

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 23, 2022
TO: Rebecca Kennedy, Emily Benoit, William Cooley, City of Vancouver
FROM: Kayla Dunn, Monica Santos-Pinacho, PointNorth Consulting
Eddie Montejo, Parametrix
SUBJECT: Milestone 1 Direct Outreach Summary – **Final** Report
PROJECT NAME: Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way Safety and Mobility Project

OVERVIEW

The City of Vancouver is studying ways to improve safety, mobility, and comfort on both Fourth Plain (from F Street east to Andresen) and Fort Vancouver Way (from Fourth Plain to Mill Plain). This project will look at ways to make these streets safer for all users regardless of how they choose to travel.

The public outreach team is planning and conducting ongoing direct outreach activities to share information and solicit feedback regarding lane reconfiguration alternatives in the Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fort Vancouver Way corridors under the City's Vancouver Moves Complete Streets Projects. Community engagement will be conducted in two milestones: Milestone 1 outreach activities began in May 2022 and will conclude when Milestone 2 starts in August 2022.

Community feedback received through direct outreach activities in Milestone 1 has been collected, analyzed, and summarized in this report.

Objectives

- Share information with community members and stakeholders about upcoming option for lane reconfiguration under consideration by City of Vancouver
- Encourage community members to provide feedback about their priorities through the following engagement opportunities:
 - Online survey
 - Online open house
 - Stakeholder meeting
- Build rapport with stakeholders for future engagement happening later this year

OUTREACH SUMMARY

Methods

- **Project Flyer:** A project flyer summarizing general information about the project was developed in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chuukese and Russian. The flyer also invited community members to visit and stay engaged via the project BeHeard site, Online Open House, and survey.
- **Canvassing:** The team conducted in-person visits along the corridor to engage directly with residents at businesses, organizations, and apartment buildings identified as priority stakeholders.

- **Phone and email outreach:** The team contacted 38 priority-identified stakeholders to introduce the project, share information, and offer stakeholder meetings for deeper dives on project scope and timeline.
- **Tabling:** The team hosted an informational table at two public spaces to share details about the project, ask for community member feedback, and build rapport for future engagement.
- **1:1 Stakeholder meetings:** The team held meetings with two stakeholder organizations interested in receiving a detailed project briefing, providing detailed feedback and expressing interest in participating in a future focus group.
- **Neighborhood association meetings:** The team attended 5 neighborhood association meetings along the corridor in June 2022 to share information about the project and ask for community member feedback.
- **BeHeard Website and Survey:** beheardvancouver.org/fourth-plain-fort-vancouver-mobility was published to share general project information with the public and to gather ongoing community feedback. *Survey #1: Safety Issues and Corridor Needs* was published in English and Spanish on the BeHeard website in May 2022. As of this writing, over 800 community members have visited the BeHeard site and 77 participants submitted a survey.
- **Online Open House and Survey:** In May, an online open house was also published at storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ to share interactive project information with the general public. The site also provided an alternative way to submit *Survey #1*. As of this writing, more than 250 people visited the online open house and 18 submitted a survey.
- **Social Media and Advertisements:** Social media advertisements on Facebook, NextDoor, Instagram, and Reddit were used to help drive community members to the BeHeard site. Social media accounted for approximately 35% of all traffic sources to the BeHeard site.

Direct Engagement Activities

An overview of the direct engagement activities conducted between May and July 2022 are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Milestone 1 Direct Engagement Activities Summary - May - July 2022

ACTIVITY	DATES	LOCATION / GROUP	TOTAL REACHED
Tabling	May 21	Downtown Vancouver Farmers Market	120+
	May 31	Clark College campus	
	July 9	LULAC Grows Mercado	
Canvassing	May 24	West project corridor (F Street to Ft. Vancouver Way) – Ft Vancouver Way (Fourth Plain to Mill Plain)	44
	May 26, 27 June 23	East project corridor (Fort Vancouver to Andresen)	
Phone and email outreach	June 1-30	Priority identified stakeholders including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIPOC-owned businesses • Transportation & mobility organizations • Residential apartment complexes • Community-based organizations • Social services providers 	38

1:1 Stakeholder meetings	June 22	Recovery Café Clark County The Marshall Center	2
Neighborhood Association Meetings	June 2 – June 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shumway, June 2 • Arnada, June 9 • Maplewood, June 16 • Rose Village, June 28 • Fourth Plain Village, June 29 	5
BeHeard Website	Launched May 18	Online	800+ visitors
Online Open House	Launched May 18	Online	250+ visitors
Survey #1	May 18 – July 15	Online via BeHeard page and Online Open House	95 surveys

THEMES AND FINDINGS

The following sections detail the themes and findings of both in-person and online outreach done as part of Milestone #1 (Summer 2022).

In Person Outreach

Questions

The outreach team prioritized asking the following three questions during each engagement effort with members of the community:

- What has been your experience traveling along Fourth Plain Blvd or Fort Vancouver Way?
- Are there any intersections on these streets where crossing feels dangerous? If so, where?
- How would you like to see these streets improved?

Themes and Feedback

- **Strong desire to address dangerous travel experience in the corridor.** Travelers in this area feel that speed, congestion, and aggressive traffic create a highly dangerous experience when travelling on these streets, regardless of mode choice. There is a strong desire in the community to address these problems, which include:
 - Crosswalks are not trustworthy because drivers disregard crosswalk
 - Sidewalks are too narrow to be a barrier from speeding vehicles
 - Not enough street lighting
 - Long travel times through Fourth Plain due to congestion, leading to poor driving behavior and more accidents
 - “There is a lot of death on Fourth Plain Boulevard.”
 - Enforcement is needed to address speeding and dangerous crosswalk violations
 - Drivers drive through red lights; very dangerous for children in the community
 - “We need ways to ensure safety for our children.”



- **Residents and commuters alike believe it is not a bike-friendly area.** This area is not perceived as bike-friendly due to lack of bicycle infrastructure. Most people expressed that they would never consider riding a bike on the current configuration of these streets. Some of the most common reasons noted include:
 - Bicyclists use the sidewalks because the road feels unsafe
 - Lack of protection from speeding vehicles
 - Existing bike lanes are insufficient

- **Overall unwelcoming perception of the area from travelers.** The atmosphere of the area feels unwelcoming to travelers due to the poor condition of buildings and lack of greenery.
 - Buildings look abandoned and uncared for
 - Nothing pleasant to look at as a pedestrian
 - “Please make this area worth walking through.”
 - Difficult to find waste or recycling bins so garbage is in the streets
 - Not enough lighting on streets

- **Safety is a key concern in certain areas of the corridor.** There are several intersections and locations in the project area where crossing feels unsafe. Most community members expressed a strong desire for pedestrian safety improvements and reduced vehicle speeds. Several also expressed a strong desire for improved traffic control at intersections and specified the following locations as problematic:
 - Andresen & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Todd & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Neals & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Norris & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Fairmount & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Grand & Fourth Plain Blvd
 - Fort Vancouver Way & Fourth Plain Blvd intersection

- **Concern with “lane reconfiguration” language.** Some people expressed concern about the term “lane reconfiguration” and a desire to learn more about what that may look like on these streets specifically. Of this group, some expressed opposition to the idea of reducing the number of lanes, opining:
 - “There’s way too much traffic here to handle fewer lanes.”
 - “Do not do a road diet – it would jam up traffic and be a very bad idea.”
 - “Fewer lanes would never work in this area.”

- **Perceived lack of investment in the area keeps people away and unengaged.** Some people expressed strong negative feelings about the City’s level of responsiveness to non-traffic safety issues in this area. Of this group, many people cited an unwillingness to discuss traffic solutions until the City first addresses safety issues related to crime, houselessness, and a perceived lack of law enforcement response in this area.
 - “There is so much crime and houseless activities in this area. I avoid Fourth Plain at all costs.”
 - “Feels like the City does not care about us.”
 - “I try not to use this road because it is stressful.”
 - More law enforcement is needed day and night to respond to calls regarding crime and address street racing

Online Outreach

Questions

The online survey asked participants to share how they typically travel along Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way, safety issues along these corridors, and to weigh in on the project evaluation criteria. The questions were:

- Are there intersections along Fourth Plain Blvd or Fort Vancouver Way where crossing the street feels dangerous? If so, where? List any places on these streets where crossing the street feels dangerous
- What has been your experience traveling along these streets?
- Do you have any ideas for improving these streets?
- How comfortable do you feel walking on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way?
- How safe do you feel walking or biking these streets to access transit?
- Which of the following are ways do you travel on Fourth Plain and Fort Vancouver Way? (Drive, Walk, Ride a Bike, Transit, Other)
 - If you checked multiple options above, what is the main way that you travel these streets?
- How often do you travel these streets?
- Any other thoughts?
- Are these the right evaluation criteria for assessing potential safety and mobility improvements on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way?
- Which of the evaluation criteria are most important to you? Select the top three (3) evaluation criteria that are most important to you.

Themes and Feedback

- **Most people feel unsafe walking and biking along Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way.** Most respondents were either somewhat uncomfortable (30%) or very uncomfortable (47%) walking these streets. Approximately 80% of respondents said they felt very uncomfortable bicycling along these streets.
- **Most people feel unsafe walking and bicycling to access transit in the corridor.** Survey respondents shared they felt somewhat uncomfortable (45%) or very uncomfortable (33%) walking and bicycling on Fourth Plain Blvd and Fort Vancouver Way to access transit.
- **Generally, only 1 out of every 5 respondents feels safe** walking, biking, or accessing transit along Fourth Plain Blvd or Fort Vancouver Way.
- **Most people drive, but a significant amount of people walk along these streets.** Although most respondents (36%) primarily drive along these streets, 29% said they walk, 21% said they ride a bike, and 14% of respondents said they rode transit.
- **Most survey respondents (74%) agree that the draft evaluation criteria are right for assessing safety and mobility improvements along these streets.** Respondents indicated the top three (3) most important evaluation criteria as:
 1. Safety Improvements for all users (31%)
 2. Mobility improvements for all users (24%)
 3. Greenhouse gas reduction benefits (19%)

A summary of the individual survey responses is provided as Appendix A.



WHAT'S NEXT

The project team will use this feedback to inform design options that address the needs of the community. The options will be shared with the community during Milestone 2 of public engagement activities later this summer/early this fall as the project team steps back out into the community to solicit actionable feedback and preferences on lane reconfiguration options.