

Walkable Community Workshops

Summary Report

May 2004

THE
ROBERT WOOD
JOHNSON
FOUNDATION

COG

★ NATIONAL CENTER ★
for
BICYCLING & WALKING



Oregon Department of Transportation



If you have any questions or comments on the workshops or the materials contained in this report, please contact Jeff Krueger at Lane Council of Governments via e-mail (jkrueger@lane.cog.or.us) or phone (541-342-3267).

Walkable Community Workshops Summary Report

Overview

The National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW) coined the term “Walkable Community Workshop” to describe an interactive workshop process where community members participate in identifying and proposing solutions concerning walkability. From May 10-12, 2004, Lane Council of Governments hosted a total of four Walkable Community Workshops in our area including two in Springfield and two in Eugene. A total of 115 individuals participated in these four workshops including citizens, elected officials, planners, engineers, planning commissioners, public health officials, disability services managers, landscape architects, and educators. The workshops were presented by NCBW expert trainers Charlie Gandy and Bruce Appleyard who combined vision with real-world experience in implementation.



Barriers to walking are common in today's built environment.

Workshop Funding

Lane Council of Governments was one of ten Metropolitan Planning Organizations from around the country selected to participate in this year's program. The workshops were funded by the National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which provided approximately \$20,000 in technical assistance. Matching funds were provided locally by the cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane Transit District Commuter Solutions Program, Lane Council of Governments, and Oregon Department of Transportation.

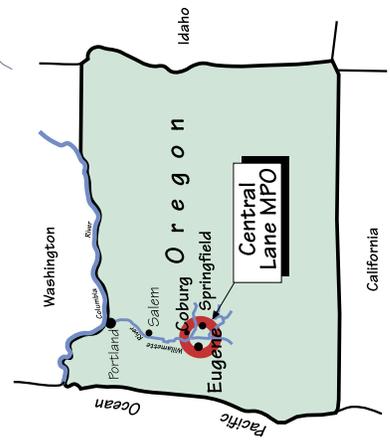
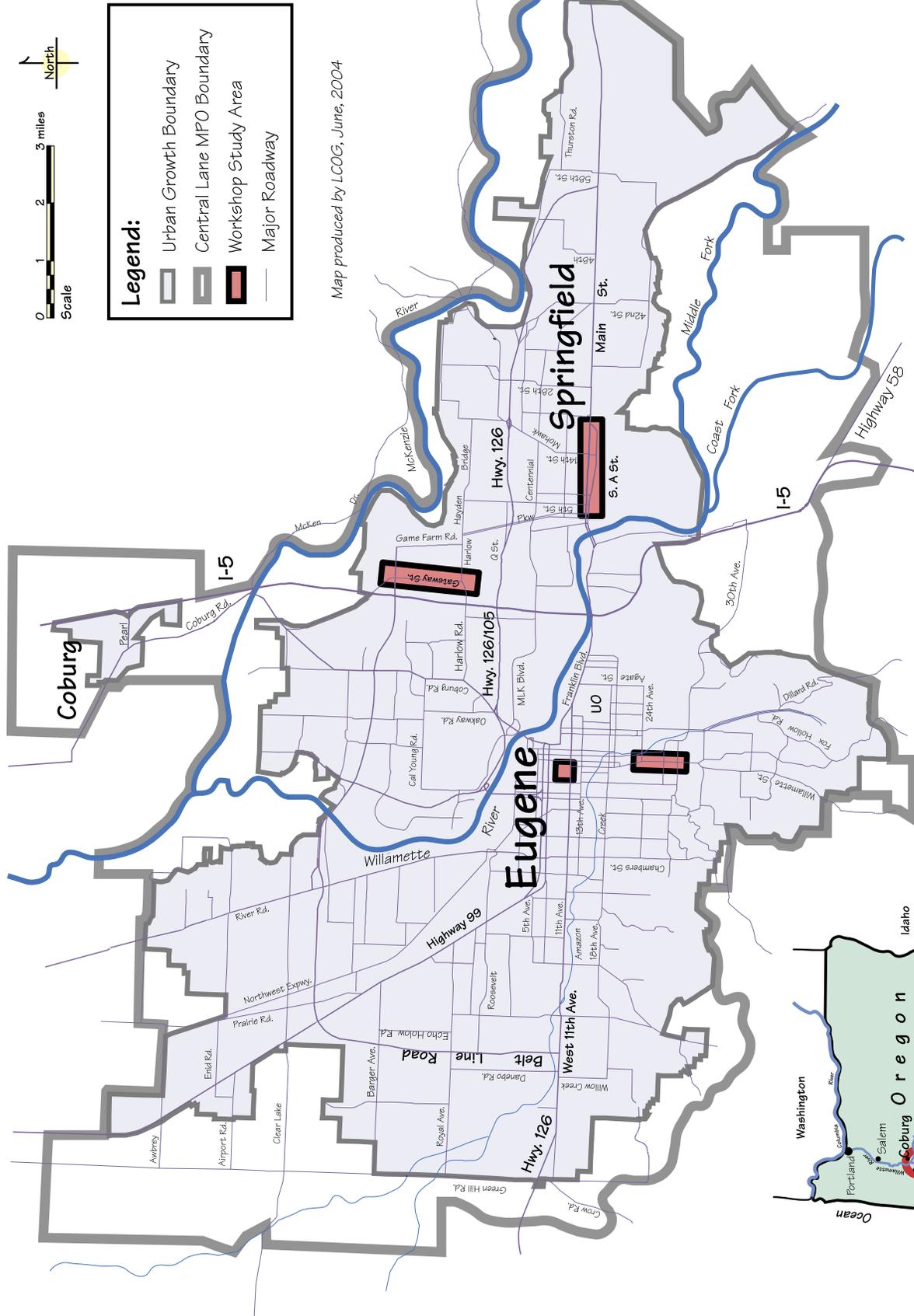
Workshop Locations and Format

Each of the four workshops followed the same basic format, but focused on a unique study area. The study areas were selected to provide a representative sampling of commercial areas found in our community. Workshop locations included Main Street/South A Street in Springfield, Gateway Street in Springfield, Willamette Street in Eugene, and the downtown Eugene LTD station and vicinity. The typical workshop included an introduction of participants, a NCBW presentation, a walking audit of the study area, a small group design exercise, and the presentation of results. Workshop participants learned about successful pedestrian design, safety, education, and encouragement. The results of the small group exercises are documented in this report. Staff and elected officials from Eugene, Springfield, and Lane Transit District will be reviewing these results in the coming months and will be considering implementation options for many of these workshop generated concepts. Each workshop may have looked at a specific site, but the solutions proposed can be applied in other areas throughout our community.

Why be Walkable?

Creating a walkable community or further enhancing an already walkable area can have many benefits as the NCBW presenters Charlie Gandy and Bruce Appleyard pointed out. These include:

- Reduced air pollution
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Healthier citizens
- Increased property values
- Commercial revitalization through increased foot travel
- Increased safety (through design and better awareness of pedestrians)
- Greater sense of community
- Economic development (quality of life is one of the most important economic development tools in today's economy)



Walkable Community Workshop Locations

Main Street/South A Street, Springfield Workshop Summary

Workshop Study Area: Main Street/South A Street, Springfield between Mill Street and 10th Street

Workshop Location: Library Meeting Room, Springfield City Hall

Date: May 10, 2004

Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Number of Participants: 25



Main Street



South A Street

Summary of Potential Solutions Identified in the Small Group Exercise:

Following the walking tour, a total of four small groups (5-7 people per group) met and identified potential solutions to pedestrian conflicts and general downtown improvements. The small group discussions at this workshop focused primarily on ways to link the downtown with the new LTD station, incorporating art and additional civic spaces into the downtown, improving east-west circulation to better connect the downtown with Island Park, and reducing traffic speed on South A Street. Ideas generated during the small group process are documented below:



Ideas Identified by Small Groups:

- Create an “Art Alley” along the alleyway between Main Street and North A Street that extends from Pioneer Parkway to 7th Street. This would serve as a major pedestrian corridor and could include pedestrian scale lighting, murals, tile work, sculptures, and other art and would serve to connect major public spaces in the downtown.
- Bronze salmon could be set into the sidewalks to visually connect the Willamette River and Island Park to the downtown, Millrace, and new LTD station or be placed along “Art Alley”.
- Consider converting the parking lot at City Hall (facing Main Street) into a public park or community plaza.
- Concentrate the Main Street streetscape enhancements in a “model block” in the area between 5th Street and 7th Street. These enhancements could be extended into other parts of downtown as funding

becomes available.

- Reduce the width of South A Street to two travel lanes to help slow vehicle speed and shorten pedestrian crossing distance.
- Create a well landscaped pocket park in the southeast corner of the Pioneer Parkway East and South A Street intersection. This would define this area as a gateway to the downtown from the new LTD station. The triangular parcel that was formerly part of a rail spur could be used for this purpose.
- Reutilize the old LTD station as a civic space and a place for interpretive signage about the history of Springfield and the downtown. This space is a great “redevelopment opportunity” for the downtown and could also host a Farmers Market or other public events.
- Add bicycle parking at strategic locations (perhaps on the curb extensions on Main Street). Consider using artistic bicycle racks that incorporate a Springfield theme such as drift boats or salmon.
- Create a covered boulevard on 5th Street between South A and North A Streets. This would visually connect the new LTD Station area with the City Hall and Library and keep pedestrians dry and shaded.
- Develop guidelines to help create “harmony” in façade design.
- Encourage additional awnings on Main Street Buildings.
- Redevelop the parking lot on the northeast corner of Main Street and East Pioneer Parkway with a well designed two story building. This is a prominent corner and should contain more than a parking lot.
- Add street trees and underground utilities throughout the downtown.
- Add pedestrian scale ornamental lighting on Main Street.
- Formalize the pedestrian crossings of South A Street at Pioneer Parkway East, 5th Street, and 7th Street.
- Consider adding parallel parking along South A Street.
- Redevelop the vacant areas (behind Main Street buildings) that lie immediately across from the new LTD station.
- Look for ways to slow the speed of vehicles coming off of the South A Street bridge before coming into the LTD station area.
- Improve the downtown pedestrian and bicycle signage within the downtown area.



An “Art Alley” in downtown Santa Cruz, California



A rich downtown pedestrian street in Hood River



A pocket park in Monterey, California

- Focus pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersections of B Street and Pioneer Parkway East and West.



A rendering of the downtown Springfield LTD station now under construction

Next Steps:

- The City of Springfield and LTD will continue to work together to create safe and convenient pedestrian connections from the new LTD station and the downtown.
- The *Downtown Springfield Association* will review the ideas developed at the workshop and make recommendations to the City Council on priorities for implementation.
- The City and the *Downtown Springfield Association* will work together to seek funding to make downtown improvements.

Gateway Street, Springfield Workshop Summary

Workshop Study Area: Gateway Street from Belt Line Road to Harlow Road

Workshop Location: Gateway Mall Meeting Room

Date: May 11, 2004

Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Number of Participants: 16



Gateway Street

Summary of Potential Solutions Identified in the Small Group Exercise:

The discussion at this workshop focused on how to best integrate the planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system onto Gateway Street, how to better connect the residential neighborhoods to the east with the commercial area along Gateway Street, and how to make good pedestrian connections from the Gateway Mall to the planned BRT line on Gateway Street. This workshop included LTD, ODOT, LCOG and City of Springfield staff in addition to a neighborhood representative and in many ways functioned as a BRT planning work session. Three small groups (4-6 people per group) worked together following the walking audit and generated the following concepts and ideas for future consideration:

Ideas Identified by Small Groups:

- Explore the feasibility of adding a series of roundabouts at each of the major intersections between Belt Line Road and Harlow Road (not including those two intersections). This could include roundabouts at Postal Way, Gateway Loop, Oakdale Street, and the entries into Gateway Mall. The improved traffic flow would potentially allow Gateway Street to be reduced to a single travel lane in each direction with a dedicated lane for the BRT system. This configuration would eliminate the need for LTD to purchase additional right-of-way along Gateway street for the BRT system as is currently proposed. Each of the small groups identified this option noting that additional study would be needed to determine how the BRT system would integrate with the roundabouts.
- Add additional retail space along the entry drives into the Gateway Mall. This retail space would front onto the entry drives, which would function like a public street with sidewalks and parallel parking to create a more pedestrian friendly corridor.
- Numerous barriers to pedestrian circulation currently exist in the residential neighborhoods to the east of Gateway Street, limiting resident's ability to walk to the mall and other nearby stores and restaurants. Identify these barriers and work with property owners to make pedestrian connections. Opportunities for connections were identified specifically along Flamingo Avenue and North Cloverleaf Loop.



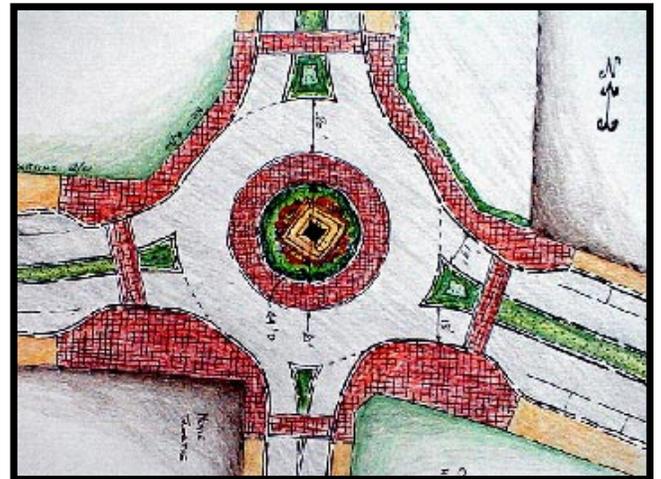
- Consider siting a multi-use path parallel to Game Farm Road that would connect into the Pioneer Parkway path.
- Designate Oakdale Street as a key pedestrian corridor and make connections to this street from the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Provide a protected pedestrian walkway between the planned BRT station and the Gateway Mall.
- Determine how best to connect the planned I-5 bicycle and pedestrian bridge into the existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian system in the Gateway area.



A redeveloped mall parking lot serves as a mixed use street in San Jose, California.

Next Steps:

- The City of Springfield and LTD will assess the feasibility of the roundabout concept.
- The City and LTD will work with the Gateway Mall ownership on creating better connections to the planned BRT stops.
- The City should investigate funding sources for further study of pedestrian circulation in the residential neighborhoods to the east of Gateway Street and identify strategies for removing barriers.
- The City and ODOT will work together to determine the necessary connections between the planned I-5 Multi-use (bike and pedestrian) Bridge and the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the area.



The concept of using roundabouts at several intersections on Gateway Street was explored as a technique to ease congestion, make pedestrian circulation safer, and to potentially reduce right-of-way requirements for the planned Bus Rapid Transit system.



The roundabout pictured above is located in DePere, Wisconsin.

Willamette Street, Eugene Workshop Summary

Workshop Study Area: Willamette Street in Eugene between 24th Avenue and 29th Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood.

Workshop Location: Tsunami Bookstore

Date: May 11, 2004

Time: 12:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Number of Participants: 50



Willamette Street

Summary of Potential Solutions Identified in the Small Group Exercise:

Following the walking tour, a total of four small groups (6-8 people per group) met and identified potential solutions to pedestrian conflicts that had been identified in the area. The small group discussions at this workshop generally focused on ways to improve the overall pedestrian environment on the Willamette Street corridor, making better pedestrian connections to Willamette Street from the adjacent neighborhoods, parking, and improving aesthetics. Ideas generated during the small group process are documented below:

Ideas Identified by Several Small Groups:

- Convert Willamette Street from its existing 4-lane configuration (two travel lanes in each direction) into a 3-lane road with a center turn lane, bike lanes, and sheltered pedestrian medians. In addition to providing bicycle access, the bike lanes would also function as a buffer between the travel lane and the sidewalk and would make it easier for cars to make right-hand turns into driveways. Bus pull-outs would be created at all stops to prevent buses from blocking auto traffic flow (buses would likely occupy at least a portion of the bike lanes when stopped). All four groups included some variation of this concept.
- Reduce the number of curb cuts and driveways wherever possible to improve traffic flow. Several groups noted this would be essential in order for the 3-lane configuration to function well. A business representative remarked that access to businesses and parking was also critical.



Unique art can give a district a distinctive character and create spaces where people want to spend time.



An existing 4-lane road similar to Willamette Street



The same road converted to three lanes with bike lanes



With a sheltered pedestrian crossing

- Make the pedestrian crossing of Willamette Street safer and easier with sheltered medians in key locations. One proposed location included 26th Avenue, while other groups presented the concept, but didn't identify specific locations.
- Add landscaped medians where possible to slow traffic and improve aesthetics.
- Create better east-west pedestrian and bicycle connections from the adjacent neighborhoods and Willamette Street (complete sidewalks where missing).
- Underground utilities or put them in the alleys to enhance aesthetics and improve pedestrian circulation (poles are located on sidewalk in some cases)
- Develop a vision for district-wide parking solutions.
- Emphasize the visual connection to Spencer Butte through design elements and/or a district name to distinguish the area.
- Discourage bicyclists from riding on sidewalk.

Other Ideas Mentioned:

- Improve the pedestrian environment:
 - Gardens/plantings
 - Ornamental lighting
 - Benches
 - Dance step footprints
 - Label tree names on large leaves embedded in pavement
 - Pay attention to trees and vegetation
 - Create building design standards
 - Covered bicycle parking
 - Mail/Post Office outlet
 - Drinking fountains
 - Create places of refuge such as pedestrian plazas, shade, and wider areas
- Ensure current parking levels are not reduced.
- Develop Portland and Oak Streets as an alternate bicycle routes.
- Create additional parking spaces by converting some side streets to angle parking.
- Consider creating a series of shared (possibly City owned) parking lots to compensate for any lost parking due to streetscape modifications.

- Utilize alleys for parking and parking access.
- Utilize alleys as pedestrian ways.
- Eliminate some of the parking lots located between the buildings and the street and relocate them behind (with care to not route traffic to residential street).
- Widen sidewalks and/or increase pedestrian protection from the street by adding a planter strip between the sidewalk and the street (may not be feasible).
- Use all pedestrian rights-of-ways, including alley, for access and circulation.
- Consider creating an urban renewal district to help fund proposed streetscape improvements.



Crosswalks can be emphasized through distinctive design such as in this LaJolla, California example.

- Using paint, create a bicycle safety zone at the intersection of Willamette Street and 29th Avenue to make it clear that bicycles are present and are sharing the road with autos in this location.
- Back doors on side streets and back streets can become front doors, especially in the *Southtowne* area.
- Smooth the transitions (lips) to access driveways and access aprons.
- Make drainage improvements on Willamette Street to prevent splashing of pedestrians and to make the street more bicycle friendly.
- Display more cues to drivers to create a safer street environment:
 - Speed limit
 - Warnings for pedestrian and bicyclist zones
 - Heavily painted cross walks
- Create designated bike and pedestrian pathways through adjacent neighborhoods (i.e. McMillian Street and 25th Avenue).
- Consider creating a raised bike lane.
- Coordinate planning with parks planning and corridor studies.
- Consider potential opportunities with future use of 4J school site on 29th Avenue.
- Encourage movement to and from this commercial district and Civic Stadium events. This could help businesses.
- Develop a theme for the Willamette Plaza shopping area. A suggested slogan was “*shopping at Spencer’s View is a butte of an idea*”.

Next Steps:

Before the proposed enhancements that came out of this workshop can be considered, some important issues must be addressed. Certain steps must be taken in approximately this order:

Access management: Development of a city-wide access management policy is presently on the work plan for the transportation planning team in Public Works. The policies will apply to all streets, including Willamette Street, and will provide a framework for working with businesses and property owners along busy corridors to consolidate access for efficiency and safety. The development and eventual adoption of a city-wide access management policy may take 2 to 3 years.

Corridor and land use studies: A comprehensive look at the circulation of traffic in the broader area including Willamette Street, Amazon Parkway, and Hilyard Street, as well as the feeder streets to the north and south of the workshop study area is necessary. In addition, and concurrently, a land use study to create development standards should be undertaken. A part of the land use study should include parking strategies that would include consolidation of parking to off-site lots, improvement of alleys, reduction of the number of driveways, and the protection of neighborhood streets. The work plans of Public Works and Planning do not include either of these studies. They are dependent on new funding appropriations from the City Council. Staff will continue to be watchful for grant opportunities, as well.

Implementation: New access management regulations in all likelihood will be triggered by new land use applications, rather than being retroactive once the new policy is developed. This suggests a slow conversion to improved safety of access along Willamette. Similar to strategies in the recently adopted Central Area Transportation Plan (CATS), the strategies identified in the corridor study will include both operational and capital improvement projects. Capital improvement projects would be incorporated into the City's overall capital improvement program.

In the short term, the City is working to assess and fix the drainage problems on the west side of Willamette street.

Downtown Eugene LTD Station and Vicinity Workshop Summary

Study Area: Downtown Eugene Lane Transit District (LTD) Station and Vicinity

Date: May 12, 2004

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Workshop Location: Eugene Public Library

Number of Participants: 30

Summary of Potential Solutions Identified in the Small Group Exercise:

This workshop focused on the area immediately adjacent to the LTD Downtown Station. Workshop participants included a number of people with sight, hearing, and mobility disabilities which lent a unique perspective to this session. The consensus of the group was that there had been a number of wonderful pedestrian improvements made to this portion of downtown Eugene over the past several years, but there was still some room for improvement, especially in light of the area's heavy pedestrian use including many people with disabilities. The focus of the walking tour and wrap-up centered around how to fine tune the pedestrian system in this area to reduce pedestrian and auto/bus conflicts. The study area has been the location of several pedestrian-auto crashes in the past several years and these areas were assessed specifically. Ideas generated during the walking tour and wrap-up are documented below:



The new public library fronts onto an excellent pedestrian environment.

Summary of Workshop Results:

- Work with LTD drivers to ensure buses pull fully into the station area to avoid blocking the sidewalks.
- Relocated the large utility box (signal control box) and newspaper boxes located on the northeast corner of Willamette Street and 10th Avenue to improve vision clearance at this intersection.
- Better align curb cuts and crosswalks.
- Work with business owners on Willamette Street to relocate hanging displays which are present obstacles to the site impaired (i.e. wind chimes hanging over sidewalk area).
- Consider extending the pedestrian crossing time at signalized intersections to give pedestrians additional time to cross. This could also include staggering the pedestrian walking interval to create a few seconds between the red light and the walk signal.
- Pay close attention to placement of storm grates at intersection corners – these can be a safety hazard to wheel chairs.
- Consider either installing a mid-block crossing with pedestrian median on Willamette Street between 10th Avenue and 11th Avenue or eliminating the ramp on the east side of the



The signal control box at this corner was identified as being a safety problem because it blocks pedestrians from the view of passing motorists.

street (by LCC). This ramp allows wheel chairs access onto the street from the west sidewalk, but doesn't provide a ramp on the opposite side of the street.

- Present workshop materials (presentation) to other groups.
- Use visible gateways or visual keys to signal entry into pedestrian area.
- Create a designated smoking area within the LTD station to keep large groups from gathering on the edges of the station. This tends to block pedestrian access and makes for an unpleasant walk.
- Continue to encourage housing in the downtown to increase activity levels.
- Encourage the "one percent for art" concept in all transportation projects as was done at the LTD station.
- Add "chirping" signalization at heavily used intersections and consider replacing walk signals with "count down" signals.
- Consider adding a curb extension at the southeast corner of the intersection of Willamette Street and 10th Avenue that would cut the 10th Avenue crossing distance.
- Make alleyways more inviting to serve as a safe pedestrian alternative.
- Add driveway location indicators for pedestrians such as striped crossings or paddles to alert autos of pedestrians in the area. The triple lane curb cut (driveway) on the south side of 11th Avenue across from the LTD station should receive this treatment.



Countdown and chirping signalization can be a good addition to heavily used pedestrian intersections.

Next Steps:

- LTD will ask drivers to pull fully into the station to prevent buses blocking sidewalks.
- The City will try to identify funds to relocate the utility box on the corner of Willamette Street and 10th Avenue.
- The City will work with Washington Mutual Bank to modify their 11th Avenue driveway in a way that makes drivers more aware of pedestrians using the sidewalk.

Art is an Essential Element of a Successful Pedestrian Landscape

"Distinctive, colorful places attract distinctive colorful people"

"Creative, unique places differentiate from dull sterile no-places"

-Charlie Gandy, NCBW Instructor

