From: Aaron Wilson
To: jason@techxorcist.net
Cc: John Engen; Jeremy Keene; Jon Sand; Grp. City Council and City Web Site; bcc
Subject: RE: LRTP Project 223: Orange Street Underpass
Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 10:03:00 AM

Jason,

Thanks for the comment (and also, good to hear from you). A couple of responses to your question regarding the Orange St underpass:

While this project is shown as illustrative in the draft plan, that doesn't mean it is not a priority. In fact, the City and Montana Dept of Transportation are working hard to develop a project and identify funding. Any repairs are likely to be covered by federal dollars, most of which are programmed at the state or district level rather than by the MPO. So getting the project into the plan is the first step for eligibility for that funding, however since the funding has not been identified it cannot be in the fiscally constrained "recommended" list of projects.

Regarding enhanced multi-modal facilities, that was discussed at length for this plan. Where we arrived was that the cost to widen the tunnel to add more bicycle and pedestrian space, combined with challenges to ADA accessibility, it was not as high a priority as other more affordable improvements such as better connectivity between the Northside and North Reserve, I-90, and east towards Greenough Drive. I would hope that any maintenance project could also improve the pedestrian environment, but that may not be possible with existing constraints.

A final point is that we are currently engaging in detailed infrastructure planning around the Northside, particularly the Scott Street area in anticipation of ongoing redevelopment. That work will help inform what additional improvements will best serve future growth. We can then either amend the LRTP or add projects to the next update in 4 years.

I hope that answers your questions, feel free to reach out if you'd like to discuss further or have any other comments on the long range plan. You certainly have familiarity with our previous plans and goals, so I'd be curious what your overall impression is.

Thanks,
-Aaron

-----Original Message-----
From: Jason Wiener <jason@techxorcist.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 9:22 AM
To: Jon Sand <SandJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>; Grp. City Council and City Web Site <Council@ci.missoula.mt.us>; bcc@co.missoula.mt.us; John Engen <EngenJ@ci.missoula.mt.us>
Subject: LRTP Project 223: Orange Street Underpass

Good morning.

Thanks for your efforts devising the next Long Range Transportation Plan. I write concerning project 223, the Orange Street Railroad Underpass, which is merely illustrative in the planning document.

Among Missoula's transportation infrastructure, with the Russell Street Bridge completed, the Orange Street Underpass likely combines the greatest degree of deterioration with the largest suite of modes and volume of traffic carried. As it exists, the passage for a bike or pedestrian is harrowing, and a failure that closed the underpass would snarl mobility across the city and the structure hardly seems in good repair.

An LRTP adequate to the concept of 30-year planning would not neglect this evidently needy and critically important connector. What gives?

Regards,
Jason Wiener