



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 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 Design Concept 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 April 2nd Transportation and Mobility Commission (TMC) meeting, the Upper Main Street project team will present and request feedback on preliminary design concepts for the corridor. This presentation is the fourth with the TMC on this project; the previous presentations were in August 2023, October 2023, and March 2024.

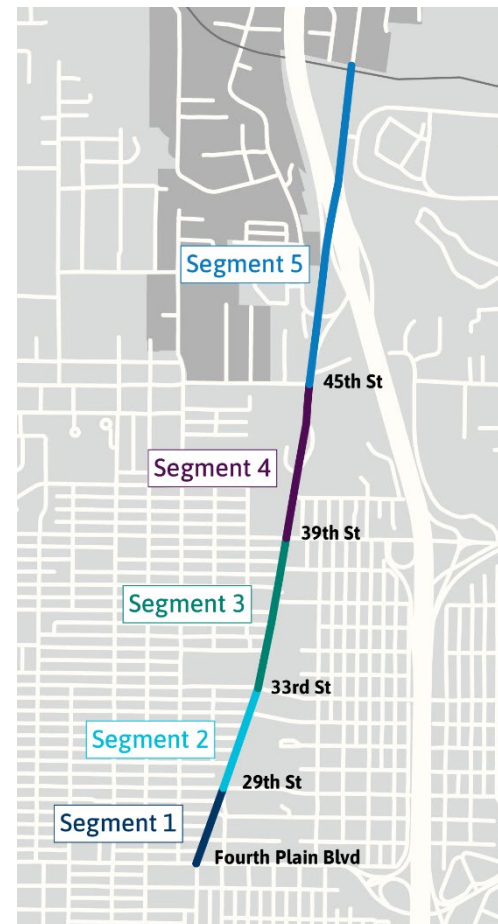
Design Concepts

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). This project is being completed in coordination with planned pavement preservation work scheduled for 2025, and the [C-TRAN Highway 99 Bus Rapid Transit Project](#).

Informed by community input and existing conditions analysis, the Project team has drafted some early design concepts to improve safety and mobility along Upper Main Street and address the issues we learned about during the first phase of the project.

Because the roadway width, street design, and adjacent land uses vary along Upper Main Street, the Project team broke the project area into five segments to understand what treatments would be appropriate corridor-wide, and what would need to be tailored to match the context of the roadway. These five segments are:

- Segment 1: Fourth Plain Boulevard to 29th Street
- Segment 2: 29th Street to 33rd Street
- Segment 3: 33rd Street to 39th Street
- Segment 4: 39th Street to 45th Street
- Segment 5: 45th Street to City Limits (just south of NE 63rd Street/Minnehaha Street)



Corridor-wide Recommendations

Crossings

According to [Vancouver's Pedestrian Crossing Policy](#), desired spacing of marked and enhanced crossings along Upper Main Street should be approximately every three blocks or 800 feet.

Sections of the project area that exceed this crossing spacing standard are between 29th and 33rd Streets and 33rd and 37th Street. This is supported by community feedback, which emphasized the need for more crossings along Upper Main Street. To fill the existing crossing gaps, the Project team recommends adding new marked crossings at:

- South side of 28th Street intersection (just north of Dairy Queen)
- North side of 31st Street intersection (across from Vancouver School of Arts & Academics)
- South side of 35th Street intersection (just north of PeaceHealth Medical Center)
- South side of 37th Street intersection (just south of Safeway) *Note: This would not replace the existing crosswalk on the north side of this intersection.*

Median Islands

Along most of Upper Main Street people walking and rolling have to cross multiple lanes of traffic in both directions to cross the street. Key findings from the first round of community engagement indicate people do not feel safe using some of the existing crossings along Upper Main Street and would like to see safety enhancements at these locations. Median islands allow people to cross one direction of traffic at a time, and may require a reduction in the number of vehicle travel lanes in some areas, though

impacts on traffic flows will be minimal. To improve crossing safety, the Project team recommends adding medians islands at the:

- Proposed 28th Street crossing (just north of Dairy Queen)
- Proposed 31st Street crossing (across from Vancouver School of Arts & Academics)
- Proposed 35th Street crossing (just north of PeaceHealth Medical Center)
- Existing and proposed 37th Street crossings (just south of Safeway)

Bus and turn lanes

[Vancouver's Transportation System Plan](#) identifies Upper Main Street as an Enhanced Transit Corridor, meaning the City will prioritize transit along this roadway. C-TRAN is developing a new bus rapid transit service, known as The Vine on Highway 99, which will serve Clark County's Highway 99 and Vancouver's Main Street, Broadway and Washington corridors. Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes (also known as bus and turn lanes) allow buses to bypass congestion and continue straight through an intersection. People driving can still use this lane to make right turns at intersections or into driveways. The Project team will work closely with C-TRAN to understand where BAT lanes maybe beneficial without significantly impacting traffic flows.

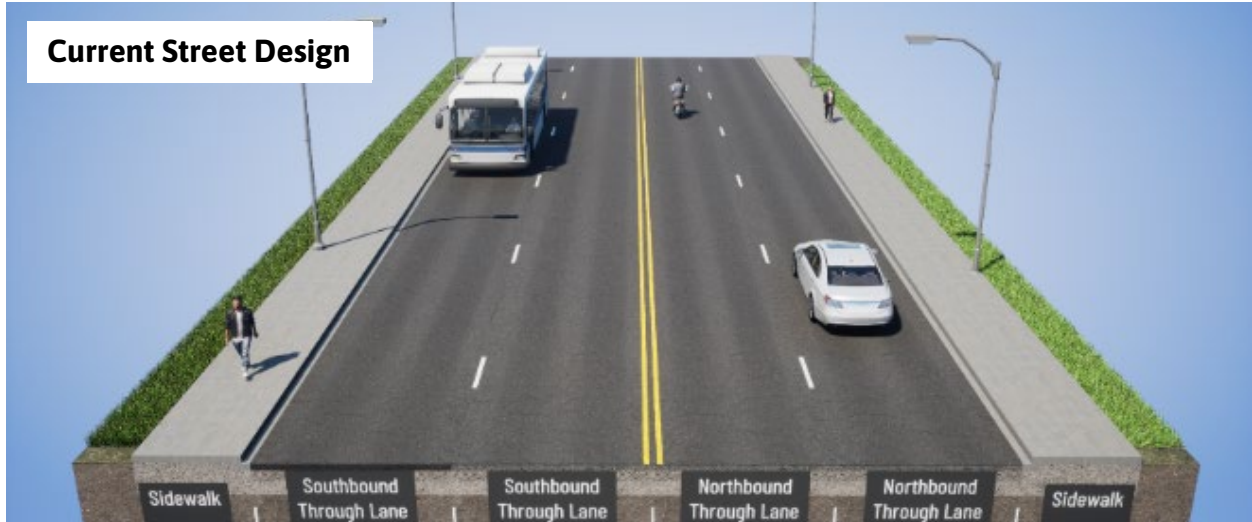
Segment 1: Fourth Plain Boulevard to 29th Street

Segment 1 has one through travel lane in each direction with a dedicated left turn lane at some intersections and wider sidewalks than much of Upper Main Street. From the first round of public engagement, the Project learned that people do not feel safe using the existing crossing at 29th Street due to poor visibility and speeding traffic. To improve pedestrian safety and comfort, the Project team recommends moving the existing crossing on the north side of the 29th Street intersection to the south side, removing the northbound dedicated left turn lane and adding a median island.

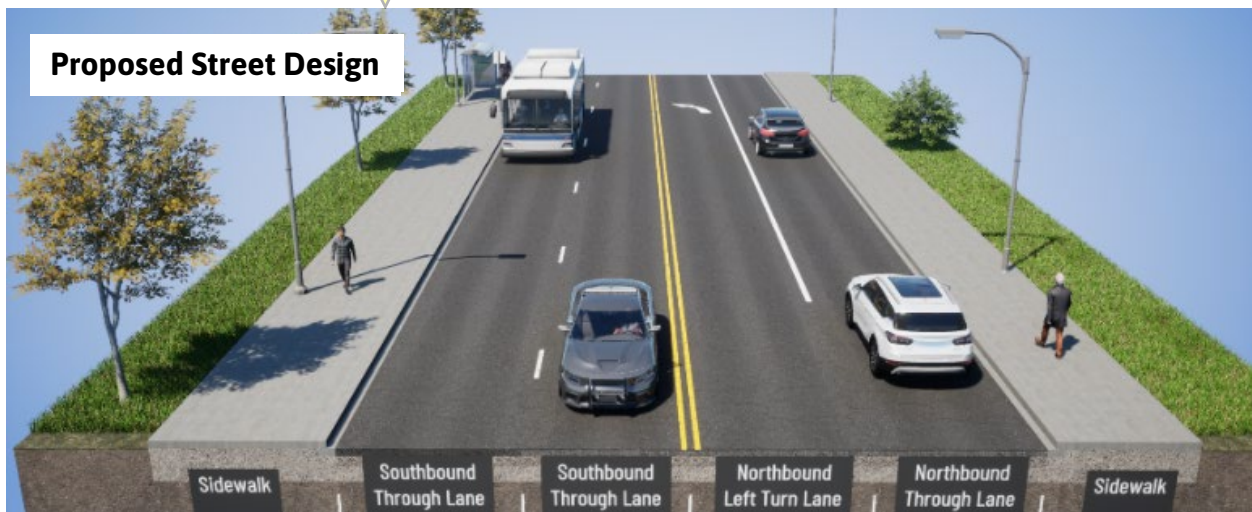


Segments 2 & 3: 29th Street to 39th Street

Segments 2 and 3 of Upper Main Street have similar roadway characteristics including two through travel lanes in each direction with a dedicated left turn lane at some intersections. Currently, people do not feel safe walking or rolling along or across these segments of Main Street.



The proposed street design would remove one northbound (toward I-5) through lane but maintain the dedicated left turn lane at some intersections. This would reduce the number of travel lanes pedestrians need to cross and provide space for adding median islands at some crossings or widening sidewalks in the future.



Segment 4: 39th Street to 45th Street

Segments 4 of Upper Main Street has two travel lanes in each direction with a two-way center left turn lane. The current travel lanes are too narrow to fit buses and large trucks, creating safety issues and contributing to traffic congestion. The TSP calls for protected mobility lanes along Main Street between 39th Street and the Discovery Trail but there is currently no comfortable connection for people biking or using small mobility devices.

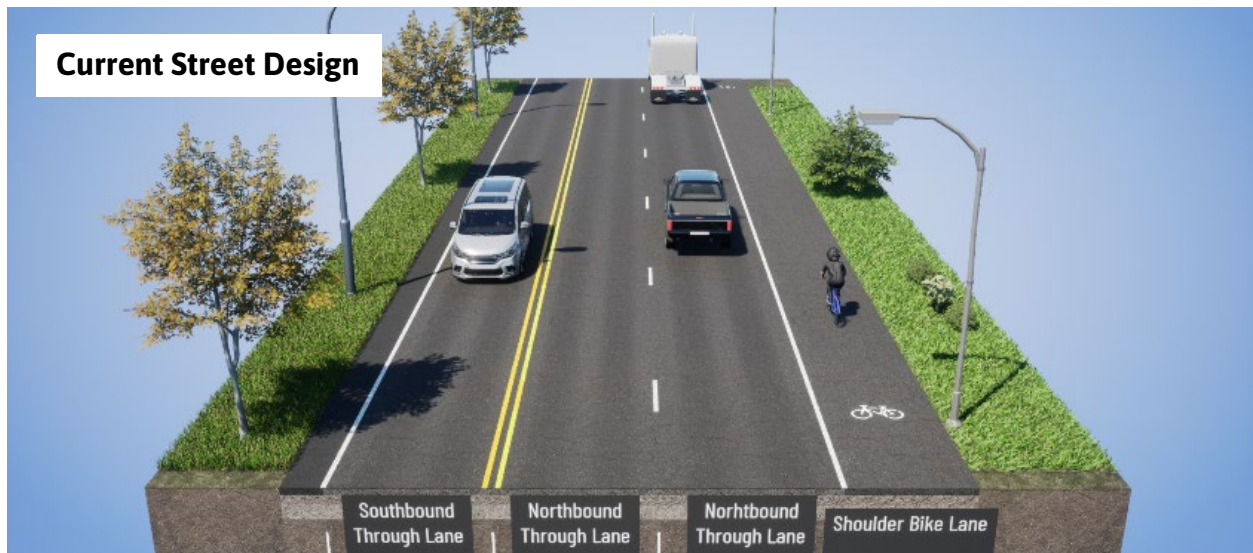


The proposed street design would remove one northbound (toward I-5) through lane and maintain the dedicated left turn lane. This would provide space for widening the other travel lanes to accommodate buses and large trucks and adding a physically separated two-way multi-use path between 40th Street and the Discovery Trail. While this new multi-use path would not extend to 39th Street in the near-term due to limited space at this intersection, this could be completed in the future. Wayfinding signage would also be added to help people navigate these multi-use path connections.



Segment 5: 45th Street to City Limits (just south of NE 63rd Street / Minnehaha Street)

Segment 5 of Upper Main Street has wide vehicle travel lanes that split into northbound and southbound lanes at the I-5 interchange. At NE Ross Street, these lanes reconnect with one southbound through lane, two northbound through lanes, and unprotected mobility lanes. The Project team has not yet finalized the design concept for this segment of Upper Main Street but is working closely with Clark County to ensure there is a consistent and comfortable mobility lane treatment.



Staff contact info

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Attachment(s):

None