



CARNATION CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject: Tolt Avenue/SR 203 Corridor Action Plan –
Alternative Visions and Next Steps

Origin: Ken Carter, City Manager

Date Submitted: 08/09/2012

Agenda Date: 08/14/2012

Attached is a memorandum from SvR Consulting concerning the work to date on Concepts for “redoing” Tolt Avenue. SvR and city Staff met with all three advisory committees (Business, Technical and Citizens) on July 26th and then hosted an open house on August 2nd for the general public to give opinions/ideas/thoughts about their preliminary concepts. SvR has taken those opinions/ideas/thoughts and prepared this memorandum.

Rather than go through a detailed explanation of the two main concepts, staff has encouraged SvR to tell the Council what they learned, what will work and what will not, what the committees and general public liked and what they did not, etc.

The very end of the SvR Memorandum summarizes the direction that SvR will take regarding the concepts for re-development of Tolt Avenue. They would like the Council to specifically review that summary tell them if the Council believes that summary is acceptable or needs to be altered.

Attachments:
SvR Design Company Memorandum #02



MEMORANDUM #02

DATE: August 8, 2012

TO: Ken Carter, City Manager
Carnation City Council

FROM: Tom von Schrader, PE
Principal

RE: **Alternative Visions and Next Steps**
Tolt Avenue/SR 203 Action Plan
SvR Project No. 11033

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the Tolt Avenue/SR 203 project to date and identify next steps for your consideration and approval.

We have had the privilege of using the last several months to better know and understand the Carnation community. Through collaborations with stakeholders and staff, formal and informal site visits and technical investigations, we have come to know Tolt Avenue, and have broken it into a series of zones, numbered 1-7, south to north (Figure 1).



This zone investigation depicts today’s Tolt Avenue,. In order to give shape to its future we turned to the community and facilitated a discussion about what the guiding principles for Tolt Avenue should be. After vetting those principles over a number of

I:\Council\Agenda_Packets\2012\Agenda Packets 2012\120814\Source docs\Discuss 1exA - Tolt Streetscape SvR_2012 08 08_Council Memo.docx



subsequent meetings we feel confident in saying that the residents of Carnation want Tolt Avenue to be:

- Safe: Providing all users with safe, comfortable access to the City’s many destinations
- Welcoming: Supporting and encouraging visitors to explore Carnation’s downtown and connect to surrounding amenities.
- Authentic: Building on Carnation’s assets by embracing a small town feel, agriculture and honoring the River
- Cohesive: Creating a unified, connected experience along the Tolt Avenue corridor
- Place-making: Establishing a central space to serve as a city heart or town green
- Maintainable: Providing a maintainable streetscape that serves the City, business owners, and residents over the long-term.

With these principles in mind, the consultant team developed two alternatives that would both 1) meet all of the principles listed above, and 2) provide “bookends” for our discussion allowing the community to explore a wide range of possibilities. See Appendix 1 for the full description of these options. We were clear that neither of these options would be adopted “as-is” but that the final plan would likely be an amalgam between the two. The two options were named the “Tactical” and the “Big Move;” the differences between these are described below:

Tactical	Big Move
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuous sidewalk on east side (zones 3-6) • on-street bicycle facility • maintains Tolt Ave parking downtown • undergrounds power through downtown • smaller tree canopy • more smaller, opportunistic projects • consistent framework will be important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuous walkable area both sides (zones 2-6) • separated bicycle facility • parking on perpendicular streets downtown • undergrounds power along most of corridor • larger tree canopy • implementation via a few larger projects • increased activation and amenities downtown • more planted areas

During a series of recent stakeholder meetings and a public open house, we presented these options to interested community members. Through facilitated discussions, collected comment forms and online comments from the project’s Facebook page the following patterns can be drawn regarding residents’ responses to these alternatives:

South of Downtown (Zones 1 – 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the existing Tolt River Bridge as a gateway received wide support. The painting of the bridge is 24
---------------------------------	---



	<p>years overdue, so there may be an opportunity to collaborate with WSDOT on paint selection and signage announcing Carnation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an intersection treatment at Tolt Hill Road was important for safety and mobility concerns. A roundabout received a bit more vocal support than a signal, but either provides improved function according to traffic modeling. • Generally, the “Big Move” alternative was preferred as it was seen as a more safe, family-friendly, welcoming and coherent alternative to get from Tolt-MacDonald Park into downtown. • There were no concerns raised about the loss of parking in these zones (zones 1 -4) • The idea of making a connection from 40th to Larsen in order to direct and control access to Tolt-MacDonald Park was well received. • Conflicts between the shared use path and vehicular access movements, particularly in Zone 4, are a concern.
<p>Downtown Core (Zone 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the “Big Move” option was preferred in most zones there was a robust and probing discussion regarding the feasibility and appropriateness of a cycle track through downtown. • Concerns included loss of parking, needing to watch two entries (alley and street) for business owners, a desire to not have “spandex wearers” ripping through downtown near slower moving pedestrians particularly seniors, a desire not to drive with large pelotons of cyclists on the street and concerns about mixing a cycle track with vehicular turning movements. • At the same time, participants acknowledged that the cycle track was a way to differentiate Carnation, making it more safe and welcoming particularly to the 60% of the population who, research says, would bike if separated bicycle infrastructure was in place.
<p>North of Downtown (Zones 6 – 7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Big Move,” with the boulevard and shared-use path in Zone 6 was preferred, providing flexibility for future development.
<p>General Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The more extensive undergrounding of was preferred by the community. • There were some questions regarding the width of the available right of way. We are actively researching and seeking a resolution to this issue, though we do not feel that there are any fatal flaws at this time. • Plantings: Stormwater plantings elicited the strongest positive comments support also shown for edible and pollinator plantings.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Street furnishings: Respondents liked furnishings that spoke to a traditional small town character.
--	---

Having heard from the members of the Carnation community—residents, businesses, property owners, staff and technical stakeholders—it is now time to take all of these comments and develop a preferred alternative. We see the following issues as the key issues to address:

1. Parking in downtown is clearly an important issue. Completely removing parking from Tolt Avenue, as was shown in the “Big Move” option through Zone 5, was too much. We will look at ways to accommodate more parking in this important commercial zone, while still accommodating a vibrant streetscape and movement for all modes of travel. Parking could be accommodated by either allocating one side of the street for parking, shrinking the bicycle and pedestrian zones or eliminating the cycle track in this area. If the cycle track was removed, we would look at creating a mixed plaza-like space, use on-street bike facilities or route bikes around downtown through the alleys.
2. Conduct an in-depth study of how the shared-use path/cycle track would layout along the entire corridor including turning movements and driveway entrances. This study will also reconsider whether portions of this facility should be located on the east side of the roadway.
3. Develop plans, sections and perspectives for the preferred alternative.
4. Develop a final tree and plant palette, site furnishings palette, and materials palette to provide a strong framework for implementation.
5. Identify potential phases, quick wins and marry these with funding sources to advance the project toward implementation.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to presenting these concepts to you and presenting the final preferred alternative to you in the coming months.