

CIM Enhancements Overview Report

"I have an affection for a great city. I feel safe in the neighborhood of man, and enjoy the sweet security of the streets." - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Could that quote from Longfellow have been about a street in the Treasure Valley? What makes a great city? What makes one street feel more secure or more memorable than another?

Recently, the American Planning Association selected a number of Great Streets in America. These included South Temple Street in Salt Lake City, Broad Street in Philadelphia, and Ocean Drive in Miami. Does the Treasure Valley have a Great Street? What would make it so?

Some characteristics of a Great Street include:

- Connects to the larger roadway system in a intuitive manner.
- Balances the needs of many different users of the street—including motorists, transit vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others.
- Promotes the natural landscape of the area.
- Is multi-dimensional, accommodating a variety of uses, buildings, and activities.
- Has high-quality urban design or architectural features that are exemplary in design.
- Relates well to its surroundings.
- Encourages human interaction and social activities.
- Is safe, secure, and clean.
- Provides environmentally sustainable features such as heat-minimizing islands and drains that redirect water for reuse.
- Is well maintained, and capable of being maintained without excessive costs.
- Is memorable.

Enhancements are features in the landscape that assist in providing a functioning transportation system. They can also improve the transportation experience by providing increased efficiency, beauty, travel options, or sensitivity to the cultural, historic and environmental aspects of the transportation network. Enhancements



improve the aesthetic quality of a street and reduce traffic congestion, which in turn provides long-term monetary benefits, improve air quality, and create sustainable communities.

In 2007, Urban Land Institute (ULI) suggested a major overhaul in the coordinated efforts between the land-use and transportation planning agencies in the Treasure Valley. A ULI report stressed the importance of transportation agencies—ACHD,

“A street comprises the entire three-dimensional visual corridor, including the public realm and how it relates to the adjacent land uses.”

American Planning Association, Great Streets

COMPASS, Valley Regional Transit, Idaho Transportation Department, and Canyon County road agencies—coming together to create workable long-range transportation plans to service the region and local communities.

The implementation of enhancements requires flexibility in the planning process for the accommodation of alternative designs that enable community transportation choices. Many agencies have cooperatively developed model ordinances to share information of best practices and to work together to better manage growth and congestion in the valley.

Nationally, the Transportation Enhancement program provides the opportunity for the implementation of enhancement projects through federal aid authorized under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The Transportation Enhancement program, in accordance with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), offer funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and to enhance the transportation experience through 12 eligible activities:

1. Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
2. Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
3. Acquisition of scenic or historic easements and scenic or historic sites
4. Scenic or historic highway programs (including tourist and welcome centers)
5. Landscaping and other scenic beautification
6. Historic preservation

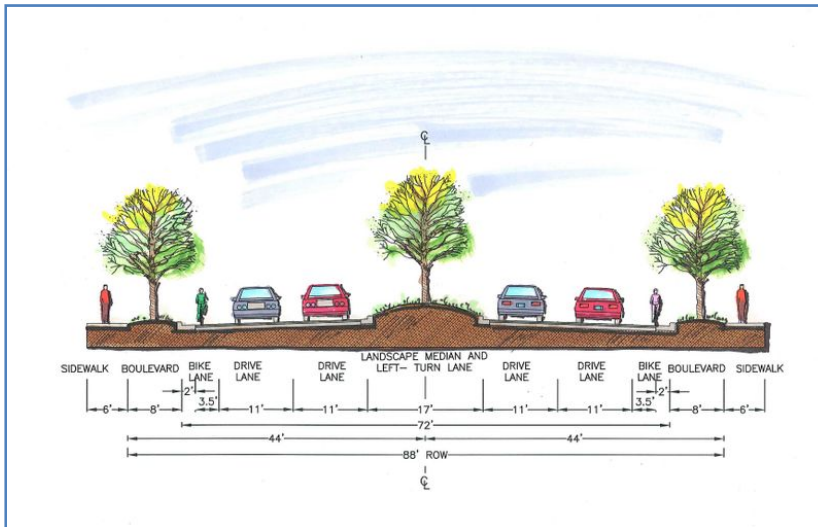


7. Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities
8. Preservation of abandoned railway corridors for conversion into pedestrian or bicycle trails
9. Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising
10. Archaeological planning and research
11. Environmental mitigation – addressing water pollution or reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality
12. Establishment of transportation museums

More details and examples of enhancement activities can be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov

At the local and regional level, city code provides the ordinances that transportation projects must comply. Many enhancement measures and projects are embedded in subdivision regulations and design, and improvement standards in the city ordinances. Some ways that cities and counties consider the overall roadway in local regulations include provisions for access management, building placement and orientation, pedestrian paths, and utility siting. Likewise, the comprehensive plan coincides with city ordinances and integrates the concerns and vision of the community. The comprehensive plans throughout the region are reflected in the regional long-range transportation plan, *Communities in Motion*.

ACHD's Transportation and Land Use Integration Plan (TLIP) emphasizes a coordinated effort to manage growth by providing a link between land-use and transportation planning. TLIP focuses on improving roadway design, well-thought-



out growth that avoids sprawl, and enhancements features that don't drain resources. This can be achieved by providing policy decisions as a result of collaborative efforts with land-use agencies and public review. Policy decisions will feature which roads will expand to higher speed and volume corridors (mobility

corridors) and roads that will remain at lower speed and volume. Many communities have developed street design guidelines and regulations that outline the road network classifications and their associated building forms and land usage;

including enhancement features such as bike lanes, sidewalks, buffers, lighting, frontage, and other elements.

The next time you drive down a street consider the other elements besides concrete and striping that contribute to how the street functions. The surrounding land uses , the history of the area, the relationship of the nearby buildings, and the infrastructure that supports other modes of travel can all create "affection" for a city.

T:\FY09\600 Projects\661 CIM\Overview Reports\Enhancements\Enhancements_final_june8.docx