MEMORANDUM

Engineering Division

September 21, 2015

To: ACHD Commissioners and Director

From: Bruce Mills, PE, Deputy Director, Engineering Division

Subject: 2015 Downtown Boise Implementation Plan – 13th Street Lane Striping – City of Boise Request for Revision

Executive Summary

As part of the 2015 Downtown Boise Implementation Plan, 13th Street is being converted from a one-way northbound street to a two-way street, between Main and State. In anticipation of projected traffic demands, our consultant designed turn lanes at certain intersections to accommodate those demands. As a result, on-street parking will be removed on the west side of 13th, from Main to just north of Jefferson (19 spaces), and between Front and Grove (5 spaces). The only retail business along 13th is Idaho Mountain Touring, located at the northwest corner of 13th/Main, and they will lose 4 spaces from their 13th frontage, although they will retain other available customer parking spaces along their Main Street frontage and close proximity.

ACHD staff was asked by the City of Boise to examine the potential elimination/alteration of the proposed southbound left turn lane on 13th at Main, and what effects it might have on traffic. This report summarizes this information.

Summary of Existing/Proposed Parking Spaces on 13th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13th Street - On Street Parking Spaces – Existing / Proposed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front-Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grove-Main</td>
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<td>Main-Idaho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idaho-Bannock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bannock-Jefferson</td>
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<td>Jefferson-State</td>
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Notes: Available parking on Main, 13th to 14th: North side – 11 (7 in front of IMT), South side - 12
Traffic Volume Information
13th Street is classified as a collector street, and currently carries 6,000 (at State) to 9,000 (at Front) vehicles per day as a one-way northbound street (Main to State). There are 7,200 vehicles/day between Main and Idaho. 13th Street is also a Priority 2 Corridor in the downtown Boise area for traffic circulation, only subservient to Priority 1 Corridors of State, Front, Myrtle, Main, Capitol and 9th.

It is anticipated that 13th Street volumes will increase when it is converted to a two-way street. 13th Street is an important link between the North End and downtown Boise and the I-184 Connector. The DBIP consultant estimates that following the two-way conversion of 13th, there may be 125 southbound left turns from 13th onto Main in the PM peak hour, opposing 400 vehicles heading northbound.

Options
1. Install southbound left-turn lane on 13th at Main, per plans
   Pros: Allows for safer and more progressive traffic flow, especially in the AM and PM peak times.
   Suggest monitoring for a 6-month establishment period, and considering any revisions.
   Cons: Eliminates 4 parking spaces on west side of 13th, in front of IMT.

2. Eliminate southbound left-turn lane on 13th at Main
   Pros: Retains 4 parking spaces in front of IMT.
   Cons: Creates traffic congestion and potential safety concerns, especially in peak hours. Northbound traffic volumes and heavy pedestrian movements (300+ in peak hours) at the intersection create few openings for southbound left turning vehicles, which may cause significant backed up congestion for southbound traffic traveling through the intersection. Might require signage for prevention of left turns during the peak hours, but that is hard to enforce.

3. Narrow lanes to 10-ft wide to allow both southbound left-turn lane and parking on 13th at Main
   Pros: Retains parking spaces and southbound left turn lane.
   Cons: There is only 44-ft in width from face of curb to face of curb in this section of 13th Street. This places 7-ft wide parking spaces immediately next to 10-ft wide lanes, which could be a potentially unsafe condition, especially in light of noted truck traffic on this street for destinations like Meadow Gold, which is north of this block.

Recommendation
Staff recommends Option 1 – install southbound left-turn lane on 13th at Main, per plans. Monitor traffic volumes and turning movements for any future revisions.

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Vicinity Map:
Parking to Retain/Remove

Current On-Street Parking Spaces:

In 4 blocks centered on 13th/Main (yellow area): 208 spaces current – 19 proposed reduction
13th Street Restriping Plan:
Jim Hansen, President  
Ada County Highway District  
3775 Adams Street  
Garden City, ID 83714  

Re: 13th Street Two-Way Conversion and On-Street Parking

Dear President Hansen:

Mr. Chris Haunold recently contacted the City and relayed his concern that four to five on-street parking spaces will be replaced with a left-turn lane on 13th Street, north of Main Street in front of Idaho Mountain Touring. We understand the new left-turn lane is planned as part of the Ada County Highway District’s conversion of 13th Street into a two-way thoroughfare and is based on predicted turn volumes from the regional model. The City of Boise is in full support of the two-way conversion and we very much appreciate the ACHD’s implementation of the Downtown Boise Implementation Plan.

As is always the case downtown, there are competing interests for the right-of-way. In this case, existing on-street parking is competing with the planned left-hand turn lane. As you know, on-street parking is vital for a vibrant and healthy downtown. These particular spaces are used for the majority of the day, while the regional traffic model predicts the need for the dedicated turn lane mostly during the two afternoon peak hours of 4-6 p.m.

After reviewing the tradeoffs, we see an opportunity to stripe the road without the southbound, left-turn lane; thereby leaving the on-street parking intact, while providing the opportunity to monitor the actual traffic patterns for a period of time. If the intersection proves to be problematic the dedicated turn lane can always be added at a later date and we can look at alternatives for replacing the parking, such as narrowing the sidewalk.

Alternatively, it appears that there is room to provide the turn lane and parking if the traffic lanes are striped at 10’ and the parking at 8’. This solution complies with ASHTO guidelines for urban areas and would be an acceptable compromise from our perspective. Or we could consider providing on-street parking for 22 hours of the day while prohibiting it from 4-6 p.m. when it can be used as a by-pass lane for through-traffic. Clearly there is more than one way to solve this problem.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important matter and your responsiveness to our shared constituents.

Sincerely,

David H. Bieter  
Mayor