

Lander Street Water Renewal Facility Improvements Community Workshop #2 Summary

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PROJECT NUMBER: LSP-070/684142

The City of Boise is beginning the process of planning, designing, and constructing improvements to the Lander Street Water Renewal Facility. Over the next several years, the city will replace aging equipment and disinfection processes and put in place modern and sustainable water renewal practices at the facility. The current range of improvements will require expanding the Lander Street Water Renewal Facility, with potential impacts to the Boise Greenbelt access and a large residential neighborhood north of the facility.

Because the city places a high value on local neighborhoods, community engagement has been designed to go above and beyond the required Conditional Use Permit process. Community members have been invited to a series of workshops in the summer and fall of 2017 to participate in the planning and design process. Input from the community also will help the city identify issues and concerns associated with construction.

Workshop Overview

The second of three community workshops was held on Aug. 9, 2017 from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Lander Street facility conference room. Attendees were invited to participate in working groups at either 4 p.m. or 6 p.m. Thirty-three people attended.

The purpose of Community Workshop #2 was to:

- » Present the range of alternatives under consideration for the Lander Street project, including potential impacts and mitigation.
- » Continue to develop working relationships with the community surrounding the Lander Street facility.
- » Gather specific public comments about three potential alternatives for the facility and surrounding area.

Notification Process

The City of Boise used several methods to invite community participation in Community Workshop #2.

- » **Postcard** – A postcard was mailed to:
 - Every business and residential address in the immediate vicinity of the Lander Street facility.
 - Property owners within 1,000 feet of the facility and 300 feet of the Boise Valley Canal bordering the facility.
 - The stakeholder database for the project.
 - The postcard and databases are included in the appendix.

- » **Walking** – Members of the project team hand-delivered the postcard to houses along Lander Street and within the immediate vicinity of the Lander Street facility.
- » **Greenbelt and neighborhood signage** – Sandwich boards announcing the meeting were placed along the Greenbelt and roadways in the project area.
- » **Social media** – The city posted the workshop invitation on the project website, citywide Facebook page and neighborhood Nextdoor site.

Workshop Format

The workshop began with a short presentation by Royce Davis, Lander Street Water Renewal Facility Manager at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. After each presentation, participants in small working groups had the opportunity to review and discuss illustrations of the alternatives, fence options and landscaping options. A technical expert and facilitator were assigned to each group.

Participants were also invited to submit written comments after the discussion. A few of the groups recorded notes on the illustrations.

Questions

Working group discussions and comment sheets included 14 questions:

- » What do you like and dislike about Greenbelt access for alternatives A, B and C? (3 questions)
- » What do you like and dislike about parking for alternatives A, B and C? (3 questions)
- » What do you like and dislike about the restroom for alternatives A, B and C? (3 questions)
- » What do you like and dislike about the proposed landscaping?
- » What are your comments about the park-like area?
- » What do you like and dislike about the proposed fence options?
- » Do you have any issues or concerns for the city to consider during construction?
- » Do you have any other comments or questions?

Written comments and discussion notes are summarized on pages 3-10. Copies of the working group illustrations and PowerPoint slides are included in the appendix.

Comments and questions

The summary of key findings and comments on pages 3-9 were developed based on input from:

- » Seven working groups ranging from two to six participants.
- » Nineteen sets of written comment sheets.
- » Five letters and emails submitted outside the workshop.

Key Findings

A few key themes were repeated throughout the working groups and written input:

- » A strong preference for an option without a long Greenbelt access closure.
- » Strong support for the Greenbelt path in Alternative A, support for some elements of the path in Alternative B, and very little support for Alternative C.
- » General support for the restroom location in all of the alternatives.

- » Varying perspectives about the size of the parking lot. Participants tended to favor the medium-size parking lot in Alternative B. However, some raised issues with too little parking (because it might encourage Greenbelt users to park in the neighborhood). Others raised issues with too much parking (because it would encroach on the park-like area and might increase traffic).
- » Concerns about the loss of trees, vegetation and wildlife habitat in any alternative.
- » A high value on the park-like area because of its use by the neighborhood and wildlife.
- » Equal preferences for the various fencing options, especially those in a dark color.
- » Several questions about how construction would affect the neighborhood.

A question-by-question summary of comments begins on page 4. Verbatim transcriptions of comment sheets and facilitator notes are included in the appendix.

Alternative A Comments

*Alternative A includes a Greenbelt access path between Lander Street and the Greenbelt. The access path is located to the west of the pond and includes a bridge. The access path would be open during construction. Alternative A includes an optional medium-size parking lot (10 spaces) north of the facility and a restroom located directly off the Greenbelt. **A rendering is included in the appendix.***

1. What do you like and dislike about **Greenbelt access** for Alternative A?

Frequent “likes” included:

- » This option would be open during construction.
- » It preserves wildlife habitat, trees and vegetation.
- » I generally like this option.
- » The Greenbelt path over the pond is more aesthetically pleasing and provides a visual buffer.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » This option negatively impacts wildlife in the pond and/or behind ball fields.
- » This is difficult to police, too exposed, and/or brings homeless population closer to the neighborhood.

2. What do you like and dislike about **parking** for Alternative A?

Frequent “likes” included:

- » This option has a smaller (medium) footprint.
- » This option is good, adequate or preferred.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » This option is too small and/or will cause people to park in neighborhood.
- » This option is too large. Too many spaces encourages overnight use and/or takes away from the pond and park-like area.

3. What do you like and dislike about the **restroom** for Alternative A?

Frequent “likes” included:

- » The restroom location is good or sufficient.

“Dislikes” included:

- » No “dislikes” were mentioned frequently.

Alternative B Comments

*Alternative B includes a Greenbelt access path and bridge across the middle of the pond. The access path would be closed for 18 months during construction. This alternative includes landscaping for a park-like setting north of the pond. It includes an optional, large parking lot (20 spaces) north of the facility and a restroom located directly off the Greenbelt. **A rendering is included in the appendix.***

4. What do you like and dislike about the **Greenbelt path** for Alternative B?

Frequent “likes” included:

- » This option preserves wildlife; the trail through the pond would be nice.
- » Additional, individual “likes” included ease of construction/maintenance/policing, more privacy for neighborhood access, and less impact to private homes.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » The 18-month closure is too long.
- » Additional, individual “dislikes” included impacts to wildlife during construction, general dislike and the proximity to the headworks building.

5. What do you like and dislike about the **parking** for Alternative B?

“Likes” included:

- » No “likes” were mentioned frequently. Individual comments in this section included the belief that more parking was better, and a general preference for this option.

“Dislikes” included:

- » The parking lot is too big. It encourages overflow parking from Willow Lane, increases traffic, consumes the neighborhood park and/or is not necessary.

6. What do you like and dislike about the **restroom** for Alternative B?

Participants gave very few comments about the Alternative B restroom. In general, commenters referred to their comments from Alternative A.

Alternative C Comments

*Alternative C includes a Greenbelt access path east of the pond, near to the Lander Street facility fence. The access path would be closed for 18 months during construction. This alternative includes an optional vehicle turnaround north of the facility with no parking spaces. The restroom is located directly off the Greenbelt. **A rendering is included in the appendix.***

7. What do you like and dislike about the **Greenbelt access** for Alternative C?

“Likes” included:

- » One person preferred this option because it was quick and cheap to build and maintain.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » The 18-month closure is too long.
- » The path is too close to the Lander facility (headworks building).

8. What do you like and dislike about the **parking** for Alternative C?**“Likes” included:**

- » Participants gave very few comments about Alternative C parking. One person said this option was easier on the eyes and easier on the neighborhood park.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » The 18-month closure is too long.
- » The path is too close to the Lander facility (headworks building).

9. What do you like and dislike about the **restroom** for Alternative C?

Participants gave very few comments about the Alternative C restroom. In general, participants referred to their comments from Alternative A.

General Comments

10. What do you like and dislike about the **proposed landscaping**?**Frequent “likes” included:**

- » Natural, wild or native landscaping; as many trees as possible.
- » Landscaping looks okay or does not raise concerns.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » Please add or keep trees and/or don't include cottonwoods.

11. What are your comments about the **park-like area**?**Frequent comments included:**

- » Don't remove trees or wildlife habitat. Consider bringing in a wildlife expert.
- » We support the park-like area, maintaining the area and/or cleaning the pond.

12. What do you like and dislike about the proposed **fence option**?**Frequent “likes” included:**

Preferences were fairly evenly divided between the decorative security fence, wire mesh fence and black chain link fence. Comments included:

- » The decorative security fence looks nice, could be expensive and may be easier for wildlife to get through.
- » The wire mesh fence looks good in a dark color.
- » The black chain link fence looks okay and is cheaper.
- » Any option will work as long as it is secure.

Frequent “dislikes” included:

- » The fence should be closer to the access road and further from the Greenbelt.

Other comments included:

- » Make the temporary fence look nice too.
- » Do other facilities use decorative fencing?
- » Don't use a style that looks prison-like, industrial or like the existing fence.

- » Could the existing fence be re-used?

13. Do you have any issues or concerns for the city to consider during **construction**?

Frequent comments included:

- » We are concerned about heavy traffic and associated safety. Please route truck traffic away from Lander Street.

Other comments included:

- » What will be the hours of construction?
- » What will be the extent of construction?
- » Will construction be contained within the treatment plant?
- » Will there be a crane during construction?
- » Put up fence, parking and access first.
- » Will the noise increase during construction?
- » How will construction noise and activity impact wildlife?

14. Do you have any other comments or questions?

Many detailed comments and questions were submitted throughout the work sessions and written comment sheets. This section also includes notable – but not frequent – responses to previous questions.

Frequent comments included:

- » Please keep the art deco façade if possible.
- » We are concerned about odor from the plant.

Other comments and questions included:

Greenbelt access path

- » Please address lighting along the Greenbelt access path.
- » Please consider an additional Greenbelt access near Veterans Memorial Parkway.
- » The Greenbelt access path feels too much like a “trailhead” because it is so far from the Greenbelt.
- » Please do not disturb the Greenbelt; only the access path.
- » Could the access path be a light-colored material instead of asphalt?
- » The Greenbelt access path should be 12 feet wide.
- » Please thin out the trees by the Greenbelt.
- » The Alternative A Greenbelt path may become more “local” if people do not want to walk as far for Greenbelt access.

Restroom

- » The restroom is too far away from the parking lot.
- » The restroom should be open all four seasons.
- » The restroom should be locked at night.
- » The restroom should include four stalls, an air station and/or dog fountain.

Parking

- » Consider converting the “lay-down” yard to a parking lot after construction. This would eliminate the distance between the restroom and parking lot.
- » Allow for handicapped parking.
- » The parking lot only fills up during large events.
- » Please minimize the parking footprint to preserve the park-like area.
- » Moving the restroom may decrease the need for parking.

Facility Operations

- » What percentage of city wastewater comes to the plant?
- » How often do you clean the Lander wastewater plant?
- » How many Republic Services trucks will go in and out of the plant?
- » Why do we see a hazardous materials crew working at the facility? They were wearing full white protective suits. Is there bacteria in the plant?
- » What is the noise we hear coming from the wastewater plant? Will the improvements be this loud? Could they be louder?
- » Leave the existing restroom building for plant use.
- » The facility staff is friendly and I hardly notice the facility.

Other Comments

- » It is not necessary to upgrade the park-like area; the area is already park-like.
- » What is the cost of the decorative fence option?
- » Is it truly more cost-effective to upgrade the plant (rather than relocating)?
- » How will this affect water bills?
- » Could you bring renderings of the buildings to the next meeting?
- » Could we walk the preferred alternative as a group at the next meeting?
- » The Veterans Memorial Parking construction will generate more traffic.
- » I am concerned about proximity of the park-like area to Willow Lane softball fields.
- » Please keep the Sand Creek flume.
- » Please keep the RV dump.
- » It is important to preserve wild areas throughout the city.

Appendix

- » Workshop introductory presentation
- » Working group illustrations
- » Facilitator notes
- » Facilitator notes (maps)
- » Transcription of written comment sheets
- » Transcription of sign-ins
- » Invitation postcard
- » Postcard mailing list:
 - Neighborhood saturation drop
 - Stakeholder database
 - Property owner mailing list: 1,000-foot radius around Lander facility
 - Property owner mailing list (for letter): 300-foot radius around Boise Valley Canal
- » Greenbelt and neighborhood signage