

**December 18, 2024**

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The PUBLIC WORKS ADVISORY COMMISSION (PWAC) met in the Bell Building 2nd Floor Meeting Room at 215 “D” Street. Council Liaison and Chair Kathy Schroeder called the meeting to order at approximately 12:04 p.m.

Public Works Advisory Commission meetings are recorded live. To view the video, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSd7GAnyk4Y>

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

*COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:* Vice-Chair Kevin Kelly, Laura Wright, Ryan Rehder, and Lytonia “LT” Gardee

*COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:* Brent Bourassa and Kayleigh Philippi

*CITY COUNCIL LIAISONS PRESENT:* Chair and Councilor Kathy Schroeder

*CITY COUNCIL LIAISONS ABSENT:* Councilor Kasee Forsmann

*STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:* Dustin Johnson, PE, Public Works Director; Haley Kelley, Public Works Specialist

*OTHERS PRESENT:* Randy Giles, PE, Assistant Regional Administrator - Design & Program Management for the South Central Region of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT); Barney Metz, Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District (LOID) General Manager; Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) District 2.

**II. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Schroeder explained that all items on the Consent Agenda are considered routine by the Commission and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these issue unless a Commissioner so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered under “Items Moved From the Consent Agenda.”

Commissioner Rehder and Wright moved and seconded, respectively, approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried 4-0.

**A. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 16, 2024 MEETING MINUTES:** - Action Item

**IV. ACTIVE AGENDA**

**A. US-12 INTERSTATE HIGHWAY BRIDGE ("BLUE BRIDGE") PRESENTATION FROM WSDOT:** - Presentation

Randy Giles, PE, Assistant Regional Administrator - Design & Program Management for the South Central Region of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) presented information about the Blue Bridge based on questions and concerns raised by the Commission in its March 2024 letter. The Commission posed the following questions to Mr. Giles during his presentation:

<b>Commissioner Comments</b>	<b>Presenter Comments</b>
Commissioner Wright asked if WSDOT had found evidence of filtration issues when	Mr. Giles said that he was not certain but would follow up with the maintenance crew and relay those findings to the

conducting biannual inspections.	Commission. He said the existing drainage system is not intricate and could get clogged with debris.
Commissioner Wright asked if the historical status of the bridge would affect the types of improvements that could be made.	Mr. Giles said that the bridge could be on the historical register which would impact the process in pursuing improvements but it would not prevent that course of action.
Commissioner Rehder inquired about the regulatory authority of the bridge.	Mr. Giles said that WSDOT works through the Washington State Department of Ecology and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) but cannot speak on the process for Idaho.

Mr. Giles shared that WSDOT does not have plans at this time to program stormwater infrastructure improvements for the bridge and that the current focus has on preservation of assets, not improvements. He said that WSDOT is now aware of the issue and has a hydraulic engineer conducting an evaluation which could lead to a project proposal to increase the stormwater drainage on the bridge. He emphasized that any improvements could snowball into other issues due to today's standards for compliance. Mr. Giles would like to collaborate with Idaho on future projects or efforts to improve drainage.

**B. THAIN ROAD CORRIDOR AND ACCESS STUDY: - Action Item**

Director Johnson provided an overview of how the City uses planning documents to inform decision making. He said that the study had been brought to City Council for consideration at the November 25, 2024 meeting to adopt the findings of the study without binding City Council to any future projects; the motion failed.

Vice-Chair Kelly asked if the Commission could provide comment or show support through a letter of support written by staff.

Barney Metz, Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District (LOID) General Manager was in the audience and requested the opportunity to comment; Chair Schroeder granted approval. Mr. Metz said that the atmosphere at the November 25, 2024 City Council meeting had been negative and believed it affected the outcome.

Commissioner Wright asked if the consultant had provided a formal presentation to City Council. Mr. Johnson said that the study was presented at a Work Session but due to the nature of those meetings, the information was condensed. He said that there had not been a subsequent presentation but that one would be provided at the December 23rd meeting by staff. Ms. Wright advised staff to clearly communicate during the presentation that City Council is not bound by the contents of the study if adopted.

Mr. Kelley said that in the interest of improving traffic circulation and public safety in the Thain Road Corridor, the Commission should support the adoption of the study with the understanding that the it would serve as a guiding document and would not bind the City of Lewiston to any of the proposed projects or recommendations.

Vice-Chair Kelly and Commissioner Gardee moved and seconded, respectively, a motion to direct staff to prepare a letter to City Council using Mr. Kelly's comments. The motion carried 4-0; Commissioner Rehder abstained and requested permission from the Chair to explain his reasoning which was Chair Schroeder granted. Mr. Rehder explained that he does not have enough information to fully understand City Council's decision and has concerns about exacerbating the public perception around the study's

intention and value. Ms. Wright and Ms. Schroeder agreed to Mr. Rehder's points of concern.

Mr. Johnson explained the study is being brought before City Council once more by request of the Mayor. He said that City Council has the latitude to approve, amend, or reject the resolution to adopt and, in the event that it is rejected, he will request that City Council provide reasoning and guidance to staff to inform future projects along Thain Road.

Mr. Rehder said that he would support a motion to provide City Council with a letter of support from the Commission if it included language requesting that City Council provide staff with specific direction if the study is rejected.

Vice-Chair Kelley and Commissioner Wright moved and seconded, respectively, a motion to amend the proposed letter to include Mr. Rehder's comments. The motion carried 5-0.

V. **ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA** - Action Item

VI. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Johnson shared current staff efforts in reviewing frontage improvements and engineering requirements in an effort to amend City Code to provide flexibility for developers without sacrificing ADA compliance. He anticipates that these amendments will be brought to the Commission in future before presentation to City Council.

Mr. Johnson said that the proposed general obligation (GO) bond for the Main Street Reconstruction Project will be voted on in May 2025 and that downtown business owners expressed an interest in campaigning. Commissioner Wright expressed concern about the traffic volume on the Levee Bypass and how it may be affected by this project. Mr. Johnson said that he would relay these concerns to the consultant.

Vice-Chair Kelly left the meeting at approximately 1:15 p.m.

VII. **UNFINISHED & NEW BUSINESS**

A. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:** - Action Item

None.

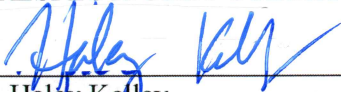
B. **STAFF LIAISON COMMENTS:** - Action Item

None.

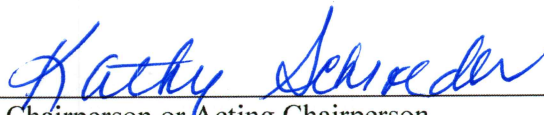
VIII. **ADJOURNMENT** - Action Item

There being no further business, Commissioners Wright and Gardee moved and seconded, respectively, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4-0 and the Public Works Advisory Commission adjourned at approximately 1:18 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Haley Kelly,  
Recording Secretary



Chairperson or Acting Chairperson  
Public Works Advisory Commission

Approved this 19 day of March, 2025