

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 2, 2024

4:15 p.m.

City Hall

Aspen Room

415 W. 6th Street

Vancouver, WA

Commissioners Present:

Devon Fender, Cory Grandstaff, Mario Raia, Eduardo Ramos, Derya Ruggles, Sara Schmit, Ken Williams

Commissioners Absent:

Jeananne Edwards, Soroush Mohandessi, Thinkh Phan

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 pm by Chair Ramos.

Motion by Commissioner Williams, second by Commissioner Ruggles, and carried unanimously to excuse the absence of Commissioners Phan and Edwards.

Motion by Commissioner Schmit, second by Commissioner Ruggles, and carried unanimously to approve the March minutes.

Parking Management Area Study and Downtown Parking Plan

Gabe Montez, Parking District Manager, City of Vancouver Economic Prosperity and Housing (EPH) Department; Ben Weber, Walker Consultants

Staff outlined the alignment of the parking management plan with citywide strategic goals and the policies in the Transportation System Plan, and the importance of updating the parking plan to adapt to changing demands in downtown. They provided an overview of the project scope, which includes analyzing parking management zones,

Members

Eduardo Ramos

Chair

Jeananne Edwards

Vice Chair

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

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parking management and enforcement processes, pricing, supply, user experience, parking benefit districts, shared parking and public/private partnerships, curb management, and mobility hubs.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Equity and priority for accessible parking spots.
- Waterfront parking solutions for employers/employees.
- Objectives and measures for a good parking plan. Staff responded there are many ways to measure the parking plan, including user experience, parking services and finances, and parking utilization and standards. Staff plan to gather more feedback from stakeholders in the development of the plan to measure the success of the plan.
- Public participation and engagement on this project. Staff responded public engagement is happening throughout the project. The Parking Advisory Committee is consulted throughout the process, and there will be small group conversations this summer to discuss existing conditions and strategies.
- Shared parking for employers. Staff responded those conversations haven't happened yet but are planned in the next few months of engagement.
- Impacts to neighborhoods adjacent to the parking management area.
- Review of parking on Main Street and impacts to neighboring areas if some or all parking is removed on Main Street.
- City subsidizing parking for businesses. Staff responded they continue to explore the balance of needs between businesses, employees, and people visiting downtown. The plan will consider the long-term solutions for those considerations.

Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility Project

Maggie Derk, Senior Transportation Planner, Community Development; Derek Abe, Alta Planning and Design; Taylor Eidt, Deputy Director Capital Projects & Planning, C-TRAN

Staff presented corridor-wide design concepts for additional marked crossings, median islands to enhance safety at existing crossings, and bus and right turn (BAT) lanes.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Bus stop at 40th going south and adding a crossing at that intersection.
- Asked about a mobility lane shared with bus and right turn lane.
- Median islands at signalized intersections. Staff responded if the median is at a signalized intersection, you would push the walk button at the curb to cross both all the traffic lanes, there is not a second crossing activation in the median island. The medians also contribute to general traffic calming.
- Accessibility features at the signalized crossings. Staff responded the rectangular rapid flashing beacons have an audible cue as well as flashing lights.
- Adding crosswalks on north and south sides of intersections with Main Street. Staff responded they could add crossings on north and south side of the intersection. There is more infrastructure to add if there are two crossings. At the intersections with a median, it can restrict turning movements, and there may be advantages to adding them strategically. Staff responded they would look at adding crossings on both sides of the intersections.
- No bus and right turn lane northbound? Staff responded they are proposing removing a northbound travel lane and therefore would not have a dedicated bus and right turn (BAT) lane, so the bus would operate in the general travel lane.

- Support for the BAT lane between 45th and 39th where vehicles merge to avoid the bus in the southbound lane.

Staff presented design concepts for segment 1 between Fourth Plain Boulevard and 29th Street, segment 2 between 29th Street and 33rd Street, segment 3 between 33rd Street and 39th Street, segment 4 between 39th Street and 45th Street, and segment 5 from 45th Street to city limits. C-TRAN presented a brief overview of the planned Highway 99 BRT stations on this corridor.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Disappointment there is no southbound lane removal in segments 2 and 3.
- Lack of mobility facilities in the southbound travel lane on segment 4 for those coming from Hazel Dell Avenue. Staff responded the TSP calls for protected mobility lane from 39th Street to the Discovery Trail and are looking to direct small mobility users to parallel networks south of 40th Street. Including wayfinding will be important for mobility users to navigate these networks.
- Support for crossing on north and south side of intersection with 29th Street and widening of sidewalks in segments 2 and 3.
- Challenging the notion of the perception of safety of pedestrians when median islands are added to crossings.
- Need for comprehensive connections for mobility users to parallel networks.
- Left turn lanes in segments 1, 2, and 3. Staff responded there are left turn lanes in segments 2 and 3 at some intersections and with the addition of medians there would be some changes to traffic flow.
- Cycle track in segment 4 does not connect to 39th Street. Staff responded the TSP calls for protected mobility lanes to 39th Street, but this is also the biggest pinch point and narrowest cross section on this corridor. Staff continue to look at the short- and long-term solutions for this corridor and specifically this segment.

Community Forum

Israel Lopez shared his experience of biking on Main Street during evening rush hour. He also commented on parking needs for businesses in the downtown area.

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. He also commented on Upper Main Street and supported extending the cycle track to 39th Street.

Tabor Kelly was present to talk about the goals outlined in the Transportation System Plan and supported a connection of Hazel Dell to Main Street for small mobility users.

Jason Cromer supported changes to Main Street to support non-driving users of the corridor and advocated for a bike and small mobility connection on Main Street south to 33rd and 29th streets.

Fourth Plain BRT Extension Project

Randy Parker, Director Capital Projects & Planning; Taylor Eidt, Deputy Director Capital Projects & Planning, C-TRAN

Staff presented an overview of the corridor, current conditions, existing transit service, preliminary locally preferred alternative concept, stations along East Fourth Plain and 162nd Avenue, evaluation of the southern terminus, public involvement activities, local service concepts, and timeline for this project.

Commission discussion and staff responses:

- Will there be a transfer to get to 164th from the west? C-TRAN staff responded they are still evaluating this, including station locations.
- Partnering with transit for connections at the waterfront. Staff responded the TMC doesn't have the ability to request new capital projects. Individuals can advocate for projects as a community member, though not as a representative of the TMC.
- Equity for those who depend on other modes of transit, convenience, and accessibility.

Staff Communication

Deputy Director Kennedy notified the Commission of community mapping activities events in April as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Commission Communication

Commissioner Fender supported more incentives to taking public or active transportation, especially in the context of the Upper Main Street Safety & Mobility Project.

Commissioner Williams requested more information on State laws that have changes around the use of cameras for automated traffic enforcement.

Commissioner Grandstaff commented on the challenges related to making space for all users of the network and access to jobs for those who can only take the bus or walk.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Eduardo Ramos, Chair