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ELKO COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**ELKO COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,
COUNTY OF ELKO, STATE OF NEVADA, SPECIAL MEETING TO BE HELD IN
THE SPRING CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM, 14650 LAMOILLE HIGHWAY,
SPRING CREEK, NEVADA, BEGINNING AT 4:00 P.M., PACIFIC TIME.**

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

The Regional Transportation Commission, County of Elko, State of Nevada, meet in a special session on Saturday, October 20, 2007 in the Spring Creek Middle School Gym, 14650 Lamoille Highway, Spring Creek, Nevada beginning at 4:00 P.M. (PST).

Commissioner Members Present: CHARLIE MYERS, Chair
MIKE FRANZOIA
WARREN RUSSELL

Others Present:	ROBERT STOKES	County Manager
	MARILYN TIPTON	Deputy County Clerk
	KEVIN LEE	NDOT Dist. III Engineer
	MICHAEL MURPHY	NDOT Asst. Dist. III Engineer
	RANDY HESTERLEE	NDOT Dist. III Traffic Eng.
	FRED DROES	NDOT Chief Traffic Eng.
	KELLY ANRIG	NDOT
	OTIS TIPTON	County Road Supervisor
	TERRY LISTER	Assistant County Road Supervisor/SCA Director
	DENA HARTLEY	SCA Director, Tract 400
	JOHN CARPENTER	Assemblyman
	JOHN BLAND	Elko Co. School District

CHUCK RICKER
RAY B. JONES
ALI HELGOTH

NEAT
NEAT
Elko Free Press

The following proceedings were held:

Chairman Myers called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Commissioner Myers led the meeting participants in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC:

Agencies at the table were as follows: Mike Franzoia, Elko City Mayor and RTC Board Member; Warren Russell Elko County Commissioner Dist 5 and RTC Board Member; Assemblyman John Carpenter; Kevin Lee, NDOT District III Engineer; Mike Murphy, NDOT Asst. Dist. III Engineer; Frederick Drees, Chief Safety/Traffic Engineer for NDOT Northeastern Nevada; Randy Hesterlee, NDOT District III Traffic Engineer; Robert Stokes, Elko County Manager; and Charlie Myers, Chairman of the Regional Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Russell reported that Pam Borda, the Spring Creek Association President, was ill and could not be present today.

No public comment was submitted.

SPRING CREEK AREA INTERSECTIONS WORKSHOP:

Traffic Signals, Roundabouts, or other Options:

Jointly with Assemblyman John Carpenter, NDOT, the Spring Creek Association and the Elko County School District conducted a Study Workshop Meeting to review possible options to address traffic management issues at intersections in the Spring Creek area. Spring Creek area residents and other interested parties attended.

Commissioner Myers informed the attending public that the County Commission had raised the gas tax .025 cents and of that funding \$100,000 had been committed to the Spring Creek Intersection. He hoped that would encourage NDOT to look at that intersection.

Commissioner Myers reviewed the proposed RTC gas tax increase of .025 cents. He stated from the County's portion of that funding \$100,000 would be committed to the Spring Creek intersections.

Fred Drees, NDOT Chief Safety/Traffic Engineer, introduced Kelly Anrig of

NDOT. Fred Droes stated there was an NDOT field audit in July. He reviewed the traffic counts for the past 10 years on SR 227 which averaged 11,000 trips per day. He stated that the traffic count had been increasing since 2006. He gave a 10 year review of crashes from the intersection with the Jiggs Highway to mile post number sixteen together with the types of injuries incurred. Fred Droes stated in 1984 NDOT widened the roadway to four lanes from SR 228 intersection to the Spring Creek Parkway. He noted that in 1998 there were left turn pockets added at the SR 228 intersection and in 2001 the four lanes were extended to the Palace Parkway intersection.

Fred Droes reviewed the history of the crashes, the peak hour congestion because of the schools close proximity to the highway, and the close proximity of the sports complex.

Fred Droes, NDOT, stated the top concerns from their January 20, 2007 meeting were: 1) the intersection at Spring Creek/Licht Parkway; 2) the entrance/exits at the high school; 3) direct access from Lamoille Highway to Interstate 80; 4) striping on SR 227; and 5) enforcement of the 45 mile an hour zones. Fred Droes displayed a list of the issues from the January 20th meeting that the participants had voted upon.

Fred Droes of NDOT reviewed the January 20th meeting participants' suggestions: 1) construction of a new road behind the high school for an alternate access; 2) construct a High Tee intersection at the high school entrance; 3) separate the bus entrance at the high school; 4) construct a roundabout or signal at the Spring Creek/Licht Parkway.

Fred Droes stated their road safety audit was performed on July 17, 2007. He stated the purpose of the audit was to identify potential road safety hazards and submit recommended counter measures. He noted that field team was made up of NDOT Carson City personnel, the NDOT District III personnel and the Nevada Highway Patrol personnel. He reported the team drove that highway both day and nighttime to address all the issues.

Fred Droes reported the proposed short term improvements were to install additional shoulders, put in center lane rumble strips, re-stripe the roadway to provide acceleration lanes on SR 227 near the high school, and re-strip for acceleration lanes at Licht Parkway. He stated the mid term improvements would be to add acceleration lanes at Martin Drive; install lighting at Boyd-Kennedy Road; install a High Tee at the high school intersection. He noted these would require some construction activities.

Fred Droes stated the long term improvement would include construction of

a roundabout at the Spring Creek/Licht Parkway; upgrade the SR 228/227 intersection to meet the ADA requirements.

Fred Droes reviewed the costs for the implementation of the considerations: re-striping the lanes would be approximately \$5,000 to \$25,000; milled rumble strips would cost \$23,000; construction of a High Tee at the high school would cost approximately \$150,000; construction of a roundabout at Spring Creek Parkway was estimated at 1 million dollars. Fred Droes stated a traffic signal at Spring Creek would probably cost approximately \$300,000 to \$500,000 once the traffic warrants were met.

Fred Droes stated their recommendation was to implement the short term and low cost improvements. He stated their long term projects would be to construct a roundabout at the intersection and construct a High Tee at the high school area. He explained the reasons for their recommendation of the High Tee at the high school intersection were to provide protected acceleration lanes and protection for left turning vehicles which did not require high speed volumes to stop. He displayed pictures of a High Tee intersection outside of Carson City going toward Gardnerville. Fred Droes reviewed a proposed schematic for the entrance to the high school inclusive of access lanes and left turn lanes. He believed they have sufficient room to install the High Tee in the roadway, and they would only have to construct raised islands and address drainage issues.

Fred Droes reviewed the options for the Spring Creek/Licht Parkway intersection: 1) do nothing; 2) change or restrict vehicular movement; 3) install a traffic signal; or 4) construct a roundabout.

Fred Droes explained a traffic signal would provide for the orderly movement of traffic and it would reduce the frequency and severity of certain types of crashes. However, it may cause excessive delays and can significantly increase frequency of collisions. Fred Droes stated the installation of a signal must be justified by an engineering study. He reviewed the MUTCD which was the national standard for their roadways and the criteria for the establishment of a traffic signal under the Code of Federal Regulation 655. Fred Droes stated that at this time the intersection at the Spring Creek Parkway/Lamoille Highway did not meet any of the eight warrants in that manual. He reiterated the concerns they had with installing a traffic signal at that location without meeting the warrants. He stated traffic signals did aid turning drivers, and crossing pedestrians.

Fred Droes reviewed the reasons for recommending a roundabout: reduction of frequency and severity of crashes; slows vehicle speed, and was an efficient method for flow of traffic. He stated a roundabout was safer for pedestrian crossings and there would be a reduction of operational costs

compared to a signal. Fred Droes reviewed the conflict points on roundabouts and displayed a program on the screen showing the control of the intersection. NDOT displayed a design for the potential roundabout at the Spring Creek/Licht Parkway which was a single lane roundabout which would handle the current traffic. Fred Droes stated that the four lanes of traffic would be reduced to one lane. He noted the internal design could be traveled at 20 mph. Commissioner Russell asked about the pedestrian access on the roundabout. Fred Droes demonstrated where the crossings would be on the roundabout. He explained a splitter island would allow the pedestrians to look at the traffic and have eye contact with the people traveling in the roundabout. He stated there was no dedicated timing for the pedestrian but in this state the pedestrians have the right of way.

Fred Droes stated the NDOT recommended plan for the future was to develop a process to include all stakeholders: state, county, city, homeowners association and citizens. He stated they would consider priorities and develop a conceptual plan, refine their schematics and gain approval of the plan. He noted the biggest challenge would be identifying funding for the improvements.

Fred Droes reviewed possible funding sources inclusive of a federal program, Safe Routes to School; federal enhancement funds; funds earmarked by the Representatives or Senators; and Highway Safety Funds. He stated in reviewing the crash records it was difficult to identify the location of the crashes so safety funds may not be available. NDOT would look at the types of crashes at the intersection of Spring Creek/Licht Parkway. He stated NDOT state gas tax could be used for maintenance but there was limited funding. He stated other funding sources would be through the local county, city government or the developer. Fred Droes stated that the funding process through NDOT could be submitted by an individual, agency, or a governmental unit. He reviewed the application process with NDOT. He displayed pictures of roundabouts in Gardnerville, Nevada and Avon, Colorado.

Otis Tipton stated at Licht Parkway they had the width for a single lane roundabout. He inquired if they could acquire a wider dedicated right of way for future traffic needs. He noted there were peak times at Licht Parkway and inquired if there could be a free right turning lane outside of the roundabout. He suggested they obtain dedicated rights of way. Fred Droes explained to the meeting participants that one lane would be dedicated to a right turn.

Jim Jeffries commented that NDOT had shown them pictures of roundabouts in residential areas but none on a major highway with high speed

traffic. Jim Jeffries stated he had never seen a roundabout on a freeway. He noted the volume of traffic on the Lamoille Highway. Mike Franzoia stated there was one in Reno. Fred Drees stated in Gardnerville the roundabout handled 14,000 cars per day and there were approximately 10,000 to 12,000 cars per day on the Lamoille Highway. Fred Drees stated that the speeds approaching that roundabout would be a concern. Jim Jeffries inquired how they would control the speed before the roundabout. Fred Drees stated that they limited the Gardnerville 55 mph roadway with a yellow flashing light warning them of the roundabout. Fred Drees noted that a stop light would completely stop the traffic.

Dorothy Hull stated that she entered into that intersection two times a day and she took a right for safety to avoid conflict. She questioned performing the field trip on July 17, 2007 because it was not during a sports event and not during the school season. Fred Drees stated the warrant analysis was performed on April 7th while school was still in session. Mike Murphy reported that 10 or 15 studies were performed at that intersection. Fred Drees stated their studies would be taken on an average day and not on a weekend.

Ignacio Reyes inquired if they could make the roundabout look more pleasing in the future. Fred Drees stated they could put conduit under the pavement to the center island to allow for landscaping.

Dorothy Hull understood at the January meeting that the roundabout would cost approximately a quarter of a million dollars but the signal light would be 2 million dollars. She questioned why they would put in a million dollar roundabout when they could pay \$300,000 to \$500,000 for a traffic signal. Fred Drees stated it was only an estimate and they had spent a million dollars in Gardnerville but they tore up a lot roadway. Commissioner Russell felt they have to look at the responsibility of the maintenance of the traffic signal which would cost money over a long period of time

Dina Hartley was under the impression that a traffic signal would be less expensive than the roundabout and the traffic light would be more expensive. Fred Drees explained the initial costs for a roundabout would be more than a signal. Commissioner Russell noted signal lights dealt with traffic problems but there were usually higher fatalities. He stated they did not deal with the children crossing the intersection safely. He stated a roundabout would solve both problems traffic and pedestrian access across the highway. Otis Tipton commented upon the pedestrian crosswalk in Summerland out of Las Vegas. Mayor Franzoia had spoken to an engineering friend in Reno who informed him it would be less expensive to incorporate the pedestrian crossing in the roundabout design than a light but if they came back after the roundabout was constructed it

would cost more for that access.

Connie McMenamin noted there was a strong proposal for a roundabout at the last meeting. She had seen them working in New Jersey. She noted that they planned to take it from double lanes to one single lane. She asked if they could address it as a two lane roundabout. Fred Drees stated there was a two lane roundabout in Reno. He stated they could keep both lanes but with the traffic capacity it would not be necessary. Ms. McMenamin felt a two lane roundabout would be more user friendly. Fred Drees stated if there was a lot of growth they could expand the roundabout.

Fred Drees reported that the Department of Transportation was developing a new scoping process. He stated this intersection was one of their test projects. He noted NDOT could do more development work as part of the test project. He stated they would look at these issues and elements such as crash problems.

Jim Jeffries asked about the time frame. Fred Drees replied there was no funding for this project. He stated NDOT was looking for some authorization that this was an acceptable treatment for this intersection. They could then develop plans; get a consensus that this was what they wanted to do; and start to develop some of the funding sources. Jim Jeffries suggested another option may be the installation of four stop signs.

Dina Hartley noted there was room for future growth in Spring Creek and felt a single lane roundabout would not last ten or fifteen years. She felt it would be hard to expand that roundabout in the future. Fred Drees explained that they could expand that center circle and they would do modifications on the sides which would require more rights-of-way and utility adjustments. He noted that roundabouts did have a capacity restraint on them so they were not perfect for every situation.

Assemblyman John Carpenter asked if they had to meet warrants for a roundabout. Fred Drees replied, no. Assemblyman Carpenter inquired what the percentage of state money versus local money was expended on the roundabout in Douglas County. Fred Drees replied that location was classified as a high crash location so it qualified for safety funds and was funded 95% by federal funding and 5% by state funds. Assemblyman John Carpenter inquired if it could become a priority project. Fred Drees stated that intersection was not currently listed as a high crash location. He stated that they would review the crash reports to verify their crash locations. Assemblyman John Carpenter inquired if there were any rural entities that had roundabouts. Kevin Lee stated the City was looking at one on Spruce. Fred Drees stated there was one roundabout in Fernley at the

intersection of US 50A and Highway 95. Kelly Anrig stated there were a couple of roundabouts at Truckee. Mike Franzoia stated those were on the off ramps from the interstates and they were very efficient. Fred Droes displayed one roundabout at New York with numerous rings which trucks could navigate. Dorothy Hull inquired how it would go down to one lane before the roundabout. Fred Droes explained how they would narrow the lanes to a single lane. He stated they would build a single lane roundabout with the understanding they would have to build a two lane roundabout in a five to ten year period. He stated some construction would have to occur because of the two lane highway. Assemblyman John Carpenter voiced concern about the children crossing the highway and asked if there would be crossing guards. Fred Droes stated he had not seen crossing guards at these configurations. Mike Franzoia noted that in Reno they had several of these and they could not go as fast so it would slow the traffic down. He noted that the City had slowed people down at the corners of the Folklife Center by narrowing the lane down to one at the corner. John Bland commented that they did not have people traveling at 55 to 60 miles per hour before the roundabouts. Fred Droes stated there may be crashes but it would reduce the severity of the crashes through the roundabouts.

Commissioner Myers asked what the engineering costs were for the roundabout. Fred Droes stated 5% to 10% of the construction costs were estimated for design of a roundabout about \$50,000 to \$100,000 for a million dollar project. Commissioner Myers stated they had briefly discussed the idea of a roundabout. They would be willing to take back the idea to the County Commission; if NDOT would do the engineering and look at the bid specifications. He stated the County Commission may bond the roundabout. Fred Droes wished to discuss that with the County to work out the details. Fred Droes displayed a picture of the Reno roundabout at Kietzke. Commissioner Myers noted there was concern about the center island in the roundabout due to the close proximity of the elementary school. Otis Tipton noted they did not want the headlights going through.

Connie McMenamin stated from the conversation; she anticipated they would put in a roundabout. She suggested they put in a double lane roundabout at the initiation of construction rather than put in a single lane then five or six years down the road have to widen it to a double lane. Commissioner Russell noted they would have to bond for the issue and at this time they had made the offer of the County Commission looking at construction costs, time schedules and engineering in less than three years. Fred Droes noted they would, in their design process; look at traffic projections that were anticipated in this area. He stated

they would design with the expectation to meet the community needs in the future.

Commissioner Russell stated if the County came up with the bonding then the Spring Creek Association should be engaged in the conversations and possibly the landscaping of the center island. Connie McMenamain expressed concern about the watering of the landscape. Fred Droes stated some roundabouts had a rock landscape for a center island to reduce the maintenance.

Fred Droes stated he would take back the understanding that there was some commitment for funding on the Spring Creek/Licht Parkway intersection.

Dina Hartley inquired about construction or completion within three years. Fred Droes stated it could be built within three years. Mike Franzoia stated that if the County made the commitment for financing and NDOT did the engineering and bidding process; construction would only be limited by the winter.

Jim Jeffries inquired if NDOT would match the Spring Creek Association funds. Fred Droes stated the NDOT Board would make that decision. He felt they might do the engineering and maybe even the construction design. Mike Murphy stated NDOT had helped with other project designs. Commissioner Myers noted that \$100,000 was specifically identified for this project from the gas tax so they would not have to bond for the full million dollars. He would take this back to the next Commission meeting and ask that they give the RTC the latitude to make those decisions. He believed they could have some conversation with NDOT to streamline the process. Fred Droes stated because of the school location they may get some federal funding. Dorothy Hull commented that there were statements that other funding may be available. She inquired if the Spring Creek Association would have to go after that funding. RTC Commissioner Franzoia stated the County Commission or NDOT would examine the school safety funds. Commissioner Myers questioned whether it would qualify for state funds but they may get some school funding. Otis Tipton noted the state spent a lot on engineering studies for the County.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED,
CHARLIE MYERS, Chairman

ATTEST:

MARILYN TIPTON, Deputy Clerk