



CITY OF MUKILTEO, WASHINGTON
WISE INVESTMENTS IN TRANSPORTATION TASKFORCE MEETING MINUTES
December 16, 2015
City Council Chambers—11930 Cyrus Way

Call to order

Chairperson Joe Marine called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Len Baron, Diane Cooper, Melanie Field, Marius Grigore, Joe Marine, Laura McCarty, Kevin Wilson, Councilmember Randy Lord

Staff Present: Marko Liias, Policy Analyst; Andrea Swisstack, Assistant City Engineer; Glen Pickus, Planning Manager

Agenda order

No changes

Meeting Items:

- Approve Meeting Minutes from November 18, 2015

Melanie Field moved to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Diane Cooper seconded the motion which was approved unanimously

Meeting Items continued:

- Pavement Management Plan Presentation

Assistant City Engineer Swisstack presented the Pavement Management Plan Budget Options Report from November 2016. The report outlines various scenarios for managing pavement in the City and projects the impacts on the City's Pavement Condition Index rating. Taskforce members engaged in a lengthy dialogue about the various scenarios and how those would be implemented. In addition, members shared observations on chip seal and its use historically as well as in other jurisdictions in the Northwest. Several members had questions about the basis for cost estimates and why costs in Washington might vary from other states and jurisdictions. Staff explained the bidding process and that initial cost estimates are engineer's estimates based on past projects and costs for similar projects in other local jurisdictions. There was discussion about which baseline was sustainable and how to define a sustainable solution.

- BTW Tour Discussion

This item was not discussed to allow more time for the Year End Report discussion.

- Year End Report to City Council

Policy Analyst Liias referred members to report comments and content from Len Baron, Laura McCarty and Kevin Wilson (see exhibits). Taskforce members discussed various elements of the comments from these members. There was consensus that the report should highlight some key themes: a focus on the need to maintain infrastructure, identifying the least-cost solutions and looking for cost containment strategies, prudence and value as important themes, and the importance of transportation to overall quality of life. There was also a consensus that the report should include a discussion of the need for a coordinated biking, transit, walking plan, so that the City could compete for state and federal grant dollars to fund construction.

The members then agreed to answer two questions in a roundtable format:

- Which pavement scenario or funding level was most appropriate for the City's needs?
- Should there be dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements?

Joe Marine: There should be a prioritized sidewalk list or plan, but it should be grant funded not from dedicated City funding. \$900,000 annually for pavement management.

Diane Cooper: \$900,000 annually for pavement management, plus interested in looking at an initial higher amount to get some poor/very poor streets fixed up front. Supports dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements.

Len Baron: \$900,000 annually for pavement management. Supports dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements.

Kevin Wilson: \$900,000 annually for pavement management. Supports dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements.

Marius Grigore: \$900,000 annually for pavement management, but would like to see that maintain PCI ratings. Supports some dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements, but mostly grant funded.

Randy Lord: \$1,500,000 annually for pavement management. There should be a prioritized plan for biking and walking improvements, but it should be grant funded not from dedicated City funding.

Melanie Field: \$1,500,000 annually for pavement management, to protect PCI and address the backlog of streets in poor/very poor condition. Supports dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements.

Laura McCarty: Not prepared to select a funding level yet. Supports dedicated City funding for biking, transit, walking improvements.

Policy Analyst Liias pledged to compile tonight's comments and those that had been sent in previously and send a draft report to the Taskforce within a few days. Discussion and approval would then take place via email.

Public Comments

None

Reports and Communications

None

Comments from Staff

Policy Analyst Liias discussed the January meeting schedule with the Taskforce.

Adjournment: 8:20 p.m.

Next meeting: January 27, 2016

Exhibits: Comments and content from Len Baron, Laura McCarty, Kevin Wilson

Exhibit 1: WITT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

Wise investment in Transportation Taskforce 2015 / 2016

Len Baron's proposed wording to be compiled into the Status Report to Mukilteo City Council, Dec. 2015

The Mukilteo Wise Investment in Transportation Task Force was initiated in the summer of 2015 through resolution 201-2016. Paraphrasing the major elements of the resolution as follows:

- 1) It is made up of residents, stakeholders and experts to advise the city on transportation matters.
- 2) It was created to provide a independent analysis regarding the city's transportation policies, infrastructure needs and funding strategies
- 3) The taskforce will review the existing policies and plans including the Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan and pavement management and active transportation plans.
- 4) The Taskforce will make recommendations regarding transportation policies, levels of service, identified gaps in infrastructure, investment needs, identified costs, funding and financing strategies.

As of December 2015 the taskforce has reviewed the street pavement options and the overall pavement maintenance plans. The Task Force has reviewed the city's financials including the current taxation income sources and current city expenses. We've seen projections regarding projected traffic growth for our city. We have reviewed the data collected during a public open house on transportation specifically focused on improving Biking, Transit and Walking (BTW) in our community. We have reviewed a proposal for a number of types of projects provided by consultation firm Cascade Design Collaborative, Fehr & Peers.

As we finish up 2015 the Task Force is nearing the completion of the data gathering phase of our assignment. We've not yet begun to synthesize the data to form recommendations. Our goals are the same as what we were chartered to do and we see no reason why we shouldn't be allowed to continue our assignment.

Exhibit 1: WITT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

Some observations of the information already provided to the Task Force can perhaps highlight the need for it to continue its assignment.

- 1) The City of Mukilteo in its present geographic boundaries has been brought together relatively recently as a result of the 1991 annexation. As such, the city has not had time to sew together the varied neighborhoods into one consistent look and feel city. Though it's been almost 25 years there were too many other, higher priority projects needed first. It can readily be seen there are differences in the transportation infrastructure within the city. As an example, sidewalks and pathways in some areas such as the Harbour Pointe neighborhood are new and function well whereas in other areas, Old Town and Mid Town, sidewalks are non-existent and pose a pedestrian safety risk. Another example is neighborhoods created by the developers prior to the annexation were not very well connected – in some cases they have no linkage to each other than via the busy Speedway. Now that those neighborhoods are all within the same city it makes sense to link them via new roads or trails so that the residents have better access to the city's amenities and each other. This can cut down on vehicle traffic to and on the Speedway and can promote healthier citizens through encouraging walking or biking alternatives to driving.
- 2) It is apparent that in the coming years the continued growth of traffic from sources outside of our city, (Boeing and the Whidbey Is. ferry) will degrade the livability of our city if no significant efforts are made to improve the transportation system or take further steps towards increased use of transit and other commuting alternatives. We must strongly advocate to the state and other government agencies the need to continue to improve our main thoroughfares and work closely with them on the details of the projects. We need to stay ahead of the future or at least keep pace with it. To do nothing and fall behind means rapid decline in the livability of our city.
- 3) The city currently does not have much of a complete and approved, well thought-out plan to encourage biking and walking. Because no overarching plan exists, one could only assume nothing will be done of any significance to improve safety. An example is a northbound bicyclist riding along 525

Exhibit 1: WITT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

has a separated and marked bike lane. As he approaches the 92nd street park the shoulder pavement is reduced down to perhaps 6 inches. So although most of the route has had safety improvements, one area and perhaps others along the path is not safe. Other safety concerns like are apparent and highlight the need for a city-wide comprehensive biking and walking plan. These safety concerns discourage riders and walkers and the concerns will only get worse as traffic increases in our future. Without a strong vision and executable plans our residents will simply chose to not bike or walk and will instead drive, which will create additional traffic and negative environmental impacts.

- 4) Neither of the two extreme options of doing nothing nor pouring multi millions into our streets provides the long term answer. Doing nothing will certainly result in an overall degradation of our streets, worsening traffic and degrading safety. Whereas our city simply doesn't have the means through current income sources to do everything on an extensive wish list. Clearly a balance needs to be struck and precisely where that balance point is open for debate. This is one of the guidance aspects our Task Force was set up to provide, that is to establish a balance point and rationale behind it.
- 5) Current funding levels do not meet the basic maintenance of preserving our current streets nor provide monies for even the smallest of improvement projects. Some cold, well considered sacrifices need to be considered and made in order to keep a balance of maintaining what we already have and building for our community's future.
- 6) Our Task Force's over-arching transportation plan/recommendation ought to include guidance on how best to prioritize and then sequence the major anticipated projects. We want to avoid painting a street with designated bike lanes just prior to a repaving of the same street.

In closing, the Task Force was set up to provide an overseeing function. It is made up of current residents, business owners, and stake holders who can and will provide recommendations with the good of the citizens and community in mind. It is a separate set of fresh eyes looking at the transportation challenges facing

Exhibit 1: WTT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

our community. It is not made up of existing city elected officials or paid city employees. The Task Force will act independently of preconceptions or heart-felt biases. This valuable perspective is what was sought by the original Task Force charter. The anticipated spring recommendation report ought to provide refreshing insights into solutions and priorities not previously fully considered by the City Council or its Transportation Committee.

Exhibit 2: WITT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

Marko Liias

From: Laura McCarty <laura.mccarty@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 11, 2015 2:24 PM
To: Marko Liias
Subject: feedback on Len's draft

Hello, and a sincere thank you to Len for starting the ball rolling. Here are a few ideas that I would like to toss into the ring, hoping that these might help shape the group's report to council.

1. Scope of report: I heartily agree with Len's statement that we've not yet begun to synthesize the data to form recommendations. To that end, the report really should be much shorter, adopt a different structure, and perhaps include a few representative ideas upon which group members already agree.

I think we could help the council understand better where we are in our deliberations by telling them we have identified (something along the line of) watchwords for creating transportation policies for Mukilteo—a sort of elevator speech built onto concepts carried in the transportation element of the City of Mukilteo October 2015 Comprehensive Plan transportation element. Here are some examples:

- *Connectivity, synergy, and safety* are valued characteristics of Mukilteo's transportation assets.
- Ideals of *fairness* and *sustainability* compel us to place greater emphasis on creating a *smart range of options* for transporting ourselves both within the city and around the region.
- A *long term* vision for transportation arrangements within our present city boundaries is just as important to us as a *short term* vision for coping with the realities we know.

A brief observation, insight, or evidence provided by individuals in the group could follow each statement. Everyone has had an "aha" moment, right?

2. Our group charge: I also have to agree with a comment made at the group's November meeting, namely, that we are *not* auditors (a person appointed and authorized to examine accounts and accounting records, compare the charges with the vouchers, verify balance sheet and income items, and state the result) nor spokespersons (a person who speaks for another individual or for a group). For that matter, in this group I am not an overseer (a person who supervises others, especially workers).

My own understanding (not discussed fully with the rest of the group) is that we are more of a sounding board (a group whose reactions to suggested ideas are used as a test of their validity or likely success before they are made public) or working group (a committee or group appointed to study and report on a particular question and make recommendations based on its findings).

Thanks for reading this!

Laura

Exhibit 3: WITT Meeting Minutes, 12/18/2015

Marko Liias

From: Kevin Wilson <Kevin@ImFishin.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 09, 2015 11:08 AM
To: Marko Liias
Subject: One task force member's draft thoughts...

Morning Marko,

I spent some time pondering the tasks at hand... Here are some thoughts...

Best Regards,

- Kevin Wilson

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- I would suspect the city would like to continue chip sealing but they are gun shy because of the complaints they have received about it.
 - I would suspect they would like a fancy bike lane/transit system but it is far too expensive financially and politically, to implement.

My first cut at possible Solutions...

I have run companies for quite awhile now.... The number one lesson I have learned is there is one surefire way to amicably solve problems that you know before you start, may in the end, ruffle some feathers... Get folks involved from the beginning, educate them, and ask for their "**Comments and Buy in.**" Very key tools if gathered before you ruffle any feathers... Worthless afterwards. Planning for reaction is failure waiting to happen.

I suspect that is partially what we have been brought to the table for, we in essence, are the councils test market.

When they chip sealed my street... I was annoyed. I called the city manager and I complained. If I had been approached before hand and educated as to why chip seal, and given an opportunity to see the finished product beforehand, I most assuredly would have felt differently about chip seal. I don't mind it at all today...

The human brain does not like surprises... Even Surprise Birthday parties are statistically about a 50/50 love/hate proposition. That said when someone comes home after a long day at work to be surprised with what they perceive as their brand new street... and after a closer look, the fresh chip seal looks, to them, like it belongs in Hicksville... that can't end well.

Our city council seems to be afraid to be honest. That is the real reason they brought us together. They already have a plan for virtually everything we are exploring. They just don't know how to sell it to the people. Or... it seems they would prefer to lean on our taskforce as the reason for moving forward with costly projects.

Two very different problems are on the table...

- 1) - How to pay for the ongoing paving needs of the city.
- 2) - What the future of Mukilteo might look like, as far as road layout in the different transportation sectors.

Let's take on Chip Seal first...

- o To chip seal or not to chip seal...
 - Let's start with words to live by... You can bet...The Best Steak Ever Grilled... won't even get a glance, if served on a garbage can lid.... But even Spam can become impressive if presented properly...
- Chip Seal...Could become the citizens informed choice ...
 - o Educate them. Get them ready.

I've done some research on chip seal. There are several versions out there but more importantly the costs vary dramatically from US city to US city.

- Who is shopping our services ? I have found costs from ~15,000.00 to 90,000.00 a mile... (with minimal research.)
 - o I would suggest an aggressive plan to shop costs and saving solutions for the cities chip seal needs.
 - Idaho is using a method that dries much faster than most types and apparently cuts down, greatly, the loose rocks post seal. They are also using smaller rocks (chips) along with a latex-modified emollient (made of equal parts oil, water and latex). On the surface, the costs look fairly reasonable as well.
- Let's use this chip seal example to illustrate one way you might tackle some of the issues that our city encounters.

It looks as if some of the planning the council has completed thus far, sections off the neighborhoods to some degree. We might look to a plan that very clearly section off the neighborhoods, somewhat like the boroughs of New York. With the ultimate goal in mind of nurturing neighborhood pride. If the citizens had a say in ways to enhance their areas and increase their usability and property value, I would think good things can happen.

- o When we were discussing options for ways to pay for things... There was one method whereby we could draw a circle around a neighborhood project. A special assessment had the beneficiaries paying a higher tax for improvements over a set time. When the project has been paid for, the additional tax would be removed. It might be very important to stress that point as people don't trust government on this one. With that in mind...
 - Put together a base plan for sustaining the ongoing road maintenance for the entire city. Break down costs by these defined neighborhoods. Inform the areas of the plan. In my mind's eye, we tell them when we plan to implement the "Base" plan as we educate them as to what that plan is. Chip seal should be the crux of the base plan. Part of the information process needs to allow folks to weigh in before you start to chip their streets. Give them addresses that they can visit to look at the finished (seasoned) product. Tell them this method is the base minimum that will be done, and tell them of the additional costs involved as far as

tax (if there are any additional taxes)... I think it would be great if the base version did not add to their taxes....

- The important twist I see at this juncture is we offer them a choice... an opportunity to “Upgrade their neighborhood.” If asphalt is something they would like to consider we can tell them what the additional costs would be. Let them vote, neighborhood by neighborhood. If they would like cobble stone streets and are willing to pay for them ... let’s do it.
- Using the aforementioned as an example you could use this formula for endless topics moving forward. (fancy streetlights, street trees, sidewalks... endless options...and yes Bike lanes. I would think our sense of community and pride of neighborhood may be greatly improved with this approach.
- 2) - What the future of Mukilteo might look like, as far as road layout in the different transportation sectors.

As for the bike lanes etc... I lived a block from Green-lake for quite a while. We went down to the lake often as a family. I made an effort to walk the lake every day, after a hiccup with my heart. I would say walkers outnumbered bikers maybe 200 to 1 or better and let’s face it, they have quite an extensive bike lane system to get those bikes to the lake and yet... walkers/joggers still overwhelmingly dominate. In our town, full of steeper hills, I would suspect even less usage of bike lanes. That said, our small town doesn’t currently have the money to create a viable bike lane system and a half hearted effort would be a big waste of money especially if you factor in the probable biker usage.

If we were able to successfully section off the neighborhoods. Something to consider (as part of, a base plan idea) might be to create a safe walking area (track) via sidewalks or paved trail or other... around each neighborhood. Then, in the spirit of possible “upgrading their neighborhood” options... Each neighborhood could then decide what to do about additional sidewalks, biking options, etc...and decide what they would be willing to contribute to it. Once you know if the neighborhoods would like bike lanes... you should consider how to connect them, neighborhood to neighborhood ...

In the end we may not get many or any neighborhoods to buy into the “upgrade your neighborhood” options. Because of that, I would propose....

- A solid baseline of road maintenance (using chip seal) and sidewalk and/or trail upgrades that will be done no matter the outcome of neighborhood opinion. Calculate the costs.
- Shop extensively for best value on those projects... Look in to grants etc...
- Once we know the cost of the Base or minimum maintenance and upgrades you/we choose ... Then present to the voters a cost of the base plan. Tell them clearly how that plan will affect their property or other taxes... In the same notification offer up options for neighborhood upgrades... When they have made an informed decision... They have, very tastefully, been given the opportunity for “**Comments and Buy in**” to include new taxes of their choice...(No surprise) Concurrently they have also signed off on (or actually chosen) chip seal or an upgrade.
With an inform and involved citizenry I would highly suspect a lot fewer complaints and a much better sense of pride.

One of many articles I ran across on the topic of chip seal....

To Chip or Not To

Annual chip sealing creates headaches

By [Deanna Darr @idwordslinger](#)

The toxic scent of oil and tinkling of loose rocks hitting the underside of your car is as much a sign of summer in Boise as minivans heading for the water park or the drone of air conditioners.

The annual rite of chip sealing has been part of summer in the Treasure Valley for three decades. Each year, the grumblings of drivers and bikers lead us all to wonder why, exactly, road maintenance means praying your windshield doesn't end the season as pock marked as the lunar landscape.

While it may seem arcane (especially as a you try desperately to keep your bicycle from careening into oncoming traffic while riding over an uneven, bumpy surface), for officials with the Ada County Highway District, it's the best—and least expensive—way to keep the county's roads in shape.

This year alone, 244 miles of ACHD roads will be resurfaced with chip seal. While that fact may raise a communal groan, ACHD has its reasons.

The main one—cost. "It's nearly nine to 10 times cheaper than the [asphalt] overlay," said Jim Michaelson, superintendent of operations at the ACHD Cloverdale Maintenance center. "It lengthens the years you get out [of roads]. It's the cheapest maintenance thing you can do."

Chip sealing a road costs roughly \$15,000 per mile. An asphalt overlay costs \$200,000 per mile.

The price-per-mile cost is one reason chip sealing is used across the country, although the hot, dry summers in the West make it more common in this region because those conditions are required for the process.

Other Western cities like Portland, Ore., and Denver use chip sealing, and several cities in **California that had stopped the practice have returned after they were unable to afford to maintain roads with other methods.**

Most drivers still aren't convinced that it's the best option. According to the Insurance Information Institute, drivers spent an estimated \$2.4 billion nationally for windshield repair and replacement in 1997. That number has been steadily on the rise since auto makers have used increasingly lighter glass to help fuel efficiency, and the amount of road construction has continued to grow.

In Ada County, the number of roads ACHD maintains has grown with the valley's population—459 miles of new roads since 1998. Michaelson's region, one of two in Boise, has grown from 86 miles in 1998 to 132 miles. Currently, there are 2,110 miles of roads in the county.

While ACHD takes a zone approach, breaking the county into 18 territories, two of which are resurfaced every nine years, more roads mean a longer chip-sealing season. In the past, chip sealing began the week after July 4 and ran through the beginning of September. This year, crews began work June 4 and will continue through mid-September, Michaelson said.

Michaelson said he's well-versed in driver complaints, but both complaints and insurance claims have dropped since ACHD began using new techniques and smaller rock pieces.

"The biggest thing is to stay on top of the curve," he said. "We keep using it and keep people as happy as we can. Most people accept it—bikes don't like it, but you've got to take care of your roads."

Three years ago, ACHD began using a latex-modified oil as the sticky portion of the chip-sealing recipe. Michaelson said this mixture sets more quickly than oil used in the past, helping cut down on the amount of loose rocks.

The agency also decreased the size of rock chips in its mixture, going from one-half inch to three-eighths inch in diameter, creating a smoother road surface. ACHD has also experimented with using one-quarter-inch chips along heavily traveled bike paths, including the Hill Road corridor.

While road bikers still don't particularly like chip sealing, they do like the new bike lanes.

Bicyclist George C. Knight said the improvements are both noticeable and appreciated, but he's still not a huge fan of chip sealing. "It's treacherous to ride on when there's fresh chips," he said. "We share a dislike for the ongoing construction projects [with drivers]. More and more, as we continue building in the valley, it's harder and harder to find a route that avoids construction sites."

Knight has carefully watched developments on area roads for years and recently joined ACHD's bike advisory committee to advocate for the needs of bikers. He said chip sealing is a perennial issue, especially as more people move to the valley.

Ada County is the only county in the Treasure Valley using the smaller chips. Both Canyon and Gem counties still use one-half-inch chips. "The chips (rocks, gravel, boulders) that are used in Gem and Canyon county are horrible," said David Bartle, coach of the Boise Young Riders Development Squad and head of the advisory committee in an e-mail statement.

Michaelson said ACHD tries to minimize the chance for damage during the chip-sealing process. It all starts the year prior, when crews repair concrete and asphalt, and deal with curb damage and drainage issues. Crews then apply a scrub coat, a thin overlay applied before chip sealing.

When the main project begins, an oil truck sprays the latex-modified emollient (made of equal parts oil, water and latex). The oil is quickly followed by a truck that spreads the pre-sized rock chips over the surface. Michaelson said new technology allows for better control over the amount of chips dropped, so there is less loose gravel. The new equipment has decreased the amount deposited from 25 pounds per square yard to 16 pounds per square yard.

"It's just enough to cover the oil, but it helps with chips," he said.

The chipper truck is followed by large rollers, which force the loose chips into the oil. The mixture takes roughly 20 to 25 minutes to set, but it could take months to fully cure, Michaelson said.

Depending on how busy a street is, a street sweeper cleans up the loose gravel between one day and one week later. Finally, an oil and water mixture called a fog seal—to further lock down the rock chips and give the road a black color—is applied a week later.

"People tend to like the black better than gray," Michaelson said.

While chip sealing is used widely across the valley, it's not the only technique ACHD uses. Concrete is the medium of choice on some of the area's largest intersections, including at Overland and Cole roads and State Street and Veterans Memorial Parkway.

Concrete is more expensive than asphalt to install, but it lasts far longer. Michaelson said ACHD is considering using concrete at other major intersections to cut down on maintenance.

But even with these intersections, it's a safe bet chip sealing will continue on Ada County roads. So, what can you do to minimize the possibility of getting your windshield taken out by a flying rock chip? Michaelson said slow down.

"If citizens would drive at speeds we put out there for rock chipping, no one would get a rock chip," he said, adding that few people actually drive the posted 20 m.p.h. speed limits