

**MURRAY CITY MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

The Murray City Municipal Council met as a Committee of the Whole on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, in the Murray City Center, Conference Room #107, 5025 South State Street, Murray, Utah.

Members in Attendance:

Jeff Dredge	Council Chairman
Robert D. Robertson	Council Member
Jim Brass	Council Member
Patricia W. Griffiths	Council Member

Members Excused:

Krista Dunn	Council Member
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Others in Attendance:

Daniel Snarr	Mayor
Frank Nakamura	City Attorney
Michael D. Wagstaff	Council Executive Director
Janet M. Lopez	Council Office Administrator
Jan Wells	Mayor's Chief of Staff
Pat Wilson	Finance Director
Brianna Allen	Murray High School Student
Jennifer Brass	Citizen
Robin Hutcheson	Fehr & Peers
Tim Tingey	Community & Econ. Dev. Director
Erin McShay	Valley Journals

Chairman Dredge called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Ms. Dunn was excused due to business travel.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dredge called for action on the minutes from the Committee of the Whole meeting held on Tuesday, March 3, 2009. Ms. Griffiths moved approval of the minutes with corrections. Mr. Robertson seconded the motion, and the motion carried 4-0.

Business Item Taylorsville/Murray Transit Alternatives Analysis

Mr. Dredge invited Mr. Tingey to address this item of business.

Mr. Tingey commented that the City has been involved in this study for some time and Robin Hutcheson from Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants was present to provide an update on the study.

Ms. Hutcheson explained that Fehr and Peers was the consultant hired to complete the transit feasibility study. She has been working on behalf of the steering committee established for this project. Tim Tingey and Scott Stanger represent Murray on the committee, and their participation has been most helpful.

The study was sponsored by the Utah Transit Authority (UTA), although, it is a collaborative effort among all the cities, the county, and the Wasatch Front Regional Council. The steering committee has met numerous times, biweekly at first and now monthly, guided by the cities involved.

Ms. Hutcheson noted that the locally preferred alternative has been developed. This includes an alignment, the mode, and general station locations. The study has been conducted within the Federal Transit Administration process, so that if federal funding is pursued in the future the study is prepared according to its guidelines.

Fehr and Peers has also completed short implementation plans for each of the cities, so they know of recommended changes the city could make to best support this particular transit project.

The consulting group was pleasantly surprised to find all the amazing transit generators within Murray and Taylorsville, Ms. Hutcheson remarked. The study area ends at State Street on the east, so it includes a critical section of Murray. There is a large student population within the study area, including Murray and the Salt Lake Community College, which has 16,000 students.

Through meetings with the steering committee and stakeholder groups, goals were established for the study. The transit project goals consist of the following:

- Increase connectivity
- Increase economic development
- Improve overall mobility
- Enhance the current transit service
- Provide speed, frequency and reliability

Ms. Hutcheson pointed out that reliability is a key, because there is great transit in the study area now, however, it is not very reliable because it gets delayed in traffic. Another key is connectivity to multi modal transportation options. This is not just walking distance to transit it is

transit to transit options. This would include bus rapid transit to light rail connections, for example.

Ms. Hutcheson showed a slide depicting the analysis process. There was a pyramid on the left showing the levels of screening that was completed, and on the right a pyramid showing in how much detail topics were studied. The screening process is completed, and this presentation is a draft of the locally preferred alternatives.

The mode of transportation was the first characteristic studied. The modes for this corridor include the following:

- Bus
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Street Car

A premium bus rapid transit has not been developed in Utah and the BRT in the study has many features new in the state. It was determined that this is the right solution in this setting. It is a high quality transit service without the investment of steel and catenary overhead lines. Done correctly, it can provide many of the same benefits of light rail transit, such as its own lane. Shown on a slide was a BRT in Eugene, Oregon traveling in its own lane with full signal priority, to avoid traffic and waiting. There is a design feature called level boarding, similar to light rail which is much faster boarding. This would be very new in the valley. Provo and Orem are developing this type of transit to connect their campuses.

Alignment was the second characteristic studied. It was fairly challenging. Different alignments were considered, and after many options were studied and eliminated the following were the best alternatives:

- 3900 South was studied as BRT connecting from TRAX on 500 West, crossing the Jordan River into Sorenson Business Park, and continuing through Taylorsville to the Salt Lake Community College (SLCC). In the end this was not chosen but it was a good alternative with strong rider-ship.
- 4500 South was a good alternative, however, it has three bridges to cross and a difficult urban interchange at Interstate 15. These were fatal flaws that eliminated anything on 4500 South.
- The final option begins at the Murray Central Station where commuter rail and light rail come together. It would travel along Vine Street to 500 West, then to the Taylorsville Expressway, to Redwood Road, and SLCC. This is the original incarnation of this alternative, and subsequently a spur into Murray City was added. The land use plans in Murray, and planned development close to Vine Street made this applicable.

Serving TRAX and commuter rail became one of the most decisive factors, in the end, explained Ms. Hutcheson. Having BRT serve two other modes of transit is very effective transportation usage. Avoiding some busy interchanges and serving some redevelopment plans in Murray was key.

Ms. Hutcheson observed that the former Utah Pet Center is not operational now, however, if the opportunity arises for redevelopment the study group felt it would fit into the implementation planning and be very interesting for transit development.

The final updated look of the locally preferred transit alternative shows the heavy purple line that goes to the locations described above from light rail at the Murray Central Station to SLCC. Then there is the light purple line that is the extension into Murray. It is an extension beyond what would normally be thought of as a logical terminus. There is some benefit in having one additional station into the heart of Murray. Walking around that area, between Box Elder and State Streets, it was evident the historic mansion, and interesting street features would complement a station adjacent to it. Building around transit in that area would be a tremendous opportunity.

Getting into Murray could be either along 4800 South Street or into the heart of downtown not to avoid a lot of jobs and people in the corridor. The second alternative seemed to be a more successful transit project into Murray.

Some of the attributes of this final alternative are:

- Three and a half to four miles in length
- Serving 3,300 to 3,400 riders per day
- Ten to 15-minute ride end to end
- Seven stations
- Approximately \$53 to \$55 million expense

There are a few outstanding issues to be addressed:

- Access into the SLCC campus is extremely important.
- Integration at commuter rail and light rail stations necessitate additional space at the bus phase for efficient transfer, and would need design treatment.
- An end station in Murray City center would be a challenge due to the space needed to turn a bus. Allocation of land for a station and bus rapid transit must be considered as that area redevelops. The City benefits would be tremendous in the transit oriented development.
- An implementation plan is being worked on for Murray on a parcel by parcel basis to change land uses as necessary for the transit project.

Mr. Brass asked how much land is needed to turn a bus. Ms. Hutcheson could not recall the amount, although, Ms. Hutcheson described an area on the north side of the SLCC campus where there is a bus bay pull in, and turn around. An area of that size will accommodate a bus rapid transit vehicle.

Mayor Snarr asked if she was familiar with a turn style, which takes in the bus, unloads passengers, and rotates the bus in place. It is then ready to proceed the opposite direction. Ms. Hutcheson stated that she would look into that possibility.

Mayor Snarr asked the length of the bus rapid transit vehicle. Ms. Hutcheson responded that they are long, due to the double articulated size. The length is a little less than the size of two buses.

Mayor Snarr expressed his approval of this option, giving riders the access to commuter rail and the opportunity to go either north or south. At 3900 South or 4500 South one would have to double back to Murray to get on commuter rail. Because of the platform to platform transfer capability in Murray, this site is very attractive.

Mr. Brass added that the plans to make Murray's downtown a transit oriented development, and to complement Fireclay, having either the bus terminus that will then get people to a TRAX station, or a pedestrian oriented TRAX stop is very important. This would be a perfect addition for the connectivity to commuter rail and light rail.

Mr. Dredge asked what the time frame for this project would be.

Ms. Hutcheson said that a typical Federal Transit Administration (FTA) process takes three to five years to complete then construction can begin. That process includes the environmental study, all the approvals, and engineering. Although, she added that the FTA process may change to streamline requirements. This project could qualify for something called *small starts*, meant to be a faster process.

Salt Lake City and South Salt Lake are working on a street car project that uses existing lines into Sugarhouse. They are considering other funding opportunities because they do not want to wait on the federal process. She said it depends on the cities, the collaborative efforts, and ideas to speed up the process.

Ms. Hutcheson added that the UTA priorities must be considered, as well. Where this ranks in projects UTA wants to accomplish is a factor.

Mr. Dredge commented that the route is fairly open except through Hunters Woods, on Murray Boulevard, which is very narrow. Ms. Hutcheson answered that it is tight due to the

parking on the street. She said that having the exclusive lane would require eliminating the street parking. She has learned that the street parking is not necessary. The apartment complex has adequate parking structures. It is for convenience that residents use the street.

Mr. Brass commented that the street parking is dangerous. He added that this particular route goes right past Intermountain Healthcare and Stevens-Henager College, so the area does have many students to serve.

Ms. Hutcheson commented that Mr. Dredge participated on the policy committee and another meeting was approaching soon. She expressed her thanks for the opportunity to share the findings with the Council. Lastly, Ms. Hutcheson noted that her next meeting with Murray would be a short presentation to discuss a non binding agreement asking the City to support the locally preferred transit option. This would be merely to confirm the City's support and give UTA the ability to go forward with the project.

There being no further business Mr. Dredge thanked Ms. Hutcheson for her presentation and adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Janet M. Lopez
Council Office Administrator