MEETING MINUTES

SUBJECT: Meeting #1 “Kick-Off”  
PROJECT: Independence Boulevard Task Force

DATE Recorded: January 21, 2010  
DATE ISSUED: January 25, 2010

ATTENDEES

City of Charlotte: Stuart Basham, Bill Carstarphen, Mark Cole, Bob Cook, Michelle Gutt, Brian Horton, Garet Johnson, Michelle Jones, David McDonald, Felix Obregon, Alysia Osborne, Norm Steinman, Tom Warshauer, Peter Zeiler


Facilitators (Kimley-Horn): Melinda Dyk, Rob Hume

GENERAL SEQUENCE OF DISCUSSIONS

GENERAL WELCOME

- Rob Hume introduced himself as the facilitator for the Independence Boulevard Task Force and gave an overview of agenda for the afternoon’s meeting.
- Norm Steinman welcomed and thanked everyone for coming and indicated that Rob Hume is acting as the facilitator to be sure that everyone has the opportunity to speak and offer ideas during the Task Force meetings.
- Barry stated that he sees this Task Force as a unique opportunity to put everyone’s minds together to better accommodate the City’s envisioned economic development for the Independence corridor while also maintaining its function as a major transportation “trunk line” for Charlotte.
- The meeting continued introductions; everyone gave their name and role within their respective organization.
- Tawana Brooks gave an overview of U-209B project as currently designed.
  - The Public Hearing map posted online is somewhat outdated.
  - ROW for park and ride lot at Idlewild Road is no longer going to be purchased.
  - Total project length for U-209B is 1.6 miles.
  - Because implementing the ITS cameras on the initial segment caused delays, Tawana is hoping that they can be separated out of the U-209B contract.
  - Construction Plans are considered to be 75% design drawings but they only need details and quantities to make them final.
- Dave stated that due to funding at City’s request, the purchase of some ROW was removed from plans and some bridges were narrowed to no longer accommodate wider pedestrian access to
future transit stations; however, the width of the mainline has not changed and standard pedestrian accommodations remain.

- Tawana stated that one of the key challenges for construction is the relocation of utilities along the corridor.
  - Some ROW acquisition is required in order to begin facilitating utility relocations.
  - Water and sewer lines are being relocated outside future pavement (some sewer trunks will stay in current location for side street connections).
  - The sequencing of utility pole and line relocations can be complicated and take a lot of time just to get the project to a point where contractor can begin roadway construction.
  - The anticipated schedule is as follows:
    - May 2010: ROW Acquisition
    - June 2012: Bid of Construction Contract
    - August 2012: Begin Construction
    - Spring/Summer 2015: Complete Construction

- Currently, the relocation of residents/businesses will be handled by a consultant and the State will handle the negotiations.

- The uncertainty of what is happening along the corridor is having big impact on decline of properties.

- The current budget for the project is $170 Million total. The project is in the TIP and Five Year Work Plan (which is critical).

- Interchanges have full control of access and everywhere else is partial control of access (one access/property unless a property has more than 2,000 feet of frontage).

- David McDonald gave an overview of the corridor from a transit perspective.
  - CATS’ recommendation to the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) was bus rapid transit (BRT) rather than light rail (LRT) because it could be implemented incrementally. The MTC accepted that recommendation but delayed implementation and that work with NCDOT about ROW in center of road.
  - The existing ROW has room reserved for BRT or LRT.
  - Public prefers LRT but BRT is more cost effective; however, CATS is reviewing cost effectiveness again based on the success of the South corridor.
  - David was asked what ability CATS has to participate in funding improvements. CATS does not have finance capacity to purchase park and ride lots or other amenities outside the center ROW.
  - LRT/BRT was recommended to be implemented in 2020-2025; however, the funds available have since declined with the economy.

- Based on the planning document that was developed through a partnership with CATS and NCDOT, LRT could be supported but any future expansion of ROW would require a new environmental document.

- Norm Steinman gave an overview of the managed lanes study.
Managed lanes were first considered two years ago and the City seems to be moving towards HOT lanes.

A few methods have been considered to help fund the project:
- Charging a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fee (will not happen)
- Increasing vehicle registration fees (to be approximately double the current fee)
- Charging tolls on existing freeways

In the Managed Lanes Study, the City assumed the center lane was reserved for transit and that there will be managed lanes and general-purpose lanes. Adding managed lanes requires an expansion of the currently designed section.

One major consideration with respect to the potential for managed lanes is the design of drainage, which is currently accommodated in the outer travel lane.

Managed lanes would work best if they were tied into the toll road project for the Monroe Bypass.

The I-277 interchange creates a challenge for those accessing the loop from the left lane.

The main consideration with respect to accounting for managed lanes in the future is designing the bridge spans wide enough so as to not preclude additional lanes in the cross section.

Alysia gave an overview of the Independence Boulevard Area Plan completed by the City.

Since 1991, there has been a 30% decline in commercial property values and a 27% decline in residential property adjacent to that retail.

The final public meeting for the Area Plan is tentatively scheduled for March 2010 pending the results of this Task Force.

Question: What has caused the blighted retail within the corridor?

- Access limitations
- Uncertainty about corridor future
- Shift in lifestyles away from strip retail shopping

The City has started requiring construction of new frontage roads identified with the plan; the Charlotte East Wal-Mart is the first example of this.

Question: What is main problem related to access for the businesses?

- Norm responded that the problem is confusion as much as it is congestion. Once the interchanges are built, if you miss a store it is difficult to turn around and get back to it.
- Tom Warshauer added the speeds along Independence are also a factor.

The AREA PLAN is intended to foster nodal developments at transit centers and re-orient businesses away from Independence.

Based on the roadway improvements, some parcels are just left with no good redevelopment potential.

Question: When will the Area Plan become the official land use plan?

- Alysia responded that as soon as this Task Force process is complete, the City will begin the adoption process likely around April 2010.
- Brian added that the new street connections identified in the plan could be tweaked as part of this Task Force process.
• Question: How do frontage or back frontage roads fit into the City’s Area Plan?
  o Norm responded that they are not fully incorporated in the Area Plan; due to the depth of the parcels, some frontage roads would require elimination of viable property. The City has an enormous burden to develop a street network to keep businesses viable; the Task Force should better consider property access or incorporate something into State plan.
  o As a clarification, the Area Plan is based on Independence Boulevard being a freeway but considers how to keep the community around it viable.
  o Norm added that the challenge is converting the existing businesses and homes to fit within the future environment.

**ROB HUME OPENED FLOOR FOR QUESTIONS**

• Question: If I understand correctly, the goal of this Task Force is to look at opportunities but not delay TIP project, correct?
  o Yes, because Independence has experienced a transition leading to blighted retail and declining residential property, the City developed a process simultaneous to the State’s design to try and prevent future segments from experiencing the same. The Task Force is to review the existing plans and identify any changes that can be made.

• With respect to the Managed Lanes concept, if we decided that it required more study could we take six months to do a more in-depth?
  o Norm reiterated that the directive of this Task Force is to spend 90 days to determine if any element of TIP should be changed and identify if there are design components that would prevent managed lanes from being implemented.
  o Barry added that additional study for something like managed lanes may not be off the table but recommendations would have to come from the Task Force and then considered by decision makers whether it warranted delay to the TIP project’s construction. The Task Force should first consider if we can tweak the current design, but if a great idea is developed that warrants further study it will be considered.

• Question: If just about any change to the design will result a delay to the project, what is the threshold within which we must stay to not jeopardize funding?
  o The key things that would trigger schedule delays are ROW, changes to access, and anything that would require going outside the current footprint of the roadway.

• Beyond schedule, financial implications will also be a filter for consideration of merit on proposed changes.

• Barry stated that his typical stance is that you never want to delay a project one day because you risk losing funding. However, this is a unique situation with directives from Secretary Conti and Mayor Foxx. The economy may be the biggest risk for delays to the project.

• Norm stated that he has heard both directives for the Task Force: 1) Stay within the budget and move money around if changes are identified; and 2) Come back with a grand vision (no matter the cost, document a vision the community can stand behind).

• Brian Horton gave an overview of the schedule and purpose of future Task Force meetings:
  o January 28, 2010 – Mainly developing ideas to be tested before next workshop
  o February 9, 2010 – Review developed ideas (based on homework)
  o February 23, 2010 – Refine ideas
March 11, 2010 – Wrap-up and Implementation Strategies

- Barry suggested that after the second meeting the Task Force should evaluate if we are adding value or not to the project; if not adding value, then would recommend ceasing further work on Task Force.
- The design plans are about 100% complete so NCDOT may be best suited to react to what is developed and indicate whether it is implementable within the existing project.
- Question: How long would it take to get general cost implications of proposed design changes?
  - NCDOT can get them before the following meeting.
- It was determined that it may be a good idea to bring construction contractors to the third Task Force meeting depending on the options developed during the second meeting. However, there may be some bidding implications for the contractors so it would need to be handled carefully.
- It was suggested that AGC could be contacted as a neutral resource for identifying contractors to attend.
- Question: If we make a change to one intersection, does that hold up the whole project?
  - Barry answered that depending on magnitude, it could.
  - Doug added that in previous projects, NCDOT has put a hold on certain parcels without holding up an entire project.
- Tom reiterated that a key consideration for the Task Force is the impact of the TIP project on adjacent parcels.
  - It is anticipated that at the next meeting, the Task Force will get into parcel-by-parcel review of viability of parcels.
  - The parcels within the interchange will be purchased at Sharon Amity but not at Idlewild.
- Question: Is there someone in the group who can talk to the potential for private reinvestment?
  - Brian responded that as part of Independence Boulevard Area Plan, a market analysis was conducted.
  - Rob added that the key to redevelopment in the corridor is likely twofold:
    - Certainty of what will happen and when.
    - Better provisions of access so that there is motivation for reinvestment.
- The key contacts for the Task Force are as follows:
  - City of Charlotte – Brian Horton and Alysia Osborne
  - NCDOT - Richard Hancock and Doug Taylor/Dave
- The State has obtained PUE’s where needed.
- Question: Are utility betterments included to allow for higher density of development?
  - No, just relocations.
- Utility relocation plans have not been completed.
  - The State has had a meeting with CMU but not sure about TWC, Duke, AT&T, etc.; UCCI is doing utility coordination.
- David suggested that some homework needs to be done in advance of next meeting to review parcel-by-parcel rather than do during meeting.
Utilities would need to react at the third Task Force meeting after the group has developed some potential changes.

Question: As the Task Force talks about the viability of parcels, are exceptions to design standards in play as far as control-of-access, etc?
  o Dave responded that we are not revising control-of-access limits.
  o Barry added that the Task Force needs to consider exceptions to design standards if it offers a potential solution; however, we need to remember that transportation viability is very important, too. He encouraged the group to take the leash off for brainstorming and then react.
  o David added that we need to be sure we consider everything and are willing to push and pull on both sides.

It’s important to remember that the Task Force is considering two horizons – the immediate and ultimate conditions that include transit and control-of-access.

**KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR TASK FORCE**

- ROW acquisition for utility relocations is critical to occur as soon as possible.
- Span of bridges should be designed so as not to preclude additional lane(s) for managed lanes.
- Staying within existing footprint and maintaining existing access will not require ROW modifications and therefore not necessarily result in construction delays.
- Goal is to not delay schedule or increase budget for project.

**KEY ACTION ITEMS**

- Leadership Team
  - Conceptualize framework for how to develop new ideas/modifications to TIP during the second meeting.
  - Send Steve Dewitt packet provided to attendees.

**NEXT MEETING**

- NCDOT Responsibilities
  - Bring the latest design files as roll plot to meeting.
  - Distribute PDF of roll plot and blow up view of interchanges.
  - Bring plans that show utility relocation details.

- City of Charlotte Responsibilities
  - Overlay TIP design files on City land use files.
  - Review (in advance of meeting) the business viability issues parcel-by-parcel.
  - Prepare a presentation of parcel-by-parcel review.
MEETING MINUTES

SUBJECT: Meeting #2 “Design Workshop”
PROJECT: Independence Boulevard Task Force

DATE RECORDED: January 28, 2010
DATE ISSUED: February 1, 2010

ATTENDEES

City of Charlotte: Stuart Basham, Eugene Bradley, Mark Cole, Tim Gibbs, Brian Horton, Garet Johnson, Michelle Jones, David McDonald, Felix Obregon, Alysia Osborne, Norm Steinman, Tom Warshauer


Facilitators (Kimley-Horn): Melinda Dyk, Rob Hume

GENERAL SEQUENCE OF DISCUSSIONS

GENERAL WELCOME

- Rob Hume opened the meeting by reminding the attendees of the Task Force’s goal.
- Norm Steinman thanked everyone for coming and explained that today the Task Force will be working to identify potential changes and based on the outcome of this meeting decisions will be made whether the Task Force should continue.
- Rob Hume explained that for today’s meeting, the Task Force will be divided into the following three subgroups to focus on the main components influencing the Independence corridor:
  o Ultimate Section
  o Street Network
  o Access Mitigation

BACKGROUND

- Brian Horton gave a brief presentation summarizing the access challenges along the corridor and how the City has sought to mitigate them through the Area Plan planning process.
  o Once the TIP is implemented, approximately 180 parcels will be left with access only to Independence Boulevard.
  o Uncertainty regarding the future of the corridor has been part of problem for vitality of businesses.
  o The frontage road concept was abandoned because the depth of most parcels makes it infeasible to implement frontage roads and leave a viable parcel for redevelopment.
  o The City would like to set up alternate access for parcels on Independence; ideally, this could be accomplished within the current TIP project, but at a minimum ensure that the TIP does not preclude future alternate access plans.
BREAKOUT GROUPS

- The Task Force broke out into three separate groups and then reconvened to provide a summary of what each group recommended for further consideration.

Street Network Breakout Group Summary

- This group explored opportunities for merging the proposed Area Plan street network with the TIP (the Area Plan assumed no change to TIP design).
  - Sharon Amity Interchange – explored option of flipping the ramp from the east side to west side of Sharon Amity Road.
    - Allows for full control of access on Independence by setting up network for reverse frontage road for commercial parcels
    - Construction cost would likely be comparable
    - May compromise future access to Glendora area
    - Right-of-way costs would likely increase
  - Question: Was bike/pedestrian corridor considered in this area?
    - During Area Plan process, it was discussed but would need smaller blocks to reasonably implement.
  - Idlewild Interchange – explored allowing a frontage road to share ramp right-of-way or shifting the ramp to intersect Independence along existing right-of-way.
    - It was suggested that a roundabout may be a possible solution to facilitate the intersection of the ramp and frontage road.
    - Network traffic analysis would need to be conducted.
    - A change to this interchange would have to happen now in order to not preclude a future reverse frontage road.
    - Approximately 900 vehicles in morning peak are projected to head into town which would make it difficult to allow the frontage road and ramp to operate together.
    - It was noted that the eastbound ramp at Idlewild Road does not preclude a fourth leg to the intersection. However, Jim stated that the laneage at that intersection was a challenge and a fourth leg may not work based on traffic demand.

- Street Network Recommendations/Items Warranting Further Study
  - Sharon Amity ramp – Need to review feasibility, cost, and potential schedule delays of moving ramp to the other side.
  - Idlewild/Farmingdale reverse frontage road – Need to review feasibility, cost, and potential schedule delays.

- Steve observed that the Task Force is feeling constrained by the cost and schedule so much so that we are dismissing most ideas. The group needs to develop the ideas and let others decide if they merit impacts to the cost or schedule of the TIP project. He encouraged the Task Force to not get bogged down in constraints and lose the vision.

Access Mitigation Breakout Group Summary

- Sharon Amity interchange vicinity – high priority to provide access to the shopping center
  - City would like to explore option of connecting Holbrook Drive east of Sharon Amity (currently two cul-de-sacs).
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- State to review the Charleston Drive connection.
  - Idlewild interchange vicinity
    - Would like to see road network through existing apartment complex.
    - Important redevelopment opportunity in southwest quadrant of the interchange.
      - State may be able to tweak angle of intersection to accommodate redevelopment better.
      - Additional study needed for access to southwest quadrant.
    - The Olive Garden is not being purchased by the State as part of TIP project and they have made many changes to the plans in order to accommodate keeping access per the property owner’s request.
- Access Mitigation Recommendations/Items Warranting Further Study
  - Charleston Drive (State to review)
  - Holbrook/Whittier connection (City to review)
  - Full movement at Conference Drive
  - Determine how City and State can work together for instances where property owner wants to be bought out but the State is not planning to as part of TIP project.

Ultimate Section Breakout Group

- The group reached concurrence that Independence Boulevard should make provisions to accommodate future general traffic, transit, and managed lanes.
- Ultimate Section Recommendations/Items Warranting Further Study – the following were identified as needing further evaluation for land use and project impacts:
  - Determine what (if any) desired elements in the ultimate cross section will be precluded based on existing design.
  - Existing design with an additional 32 feet of pavement and widened bridges to accommodate managed lanes all the way through corridor.
  - Complete control-of-access along corridor.
  - Back design down to interim (super street).
  - Combination of complete control-of-access and super street.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

- Right-of-way can only be purchased for actual project. May impact feasibility of buying 32 feet of additional of right-of-way to accommodate future managed lanes.
- Want to be sure each dollar invested in corridor is making progress towards ultimate cross-section and not to be wasted later.
- Norm said that the State is purchasing 165 feet and the City thought it was 200 feet.
- Jim reminded the group that if 32 additional feet is added, there are additional design considerations beyond just widening the bridges (e.g. impact to ramp loops, drainage, etc.).
- Many decisions will need to be made based on right-of-way costs and the State cannot get them in a week and a half before the February 9th meeting. The City will work to generate an order of magnitude number based on guidance from the State.
The direction this Task Force established will impact not only the segment of Independence included in U-209B but also future segments and future segments have greater setbacks than this segment.

Given the amount of homework that needs to be done in response to the ideas generated today, there is not enough time between now and the scheduled February 9th meeting. Therefore, the February 9th meeting is cancelled with the expectation that subgroups will coordinate between now and the next meeting on February 25th.

The Task Force’s deadline is March 11th to recommend whether any changes should be made to the corridor.

Rob suggested the facilitators of each breakout group take the lead to identify data needs for recommendations and coordinate meetings as needed in interim before the February 23rd Task Force meeting.

Question: Do some ideas generated work together, compete, rely on each other?

- Yes, some are dependent or mutually exclusive.

Access Group and Street Network groups will coordinate on action items since they overlap.

Expectation is that by February 23rd, the groups will have graphics and costs to actively discuss during the meeting.

Question: Given that the ultimate section group came up with many alternatives (some go up in impacts, some go down) and many require relatively significant analysis, what are we supposed to be achieving in this Task Force? Before we go in two directions, what is the direction for Task Force?

- The group reviewed the letter written by Mayor Foxx to reestablish the direction for the group. The key objectives were identified as follows:
  - Consider whether the project as designed is still the best investment for the corridor.
  - Examine ways to minimize damage to adjacent businesses due to access limitations.
  - Avoid delays to project’s construction date.

- Steve reminded the group that design-build gives some flexibility in making changes while keeping with the existing construction schedule.

- Norm summarized that “best investment for corridor” translates to the long range vision while “minimize damage” translates to recognizing the damage done to businesses on previous segments.

- The City is creating an outline of data needed for each group by the next meeting on February 23rd.
MEETING NOTES

SUBJECT: Meeting #3 “Concept Refinement”  PROJECT: Independence Boulevard Task Force

DATE RECORDED: February 23, 2010  DATE ISSUED: February 26, 2010

ATTENDEES

City of Charlotte: Stuart Basham, Bill Carstarphen, Brian Horton, Garet Johnson, Michelle Jones, David McDonald, Felix Obregon, Alysia Osborne, Norm Steinman, Tom Warshauer

NCDOT: James Bridges, Tawana Brooks, Steve Dewitt, Jim Dunlop, Ron Graham, Elise Groundwater, Richard Hancock, Louis Mitchell, Anil Panicker, Dave Scheffel, John Shoemaker, Doug Taylor

Facilitators (Kimley-Horn): Melinda Dyk, Rob Hume

GENERAL SEQUENCE OF DISCUSSIONS

- The facilitator (Rob Hume) opened the meeting by providing an overview of the meeting’s agenda and explained that the product of the Task Force was expected to be modifications to the TIP project but based on the concepts developed to date may likely also include:
  - Concepts considered complementary to the TIP (because of scope, funding or schedule impacts) that may require TIP modification to accommodate them in the future
  - Concepts that fundamentally change the scope of the TIP requiring further consideration outside the Task Force
- Brian Horton gave a brief overview of the Task Force-developed concepts that were distributed via email on February 12th
  1. The Access Mitigation group-developed concepts included:
     - Provide right-turn tapers along Independence Boulevard at major trip generators along the corridor
     - Identify and prioritize key properties to consider offering owner buy-outs in recognition of the poor circumstances surrounding the property as a result of the TIP project
  2. The Street Network group-developed concepts included:
     - Whittier-Holbrook Connection
     - Charleston Drive Roundabout
     - Idlewild Road Leftover
     - Idlewild Ramp – Reverse-Frontage Road Roundabout
     - Idlewild U-turn at Hunters Ridge Lane
     - Conference Drive Left-Turn at Future Buick Drive
     - Conference Drive Median Opening and Left-Turns
  3. The Ultimate Section group-developed concepts included:
     - Lengthen the proposed bridges to accommodate the ultimate future cross section (travel lanes, transit and managed lanes)
Consider an alternative roadway/intersection design concept (like “superstreet”) that would provide a lesser improvement to a longer segment of Independence Boulevard.

Each of the concepts was reviewed and discussed by the Task Force members in more detail.

1. Property Buy-out Prioritization
   - Norm indicated that the recommendation of the Task Force should likely be that the City and State work collaboratively to facilitate the City initiative of strategic buy-outs rather than discuss specific properties and their priorities during the Task Force meeting.
   - Because the vision for the corridor is to be controlled access, the concept of buying out properties is consistent with the Task Force objective of minimizing interim damage to businesses due to access limitations.
   - The State won’t know the difference in property values (between damage and full acquisition) until the appraisals are completed; the six month right-of-way date is schedule for May and the appraisals should be complete by the fall.
   - From a public relations perspective, the City and State need to be careful in announcing that they are working together on a City initiative for buy-outs as it may likely trigger questions/concerns from property owners who have been impacted previously but not bought out, as well as property owners who may not be identified for a potential buy-out.
   - The order of contact for impacted properties is as follows: 1) Relocates 2) Properties impacted by utility relocations 3) Vacant parcels
   - Per the City’s assessment of prioritized buy-outs, many of the highest priority properties are located in the original TIP segment
   - The City should develop a list of prioritized properties and give it to the State; the State will start on appraisals for those properties and get the values back to the City as soon as possible to begin to get an idea of likely funding needed for a potential buy-out program
   - A good estimate for order-of-magnitude property values is applying the following equation: (tax value x 1.4 x 0.5).
   - Through the Independence Boulevard Area Plan process, the City has told the public that they are developing buy-out strategies. Within the current segment it makes sense to coordinate with the State to pursue the City initiative of property buy-outs through the ROW process. On previous segments, the City will need to determine how to address owners who may feel excluded.

2. Right-turn Taper at Major Driveways
   - NCDOT is supportive of incorporating these into the TIP project.

3. Whittier-Holbrook Connection
   - Based on standard ROW acquisition policy, the State is not required to purchase the houses that will be adjacent to the Sharon Amity ramp; however, the City feels that due to the connectivity that is lost with the cul-de-sacing of Whittier and Holbrook that those properties should be purchased to allow for restoring the connection. NCDOT does not believe there is justification to purchase the properties by eminent domain.
   - One of the houses in question is inhabited by an 80-year old woman who does not want to be relocated. This makes it more challenging to consider purchasing the properties when they were not originally identified as required for the TIP project. NCDOT believes property owners must agree to acquisition before it could happen.
   - The City may need to pursue this as a municipal project.

4. Charleston Drive Roundabout
- Doug stated that unless the proposed roundabout improves the function of the intersection, it will not likely be considered as warranting inclusion in the TIP
- Concept warrants further study to determine if the benefits justify modification to the TIP

5. Conference Drive Leftovers and Median Openings
- Conference Drive will be inherited by the City for maintenance; therefore, the State has no problem modifying the plans to account for the requested median openings.

6. Idlewild U-turn at Hunters Ridge Lane
- This concept would likely require some additional right-of-way to allow for a bulb-out. Additional review is required to be sure this would not create problems.

7. Idlewild Road Leftover
- The State is supportive of incorporating this change.

8. Idlewild Ramp – Reverse Frontage Road Roundabout
- Although the original concept distributed on February 12th represented a roundabout located north of the Idlewild Road ramp, it is preferred that the roundabout be included in the ramp and be shifted back towards Idlewild Road to minimize property impacts.
- Consideration of this concept in contingent upon Congestion Management’s analysis; based on the projected traffic volumes, the ramp is expected to carry approximately 1,000 vehicles per hour in each direction. NCDOT needs traffic projections for the future frontage road from the City.

9. Ultimate Section
- NCDOT provided an assessment of lengthening the proposed bridges to accommodate a wider cross section on Independence Boulevard; it is expected that it would cost approximately $1M to lengthen the three bridges within the TIP.
- Per the I-77 Feasibility Study, it is recommended that there be four feet of separation between the general purpose lanes and HOV lanes due to the operating speed differential. This additional four feet was not included in the assessment outlined in the previous bullet.
- It is likely possible to lengthen the bridges without a significant impact to the schedule. Adding another four feet to both sides would increase each bridge cost another $0.5 million, increasing the cost of all three bridges by $1.5 million.
- The drainage design cannot be revised without major impacts to the schedule and based on the constraints of the design it is not preferred.
- It was noted the original section as constructed may not accommodate the HOV/HOT lanes without modification and there is no funding to implement them at this time. The task force may recommend a study be completed outside of the TIP to understand any such constraints to future managed lanes. This study would not impact the current schedule for U-209B.
- The Task Force concluded that due to the relatively minor increase in cost, it is worth recommending extending the bridges now so as not to constrain the ultimate cross section.

- The concepts were categorized into recommended modifications to the TIP and concepts requiring additional clarification as follows:
  1. Recommended modifications to the TIP
     - Idlewild Road Leftover
     - Idlewild Ramp – Reverse Frontage Road Roundabout (requires additional analysis)
     - Idlewild U-turn at Hunters Ridge Lane
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- Conference Drive Leftover at Future Buick Drive
- Conference Drive Median Opening and Leftovers
- Right-turn tapers at major driveways
- Lengthen bridges

2. Concepts requiring additional clarification
   - Whittier-Holbrook Connection
   - Charleston Drive Roundabout

- Jim discussed the potential consideration of implementing the superstreet concept now and moving forward with the proposed interchanges sometime in the future.
  1. This concept would likely last until 2020 – 2022 before reaching functional capacity.
  2. This would likely extend the period during which businesses are choosing not to reinvest.
  3. The superstreet concept may not be consistent with or as able to accommodate light rail transit.
  4. The Task Force determined the superstreet concept to be incompatible with the City’s land use plan and not preferred over the current TIP project.

ACTION ITEMS

- NCDOT will analyze the Idlewild Ramp – Reverse Frontage Road roundabout; the City needs to provide traffic projections for the frontage road.
- Determine if the Charleston Drive Roundabout should be included as a modification to the TIP or as a future recommended project; NCDOT to determine if the current tee intersection at Charleston Drive operates acceptably; City to determine the status of the adjacent property owner.
- NCDOT to review the potential of lengthening the bridges an additional four feet beyond what was analyzed to accommodate the separation between general purpose lanes and managed lanes.

TASK FORCE FINAL DELIVERABLE

- The final deliverable of the Task Force will include a detailed summary of findings; however, it was established that an executive summary should be addressed to Mayor Foxx and Secretary Conti apprising them of the Task Force’s response to the directives in the letter from Mayor Foxx to Secretary Conti.
- The City will take the lead on creating the Executive Summary; the draft will be distributed via email on March 4th, comments need to be returned by March 9th, and the final document will be submitted on March 11th to Mayor Foxx and Secretary Conti.

NEXT STEPS

- The City will distribute meeting notes from Meeting #2 and #3 for review.
- Meeting #4 scheduled for March 11th will be canceled in lieu of email coordination on the final deliverable.
- A future meeting will be scheduled in mid-March to finalize the Task Force findings.