



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 · Matt Herman · Alexander Hubert · Leah Jackson ·
Mike Paine · Mario Raia · Eduardo Ramos · Derya Ruggles · Ken Williams

January 4, 2022

Time: 4:30 – 6:44 p.m.

Location: Convened telephonically, no in person attendance

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (00:27)

The January 4, 2022 meeting of the Transportation Mobility Commission was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Chair Eduardo Ramos.

Present: Chair Eduardo Ramos, Vice Chair Mario Raia, Jeananne Edwards, Connor Godsil, Matt Hermen, Alexander Hubert, Leah Jackson, Mike Paine, Derya Ruggles, Ken Williams

ACTION ITEMS

ADOPTION OF MINUTES (01:55)

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

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Jeananne Edwards	Yes
Connor Godsil	Yes
Matt Hermen	Yes
Alexander Hubert	Yes
Leah Jackson	Yes
Mike Paine	Yes
Derya Ruggles	Yes
Ken Williams	Yes
Mario Raia	Yes
Eduardo Ramos	Yes

STAFF COMMUNICATIONS (03:49)

Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director of Community Development, provided administrative updates to the Commission. Meetings will continue in the virtual format for the foreseeable future. Staff sent out a reminder on the process for discussion at virtual meetings, to ensure the group has a shared understanding about how Commission discussion will be facilitated. Staff will also work with the City's Boards and Commissions coordinator to consider a different meeting platform with more features to facilitate discussions. Last, the 2022 TMC retreat will be in May or June this year, with more details to come.

Jennifer Campos, Principal Transportation Planner, reviewed follow up information from the December 2021 TMC meeting provided to the Commission on the Fourth Plain Safety and Mobility Project. Staff explained the memo from project consultant Parametrix that further explained level of service (LOS) and historical traffic count information on the corridor. Staff responded to a question about service for non-vehicle travelers, including pedestrians and bicyclists, indicating that the Transportation System Plan Update will address those issues. Another Commissioner asked about repurposing travel lanes on the west end of Fourth Plain for pedestrians and bicyclists. Staff responded that project happened in the early 2000s, which added turn lanes and bike facilities. Staff indicated they could look at the project documents to provide more information, as well as send the federal standards for lane repurposing. Staff also provided an overview of the report on the SR500 access restriction project and its impacts to traffic.

WORKSHOP ITEM (19:39)

Transportation System Plan Enhanced Transit Corridors Analysis (Jennifer Campos, Principal Transportation Planner; Stephanie Wright and Esther Needham, Nelson/Nygaard)

Rebecca Kennedy introduced the workshop, which will focus on how the City and C-TRAN work together to promote fast, reliable, and convenient transit.

Stephanie Wright Nelson/Nygaard, the consulting firm that is working on the Transportation System Plan (TSP) Update, presented the most recent draft of the enhanced transit network, including defining what enhanced transit means in the context of the City of Vancouver, and how this integrates with and supports the overall goals of the TSP as well as City Council goals for climate and sustainability. The presentation covered the City's role in transit, current statistics for transit in Vancouver, existing service types, access to bus stops, and the public's priorities for transit.

Esther Needham, Nelson/Nygaard, presented on the analysis and data used to identify the enhanced transit network. The analysis looked at the equity focus areas, ridership during the beginning months of the pandemic that show transit dependency, and regional projected growth in housing and employment density in 2015 and 2040. The analysis also included data on congestion as reported by C-TRAN operators.

The bullets below summarize the Commissions discussion on the proposed enhanced transit corridor network:

- Surveying transit users on specific needs and desires for transit. Staff noted C-TRAN surveys their users, and they have a citizens committee that discusses these topics. This analysis did not include surveying transit users. The Community Roundtables that the City conducted included transit users to get input and feedback.
- Job density projections and the proposed enhanced transit corridors, as well as outreach to employers. Staff responded that new employment density areas created by future job growth as predicted in the regional model were still in the lowest density category of 1-19 employees per acre and based on C-TRAN service standards likely would not qualify for increased transit service. Staff noted they would continue to look at those areas as the analysis proceeds. In response to specific comments about the need for increased transit that serves the Port of Vancouver (POV), staff noted that they are part of project technical advisory committee and are currently working with C-TRAN to address Port employee transit needs. The City is supportive of the Port and C-TRAN working together to provide transit access to those areas.

- A greater range of uses and needs for transit outside of traditional home to a work commute routes, and encouragement to improve transit routes that connect people to services and amenities in addition to worksites.
- Questions about measures to relieve congestion, such as more frequent buses, changing duration of traffic signals, different types of lanes to enter/exit a thoroughfare. The project team responded that C-TRAN has made some of those changes to address congestion, but the issue is around the tradeoff of space for transit and other users. Changing signals can also be expensive. These types of tradeoffs, and where transit supportive improvements should be prioritized, is the purpose of the ETC analysis.
- The City of Vancouver and City of Portland and connected corridors between the two jurisdictions. Staff responded there is ongoing cooperation and coordination between the transit agencies and, to a lesser extent, the cities. C-TRAN is the only transit provider in the region that serves both cities/states.
- Accessing the airport using public transit, and the need for transit from downtown Vancouver to the airport.

Staff continued the presentation, providing an update on the City's Vulnerability Index Analysis, which provides a composite social vulnerability score based on the several demographic and socioeconomic factors, and will provide the foundation for a transportation-specific Underserved Areas Analysis that is being created as part of the TSP and will inform future investment prioritization decision making. The presentation covered travel patterns using data from StreetLight, comparing the changes in traffic volumes from April to October of 2020 to volumes in 2019, as well as biking activity, transit ridership, and home based work trips.

The bullets below summarize the Commissions questions and staff responses to the presentation:

- Work trips decreased due to working from home. Project staff indicated that is true, describing how StreetLight aggregates data to determine if a trip is a work trip or some other errand. Mid-day traffic volumes have increased with people who are working from home and leaving home for short periods during the day.
- Return to office in the next few months and years and effects on traffic patterns. Staff agreed some traffic will return, but many employers are moving towards flexible schedules with increased ability to work from home/virtually more of the time.
- With the pandemic, an increase in e-commerce and the affects of light freight on residential streets. Staff agreed is a big trend that will continue and is a challenge. Downtown is also seeing issues with short term parking and delivery vehicles.
- Observations that traffic volumes up in the downtown, but commuting to downtown has decreased, and questions about what that indicates. Staff suggested it could be more recreation or social trips, rather than commuting to work.
- Other trends of note include the aging of the population, implications of the great resignation, and increased sales of e-mobility vehicles. Staff noted these all could manifest in the TSP with various types of programs intended to address changes to transportation patterns and behaviors.
- Access to services outside of the traditional work and service hours. Staff indicated they could possibly sort the data by hour and will analyze it further.

Staff finished the presentation by discussing the outcomes of the community values outreach process. Key priorities for the transportation system identified through community roundtables, public outreach events, and online surveys include equitable access, reliable travel times, safety, affordability, comfort level and a desire for user friendly infrastructure, earth friendly, well maintained, and regional connectivity. When combining all feedback, the top five priorities were safe, earth friendly, reliable travel times, regional connectivity, and affordable.

The bullets below summarize the Commissions questions and staff responses to the presentation:

- The definition of safety. Staff indicated the suggested definition of safe was “our transportation system keeps people safe through physical infrastructure and a culture of safe behavior”. For the community roundtables, there is recordings that include further qualitative information on their responses.
- The value of prioritizing safety within this process, as it relates to the basic needs of transportation. Staff responded that the community values will be used to weigh proposed projects. Projects that are more heavily weighted for safety might get prioritized and funded over a project that prioritized economic development, for example.

COMMUNITY FORUM (01:30:00)

Glen Yung, Vancouver resident, was present to comment on defining accessibility and equity to include access to a car and the impact on time as a resource. He provided an example of a resident who until recently did not have access to a car and would spend a day using public transit to complete their errands. He also brought up policy changes and their consequences, such as needing access to vehicle charging stations at rental properties.

Staff responded that the building and land use code does required charging stations for new developments, but it will take time for older buildings to retrofit to meet the needs of people today, and acknowledged that lack of access in the interim is a real challenge.

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION (01:37:18)

Commissioner Hubert suggested increasing C-TRAN routes from downtown Vancouver to the Portland airport. Staff responded they would share this suggestion with C-TRAN.

Commissioner Ramos asked staff about the work related to the Interstate Bridge Replacement Project. Staff responded the project is in the early stages and is gathering feedback and input from the regional partners. When the project moves to interacting with the local roads system, staff will engage the Commission, after the regional partners have agreed to a structure for the overall bridge solution and the program moves into the design phase.

ADJOURNMENT 6:44 PM

Eduardo Ramos, Chair

Meetings of the Transportation Mobility Commission are electronically recorded on audio. The audio tapes are kept on file in the office of the City Clerk for a period of six years.

