

City of Vancouver



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*Transportation
Plan*

This Plan is a general summary which highlights the Plan process and recommendations. Numerous technical reports and community surveys underly this Plan and are available for review. For further information regarding this Plan please refer to the City of Vancouver Transportation Services website at <http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/transportation/index.html> or contact the department at any of the following:

*Phone.....360-696-8290 / Fax.....360-696-8588
Address.....1300 Franklin Street, Floor 4
e-mail.....vantrans@ci.vancouver.wa.us*

Ways to be involved:

- Attend your neighborhood association meeting or, if there is no neighborhood association in your area, consider forming one.
- Join local business councils and associations.
- Monitor the newspaper and neighborhood newsletters and City website for relevant project information and meeting notices.
- Attend project open houses and public meetings.
- Get involved in the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.
- Contact the City's Transportation Services for project updates.

Adopted - May 3, 2004

City Council

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Transportation Finance Task Force

City Council appointed Task Force which studied transportation finance issues and recommended a finance approach. This Task Force did not address broader Transportation Plan issues beyond finance.

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Why is transportation important?

Our transportation system is part of everyday life. The entire community, from corner store to large industrial employer, from elementary school student to retiree, from 9-to-5 professional to soccer-and-everything-else mom, depends on all elements of the transportation system everyday - today, tomorrow, and on into the future. We rely on the system to get us where we are going, to bring goods to and from the community, and to connect us to the services we need.

The transportation system is the backbone of our community. Not only do our lives and economic livelihood depend on access to transportation - to move or to be moved around - it can also affect how our community looks and how we live. Transportation facilities can define the character of your neighborhood. They can provide a safe and efficient way for you and your family to get around to all kinds of activities. They can be a source of frustration and danger. Or they can be a source of convenient and unprecedented mobility.

The transportation system also affects how we spend our money. Transportation infrastructure is the single largest public investment or asset that the City of Vancouver owns and manages. The taxes that you pay help to support development and maintenance of the system, and the efficiency of the system can affect the price of goods and services by reducing or increasing how long it takes people and goods to get around.

You, as a citizen of this community, have a right and responsibility to help make decisions about how the transportation system is managed and what it becomes. This plan is a blueprint for how the community can help move forward and build the transportation system that will make this a great community to live in. The plan has been developed through a broad public involvement program to reflect the desires of the people who live and travel in Vancouver.

That is why transportation, and planning for it, is important to you, and to all of us.



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Why is this Plan important?

Why is this Transportation Plan important? Why now?

Vancouver has experienced rapid population, employment, and traffic growth in the last decade. As a result, mobility needs within many areas of the City has become troublesome, even critical, and neighborhood livability and traffic safety need to be maintained. Because population is expected to continue to grow at a rapid pace during the next 20 years, there is little time to spare in beginning to plan for the future.

To address these challenges, Vancouver's Mayor and City Council directed city staff to work with the community to develop a vision of Vancouver's future transportation system, consistent with the overall community vision developed fully in the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.



What does transportation do for us?

Provides Convenience. We can travel almost anytime, anywhere - for work and non-work purposes.

Encourages Economic Development.

Transportation investments spur economic growth, both in terms of direct construction spending and associated economic benefits that infuse the economy. Transportation is the glue that keeps the economy together.

Increases Personal Mobility. Contemporary transportation networks provide unprecedented choices in workplace and home locations. They allow individuals and families to choose where they live independent of where they work. In addition, effective transportation networks increase personal mobility, which makes it easier for people to make multiple stops and complete multiple errands on a single trip.

Creates Choices. Multi-modal transportation systems offer users many different ways to access and use the system: car, bike, walk, transit, and others. The flexibility and mobility offered by these diverse systems can give individuals and households freedom to choose from a wide variety of social and recreational activities.

Reduces the cost of goods and services.

Investments in comprehensive transportation networks have effectively reduced the transportation costs associated with labor and distribution, which in turn reduces the costs of goods and services borne by consumers. As a result, consumers have been provided a broader range of goods and services from increasingly distant markets.

What does transportation do to us?

Increases Driving. Americans are driving 137% further than in 1969 and sacrificing time that could be spent with family, at work, or doing other activities for time stuck behind the wheel.

Affects Safety. Collisions, deaths - every year more than 41,000 people in the United States are killed in traffic collisions. Another 5 million are injured. In recent years, Vancouver and Clark County have had the highest pedestrian accident and fatality rates in the state of Washington.

Costs Money. In 1998 the average American family spent \$6,312 on transportation, or \$17.29 per day. In larger metropolitan regions average expenditures are even higher.

Affects Health. As a nation we are in the midst of an inactivity epidemic. Studies have shown that the more time a person spends in the car, the greater the likelihood that they will be overweight.

Increases Air Pollution. Nationally, autos account for 58% of all carbon monoxide, 30% of nitrogen oxide, 27% of volatile organic compounds, and 9% of particulate matter. Automobile emissions account for more than 25% of all ozone pollution, which occurs when volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides react with sunlight. Unlike the ozone layer high in the atmosphere, which protects us from ultra-violet rays, ground-level ozone causes smog, and has been directly linked to asthma attacks. Twenty-five percent of American children live in areas that frequently exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's limit for ozone. Vancouver used to be one of those areas, but vehicle emissions limits have improved air quality.



Why is this Plan important?

How does this Transportation Plan relate to the Comprehensive Plan?

This Transportation Plan is the "transportation element" of the Comprehensive Plan. The policies, objectives, programs, and projects identified in the Transportation Plan will support future growth and development of the City, as directed by the Comprehensive Plan.

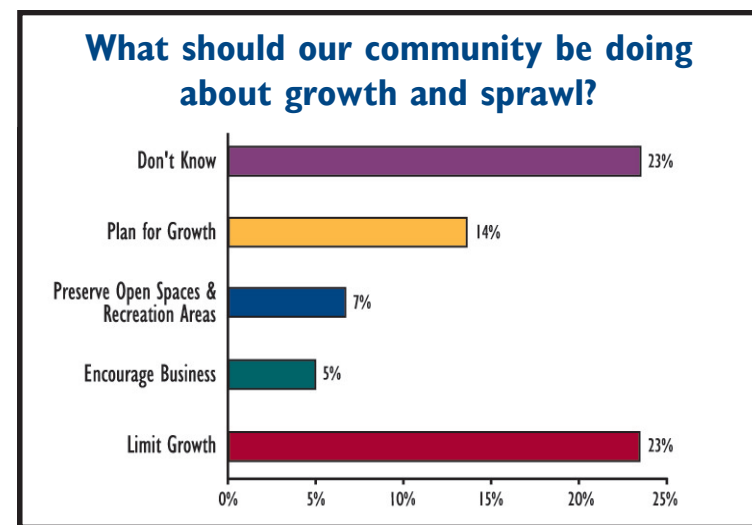
The Transportation Plan will provide the policy foundation for City decision makers, staff, advisory bodies, and citizens. The goals, objectives, and policies of the Plan will be considered in all decision-making processes regarding the transportation system.

How does the Transportation Plan address major issues over the next 20 years?

Our community will face many issues over the next 20 years. Those issues most important to the long-term performance of the transportation system are discussed below.

Does this Plan address future population growth?

Yes. Growth is a complex issue, and Vancouver residents have mixed views about it. Some see growth as an essential element of prosperity, while others see it as a threat to livability. During the next 20 years, Vancouver's population is expected to increase from 149,000 to 183,000 and employment is expected to increase from 96,000 to 134,000 within the City limits. Technical analyses for this Plan were completed using those growth figures, and the information gleaned from those analyses was used to identify projects, programs, initiatives, and set level of service standards to respond to that growth.



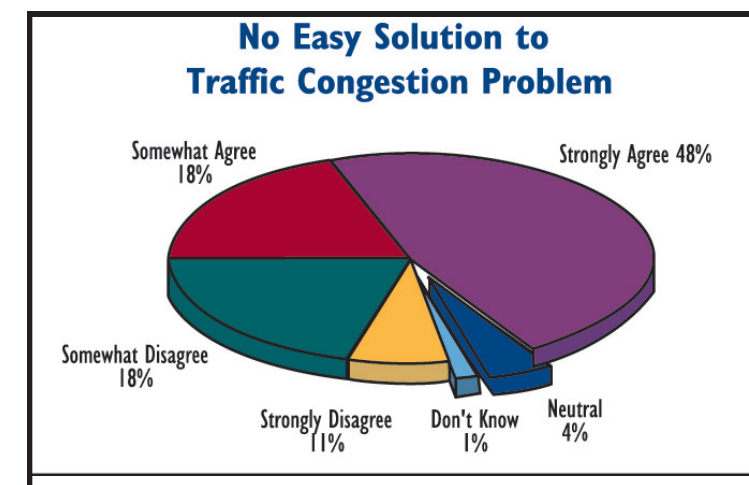
The recommendations outlined in this plan provide a blueprint for coping with future growth and demand for new transportation investments by outlining projects that specifically address the impacts of growth. Other recommended programs and initiatives are aimed at heading off future issues using strategic, up-front investments.

Will this Plan eliminate traffic congestion?

No. A good plan does not make promises it cannot keep - plans that promise to eliminate all congestion are not realistic and are viewed by the public with skepticism. This Plan supports the City of Vancouver's Vision for the Future and presents a process for implementing workable solutions.

Traffic projections derived from the population and employment growth forecasts clearly indicate that future auto, truck, and transit trips will all increase significantly in Vancouver over the next 20 years. That means that traffic congestion will continue to get worse, and levels of service will be reduced. However, some of the improvements recommended in this Plan should help alleviate the worst problems.

This Plan supports growth in Vancouver by building and managing a multi-modal system that is designed for urban traffic conditions.



Why is this Plan important?

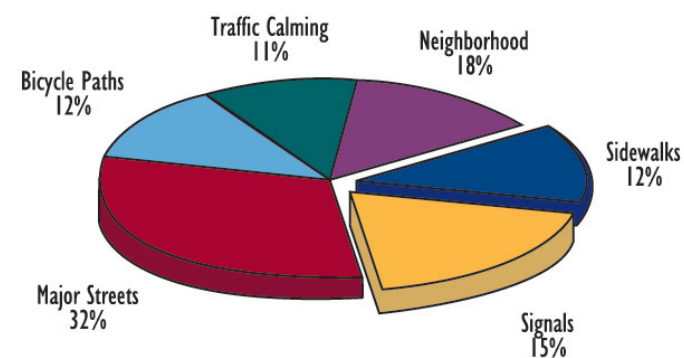
Does this Plan only address cars?

No. During the planning process, the citizens and businesses of Vancouver have set high expectations for a truly multi-modal transportation system. A multi-modal approach will best meet the varied interests and broad needs of the community.

The City's transportation system is not currently and nor will it ever be, solely based on the automobile. In addition, there is increasing sentiment (expressed by the community in a series of opinion polls) that autos are only one element of the transportation system that will be needed to accommodate growth and enhance community livability.

A primary goal of the Transportation Plan is to support a vibrant City with strong transportation links to its neighborhoods and activity centers. To meet that goal, the Plan focuses on roadway solutions, but also supports bicycling, walking, and transit, as well as increased effort to manage the transportation system.

How should Vancouver spend its money?



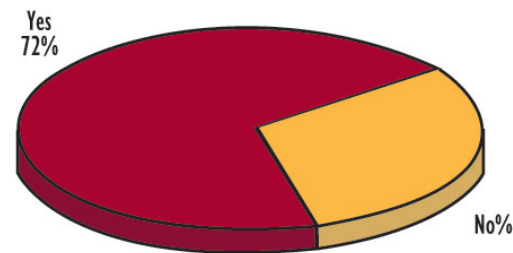
Does this Plan provide direction to resolve our current funding crisis?

Yes. Vancouver has several options available to address the large shortfall in its future transportation investment budget. Through our public outreach program, Vancouver residents and businesses have mandated that we must improve the transportation system to keep pace with growth, maintain a competitive business environment, and to maintain our high quality of life.

This Plan presents a detailed assessment of available funding, anticipates what it will cost to deal with the shortfall, and makes specific recommendations for advancing a new funding program towards approval.



Would you pay anything for the perfect solution?



What is the intent of this Plan?

The intent of the Plan is to create a blueprint for transportation system investments needed to achieve the Vancouver's Transportation Vision while accommodating the community's increased transportation demand.

Hundreds of Vancouver citizens participated in a comprehensive public involvement program during the development of this Plan. The Plan reflects what the community said it wants and expects from the future transportation system. It also identifies the types and locations of needed investments, and generally how future investments in the system should be prioritized. Finally, a funding plan has been developed that reflects how the citizens of Vancouver have said they are willing to pay for transportation investments.

The Plan will support Vancouver's Transportation Vision by:

- Expanding **streets**, building **sidewalks** and **bike lanes** to encourage walking and biking for shorter local trips, and fostering **transit**;
- Advancing **new programs and initiatives** to respond to growth and increased demand on the transportation system;
- Reducing the impact of traffic on residential streets and within neighborhood and activity centers to **promote quality of life**; and
- **Identifying ways to fund the Plan's recommendations** that reflect the funding approaches and amounts that the community supports.



What does Vancouver want?



What does Vancouver want?

"In 2020, the City of Vancouver will be a place that promotes livability through transportation and land use improvements that are complementary and easily accessible for everyone. The system is based on and utilizes a variety of modes for the safe, efficient, cost-effective movement of people and goods."

Who created the plan?

The citizens of Vancouver created this plan.

Built directly from a multi-year public involvement process, this plan articulates the wants, needs, and willingness to pay for investments from a broad spectrum of the community—from those who love to drive their car for the sake of driving, to those who have given up the automobile for other modes, to those who have limited transportation choices.

This Plan considers the broadly expressed sentiment throughout the community that citizens expect accountability and efficiency from government. It reflects the Transportation Vision and what the community hopes its streets and neighborhoods will become.

Few, if any, questions or issues remained untouched during the public involvement process. The community was asked to get involved, and it responded. Those responses, preferences, and technical conclusions were assessed during development of this Plan and throughout the public involvement process. This resulting final Plan is as close as the community may ever come to balancing the needs of and presenting a comprehensive approach to transportation system improvement.

This Plan is the community's best effort. Your ongoing participation in building Vancouver's future is needed. A summary of ways to stay involved and help move the plan forward is shown on the inside front cover of this report.



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What does Vancouver want?

How was the Plan created?

Because our future transportation solutions are so important to livability and our quality of life, the City of Vancouver used the best resources and the most thorough process possible to involve the community in this planning effort. Knowing that Vancouver residents and businesses are pressed for time, this planning process set in motion a comprehensive, creative and multi-dimensional approach to soliciting opinions, identifying issues, and seeking feedback. This approach was unlike any past transportation planning efforts.

National experts in community visioning, scientific opinion surveying, and community focus group facilitation worked collaboratively with citizens to shape the Transportation Plan. Using the process elements outlined below, the City of Vancouver solicited public input for more than 2 years, using many approaches, as shown in the Plan Timeline.

Scientific Opinion Research - This research involved two elements:

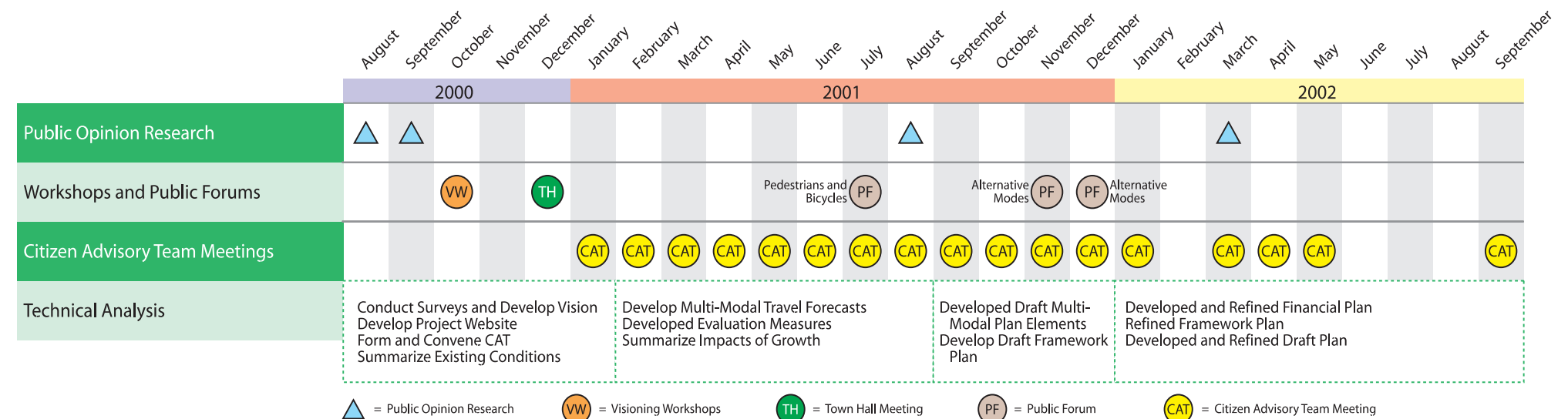
- Scientific Survey: A random-sample, scientific telephone survey was used to benchmark the community's position on transportation. Three hundred Vancouver residents were surveyed.
- Focus Groups: In four targeted focus groups, representative residents were asked to react to and help guide the transportation issues and elements included in the Plan.

Citizen Workshops - At a series of workshops held at various locations throughout the City, the public helped designate priorities for our transportation system.

Town Hall and Public Forums - At topic-specific forums held throughout the process, citizens commented on what had already been developed and continued to direct the Plan's final outcome.

Citizen Advisory Team - The team consisted of 19 residents and business leaders from Vancouver. The team steered development of the Transportation Plan at monthly meetings held from January 2001 to September 2002. All issues and Plan strategies were developed in partnership with this group. Members also participated in community presentations and facilitated public forum discussions.

Representative Councils/Commissions - Vancouver's City Council, Planning Commission and Vancouver Plan Oversight Committee participated through regular staff briefings and open dialog on the Plan's development and progress.



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What is the Transportation Vision?

The Transportation Vision, published in 2001, includes the seven elements presented over the next few pages. The Vision summarizes the comments of Vancouver citizens, both residents and businesses, regarding their hopes and aspirations for how our transportation system should enhance and shape their daily lives. The Transportation Vision is the foundation upon which the community hopes to build and expand the transportation system.

What does Vancouver get when the Vision is built?

The Transportation Vision is of a transportation system that provides choices and supports land use planning. The envisioned system would reduce the impact of transportation on the environment, support wise land use relationships, support a safer street system, establish neighborhood links, and better accommodate future growth by expanding the number of future transportation options and strategies.

Building the Vision won't happen overnight; it will occur incrementally through deliberate decisions that support the Vision - project by project, investment by investment, program by program, year by year. If the Vision is enacted, the community will achieve its goal: a transportation system that moves people and goods efficiently and cost-effectively while protecting our quality of life.

Promote Accessibility, Not Just Mobility

Accessibility ensures that all users of the transportation system have equal access to safe and quality facilities, regardless of transportation mode. Basic transportation access to obtain goods and services and engage in social activities is an essential need that must be met. Motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders should all be able to use the transportation system in a safe, efficient, and uniform way.

Transportation is a means to an end; seldom an end in itself. By focusing on accessibility rather than mobility, we look at the more critical issue of how people can accomplish daily activities more efficiently, rather than how they can get from point A to point B more rapidly. Furthermore, focusing on accessibility rather than mobility reinforces the dynamic relationship between land use and transportation systems.



Be Efficient

Money for transportation improvements is scarce, even as demand for new and better facilities increases. Consequently, strategies that make do with less and maximize existing investments are a high priority. Improvements to the transportation system must address efficiency.

Incremental improvements to existing infrastructure often can be more efficient than large capital improvements, and more effectively uses scarce resources. Policies and initiatives which satisfy demand by measures which provide alternatives to significant capital investments or improvements also should encourage a multi-modal transportation system (one that supports all transportation modes; for example, transit, cars, freight, walking, and bicycling) and the need to make improvements for all travel modes.



What does Vancouver want?

Create Livable Streets

Most people who live in Vancouver view the community's streets as more than simply concrete and asphalt. Throughout the City, streets affect the way we live, work, and play. Balancing different types of improvements that make streets more livable will help achieve the overall community transportation vision.

Streets should be viewed as part of a dynamic, integrated land-use and transportation system in which streets and adjacent land uses work together to create safe and great places to live, work, and play. Street designs and treatments should address the needs, issues, and demands of regular users and the surrounding land uses.



Have Good Connections Throughout

Many contemporary development patterns lack connectivity, which means that even simple errands -like going to the store or visiting a friend - require significant travel. Connected, continuous street systems make travel for those simple errands shorter and much more convenient.

Early development in the City of Vancouver was based on a grid street system. As development moved east, a basic grid framework was established based on the major corridors; however, many neighborhood and interal connections still have not been developed. In many areas, connectivity is lacking for auto travel, pedestrians, and bicyclists. New connections will enhance convenience and increase route choices.



Support All Travel Modes

Vancouver residents and businesses support and expect the development of a multi-modal system; one that provides a range of travel choices. This will require planning and providing facilities for automobile, bus transit, high-capacity transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel.



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Help Build a Truly Walkable Community

Nearly everyone walks, and does so every day. Vancouver residents and businesses have indicated that they equate a walkable community with a high quality of life. In addition, through the Plan's public involvement process, citizens made it clear that more work needs to be done to make our streets more walkable and accessible. Especially important are downtown, neighborhood streets, minor arterials that serve our neighborhoods, and routes along major bus lines.



Support Transportation and Land-Use Improvements

A large majority of residents support mixed-use developments in at least some of Vancouver's centers and neighborhoods. Mixed-use areas are often our favorite places - with lots of activity and easily accessible by different transportation modes. Streets within the City with an attractive and interesting street atmosphere, where land uses and transportation system are mutually supportive, create a vital and interesting focus for the community. In addition, by offering a mix of housing, employment, and services, these coordinated land use and transportation designs benefit the overall transportation system by reducing the total number of trips and by keeping local trips off major highway systems.



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How can we improve the system?

Vancouver's 20-Year Transportation Plan - FRAMEWORK



Project Group	Framework Elements Addressed
Our Street Systems	Arterial, Collector and Local Streets; Transportation Demand Management; Trucks/Freight Mobility; Land Use Design
Our Signal Systems	Transportation System Management
Our Pedestrian Systems	Pedestrian System; Land Use Design
Our Bicycle Systems	Bicycle System; Land Use Design
Our Transit Systems	High Capacity and Bus Transit; Land Use Design
Our Highway Systems	Freeway and State Highway System; Truck/Freight Mobility



What are the planned projects?

The projects outlined in maps on the next pages will improve connectivity and access throughout the community, foster system efficiencies, encourage alternative transportation choices, and support and encourage development as outlined in the City of Vancouver's comprehensive plan. Whether you drive, walk, bike, or ride transit, these improvements will increase your access to goods and services throughout the community and preserve the quality of life that makes Vancouver special.

During development of this Plan, the Project Team and Citizens Advisory Team developed a "Framework Plan" to identify those elements that make up the transportation system, and to begin to identify specific projects that are needed to make the elements work together efficiently. The elements of the Framework are shown in the graphic on the facing page, the project groups and Framework Elements Addressed in the adjacent table. The maps included in this section show the specific projects that make up the Framework of the transportation system. The tables describe the programs and initiatives that will be needed to move these projects forward. The image of a Framework was selected to represent the types and locations of projects needed to develop an integrated Transportation Plan. Individual projects and descriptions are listed in detail in an accompanying technical appendix and in the Comprehensive Plan - Capital Facilities Plan element. Regular updates to the specific project lists will occur over time and in conjunction with annual adoption of the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program.

The recommended investments will create travel mode choices and address existing system deficiencies (bottlenecks, hotspots, missing links, operational timing, and land use synergies). Accomplishing both of these goals requires different system investments at various levels to support a complete transportation program, as outlined in the Vision.



How can we improve the system?

Our Street System

Our street system is the City of Vancouver's most valuable infrastructure asset. Like most assets, the street system requires constant maintenance and incremental improvements and modifications to ensure that the system is creating the highest value (in terms of mobility, livability, and economic prosperity) for the community.

While the analysis of future traffic conditions indicates that Vancouver's congestion problems will only worsen if no action is taken, Vancouver's residents want solutions but also understand there are no "silver bullets" to make traffic congestion go away.

As expressed in community focus groups and surveys, the community wants significant strides to be made to complete the major street upgrades, make new street connections, and keep pace with the ongoing maintenance needs on Vancouver's streets. The community wants a street system that is complete, has few congestion hotspots, and is safe from frequent accidents.

The Framework Plan has identified street projects and programs that will move Vancouver towards developing a complete transportation system that supports the community's overall plan for growth.

Street System Program/Initiatives	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
6-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): Update the TIP to ensure compliance with Transportation Plan policy and project recommendations. Confirm the role of the TIP as the annual implementation of the Plan.	✓	✓	✓
Transportation Impact Fee Program: Update the Transportation Impact Fee program to address the Transportation Plan project recommendations.	✓		
Street Standards Update: Update the Code by adopting revised street standards that incorporate guidelines that advance the Transportation Plan's policy and project recommendations.	✓		
Access Management Policy and Program: Update the Access Management policy and initiate a corridor pilot program to implement the policy recommendations.	✓		
Safety Management System: Initiate an ongoing monitoring program to identify and prioritize improvements which enhance transportation system safety.		✓	
Neighborhood Traffic Management Program: Complete development of sub-area local street traffic studies to define projects and programs in support of the neighborhood traffic management program.	✓		
Transportation Demand Management Program: Initiate or advance partnership TDM programs in the following centers - Downtown; Clark College; hospital/health district; east-side high-tech district; East Mill Plain commercial district; Mall commercial district; Port of Vancouver.	✓		
Multi-modal Concurrency Policy Initiative: Investigate a policy for adoption which incorporates multi-modal assessments into the concurrency evaluation process.	✓		
Multi-modal TIF Policy Initiative: Investigate a policy for adoption that would assess impact fees to provide multi-modal street and off-street improvements.	✓		
Major Activity Center Initiative: Develop a planning and project implementation strategy for investments in streetscape and multi-modal connectivity linkages in activity centers (e.g. major transit transfer points; commercial and retail nodes; recreational/civic centers).	✓		
Sustainable Systems Initiative: Develop and implement sustainable systems practices and performance measures/benchmarks to be applied during project development processes.		✓	
Commercial District Initiative: Initiate a planning and project development process for commercial areas to promote street beautification and traffic management practices.		✓	
Freight Mobility Initiative: Develop strategic investment and partnership strategies to improve hot-spot and bottleneck points on existing systems, and to support more efficient freight mobility and operational safety.	✓		
Code Revisions: Identify, and prepare for adoption, revisions to the land development code that promote the policy and project recommendations of this Plan. Priority issues include: parking standards, site circulation, street connectivity, and pedestrian zones.	✓		



Framework Plan - Street System

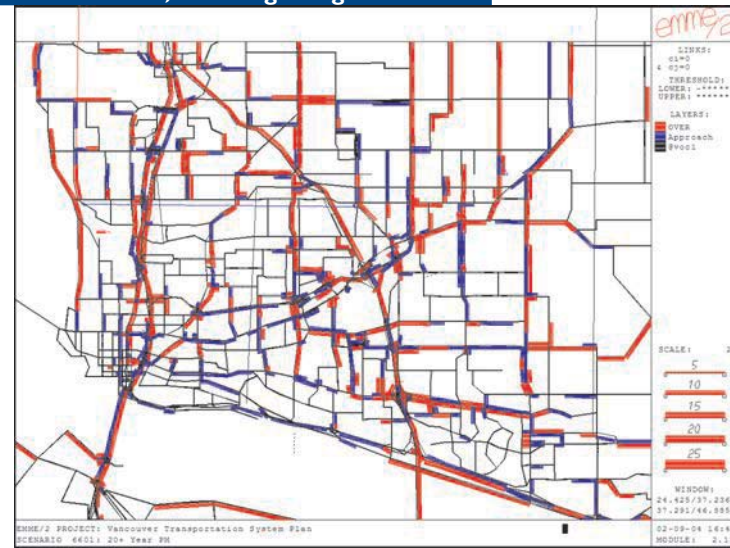


How can we improve the system?

Why invest in the street network?

Arterial streets are the primary arteries in the circulatory system of the urban street network. Arterial streets provide efficient community-wide traffic flow and may provide access to adjacent properties. To best serve its intended purpose, the arterial system must allow for safe travel, have a basic and continuous pattern, and meet urban standards.

Existing PM Peak Hour Traffic:
"Red is bad, Blue is getting bad."

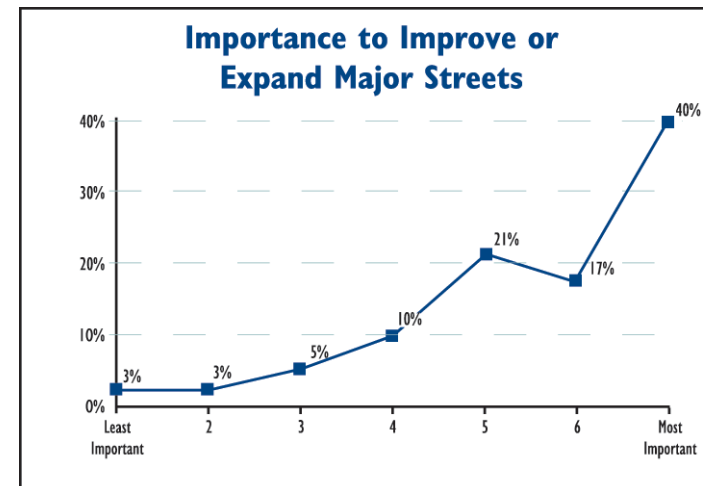


What do the Street projects provide?

Over the next 20 years, improvements to Vancouver's arterial system will provide the following: 1) improved safety; 2) system completion/congestion relief; and, 3) urban upgrade.

Safety - Improvements that enhance the safety of all street users are essential. The City monitors street safety and has identified hot-spot improvements and programs aimed at correcting existing safety problems. Improvements that enhance safety may include intersection modifications, medians, core roadway enhancements, and, in some cases, roadway widening.

System Completion / Congestion Relief - Completing the basic segments of the arterial network is one of the purposes of the planned projects. Planned improvements will provide continuity in the street network by filling gaps in the system, eliminating or enhancing congestion bottlenecks or disjointed intersections, widening select corridors or major intersections to increase capacity, and providing new street extensions into areas of planned urban growth.



Urban Upgrade - Upgrades to urban standards include improvements to add sidewalks, bike lanes, water drainage facilities, street lighting, and transit supportive facilities (where appropriate). It is essential that the urban street network provide the core facilities for a multi-modal transportation system.

Recommended Projects

The recommended street improvement projects are proposed to safely and efficiently accommodate future demand on Vancouver's street system. These projects include new arterial streets; street widening to add travel or turn lanes; street upgrades, including design treatments to improve safety and multi-modal circulation; intersection improvements (e.g. new turn lanes and traffic signals); and programs and projects to better manage traffic (e.g. neighborhood traffic calming, arterial access management, and traffic signal system management). Many of the recommended street improvement projects include pedestrian, bicycle, and transit enhancements.

What do these Street improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Upgrade several sub-standard urban arterials.
- Alleviate some congestion at existing bottlenecks.
- Better integrate projects and strategies to support multi-modal and growth management/smart growth policy objectives.



How can we improve the system?

What Street System issues stand out over the next 20-years?

Over the next 20-years, the following issues will become more important to the street system's development: Street System Management, Neighborhood Traffic Management, and Activity Centers.

Street System Management

As identified in the Plan, large-scale street system improvements will need to occur over the next 20 years to keep pace with population and employment growth and to support the build-out of the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Examples of the needed improvements include NE 18th Street, NE 138th Avenue, Burton Road, and the NW 26th Ave extension.

While large capital improvements and other significant urban upgrades are on the "need" list, during the 20-year horizon (if funding is made available) the City will transition from needing to invest in large urban upgrade and street connection projects to concentrate more on hot spot improvements. Other goals will be to push forward Transportation System Management (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program initiatives, as well as to work with Transit to achieve maximum benefit from the existing street system.

Neighborhood Traffic Management

The City has a dedicated neighborhood traffic management program dealing with the effects of the arterial system development on the local street network. In the short term, this program works with neighborhood associations, residents, local business, and others to minimize speeding and cut-through traffic within neighborhoods. In the long-term, this program will address local street design deficiencies and develop street improvements guidelines and policies that will improve traffic management and enhance safety at the district level.

The purpose of NTM is to address the negative livability impacts of unchecked speed and volume on neighborhood streets. This not only means fixing existing problems on existing streets, it also means not relocating the problem to another area. In addition, it means addressing neighborhood street impacts of new development so no further problems are created. Issues addressed by NTM typically include vehicle speeds and volumes, multi-modal facilities, and connectivity. Vancouver's livability depends on how well our arterials relate to our local streets and surrounding land uses.



Activity Centers

A major initiative planned over the next 20 years is to begin to focus population growth and additional development intensity into activity centers.

Street system investments in these new and growing urban activity centers will require a shift in thinking. The role of arterial streets within the centers will be broadened. These urban activity centers will require the street to serve multiple functions simultaneously. Streets will need to provide a broad range of mode choices, efficiently distribute traffic activity for various modes, and be "livable" so as to promote active streetscapes and support economic development.

Activity centers provide an ideal location for implementation of much of the Transportation Vision. Within these new centers it will be important to make strategic investments in new projects, including hot-spots improvements, key connections for alternative modes, and development of new street standards for promoting choices. Conversely, less focus will be placed on "expansion" related project solutions. Street urban design and land use interaction with the street network will take a front seat, as the focus shifts from providing basic infrastructure, to outfitting streets with services and amenities while also managing travel demand through broader means.



How can we improve the system?

Our Signal System

Congestion and disruption in system operations increasingly is a point of critical concern within Vancouver. These issues are present on all systems, whether City, County, or State. In recent citywide surveys; traffic congestion has consistently rated as one of the major quality of life concerns for resident's. How we got to this place is clear - driving has increased and investments in the roads to support that habit have not kept pace.

As stated previously, the transportation system supply has not kept pace with driving demand, and this issue cannot be resolved for a myriad of reasons. Over the next 20+ years, the City will not be able to keep pace with the demand for more road lane miles largely because, as a society, we are simply driving more - more often, more places, and longer distances. Even as driving continues to increase, it has become increasingly difficult to build roadways, largely as a result of citizen opposition, fewer corridors for new roadways, and lastly, the high costs of building and maintaining roads.

Improvements to our signal system can improve how well we manage our existing facilities and will help us address future travel demands.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

The City's recently developed Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST) strategy provides a detailed approach to integrating traffic signals and the road network. The VAST strategy recommends investments to upgrade the existing signal system equipment to the latest technology, which will allow more efficient traffic signal management. In addition, the strategy identifies partnering efforts among the regional transportation agencies to coordinate additional regional improvements. For more information regarding the City's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) strategies, please see the Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST) Final Technical Report.

What do these Signal System improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Ongoing investments in technology to improve the signal system and promote efficient traffic flow
- Institute a signal management program to monitor traffic flow and make frequent adjustments so signals systems are timed, coordinated, and functioning at the optimal level.



Signal System Programs / Initiatives	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
Intelligent Transportation System(ITS) Plan Update: Update the Vancouver Area Smart Trek Plan and adopt the ITS Business Plan.	✓		
COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE: Provide communication networks between local agencies; expand communications and interfaces for freeway and arterial systems; and provide network connections to key traffic generators.	✓	✓	
INCIDENT MANAGEMENT: Provide systems and field response equipment to ensure timely incident response and to manage traffic operations in such a way as to minimize system service disruptions.		✓	
TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT: Invest in technology, institute recurring maintenance activities that provide real-time monitoring, and develop response mechanisms that adjust system operations to accommodate what is occurring on the street.	✓	✓	
TRAVELER INFORMATION: Provide technology and user interfaces to distribute system status information and updates to travelers so they can make choices regarding travel routes and time of travel.	✓		
TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM: Update existing systems and make strategic technological investments in traffic control systems and equipment on key capacity corridors to ensure maximum system performance.	✓	✓	
TRANSIT PRIORITY: Invest in technology on high-priority transit corridors to provide signal priority and improve transit travel time reliability.		✓	



Framework Plan - Signal System



Intersections	
●	New Signal
●	Existing Signal Modification
ITS Routes	
—	Existing ITS Route
—	Phase 1 ITS Route
—	Phase 2 ITS Route

20-Year Vancouver Transportation Plan

How can we improve the system?

Our Pedestrian System

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are indicators of a community's health and livability to its residents, particularly the young and the elderly. National and local polls frequently cite the lack of safe and accessible facilities as the number one reason more people do not walk or bicycle to their destinations. During development of the Plan's vision and goals, the community clearly indicated its desire for an increase in safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

One of the most important goals guiding this Plan is universal access. This means that everyone should have equal access to the transportation system, whether they are driving a car, bicycling, walking, or using the bus system.

Walking in Vancouver

At some point during the day nearly everyone becomes a pedestrian - whether walking through the parking lot of a grocery store or going out to grab some lunch. Because walking trips occur so frequently and in so many different circumstances, the need for improvements to ensure pedestrian safety and mobility is extensive.

Sidewalks are the primary pedestrian facility that allow for safe and easy access to the transportation system, but many other aspects also need to be considered, including curb ramps, crosswalks, traffic signals, lighting, landscaping, parking lot design, and police enforcement.

Recent History

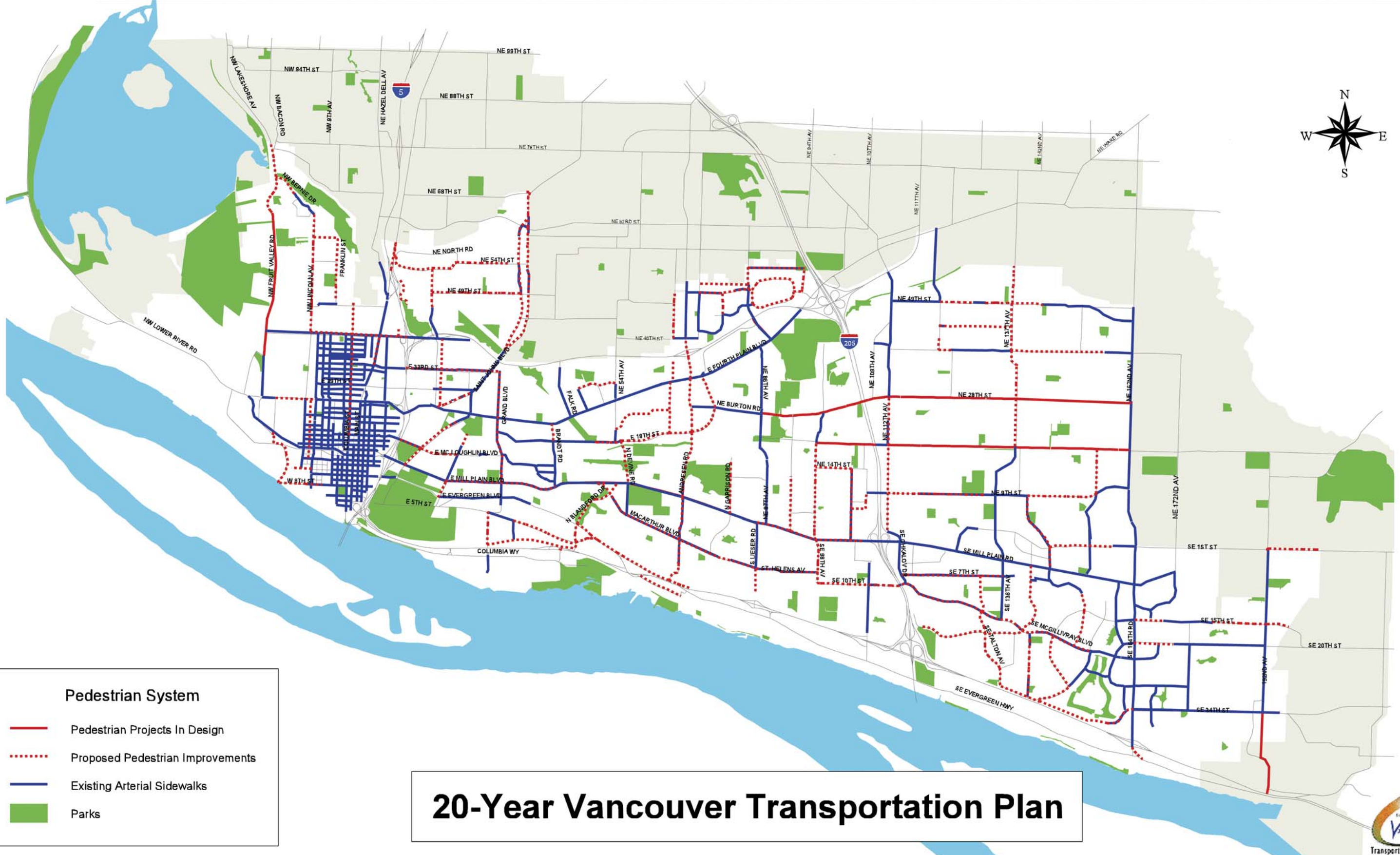
Our land use and transportation systems have been focused on providing automobile accessibility, giving little or no access for other non-auto users. One result is that automobile owners have a broader range of choices regarding where they decide to work, shop, and live than those who do not own automobiles. To put things in perspective, almost half of the people that live in this country do not have cars. In 1998 this accounted for about 8.4 million senior citizens 65 years and older without drivers' licenses, 25 to 30 million people with severe disabilities who rely on transit, about 10.7 million people living in households with incomes below \$15,000 per year and no car, and 56 million school age children who are not old enough to drive. These are some of the issues that underscore the significance of the need to maintain and invest in the pedestrian systems.



Pedestrian System Program/Initiatives	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
Create a permanent citizens' Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) tasked with advising the City on all matters related to walking and bicycling.	✓		
Develop a Transition Plan to address the need for ADA accessible curb ramps within the community and develop a program for implementation	✓		
Develop pedestrian design guidelines for sidewalk width, amenities, and other items.		✓	
Update the City's zoning code to ensure that developments are more pedestrian-friendly.	✓		
Create and fund a pedestrian and bicycle coordinator position and program to oversee implementation of the recommendations in the Plan.		✓	
Host a national walking or bicycling conference such as the bi-annual Pro-Bike/Pro-Walk conference in the next 10 years. Host a state or regional conference in the next 5 years.			✓
Develop a series of support programs, including maintenance, signing, education, sidewalk aesthetic enhancements, and safe routes to school.		✓	
Update City Street Standards to better incorporate pedestrian facilities.	✓		
Work with traffic enforcement to improve automobile and pedestrian compliance with existing traffic laws.	✓	✓	✓



Framework Plan - Pedestrian System



- Pedestrian System**
- Pedestrian Projects In Design
 - ⋯ Proposed Pedestrian Improvements
 - Existing Arterial Sidewalks
 - Parks

20-Year Vancouver Transportation Plan



How can we improve the system?

What issues stand out over the next 20 years?

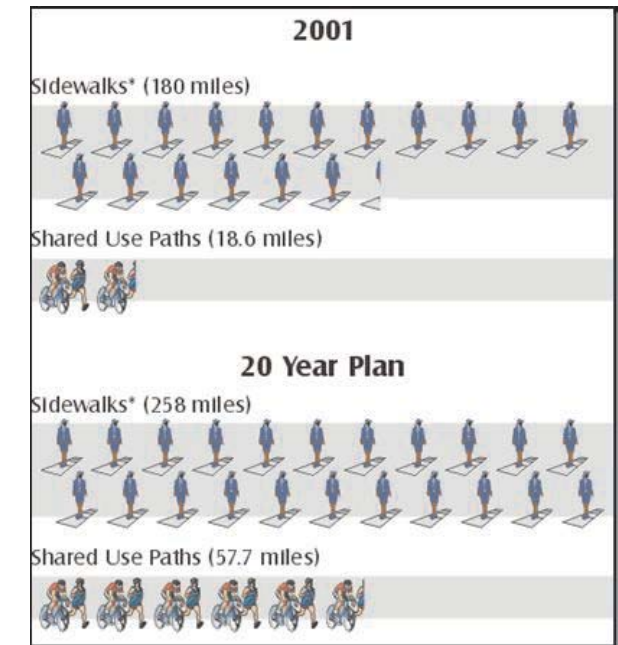
Currently Vancouver has a solid sidewalk network in the downtown area, but east of I-5 the sidewalk network is intermittent and discontinuous. The same problem exists east of I-205 in the area the City annexed in 1997, which included an extensive network of county roadways that did not have pedestrian facilities. Because there are such large gaps in the City's sidewalk network, it will take a lot of time to catch up with previous development that was constructed to a rural rather than urban standard.

Another major issue for the City is the lack of curb ramps on the existing street system that meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. For many Vancouver residents, this lack can prevent or greatly impede their access to shopping, transit, or housing. A large portion of our existing sidewalk network does not have curb ramps, and little funding is allocated to retrofitting these streets.

Most of the pedestrian projects identified in this plan focus on installing sidewalks or curb ramps. The plan focuses on the arterial roadway sidewalk network, so improvements to local streets are not included unless they provide neighborhood access or are on school walk routes. The main project priorities were to ensure safe walking conditions throughout the City, improve connections to schools, improve road crossing conditions, improve access to transit, and provide better access to major retail and office centers.

What do these Pedestrian improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Provide more direct walking routes within and between neighborhoods and activity centers.
- Provide alternatives to driving cars.
- Expand recreational opportunities.
- Create safer walking routes for school children between neighborhoods, schools, and parks.



Our Bicycle System

Bicycles can provide wonderful recreational opportunities or they can be used as a means to get to work. You can see people bicycling around Vancouver on a daily basis who are using our growing bicycle system, examples of this system are on McGillivray Boulevard and the Waterfront Trail.

The city has made significant strides over the last few years to improve cycling facilities, but there are still serious gaps in the system. Most notable are the lack of facilities on the east side of the City. As with the pedestrian network, the bicycle network on many of the county roads annexed in 1997 are substandard. Roads such as 112th, 18th, 28th, and portions of 164th provide direct access to popular destinations, but they are dangerous for cyclists.

When there are no safe on-street bicycle facilities, people are either forced to share the roadway with cars or ride on the sidewalk. In some neighborhoods, sharing the road may not be okay because auto speeds and volumes are relatively low; but riding on an arterial roadway with no extra space can be a harrowing experience for the bicyclist and nearby motorists. Riding on the sidewalk along a busy roadway also puts a bicyclist at significant risk of an accident because every driveway is a conflict point where a bicyclist can get hit. This type of accident accounts for 25% of all bicycle accidents in the City.



The proposed bicycle network in this Plan will use a combination of bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, and shared use paths. The intention is to provide a bicycle system that gets cyclists to their destinations in an safe and efficient manner. Bike lanes will provide the most direct routes, but if streets cannot be retrofitted with bike lanes, bicycle boulevards will be designated on parallel routes. Bicycle boulevards typically are not striped with bike lanes, but are shared use facilities on slower streets that carry less traffic than the larger arterial roadways.

To provide bicycle lanes, the City may reduce travel or parking lane widths, remove a travel or parking lane, widen shoulder areas, or widen a street. Because widening streets is enormously expensive, all other alternatives are considered before a street is widened just to supply bike lanes. Roads usually are widened to include bicycle lanes when a significant road upgrade project is undertaken which results in bringing the facility up to standard for all modes.

What do these Bicycle improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Create better links between the different types (on-street and off-street) bicycle systems.
- Improve bicyclist safety.
- Ensure that facilities are built to keep pace with demand.
- Provides an alternative system for those who choose to bicycle rather than drive.

Bicycle System Program/Initiatives	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
Create a permanent citizens' Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) tasked with advising the City on all matters related to walking and bicycling.	✓		
Update the City's zoning code to include a bicycle parking ordinance.	✓		
Implement a bicycle education program that would target middle school students.	✓		
Update the City's streets standards to ensure the construction of appropriate bicycle facilities.	✓		
Create and fund a pedestrian and bicycle coordinator position and program to oversee implementation of the recommendations in the Plan.		✓	
Host a national walking or bicycling conference such as the bi-annual Pro-Bike/Pro-Walk conference in the next 10 years. Host a state or regional conference in the next 5 years.			✓
Develop a series of support programs, including maintenance, signing, education, and safe routes to school.		✓	
Develop a comprehensive bicycle system, focusing in particular on completion of the Discovery Trail system in time for the 2005 Lewis and Clark celebration.	✓	✓	✓



How can we improve the system?

The Plan includes a number of bicycle system improvement projects and programs to be developed during the next 20 years. These projects and programs were identified to link the existing, discontinuous bicycle network, make conditions safer for bicycling, provide community bicycle education, and ensure bicycle parking at desired destinations. Emphasis is placed on connecting schools to the bike network and providing parallel routes to those roadways that are unable to accommodate bike lanes.

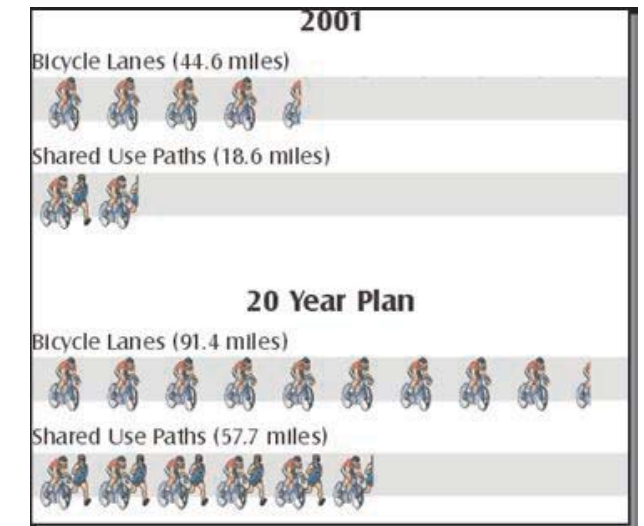
Shared Use Paths (Trails)

Shared use paths are an integral piece of the City's pedestrian and bicycle network, and they are essential to creating a transportation system that provides mobility to all users. Trails offer numerous aesthetic and recreational opportunities, as well as commuter options for walking, hiking, bicycling, skating, and horse-back riding.

The City has been successful in creating a good system of off-street paths, especially the Waterfront Trail and Discovery Trail systems. The projects identified during development of this Plan focused primarily on connecting the fragments of the existing trail network.

What do these Shared-Use Path improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Provide alternatives to driving cars or riding transit.
- Expand recreational opportunities.
- Provide cycling routes for school children between neighborhoods, schools, and parks.



Framework Plan - Bicycle System



20-Year Vancouver Transportation Plan

How can we improve the system?

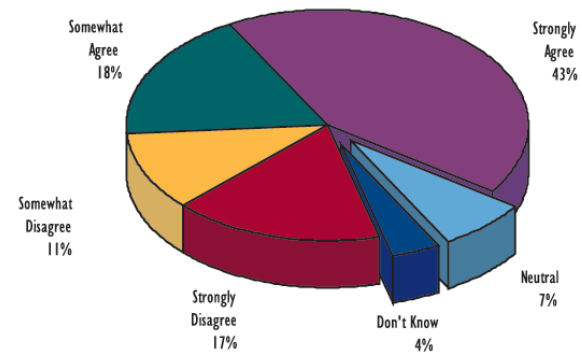
Our Transit System

Many people in our community choose to ride the bus on a daily basis. For those who currently ride or may choose to ride transit in the future, the street system should be as safe and accommodating of transit as possible. In addition, as congestion on the community's roadways continues to increase, making transit as competitive as possible with the automobile is an effective way to maximize the capacity of the existing street system. Transit is and will continue to be an integral component of Vancouver's transportation system.

Is Light Rail really an option?

Yes. Light rail transit has been identified as a strategic option in this Plan. It should be considered during development of a regional high-capacity transit system. Over the next 20 years, incremental improvements are likely to be made in development of a high-capacity transit system in Vancouver. The system has been identified as a loop system through Vancouver with connections to the Portland system at the I-5 and I-205 bridges. A first step in development of this system may occur as part of the improvements proposed for the I-5 bridge replacement effort.

Light Rail is part of the solution to Vancouver's traffic congestion problem.



What is the City's responsibility to Transit?

The City of Vancouver does not own or operate public transit. Therefore, it does not directly fund transit operations or capital investments. However, the City has a vested interest in public transportation services. Buses run on City streets and the City has a commitment to improving pedestrian access to C-TRAN bus operations by way of safe and convenient connectors and streetscape amenities. In addition, as the community continues to grow and greater demands are placed on the City's street and regional highway systems, transit can provide significant transportation capacity without investments in additional roadways, particularly in areas where facility expansion projects are no longer an option.

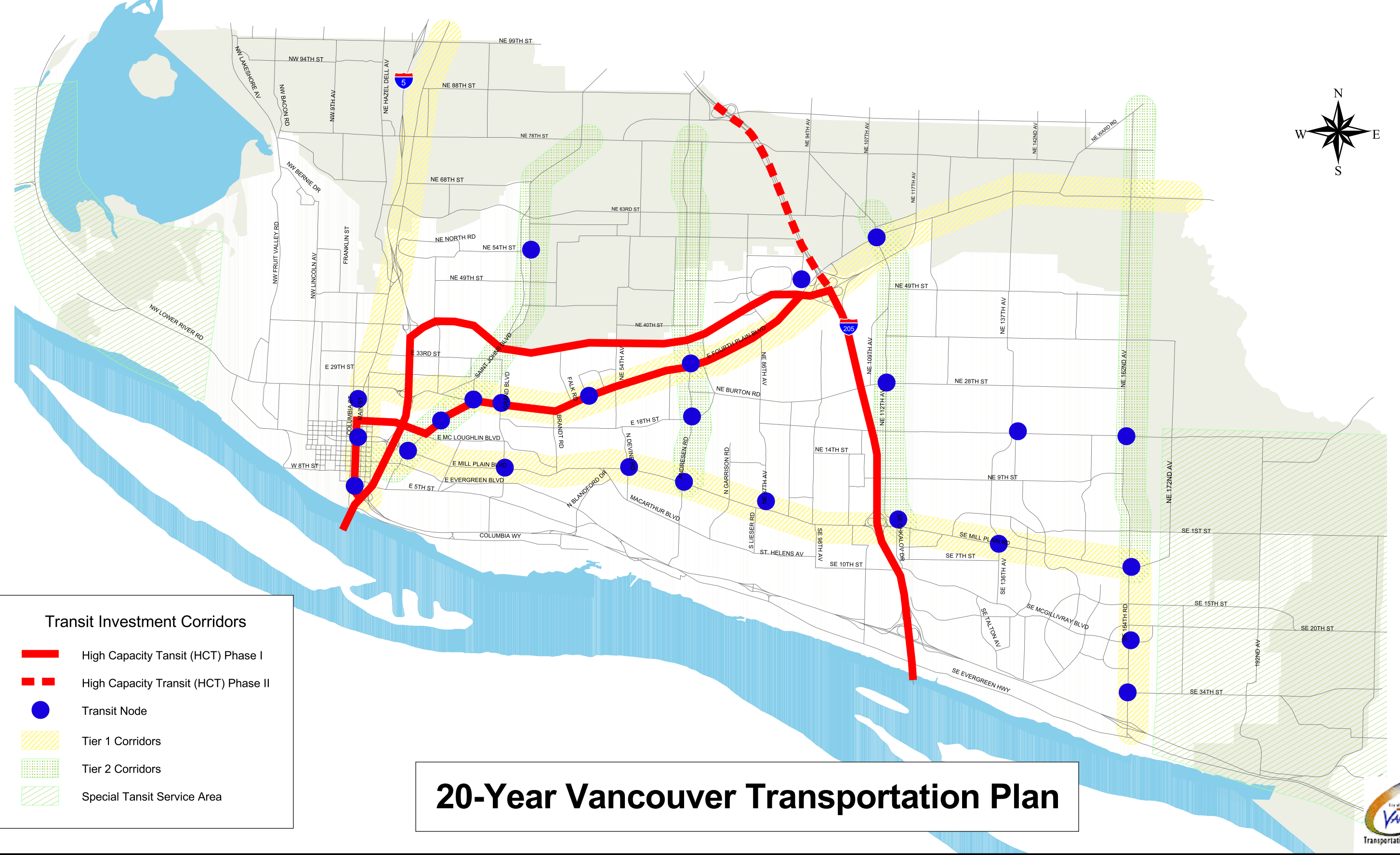
What do residents within the City expect of Transit?

City residents polled expect that C-TRAN will provide an urban level and frequency of transit service. This type of service is needed to ensure that transit is a competitive option for residents seeking reliable urban transit service and minimal wait time at the bus stop.

Transit-Supportive Programs / Initiatives	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
Tier 1 Transit Corridor Program: Initiate corridor-wide pedestrian improvements and signal upgrades to enhance access to transit and promote transit travel time reliability.	✓		
Tier 2 Transit Corridor Program: Implement spot pedestrian improvements and spot signal upgrades to enhance access to transit and enhance transit operations.		✓	
Transit Hub Initiative: Augment multi-modal connections and zoning with partnership efforts to foster transit complimentary development projects near transit hubs.		✓	
Transfer Point Initiative: Develop targeted streetscape and pedestrian connectivity enhancements at or near major transfer points and high activity bus stop locations.		✓	
Transit Overlay Zones: Assess the City's zoning code to include transit-oriented design guidelines and regulations. Assess City Street Standards to incorporate transit-supportive amenities such as wider sidewalks and street furniture at transit stops.		✓	
Rapid Bus/High Capacity Transit Evaluation: Partner with C-TRAN to study and consider implementation of high frequency bus or high capacity transit service along one of the "high capacity" or "Tier " corridors.			✓



Framework Plan - Transit System



Transit Investment Corridors

- High Capacity Transit (HCT) Phase I
- - - High Capacity Transit (HCT) Phase II
- Transit Node
- Tier 1 Corridors
- Tier 2 Corridors
- Special Transit Service Area

20-Year Vancouver Transportation Plan



How can we improve the system?

Our Highway System

Investments in the state and regional highway system are critical to the long-term mobility of Vancouver residents. Much of our community, regardless of the travel mode used, either uses or interacts with the regional highway system on a daily basis.

Do highways only benefit autos?

No. Our standard of living and economic competitiveness directly correlates to the operating efficiency of our highway system. Freight movement is a key functioning component of our highway system. If carefully designed and implemented, highway projects can enhance the non-auto system by providing connections and facilities that improve the surrounding area and allow alternative mode access (bike bridges and tunnels, riparian corridors, and other benefits).

What is Vancouver's responsibility to help fund these highway projects?

These projects are not Vancouver's direct responsibility (financial or otherwise), but the City is a major stakeholder. Vancouver will need to contribute as a minor financial partner in the development of these projects. The extent of the partnership contribution is as yet undefined. In all likelihood, many of these efforts, given the magnitude of the financing need, will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the funding formula developed when a project begins to go forward.

What important highway issues need to be addressed?

- Freight mobility hot-spot investments to ensure viable Port activities and goods movement.
- Interchange area management and access policies to preserve orderly development of land adjacent to new and existing interchange areas.
- Transportation Demand Management and other measures, including priority car and bus lanes, to enhance the operational capacity of the system.
- Transportation System Management investments to preserve/augment the carrying capacity of existing and improved systems.
- Rapid busway or light rail transit systems to augment the carrying capacity of the "regional systems," in critical corridors.

What major highway system investments will be needed over the next 20 years?

Although the City of Vancouver is not directly responsible for funding designing, building, or maintaining the state or federal highway system in Vancouver, the system does affect our city and our quality of life. Therefore, part of the City's role and the Transportation Vision outlined in this plan is to advocate for the community's interest in the design and construction of these facilities over the next decades.

I-5

This interstate freeway is the central artery of the region. Over the next 20 years, there should be significant transformation of this corridor or the mobility and economy of the City and greater region will suffer. A comprehensive strategy for improving this corridor was adopted in 2002; some of the suggested improvements may both benefit and potentially harm Vancouver. Given the complicated nature of these types of improvements, the City must advocate for outcomes that provide net benefits to the City, while understanding there are tradeoffs to be made in the process.

I-205

During the 20 years since this freeway opened in the early 1980s, traffic growth in this corridor - largely driven by the rapid suburbanization of eastern Vancouver and Clark County - has been phenomenal. This facility is in need of major upgrades within the City to accommodate future travel demand. The planned improvements are extensive; however, most have been designed as discrete projects and will likely be built in stages. Without these improvements, east Vancouver development (including unincorporated east County) will struggle with access constraints.



Framework Plan - Highway System



Highway Improvements

Highways	Interchange	
		Freeway and State Highway System
		Major Investment Focus Area
		Freight Mobility Strategic Improvement

Note: These projects are identified in the Washington State Highway System Plan.

20-Year Vancouver Transportation Plan



How can we improve the system?

SR-500

In addition to needed safety improvements on this corridor, proposed projects will significantly improve travel times and efficiency. Several interchange improvements are also proposed. Projects along the SR-500 corridor need to preserve capacity for future express bus operations and further consideration of a future light-rail transit option.

SR-14

Rapid suburbanization of east Vancouver, unincorporated Clark County, and Camas has impacted SR-14. Although the corridor is very efficient in terms of capacity, improvements are needed that will ensure long term performance, including interchange enhancements, or in some cases, replacements.

SR-501

This facility, which traverses the middle of downtown Vancouver and is one of two primary accessways to the Port and west Vancouver, is critical to downtown vibrancy. The most pressing issue facing this corridor within the downtown is the need to maintain a balance between providing travel efficiency for downtown, west industrial, and Port interests, while ensuring safety and providing the vibrancy of an inner city street. Strategic improvements are needed at the I-5 interchange as well as maintenance and development of parallel access facilities connecting the Port to facilitate access and build-up of the western industrial properties in line with the Gateway master plan.

What do these highway system improvements do for Vancouver residents?

- Create major new highway system infrastructure, including new interchange access points to serve east City.
- Eliminate safety hazards at major intersections along SR-500.
- Reduce bottlenecks at major interchange areas.
- Provide opportunities to develop transit options in conjunction with the highway improvements.



How will we fund the Transportation Plan?

New and dedicated funding sources will be needed to make the recommended investments and maintain and operate the transportation system. To understand the Plan's funding status, we need to ask and answer the following questions:

- 1) How much money is there?
- 2) What does it cost to develop and sustain the complete transportation program?
- 3) How much is the annual funding shortfall?
- 4) How can a new funding source be established?
- 5) Who should pay?
- 6) How much can each of us expect to pay?

Analyzing these questions will help you decide why and how the community should fund this Transportation Plan. The following sections provide additional detail.

Funding the Transportation Plan

How much money is there?

About \$8 to \$10 million is available from a variety of sources. Many of these sources are dedicated (i.e., are earmarked for a specific purpose) and the amount fluctuates from year to year. (Note: approximately \$9-10 million is contributed annually from the City's General Fund to pay for street operations and maintenance expenses. These funds are not considered a capital project expense and are not included in the finance plan.)

What does it cost to develop and sustain a complete transportation program?

About \$22 million per year, including building new improvements to keep pace with growth, managing neighborhood needs; and maintaining any new system investments.

How much is the annual funding shortfall?

About \$12 to \$14 million per year.

How can new funding be established?

By working with citizens and elected officials to identify and adopt a mix of projects and finance mechanisms, based on principles developed in this Plan.

Who should pay?

Recent voter trends have indicated that taxes should reflect user benefits. Vancouver residents and business have both indicated a willingness to pay for transportation services if those costs reflect direct user benefits. Simply - both business and residents should pay.

How much can each of us expect to pay?

Two groups helped tackle this issue during the planning process. End decisions by these groups indicate everyone will need to pay more for a complete system.



What's it worth?

How much money is there?

In recent years, the City has pooled money from several existing funding sources to pay for the transportation program. The existing funding sources fluctuate annually, and have generated roughly \$8 million to \$10 million dollars per year, as shown in the following table. This funding has paid for transportation projects, as well as operations and maintenance.

Source	Annual Amount
Gas Tax - New Capital Improvements	\$300,000
Gas Tax - Street Maintenance	\$2,100,000
Real Estate Excise Tax - Pavement Maintenance Program	\$1,900,000
Real Estate Excise Tax - Neighborhood Traffic Management Program	\$500,000
Traffic Impact Fees	Varies annually from \$1 - \$2 million
Grants	Varies annually from \$1 - \$2 million
Development Exactions & Contributions	Depends of level & location of development
Revenue Bonds	Gone by year 2004
Total	\$8 - \$10,000

Gas tax revenue comes to the city via the state in two parts: \$900,000 goes to the capital fund and \$2.1 million goes to the street fund for operation and maintenance. Of the \$900,000 annually devoted to the capital fund, \$600,000 is already committed to debt service on bonds issued over the last 6 years, leaving \$300,000 per year for the capital fund.

The Real Estate Excise Tax is a key factor in the funding picture, serving two worthwhile programs. It is assessed as a 0.25% tax on the sale of real estate and is dedicated to street rehabilitation. A portion of an additional 0.25% has been earmarked to fund neighborhood traffic safety improvements at a \$0.5 million per year.

Grant income is variable and periodic, and typically can only be used for capital improvements. Grants have also become harder to obtain in Washington because of: 1) the impact of inflation on the gas tax; 2) the impacts of Initiative 695, which directly reduced transportation capital funding; and 3) the corresponding reduction in the availability "local match dollars," which are required to successfully compete for grants.

Developers contribute to transportation system funding through traffic impact fees. These fees provide between \$1 and \$2 million annually for capital projects. In addition, many projects are assessed additional fees to support further development of the street system.

General fund revenue comes as a periodic and variable infusion to the capital fund. It is not a reliable revenue source. In addition, the general fund, fed primarily by property taxes, has been affected by recent property tax limitation measures and unprecedented population growth that is feeding demand for the full range of city services.

Under a best case scenario assuming a General Fund cash infusion of \$1 million and grants of around \$4 million, total annual revenue would be around \$13 million. In an average year, actual revenues are \$8 to \$10 million.

How much does it cost to develop and sustain the complete transportation program?

The annual cost to fund the projects identified in this Plan and to provide a complete transportation program is roughly \$22 million per year. This amount covers the costs of building new improvements to keep pace with growth, operating the system, managing neighborhood needs, and maintaining and at times refurbishing new investments. The following shows the details of the transportation program and the areas where annual funding is needed.

Complete Transportation Program

Safety & Livability	Neighborhood Safety	\$1.25
	Sidewalks & Paths	\$1.25
New Capacity	New Capacity Projects	\$5.5
	Urban Upgrade for Existing Facilities	\$3.5
	Regional Capital Projects	\$2.0
System Preservation	Roadway Reconstruction	\$3.5
	Pavement Rehabilitation	\$4.0
	System Operation & Maintenance*	\$9.5
* General Fund Transfer - Figure is not included in transportation capital needs analysis of funding plan.		
TOTAL*		\$30.5 M
* Note: This total does not include \$2.7 M program Administration overhead		



What is the annual funding shortfall?

With existing annual funding at \$8 to 10 million and needed annual funding at \$22 million, our annual transportation system funding **shortfall is roughly \$12 to \$14 million per year**. The shortfall will vary annually due to different factors such as how many grants were received and how much impact fee revenue is generated. Notwithstanding those variables, there is simply a large annual shortfall.

Why the shortfall; why isn't there enough money already?

First, most transportation funding at the state and federal level is based on the gas tax. **Purchasing power of the gas tax has eroded** because 1) the gas tax is not indexed to inflation (i.e., increases in the gas tax have not kept pace with the general rate of inflation) and 2) cars have become much more fuel efficient than they were a couple of decades ago - even though we drive further the gas tax generates less money.

Second, the **costs** of building and maintaining transportation infrastructure **have increased faster than inflation**. Most people are aware of the environmental regulations that have been evolving since about 1969 with passage of the Clean Air Act. Passage of the Clean Water Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act and other local regulations have also had an impact. These are all good things designed to enhance the overall quality of our communities and lives, but they cost money.

Third, **housing growth rarely pays fully for itself**. In Washington State, because of the tax structure, retail land uses and larger employers help to cover the cost of providing services to homeowners. Clark

County faces particular challenges in this area because development of housing has far outpaced development of commercial land over the last decade and because the sales tax does not generate as much income for jurisdictions here because of the proximity to sales-tax-free Oregon.

Fourth, Washington voters have enacted several **tax limitation measures** over the last decade that have impacted the growth of general fund dollars that typically pay for all sorts of city services: including, police and fire, community services, parks and recreation. This pressure on the general fund makes it difficult for City Council to supplement declining gas tax revenue from the general fund. Other tax limitation measures have directly impacted transportation funding, such as the car registration fee rollback several years ago introduced by Initiative 695.

Other contributing factors to the funding shortfall include:

- Declining state and federal support for local system improvements and maintenance.
- Increasing competition for scarce resources - local match funds and project staging have become critical to winning grants.
- Growing maintenance and operations costs for an aging system.
- Continuing population and job growth.
- Increasing individual demand for transportation services each year.
- Expanding regional economy requiring transportation infrastructure investment.
- Decreasing purchasing power resulting from reduced gas tax revenues caused by increased fuel efficiency.

So, just as demand for services has grown tremendously over the last decade, traditional sources of transportation funding have been in decline.

Why should Vancouver deal with this Shortfall now?

We can no longer mortgage the future. In order to avert a crisis Vancouver has issued revenue bonds three times over the last decade. The city has borrowed money based on anticipated future gas tax income to try to keep pace with growth. Now growth is still coming and the future revenue stream is exhausted.

Improvements to the transportation system are needed to: 1) keep up with rapid population growth and transportation demand; 2) keep Vancouver economically competitive to retain employers and attract new ones; and 3) protect and maintain our high quality of life.

The community must commit to developing and approving a new transportation funding source or our transportation system will continue to decline, and few new projects identified in this Plan will be implemented in a timely manner.



CITY OF
VANCOUVER
WASHINGTON

What's it worth?

How will Vancouver create new transportation funding?

Dealing with the transportation funding shortfall means developing and ultimately implementing a new revenue source. This means that the citizens of Vancouver must be willing to pay to move forward the Transportation Vision that they have developed. Four funding principles will drive development of any new revenue:

- 1) use existing resources before asking for more,
- 2) base new revenues on benefits to users,
- 3) adopt new funding with an automatic sunset provision, as well as project delivery and accountability mechanisms, and
- 4) identify city transportation funding as one of the many critical demands for local tax dollars.

Ways to Pay for Transportation Improvements

There are many ways to pay for transportation improvements. Of 25 funding approaches¹ considered during development of this Plan, 11 were carried forward for further consideration because they are authorized by current laws, they are not being used by the City for other purposes, and they would raise enough money to pay for a significant part of the City's transportation improvements.

Community Willingness to Pay for Transportation Improvements

Vancouver residents were asked whether or not they would be willing to pay any additional fees or taxes to obtain transportation improvements that they believe are necessary and desirable. In three different surveys, the average amount that City residents said they would be willing to pay ranged from \$27 to \$45 per month per household. However, it would not be necessary to collect that much, because it would only cost around \$14 per month per household to raise an additional \$11 million per year. Furthermore, it would take \$7 per month if the other half were funded by the business community. The results of the financial analysis indicate that Vancouver residents are willing to pay enough for needed transportation improvements to fully fund Vancouver's long-range transportation plan.

Who Should Pay?

The City of Vancouver will need to pay for future transportation investments to keep pace with growth and implement the Transportation Vision. Because increasing the financial burden on Vancouver citizens is a challenging conclusion, a broad public outreach and public opinion research effort was undertaken to identify public sentiments regarding the potential revenue sources identified previously. That effort yielded the following finance plan principles, which will be used to guide the development and approval of a new funding source.

Potential Revenues for Vancouver Transportation Plan

Potential Revenue Sources	Potential Revenue Estimates
General City Taxes/Sources	
<u>Property Taxes</u>	
Levy Lid Lift (50% voter approval required)	\$1,800,000
Non-Voted Bonds (Paid from General Taxes)	\$6,000,000
Voted Bonds (60% voter approval required)	\$2,400,000
<u>Sales Tax</u>	
Increase local sales tax rate from 0.8% to 1.0%	\$3,800,000
<u>Business & Occupation Tax</u>	
Re-establish B&O tax at 1992 rates: \$1/\$1,000	\$7,000,000
<u>Business License Fee Increase</u>	
Implement a Per Employee License Fee	\$2,000,000
<u>Utility Tax</u>	
Standardize rate at 6% on electricity & natural gas	\$1,500,000
Increase tax rate on City water and sewer utilities	\$350,000
Local Option Transportation Funding Sources - City Share	
<u>Countywide Gas Tax Option</u>	
Voter approval; simple majority; Countywide	\$1,000,000
<u>Other Local Option - Transportation Funding</u>	
City Street Utility - Per Household Charge (authority to impose not well established)	\$6,000,000
Utility Sources	
Revenue Bonds (Payable from Utility Rates)	\$6,000,000

¹ Revenue Sources for Transportation, Henderson, Young & Company, December 13, 2001. For more information about financing transportation in Washington, see the reports of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation at <http://lrc.wa.gov/brct/papers.html>. The three reports that are most relevant to financing Vancouver's transportation investments are: "Overview of Transportation Funding," "Local Sources of Funding City and County Transportation Needs," and "The Distribution of Gas Tax to the State, Cities, and Counties."



New Funding - Guiding Principles

Four guiding principles form the basis for Vancouver's transportation funding strategy: (1) use existing revenues before asking for more; (2) new revenues should be based on benefits to users; (3) there should be a time limit on the duration of authority for new revenues; and (4) new revenues should be a small fraction of the community's willingness to pay.

These principles were used to identify the best revenue sources for the Transportation Plan.

1. Use existing revenues before asking for more revenue.

Based on the existing annual funding available to the City for transportation, there is an existing funding shortfall on the order in the amount of \$12 to 14 million annually.

2. New revenues should be based on benefits to users.

Over the past several years, taxpayers have tended to prefer fees and taxes that relate to the benefits received from those charges rather than general taxes paid by everyone as a duty of citizenship. The 11 potential revenues under further consideration were evaluated based on direct benefits to users:

- Bonds are repaid by property or other general taxes and, therefore, lack the direct user benefit connection that is important to successful new revenue proposals.
- The City previously had a business and occupation tax (B&O tax), but repealed it in 1993 after a large annexation. A business tax could be used to pay for the benefits that businesses receive from the transportation system, such as providing access for customers

and getting products to the establishment.

- A commercial parking tax could generate significant revenue (a \$1 tax per parking transaction would raise \$15 million in 20 years). Parking is the last step that a driver makes as they arrive at their destination, thus the tax is related to use of the transportation network.
- Grants, impact fees, and the motor fuel tax regular distribution are existing revenues, so they are not available as new revenue.
- Transportation Benefit Districts require voter approval, and they can establish several types of fees, charges, or taxes, depending on how they are designed.

Another way of looking at user benefits is to classify the benefits of transportation for broad groups. For example, if residents pay for their share of trips on the transportation system, and businesses pay for their share, it may be acceptable for the payments to be based on flat rates per dwelling, per capita, per business, or per employee, rather than trying to assess a rate per trip on the transportation system.

3. There should be a time limit and accountability provisions for any new revenues.

Public skepticism about government's need for new taxes is real. Therefore, any new revenues should have a built-in "sunset" clause that terminates the revenue at a specific point in the future and allows the public to take stock of government accountability.

To provide accountability, the City Council could appoint a Transportation Accountability Board composed of community stakeholders and elected officials to oversee expenditure decisions and to review program efficiency and project delivery.

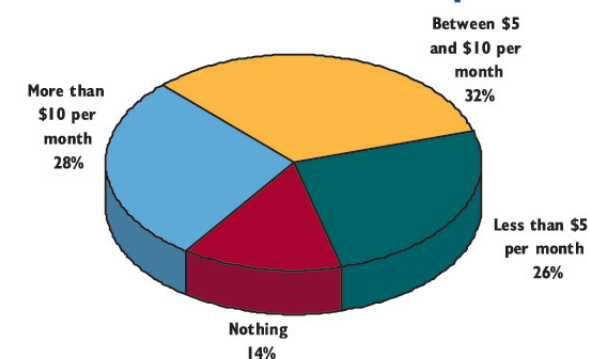
4. New revenues should be a small fraction of the community's willingness to pay.

The three surveys conducted for the Plan indicated a significant willingness to pay for transportation improvements that the community believes are necessary and desirable. The results, summarized above, indicate a strong willingness to pay. It would be best if the City asked for amounts that are a small fraction of the survey results because the community's willingness to pay will erode somewhat as individuals see that the Plan is a mixture of projects and programs that appeal to some individuals and are opposed by others. If the combined Plan project list has enough support, it would probably also sustain a willingness to pay, albeit at a lower level than expressed in our surveys.

A successful financial solution(s) will include:

- Sources of revenue that the public believes are appropriate for transportation;
- Specific expenditures that are seen as providing benefits to the community; and
- Revenues that place responsibility on those who create the need for the transportation improvements.

How much would you be willing to pay to solve Vancouver's traffic problem?



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What's it worth?

Funding Plan

Two groups (the Transportation Plan Citizen Advisory Team and a City Council appointed Transportation Finance Task Force) individually worked to develop a funding plan for the needed system investments. Out of those two processes, a preferred approach to funding was developed. The recommended approach - ultimately developed and recommended to City Council by the Transportation Finance Task Force - outlines a policy framework and two-phase strategy that should be pursued to fund the plan.

That new funding framework encompasses the principles presented on the previous page - that all existing revenues have been exhausted; that new assessments be based on user benefits; that new revenues have sunset and accountability provisions; and that the dollar amounts are a small fraction of the overall willingness to pay. The recommendations provide the funding plan framework to fulfill the financial obligations of the transportation capital facilities plan as identified in the corresponding tables.

The funding plan: a short-term and long-term strategy

Short-term: it is recommended that the City utilize one of the funding options (as identified in the potential revenues table on page 34) which can be enabled by City Council authority to primarily satisfy the existing operations/maintenance costs and program needs within the system preservation, and to a lesser extent, safety and livability programs.

This component will help to satisfy the need to maintain existing systems already in place and to provide a limited capital measure in the form of a bond issue or low interest debt options in order to advance a strategic grouping of capital projects to address the more immediate improvements which are deemed necessary for Plan build-out in the short-term (Yr 2004-2009).

Long-term: it is recommended that the City will be served by a street utility or like assessment to fund the complete transportation program. In this case, the new revenues will be used to support the whole transportation program and the distribution of the burden to pay will be apportioned between business and households based on the percentage of all trips generated by each use - new assessments based on user benefits - as the framework principles prescribe.

20 Year Capital Facilities Project Cost Summary

	Costs	Revenue
2004 to 2009		
2004 Projects in Progress Subtotal	\$64,008,000	
Street & Intersection Project Subtotal	\$111,832,000	
Pedestrian Project Subtotal	\$8,522,500	
Bicycle Project Subtotal	\$3,545,000	
Years 1 to 6 Subtotal	\$187,907,500	\$188,051,000
2010 to 2023		
Street and Intersection Project Subtotal	\$187,830,259	
Street & Intersection Project Subtotal	\$18,926,500	
Pedestrian Project Subtotal	\$5,015,000	
Bicycle & Trails Project Subtotal	\$6,600,000	
Years 1 to 6 Subtotal	\$218,371,759	\$218,381,000
Totals		
Years 1 to 6 Subtotal	\$187,907,500	
Years 7 to 20 Subtotal	\$218,371,759	
Grand Total - 20 Year CFP	\$406,279,259	\$406,432,000

Funding Plan Framework

Source of Revenue	Funding Estimate: 2004 - 2009	Funding Estimate: 2010 - 2023	Funding Estimate: 2004 - 2023
Total Impact Fees	14,344,000	21,516,000	35,860,000
State & Federal Grants	26,190,000	39,285,000	65,475,000
City REET - 1st 1/4% - P Mgmt	10,701,000	16,052,000	26,753,000
City REET - 2nd 1/4%	2,628,000	3,942,000	6,570,000
State Gas Tax - Unobligated	1,800,000	2,700,000	4,500,000
Developer Contributions	7,186,000	10,779,000	17,965,000
Public Agency Partnerships	3,000,000	4,500,000	7,500,000
Street Fund Reserves	2,268,000	0	2,268,000
Reserves for Funded Projects	67,000,000	0	67,000,000
General Fund - Pavement Mgt	8,220,000	12,330,000	20,550,000
New Funding - Task Force	44,714,000	107,277,000	151,991,000
Total	188,051,000	218,381,000	406,432,000



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How does the plan move forward?

Moving this plan forward is going to require a significant effort by numerous community partners; otherwise, many of the programs and initiatives and projects may not be implemented.

Key Partners

The City cannot implement this Plan alone. Consequently, key partners have been identified to push this plan forward. In all likelihood, you are one of those partners.

The key partners are the:

- **The City of Vancouver,**
- **Neighborhoods and Citizens,**
- **The Business Community, and**
- **Regional Transportation Agencies**

Each of these partners must contribute to the plan at varying levels and at various times. Given the complexity of the Plan and its supporting programs, it will be necessary to develop further partnership arrangements. This document is the first step in identifying the key partners and initiating dialogue needed to move the Transportation Plan forward.



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Who's going to do what?

Near-Term Plan Action Steps

The following table lists a preliminary set of action items needed to begin advancing the Plan. It is not intended to be a complete listing of issues that will arise during the next 20 years, but rather, activities that should begin now. The list will continue to grow and evolve throughout the life of this Transportation Plan.

What are the most immediate action items?

Funding is the most immediate action item. Without a new dedicated and recurring funding source for the transportation system, much of this Plan cannot be implemented. In addition to funding, the standards that guide development of the street system need to be updated to ensure that, over time, the *Transportation Vision* guides public and private street development.



Adoption, Funding, Programs & Monitoring	Timing		
	Within 3 years	Next 6 years	7-20 years
Adoption Schedule Plan adoption proceedings with the Planning Commission and City Council.	to occur in conjunction with Comprehensive Plan		
Funding Establish a Transportation Funding Task Force to recommend a dedicated transportation funding strategy to the City Council.	✓		
Adopt a Dedicated Transportation Funding source for needed improvements.	✓		
Review priorities for City expenditures in Capital Plan and biennial Budget.	✓	To occur annually thereafter	
Programs Incorporate project recommendations into the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and ensure consistency between the TIP and the Transportation Plan during the annual TIP update process.	✓	To occur annually thereafter	
Incorporate the recommendations of this Transportation Plan into the Business Plan for the City's Transportation Department.	✓		
Begin project scoping for projects scheduled to be in a first round approval as part of the proposed new transportation funding program.	✓		
Update Street Standards to reflect the policies and projects recommended in this Transportation Plan.	✓		
Incorporate project and policy recommendations into the Comprehensive Plan and revise the Capital Facilities Plan to reflect the project needs identified in this Transportation Plan.	✓		
Develop a legislative agenda and program to influence state and federal policy development for funding and project implementation of the Transportation Plan.	✓	To occur annually thereafter	
Monitoring Establish a monitoring and review program for the transportation program as a basis for guiding future project, policy, and budgeting decisions.	✓	To occur annually thereafter	
Prepare progress reports on project implementation, programs, and initiatives identified in the Transportation Plan.	✓	To occur annually thereafter	

Into the Future...

As individuals, as a community, or as a society, it is clear that we cannot live without access to transportation and the benefits we derive from the ability to move people and goods through the transportation system.

This Transportation Plan identifies the transportation issues facing Vancouver in the future and, most importantly, what we, the community, can do about it.

In this Transportation Plan we have identified the Transportation Vision; made recommendations for projects, programs, and initiatives that will incrementally implement the Vision over time; and presented a clear set of principles that should be used to develop and enact new funding mechanisms to advance this effort.

The City alone cannot implement this Plan. What is needed is for the community and the existing coalitions within the community (The City, Neighborhoods and Citizens, Businesses, and Transportation Agencies) to work together and begin to identify those elements of the Plan that each of them help can move forward. And then to do just that - join together and move the Plan forward.

The first step is to secure a dedicated funding source and begin to implement this Plan - piece by piece, project by project. It will require a dedicated effort over many years and many decisions to move our Transportation Plan forward. When that occurs, the Transportation Vision and Plan will shape our City well into the future.



How does this Plan fit with others?

Establish Legal Basis of the Vancouver Transportation Plan

Implementing the Vancouver Transportation Plan begins with the establishment of its legal standing through adoption. The Plan is adopted by City Council as an element of the Vancouver Comprehensive Plan. The Plan is considered a detailed component of the Comprehensive Plan; and, therefore, has the same legal standing, as the Comprehensive Plan. The goals, objectives, policies, maps and projects contained in both the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan are legally adopted and binding.

When new studies, neighborhood plans, or private development plans make recommendations that would significantly change or improve upon the Vancouver Transportation Plan, the Plan can be amended to reflect those changes. Amendments to the Plan require a public hearing and ultimately a vote of approval by City Council.

Policy Foundation for Decision-Making

The Plan provides the policy foundation for City decision-makers, staff, advisory bodies, and citizens. The goals, objectives, and policies of the Plan are to be considered in all decision-making processes that impact the transportation system. Specifically, the Plan is intended to guide decisions involving the following.

Land Use Actions and Development Review

In accordance with requirements contained in the Vancouver Municipal Code, the adopted goals, objectives, policies, projects and maps of the Plan will be considered and applied in the review and approval of land use actions and development applications.

Capital Investments

The project and program recommendations contained within the Plan form the basis from which projects are placed into the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), The State of Washington TIP, and annual City Capital program and budget.

Funding Priorities

The projects and programs recommended in the Plan are prioritized based on need and general timeframe. These priorities should be considered when preparing funding scenarios and measures. It is understood that priorities may change over time, and other factors need to be considered when preparing funding and construction priorities.

Transportation Programs

This Plan identifies measures and programs to be undertaken to increase mobility for all travel modes. Development of the programs and initiatives must be consistent with the Vision and recommendations of this Plan.

Relationship to Vancouver Comprehensive Plan

The Transportation Plan represents the "Transportation Element" of the Comprehensive Plan. The policies, objectives, programs and projects identified in the Transportation Plan are to be incorporated directly or by reference in the Comprehensive Plan in supporting accommodation of future growth and development of the City as directed by the Comprehensive Plan.



Relationship to 20 - Year Capital Facilities Plan (20-year CFP)

The Transportation Plan project recommendations comprise the foundation of the 20-year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP). The City's 20-year CFP is the listing of capital improvements that are needed to be constructed to support the build-out of the community according to the Comprehensive Plan.



Relationship to 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program (6-year TIP)

The City's 6-year TIP is a program implementation plan for the City's new capital projects and yearly programs. The major transportation-related projects contained in future TIPs will be derived, in part, from the projects and needs identified in the Plan. All transportation projects contained in the TIP, whether major or minor, must be consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and needs identified in the Plan.



Relationship with Regional Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan is Clark County's regional blueprint for transportation improvements and initiatives. Vancouver, as the largest city within the region, has a significant amount of influence on the regional transportation plan through the advancement of projects, policies and initiatives that support an integrated transportation system.



Plans and technical reports adopted by reference which underly this Plan

Multiple technical studies and sub-area plans were prepared in conjunction and in support of the Transportation Plan. Those project recommendations have been incorporated (where necessary) into this plan and (where necessary) into the 20-year Capital Facilities Plan. These Technical Reports and Plan Documents listed below are incorporated into this Plan and their underlying detailed reports and technical analysis are adopted by reference with this Plan's formal adoption.

Plans and Reports include:

- Vision the future - Vancouver Transportation System - December 2000
- Downtown Transportation System Plan - November 1999
- Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST) Master Plan - January 2001
- Walking and Bicycling Master Plan



Transportation System - Policy Framework

- 1) **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM:** Develop and maintain an interconnected and overlapping transportation system grid of pedestrian walkways, bicycle facilities, roadways for automobiles and freight, transit, and high capacity transit service. Include support programs such as traffic operations, transportation demand management, neighborhood traffic management, and the regional trails program. Work towards completing and sustaining individual components and programs to ensure success of the entire system.
- 2) **SYSTEM BALANCE:** Allocate resources to balance transportation choices. Promote development of a broader range of transportation options including pedestrian, bike, and transit systems, rather than focusing all resources on satisfying peak commuting demand with roadway capacity alone.
- 3) **TRANSPORTATION SAFETY:** Ensure high safety standards for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists through the development and capital improvement processes. Allocate city capital resources to high risk and collision locations for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
- 4) **TRANSPORTATION FINANCE:** Develop recurring and dedicated funding for a complete transportation program, including system operation and maintenance. Leverage local funding with innovative and aggressive finance strategies including partnerships, grant development, efficient debt, and fee-based funding sources.
- 5) **TRANSPORTATION CIRCULATION AND SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY:** Develop a transportation grid that provides good connections to surrounding land uses and activity centers and allows for multiple circulation routes to/from each location. Close gaps and complete system connections through the development and capital improvement processes.
- 6) **LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION INTEGRATION:** Develop and implement innovative transportation investment, design, and program incentives to achieve the urban environment envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan.
- 7) **LIVABLE STREETS:** Design streets and sidewalks and manage vehicular traffic to encourage livability, interaction, and sense of neighborhood or district ownership in linkage with adjacent land uses. Encourage multi-modal travel, and provide accessible, human scale opportunities for transferring between travel modes.
- 8) **TRANSPORTATION ACCESSIBILITY:** Build an accessible transportation system focused on inter-modal connectivity and removal of barriers to personal physical mobility.
- 9) **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM EFFICIENCY:** Invest in and improve efficiency of the transportation system with multi-modal design, advanced traffic management and operations technologies, demand management strategies and high-frequency transit service.
- 10) **NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC:** Protect and enhance neighborhoods with an active program that focuses on safety, safe routes to school, traffic calming, education, and enforcement.
- 11) **TRANSPORTATION REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN COORDINATION:** Coordinate Vancouver's transportation plans, policies, and programs with those of other jurisdictions serving the greater Metropolitan area to ensure a seamless transportation system. Focus particularly on cooperation with the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, Washington State Department of Transportation, Clark County and C-TRAN.
- 12) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** In order to support the continued economic vitality of Vancouver, major transportation system investments should facilitate freight mobility, job creation, regional competitive position, and revenue growth
- 13) **VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED:** Use transportation and land use measures to maintain or reduce single occupant motor vehicle miles traveled per capita to increase system efficiency and lower overall environmental impacts.
- 14) **STREET DESIGN:** Design city streets to achieve safety and accessibility for all modes. Arterial streets shall provide facilities for automobile, bike, pedestrian and transit mobility, and shall include landscaping and adequate lighting.
- 15) **PARKING STANDARDS:** Adopt coordinated parking standards which maintain neighborhood integrity, promote the use of a multi-modal transportation system, and efficient utilization of limited land and encourage desired economic development and growth throughout the entire urban area.
- 16) **TRANSIT SERVICE:** Maintain transit service at no less than 2003 levels.





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