DRAFT

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, December 9, 2002 Shoreline Conference Center
7:30 p.m. Mt. Rainier Room

PRESENT: Mayor Jepsen, Deputy Mayor Grossman, Councilmembers Chang, Gustafson, Hansen, Montgomery, and Ransom

ABSENT: none

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Jepsen, who presided.

2. FLAG SALUTE/ROLL CALL

Mayor Jepsen led the flag salute. Upon roll call by the City Clerk, all Councilmembers were present.

Mayor Jepsen presented proclamations to the Shorewood Boys Tennis Team and the Shorecrest Girls Volleyball Team. Proclamations to the Kings High School Cross Country Teams and the Shorewood Girls Soccer Team were mentioned and will be sent to the athletic directors at those schools.

3. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Steve Burkett thanked the Council for a great year.

4. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS: none

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) David Townsend, Shoreline, asserted that the death of his daughter was caused by a poorly maintained pedestrian crosswalk. He expressed dissatisfaction with the City's efforts to resolve pedestrian safety issues, noting that in-pavement street light funds are being applied to the wrong crosswalks. He also mentioned that sidewalks on NE 175th Street between 3rd Ave. NE and Meridian Ave. N do not meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

(b) Rick Stephens, Shoreline, commented on a recent pedestrian traffic accident at the intersection at NW 175th Street and Fremont Avenue N. He noted that the

accident victim was handicapped and that the intersection does not comply with ADA requirements. He urged Council to reconsider several capital projects and make ADA compliance a priority throughout the City.

(c) Walt Hagen, Shoreline, commented on the impacts of spill-over traffic into the neighborhoods from the Aurora Corridor project and the potential financial impacts on the Shoreline School District of such an expensive item in the City's Capital Improvement Plan. He felt the plan should look more carefully at the safety issues.

(d) Paul Colvin, Shoreline, expressed dissatisfaction that the City does not plan to plow his street in the event of snow. This is particularly stressful for him because he will be on crutches through January. He felt the City has not appropriately responded to his concern. He also asserted that the City is not complying with ADA requirements in several areas, including crosswalks and parking stalls. He implored the City to consider ADA mandates and make street maintenance a priority.

(e) Patty Crawford, Shoreline, said the City could restore the $500,000 in lost street maintenance funds by dropping its current litigation. She addressed an issue relating to Twin Ponds Park volunteer John Dixon, noting that 19 neighbors signed a petition opposing his service due to inappropriate behavior and safety concerns. She read a letter written by Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Wendy Barry, noting that the City was aware of issues concerning Mr. Dixon in 1999. She said the City will be liable for anything that happens if the City continues to allow him to volunteer in the park.

(f) Tim Crawford, Shoreline, commented that the police chief improperly rejected a bid for lunch at the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce auction.

RECESS

When Mr. Crawford addressed the police chief directly, he was asked to sit down by Mayor Jepsen for comments in violation of Council rules on general decorum. Mr. Crawford refused, and at the request of several Councilmembers, Mayor Jepsen declared a recess at 7:55 p.m. The Council reconvened at 7:58 p.m. and the public comment continued.

(g) LaNita Wacker, Shoreline, said Council responded to Mr. Crawford's comments in an uncivil manner. She addressed the Chamber of Commerce auction, noting that citizens have the right to publicly comment on the City's refusal to honor a legitimate auction bid. She felt recessing the meeting was not a civil response to citizen's comments.

(h) Richard Johnsen, Shoreline, expressed dissatisfaction with the City's response to an automobile accident that occurred in his neighborhood on September 18th. He said Mr. Burkett promised to personally visit the scene and discuss traffic issues with

the neighbors. On another topic, he reported being nearly hit by a car at a crosswalk in his neighborhood, and urged the City to aggressively enforce traffic laws.

Responding to Ms. Wacker's comments, Mayor Jepsen stressed the importance of maintaining civility and respect, noting that while opposing views can be heard, citizens must respect the rights of Council and staff.

Mr. Burkett said the issue is not an unwillingness to respond to citizens' questions, but an issue of inappropriate interrogation of staff members and Council. He said public comments are not the forum for questioning people in the audience. In response to the question about the Chamber of Commerce auction, he explained that the City Manager and Police Chief declined the bid for lunch since the City is currently involved in litigation with the bidding party, which could create ethical problems. He noted that people have the right to disagree with the decision.

Responding to Mr. Colvin's comments, Mayor Jepsen explained the challenges facing the City's budget. He pointed out that the $500,000 cut to the Street Fund due to Initiative-776 will limit snow removal in the City.

Mr. Burkett noted the City's intention to install in-pavement street lighting at three locations in Shoreline. He directed staff to make Mr. Townsend aware of the installation schedule.

Councilmember Ransom asked why the in-pavement lights at NE 170th Street and 15th Avenue NE have been scheduled last of the three locations.

Paul Haines, Public Works Director, said the City is making installations at two school crossings first in order to train the crossing guards before students leave for winter break. He said lights at NE 170th Street and 15th Avenue NE will be installed shortly thereafter, and all three will be operating by the end of the year.

Noting the recent pedestrian accident at NE 175th Street and Fremont Avenue, Councilmember Gustafson emphasized the importance of addressing ADA issues in and around school zones.

Councilmember Chang concurred, emphasizing the need to ensure that City projects include ADA compliant amenities such as wheelchair access.

6. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Councilmember Montgomery moved approval of the agenda. Councilmember Gustafson seconded the motion, which carried unanimously, and the agenda was approved.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Councilmember Montgomery moved adoption of the consent calendar. Councilmember Hansen seconded the motion, which carried 7 – 0, and the following items were approved:

Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 12, 2002
Minutes of Workshop of November 18, 2002
Minutes of Joint Dinner Meeting of November 25, 2002

Motion to approve a total of $10,900 in mini-grant funds to Neighborhood Associations to be distributed as follows: $5,000 to North City; $2,800 to the Innis Arden Club; $1,700 to Highland Terrace, and $1,400 to Hillwood

Motion to authorize the City Manager to execute a local agency agreement and project prospectus for design funding for the Interurban Trail Pedestrian Crossing Project

8. ACTION ITEMS: OTHER ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

(a) Resolution No. 201 adopting the design for the Aurora Corridor Project 145th to 165th and directing staff to proceed with construction consistent with this design

Mr. Burkett introduced this item and discussed the three alternatives associated with the Aurora Corridor Project.

Kirk McKinley, Aurora Corridor Project Manager, and Tim Bevans, consultant from CH2MHill, reviewed the background and history of the project, the project definition and environmental analysis, responses to public concerns, and the recommendation of Alternative A Modified as outlined in Resolution No. 201.

Mr. McKinley's presentation included the following points:

- The City began the visioning process in 1996 which established initial design standards for the Aurora Corridor.
- The Aurora Corridor pre-design study was adopted in August 1999. In January 2001, the Council adopted policies and procedures for acquiring public right-of-way. This process included extensive community involvement.
- The City adopted Resolution No. 156 in August 1999 to guide implementation of all aspects of the Aurora Corridor Project.
- As a highway of statewide significance, Aurora Avenue is an important state corridor which is included in the regional transportation plan.

Mr. Bevan's presentation included the following points:

- The purpose of the project is to improve safety and multi-modal mobility, support economic development, and meet regional transportation needs.
- The 1.2 mile project is designed to address the portion of Aurora Avenue with the highest volumes and accident rates.
- The Aurora Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) issued in July 2002 evaluated two alternatives plus a "no build" alternative.
- Public testimony was taken on the DEIS in August, and staff responded to 328 comments, which are included in Volume 2 of the Final EIS. The most common concerns were: impacts of the median, project width, width of sidewalks, loss of tax revenue, total expenditures, cut-through traffic, pedestrian safety, and water quality.
- Alternative A-Modified responds to several citizen concerns, including overall project width, width of sidewalks, storm water facilities, additional access points for left/U- turn access, reduced sidewalk widths in certain areas, shortened side street lengths in response to environmental impacts, measures to mitigate construction, neighborhood traffic, and storm water runoff.
- Medians and lane widths are dictated by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) safety standards. WSDOT will not approve the project without a center raised median. The median allows vehicles to perform left-turns and U-turns and provides traffic buffers and pedestrian refuge.
- The project is expected to reduce revenues by a nominal amount, approximately $860, or.01% of total tax revenues. The City anticipates increased long-term tax revenue as a result of the project.
- The reduced design/footprint results in a $19.6 million project which includes $11 million in construction costs and a $3 million contingency for overruns. Costs were reduced by decreasing overall width, cross street lengths, and increasing Seattle City Light's share of underground utility costs.
- The projected costs compare favorably with similar projects in the region. While the projected costs are higher than projects in Tukwila and Lynnwood, Tukwila has fewer lanes, and Lynnwood is a much simpler design.
- New signals will move more vehicles, allow better access to Aurora Avenue, and reduce neighborhood cut-through traffic. The City proposes an Aurora Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to monitor traffic volumes if neighborhood traffic increases.
- Pedestrian safety will be enhanced through the following measures: additional signalized intersections at 152nd and 165th, buffer/curb improvements, pedestrian scale lighting, and ADA features including audible signals and wheelchair detectors.
- The City requires the project to comply with all state, county, and city storm water quality requirements. The project will include oil-water separators, detention facilities, erosion/sediment control measures, and basin-wide improvements.

Mr. McKinley concluded by discussing various features and benefits of Alternative A-Modified, noting that it meets all safety, transportation, and environmental goals. He said the project preserves neighborhoods, benefits property and business owners,

accommodates the particular needs of certain businesses, and does not eliminate any businesses. He said the City will provide up to $5,000 to businesses for underground utility hook ups, and the project will provide property owners with frontage/aesthetic improvements at no cost. He noted that the next steps include National Environmental Policy Act approval, completion of the final design by 2003, and acquiring 0.5 acres of right-of-way.

Mr. Burkett concluded that although the project will not satisfy everyone, it strikes a good balance between the goals of the community and business concerns. He said the project will provide dramatic improvement on Aurora Avenue at a cost of only $10 million to the City due to state and federal contributions.

Mayor Jepsen outlined the rules for public comment.

Ron Paananen, representing WSDOT, and Ellen Bevington, representing King County Metro Transit, spoke in support of the proposed design for the Aurora Corridor project. Mr. Paananen emphasized the importance of State Route 99 as a regional route and acknowledged WSDOT's responsibility for design standards.

Ms. Bevington characterized Aurora Avenue N as one of the most productive routes in the Metro system. She said its redevelopment will help meet the growing demand for transit service in the region. She commended the City for its attempt to strike a balance between local and regional needs. She said Metro intends to make future investments in bus stops and lighting in addition to its $500,000 initial commitment.

Mayor Jepsen asked for other public comments.

(1) Myron Phillips, Edmonds, opposed the project since it does not address pedestrian safety issues. He advocated for more pedestrian activated crosswalks and decreased speed limits on Aurora Avenue to 30 or 35 miles per hour.

(2) Richard Warbrouck, Shoreline, opposed Resolution No. 201 on the basis that raised medians will unnecessarily impede access to businesses. He said revenues could be used for more important purposes, suggesting that medians could be added later. He felt the proposal does not adequately emphasize safety.

(3) Edsel Hammond, Shoreline, suggested that, although the plan has changed slightly, the City should change it further based on more input from citizens. He opposed paying consultants for a job he feels citizens can perform. He urged Council to reduce costs and said the Council has a responsibility to listen to what people want.

(4) Dwight Stevens, Shoreline, expressed support for Resolution No. 201, noting that the media inaccurately reported that a disproportionate number of people are against it. He said the City incorporated to make Shoreline a make better place, and improving Aurora Avenue will make it a better place to live.

(5) Paulette Gust, Shoreline, said the resolution is a good plan that will address pedestrian safety and maintain a long-range focus. She said many efforts have been made to appease private interests, sometimes at the expense of the common good. She noted that citizen input has been readily accepted and considered.

(6) Jim Shea, Shoreline, expressed support for the resolution, clarifying that the project cannot be approved without raised medians due to WSDOT road standards. He cited preliminary data that suggests Aurora Avenue in Edmonds is not safe due to a lack of raised medians.

(7) Brian Doennebrink, Shoreline, expressed support for Alternative A-Modified, also noting that WSDOT requires raised medians as part of the plan. He spoke in favor of sidewalks, amenity zones, and Business Acess/Transit lanes to improve the predictability of traffic. He also expressed a need for additional traffic signals.

(8) Dale Wright, Shoreline, expressed support for Resolution No. 201. He cited research showing that raised medians do not have adverse economic effects on business activity. He rejected the idea that medians have catastrophic impacts on business as some have asserted.

(9) Larry Bingham, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the Aurora Corridor Project, noting that it serves the purposes of other jurisdictions. He proposed that since King County, WSDOT, and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) have conflicting purposes and jurisdictions in Shoreline, the Aurora Corridor needs to be divided into two separate right-of-ways, one on the surface and another as a tunnel. He said Shoreline's right of self-determination is forfeited under the present system.

(10) Diana Stephens, Shoreline, representing the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, expressed opposition to Resolution No. 201, noting that raised medians should only be used at pedestrian crossings. She said raised medians have devastated businesses in other cities, and that businesses returned as soon as medians were removed. She opposed sidewalk widths and underground utilities, noting that businesses would end up paying for service they already have. She said the true costs of the project are misrepresented, and the present plan will force businesses to pay unreasonably high costs.

(11) Doug Parris, Shoreline, opposed the resolution because of the bleak economic outlook facing Shoreline. He said the current economy has created many challenges, e.g., higher unemployment, high utility costs, higher property taxes, and law enforcement needs. He said most people either oppose the project or are unaware of it. He asserted the plan is not fiscally responsible and not good for business.

(12) Edwin Asimakoupoulos, Wenatchee, expressed concern about the Aurora Corridor project, noting that there will be impacts to his property at 160th Street and Aurora Avenue. He feared his property would lose frontage and earning value.

(13) Steve Elster, Shoreline, characterized the Aurora Corridor project as "outrageous," noting that costs are too high and citizens will be upset by lack of access and increased neighborhood traffic. He warned Councilmembers there will be a public backlash if they vote for the project.

(14) Margaret Thue, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, citing high costs, increased neighborhood traffic, and negative impacts to business as likely results of the project. She said it is too expensive and that pedestrian safety measures are not needed since most people drive anyway. She suggested that the City encourage local small business in difficult economic times, rather than pursuing a course that is likely to eliminate some of them. She asked why Shoreline's project is so different from Edmonds and Lynnwood. She suggested that the money could be better spent on a crosswalk at 170th St. and 15th Ave. NE.

(15) Sunny Kim, Shoreline, expressed concern about the project on behalf of the Korean Chamber of Commerce. She described the large and growing population of the Korean community and their concerns about increased taxes and potential impacts to business.

(16) Clark Elster, Shoreline, expressed disappointment that Council had already decided on what he considered a predetermined solution. He described his long experience with the process, noting that Aurora Avenue in Shoreline is not one of the State's most dangerous highways. He asserted that SeaTac has the most dangerous highway, yet it is a model for Shoreline's project. He predicted increased traffic volumes and accidents if Council moves forward. He recommended decreasing the speed limit, adding street lighting, and vigorously enforcing traffic laws as ways to remedy the highway's problems.

(17) Rick Stephens, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that Alternative A-Modified was not considered in the Draft EIS and should be resubmitted to the public for feedback. He said if Council is truly interested in reducing costs, it will reduce sidewalk widths, allow utilities to remain above ground, and modify the proposed medians. He encouraged Council to defer voting on the project until it can reconsider various cost-saving measures. He expressed support for greater focus on ADA crosswalks and sidewalks around schools.

(18) Gretchen Atkinson, Shoreline, expressed support for Alternative A-Modified, emphasizing that staff has done a good job with the proposal. She commented favorably on the proposed amenity zones, and said decreasing sidewalk widths to 7-feet is good for businesses.

(19) Ken Cottingham, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that the Final EIS is inadequate because it does not consider Alternative A-Modified. He described the characteristics of Class-4 highways, and cited Washington State Law to show that raised medians are not required by WSDOT since Aurora Avenue is a Class-4 highway.

(20) Cindy Ryu, Shoreline, expressed skepticism about the project, noting there are no guarantees that the proposed left/u-turn lanes will work. She expressed a preference for the two-way turn lanes and suggested that medians will only serve to back-up the primary lane of travel. She asked for clarification about how the project will enhance beauty and safety, and characterized the plan as an expensive, disruptive solution that will not increase capacity. She requested that Council defer the vote in order to address these issues.

(21) Harley Murray, Shoreline, said it is not fiscally responsible to spend $20-$30 million on one mile of road. He supported the merchants on Aurora Avenue and said the project is not worth it if it eliminates even one business. He expressed support for an "Eyeman-type initiative" and said the project needs a vote of the people. He expressed hope that initiatives will prevent the City from raising taxes on future phases of the project.

(22) Jerilee Noffsinger, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that the Aurora project will negatively impact her business by eliminating much-needed parking. She said the plan has not included citizen participation, as City staff has never asked for her input. She implored Council to vote against the resolution until the City as a whole can reach an agreeable solution that will benefit the greatest number of people.

(23) Dennis Lee, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution and characterized the Aurora discussion as a flawed process. He urged the Council to vote against the resolution, suggesting that Councilmembers could suffer political consequences by casting an affirmative vote. He said small businesses are not only stakeholders, but a good economic base, and that Council needs to consider their needs.

(24) Mark Deutsch, Shoreline, expressed support for the project, noting he is looking forward to seeing positive changes occur. He urged Council to take action now and avoid further delays, in order to achieve safety improvements as soon as possible. He disagreed with the claim there has not been enough outreach, asserting that the City has made efforts to accommodate the business community. He expressed a desire for a pedestrian-friendly community.

(25) Won S. Han, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the project, asserting that Korean businesses have been excluded from the process due to a lack of Korean translations. He asserted that information in Korean was not provided until 2001. He emphasized the importance of including everyone in a democratic society. He said property values in Shoreline have not kept pace with surrounding areas like Edmonds and Lynnwood, where many Koreans have already moved their businesses.

(26) Steve Brewer, Shoreline, said the Aurora Project is too big and too expensive. He described his long experience with Seattle City Light and asserted that the cost for undergrounding utilities and wide sidewalks is excessive. He said wide

sidewalks are not necessary due to the lack of pedestrians on Aurora Avenue. He indicated that jersey barriers could be used in some places to address specific traffic problems. He said Lynnwood traffic flows twice as fast as it used to due to its road upgrades, which do not include medians and transit lanes. He expressed concern that he will not be able to live in Shoreline after retirement due to increasing taxes.

(27) Bill Bear, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the proposal as written. He said consultants, engineers and staff have not questioned the basic premises of the project. He said good science always includes worst-case scenarios and questions assumptions. Therefore, staff should be open to the possibility that the plan is wrong.

(28) Dave Townsend, Shoreline, said that based on his extensive study of pedestrian safety issues, the City and WSDOT are not approaching the problem correctly. He opposed the use of WSDOT's "roving eyes," noting that a citizen was killed at the intersection of 170th Street and Aurora Avenue N while the crosswalk was operating. He opposed the use of raised medians except where there are pedestrian-activated stop lights, noting that WSDOT does not require them on Class 4 highways. He urged Councilmembers to educate themselves and vote appropriately on the issue.

(29) Maggi Fimia, Shoreline, urged Council to postpone the decision since there is so much opposition to the current proposal. She expressed support for an Aurora project covering the entire corridor, and one that does not take a disproportionate amount of money from other needs. She said the pedestrian needs of neighborhoods and schools must be balanced with the needs of the Aurora Corridor. For example, many high schools and grade schools do not have sidewalks. She urged Council to unite the community and defer the vote on what is a partial, expensive alternative.

(30) Kenneth Meyer, Seattle, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that Aurora Avenue is an artery that represents about half of all the north-south capacity in this region. He said speciousness is rampant with regard to the project, and that the BAT lanes will actually reduce capacity.

MEETING EXTENSION

At 10:00 p.m. Councilmember Hansen moved to extend the meeting until 11:00 p.m. Councilmember Ransom seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

(31) Daniel Mann, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution. He felt that local public input has not been given as much consideration as out-of-state studies. Pointing out a lack of safety statistics, he asserted that WSDOT has not proven that center-lane medians are safer. He said omitting the cost of undergrounding utilities is an intentional misrepresentation, and that someone will eventually have to pay for it. He warned against doing a partial project, urging Council to consider the entire corridor.

(32) Cheryl Lee, Shoreline, expressed support for the resolution, noting that Aurora Avenue is a dangerous corridor and safety must be improved. She said there has

been extensive public input and it is time to move forward with the project. She asserted that property values have not increased on the Aurora Corridor because there has been no significant investment there. She said although the transition will be difficult, people will adapt to changing circumstances.

(33) Randy Ferrell, Shoreline, opposed the resolution, but said that Aurora business owners have been encouraged by the City's first effort to seek out compromise with the business community in proposing Alternative A-Modified. He questioned the actual cost of undergrounding utilities, noting that the project costs have changed from $31 million to $19 million. He said the project is still too expensive since Edmonds and Lynnwood were able to complete seven miles of Highway 99 improvements for only $31.8 million.

(34) Mary Jo Heller, Shoreline, expressed support for the resolution and complimented Council for its vision. She said the plan is a good one, and she looks forward to wider sidewalks and safer center turn lanes. She expressed hope that the plan would attract new businesses and help lower taxes.

(35) LaNita Wacker, Shoreline, supported Alternative A-Modified, although she felt the plan should have a separate public hearing because the new plan contains material changes. She said Council has the power to reduce the speed limit to 30 or 35 miles per hour, thereby enhancing pedestrian safety and helping the business community. She disagreed with the WSDOT "roving eyes," noting that pedestrians need stoplights.

(36) Tim Crawford, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, explaining that the PSRC has determined what is best for Shoreline. He believed that Council does not represent community needs. Furthermore, staff is not telling the truth when it claims that the plan reduces impervious surfaces. He explained that planter islands are not pervious surfaces because the soil is 98% compacted. He opposed the decision to close eastbound 160th Street at Aurora Avenue, noting that the City is making unilateral decisions.

(37) Pat Crawford, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution and reported that neighbors were against the City's decision to close 160th Street. She said the City's claim that the Aurora Corridor project will decrease impervious surface is false, noting that there is no detention in a compacted roadbed. She asserted that the project will actually increase storm water flows and harm the environment. She said the courts have supported her views in the past, and she felt they will ultimately rule against the City's project.

(38) Les Nelson, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, explaining that the plan will require him to cross too many lanes of traffic. He said the plan is not safe, and there is no justification for a southbound transit lane.

(39) Linda Hart, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the project as proposed, based on the high cost of just the first mile. She encouraged Council to look at the big picture and consider improving the entire corridor at the same cost.

(40) Richard Johnsen, Shoreline, expressed support for the resolution, noting that he has been looking forward to an improved and safer Aurora Corridor. He said that sidewalks are an amenity that will benefit the area and will attract new construction and new businesses. He felt the improvements made in Edmonds and Lynnwood did not contribute to safety.

(41) Anthony Poland, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that Shoreline changed the definition of BAT lanes after it received federal funding. He said the proposed pedestrian refuge zones are not safe, and that the City has ignored hundreds of suggestions from the public. He asserted the EIS scoping did not adequately ascertain environmental impacts since it only considered 50 feet on either side of the 3-mile project.

(42) Diane Fitzgerald Murray, Shoreline, urged Council to reconsider the project because, in her opinion, Aurora Avenue can never be made pedestrian-friendly. She said traffic is too fast, and businesses are too densely located to allow for safe pedestrian traffic. She said Council is trying to accomplish two conflicting goals of increased capacity and pedestrian safety.

(43) Walt Hagen, Shoreline, expressed dissatisfaction with plan. He advised that City staff needs to check its facts and realize that WSDOT is not the final decision-maker. He believed that WSDOT policy conflicts with State law. He cautioned Councilmembers not to trade neighborhood safety for safety on Aurora Avenue and expressed concern about recurring costs of median and amenity zone maintenance. He asserted that the City did not consult with business owners, but with property owners.

(44) Russ McCurdy, Arlington, expressed opposition to the resolution, although he does support an improved Aurora Corridor. He agreed with the positions of the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce and Korean Chamber of Commerce, citing a poor economy, waste, and business impacts as reasons for his opposition. He indicated that international events have created a sense of uncertainty about the future which Council should consider in moving forward.

(45) David Carver, Shoreline, said he walks on Aurora Avenue N on a regular basis, but to do it safely one must walk "defensively." He felt his taxes will increase under the Aurora proposal, although he favors constructing sidewalks and crosswalks. He expressed concern that the costs for the Aurora Corridor project are unreasonably high compared to its anticipated benefits.

(46) Diane Cottingham, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the resolution, noting that the EIS has created more conflicts than solutions. She said businesses have not been fully informed about the costs of undergrounding utilities, and the project costs

are prohibitive compared to neighboring communities. She said sidewalks are not needed since there are so few pedestrians on Aurora Avenue. She said the City has not considered safety, and recommended that the speed limit on Aurora be decreased.

Councilmember Montgomery moved adoption of Resolution No. 201. Councilmember Hansen seconded the motion.

Councilmember Chang asked a series of questions regarding the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) process, outreach to Korean businesses, how comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement were handled, costs of underground utility hook-ups, safety issues, and costs of various elements of the project. He expressed disapproval of the process that had led to tonight's action, noting that there are still many unanswered questions and citizens and businesses have not been fully informed about the process. He questioned whether the Korean business community was provided documents in a timely manner, specifically asking staff whether information was provided in the Korean language. He stressed the importance of a reliable, credible government that is accountable to the people. He also asked whether citizens received responses to the public comments they submitted.

Mr. McKinley stated that the Asian community was informed of meetings through various publications and postcards. Councilmember Chang asked if documents were provided to them prior to October 2001, citing an article that the Korean community was not properly informed in its own language.

Mr. McKinley said he had not seen the article Councilmember Chang mentioned, but he did receive a call from a reporter regarding the overall communication effort. He explained that the City has utilized Mr. Park of the Citizens Advisory Task Force, who translated newsletters and articles for international papers numerous times. He noted that former Councilmember Lee conducted reporter briefings with a number of Asian newspapers. More recently, a Korean interpreter was provided at the August 6th hearing on the DEIS. He noted that the City received eight comment letters in Korean on the DEIS, which were translated so the City could respond. He added that the City sent postcards to all persons who testified or submitted comments when the Final EIS became available.

Mayor Jepsen felt it was inaccurate to say that the City did not respond to most businesses, noting staff efforts to send letters and personally walk the Corridor. He said property/business owners themselves must make the decision about whether they wish to get involved. He noted that it was the business community that specifically requested a full EIS. He pointed out that the design phase does not provide specific answers for specific properties.

Councilmember Chang said he has spoken with every business owner impacted by Phase 1 of the project and the majority of them have complained that their voices have not been heard. He again asked staff to explain how the City responded to citizens' comments.

Mr. Burkett explained that all 382 comments were incorporated into the Final EIS. He said those who provided comments were notified that their concerns would be addressed in the FEIS.

Councilmember Chang said people are concerned because their comments have been ignored by the City. This is evidenced by the fact that the project has not changed significantly. Mr. Burkett responded that a primary purpose of the FEIS is to give decision-makers the benefit of all opinions and the City's response to those opinions.

Responding to Councilmember Chang's question about the costs associated with connecting to underground utilities, Mr. Burkett estimated that costs could range from $5,000 to $20,000.

Councilmember Chang speculated that some businesses may be required to pay up to $45,000 for multiple utility connections and that the project cost of undergrounding is approximately $11.1 million.

Mr. Burkett explained that Seattle City Light estimates the undergrounding costs around $3.5 to $4 million. He explained that inflated dollars, reduced sidewalk widths, and other cost reductions account for the difference between the original project ($30.8 million) and the currently proposed project ($19.6 million).

Councilmember Chang asked if the City was aware of businesses with multiple utility connections, noting that his business has at least two.

Mr. Burkett said Seattle City Light is currently in the process of designing the undergrounding, and businesses with multiple connections will be identified as part of the project design. He said there may be some opportunities to consolidate connections, but there will be a project cost and a cost to businesses.

Councilmember Chang asked the Council to consider that clarification in making its decision on the design. He noted that a majority (over 50%) of all traffic accidents on Aurora Avenue in Shoreline occur between 145th Street and 165th Street.

Mr. McKinley said the State's analysis identified three high-accident locations: the intersections of Aurora Avenue and 145th Street, 152nd Street and 163rd Street.

Councilmember Chang concluded that addressing one area alone would significantly eliminate the majority of Shoreline's traffic accidents. He recommended installing a traffic signal at 152nd Street to eliminate the accidents that frequently occur there. He also objected to the term "suicide lane" as a reference to the center left-turn lane. He said the term has been used by the City to influence people's opinions about the Aurora Corridor.

Continuing, Councilmember Chang asked staff to explain the safety difference between pockets allowing left-turns/u-turns versus a center, two-way median. He felt that

WSDOT and City staff contradict themselves when they claim that u-turn pockets with no signal light are safe, whereas u-turns from a two-way median are unsafe.

Mr. McKinley explained that Alternative A-Modified proposes raised medians that prohibit left turns except in designated areas, and all left turn lanes identified in Alternative A-Modified allow u-turn movements as well. He said expanded receiving areas allow passenger vehicles and small trucks to negotiate the left-turn lane safely, while the pocket allows the opposing traffic to clear until there is a gap so u-turns/left turns can occur.

MEETING EXTENSION

At 11:00 p.m., Councilmember Hansen moved to extend the meeting until midnight. Councilmember Ransom seconded the motion, which carried 6 – 1, with Councilmember Montgomery dissenting.

Councilmember Chang explained that WSDOT adopted a new policy that requires raised medians on all new highways, suggesting that Aurora Avenue does not fit this criteria. He questioned whether WSDOT considers Aurora Avenue and Interstate 5 in the same light. He said WSDOT is willing to meet with the City to discuss the issue of medians in more detail, emphasizing the fact that raised medians are not required. He then asked what accounted for the $11.2 million decrease in project costs.

Mr. McKinley noted that the $30.8 million as originally outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan reflected inflated dollars through the life of the project. He explained that Alternative A-Modified reflects a loss of inflated dollars and various cost savings, such as reduced sidewalks and reduced east-west street improvements.

Mr. Burkett reiterated that the bulk of the difference in costs is due to inflated money in the CIP, which envisioned constructing the major portion of the project in 2005 and 2006.

Councilmember Hansen noted that the original plan included a $7.5 million contingency fund since there were so many unknown variables, whereas the current proposal only includes about $3.5 million. He said the City always made liberal estimates to ensure the project could be completed. He asserted the City has planned appropriately and has considered worst-case scenarios.

Councilmember Chang suggested that the City plan the full three miles now since worst-case scenarios are not known for the second or third phases. Councilmember Hansen responded that the City will have far better information on the final phases after completing the first mile.

Councilmember Chang inquired about revenue sources for the final phases, stressing that the first mile is the easiest and least-expensive portion of the project. He noted that the second and third phases were projected to cost more than $20 million, excluding the cost of underground utilities.

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Mr. Burkett recommended the City continue to pursue state and federal grants to fund the majority of the project. Since Aurora Avenue is such an important part of the regional transportation network, he was confident the City will be able to procure the necessary funding to complete the project. He pointed out that the City has not had to resort to loans or bond issues to fund the first phase.

Councilmember Chang noted that Senator Patty Murray has been very instrumental in securing federal funding, but he doubted she will be able to secure future revenues since she no longer chairs the Transportation Committee. He inquired whether the City plans on meeting one-on-one with businesses to discuss specific design elements.

Mr. McKinley emphasized the importance of input from the business community, noting that the City will discuss access needs and options for temporary construction easements with owners as the design process goes forward. He said the City will be required to purchase portions of the right-of-way in some cases.

Councilmember Chang contended that access and easement needs should have already been determined. He questioned whether the plan could change based on input from business owners, even if the resolution is adopted.

Mr. McKinley said Resolution No. 201 establishes the general design and identifies three locations in which sidewalks would be narrowed on an interim basis to adjust to individual needs. He noted that the City will work with property owners and Council to identify additional locations that may require similar modifications.

Councilmember Montgomery expressed support for Resolution No. 201, noting that Alternative A-Modified will greatly improve safety and aesthetics along Aurora Avenue. She said the voters have been aware of her priorities for a long time, as this issue was a major part of her campaign platform. She said her support is not in response to consultants, but in response to community sentiment. She said the City needs to invest in order to enhance economic development and restore a sense of community pride. She also expressed the need to mitigate the impacts on businesses during the construction phase. She said Alternative A-Modified is a reasonable compromise, since the original vision was even more aggressive.

Councilmember Ransom spoke favorably about the project, but declared he would vote against it because there is still too much controversy surrounding it. He mentioned his extensive interaction with the business community and the Korean Chamber of Commerce and their opposition to the project. He discussed the major elements of the project, noting that it does include several compromises in response to public input. He felt the medians and left/u-turn lanes would not negatively impact businesses because most consumers tend to be deliberate, rather than impulsive. He expressed a preference for bushes in the medians as opposed to trees, as well as ADA medians at the street level so wheelchairs will not roll back into traffic. He felt that 7-foot sidewalks are a reasonable compromise.

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Continuing, Councilmember Ransom said he has long advocated for a traffic signal at 170t[h] Street and Aurora Avenue , since there have been at least two fatalities at that location. He expressed concern that the City may have to fund the entire three-mile project, noting that it is already using its savings, instead of grants, for the first phase of construction. He said he will vote against the resolution due to the uncertainty of future funding and because of the high level of opposition.

Deputy Mayor Grossman expressed support for Resolution No. 201. He pointed out that many discussions and forums have been conducted to keep people informed of the issues. He said while there have been changes in presentation format, the Korean community has been aware of the project since 1999, if not longer. He mentioned the project's large contingencies, noting that the City will now be able to address specific business needs and minimize construction impacts. He said although there will be short-term impacts to businesses, the project will result in increased long-term values. He noted that Council must look 20 years into the future and consider the long-term viability of Shoreline. He expressed the need to address increasing traffic volumes and pedestrian safety now, noting that the project will improve the quality of life, the tax base, and property values.

Councilmember Gustafson also supported the resolution, describing it as a long-term vision for Shoreline. He said the project will accomplish the goals of pedestrian safety and improved aesthetics, which will have a positive effect on property values and business. He mentioned landscaping as a key factor, noting that the project should be tied to the Interurban Trail Project and enhance the pedestrian features of the entire corridor. He said the City has made compromises, including additional turn lanes, more ADA features, and reduced sidewalk widths. He noted that delaying it will only make it more costly in the future.

Responding to Councilmember Gustafson, Mr. McKinley noted that WSDOT agreed to consider the City's proposal to reduce the speed limit to 35 miles per hour. Mr. McKinley also clarified that closing 160[th] Street at Aurora Avenue is optional.

Councilmember Hansen expressed support for the resolution, noting that the Aurora Corridor has stagnated for the last seven years because of a lack of investment. He related his personal experience with various improvements that, although costly and inconvenient at the time, now have enhanced the value of his property. He asserted that the same thing will be true for the Aurora project. He said it will improve many aspects of life, including safety, aesthetics, and water quality, which will result in a better place for businesses to operate.

Mayor Jepsen expressed support for the resolution, noting the need to keep Aurora Avenue viable and encourage new businesses. He said the City has made numerous compromises. He agreed with Councilmember Montgomery that this issue was the primary focus of discussion during the last election. He said while the EIS has been a conceptual process, he looks forward to working with businesses about the details of the

design. He characterized Alternate A-Modified as a common sense plan, and noted that everyone had an opportunity to participate in what has been a democratic process.

A vote was taken on the motion, which carried 5 – 2, with Councilmembers Ransom and Chang dissenting, and Resolution No. 201 adopting the design for the Aurora Corridor Project 145th to 165th and directing staff to proceed with construction consistent with this design was approved.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) Virginia Botham, Shoreline, expressed opposition to WSDOT's "Roving Eyes" at 170th Street and Aurora Avenue because drivers cannot see pedestrians at that crosswalk. She expressed a need for a pedestrian-activated stoplight, because people recognize that "red means stop."

(b) Diana Stephens, Shoreline, expressed disappointment with the Council's passage of Resolution No. 201, warning that new business will not come to Shoreline if existing businesses close. She said increasing residential property while decreasing business property will decrease the tax base, which will result in a corresponding tax increase for everyone.

(c) Rick Stephens, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the Council's decision, noting that the City is going in wrong direction. He said Shoreline is gaining a reputation as a "business-unfriendly" city.

(d) Pat Crawford, Shoreline, commented that the City accepted grant money for the stream inventory and not using it for its intended purpose. She said the City must conform to the statutes of the King County Conservation District and Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife if it accepts grant funds. She raised water quality concerns, noting that the Aurora project will not provide detention for the extra storm water created by the roadway.

(e) Tim Crawford, Shoreline, expressed opposition to the manner in which Council responded to his comments at the beginning of the meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Again, due to violation of general decorum rules, Mayor Jepsen asked Mr. Crawford to stop speaking. When Mr. Crawford did not comply with the request, Mayor Jepsen declared the meeting adjourned at 11:55 p.m.

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Sharon Mattioli
City Clerk