

To: Ms. Barbara Buffaloe, Mayor
Council Members: Nick Knoth, Andrea Waner, Roy Lovelady, Nick Foster, Donald Waterman, Betsy Peters
Mr. De'Carlton Seewood, City Manager

From: City of Columbia Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission

Date: September 25, 2023

Subject: **Improve I-70 Program, Boone & Callaway Counties – Time Sensitive**

Dear Mayor Buffaloe, Council Members and City Manager Seewood,

As you are aware, MoDOT has issued the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the referenced project on August 24. Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) are due on October 2 and MoDOT is to issue the Request for Proposals (RFP) on October 6, 2023. Proposals, which are due January 18, 2024, will include the near final intersection layouts of each design-built team.

Please refer to this commission's June 1, 2023 letter on this subject, which is attached for your reference. This prior letter had clearly laid out why we believe that this project must provide non-motorized connectivity across all four legs of the I-70/63 interchange to comply with MoDOT's own policies as well as guidance by the FHWA. Since the issued RFQ also includes a bridge replacement at East St. Charles Road many of our comments also apply to this location.

The Project Description in the RFQ lists "improve accessibility...for bicycles, and pedestrians...." However, unlike current projects in the St. Louis District, the six "guiding Program Goals" used to score the SOQs do not include non-motorized connectivity. (The referenced examples include the Safety Improvements Design Build Project, to be awarded in January 2024, and Future 64 Project.)

The City has provided MoDOT with significant input that constructing pedestrian connectivity to all intersection quadrants is an essential project safety component. We believe it is vital that the City insists that this goal is stated clearly in the RFP. As prior experience has shown, deferring this requirement to a municipal agreement or simply allocating space for future construction is not enough.

We request that the City emphasize to MoDOT that we have already invested in sidewalks near both intersections. At the 63 Connector, sidewalks and/or crosswalks exist at East Business Loop 70/Conley Road, Interstate 70 Drive SE and Clark Lane. At East St. Charles Road, there are sidewalks near Interstate 70 Drive SE and the gas station directly north of the interstate. The prospect of a new 300-lot subdivision near this crossing lends additional emphasis to requiring bike/ped facilities in the design.

The Improve I-70 Project will be building infrastructure for a generation. We are truly designing history. We have one shot to get this right. Please ensure that the MoDOT RFP selection criteria include pedestrian connectivity across all quadrants of each Columbia intersection.

Sincerely,



ELKE BOYD, CHAIR
CITY OF COLUMBIA BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

C: Richard Stone, Columbia Engineering & Operations Manager
Allison Anderson, Columbia Engineering Manager
Kirsten Munck, MoDOT Area Engineer
Eric Kopinski, MoDOT Improve I-70 Director
Jeff Gander, MoDOT Project Director Improve I-70

To: Barbara Buffaloe, Mayor
From: City of Columbia Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission
Date: June 1, 2023
Subject: **Improve I-70, I-70/US 63 Interchange Design-Build Project**

Dear Mayor Buffaloe,

The I-70/63 interchange has been identified by Columbia's Vision Zero team as the most pedestrian unfriendly and dangerous intersection in the City. In previous I-70 intersection design-built projects, bike/pedestrian facilities were included via 8-foot sidewalks. The design-build team for this intersection needs to include bike/pedestrian facilities for the following reasons:

1. The City has notified MoDOT of its Complete Streets Policy.
2. A pedestrian connector at this intersection is on the City's Sidewalk Master Plan.
3. Adding bicycle and pedestrian connectivity at all four legs/directions of the I-70/US 63 interchange is on the CATSO Unfunded Needs List.
4. It is important that MoDOT stress the importance to the consultants at the RFQ stage to implement MoDOT Engineering Policy Guide Category 642.2, Consideration of Pedestrian Facilities, in its design:
 - There are existing gaps.
 - There are pedestrian traffic generators at each of the four quadrants.
 - There is footpath evidence of existing pedestrian traffic.
 - Pedestrian access is limited by a man-made barrier.
5. All four corners of the intersection need pedestrian connections.
 - The northeast quadrant, identified as a Justice40 area, has low-income housing developments and retail businesses, including restaurants.
 - The southeast quadrant has hotels, grocery stores, medical offices, and neighborhoods.
 - A major retail complex is in the southwest quadrant, containing restaurants, major "box" stores, and more.
 - Additional low-income housing is located in the northwest quadrant, which is also in the Justice40 tract.

The City's Bike/Ped Commission considers the I-70/63 intersection its number one priority for inclusion of safe bike/ped facilities connecting all four quadrants of the intersection. We urge you to ensure that the MoDOT selection criteria for short-listing the design-build team for the current project include this critical need.

Sincerely,



ELKE BOYD, CHAIR
CITY OF COLUMBIA BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

C: City Council, Members
De'Carlton Seewood, City Manager
Richard Stone, Engineering & Operations Manager
Allison Anderson, Engineering Manager
Disabilities Commission
Ed Hassinger, PE, MoDOT Deputy Director/Chief Engineer
Kirsten Munck, MoDOT Area Engineer
Zackary Osman, MoDOT Transportation Project Manager