

Memorandum

City of Lawrence

Public Transit

TO: David L. Corliss, City Manager

FROM: Robert A. Nugent, Public Transit Administrator

**CC: Diane Stoddard, Assistant City Manager
Cynthia Boecker, Assistant City Manager**

Date: June 15, 2013

RE: Agenda Item: Alternate Site Analysis for Temporary Transit Hub – 700 Block Vermont

Please place the following item on the agenda for the June 18, 2013 City Commission meeting:

Over the last few weeks staff has evaluated several locations that could act as a temporary downtown transit hub. This has become necessary due to recent concerns over a previously approved temporary transit hub in the 800 block of Vermont Street.

The following is an evaluation of the 700 block of Vermont Street:

ADA

- Sidewalks are complete with no gaps and run continuously from the curb to the existing buildings (approximately 12 feet).
- Several meter posts would have to be removed in order to accommodate operation of passenger ramps and lifts. .
- With only one exception, transfers between routes would be possible without crossing the street. The southbound route 4 being the only exception. It would continue to utilize the existing stop which is located directly in front of the Douglas County Senior Services building.

Parking

- Between 12-16 parking spaces would have to be removed. In order to accommodate 300 feet of curb space needed for boarding and deboarding passengers 12 parking spaces would need to be removed. An additional 4 spaces should also be moved in order to address opposing tail swing issues at the Vermont and 7th Street intersection.

- Approximately 75% of the parking spaces available at this location were in use when staff performed the ADA lift and accessibility analysis. These vehicles remained for the duration of our analysis.

Bus Operations

- Turning from northbound Vermont onto westbound 7th Street presents a safety issue due to cars backing out of head-in parking which is located at the US Post Office.
- High potential of service disruptions or delays due to the library construction. During our site visit construction vehicles used the center turn lane as short term parking. Delivery and construction vehicles blocked and interrupted traffic flow several times in or around the intersections of 7th and Vermont and 7th and Kentucky.
- Opposing tail swing between buses traveling northbound on Vermont to east and west bound 7th Street. Removal of 4 parking spaces at the southeast corner of 7th and Vermont would allow for more space and eliminate conflict. This is important due to the fact that numerous buses will be operating through this intersection for approximately 14 hours a day.
- Traffic signs would have to be moved farther from the curb line in order to allow for curbing of buses.
- The trees on the east side of the block would have to be trimmed back so they do not project over the curb line.

Property Impact

(Staff talked with representatives from three businesses in the immediate area)

- Parking was not an issue with any of the businesses.
- Two businesses were concerned about deliveries to their facility. One business stated that they have to utilize the center turn lane for delivery which creates a safety issues associated with traffic. Adding bus operations make the situation even more difficult and dangerous.
- All three businesses were concerned with buses potentially blocking driveways.
- Proposed location would place buses and activity very near the front of the properties at 700 and 734 Vermont.

In addition to evaluating the location at the 700 block of Vermont Street staff also performed a cursory evaluation of a second location at the intersection of 9th Street and Rhode Island. Staff has considerable concerns with this location due to the following issues:

- Less than adequate linear space for the operation of service without encroaching into residential areas.
- Buses would be operating directly next to private homes and residences.
- Considerable amount of sidewalk would have to be replaced or added in order to allow for wheelchair and ramp operations.
- Location promotes pedestrians crossing unsafely in the middle of a block.
- Development at 9th and New Hampshire will be performing considerable work n the intersection which will virtually eliminate the operation of western bound buses in the corridor.

Conclusion:

Staff believes that the 700 block of Vermont can act as a temporary transit hub with few physical changes. It also presents only a few manageable issues associated with the operation of buses and transit service.

Requested Action:

Provide direction to staff as appropriate.