

# Lower Town Mobility Study

## Public Meeting 3 – Meeting Notes

### Community Questions

- Is vehicle speed considered anywhere? the speed limits are often disregarded which I have found to be more of an issue than congestion. often during the hours with the most congestion feel safer to cross the street, etc. because it's the only time traffic goes reasonable speeds.

There will be a discussion of speeding issues and possible speed management techniques later in the presentation.

- Is there documentation that new development parking is “inadequate”? Or is this just anecdotal observation?

This was one of the concerns we heard from the series of stakeholder meetings and public ‘office hours’ events we held. We have not performed any analysis into whether this is a particular problem.

- Are the RRFB's useful by the school when peak traffic/pedestrian hours are during daytime?

RRFB's are activated by pedestrians pushing a button at the crossing. The RRFB's will be available for use 24/7, not just for school arrival and dismissal periods.

- There's no recommendation to fill in the sidewalk gap on (the north side of) Plymouth Rd. between Barton and Maiden Lane?

There currently is a bit of sidewalk along the north side from Barton to the bus stop just southwest of Barton. During the design process for reconstructing this segment of Plymouth Rd, consideration was given to extending the sidewalk to the southwest. While a short extension is feasible, as we get further from Barton there are steep grades between Plymouth Rd (lower) and the railroad tracks (higher) that make this impractical. So, adding sidewalk along this segment of Plymouth is not part of the roadway construction plans at this time.

- What are action items likely to be as recommended to the Transportation Commission and City Council?

This presentation is providing a preview of some of the recommendations. A full, formal report will be prepared to document the study process, findings and recommendations. This will then be presented to the Transportation Commission. The report will be published to the City's project website and subject to another public meeting. City Council action may likely take the form of considering individual projects for funding and construction.

- I notice you'll fill a sidewalk gap on the part of Barton that leads to the entrance to M14. Could you specify where that will be and where there will be new crosswalks across Barton on that stretch?

Some of the sidewalk recommendations are just a restatement of the City's master plan for providing sidewalks. Particular crossing locations have not been determined.

- Are slightly elevated crossings near A2steam under consideration?

By this, we assume you are referring to using a table-top speed hump and placing the school pedestrian crossing atop this feature. We have not considered this treatment but will now do so.

- Historical proposals for a STEAM drop off as indicated on your slide have been ruled out as too close to the Barton/Pontiac intersection, has that changed?

As depicted, the entrance to the drop off area is about 430' from the signalized intersection of Pontiac Trail and Barton Dr. The OHM team does not consider this distance as an insurmountable issue. It is recognized that this is a suggestion to AAPS and they are at liberty to accept or reject this proposal.

- Is there anything proposed for the John A Woods and Traver intersection?

Only recommendation so far is related to providing sidewalk along the north side of Traver from John A Woods to Barton Dr.

- Is there possibility of getting the Barton Street parking removed to complete the bike lane?

The removal of the limited on-street parking along the south side of Barton from Chandler Rd to Pontiac Trail was discussed during the RSA. Use of this extra space could be for an auxiliary right turn for vehicles, a bike lane, or just moving the curb and narrowing the road for a traffic calming effect.

- Were there considerations of eliminating on-street parking to accommodate dedicated bike lanes? e.g. Wall Street? There's certainly enough parking around there.

The City is considering changing the cross section of Wall St. There currently are narrow dedicated on-street bike lanes along most of Wall St. One of our recommendations is to increase the width of those lanes to make it safer for cyclists, reducing the problems with cars' doors being opened and interfering with their use. At this time, no consideration has been given to remove any of the on-street parking for Wall St.

- Getting from Northbound Division over the Broadway Bridge onto Pontiac Trail is problematic, and plans on making that easier to do?

Later in the presentation, there will be alternatives offered regarding possible changes for motor vehicles and others in this area.

- What is the rationale for a bike boulevard on Chandler? It will provide an alternative to Pontiac for bikers (which we already use) but it won't solve any of the main problems for bikers needing to cross the B-way Bridge

The idea of a bike boulevard was put forward during one of our meetings with the public 'office hours' by a cyclist. It is correct to say that it is not related to the problems of crossing the Huron River.

- Was there any consideration toward making better \*off-street\* connections over the Broadway bridge aside from just painted bike lanes?

As will be shown in the presentation later, there have been alternatives identified for changes to the south side of the bridge, re: Broadway, Division and Beakes. One change proposed north of the bridge is for a new and better connection to the Border to Border Trail.

- The width from accommodating parking on Barton encourages faster speeds. does the study consider removing the parking and adding a treatment like bumpouts or protected bike lane to make the road narrower & slow speeds?

As already noted, there are alternatives under consideration for changes for this portion of Barton.

- Has reducing the width of Broadway bridge been studied?

We assume you are referring to reducing the number of travel lanes, not the width of the structure itself. Last year, as part of the City's Health Streets program, Broadway was reduced to one lane in each direction. Doing so again is not part this year's program. With the Broadway Park development (former DTE site), their access to Broadway will be signalized, and to provide a left turn lane on Broadway into the site the other lanes will be narrowed.

- Are there plans for more bus stop shelters?

We have identified locations where there are no bus pads for waiting transit patrons, or the locations are not ADA compliant. While the City can make recommendations, AAATA is responsible for identifying and erecting bus stop shelters.

- If I remember correctly, AAATA removed a bus stop on the north (southwest-bound) side of Plymouth Rd. a few years back, because it was inaccessible without diving across 5 lanes of traffic. Was there any consideration toward building pedestrian infrastructure (e.g. a mid-block crosswalk with an RRFB) that would allow reinstating that stop?

This concept was part of the discussion of the Plymouth Rd construction. It was not made part of the design. We will contact AAATA to discuss if they are interested in re-instating the bus stop and will consider what would be the appropriate infrastructure to support such a bus stop.

- What is the objective of using changeable message signs and other technologies? Will they reduce speeds or increase throughput?

The goal of using CMS as a form of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) is to provide warnings of unusual conditions so motorists can plan alternate routes to avoid needless delays. An example would be related to the Ann Arbor Railroad and how their freight trains block multiple road grade crossings. If CMS were available, say on M-14 in advance of the interchange with Barton, maybe the traffic using Barton to get to Lower Town or to downtown would use a different route knowing that they would be otherwise blocked by the train.

- Is there consideration of dieting Plymouth? The volumes there are 27K so it would likely increase delay, but it would greatly increase driver, bike, and pedestrian safety.

Usually the upper bound for considering a road diet of 4 or 5-lane roads is about 12k to 15k. As Plymouth has considerably more than that, it was not a consideration of the OHM team.

- There have been mentions in plans to restore 2-way traffic to 5th and Division, which would reduce design speeds. Did your alternatives and analysis consider or recommend this eventuality?

The project team has only just learned within the last week that a discussion has started regarding the two-way conversion of these roads. We have not yet considered how this would influence our findings or recommendations.

- Would reducing Broadway Bridge to one lane each direction, with protected lanes reduce crash points?

The conflict points noted in the presentation are between movements and are not numbered by the number of lanes. So reducing the number of lanes on the Broadway Bridge will not impact the count of conflict points.

- Division and Broadway on either side of the triangle have volumes of 11 and 13K. Why isn't dieting these lanes a consideration?

As previously noted, the upper bound for considering a road diet of 4 or 5-lane roads is about 12k to 15k. This is for two-way traffic; thus the implication is for a range of 6k to 7.5k per direction. Division and Beakes have volumes almost double the range for road diets, so we had not considered this option.

- If the old DTE lot is developed, would there need to be a left turn lane on the northbound side of the Broadway Bridge?

Our understanding is that the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the development has indicated that its access should be signalized and, yes, there should be a dedicated left turn lane provided

- Have considerations been given to potential growth of micro-mobility like scooters?

Scooters were not separately considered. It would be appropriate to think about them as having similar characteristics as bicycles.

- If there is a roundabout at Broadway and Plymouth, what happens if there is a high frequency of HAWK requests by pedestrians at vehicle rush hours?

HAWK signals are to be push-button activated by pedestrians. There is a range of ways to program them. If the City wishes to give priority to them, then each new activation by a pedestrian could be immediately responded to by the signal. To balance between the competing uses, alternately, a short delay of a few seconds may be programmed in before the signal stops vehicle traffic again. As the delay is increased, the weight of favoring cars becomes greater. It would be up to the City to decide.

- Isn't Pontiac Trail a state road? We have been told there can be no real traffic calming because of this

Pontiac Trail is a minor arterial and belongs to the City of Ann Arbor. The City does not yet have a policy regarding traffic calming on arterial roads.

#### Ideas from the Community

- Barton Drive hill can be dangerous for pedestrians as vehicles take this too quick
- Keep the A2STEAM school drop off at the current locations
- Unsure about the idea of parking protected bike lanes
- Interest in removing parking along Barton Dr near Pontiac Trail to complete the bike lane that was recently installed
- This project should be looking at ways to slow vehicles down on the busier streets in the study area. Speeding cars are making conditions dangerous for walkers and bikers.
  - Barton Drive, Pontiac Trail, Plymouth Road, Broadway/Division,
- There was debate amongst the participants about roundabouts and their safety in regards to bikes/peds. Some are interested in roundabouts, while others do not want one.
- A number of participants want a clear message from this project about who the improvements from this study are for. By adding improvements for vehicles, we may be negatively impacting pedestrian and bike conditions.
- Residents are concerned about improving safety and slowing traffic down. Need to consider the context of these improvements as they will be in a residential neighborhood.
- Participants are interested in the intersection improvements proposed for the Division/Broadway/Carey St area
- Enforcement of traffic safety in the Lower Town Area was suggested as a way to improve conditions
- Participants were interested in the idea of a roundabout at Plymouth/Broadway/Maiden Lane
- Participants were interested to understand what the recommendations were based on – data, anecdotes, observations, or experience.
- Participants are interested to know MDOT's plans for M-14 and Barton Drive.