

Date: May 2, 2023
To: Chair Ramos and Transportation and Mobility Commission Members
From: Ryan Lopossa, Streets and Transportation Division Manager, Public Works
Emily Benoit, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development
CC: Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development
RE: Columbia Street Mobility Project Update – May 2023

Background

The Columbia Street Mobility Project (previously the Westside Bike Mobility Project) was informed by several existing policies and plans previously adopted by City Council, including the City's 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, Complete Streets Policy (2017), Westside Mobility Strategy (2016) and Transportation System Plan (2004). The purpose of the Project was to develop a north-south bike route west of Interstate 5 for all ages and abilities that connects neighborhoods between the Burnt Bridge Creek Trail and the Waterfront.

The Project consisted of upgrades to bicycle and mobility facilities on Columbia Street between W Columbia Way and W 45th Street. These safety and mobility upgrades were installed in mid- to late-2022:

- Parking-protected mobility lanes between W 8th Street and W 13th Street.
- Sharrow marked lanes between W 13th Street and Mill Plain Boulevard.
- Buffered, zicla-protected mobility lanes between Mill Plain Boulevard and W 45th Street.
- On-street parking removal between Mill Plain Boulevard and W 45th Street.
- An enhanced pedestrian crossing between W 6th Street and W 8th Street.
- Bike boxes and bike lane extensions at intersections.
- Marked crosswalks with street lighting at intersections.
- Automatic bike and pedestrian counters.
- Education about roadway improvements and enforcement activities.

Evaluation Process

City Council embedded a post project evaluation process for all Complete Streets projects to determine how the added safety and mobility elements function, and to recommend refinements and changes if needed. This is the last stage of Complete Streets projects and is currently underway for the Columbia Street Project.

The Project was completed¹ in Fall 2022, at which point the yearlong post-implementation evaluation began. This evaluation will collect post-implementation data to compare to pre-implementation data for the same locations. Data will be collected at the one-month (Fall 2022), 6-month (Spring 2023) and 12-month (Fall 2023) milestones. Once the evaluation period is complete, data analysis will inform whether refinements should be made, and if any recommendations are proposed to further improve safety and mobility on the corridor. The project team will present these findings and any refinements or recommendations to the Transportation and Mobility Commission and City Council.

With the safety and mobility elements installed, there have also been enforcement activities, including an educational component, to ensure driver and parking compliance along the corridor. Educational tools, such as [safety videos](#) and informational yard signs, were created to inform the community about new roadway elements, such as parking protected bike lanes, bike lane extensions and protected intersections. While compliance issues are steadily decreasing, continued enforcement and education will be conducted as needed.

One-Month Evaluation Outreach (Fall 2022)

This milestone consisted of data collection, such as speed and volume counts, and also included two surveys, available on the Project's [BeHeard webpage](#), to understand the Project's impact on different community members. The User Survey included both in person intercept and online survey options, which are focused on people who have or were actively using the new mobility facilities. The Neighbor Survey focused on businesses and residents on or adjacent to the corridor and was advertised via 1,700 mailed post cards sent out requesting input. All respondents reported being directly impacted by the project, with mobility lane users reporting a feeling of increased safety, and some neighbors and business owners continuing to report strong concerns about removal of on-street parking.

These surveys will be conducted again during the evaluation process to gauge changes in use and perception of the Project's impact. As everyone becomes more familiar with the changes, the impact of the Project may change. This longitudinal evaluation may also illuminate longer-term concerns that may not be apparent after one-month. Future outreach efforts, in conjunction with further assessment of corridor performance, will inform any refinement or recommendations.

Ryan Lopossa, Streets and Transportation Division Manager, Public Works, 360-487-7706,
Ryan.Lopossa@cityofvancouver.us

Emily Benoit, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development, 360-487-7944,
Emily.Benoit@cityofvancouver.us

¹ Two automated bicycle and pedestrian counters were damaged in transit and have been returned to the manufacturer for replacement. As soon as these are received, they will be installed on the corridor.

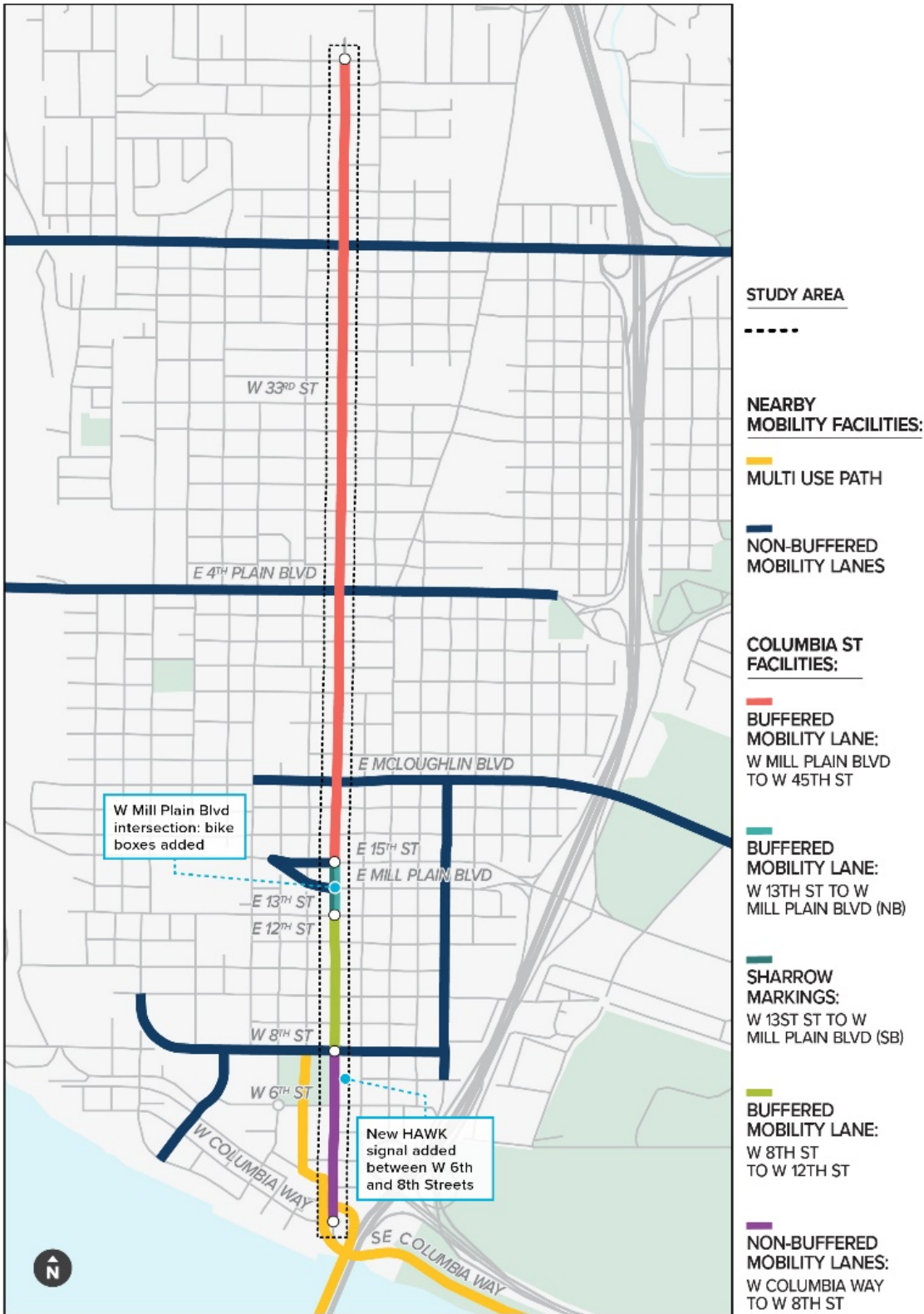


Figure 2: Columbia Street Mobility Project Area and Nearby Facilities