

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023

4:00 p.m.

City Hall

Aspen Room

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

Commissioners Present:

Connor Godsil, Leah Jackson, Mike Paine, Thinh Phan, Mario Raia, Eduardo Ramos, Derya Ruggles, Ken Williams

Commissioners Absent:

Jeananne Edwards, Corey Grandstaff, Soroush Mohandessi

Staff Present: Rebecca Kennedy, staff liaison; Julie Nischik, staff liaison; Becky Rude, staff attorney

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 pm by Chair Ramos.

Motion by Commissioner Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Raia, and carried unanimously to amend the December 5 agenda to remove any time limit during the Community Forum.

Motion by Commissioner Williams, second by Commissioner Ruggles, and carried unanimously to approve the October minutes.

112th Avenue Safety and Mobility Project

Kate Drennan, Principal Transportation Planner, Community Development Department; Ryan Farncomb, Consultant Project Manager, Parametrix

Staff presented a review of the project area, timeline, needs and issues along the corridor, a summary of community engagement during the first phase of the project, community feedback gathered at events, a summary of survey results, the process to design and review the alternatives, the near term corridor alternatives, lane reconfiguration

Members

Eduardo Ramos

Chair

Jeananne Edwards

Vice Chair

Connor Godsil
Corey Grandstaff
Leah Jackson
Soroush Mohandessi
Mike Paine
Thinh Phan
Mario Raia
Derya Ruggles
Ken Williams

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challenges at the intersection with Mill Plain, long term corridor alternatives, parallel mobility route alternatives, other corridor investments such as enhanced crossing locations, access control, reducing speeds, streetlighting, small mobility connections, and signalized intersection improvements.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Support for not allowing right turn on red and questions about the efficacy of signs that indicate this.
- Questions about the need and usefulness of a turn lane in the section between 38th and 49th where there are very few places to turn into and how that space might be used differently.
- Support for removal of right turn lanes to improve safety for pedestrians and repurposing that space for other users.
- Changes to transit service on the corridor. Staff responded there are plans to change a few of the bus stops on the corridor and it will continue to be 30 minute service.
- Implications if the left turn lanes at the intersection at Mill Plain were reduced. Staff responded every approach at that intersection has two left turn lanes today. Staff analyzed the intersection to study what would happen if those were reduced to one left turn lane. It appears to be feasible, but with existing Bus Rapid Transit on Mill Plain and nearby freeway on-ramps, staff want to closely study this to fully understand what is possible.
- Community engagement with this project. Staff responded they could provide more data on the website and social traffic. The consultants, communication staff, and planning staff have been going out into the community to canvas the area and directly engage with people in the area as well as with people who use the corridor but may not live in the area.
- Support for speed and red light enforcement on this corridor.
- Lane reduction projects in Vancouver to compare results? Staff responded there have been lane reduction projects on MacArthur, Fourth Plain west of I-5 and other areas throughout the City. Those corridors continue to function well and as expected. Staff often recommends lane reduction on parts of corridors and not in others to ensure that traffic continues to function.

McGillivray Blvd Safety and Mobility Project

Emily Benoit, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development; Kara Hall, Fehr & Peers

Staff presented a summary of community engagement for phase 2 of the project and the timeline for the project. Phase 2 evaluates the design options based on the project goals. Staff presented details of the design options, including location of the mobility lane and other safety features that would be added in each option. Staff shared community feedback and concerns related to this project generally, as well as concerns and support for each design option. The presentation continued with an evaluation of how well each design option aligns with project goals.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- With design option 2, concern for vehicles turning into the mobility lane if unfamiliar with the corridor. Staff responded there will be vertical separation and striping at intersections and driveways. In the sections of the corridor with an existing sidewalk, could consider narrowing the mobility lane as it won't need to also accommodate pedestrians.
- Does either option better accommodate buses and bus stops? Staff responded they have been working with C-TRAN and currently both options work for their needs on the corridor.
- With option 2, concern with conflict points of mobility lane users and vehicles when both are turning left.
- With option 1, concern with the speed differential between pedestrians, bikes, and e-bikes or scooters.

- Support for removing the left turn lanes at 136th and Blairmont to improve pedestrian safety. Staff responded at 136th, there is enough vehicle traffic to warrant a signal, and this may be a longer-term item included in the recommendation.
- Using different color to indicate the mobility lane. Staff responded there will be green paint and markings to indicate the mobility lane is for bicycles, small mobility users, and pedestrians.
- How to facilitate trash removal and mail delivery with the two options. Staff responded with both options, there is parking along the corridor with space for delivery drivers and trash removal vehicles, so it would function similar to how it does today.
- Congestion and safety during school pick up and drop off. Staff responded with the reduction in travel lanes at each intersection, there will be less vehicles coming to a stop at one time and competing to go through the intersection. The high visibility crosswalks will improve safety for pedestrians.
- Conclusions from the analysis on impacts of this project on the neighborhood. Staff responded they heard from the community that McGillivray is used as a cut-through route. Speed bumps were added on 7th as that route was also used as a cut-through. One of the goals is to reduce speed and use Mill Plain as the arterial to carry people east and west through the City. Based on the traffic analysis for 2045, staff expects traffic on McGillivray to be well below the threshold for capacity and do not expect to see a lot of diversion with a lane reduction.
- Visibility concerns from parked cars and access to driveways. Staff responded they are looking to consolidate parking to ensure there is no parking within 25 feet on either side of a driveway to maintain sight distance.
- Expected infill of the Cascade Park area. Staff indicated that currently there is not any expected large development along the corridor, though there may be smaller scale redevelopment in the future.
- Photo enforcement and technology to improve the corridor. Staff responded radar speed enforcement is recommended in the Transportation System Plan. It is more broadly allowed by the State, where it used to only be allowed in school zones. In Vancouver, it would require a change to Title 11, which would come before the Transportation and Mobility Commission and then City Council. Enforcement is part of the solution, along with roadway design and user education, to address safety concerns.
- After a recommendation is made, and the design is implemented, what is the education process for those who live near and travel along this corridor. Staff responded there would be a detailed education and implementation strategy, similar to what was done on Fourth Plain with the bus turn lanes. There would be broad communication throughout the City as well as on the corridor.

Community Forum

Joe Arndt spoke regarding the McGillivray Blvd project. The neighborhood has many senior citizens who use vehicles to get around. He supported traffic cameras and speed bumps to reduce speeds. He expressed concern for emergency vehicles being slowed if there is only one lane.

Anita Brittain did not support either design option for McGillivray Blvd and was concerned with diverted traffic in the neighborhood.

Dan Packard spoke regarding pedestrian fatalities. The HAWK signal installed at Mill Plain and V Street does not provide enough time to cross the street safely and he requested the City to increase the time for a pedestrian to cross the street. He also commented on the lack of bicycle parking along the Waterfront. He suggested implementing a bicycle parking policy throughout the City.

Laurie Arndt spoke regarding the McGillivray Blvd project and was disappointed with the amount of outreach for the project. She supported adding sidewalks in the areas where there are currently none. She has experienced bad driver behavior on the corridor but did not think the proposed designs would address those issues.

Gail Martin asked about the City's response to community feedback of the design options. She expressed concern for safety and access for emergency vehicles.

Patty Marsden spoke regarding the McGillivray Blvd project and was disappointed with the amount of outreach for the project and did not support either design option.

Kent Marsden supported enforcement on McGillivray Blvd and throughout the City. He expressed concern for increased road rage with the slower traffic.

Rick did not support either design option for McGillivray Blvd as a way to address safety concerns and believed the proposed designs will cause traffic congestion.

Mike Shaw supported adding delineators between vehicles and mobility users on McGillivray Blvd, increased enforcement, and adding sidewalks where there are currently none.

Michael Doherty supported option 1 for McGillivray Blvd and noted other solutions are needed to address traffic issues citywide.

John Bower supported adding the mobility lane on McGillivray Blvd for the students who bike or use a scooter to go to the schools along the corridor. He supported design 1.

Tabor Kelly is a frequent user of McGillivray Blvd and recently experienced vehicles blocking the bike lane while biking to the grocery store. He supported design option 2. The draft Transportation System Plan supports building low stress networks, and the current design of the boulevard is not low stress.

Ryan Ward supported the addition of sidewalks where they don't currently exist. Street design plays a big role in limiting speeding and bad driver behavior. He supported safer infrastructure for biking and driving and was in favor of design option 1.

Jason Cromer thanked Leah Jackson for her service on the Commission. Much of the transportation infrastructure prioritizes vehicles and the system is not equitable or fair for those who use other methods of transportation. He supported either design option for McGillivray.

Samin Sepasi supported both design options for McGillivray Blvd. The corridor is currently inaccessible to non-vehicle user, such as herself. There are services near this corridor that provide essential services to those who live in the area.

Israel Lopez shared his experience of being hit by a vehicle while biking as well as near misses he has had as a driver. He supported design option 1 for McGillivray.

Christina Martin did not support either design option for McGillivray as she felt they will increase traffic congestion. The only intersection she has issues with as a pedestrian is at Olympia where there is poor visibility.

Leah Perkel supported more community and neighborhood input in the design process.

David Kirchner felt that the design options for McGillivray will slow traffic and cause congestions that will impact the side streets as well. He was disappointed with the community input process.

Daniel Irizarry did not support either design option for McGillivray. He supported adding traffic lights at some of the intersections. He also requested the meetings regarding this project be located nearer to the area.

Zach Gatton supported either design option for McGillivray. For 112th, he supported the proposed design south of 18th Street with planter boxes separating the travel and mobility lanes. North of 18th has challenges, but it should be prioritized as a complete corridor for north-south connections. A parallel route for mobility users wouldn't be an equitable or efficient route, and he supported making 112th a complete corridor.

Juhyun Kwon supported narrowing lanes on McGillivray to slow traffic. She lives on a corridor with speed bumps and still observes people speeding. She supported prioritizing safety for all users when making decisions about infrastructure.

Keric Gramstad supported design option 1 for McGillivray as it's aligned with how most people think about safety on streets and sidewalks.

Will Schwan supported the design options on McGillivray to support people using active transportation modes such as biking and walking. He supported design option 1, as it's more intuitive for cyclists, walkers, and drivers, and adding physical barriers between mobility users and drivers.

Don Orange supported better pathways for mobility users of future generations and recognized that younger generations and people living in the region are choosing to drive less.

Pierre Mewissen supported adding speed bumps to address speeding on McGillivray, increasing travel mode options, and making neighborhoods more pedestrian friendly to increase vibrancy and foster social interaction.

Jan Verrinder is a cyclist and a driver, and chooses to bike when possible, to reduce emissions as well as for exercise. She appreciated both plans for McGillivray as they both add barriers between the cars and bikes, reduce traffic speed, increase safety at intersections, and move cyclists away from parked cars.

Commissioner Phan left the meeting.

2025 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program

Chris Malone, Finance and Asset Manager, Public Works

Staff presented an overview of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the transportation project pipeline and how projects get to be on the TIP, proposed changes for the 2025-2030 TIP, future changes to TIP prioritization, the public outreach process, and the proposed schedule for this update.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- How do projects that are high priority and longer term move from the capital facilities plan to the TIP? Staff responded every year as part of drafting the TIP, staff review and re-prioritize the capital facilities projects to consider what can move forward in the next six years. If a project is high priority, it's more likely to end up on the TIP, and staff will pursue funding for that project.

Transportation System Plan Public Hearing

Kate Drennan, Principal Transportation Planner, Community Development; Stephanie Wright, Nelson\Nygaard

Staff presented an overview of the Transportation System Plan (TSP) chapters, the changes made since fall 2023 including policy additions and map edits, the final public comment period and themes of feedback received, and next steps for adoption of the plan.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Will the TSP be updated more frequently than 20 years? Staff responded typically a major TSP update is done at least every 10 years, with minor updates every 3 to 5 years, and that this is the plan for the City going forward.
- How does the TSP influence regional transportation plans? Staff responded the Regional Transportation Council (RTC) will integrate larger projects from the TSP into the regional transportation plan.

Public Testimony

No members of the public were present to testify.

Commission Deliberation

- Commissioner Williams noted the TSP is striving to move in the right direction and acknowledged the amount of work that went into drafting this plan.
- Commissioner Jackson supported the plans adaptability and goals.
- Commissioner Ruggles appreciated the recent updates to the plan and supported the draft plan.
- Commissioner Raia appreciated the project prioritization, projects tied to modal networks, and the emphasis on maintenance.
- Chair Ramos appreciated the work that has gone into drafting this plan, the focus on people, seniors, and transit users. He supported adopting the draft plan.

Motion by Commissioner Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Williams to recommend to City Council adoption of the updated 2024-2044 Transportation System Plan as outlined in the staff report and presentation on December 5, 2023.

Roll call vote

Commissioner Williams: Yes

Commissioner Godsil: Yes

Commissioner Jackson: Yes

Commissioner Ruggles: Yes

Commissioner Raia: Yes

Chair Ramos: Yes

Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Communication

Deputy Director Kennedy acknowledged the service of Commissioner Jackson and Commissioner Godsil to the City and this Commission and thanked them for the time and commitment they have dedicated to serving the community.

Commission Communication

Chair Ramos thanked Commissioner Godsil for his engagement and commitment to the Commission. He thanked Commissioner Jackson for her efforts to lay the groundwork for the TMC as well as her work with the City over the years.

Commissioner Jackson provided feedback on the recent striping of Ft. Vancouver Way. At McLoughlin and Ft. Vancouver Way, if you go straight you end up in the bus only lane and she observed people using the bus lane to pass. She suggested City staff review that intersection again to address this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 pm.

Eduardo Ramos, Chair