

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Vancouver City Hall – Aspen Room – 415 W. Sixth Street
PO Box 1995 – Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995
www.cityofvancouver.us

Jeananne Edwards · Connor Godsil · Corey Grandstaff · Leah Jackson · Soroush Mohandessi
Mike Paine · Thinh Phan · Mario Raia · Eduardo Ramos · Derya Ruggles · Ken Williams

October 3, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The October 3, 2023 meeting of the Transportation and Mobility Commission (TMC) was called to order at 4:22 p.m. by Vice Chair Edwards.

Present: Chair Eduardo Ramos (remote), Vice Chair Jeananne Edwards, Commissioners Connor Godsil (remote), Corey Grandstaff, Leah Jackson, Soroush Mohandessi, Mike Paine, Thinh Phan, Mario Raia, Derya Ruggles and Ken Williams

Rebecca Kennedy was present as the staff liaison for the meeting, and Becky Rude (remote) was present as the staff attorney assigned to the Commission.

ACTION ITEMS

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Paine, and carried unanimously to approve the September minutes.

WORKSHOP

Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Update

Rebecca Kennedy and Katherine Kelly introduced the workshop, outlining the current stage of the program, the role of the TMC and other community advisory groups in the process, and the program's preparation for release of a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS).

Shilpa Mallem presented an overview of the program study area, including active transportation facilities, the interchange with SR-14, transit stops near the waterfront and Evergreen Blvd, the Mill Plain and Fourth Plain interchanges, the interchange with SR-500, and coordination with C-TRAN. As part of the environmental study, the program is considering design options for the following elements: whether to rebuild all or part of the C Street ramp, single level and double decker bridge options, and fixed and movable span options.

The bullets below summarize the Commission's questions and staff responses:

- On the double decker option, consideration for active transportation and transit on the top level to reduce noise levels. Staff indicated several factors are being studied to inform this decision, including rain coverage.
- Main Street connection to Columbia Way under the bridge and safety at street crossings due to noise levels. Staff responded that the project will construct a new portion of Main Street

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between 5th Street and Columbia Way. All crossings will reflect best practices for safety and comfort for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

- Compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements for Portland International Airport. Staff responded that the program is actively coordinating with the FAA and all appropriate program elements will respond to FAA requirements.
- Toll gate placement and tolling amount. Staff responded that the Oregon and Washington state transportation commissions will set toll rates. Gantry placement has not yet been determined.
- What are the pink boxes on the map? Staff responded they are the proposed locations for park and rides near the Evergreen transit station and the waterfront transit station. the program estimates there will be zero to two park and ride stations. Depending on the data from the transit optimization analysis, there may not be a need for a parking lot at either station, or at a maximum, one parking lot for each station.
- In the option without the C Street ramp, is the connection from SR-14 westbound to C Street also removed? Staff responded there would still be a connection from SR-14 westbound into downtown via 4th Street.
- Rationale for removing the connection from SR-500 westbound to Fourth Plain westbound. Staff responded to make that connection, from SR-500, traffic would exit to 39th Street to connect to Fourth Plain. There are currently quite a few crashes at that interchange and separating the traffic making that connection from the I-5 traffic is an attempt to improve safety.
- Bridge design options. Staff responded there are concept level design options at this stage.

WORKSHOP

Upper Main Street Safety & Mobility Project

Kate Drennan, Principal Transportation Planner, Community Development; Randy Johnson, DKS Associates; Derek Abe, Alta Planning & Design

Kate Drennan introduced the workshop and presented the project overview, previous planning work for this corridor, and the modal networks on the corridor from the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Randy Johnson presented the existing traffic conditions, existing lane conditions, lane configurations for alternatives 1 and 2, diversion impacts, traffic impacts under the two alternatives, and the multimodal connection from 40th Street to the Discovery Trail. Derek Abe presented the goals of phase two of the project, including improvements to the multimodal network, the project and outreach timelines, and key stakeholders for public outreach.

The bullets below summarize the Commission's questions and staff responses:

- Cyclist and small mobility connections from Main Street at 39th Street to connect to Columbia and 40th Street to connect to F Street. Staff responded part of the analysis of this project will include reviewing these intersections, connections, and parallel routes to build a more complete network.
- Explanation for traffic congestion southbound during the AM peak on Main Street but not during the PM peak. Staff responded it's likely correlated to the congestion on I-5 at the bridge. Planning analyses show localized growth in the study area between now and 2040, but because the Interstate Bridge Replacement will be completed in that time period, traffic models show current and new trips staying on the interstate, with very limited net change.
- Adding pedestrian crossing between Fourth Plain and 39th Street. Staff responded this is a pedestrian priority corridor, so we will look at crossing distances, the locations of new BRT stations and multi-family housing to meet the new standard for this corridor.

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- Add PeaceHealth, Cycle Vancouver, Bike Clark County, Rev Rides, businesses in Hazel Dell, Vancouver School District, Clark College, WSU, and those who are staying at the Safe Stay sites nearby to the list of key stakeholders during outreach.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Christina Martin provided comments on the McGillivray Safety and Mobility project and was opposed to the plans due to concerns with traffic congestion. She suggested adding police presence to address concerns for speeding. She also supported speed bumps and adding a stop sign at the intersection with Olympia.

Anita Brittain provided comments on the McGillivray Safety and Mobility project and was opposed to the plans due to concerns with safety, removal of parking, and changes to the aesthetics. She suggested adding more outreach to notify neighbors of meetings related to this project.

Jason Cromer provided comments on the McGillivray Safety and Mobility project and was supportive of the plans, specifically alternatives 1 and 2. He supported proactive traffic calming measures on McGillivray to address safety, reduce crashes and speeding, and lower noise pollution.

Dan Packard provided comments on the Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility project. The traffic analysis didn't seem to account for increased use of transit and small mobility and only focuses on motor vehicle travel. He also provided comments on the 112th Avenue Safety and Mobility project and access to the businesses in the area. He rode the C-TRAN Mill Plain Vine BRT route but had to walk 10 minutes on a busy street to get to the transit stop for his return trip. He urged the Commission to continue to advocate for city design improvements that benefit everyone.

PUBLIC HEARING

Main Street Promise

Ryan Lopossa, Streets and Transportation Manager, Public Works; Chris Harder, Deputy Director, Economic Prosperity & Housing

Ryan Lopossa presented a project overview, goals and guiding principles, project timeline, takeaways from the TMC and City Council workshops, and alignment with the Strategic Plan. The presentation covered the final design elements, bike parking corrals, and bollard plans. Chris Harder presented on community engagement and public feedback, the project advisory group, the business retention plan vision and goals, and next steps for the project.

The bullets below summarize the Commission's questions and staff responses:

- How bollards will impact flow of traffic and pedestrian crossing. Staff responded the bollards can be placed to prevent vehicular traffic on Main Street from any direction, depending on the need for the event. Pedestrians will continue to have access to all crosswalks when the bollards are in place.
- Define enhanced intersections. Staff responded the intersections are designed to draw the attention of the user, particularly drivers. On Main Street, the intersections will include concrete instead of asphalt and be a different texture. In the crosswalks, there is more contrast and texture to alert drivers to pay attention. The intersections with traffic signals will include Audio Pedestrian Signal (APS) technology and tactile ramps.

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- How are business grants funded? Staff responded the grants are funded and managed through the Vancouver Downtown Association. The City is partnering with other local agencies that offer business grants.
- After construction is complete, will there be a process to evaluate traffic volume and speed on the corridor? Staff responded there will be an evaluation of the corridor after construction to assess how well the design is functioning.
- What will staff measure post-construction to evaluate the project? Staff responded they will evaluate traffic speed and volume. For programmed events where portions of the street are closed, they will review information on how many people attended the event and impacts to businesses.
- Data from programmed closures of the corridor for events and the challenges to using that information to determine potential permanent closure to vehicular traffic.

Public Testimony

- Dan Packard expressed concern for the pedestrian experience with the proposed design. The sidewalk is narrowly constrained between 6th and 9th Street. The corridor is still mostly designed for vehicles. The City is missing an opportunity to reduce vehicle emissions and make the corridor more livable and prosperous.
- Christina Martin supported on street parking on Main Street to support businesses located on the corridor.
- Jason Cromer suggested studying longer term closures of the corridor, such as three or six months to understand the impacts to businesses. He supported changing the infrastructure to support pedestrian and small mobility usage and lowering the volume of vehicles on Main Street.

The bullets below summarize the Commission's questions and staff responses:

- Sidewalk width between 6th and 9th Street and ensuring there is a clear active section on the sidewalk for pedestrians. Staff responded the active section of the sidewalk is approximately 8 feet wide. It's a challenge to fit outdoor seating and other uses on the sidewalk but there is an emphasis on the active zone to be free of any barriers. There will be a furnishing zone next to the buildings for seating and tables. The active zone should not have any furniture or obstructions and each section of the sidewalk will have different textures to designate those different zones.

Motion by Commissioner Paine and seconded by Commissioner Ruggles to forward a recommendation to City Council in support of the following:

- The final project design and public engagement process as described in the Staff Report and Presentation
- Implementation of the Business Retention Strategy as outlined in the Staff Report and Presentation
- Council to direct staff to return in five years after project completion to present information on the benefits and impacts of temporary street closures of Main Street to inform a discussion of if/when a permanent closure of Main Street may be appropriate.

Amendment to the motion by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Ruggles for Council to direct staff to return in three years after project completion and the street closures apply to vehicular traffic.

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Deliberation

- Commissioner Mohandessi appreciated the work and creativity, including the community input that went into this project. If the design was for 10 blocks with no vehicles, it would be a unique experience. The current design is like any other in the City and requested to table the motion to allow more time to amend the design.
- Commissioner Ramos agreed with the points made about the design and acknowledged the hesitation to more radical design ideas like removing parking. He supported the opportunity to review the design in three years to consider limiting vehicle traffic and pushing forward on the City's climate goals and towards more bold policymaking.

Roll call vote on the amendment to the motion:

Commissioner Williams	Yes
Commissioner Jackson	Yes
Commissioner Raia	Yes
Commissioner Ruggles	Yes
Commissioner Phan	Yes
Commissioner Grandstaff	Yes
Commissioner Mohandessi	Yes
Commissioner Paine	Yes
Commissioner Godsil	Yes
Commissioner Ramos	Yes
Commissioner Edwards	Yes

Roll call vote on the amended motion:

Commissioner Williams	Yes
Commissioner Jackson	Yes
Commissioner Raia	Yes
Commissioner Ruggles	Yes
Commissioner Phan	Yes
Commissioner Grandstaff	Yes
Commissioner Mohandessi	No
Commissioner Paine	Yes
Commissioner Godsil	Yes
Commissioner Ramos	Yes
Commissioner Edwards	Yes

Motion passes 10-1.

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Rebecca Kennedy provided an update on the McGillivray Blvd Safety and Mobility Project. The two design options both include removal of a travel lane and reconfiguration and there has been feedback from the community for an option that does not include removal of a travel lane. Staff is evaluating that option under the same criteria as the other two options and will bring that information to the Commission at the next workshop.

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COMMISSION COMMUNICATION

Commissioner Williams shared his experience of an edge lane road in Port Townsend that had been restriped with two 5-foot wide non-vehicle lanes and one 10 foot wide two direction vehicle lane. He encouraged staff to include this option when considering traffic calming measures. Staff indicated this is often called an Advisory Bike Lane and is a design they are considering on roadway segments with low vehicle volumes.

ADJOURNMENT 8:15 PM

DocuSigned by:

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Eduardo Ramos, Chair

Meetings of the Transportation Mobility Commission are electronically recorded on audio. The audio is kept for a period of six years.

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