

## Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, March 5, 2024**

**4 p.m.**

**City Hall**

Aspen Room

415 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street

Vancouver, WA

**Commissioners Present:**

Jeananne Edwards, Devon Fender, Cory Grandstaff, Thinkh Phan, Mario Raia, Eduardo Ramos, Derya Ruggles, Sara Schmit, Ken Williams

**Commissioners Absent:**

Soroush Mohandessi

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 pm by Chair Ramos.

**Motion** by Commissioner Williams, second by Commissioner Ruggles, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Commissioner Mohandessi.

**Motion** by Commissioner Edwards, second by Commissioner Ruggles, and carried unanimously to approve the February minutes.

**Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility Project**

Maggie Derk, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development Department; Derek Abe, Alta Planning and Design; Ben Nolan, C-TRAN

Staff presented the project goals and an overview of the existing conditions including the pedestrian network and level of traffic stress; the transit, bike and small mobility network and level of traffic stress; vehicle congestion; and safety and crash history. The presentation continued with an overview of community engagement efforts that asked people how they use the corridor and their preference for

## Members

**Eduardo Ramos**

*Chair*

**Jeananne Edwards**

*Vice Chair*

Devon Fender  
Corey Grandstaff  
Soroush Mohandessi  
Thinkh Phan  
Mario Raia  
Derya Ruggles  
Sara Schmit  
Ken Williams

## Community Development Department

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improvements. Staff provided an overview of short term improvements that can be made in coordination with pavement preservation work as well as longer-term opportunities.

#### Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Who took part in the in-depth conversations as part of community engagement? Staff responded that engagement was primarily with community organizations active in the area such as neighborhood associations and advocacy groups.
- Space for bus rapid transit (BRT) and small mobility lanes. Staff responded that through most of this project area there are alternative or parallel routes for small mobility users. The Transportation System Plan calls for protected mobility lanes from 39<sup>th</sup> Street to the Discovery Trail, so we would look at potentially reducing lanes to create a safe and comfortable mobility lane for pedestrians and bicyclists. In the segments where there are BRT stops and a mobility lane, there is a bike bypass around the transit stop.
- Access to the Discovery Trail. Staff responded they are considering a two-way protected facility on the east side of the street in the northern section of the corridor to make this connection simpler for bicyclists.
- Adding crosswalks and addressing sidewalk gaps. Staff responded there are both near term and long term solutions. For the sidewalk gap south of 45<sup>th</sup>, the project team is considering a two way shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. The sidewalk gap north of Ross Street is constricted because of the railroad underpass. Staff is working with Clark County to see what type of facility could be added for pedestrians and small mobility users on the east side of the street.
- Criteria for a pedestrian corridor. Staff responded the Transportation System Plan (TSP) establishes the crossing spacing policy for the city, with a maximum of 800 feet between crossings. In the pedestrian priority network, the spacing for crossing is shorter, at 530 feet.
- Suggestion that future community engagement include talking with folks at senior centers, Visit Vancouver, neighborhood associations and advertising on buses.
- Pedestrian level of traffic stress rating on Creston and Division. Staff responded the low rating is likely due to lack of sidewalks and/or sidewalk conditions. From public engagement, staff heard there is a high level of stress for pedestrians north of 45<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Design for the mobility lane as it crosses the Interstate 5 northbound off ramp to Highway 99. Staff responded that the mobility lane will be physically separated from vehicles and will connect with the Discovery Trail network which goes east of Main and crosses I5 to avoid that conflict point. Staff will also recommend improvements for the wayfinding signs to connect with the trail network.
- Segment of 45<sup>th</sup> Street that is not graded with bicycle level of stress. Staff responded it's not within city limits and will conduct traffic counts there to analyze what type of treatment is needed there.
- Average daily traffic volume on Main Street. Staff responded the traffic analysis includes vehicle counts at intersections but there is not average daily traffic volume for the whole corridor.
- How far south does the route for the Vine extend? Staff responded the Vine will extend south to the waterfront area.
- Vehicles diverting on 45<sup>th</sup> to Columbia during peak travel times and bike facilities on 45<sup>th</sup>. Staff responded they would review the turning movement counts for that intersection and review and recommend appropriate bike facilities on this section.
- Recently built townhomes at 29<sup>th</sup> and Main and additional lots that may increase density along the corridor. Staff responded they use the regional travel model for traffic analysis, which considers future housing density and development.
- BRT impacts to other C-TRAN routes. Staff responded route 31 will share at least one station with the BRT. In the northern section, C-TRAN is looking to increase headways to 15 or 20 minutes. There

will likely be rerouting and relocation of local stops closer to the BRT line. Those stops that don't currently have shelters will get them.

## **2025 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program**

Chris Malone, Finance and Asset Manager, Public Works Department

Staff presented an overview of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), format, the project pipeline, changes in the 2025-2030 TIP, changes to the project scoring criteria as adopted in the Transportation System Plan (TSP), and next steps in the program.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- How does availability of grant funding affect what is on the TIP? Staff responded they use the prioritization system to determine which projects to apply for grants for. If the City receives a grant, they will prioritize those projects to utilize those funds.
- Defining essential places. Staff responded essential places includes commercial districts, schools, grocery, health care, faith communities, parks, etc. When staff are considering projects, they look at investments to increase access to places that are important to people. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, we are working to define 15 minute neighborhoods, which is a Council priority. As part of the TSP, we have adopted modal networks. Anytime pavement projects begin, we look to see how we might improve the network as part of that project to increase safety and improve access to those essential places. Jobs are not included in the 15 minute neighborhood definition, as it's a regional employment shed where many variables impacting where someone lives and works.
- How the Climate Action Framework has impacted the TIP. Staff responded they are looking at project impacts on environmentally sensitive areas and natural areas, and in the future will look at reduction of greenhouse gases associated with projects.
- Community streets, use of right of way for parklets, open street events, public art, etc. Staff responded that open streets policies were included the updated Transportation System Plan (TSP).
- Transportation impact fees and developer contributions. Staff responded impact fees are used to improve the network in many ways. Developer contributions are for projects that are required due to the impact of the development.
- How are longer term projects funded and moved onto the TIP? Staff responded for this TIP, they reviewed projects that were likely to get some funding within the next six years. The longer term projects will be on the capital facilities list and will need to work through how projects move from one list to the other.
- No "highest priority" projects in the six year timeframe.
- Suggestion to include a table of projects listed by priority and page number.

## **Community Forum**

Dan Packard was present to talk about the need for safe and secure bike parking. At new developments in the city, there are no secure places to park a bike. There are only a few racks available near the waterfront.

Tabor Kelly was present to talk about biking on Columbia Street. There is a missing bike lane northbound between 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Mill Plain. He also discussed negative interactions with cars at Andresen and Mill Plain and supported prohibiting right turns on red.

Zach Gatton supported a no right turn on red sign at Thurston and Parkway Drive by the mall. Bicyclists share a right turn lane with vehicles and is dangerous.

Jason Cromer supported adding no right turn on red signs where there are bike boxes.

### **Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program**

Emily Benoit, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development Department

Staff presented an overview of traffic calming, the role of TMC with the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program, the program lifecycle, the process to review and evaluate projects, some examples of project elements that have been implemented, and next steps for the program in 2024.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Can the proponents of a project be a renter and how close do they need to live to the project area? Staff responded any community member can be a proponent for a project and there are not distance requirements. Only one project per neighborhood is selected each year.
- What if there are multiple projects in the same neighborhood? Staff responded they would consult with the neighborhood association and look to internal policy guidance related to safety, equity and climate action to determine which project moves forward.
- Support for street art, trees, place making. Staff responded those are great options for traffic calming. There are other programs and departments in the City that also add street trees and support street murals that are outside of this competitive process.
- Other tools to use for traffic calming. Staff responded there are a lot of different options for traffic calming. Staff works with the public works design engineers to determine what is needed and the best options depending on the roadway type and condition.
- How would a street with modest traffic volume and speeding get selected for traffic calming? Staff responded since this is a competitive program, projects are prioritized in areas where there is both higher volume and speeding.
- Data on which tools work best in Vancouver. Staff responded there is not data on specific tools, but staff would like to implement an evaluation phase similar to what is done with Complete Streets projects to review which elements are most effective.
- Traffic count data for the applicants. Staff responded there is not traffic count data for every street in the city. After the applications are reviewed, staff conducts traffic counts on streets that meet the qualifications for the program.
- Where has this program been implemented throughout the city? Staff responded as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program, staff put together a [storymap](#) to highlight the work completed through this program. The projects are geographically dispersed throughout the city and staff are available to assist anyone who wants to submit an application.
- What role does the neighborhood association play in this program? Staff responded in some cases, the proponent for a project is a representative of the neighborhood association, though a proponent does not need to participate in the neighborhood association to submit an application.

### **Election of Officers**

Rebecca Kennedy led the election of officers.

Commissioner Ruggles nominated Eduardo Ramos for Chair. The Commission voted unanimously to elect Eduardo Ramos as Chair.

Commissioner Ramos nominated Jeananne Edwards for Vice Chair. The Commission voted unanimously to elect Jeananne Edwards as Vice Chair.

**Staff Communication**

There were no staff communications.

**Commission Communication**

Commissioner Williams noted the better conditions of facilities for biking and walking in Vancouver compared to a recent visit to Roseville, California.

Commissioner Grandstaff commended the improved audio for participating remotely.

Commissioner Raia commented on the efforts to improve different modes of transportation in Vancouver, as compared with his recent travels to Pakistan.

Commissioner Phan also noted the efforts for safer biking in Vancouver, as compared with the current conditions in the town he grew up in in Vietnam.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

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Eduardo Ramos, Chair