



## news Briefs

issues, they view the matter as ‘insider baseball’ that doesn’t significantly impact their feelings about Rob,” the survey says.

The Lake Research Partners document concludes, “Given a strong, well-funded campaign that helps Handy target his likely supporters, drive turnout among them and ensure they vote on the down-ballot race for county commissioners, he is in an excellent position to be re-elected in 2012.”

Handy says the survey confirms the anecdotal stories and his gut feeling that support from his constituents remained strong or even grew because he is out in the community so much.

— Camilla Mortensen

## BLAIR REMAKE BUT NO BIKE LANES

The city of Eugene plans to “transform” bustling Blair Boulevard in the Whiteaker neighborhood with a \$2.2 million project that will repave the road and widen sidewalks but not add bike lanes.

Instead of bike lanes, the city will use controversial “sharrow” road paint meant to encourage cyclists to bike along with fast-moving car and truck traffic, according to a funding application sent to the state.

The application cites Census numbers indicating that 20 percent of trips in the neighborhood are by bike and 11 percent by walking. The 30 percent poverty rate in the neighborhood makes people especially dependent on biking and walking, it says.

The city has favored sharrow over bike lanes in recent projects because they are cheap and prioritize car parking and driving speed above the safety of people on bicycles. The city recently removed a bike lane leading into the UO on 13th and installed sharrow to make room for car parking, and installed sharrow near Willamette and 29th after arguing that a bike lane would slow car traffic.

But the grant application says that the sharrow will represent a bike-friendly improvement over the current situation in the Blair/Van Buren corridor which now has no bike amenities. “Many bicyclists are not comfortable riding on these streets. Prominent shared-lane markings and wayfinding signs will highlight this cycling corridor and alert motorists that bicyclists will be sharing the road and help bicyclists position themselves and feel more comfortable on the roadway,” the application states.

The plan states that the sharrow will attract more bicyclists to reduce pollution and global warming. But local cyclists have argued that separated bike lanes and cycletracks are far more effective in attracting the people who would bike but fear getting hit by cars.

The city is applying for an \$843,000 grant from the state. The city plans to combine that money with \$1.2 million in street preservation bond funds plus \$96,000 in systems development fees to repave the street and add other amenities.

The application lists \$136,000 for bikeway elements and \$390,000 for walkway elements out of the \$2.2 million. The city targets completion of the project by Oct. 31, 2013.

For pedestrians, the plan includes wider sidewalks, improved crossings, curb extensions, elimination of unused driveways, pedestrian signals, street trees, streetlights and wheelchair ramps.

The grant doesn’t say any car parking will be removed along the street, but it does say the city will add on-street bike corral parking.

Blair/Van Buren provides an important link to the riverfront bikeway system and planned EmX stops on 6th and 7th and is “bustling” with new businesses, according to the grant application. “There is stronger potential for more entrepreneurial small business energy in this corridor than anywhere else in the city,” the city states.

— Alan Pittman

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