



City of Camas NW 6th and Norwood Intersection Improvements Open House Summary

Date: Thursday, 28 May 2015
Purpose: Open House No. 1
Location: Camas Public Library

City Representatives and Project Team Attendance:

- Mayor Scott Higgins
- Councilor Greg Anderson
- Councilor Bonnie Carter
- Councilor Steve Hogan
- Councilor Melissa Smith
- Councilor Shannon Turk
- Pete Capell, City Administrator
- Steve Wall, Public Works Director
- Jim “Curleigh” Carothers
- Ronda Syverson, Senior Administrative Support Asst.
- Robert Nova, WSDOT
- Greg Jellison, HDJ Design Group
- John Manix, HDJ Design Group

PROJECT BACKGROUND

HDJ Design Group and their Consultant team were selected by the City of Camas to design a traffic signal at the intersection of NW 6th Avenue and Norwood Street. The 6th and Norwood Project is intended to address safety and congestion issues in the project area. Extensive coordination with WSDOT has been necessary as the west leg of the intersection is part of the off and on ramps for SR-14. Through the design and traffic analysis process the option of a roundabout as the appropriate intersection improvement was suggested by representatives from WSDOT. Camas representatives also suggested that a roundabout may provide an opportunity to provide a gateway feature at the western entrance to Camas. As of March 16, 2015, it was determined that a roundabout should be designed to 30% completion and the traffic signal design be put “on hold”. As part of this phase HDJ performed updated traffic analysis with refined traffic projections and prepared a 30% design showing how a roundabout would fit within the existing intersection features. HDJ also prepared updated conceptual landscape/gateway plans based on the 30% plan layout.

The Camas City Council desired to gather input from the public regarding the roundabout option. Along with City staff, HDJ coordinated an open house to present the 30% design concept to the public.

EVENT OVERVIEW

The open house was held at the Camas Public Library on May 28, 2015 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. In attendance were 28 members of the public along with the Mayor, five council members, four city staff, one WSDOT representative and two consultant staff from HDJ. Total number of people in attendance was 41.

At 5:45 PM the project team gave a presentation on the proposed roundabout and the relative benefits of roundabouts as compared to the installation of a traffic signal at this location. Included with the presentation was a visual traffic simulation prepared by WSDOT that represented how the roundabout would operate in 2035 during the PM Peak Hour. HDJ also prepared exhibits showing the layout of the roundabout intersection and showing the conceptual gateway landscaping feature.

At the conclusion of the presentation Greg Jellison reminded everyone to submit any comments they may have regarding the project and directed the public to review the exhibits and ask questions of the project team representatives. The visual traffic simulation was also shown on the screen in a continuous 3 minute loop and a separate FHWA Roundabout video was shown on a monitor for people to view.

The general response to the presentation and the roundabout option was very positive. Some people that attended the open house were initially opposed to the roundabout but after the presentation and answering some of their questions they are now supportive of the roundabout option. Others were somewhat supportive of the roundabout but had concerns about certain aspects like the speed of vehicles exiting SR-14 and how trucks would be able to maneuver through the roundabout. After explaining how the design of the roundabout would require vehicles to slow down but also accommodate trucks and other large vehicles their concerns were addressed.

Below are the written comments received at the open house as well as three more comments that were emailed in after the open house.

WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED AT OPEN HOUSE

- I fear for my safety! This roundabout will take care of my most concern. As of now I have to RUN across to get to the gas station just to buy something at the Minit Mart. I live in Norwood so going east on Hwy 14 is a major challenge.
- I like roundabouts vs lights. My concern is speed and construction interferences [sic].
- Please keep any greenery in the roundabout low, so vision lines aren't blocked (as they are in east Vancouver off 49th and 137th).
- I was concerned but am now convinced this will be a good solution. Very thoughtful, thorough presentation. Thank you! PS: Belua says she agrees! ☺
- Thank you for your presentation. I still think the project is too expensive but I better understand the issues of the situation.

- What is the traffic control device for cars traveling across Norwood Street to Norwood Drive? Love it and think it should be built.
- I look forward to the new gateway and traffic calming. Beautiful island design.
- I have always been against roundabouts because so many people/drivers don't know how to use them safely. I have, however, changed my mind about this one. The explanation/presentation helped a lot. I do believe the one lane version would work well.
- Great event—thank you for hosting this Open House! Could not be more supportive of the roundabout solution to this intersection. Safety statistics alone justify any additional costs as compared to a signal. Of special importance is the increased pedestrian safety. Less waiting time at intersection is a bonus too. ☺ Again, thank you for your very thoughtful work on this issue.
- A very good investment for us, resident and for the city. Very well presented. Developing countries are getting rid of their lights!
- Please, make the roundabout happen faster!! What a great entrance to Camas.

EMAIL COMMENTS

- Mr. Jellison, HDJ Design Group and Mayor Higgins: Thank you for an informative and concise presentation about the proposed roundabout for Camas - 6th Ave. ~ My husband and I are new residents, building our house on SW 7th Circle, and completely in favor of the proposed roundabout, and much more than a standard signal. ~ We have been crossing that intersection to go West on 14 for the last nine months at different times of the day, and always feel like we are putting our lives at risk, and more so, during the late afternoon rush hour. ~ Last month, on an early afternoon, not commuter time, I (Carmen) held my breath expecting to see a head-on collision when a car turned from the Shell Station side hoping to go westbound onto HWY 14, but accidentally turned into the eastbound left-turn lane. Fortunately, a vehicle heading east into the turn lane, slowed and pulled alongside the westbound vehicle until the driver was able to safely back up and head in the west bound lane. ~ I thought your presentation of the safety percentages comparison was very convincing and seemed like the most logical choice for not only safety but keeping traffic flowing with fewer delays. I would hate to be one of the 28 cars stuck at the light with HWY 14 behind me. ~ I thought the reduction of 90% fatality accidents, and 40% for pedestrian injury reduction are worth the investment—one life saved is priceless. Pedestrians being able to cross one lane with traffic coming from only one direction at a time is a huge plus. Who would dare try to cross that street now? Even with a signal, the risk of someone running the light, or time expiring while crossing would be greater. ~ The gateway welcome to our community is also a plus and accommodating a second lane for the future is also good planning. ~ I applaud your design and research, and pray the city council will agree to implement this roundabout for the safety of all Camas citizens and especially for those of us who will daily use this intersection to and from home.
- As promised I wanted to give you and your team a thumbs up on the round a bout proposal in Camas. ~ The presentation by you and John was outstanding. The power point and software illustrations were awesome. After hearing the presentation it was a no brainer that the traffic light is not a good idea. Everything stated here was also directed to Mayor Higgins and the council. ~ I would like to contact John about the traffic issues that are occurring here in my neighborhood to see



if there is a solution to our problems. With the growth and increased traffic volume that goes with it, your firm could be a huge asset in the future plans in Camas regarding traffic management projects. ~ Thank you Greg! Hope to meet with you soon! ~ Please pass this on to John and your staff!!

- Thank you for the tour of the NW 6th and Norwood Intersection project. We are really looking forward to a more functional crossing at that location. As it is, we rarely use those businesses since getting back out and on the road can be quite a challenge at certain times of day. But the idea of coming off the highway into a traffic light isn't a pleasant thought either. The traffic circle really seems like a suitable solution. With some nice landscaping and signage, it will present a welcoming entrance to our lovely downtown.