

# City of Ann Arbor: Nixon Road – Huron Parkway Improvements

## Public Meeting

Date: Wednesday, June 6, 2007

Location: Parkway Meadows Community Room

## Meeting Agenda

### 1. Greetings, Project Overview and Introductions

This is the third public meeting for the Nixon Road – Huron Parkway Improvement Project. Previous meetings were held on February 21 and on March 22. The project team includes:

Bob Craigmile, OHM  
Steve Dearing, OHM  
Connie Pulcifer, Beckett & Raeder  
Igor Kotlyar, City of Ann Arbor  
Les Sipowski, City of Ann Arbor

### 2. Project Background

#### Project Purpose

- During the past several years the City has observed problems with vehicle and pedestrian circulation at the intersection of Nixon Road and Huron Parkway. They have also identified roadway deficiencies with pavement condition and drainage that have gotten progressively worse with time.
- The City has received many complaints from commuters and pedestrians who experience delays at the 4-way STOP intersection and difficulties in crossing the intersection.
- These difficulties are the result of the skewed geometry of the intersection where up to 12 vehicles could be approaching the 4-way STOP. This situation can easily confuse drivers who are waiting their turn to gain the right-of-way.

#### Preliminary Ideas

- The City investigated these issues and first looked at installing a traffic signal as a possible solution. However, due to the close proximity of two existing signals at Plymouth Road, and the volume of pedestrian traffic that would be affected, synchronizing the installation of a new signal would be very difficult and result in a situation that would be problematic.
- The City hired the engineering firm DLZ in 2006 to study the intersection and recommend improvements. This study recommended the construction of a roundabout.
- The City hired OHM and BRI in 2007 to confirm the findings of the study and offer vehicular and pedestrian friendly design improvements for the Nixon Road and Huron Parkway corridors. The roundabout recommendation was confirmed and design options have been considered

#### Project Goals

- Improve the function of the intersection for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Improve the aesthetics of the area
- Implement measures that will help facilitate traffic calming
- Create a pedestrian friendly environment.

#### Project Progress

- The project team has been working on the preliminary design and the public participation process since January 2007.

### 3. Update on Public Participation Process

#### Public Information Meeting

- On February 21 there was a public information meeting at Clague Middle School where the project team introduced the public to the project.

#### Stakeholder Meeting

- On March 21 the project team has two separate stakeholder meetings who provided input and feedback. These attendees included:

- Representatives from City Departments
- Council Members
- Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues
- Residential Groups
- Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA)
- Commercial Property Owners (Traver Village and Plymouth Road Mall)
- Ann Arbor District Library
- University of Michigan
- Washtenaw Biking and Walking Coalition

#### March Public Meetings

- Two separate public meetings were held on March 22 at the Parkway Meadows Community Room
- Over 100 people attended both of these meetings: a translated meeting for residents and a meeting for the general public.
- Information conveyed by the project team as a means of introducing participants to the concept of modern roundabouts.
- Several questions raised by the participants. Answers to these questions were consolidated in a “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)” document which can be found on the City’s website <http://a2gov.org/PublicServices/ProjectManagement/eng.html>. Scroll to Upcoming Projects and click on Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement Project.

#### Follow-Up Meetings with Stakeholders

- April 18 meeting with the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA)
  - Input on bus stop improvements (locations, pull-outs, shelters)
  - These improvements have been incorporated into the design and AATA fully supports the plan.
- April 19 meeting with the commercial property owners
- April 23 and May 4 meetings with City staff
  - Input regarding the City’s non-motorized plan
  - Input regarding improvements to Huron Parkway and additional parking
- May 10 working session with representatives from the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues
  - The chair and co-chair personally traveled to Okemos to experience two urban compact roundabouts that are similar to the one being proposed with this project
  - Input was gathered regarding pedestrian access and preferred improvements for the pedestrian crossings
  - Input was gathered to improve access for disabled people
  - With these additional pedestrian safety measures in place the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues and the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living supports the recommended plan.

#### June Public Meetings

- Two separate public meetings were held on June 6 at the Parkway Meadows Community Room
- This meeting was not originally in the project schedule, however the project team decided it was an important component of the process. This gave the public an additional opportunity to comment and ask questions on the preliminary design options.
- The project team presented the project background, an update of the public outreach process, answers to frequently asked questions, and an overview of the preliminary design alternatives.
- Questions and comments were recorded. Answers to these questions were consolidated in a “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)” document which can be found on the City’s website <http://a2gov.org/PublicServices/ProjectManagement/eng.html>. Scroll to Upcoming Projects and click on Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement Project.

## 4. Frequently Asked Questions

- Several questions have been raised through the public meetings and stakeholder meetings. The most common questions have been documented and posted on the City’s

website <http://a2gov.org/PublicServices/ProjectManagement/eng.html>. Scroll to Upcoming Projects and click on Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement Project.

Four most common questions

- Why are improvements being proposed to this intersection?
  - The intersection is skewed
  - Pedestrians must cross 80+ feet (crossing Plymouth Road is only 60 feet)
  - The 4-way STOP and lane configuration allows up to 12 vehicles to be stopped at once, thus confusing drivers on who has the right of way
  - Traffic volumes are increasing
- Why construct a roundabout and not a signal?
  - Studies show a 40% reduction in pedestrian related accidents
  - Pedestrian crossing distance reduced to two 15-foot crossings of one-way traffic
  - Roundabouts slow traffic to 12mph-18mph thus creating less severe accidents when compared to the current 35mph speed limit
  - Vehicle to vehicle and vehicle to pedestrian conflict points are reduced
- How does a roundabout provide pedestrians with safer crossings?
  - Lower vehicle speeds – vehicles entering/exiting the roundabout will be traveling at 12mph to 15mph, which is equivalent to a STOP controlled intersection, but slower than a signal controlled intersection where a vehicle could proceed through the intersection at the posted speed limit of 35mph.
  - Less crossing distances – due to the existing skewed intersection, pedestrians are exposed to traffic for 82 feet to 95 feet depending on the crossing. With a roundabout, the pedestrians will have to cross only a 15-foot segment to reach a mid-point “safe haven” and then cross another 15- foot segment to reach the other side.
  - Separates the pedestrian crossing from the intersection – the pedestrian crossings are moved approximately two car lengths away from the roundabout, thus allowing approaching drivers to first acknowledge the pedestrian crossing; then acknowledge the vehicles in the roundabout. In addition, it allows pedestrians to cross one lane of one-way traffic at a time, as opposed to four to five lanes of two-way and turning traffic.
- How long will construction last and when will it occur?
  - The construction of a roundabout at this location should be completed in one construction season (April to November).
  - The planned construction will not occur until the summer of 2008. Access to all properties will be maintained during construction.

## 5. Discussion of Improvement Alternatives

### Huron Parkway

- Existing Roadway Conditions
  - Four lanes in general, five lanes at Plymouth
  - Above-average pavement condition, based on OHM inspection and City’s pavement management system
  - Pavement rutting near Plymouth Road
  - Four lanes not needed, only one lane in each direction
- Repair Options
  - Construct median: two through lanes, two bike lanes, with grass median; expensive maintenance and construction (additional maintenance of medians not preferred by City staff); removal of good pavement;
  - Provide parking both sides: two through lanes and parallel parking on both sides (parking suggested by mall owners and non-motorized staff); no destinations on residential side due to fencing; does not support non-motorized plan
  - Provide parking on one side with bike lanes: Preferred option, two through lanes, two bike lanes (per non-motorized plan), and parallel parking on the commercial side; bike lanes wider on parallel parking side
  - Additional bus stop along Huron Parkway (per AATA) to remedy bus traffic

- Minor asphalt repairs (resurfacing) near Plymouth
- Nixon Road
  - Existing Conditions
    - Poor condition, based on OHM inspection and City's pavement management system
    - Three lane cross section
    - Lack of storm sewer over the 900 feet; all drains to Plymouth
  - Repair Options
    - New layout will be 3 lanes with bike lanes on each side (per non-motorized plan)
    - Rehabilitation with addition of storm sewer
    - Addition/location of bus pull-outs (per public and AATA)
    - Access management of drives; looked at crash data; TCF as right-in, right-out with wider radius for in-bound traffic; widen and repair approaches on the east-side
    - Mid-block pedestrian crossing (per public and AATA)
    - Crosswalk adjustment at Aurora (per public); allows for less conflict points for vehicles turning left (south) onto Nixon Road
- Nixon Road – Huron Parkway Intersection
  - Existing Conditions
    - Four-way STOP control, with up to 12 cars approaching at once
    - Long pedestrian crossings in access of 80 feet
  - Repair Options
    - The City reviewed options of a signal, roundabout and the existing conditions and decided on the recommended roundabout option.
    - Several alternatives were looked at in regards to the roundabout's alignment within the intersection. The City chose an alignment with minimal impacts to the southwest corner and zero impacts to the other three corners.
    - Based on discussions with the Ann Arbor Commission on Disability Issues, changes to the pedestrian crossing locations were made. In addition, features were added to enhance the ability of visually impaired persons to discern traffic in the roundabout

## 6. Discussion and Q & A

- Several questions were asked at the meetings. The most common questions have been documented and posted on the City's website: <http://a2gov.org/PublicServices/ProjectManagement/eng.html>. Scroll to Upcoming Projects and click on Huron Parkway – Nixon Road Improvement Project.

## 7. Next Steps

### Nixon Road – Huron Parkway Improvement Project

- City Council Work Session
  - Expanding the project to include more extensive work on Nixon Road
- Prepare a detailed design, including contract documents
  - Pavement cross-section for the intersection and Nixon Road
  - Storm sewer design for Nixon Road
  - Street amenities for the roundabout
  - Traffic maintenance to ensure access is maintained to abutting properties
- Anticipated open house in the fall of 2007 to view the design and present the project
- Project bid in January/February 2008 through MDOT as a Local Agency Programs Project
- Construction is the summer of 2008