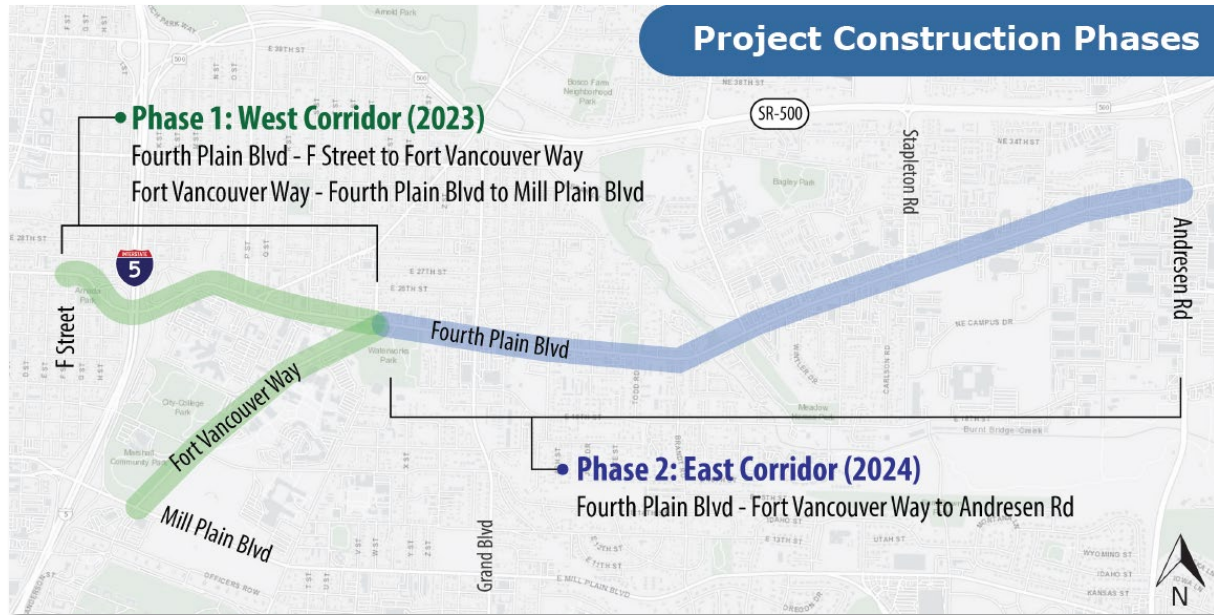


TO: Transportation and Mobility Commission **HEARING DATE:** 3/7/2023
FROM: Kate Drennan, Principal Planner, Community Development; Ryan Farncomb, Parametrix
SUBJECT: Fourth Plain and Ft. Vancouver Way Safety & Mobility Project Phase 2 Design



Report Date: 3/7/2023
Hearing Date: 3/7/2023
Proposal: Improve safety and mobility on Fourth Plain Blvd through roadway reconfigurations and capital projects
Location: Fourth Plain Boulevard between Ft. Vancouver Way and Andresen Blvd
Proponent: City of Vancouver
City Staff: Kate Drennan, Principal Planner, Community Development, City of Vancouver

Recommendation: Endorse the recommended Phase 1 designs to repurpose a travel lane on Fourth Endorse the proposed design to reconfigure roadway lane design through the repurposing of travel lanes, addition of business access and transit lanes, and buffered and striped mobility lanes. Endorse the supplemental project recommendations of capital projects focused on mobility lane improvements, placemaking, and traffic calming for addition to the Transportation Improvement Program.

P.O. Box 1995 • Vancouver, WA 98668-1995 • 360-487-8000 • TTY: 360-487-8602 •
www.cityofvancouver.us

To request other formats, please contact: Julie Nischik (360) 487-7813 | WA Relay: 711 |
Julie.Nischik@cityofvancouver.us

I. Background

The Fourth Plain and Ft. Vancouver Way Safety and Mobility Project is a Complete Streets project focused on reconfiguring the roadway to address one of the most unsafe corridors in the City through a potential roadway repurposing, coinciding with scheduled pavement maintenance. The existing corridor has historically high crash rates and does not provide safe or comfortable facilities for people walking, cycling, using a mobility device, or accessing transit.

Due to the multi-year paving schedule, and the complexity of the corridor, the project is split into two phases. Phase 1 includes Fort Vancouver Way between Mill Plain and Fourth Plain Boulevard. Phase 1 also includes Fourth Plain Boulevard from F Street to Fort Vancouver Way (2023 paving year). Phase 2 includes Fourth Plain Boulevard between Fort Vancouver Way and Andresen Road (2024 paving year). To meet project schedules for the 2023 paving season, Phase 1 West Corridor roadway design was advanced in Fall 2022, while the Phase 2 Corridor design is advancing in early Spring 2023.

II. Technical Findings

The team reviewed previous planning work and historical crash data to understand safety and access issues along the corridors. To understand potential impacts from a roadway reconfiguration, the team conducted traffic analysis to understand how changes to roadway vehicle capacity would impact vehicle travel times in current and future conditions. While the corridor largely continues to operate well under a roadway reconfiguration, one east-bound section of roadway cannot be repurposed due to congestion-related impacts from removing a general-purpose travel lane. Because Fourth Plain is a concurrency corridor, there are minimum corridor operating speeds that are enshrined in City adopted ordinances. This constraint factored into the final design recommendations.

The team also worked closely with C-TRAN to understand the impacts of different roadway designs on their service and operation. Maintaining transit travel time and reliability is a guiding value embedded in the project and is enshrined in the operating agreement between C-TRAN and the Federal Transit Administration. This agreement, and roadway geometry, contributed to the recommendation that C-TRAN continue to use the existing Vine Platforms for their stops.

To provide continuous mobility lanes across the entirety of the project corridor, the team also investigated the feasibility of multiple design alternatives for facilities outside of the right-of-way or diverting to parallel routes. While roadway geometry limited in-road facilities in the eastern-most segment, the findings prompted the project team to recommend the complementary mobility-lane capital projects as interim mobility solutions until a larger investment for multiuse path facilities can be advanced.

III. Community Engagement

The Project team has engaged communities along the corridor, including businesses, the public and stakeholders throughout the project. As shared during the February 7, 2023, TMC meeting, area stakeholders and the wider public largely support the repurposing of vehicle travel lanes to improve safety and mobility on the corridor. In-person feedback gathered during community events favored bus reliability treatments (33%), either bus or bike treatments (33%) or favored bike safety treatments (17%). Online open house feedback was more evenly split on priority treatments with 63% supportive of bicycle-focused improvements and 66% supportive of bus-focused improvements. In-person canvassing of local, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) business owners communicated a strong preference for bus-focused improvements (44% to 9% favoring bike improvements).

From City Council, we've heard emphasis on advancing the strategic plan goals of safety, equity, and climate. As the premier bus rapid transit corridor in the region serving the most diverse area of the City, there is a desire to keep transit on-time and reliable on the corridor both today and in future years that will see added growth. There is also a goal to improve the facilities for people using active transportation modes, such as walking, rolling, bicycling, or using other small mobility devices.

We gathered feedback from Transportation and Mobility Commission throughout the project. We have heard a desire to increase space for different mobility users, to create consistent and legible facilities along the corridor. The TMC also shared the vision of Fourth Plain as a prosperous and vibrant place to be celebrated through community street mural projects. Finally, the TMC reviewed, and Council endorsed performance criteria for evaluation of options based on improvements for people walking, using mobility devices, bicycling, and using the bus, safety improvements for all users, greenhouse gas reduction, equitable outcomes, and access to businesses, jobs, services, parks, recreation, and education. Throughout the project, a BeHeard page was host to materials including surveys, online open house materials, and other ways to offer feedback.

IV. Transportation and Mobility Commission and City Council Review

In 2022 and 2023 the project team has met with the TMC six times to discuss the project (April, June, September, October, and November in 2022). Most recently the Project team presented the recommended Phase 2 design in February 2023.

The Project team has also presented to City Council on five occasions (July, October 3 and October 24, and November in 2022, and in February of 2023). At the February 26th meeting the Project team similarly presented the Phase 2 design recommendations.

V. Phase 2 Design and Project Recommendations

The project team recommends a project package that consists of three parts which: utilize the federal grant to repave Fourth Plain, add capital projects to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and adds a significant project proposal to the Ten-Year Investment Strategy for Fourth Plain.

- I. The team recommends a design for the 2024 paving project that preserves transit travel time reliability and includes improvements to mobility users. The design repurposes a travel lane in each direction between Ft. Vancouver Way and 62nd to add Bus Access Transit Lanes where needed (west bound between St. Johns Blvd and Falk Road and east bound between General Anderson Avenue and Stapleton Rd). East of Stapleton, the design repurposes a travel lane eastbound for a BAT lane, and westbound the roadway retains two vehicle travel lanes. The design includes a buffered mobility lane both east and west bound between St. Johns Blvd. and Ft. Vancouver Way to General Anderson Avenue, and an expanded striped mobility lane in each direction from General Anderson Avenue to 62nd Avenue. Vehicle travel lanes will be narrowed to further reduce speeding and reallocate space.
- II. The team recommends adding three new capital projects to the Transportation Improvement Program to create quality mobility lane connections to parallel east-west corridors. The first capital project would restripe Stapleton Road from Fourth Plain Blvd to 18th street to create buffered mobility lanes. The second capital project would improve the existing mobility lanes on 18th street with improvements like buffers and/or delineators to connect east to future projects on NE Burton Road and evaluate appropriate traffic calming for Brandt Road and Grand Blvd. The third capital project would include a large intersection street-mural on Fourth Plain at the crossing of the Burnt Bridge Creek trail. This mural would act as a traffic calming device at this important crossing for mobility users, while providing a placemaking opportunity to celebrate the culture and community of the International District that makes up Fourth Plain Blvd.
- III. The third recommendation is a capital project to add off-street multiuse facilities between 62nd Avenue and Andresen Road to serve mobility users outside of the roadway. To achieve this, the City would need to work with adjacent property owners to purchase right-of-way, relocate utilities, potentially remove trees in some areas, and other mitigation. The project is recommended for inclusion in the 10 Year Investment Strategy where the Fourth Plain community will be prioritizing investments. Incorporating this recommendation into the investment strategy is reflective of the cost, complexity and time required to build these facilities, while recognizing the long-term need to provide safe and accessible facilities particularly as this corridor continues to add residences, businesses, and other destinations.

VI. Recommendation

In making the recommendation, staff considered feedback from the TMC in earlier design discussions, public engagement feedback, stakeholder interviews with C-TRAN and BIPOC businesses along the corridor, and analysis of traffic impacts through lane reconfiguration.

Based on these, the project team recommends the following design options for Phase 1:

- The roadway reconfiguration described in Part I as part of the 2024 paving preservation work.

- The new capital projects outlined in Part II to create new, or improve existing mobility lanes, for the purpose of creating an alternative network for traveling furthering east or west parallel to Fourth Plain. These should be added to the Transportation Improvement Program.
- Advance the off-street multiuse facility as described in Part III of the recommendation, for inclusion in the Fourth Plain for Fall Investment Strategy for community prioritization.

Kate Drennan, Principal Planner, Community Development, Kate.Drennan@cityofvancouver.us

Attachments:

- Memo: Fourth Plain & Ft. Vancouver Milestone #1 Outreach Summary (August 2022)
- Memo: Fourth Plain & Ft. Vancouver Milestone #2 Outreach Summary (December 2022)
- Memo: Staff Memo for Fourth Plain Phase 2 Draft Project Recommendations (February 2023)
- PDF: Map of Phase 2 Design Recommendations (February 2023)