

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 4, 2024, by Mayor Robert Simison.

Members Present: Robert Simison, Luke Cavener, Liz Strader, John Overton, Doug Taylor, Anne Little Roberts and Brian Whitlock.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

☒ Liz Strader	☒ Brian Whitlock
☒ Anne Little Roberts	☒ John Overton
☒ Doug Taylor	☒ Luke Cavener
☒ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call this meeting to order. For the record it is June 4th, 2024, at 4:30 p. m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next up is adoption of the agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move we approve the agenda as presented.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to adopt the agenda as present. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the agenda is adopted.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Idaho Pup and Ales Water Main Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2024-0072)**
- 2. E. Lake Hazel Rd. Sanitary Sewer Easement No. 1 (ESMT-2024-0074)**
- 3. Agreement between the City of Meridian and Ada County Highway District for use of Idaho Transportation Department Fiscal Year 2024 Strategic Initiatives Local Transportation Grant Funds**

- 4. Fiscal Year 2024 Net-zero Budget Amendment in the amount of \$4,035,389.00 for State Grant Funds for Linder Road Overpass Project cost offset**
- 5. Resolution No. 24-2454: Final Acceptance of Fanfare Artwork at Discovery Park by Steve Parker**
- 6. Resolution No. 24-2455: Final Acceptance of Peregrine Bike Racks at Discovery Park by Colin Selig**
- 7. Resolution No. 24-2457: A Resolution of the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Meridian Approving City Council President's Appointments of City Council Members to Serve as Department Liaisons; and Providing an Effective Date**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move we approve the Consent Agenda. For the Mayor to sign and the Clerk to attest.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the Consent Agenda. Is there any discussion? If not, all in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it and the Consent Agenda is agreed to.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

Simison: There were no items moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

8. Years of Service Recognition

Simison: So, we will just move on to Department/Commission Reports and the first items up is our years of service recognition. We will go ahead and do this at the podium and I think we will ask Ms. Glenn to join myself at the podium first up. Karie, nice to see you. So, this is part of our ongoing efforts as we do our employee recognitions of those with the significant -- significant years of service to the city. So, we have got two employees who will be celebrating 25 years with the City of Meridian and so it's quite a momentous

accomplishment and Karie predates me by a few years and had much longer hair when I first met her in that context. But it's -- it's an honor to be here as we celebrate you, Karie, today. It's great to see some great faces out there that are here as we honor you for your time with the city. So, I'm just going to go over a little bit of your career in that context and, then, if you want to anyway, we will let you say some -- a few words, but you don't need to tonight. Karie started her career in April 1999 here in the Public Works Department as a department specialist. Continued to rise in -- in the department to -- to a senior department specialist, a supervisor and, eventually, became the business operations manager in 2008 and, then, in June 2009 moved into her current position as the utility billing manager in our Finance Department. Some fun facts about Karie is that she -- her and her husband James and their -- live with their two Wiener dogs, Coco and Ebony, preparing for the next phase of life with a 40 foot house on wheels to travel the country once you get to that point in time, but you are not there yet, but we appreciate you thinking about that next type of lifestyle and see if you can live on the road together. It says practicing -- it says you have a dry sense of humor. I have actually really always enjoyed your sense of humor very much and found it to be spot on is how I would describe it, instead of dry. But you -- you have always been a great team partner and participant in everything that has gone on in the city, especially with the Finance Department. You jump in, you make things happen. You have addressed issues that customers have had that I have worked with you on for years and years and years always with a can do approach and going to make it happen and that's something that I have always personally very much admired about your time and your roles is -- I talked to Karie, I know -- I know it's going to be handled, sometimes one way or the other, but it's going to get handled most definitely. So, with that I'm going to see if Todd would like to come up and say any words as well. Just -- someone that you have worked with for a long time as well, but -- he doesn't have to, but I know he also -- he loves recognizes his -- his -- his employees. Yes. From the podium.

Lavoie: Well, Mayor, I appreciate it. Karie, again, you have been up with us for a number of years and, as Robert stated, she leads her team by example and her team always follows her. We all learn from her, because she takes extreme pride in what she does. So, a lot of us learn from that. I lean on her to be my sounding board for I guess decision making. I am the -- kind of the -- the soft person, the blue person and, then, she keeps me in check on -- you need to be a little bit more direct, Todd. So, she helps me stay guided. So, we bounce a lot of ideas off each other. Again, we work well together. I think she works well with the team. Again, it's been an honor. Again, I appreciate it. Congrats on 25 years and only a couple more left I believe? A couple.

Glenn: Thank you. Thank you for all the nice words I greatly appreciate it.

Simison: She said thank you for all the nice words. She greatly appreciates it, so it's on the record. So, Karie, congratulations on 25 years with the City of Meridian. Mr. Leslie, would you like to join us. The chief, why don't you go ahead and come on up as well. So, we are here to recognize Jamie's 25 years with the City of Meridian. Since you started here a year before Karie, I don't know if we are a year late or, you know, maybe some time off for bad behavior was -- occurred during that time frame. But Jamie started as a

police officer with the Meridian Police Department in 1998 and he was promoted to detective in 2002, became a corporal in 2003, sergeant in 2004 and lieutenant in 2010. He -- let's say he's been here longer than I have and he's always been a steady face from my memory and he's had many roles in the department, but I think some of the things that stand out most to me is when it came to a commercial construction project occurring there at department Jamie was always the go to guy, whether it was Jeff or Tracy, it's like he is -- I don't want to say it was -- I don't know, go talk to Tracy -- or go talk to Jamie, but it was pretty much -- I don't know, go talk to Jamie throughout all those projects, because he was really the one that lead department in that. Also helped develop the department's report writing system, which is now used by the law enforcement agencies in Ada county. On the forefront of many technology process improvements for the department for the last 20 years. He is a leader amongst leaders and a tremendous asset to the city and I'm sure the chief has many more wonderful things to say about Jamie at this time. But whether it's cars or buildings, you are the go to.

Basterrechea: Oh, I have got some things to say about Jamie, but not for here. No. The thing that I -- I really really appreciate -- appreciate about Jamie -- and we talk about it a lot as a group and outside of our group -- is when we are trying to figure out the answer to a problem and we are all going in one direction, Jamie is the guy that comes up with this idea that everybody's like why the heck didn't we think of that? And it happens over and over again. He just has a different way of -- of looking at problems and looking at things and I absolutely appreciate that and he is kind of -- he is one of those guys that make sure that I don't step in it. Sometimes I have ideas or -- or things that we are going one direction and Jamie will always be the one that -- he's really willing to step into my office and say, hey, I know why you are thinking this way, but have you thought about the repercussions of this and maybe we need to rethink it in a different direction and so I really really appreciate that about him.

9. Idaho Transportation Department Eagle Road Presentation

Simison: Thank you. With that we will move on to Item 9, which is the -- oh, I'm also supposed to announce we have cake; is that correct? So, cake out there. And for those that would like to have some cake -- even if Council wants to go grab a slice, we can have it while we enjoy, but there will be some afterwards. So, with that we will move on to Item 9, which is the Idaho Transportation Department Eagle Road presentation. Not sure exactly who -- if it's going to be Jason, Dan or somebody else. Will we see -- it looks like we are going to have a group effort. We will start off with Dan McElhinney and let him introduce whoever he has got from the team for any remarks and presentations. Dan, thank you for being here. Appreciate it.

McElhinney: Good afternoon, Mayor and Council Members. Thanks for having us for an update on Eagle Road traffic safety improvements. I'm Dan McElhinney. I am the Chief Deputy, Chief Operations Officer for ITD statewide and with me is one of my 6th District engineers Jason Brinkman. So, today, Mayor and Council Members, we will give you an update on what we -- our activities are on safety for Eagle Road since our last update in October and we will give an update on those proposed improvements for safety,

congestion, speed and signal operations and we have a recommendation that we are going to be presenting to our board next week. Thank you, Meridian and Boise and Eagle for being part of the working group since fall of 2022 and the Mayor and Chief Deputy Miles have been a great -- great team members. Ada County Highway District, Idaho State Police and, of course, Meridian Police Chief and his team and the Idaho Transportation Department staff of District Three and headquarters. We did initiate a fall contract last year to study signal timing on state highways in Ada county, as well as in Pocatello and Twin Falls and so we have some preliminary results that Jason would be presenting on that in regards to Eagle Road and this year we have been focusing on fine tuning our opportunities for improvement on Eagle Road, working with city officials. Oh, I think everybody knows Eagle Road pretty well, but if you don't it's good to remind you that six and a half miles of state highway from State Highway 44 to I-84 -- that's 18 signals and sometimes it's three lanes both directions, sometimes it's two lanes both directions. It serves a hospital zone, business zone, residential zones and access to the Boise River across the three cities. Not long ago it was only 30,000 cars a day, now it's near 60,000 cars a day. We did complete a speed survey and Jason can go into details on that, but it shows drivers are traveling in general at the posted speed limits per the 85th percentile traffic engineering study. What else about Eagle Road. Well, it has a lot of crashes. Almost 2,000 crashes over the last five years, according to our Office of Highway Safety stats. Sixty-four percent of those were between Franklin and Chinden. The majority of those are rear-end accidents and there are some high counts at the intersections, nearly 2,000 crashes at some of the major intersections over the five year period and the mid-block left and U-turn medium breaks were also a crash concentration area and that's our -- that's our biggest concern, how can we make a change to help drivers travel the corridor safer and have less crashes. So, I will turn it over to Jason to talk about the speed survey and the proposals.

Brinkman: Thank you, Dan. Again Jason Brinkman, I'm the district engineer for District Three, which includes southwest Idaho. I think you have seen this slide before. This is the observations of speeds that the public is traveling along the corridor. On this graph we have shown what the average speeds are in the blue bars. The orange bars represent the drop-in speeds that we are getting at peak times, which you can see while not terribly significant it is there and, then, the -- the gray bar is more of a theoretical or estimated free flow. That speed isn't necessarily achieved for long portions of the day, but that would be the -- the prevailing speed if we could best estimate one of what traffic is capable of driving. ITD set speeds based on something that we call the 85th percentile method and this is a method that is prescribed to us out of a national standard, the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This is essentially the speed that's just right at what 85 percent of traffic is -- is going or -- or above. So, the 85 percent of drivers would be below the speed and 15 percent above. So, when we do the speed studies that's what we are looking for, that's the number. Speed limits are prescribed as far as how we apply those in -- in law and in policy and speed limits are not arbitrarily set. What the speed study and review showed us is that the speed limits along Eagle Road, while they are not all the same today, there is some 50 and 55 and 40, that they do all appear to be appropriate under our methodology for the current conditions. But we do certainly recognize that those speed limits may not always be attainable during the peak congested periods,

because of the stopping and the queuing that occurs at intersections. So, what we have for you today are three categories of recommendations that we are making for improvements to Eagle Road. We constructed the raised medians that are in the center of Eagle Road in the early 20 teens -- 2013-ish. There were concerns at that time that those medians would turn some access locations into right-in, right-out and that that could have a negative effect on businesses or drive excessive U-turns. We are happy to report that we haven't noticed that to be the case. The businesses seem to be doing well. People have found ways to get to their destinations and the U-turn volumes are tolerable at the intersections where they exist today. However, there are four pairs of median breaks where there are unsignalized either left-in turns or U-turns that occur in the median and so there is -- all of these are paired, one each direction, northbound and southbound. Those locations are at Meadowdale Street, which is just south of McMillan. At Bald Cypress, which is north of Ustick Road. There is a U-turn provision that is immediately south of Ustick Road and, then, there is a pair of left-ins at Lanark Street, north of Franklin. Dan mentioned the volumes of growing significantly and they continue to grow. We -- we are awaiting to see what the effects of new facilities like Highway 16 will have, but all indications are that Eagle Road will continue to appreciate steady growth as population in the valley grows and development continues. As such we don't think that the issue with those unsignalized median breaks is going to get any better and so we feel it's appropriate at this time to restrict one direction of movement at each of those four locations and we are picking that direction based on which has a more severe traffic condition. So, it's often the case that a signal adjacent to these locations will back up or queue across these locations and that represents a particular safety concern, because drivers awaiting left turn at those locations can't necessarily see oncoming traffic in the far lanes. So, the proposal would be to close southbound left-in at Meadowdale, northbound left-in at Bald Cypress, the southbound U-turn near Ustick and the northbound left-in at Lanark. Category two is what we titled congestion and speed and as I mentioned earlier, we think they are related and that it's not always possible to achieve the posted speed during congested periods. We have developed three sub alternatives to consider how we deal with that. One of the motions that we think would help is making sure that at least unfamiliar drivers are alerted to that condition existing. So, alternate 2-A would put up ten sets of yellow diamond shaped warning signs that would read watch for stopped traffic. These signs are approximately four foot by four foot. Underneath of them, much like you might see on a speed rated curve, would be an advisory placard that would say 45 miles per hour and above the signs would be a pair of yellow or amber lights that would flash in an alternating fashion to alert drivers to that condition. This option is advisory in nature. We certainly recognize that the -- the warning signs, even with the 45 mile per hour placard, are not citable offenses under normal circumstances. Our second alternative, a sub alternative 2-B, was what we call a daily congestion zone. This would include some additional signing that would declare a portion of Eagle Road to be a daily congestion zone, which would be posted on yellow rectangular advisory signs, so that motorists would understand that they were in the zone where they would expect congestion. This would be done in conjunction with speed feedback signs that says your speed is next to the normal static speed limit sign. So, if it said 50 miles per hour underneath would be a supplemental sign that says your speed is and it would read back in realtime the speed of the approaching motorist. The intent of this option is to both alert traffic to being in a

zone where they should expect congestion, as well as to try to encourage better driver behavior and this, as well, is advisory in nature. The third alternative -- the third sub alternative in category two is what we call variable speed limit. Variable in this case refers to a type of a speed limit sign where we take out the portion of the sign where the normal numbers are printed and we replace it with an LED panel. These LED panels can be obtained in different colors. Sometimes in construction zones they might be yellow lights or orange lights. For the purpose of a speed limit sign it would be black and white sign panels, so that the numbers would appear black and white like they do on an ordinary speed sign. That allows us to change the speed limit throughout the day as conditions warrant. This technology has been used previously, but we are not aware of the use of it to date on a signalized urban arterial. The installations that we are familiar with are on freeways and interstates where they are normally placed overhead above the road on a sign structure much like you might see on the interstate for advertising exits and -- and locations. We would propose to do these with roadside signs, which we think are more appropriate for the corridor and we would set times uniformly throughout the variable speed limit zone, so that the signs would change simultaneously and could be monitored remotely. The speeds for ordinary times a day -- less congested times a day would be set at their current posted speeds and, then, during congested periods we would propose that we would lower them to 45 miles per hour, such as from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. in the morning and from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. We would base these times based on the traffic congested conditions. So, we might adjust these a half hour give or take as -- as we perfect this plan, but the notion would be that they would be the same every day, so that they were predictable and knowable as far as people's travel time and their expectations in the corridor. Unlike the advisory signs or warning signs, variable speed limit signs are enforceable in Idaho. So, you can get a speeding ticket for these, much like you would a static sign, and we have had successful use of these in some construction work zones on a temporary basis. So, we have a little bit of experience with that. We would also add the flashing yellow beacons above the signs with the intention to turn those on only during periods when the speed is lower. So, in addition to the lower speed there would also be a visible flashing warning that the speed is lowered at those times. I have got a plot of the entire corridor here that I have chopped up into pieces to show you approximately where those locations of these devices would be. So, this is for that option 2-C, the variable speed limit. We would -- starting here at I-84 -- north is up on these. We would retain the 50 mile per hour zone that's down by St. Luke's today. We would add a warning sign that says watch for stopped traffic next seven miles and, then, just north of Franklin Road -- this would put the -- the variable speed limit pilot in effect from Franklin Road to Chinden essentially. So, just north of Franklin Road you would encounter the first variable speed zone sign notifying that you were in such a zone. Also detailed there and -- and blown up on the left is the detail of how we would close that left-in at Lanark for the northbound left turns. You can see we would -- we would hatch out the -- the turn lane that's there right now for the northbound. Southbound would still be able to use that location. Moving to the north this is the zone that includes the Fairview and River Valley areas and you can see the installation there, then, of these variable speed limit signs, so the black and white signs with the two black X's. The black X's is where it would say 45 during congested times or 55 during normal times. We believe it would be prudent to also install these with speed feedback signs. We find those to be

very effective in trying to curb driver behavior of folks that might be going a little too fast and so these would have not only the current speed limit, but also be giving realtime feedback. There is a couple other warning signs and advertising of the speed zone there. You can also see on the left the closure of the southbound U-turn at Ustick, which is highlighted on the -- on the bigger map as a hatched area. This, then, is the Ustick and McMillan area as I continue to move north. You can see there the closure of the northbound left-in for Bald Cypress and a series of signs, both the variable speed and the warning signs that we would propose to put in the corridor. I will, then, move north to the area between McMillan and Chinden. This is showing the end of the variable speed zone just south of Chinden. So, there would be signs on all three directions approaching Chinden and Eagle advising of the entrance of that zone and, then, additional warning signs as well and you can see there the closure of the southbound left turn for Meadowdale and, then, this is the north end of the corridor where Eagle Road meets State Highway 44 in Eagle. We are retaining the existing 40 mile per hour speed on that end and adding a couple warning signs, both watching for stopped traffic southbound, as well as the 40 ahead northbound. The third category of our recommendations, then, had to do a signal operations and Anne mentioned the contract that we entered last year for the traffic expert review of our signal operations. We have recently upgraded all of the signal controllers in the corridor to something that are known as ATPMS signals that stands for Automated Traffic Performance Management System and, essentially, what these controllers do is collect a whole lot of data about how the signal is operating, what kind of queues it's experiencing and things of that nature. So, you might call these smart controllers. The expert review found that ACHD, who is our operating partner on the signals and ITD, we are doing a reasonably good job of operating signals in the corridor. They are going to make recommendations for minor tweaks of the signal timing, but not things that most people would be detecting, just a few seconds here or there. There are some future opportunities where we can look at things like emergency vehicle preemptions and how the signals reset after those to try to optimize getting back to the normal operating condition. There is, however, no real expectation of ever having a green light progression all the way through the corridor. The spacing and the volumes that we are dealing with simply don't lend to that on a two way roadway like Eagle Road. However, there is the possibility that we can get some partial progressions moving through segments of the corridor and we will certainly look for those opportunities anywhere we can put those into place. We will also continue to monitor on an ongoing basis those signals and analyze new technologies for bringing every bit of capacity that we can out of the signals in the corridor. So, to summarize our three-point recommendations, we are recommending for the sake of safety closing four of the eight median breaks, one each at those four paired locations where the left-ins or U-turns are currently leading to the most accidents. We would propose to implement alternative 2-C with regard to congestion and speed limits, which would put the variable speed limit zone in place as a pilot from Franklin to Chinden and, then, we will work with ACHD to continue to update signal timing and to do the ongoing monitoring in the corridor. With that, Mr. Mayor, Council Members, we thank you for your time and stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you, Jason and Dan. Council, questions, comments?

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: First off can you hear me okay?

Simison: Yes, we can.

Overton: Thank you. And the rest of the Council. I would like to start off first off by sharing a thank you to ITD for this presentation. There is a lot of stuff that you guys presented that I totally agree with. I -- I still have some issues with some of it. I have -- I have always believed that out of those 2,000 -- or almost 2,000 crashes we have on Eagle Road, one of the things I keep getting told is speed is not a factor and speeding -- going over the speed limit, that is correct, but I still maintain that the current speed limit of 55 miles an hour is a factor in a lot of those crashes and I stand by that from all my years of studying crashes. I think that the 45 would not only reduce any fatalities, it would reduce the seriousness of our injuries, it would reduce the damage that we have in a lot of crashes and in some cases could completely eliminate some crashes we have today, because you mentioned that most of them are following too close and the problem we have -- and I drive that road almost every day -- is currently many times of the day, not just in the times that you have set aside, we will have drivers who are in a 30 or 35 mile per hour traffic jam and see a break ahead of them and they rush to get back up to that 55 mile an hour speed limit, only a short time later they dynamite the brakes, because we are coming up on the traffic in front of them and most of the problems we have with those following too close accidents, I believe from the bottom of my heart, is the fact that we have two factors at play here, we have the time it takes for those drivers to react to what's happening in front of them, coupled with the time it takes for their vehicle to stop and when you add those two factors together at 55 miles an hour it's a long distance and I think a lot of drivers have a hard time figuring out what that distance is and I won't go into the whole thing I gave last time you were there, because I brought in a lot of the -- the facts from highway department -- or highway traffic safety having to do with the difference in the amount of inertia from a 45 mile an hour stop to a 55 mile an hour stop. I'm still pushing for 45 all the way through that corridor. Make no bones about it. That is my ultimate goal. But based on the presentation that you have given today I think it's only fair that we let ITD offer up something like Option 2-C, but I would ask something very important of you. I think the two hour zone is way too short. I think you have got too many people, especially to all of the restaurants and businesses we have got, that could be going down Eagle Road. at 45, having dinner, getting back on Eagle Road and it's now 55. I would like to see an extra hour added to each one of those and make those at a minimum of four hour time zones in the morning and in the evening or in the heaviest traffic times at least four hours and, then, we can start to study as we go through this what that accident data looks like through those times and through the unregulated times when it comes to accident stats. I do commend you for the four left-turn movements that we will be further restricting. It's not a very popular opinion, but I have been supporting those medians since the beginning from when we were first trying to eliminate 34 injury crashes coming out of Magic View onto Eagle Road just north of the freeway and we did that. It

went from 34 to zero. I truly believe that can do a lot of help in reducing some of those crashes. But I think the only way we are going to really substantially make a change in a lot of these rear-end accidents is by lowering those speeds and if that takes going with Option 2-C that may be the only way that we can study that and -- and come to some form of agreement in the future that that's what it's going to take. Again, what I want to see is 45 straight across. I don't think it's fair to the drivers to have different speed limits during the day. I think it's tougher on our law enforcement folks and I'm not sure how that's going to be taken in some cases in front of our local magistrates when they get a ticket for a road that, quite frankly, they could be driving on and it could be 55 and it could change to 45 while they are on it. So, I will leave it at that for right now. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you, Councilman Overton. Mr. Brinkman.

Brinkman: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you, Council Member. We appreciate your comments. We -- we did want to emphasize that the hours of the variable speed at 45 miles an hour -- we are still -- we are still looking at, so we appreciate those comments. We as a team -- the team really liked the opportunity to have a safety corridor beyond just talking about speed limits. The number one thing for the traffic engineering team that's looked at this is -- is those mid-block accident issues and so we appreciate support or comments there, because it's -- it's not easy to do, but having opportunities at the signalized intersections to get to businesses or do U-turn -- a U-turn signalized, we thought there was some good options there and having a safety corridor gives us an opportunity to let drivers know whether it's daytime, nighttime, bad weather and when they see the variable speed zone signage and they -- whether or not it's a variable speed at that time, hey, there is something different up ahead. If I -- if I don't know this corridor or if I'm taking too many risks on this corridor, I need to think safety. So, watch for stopped traffic signage is still part of the package. Just -- because we are trying to guide them. This is a different corridor. This is very unique for Idaho and this variable speed limit package, as Jason says, it's unique on an arterial nationwide, but our success here in our District Three and down in Twin Falls area and up in Coeur d'Alene with the variable speed limits and speed feedback together in construction zones has shown ISP and ITD really good progress. So, we -- we will bring it to this safety corridor. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: A quick question and I appreciate the presentation. How do you account for -- by closing off some of those left turn, right turns in the mid -- mid breaks -- you are probably going to end up having more U-turns now at those intersections. Do you have an estimate what that may look like? How do you kind of accommodate that? Do you have a longer protected left turn to allow that? I'm just kind of curious how you factor in some of the -- excuse me -- pushing those U-turns and such to the intersections, as opposed to allowing them in the road, which, by the way, I think is a good idea. A little scary sometimes to do

a U-turn in the middle of Eagle Road, but I would just like to know how you would accommodate some of those changes.

Brinkman: Mr. Mayor, Councilman, great question. There are opportunities to estimate and model what those will look like. We certainly adjust green times or protected left accordingly. Unfortunately, those type of closures are a little bit hard to predict, because it has a lot to do with what choices people have in their travel pattern. So, if you are, you know, used to stopping at your favorite tea store in the morning for a soda or coffee and you know that option isn't available any longer you might take a different path to get there. Maybe you go out of your subdivision a different way or you route your trip a little bit differently and so it's -- it's not a one for one. It's not that every left turner at one of those breaks is going to make a U-turn now. Some of them will more broadly reroute themselves. But it's one of the things that we will certainly be monitoring -- if we were to close those locations we will be monitoring what the result of traffic is and we will make adjustments to signal timing of things accordingly.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I -- I agree completely with Councilman Overton's comments. I -- I don't think it goes far enough, but I do think it's going at least in the right direction, you know, so I do appreciate -- I appreciate that component of it. The variable speed limit I think could create a lot of confusion for people, but I'm hoping that the signage and everything will help with that. I just think -- I just want to hear from you if you are committed that with this pilot we are all going to have a subsequent meeting to talk about the results of it, because, you know, I think that's really important data to try to gather. I do think lengthening those windows makes sense. I think ultimately the whole corridor should be 45. I mean I just - I -- I don't -- you know, just knowing the -- the safety factor -- and we -- we have talked about this in our last meeting, so I don't think my comments are a huge surprise to you, but with the severity of crashes and -- and what we have seen and how it's impacting our community, you know, the -- the closure of the -- the four unprotected left turns that does help a lot, but I -- I'm -- I remain concerned about the speed limit, but I do appreciate that this is at least an incremental change that attempts to move in that direction. I'm a little disappointed, I was hoping you were going to announce that we are changing the speed limit on Eagle Road. But, again, I appreciate it is moving in the right direction.

Brinkman: Council Member, to address your question, with regard to the pilot we do fully intend to collect data during that period. We would be happy to come back and share what our observations are about how that's working and what the result's been.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: And, Jason, thanks for coming back. I know last time you were here it was a little spicy. There was a lot of passion, because we care and I appreciate you being committed. So, one of the things that I learned sitting up here is that we are rarely an expert on anything. We rely on subject matter experts to advise us, to help us form an opinion and a decision and certainly ITD is a subject matter expert when it comes to transportation and moving vehicles. Our police department, right, they are -- they are our subject matter experts when it comes to traffic safety and so I'm curious have you had a chance to share kind of what you are proposing with our law enforcement department, with the other jurisdictions? What has been the response from our law enforcement community about what you are proposing?

Brinkman: Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Council Member. Yeah. Well, we -- we had an opportunity to sit with the Mayor and the chief deputy and Captain Stokes on Friday to -- to go through the options that we have and some great feedback from Captain Stokes particularly about the enforceability of the variable speed limit signs versus the enforceability or the confusion it may be for drivers when they see a black on yellow versus black on white sign and so we took that very seriously and we are coordinating closely with Idaho State Police as well and both have had representatives on the working group since 2022 and that's -- that's been essential for us and I can't remember who said it at the last meeting, but it's the three E's, you know, it's the education of the drivers as they are driving through and sometimes just having a meeting like this that's public and the two public open houses we plan is a great safety meeting, you know, discussion and, hopefully, some -- some good coverage on a good subject for all of us and it's enforcement and engineering. So, that -- we really try to blend those well and be sure that we are not arbitrarily setting speed limits, but working within the code for variable speed limits and making a difference for drivers on such a long corridor. So, yes, we have been teaming together.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I guess I'm curious did -- did they provide -- is this something that they -- that they can support? They are -- they are in supportive of? They are excited about this? You mentioned, two -- there is -- there is two other jurisdictions involved. City of Boise. What's the Boise Police Department's response to this? What's our -- what's our sheriff's department response to this? They all are charged with, you know, keeping our -- our streets and roads safe and to me anything that we are going to want to roll out -- it's important to me that it is supported by -- by our law enforcement community.

Brinkman: I know as a district the team has met with Eagle and Boise staff over the last year and -- and part of this outreach we will be sure to, you know, confirm that, both the Boise PD and Eagle PD.

Cavener: Okay. Mr. Mayor, additional question if I may?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Because you -- you touched on this as -- as a pilot, which I think is -- is prudent -- I know when I have done pilots in my professional capacity we are -- we are -- we are doing this because we -- we think we have got a plan that's going to achieve a successful outcome. What are the benchmarks that you guys are going to use to determine if this pilot was successful or wasn't successful?

Brinkman: Well, the first benchmark is the crash data and we are -- we have been consistent over the last five years at averaging close to 400 crashes on the corridor a year and this is our opportunity to do something different and it's -- it's going to be very visible to drivers and that's -- that's good and that supports us from the engineering side, the education side, as well as, hopefully, from the enforcement side. Just flipping the speed limit signs -- we just don't see -- other than setting our speed limits, which is always a concern for folks, we don't see that same safety benefit on the corridor addressing those crash numbers and the volumes are going to continue to grow, so we will have to monitor that and this -- we -- we plan to pilot it for at least two years, maybe three years and work closely with city staff from all three cities and our Office of Highway Safety and, hopefully, make changes that make a difference and lower those crash -- crash numbers.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: And, Dan, I -- I appreciate that and you have heard from a couple of my colleagues who are much smarter than I am voicing their support at 45. I -- again, not being an expert that seems to make sense to me. You all as transportation experts say that this approach is the best approach and, again, I tend to trust the experts. I just think it's -- Dan, I'm not trying to put you on the spot, but it does seem like that maybe there is some -- some more communication that needs to happen with our -- with our police departments and so I guess my hope would be is before any of this is deployed that we have got enthusiastic buy in from our law enforcement community on that and I hope that we can rely on you as transportation experts who want to create safe roads that you are working with those that are going to be in charge of the enforcement make sure this is something they can be excited about.

McElhinney: Thank you, Councilman. We will. We will. And we have got some time. We don't plan to get to a final implementation of this until next spring and, then, once we -- once we do we think it will only take a couple of months to get it deployed starting with the simple, watching for stopped traffic signage, and we plan to do it as cost efficiently as possible. Got some great electrical engineers in house and some great maintenance team in District Three. It's just a matter of us -- you know, we are going to get some good comments, too. I think at the open houses, as well as tonight, and so circle back around with all three cities and their staff as well.

Cavener: Thanks. Appreciate you guys being here. Thank you.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: I'm -- I'm a simple guy and I'm just wondering -- you mentioned the electrical engineers and are these variable speed limit signs solar powered or do you have to hard wire them? And I'm just thinking about flashing amber lights, yellow rectangular signs, black and white variable speed limits and all of that, thinking wouldn't it just be easier to put up a 45 mile an hour speed zone?

Brinkman: It -- it wouldn't be as effective. So, the advice for the team is let's do something that's going to affect those crash numbers. Those speed limit -- those variable speed limit signs, we are looking at 48 by 60s, which are the larger version with the beacons on top and also the speed feedback signs will be -- I think they are 36 by 48. So, they are a little smaller. My bet is the speed feedback sign is -- gives us the bigger benefit. Most people, even on our team initially when we first started this, what's the speed limit on Eagle Road. Most people don't cite a number off the top of their head. So, it will be -- it will help us to have a variable speed limit as part of the package I think from engineering, as well as enforcement, but it's the awareness of safety and the awareness of the six miles can be very congested and the intersections can be very busy and they may not realize that the crash is -- some of our intersections 150, 200 crashes over the five year period. That's just -- I mean when you go through it you don't see the crashes, but law enforcement does, emergency respond -- responders do. So, that's what we are trying to tackle is the crash history and this will help.

Simison: Well -- so, here a couple comments for consideration moving forward. I -- I think that there is a fair amount of stuff that does need to continue to be worked through the work group and maybe even some processes as simple man. One of the things that we have been doing with the work in our fire department is we have seen several incremental steps that allows us to determine maybe what changes are actually improving certain elements. Maybe you start with the variable speed limit signs without the feedback signs for six months, see what type of -- what you get before you go that direction. But I think even those are some good conversations they have with law enforcement, because I don't disagree, you -- you put up three different things on one sign, it -- what are we looking for? There is three lanes of traffic. How many people actually can see the -- is it going to be them? Is it going to be somebody else? Just -- that's my initial thoughts based on some of the other events. The other thing is also I think when you showcase the speed data I'm going to challenge you on one more thing, lower to 45 when you get off the Interstate. The data allows that to exist from what you have showcased. That's not arbitrary. The data can support 45 miles per hour from the interstate up until the -- where you would have the variable speed zone. That way you don't have people getting off going -- going up to 50, then, dropping down to 45 even during those -- those hours of the day, if you just make it 45 like the data would be supportive of, that's at least a small consistent number, so that you don't have an up and down when you have these -- that variable speed limit. So, that's -- that's one small win I think for the community towards

the longer goal of our -- all of us up here of going towards what we think is an appropriate speed limit of 45 miles per hour, but let's let the data showcase that, you know. While you talk about the severity of crashes, every crash is severe to our police department in the time that they have to spend on every accident on that road. Lower speed limits will reduce that. We know that. What can be avoided in ten miles per hour for those that actually follow the speed limit? I don't -- I don't want to guess, but I'm going to say it's going to be one less -- one -- one fewer than it is currently on there and each one of those saves our officer's time, our taxpayers money and resident a lot of heartache and impact that may be life altering, even though it doesn't seem severe on the -- on the numbers, you know. I don't know how severity gets, you know, whiplash for someone's impacted for the rest of their life due to a sore back. Is that severe or not compared to a death, a fatality? It is all severe. So, how we get to the point where we actually articulate the value and the impacts regarding cost severity, taxpayers, et cetera, that's where we want to go and that's why I do want to, you know -- you and I, we -- we talked last week and I appreciate this update a lot more than the update last week in this context that it is a step in the right direction and it's a step where hopefully the data will prove to you about that even though the traffic flow may be different, but the accident reduction will hopefully showcase that, yes, despite the greater travel speed study this has the greater long term and it hits your number one element, which is in your mission statement, which is safe -- safety. Safety before mobility. I don't know if you guys -- that's how you rate them, but it is number one in that context and we will prove that up. So, I appreciate you bringing this forward at this time and hopefully we can get something as you mentioned no later than next spring. You know, if we can move forward faster let's do it. Let's not wait. Don't want anything to -- but I understand you got budgets you may have to work through and time along with other projects. So, appreciate it very much. All right. Look forward to working with you. Okay. Council, we have reached the end of our agenda. Do I have a motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move to adjourn.

Simison: Motion to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:25 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

/ /
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK