To: City of Springfield City Council, City of Springfield Transportation Staff, City of Eugene Transportation Planning

From: Springfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Eugene Active Transportation Committee

Date: 12/3/2025

Subject: Improving Active Transportation Connections Between Springfield and Eugene.

Summary

This memo presents collaborative recommendations from the Springfield Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and Eugene Active Transportation Committee (ATC) to improve active transportation access and safety between the cities. It outlines three areas of concern and proposes improvements to bike and pedestrian routes and wayfinding, strengthening inter-city connectivity. These proposals are specifically designed to prioritize access for key user groups, including fans traveling to Autzen Stadium, commuters accessing vital health and medical destinations, and connecting Springfield Downtown to the Ruth Bascom Path system and a variety of destinations in Eugene Oregon via Alton Baker Park.

BPAC and ATC recommend the following to improve inter-city connectivity and safety:

1. Create shared use paths on both sides of the MLK Jr Blvd bridge across I-5 by repurposing a westbound driving lane.
2. Add signage in the Gateway neighborhood of Springfield to facilitate walking and biking from areas east of Gateway St onto the I-5 Bridge and into Eugene, improving active transportation connectivity to the RiverBend Hospital campus.
3. Add signage on the Ruth Bascom Path to facilitate travel between Springfield, particularly in Alton Baker Park.

Martin Luther King Jr/Centennial Blvd Bridge (MLK Bridge)

There are currently no sidewalks or bike lanes across the MLK Bridge, where speed limits are signed for 40 mph (FIgure 1). This creates significant safety concerns for walking and biking between the Harlow neighborhood of Eugene and Springfield every day, and is particularly dangerous on UO football game days. On game days, hundreds of pedestrians cross the sidewalk-less bridge alongside heavy car traffic, in a 5-ft wide space that is signed as a bike lane.

We recognize this is a multi-jurisdictional section of roadway with sections maintained by both cities along with ODOT and Lane County. Therefore, our recommendation is that transportation planners from both cities work with ODOT and Lane County staff to consider solutions for improving active transportation safety along this corridor.

One potential solution for improving walking and biking safety on the bridge is to consider a continuation of the recent installation of business access transit (BAT) lanes along MLK Blvd in Eugene into Springfield by continuing the driving lane reduction east across the bridge. Terminating one of the westbound lanes at Anderson instead of Garden would allow space to be repurposed for non-car traffic (Figure 2). This widened shoulder could start with a painted buffer, and then be upgraded with Jersey barriers or a concrete curb as funding becomes available later.

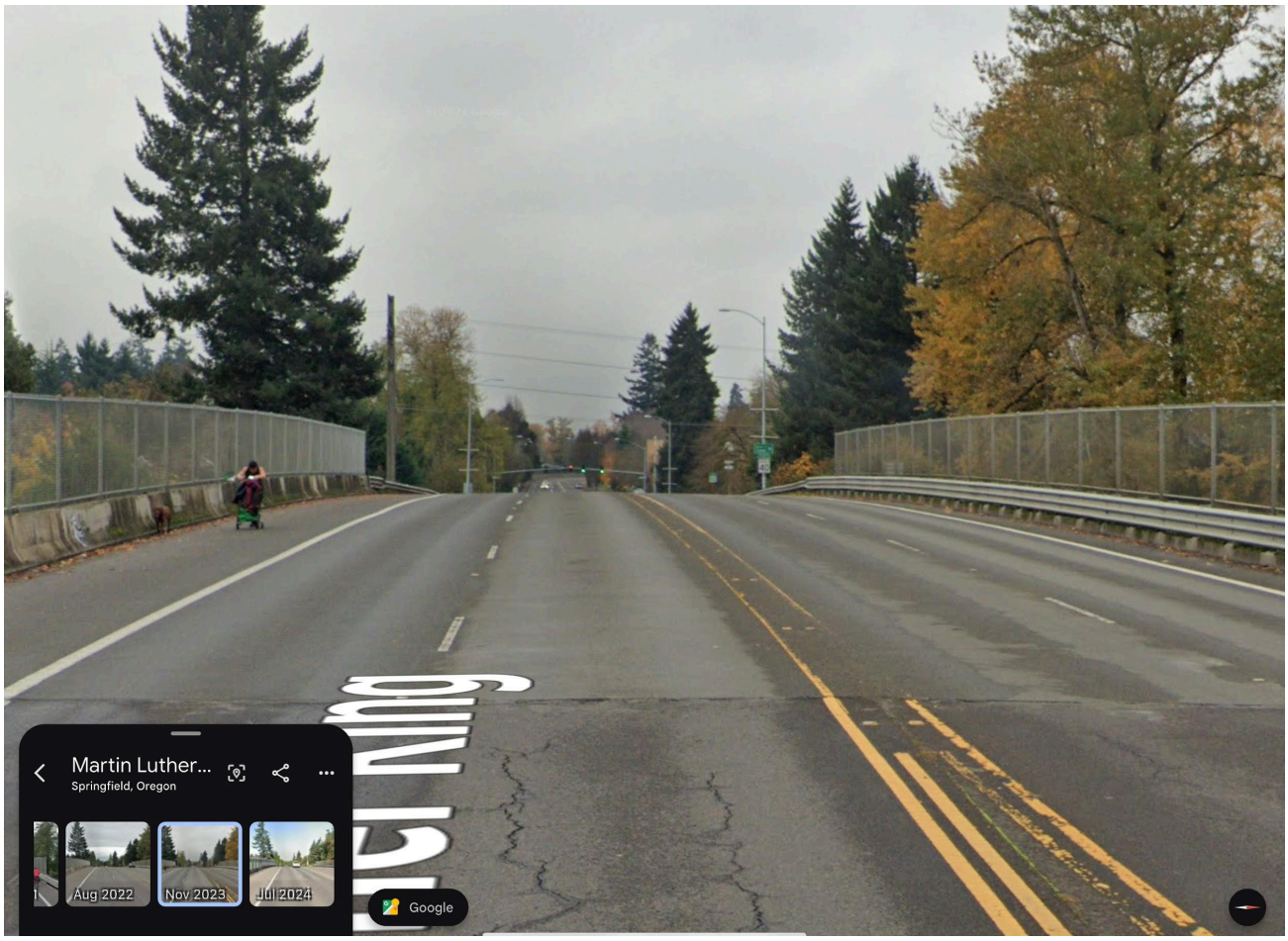

Figure 1. The current MLK bridge does not provide any separation between people walking and high speed car traffic (Google Earth Image).

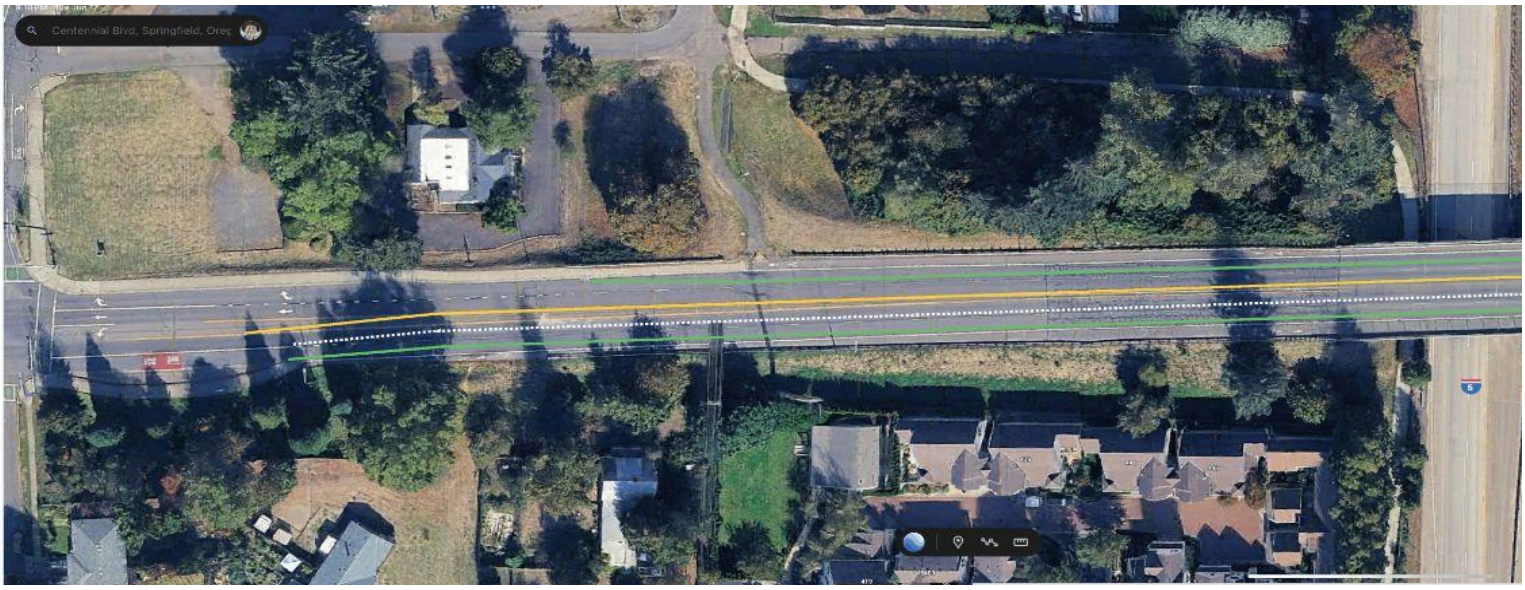

Figure 2a. Potential new lane markings that would create spaces for walking and biking. Green line represents a barrier separating people from cars. Note one remaining travel lane in westbound direction, two in eastbound direction.

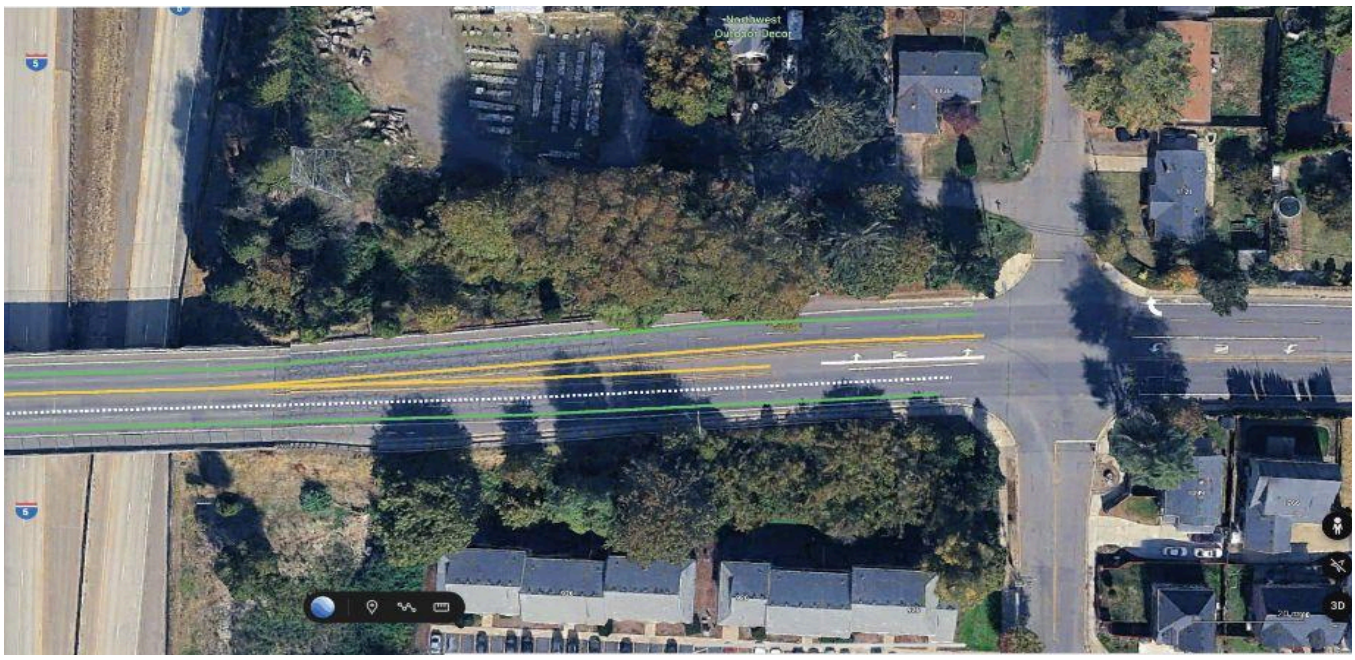

Figure 2b. Potential new lane markings that would create spaces for walking and biking. Green line represents a barrier separating people from cars. Note one remaining travel lane in westbound direction, two in eastbound direction.

Gateway Neighborhood Signage

Connectivity to the Riverbend Hospital in the Gateway neighborhood is very important, especially now that there are no hospitals within Eugene. Unfortunately, getting to and from the hospital and other destinations east of Gateway St by foot or bicycle is a challenge. It requires riding on sidewalks and busy streets with many tight turns and narrow accessways.private streets and cul-de-sacs make it difficult to identify a direct, low-stress bike and pedestrian route.

A helpful interim solution would be marking the current best route with signs and sharrows. However, we recommend that the City of Springfield work with Lane County and Riverbend hospital to develop a more direct walk and bike route to improve access to the hospital for the public, hospital employees, nearby offices, and local residents. The Gateway is a priority area for Springfield's upcoming Walk and Roll project (Springfield's Transportation System Plan).

One suggestion to improve connectivity between Eugene and Springfield is to install a 12-foot-wide bike and pedestrian path between Gateway Street and Game Farm Road. This connection is already in Springfield's Transportation System Plan, (Project ID #2),[1] and would connect to RiverBend Hospital and many other medical, employment, and community services in the vicinity. Many of these destinations are already served by EmX, but have no low stress bicycle routes.

Figure 3. Route for a shared use path to improve biking connections to Riverbend Hospital and other Gateway destinations.

[1] https://maps.springfield-or.gov/portal/sharing/rest/content/items/2b0066a068414560b8b0129dd0711faa/data

Alton Baker Signage

The multi-use paths connecting Alton Baker Park in Eugene and the Eastgate Woodlands in Springfield are the superhighways of cycling connections between the two cities. However, there is a maze of paved trails in this area along with two separate Interstate undercrossings, all without adequate wayfinding signage. unnecessary confusion for cyclists or pedestrians trying to find the best route to travel from one city to the other, creates a barrier to active transportation..

We recommend designating specific trails through the park as the bicycle through-routes, and marking those intersections with wayfinding signage pointing to major destinations. Useful major destinations to mark on signs could include:

- Downtown Eugene
- Downtown Springfield
- University of Oregon
- Gateway/Harlow
- Coburg Rd/Oakway Center
- Valley River Center
- Autzen
- Cuthbert Theater
- Eugene Science Center
- South Eugene/High St/Amazon Pat/h

Potential “superhighway” (through way?)routes to/from major destinations and their most confusing intersections are marked on the map below (Figure 4). We particularly want to highlight the exit off of Day Island Road to get to the Frohnmeyer Bridge, which is often missed while traveling west as Day Island Road turns north. That intersection would be a great first place to begin adding navigational signage.

Additionally, we recommend that Eugene and Springfield work together to create metro-style maps to aid in navigation. In places where there are parallel routes, we encourage the cities to consider naming the routes and identifying them with different colors on maps and wayfinding signage.

Figure 4. Potential “bicycle superhighway” routes noted as gold lines. Confusing intersections that could benefit with signage noted as blue stars, and greatest priority for the pink star.