

The role of the steering committee is to develop goals for the project and to create a purpose and need statement. This statement will then be used by the engineer to come up with three design alternatives that meet the criteria. The steering committee will then pick one of those three alternatives to be the preferred alternative.

DISCUSSION OF CHALLENGES:

B. Colburn asked the attendees for what they believed were the most significant challenges in the area. They came up with the following:

- E. Dhima asked how changes to the Nashua side of the bridge will affect the Hudson side in terms of traffic. He mentioned there are 32,000 vehicles per day traveling over the bridges and the amount of traffic on the Hudson side has doubled in the last five years. A lot of this traffic is coming from the towns around Hudson as this is the most convenient bridge to use to get over the Merrimack River. B. Colburn said that the traffic study done for this intersection will include an analysis of the impacts to the Hudson side.
- Access to the Renaissance development and Crown Street is poor.
- There are a high number of left turns for local access off of Bridge Street and East Hollis Street. This has resulted in the introduction of a left turn center lane on Bridge Street and possibly one on East Hollis Street.
- There is a need to create gaps in traffic to allow for vehicles to turn onto the primary roadways.
- The Renaissance development is not expected to delay traffic on Bridge Street. The only traffic delays are expected to occur in the development. The City of Nashua is also considering a flashing amber light for left turns into the development.
- Travel is difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists in this area.
- Trains cause a significant traffic backup when they cross Bridge Street and East Hollis Street. This occurs approximately six times per week.
- Signals are not currently coordinated in and around the project area. This includes the Hudson side of the bridge. Time-space diagrams should be done during design to coordinate the signals. This will most likely improve traffic flow, but it is unrealistic to expect high levels of service.
- The proper type of development is needed in this area to avoid creating more traffic issues.
- Vehicles are using the residential streets around Bridge Street and East Hollis Street as cut throughs. These streets are often narrow with cars parked on both sides and pedestrians walking in the street.
- Improvements to the surrounding areas are bringing in new demands. A. Shrey mentioned that traffic doesn't seem to be as bad in the morning as it is leaving in the afternoon.
- The existing infrastructure can't support more density. The bridges over the Merrimack River will be undergoing some work to prevent them from deteriorating more. The side streets are also struggling to keep up with the increase in traffic.
- The drainage and sewer systems in this area are very old. Anything within the project limits should be replaced.
- The project area is dangerous for kids walking to the Dr. Norman W. Crisp Elementary School.

DISCUSSION OF OPPORTUNITIES:

B. Colburn asked the attendees for what they believed were the opportunities for the project. They came up with the following:

- Improvements in access to the Renaissance development can be made.
- Impacts to traffic can be minimized while improving this area overall.
- The intersection improvements will create an opportunity for more development in the area.

- A nicer view of the gateway to the city will be created over what is there today.
- Stormwater management can be improved.
- There is the potential for a connection between Crown Street and East Hollis Street.
- Landscaping can be low maintenance, such as grass that needs limited mowing.
- This intersection can be made more pedestrian and bike friendly. The only issue with this is that the bridges over the Merrimack River cannot accommodate pedestrians or bicyclists.
- There is a pedestrian signal at the intersection of East Hollis Street and C Street that has been well received by the residents. There is the potential to install more of these to improve pedestrian access throughout the area. This would make it safer for pedestrians to walk from the Renaissance development to the Dr. Norman W. Crisp Elementary School or to the potential future train station at 25 Crown Street.
- Lighting, trees, a park, and/or an arch can be designed to create a gateway to the city. Another idea is to include public art depending on what type of gateway is done. Input from the neighborhood would be beneficial to see what they would want for a gateway. It may be worth using the gateway to let cars passing through know that this area is surrounded by residential neighborhoods.
- There is an opportunity to do streetscaping at the intersection. This includes looking at existing on street parking and adding on street parking where appropriate. The sidewalk can also be looked at to see how the edge of sidewalk can create appropriate frontage for buildings/new development close to the edge of the road.

Submitted by:

Brian E. Patinskas, PE
McFarland Johnson, Inc.

cc: Attendees