

To: Eric Kopinski, Improve I-70 Program Director
Daniel Oesch, Statewide 3rd Party Lead
Spencer Robinson, PE, Traffic and Safety Ops Lead, Statewide Improve I-70 Program
Kirsten Munck, PE, Area Engineer

From: City of Columbia Bicycle/Pedestrian Commission

Date: March 12, 2024

Subject: **Improve I-70 - Columbia to Kingdom City Project Meeting**

Dear MoDOT staff,

This letter is to summarize the March 1, 2024, meeting with the Chair and Vice Chair of the City of Columbia Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission (Elke Boyd and Carol Elliott) and the Director of Loop 70 (Carrie Gartner). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the bike/ped aspects of the conceptual project design for the portion of the referenced project located within the limits of the City of Columbia.

We want to start by saying we appreciate the Department taking the time to meet with us to discuss the transportation needs of our most vulnerable residents. We applaud the addition of several non-motorized travel routes at this important intersection. To provide true bike/ped connectivity of all four quadrants we provide the following comments, which are split into sections to mostly match the Flyover video presented at the MHTC meeting on February 14, 2024.

A. 63 Connector:

The preliminary plans show the removal of the westbound I-70 ramps and associated signal as well as the addition of a sidewalk along the westside of the Connector from Clark Lane to Conley Road.

1. City design standards require a grade-separated sidewalk with a minimum width of 6 feet and a 2-foot buffer strip. In this location, frequent semi traffic justifies the increase of both the buffer and sidewalk width for the safety of all travelers. If designed for bidirectional bike and ped travel, the minimum width would be 10 feet.
2. A crosswalk equipped with a HAWK signal needs to be provided at the I-70 offramp and a signalized crosswalk at Clark Lane.
3. The current layout provides no way to safely reach the existing sidewalk on Interstate 70 Drive SE without going at least a mile out of the way. It is imperative to add sidewalk connectivity from the sidewalk on the westside of the 63 Connector, including a signalized crosswalk with pedestrian refuge. This section is already on the City's Sidewalk Master Plan with the highest priority rating.
4. Adding a sidewalk on the eastside of the Connector would involve the least traffic conflicts to reach the Interstate 70 Drive SE sidewalk.

B. Clark Lane:

The preliminary plans add a roundabout (RAB) on Clark Lane near Lambeth Drive. This is near where the City's Hinkson Creek Trail is to connect to Clark Lane. Currently, there is a sidewalk on the northside of Clark Lane. This sidewalk terminates about 120 feet east of Lambeth Drive, because the adjacent section of Clark Lane is owned by MoDOT. There is also a signalized crosswalk with pedestrian refuges leading across the Connector to a sidewalk on the northside of Clark Lane east of the Connector.

1. The new streetscape needs to include a sidewalk on the northside of Clark Lane connecting to existing sidewalks on both ends and meeting the City's design standards regarding widths, grade separation and roadway buffer.
2. The signalized crosswalk needs to be maintained.
3. A sidewalk on the southside of Clark Lane from the Best Western to the Connector would provide access to the motel and both restaurants for employees and patron.

C. Conley Road RAB:

The preliminary plans replace the signalized Conley Road/E Business Loop 70 intersection with a RAB. The RAB includes two crosswalks connecting to the sidewalks on the westside of the RAB, which lead to shopping centers.

1. The RAB should be configured to reduce approach speeds.
2. The crosswalks should be equipped with pedestrian activated traffic signals.

D. Conley Road Underpass

The preliminary plans add an underpass from Conley Road to the northbound 63 Connector. The underpass provides space for a future 10-foot sidepath.

1. While there is currently no connecting sidewalk on the eastside of Highway 63, we can expect non-motorized traffic to be heavy since access is possible through existing parking lots and walking paths. We recommend providing stoplights on Conley Road and crosswalks on the south, north and west sides to provide a safer intersection for motorized traffic as well as peds/bikes.
2. Experience has shown that space allotted for future sidewalk construction often neglects the space taken up by protruding support pillars, curbs and the general restrictive nature of an adjacent wall. The space allotted for the sidepath needs provide a true clear space of at least 10 feet plus setbacks from objects and truck mirrors.

E. East Business Loop 70 RAB/Collector-Distributor

The preliminary plans add a RAB on East Business Loop 70 near MFA Oil and a distributor collector for eastbound I-70. The Loop has an existing sidewalk on the southside with a 600-foot gap from Big O Tires to Plumb Supply. There is footpath evidence of pedestrian traffic in the non-paved gap sections in front of Palmer's/Tyree and the Adult Day Care, on the west and east end of the gap, respectively.

1. This site is very near Welcome Home – A Community for Veterans, many of whom do not drive. The Loop is such a vital connection for area residents that people used to walk on the interstate before the Loop was extended to connect to Conely Road. We request that a sidewalk meeting City design standards is constructed on the southside of the Loop.

F. Extension of Hanover Blvd

The preliminary plans add a RAB on Clark Lane and an underpass from Hanover Boulevard to Interstate 70 Drive SE. There are existing sidewalks on the northside of Clark Lane from Hanover to the east and along both sides of Hanover. There is an 850-foot sidewalk gap on the northside of Clark Lane from Hannover to Student Transport of America. There is no sidewalk on the southside near the RAB. There is also a short southside sidewalk gap at the signalized intersection in front of Burger King. This section of Clark Lane is, based on HSM Safety Analysis, the by far highest ranked project on the City's Proposed CIP list. There may be VRU or other grant funding available for sidewalk construction in this area.

1. Since this project will add to the already high traffic count on Clark Lane, a sidewalk needs to be constructed at least on the northside of Clark Lane, including a crosswalk at the Hannover RAB. With increased traffic expected on Hanover, this crosswalk should be signalized. Also, the gap in front of Burger King needs to be closed and signalized crosswalks across Clark Lane added.
2. A parallel sidewalk on the southside of Clark Lane and associated crosswalk at the RAB are also desired.
3. There needs to be a signalized crosswalk on the westside of the RAB across Clark Lane.
4. The RAB needs to be configured to reduce approach speeds and to allow the addition of a southside crosswalk once the sidewalk gap gets closed.
5. The underpass sidepath will need to accommodate bidirectional bicycle plus pedestrian traffic. City standards require a minimum width of 10 feet. The allotted clearance needs to provide a true clear space of at least 10 feet plus setbacks from objects and truck mirrors. Additionally, sight distance at the turns needs to be maximized by localized widening and rounding corners.

6. Per MoDOT EPG Section 901.7.5, Underpass Lighting, only underpasses under 75 feet do not require lighting. This underpass would increase traveler confidence, if both lighting and smooth walls that allow artistic improvements could be provided.
7. At Interstate 70 Drive SE, there needs to be a signalized crosswalk to the existing sidewalk on the southside of the intersection.

G. East St. Charles Road intersection:

The preliminary plans add a sidewalk on the westside of E. St. Charles Road and space for a future sidewalk on the eastside. There are existing sidewalks on the northside of I-70 to Schnucks and the Phillips 66 gas station and on the southside of I-70 to across from Petro Mart.

1. With the elimination of the offramp leading from westbound I-70 to the 63 Connector to southbound Highway 63 we expect traffic at the E. St. Charles Road intersection to increase due to westbound travelers trying to get to southbound Highway 63. Together with the existing pedestrian attractors and future developments planned for this area, it becomes even more important that sidewalks and crosswalks are provided at this intersection on both sides.

While we believe all the listed infrastructure is important, we were asked to prioritize the list. We would rank the most important improvements as follows:

1. **A.3.** Crosswalk from the sidewalk on the westside of the 63 Connector to Interstate 70 Drive SE.
2. **A.2.** HAWK signal at I-70 offramp and signalized Clark Lane crosswalk at Connector.
3. **F.1.** Fill sidewalk gap on northside of Clark Lane, east of the Connector.
4. **E.1.** Fill sidewalk gap on the southside of East Business Loop 70.
5. **B.1.** Fill sidewalk gap on the northside of Clark Lane, west of the Connector.
6. **A.4.** Sidewalk on the eastside of the Connector across I-70.
7. **C.2.** Signalized crosswalks at the Conley Road RAB.
8. **D.1.** Traffic signals at the Conley Road underpass intersection.
9. **F5.** Minimum sidepath width of 10 feet in Hanover Boulevard underpass.
10. **F.3.** Signalized crosswalk on the westside of the Hanover Boulevard RAB.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment and look forward to continued cooperation.

Sincerely,



ELKE BOYD, CHAIR

CITY OF COLUMBIA BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN COMMISSION

- C: Barbara Buffalo, Mayor
 City Council, Members
 De'Carlton Seewood, City Manager
 Tim Teddy, Community Development Director
 Shane Creech, Public Works Director
 Gabe Huffington Director Parks and Recreation
 Mitch Skov, Senior City Planner