



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 2024

TO: Chair Ramos and Transportation and Mobility Commission members

FROM: Maggie Derk, Senior Transportation Planner, and Laurel Priest Associate Transportation Planner, Community Development Department

RE: **Upper Main Street Existing Conditions and Phase 1 Engagement updates**

CC: Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development Department; Kate Drennan, Transportation Planning Manager, Community Development Department; Ryan Lopossa, Streets and Transportation Manager, Public Works Department

Meeting Purpose

At the March 5th Transportation and Mobility Commission (TMC) meeting, the Upper Main Street project team will present a summary of the existing conditions and preliminary analysis from the first round of public engagement. Key questions for the TMC include:

- Is there any other information the TMC might need for consideration of design alternatives?
- Are there any communities we might have missed in the first round of engagement? And if so, do you have recommendations for how to reach them?
- Are there any issues or opportunities we've missed along the project area?

This presentation is the third with the TMC on this project; the previous presentations were in August and October of 2023.

Introduction

The Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility Project is exploring how to improve safety and mobility on Main Street between E Fourth Plain Boulevard and the northern city

limits (just S of NE Minnehaha / 63rd Street). The Project will evaluate how Main Street can better meet the needs of people using transit, walking, biking, using a mobility device, and driving.

This project is being completed in coordination with planned pavement work in 2025, and the C-TRAN Highway 99 Bus Rapid Transit Project. The future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line will operate along this section of Main Street, connecting the length of Highway 99/Main Street from downtown Vancouver to Washington State University Vancouver and the Salmon Creek Park and Ride. Upper Main Street is a focus of subarea planning through the Comprehensive Plan and is identified as a civic spine in the Westside Mobility Study.

The goals of the project are to:

- Improve pedestrian safety by adding/upgrading crossings and filling sidewalk gaps that improve connections to transit.
- Improve bike and small mobility connectivity by addressing network gaps and connecting to regional trails.
- Explore transit speed and reliability treatments and improve transit stop access in anticipation for C-TRAN's Highway 99 BRT project.



Existing Conditions

This Existing Conditions analysis gathered various data to understand the current operations and conditions of Upper Main Street for all transportation user groups. This information provides a basis for determining potential treatments for the corridor that can be made in conjunction with the planned paving work and C-TRAN's new Hwy 99 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. The data examined included:

- Existing pedestrian facilities
- Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress (P-LTS) analysis
- Existing bike and small mobility facilities
- Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (B-LTS) analysis
- Transit ridership data
- Existing vehicle facilities, including roadway geometry
- Traffic volumes and speeds
- History of collisions
- Demographics

Key takeaways from this analysis include:

- The typical lane widths range between nine and ten feet wide, but in some locations, such as north of 45th Street, lanes exceed 12 feet.
- The number of travel lanes varies along the corridor varies throughout the corridor. The south end of the corridor has one lane in each direction with a left turn lane approaching intersections. The central segments have two lanes in each direction with a center left turn lane approaching intersections. The northern section of the project area has two lanes in each direction with a center left turn lane.
- Overall, no intersections along Upper Main Street are over capacity but the intersections that see the most congestion during peak periods are 33rd and 39th Streets.
- The 2024 Transportation System Plan (TSP) identifies Upper Main Street as a Primary Pedestrian Corridor.
- Most sidewalks along the project area are less than six feet wide and are directly adjacent to traffic.
- Sections of Upper Main Street that do not meet our pedestrian crossing policy (marked crosswalk every 800 feet) are between 29th and 33rd Streets, and 33rd and 37th Streets.
- The 2024 TSP modal networks recommend protected mobility lanes on Main Street from 39th Street to the Discovery Trail.
- Most of the Upper Main corridor lacks bicycle and small mobility facilities, except for a mobility lane along the most northern section between Ross Street and the city limits.
- The 2024 TSP identifies Upper Main Street as an Enhanced Transit Corridor.
- There are four proposed BRT stations along the project area at 45th Street, 37th Street, 33rd Street and Fourth Plain Boulevard.

- Existing travel lanes are not wide enough for buses.
- Between 2018 and 2022, there were three injury collisions along the Upper Main Street corridor that involved vehicles striking people biking, walking, and rolling. Three vehicle-only crashes resulted in serious injuries.
- The highest crash locations include the intersections of 45th Street, 39th Street, 33rd Street, and Fourth Plain Boulevard.

Phase 1 Engagement Summary

The project team developed a community survey to identify community values and desired improvements along the Upper Main Street corridor. This survey, available in English and Spanish, was live from January 15, 2024 through February 16, 2024, garnering **362 responses**. The project team launched an accompanying interactive map activity, for users to pin specific comments and concerns to an online map. Respondents made **99 comments** on this map. The project team informed stakeholders and community partners about the survey through the following methods:

- **5,317 bilingual postcards mailed** in English and Spanish to residents and property owners within one-third mile of the project area.
- **Two email updates** to the project listserv on Jan. 15, 2024, and Feb. 8, 2024 with a cumulative 202 successful deliveries.
- **A business canvassing** effort along the corridor, where team dropped off flyers with text in English and Spanish at approximately 40 local businesses and community destinations. Of these businesses and community destinations, the project team connected with 11 people for more depth discussions.
- **Digital distribution of a bilingual flyer in English and Spanish through the Vancouver School District's PeachJar system.** This flyer was sent to Discovery Middle, Benjamin Franklin, Hough, and Lincoln Elementary Schools, and Vancouver School of Arts and Academics families, generating over 1,718 impressions and 139 views.
- **Messaging in three City newsletters:** Vancouver Connects E-newsletter, City Currents Internal E-newsletter, Office of Neighborhoods Weekly E-newsletter.
- **Six posts** on the City's social media channels garnering 15,376 views and 165 clicks.
- **One tabling event** at the Vancouver Farmer's Market on Jan. 27, 2024
- **Ten presentations and conversations** with community organizations, including:

Arnada Neighborhood	Shumway Neighborhood
Cycle Vancouver	Uptown Village Business Association
Do Good Multnomah (Safe Stay Community #4)	Vancouver School District
Knights of Pythias	West Hazel Dell Neighborhood Association
Latino Community Resource Group	
Northwest Neighborhood	

Key takeaways from the survey and comment map include:

- The top 3 destinations that survey respondents go near Upper Main Street are:
 - Places where I want to shop, eat, and play
 - They use Upper Main Street to travel somewhere else
 - Home
- Bicycling or using a small mobility device and walking/rolling/using an assistive device feel the **least** safe and comfortable of all modes of transportation along the corridor, while driving or riding in a car feels the **most** safe and comfortable.
- Sidewalks are too narrow particularly near Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, Main and 39th Street, and Main and 45th Street.
- Crosswalks could be improved or added in front of the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics, Main and 39th Street, and at Broadway and Fourth Plain Boulevard.
- Gaps in both pedestrian and bike/small mobility infrastructure, and a lack of wayfinding signage along Upper Main Street make travelling along Main St uncomfortable, particularly between 45th Street and 63rd Street and near Hazel Dell Avenue.
- The improvements that survey respondents identified as the most important included:
 - Addressing potholes, road striping, etc.
 - Adding more sidewalks to fill existing gaps
 - Adding more crosswalks or other features to make crossings safer

Issues and Opportunities

Key issues identified through the existing conditions analysis and public engagement include:

- Narrow sidewalks directly adjacent to traffic, missing in some locations and not accessible for everyone.
- Large crossing gaps between 29th and 33rd Streets, and 33rd and 37th Streets.
- Narrow travel lanes are difficult for buses and large trucks.
- Bike and small mobility network gaps in the northern section of the project area.
- Wayfinding signage to off street paths is limited and hard to locate.
- Main Street and 39th Street is the highest crash location along the project corridor.
- Most traffic congestion at 39th Street and 33rd Street intersections.

- On and off ramps to I-5 and wide roadway in the northern end of the project area contribute to higher travel speeds.

Key opportunities for improvement include:

- **Between 45th Street to City Limits:** Enhanced crossing, two-way protected mobility lane, more wayfinding signage, more lighting
- **39th Street to 45th Street:** Reduce number of travel lanes, two-way protected mobility lane, more wayfinding signage, New VINE stop
- **33rd Street to 39th Street:** Reduce number of travel lanes, redesign and signal timing at 39th Street
- **29th Street to 33rd Street:** New crossings, remove dedicated turn lanes
- **Fourth Plain Boulevard to 29th Street:** New crossings, remove dedicated turn lanes

Staff contact info

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Attachment(s):

- Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility Project Existing Conditions Report