



# MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 1, 2024

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Eric Holmes, City Manager

**RE:** Transportation System Plan Implementation Update

**CC:** Kate Drennan, Transportation Planning Manager, Community Development; Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development; Ryan Lopossa, Transportation Manager, Public Works.

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## Background

In January 2024 City Council adopted the 2024 – 2044 Vancouver Transportation System Plan (TSP). The TSP is a guiding document that sets policy direction, outlines programs and projects, and prioritizes investments that advance safety, equity, and climate goals. The Plan is ambitious – presenting a vision of Vancouver where people of all ages and abilities can safely move through the City to go to work, school, and meet their daily needs using many different modes of travel. The TSP speaks to the integral role of land use in shaping travel patterns, and how our transportation system impacts our health, pocketbooks, and the natural environment.

This memo provides a six-month update on the work staff has undertaken to begin advancing priority implementation items (p. 103) and an expansive number of policies and programs outlined in the TSP’s Big Ideas (p. 30).

## Priority Implementation Items

The TSP identifies four priority initiatives for the first two-years of work following adoption of the 20-year Plan. The initiatives speak to foundational elements that guide the design and function of our streets and demonstrate a commitment to safety.

## Complete Corridors

The Complete Corridors ‘Big Idea’ is to “create complete corridors that connect growth areas, support business, serve transit, and maximize safety”. The TSP definition focuses on the city’s arterial network due to the density of major destinations, presence of transit, and directness of travel for users. Much of the City’s staff time is focused on advancing this priority area through a series of “Safety and Mobility Projects” advanced through the Complete Streets program. These projects are focused on building out safe and accessible facilities for people on foot, bike, or using a small mobility device – and supporting transit speed and reliability on corridors where fixed-route or BRT investments exist or are planned.

The City currently has four Safety and Mobility projects in the planning phase (29<sup>th</sup> Street/ 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, St. Johns/ St. James, Upper Main Street, and 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue), two projects in the civil design phase (34<sup>th</sup> Street, McGillivray Blvd.), one in the construction phase (Fourth Plain Blvd), and one that will begin the data collection and evaluation phase in the Fall (Fort Vancouver Way).

In addition to Complete Streets projects, major Capital Projects such as SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street, NE 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Jefferson/Kauffman, and Main Street Promise are also integral to building out complete corridors that connect people to major activity centers in alignment with TSP-established priority modal networks.

### **Leveraging Development**

This priority area focuses on how the City will measure the impact of new development on the transportation system. When new development occurs, the City has three processes that are triggered: concurrency evaluation, traffic impact analysis, and the application of the traffic impact fee program. Together, these assess how new trips added to the system will be calculated and addressed through proportional fees and required improvements.

The TSP calls for a shift to a more multimodal approach that measures concurrency (a measure of transportation system capacity to support development) on a person-trip basis rather than solely considering auto trips. In shifting to a person-trip performance measure, the transportation impact analysis and fee program can also consider investments to the overall system to address trip infrastructure or programs to serve all types of trips on the network.

Staff is currently exploring a shift to the multimodal concurrency approach taken by other Washington jurisdictions such as Bellingham, Redmond and Bellevue. The TSP consultant team provided a recommended adoption of “mobility units” – a mode-neutral person trip calculation to assess transportation system-wide capacity. As a next step, staff is contacting personnel at these jurisdictions to better understand how to apply it to the development process in Vancouver.

### **Vision Zero**

Vision Zero is a policy based in a belief that serious injuries and deaths on our streets are preventable, and TSP calls for employing the safe-systems approach to reduce the number and severity of crashes on Vancouver streets. The safe systems approach relies on building in design

redundancies to prevent crashes and apply safety “countermeasures” that address contributing factors to crashes on the roadway.

Since TSP adoption, staff has been updating the Local Road Safety Plan, a report that evaluates crashes on city streets with a focus on crashes that resulted in a fatality or severe injury. The updated plan will assess five years of crash data, from 2018-2022. The Plan identifies the top ten intersections and roadway segments with the highest crash rates and which countermeasures would address factors contributing to the crashes. Staff uses this data to prioritize projects and treatments for capital and repaving projects.

Staff has also provided a workshop on the Safe Systems approach to members of the Transportation and Mobility Commission to increase knowledge and understanding of the practice and how it relates to projects coming before the Commission for review. A significant component of Vision Zero and the Safe Systems approach is reducing roadway speeds. As part of the TSP work to update street design guidance, staff is looking at reducing speeds citywide through creating a citywide speed limit of 20mph for local roads, and 25 – 30 mph for most other collector and arterial roadways based on their land use context, size, and other factors.

### **Safe Routes to School**

This priority item is focused on creating a City of Vancouver Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) program. SRTS is a nationally funded program to encourage students and caregivers to walk, roll and bike to school along safe pathways. While the City has worked with Vancouver schools in the past to improve infrastructure and written and supported related grant applications, the City does not have a formal program.

Since TSP adoption, staff has begun to stand up a program through creating a charter with program goals, objectives, and action items. The team is researching programs elsewhere in the state of Washington, connecting with local school district administrators, and meeting with regional bike education and encouragement program providers. Staff is also working on how to integrate the COV equity index when prioritizing project infrastructure needs and requests, and cross-referencing school-serving projects already identified in the TSP and Transportation Improvement Program. The City has received a Department of Commerce grant to aid in standing up this program.

## **Policies and Programs**

Within the TSP, the six “Big Ideas” act as the organizing framework for 93 different policies, projects and programs to advance the underlying idea. While many of these are on a longer implementation timeline, the City is currently making progress on several highlighted below.

### **Support Thriving Neighborhoods (TN)**

*Make walking and rolling, small mobility and transit options convenient for neighborhood travel.*

The City is making progress on this big idea through creation of Connected and Accessible Neighborhoods (formerly 15-minute neighborhoods) (TN1) as a key outcome of the Comprehensive Plan. The City is also growing the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program through more allocation of transportation funds (TN1.1) and creating a Vancouver Safe Routes to Schools Program (TN1.2).

### **Create Complete Corridors (CC)**

*Create complete corridors that connect growth areas, support business, serve transit, and maximize safety.*

The City has several policies and programs related to Complete Corridors in progress. As mentioned above, the City is planning and constructing safe and accessible facilities on several arterial roadways through the Complete Streets program and capital projects (CC1). Staff are finalizing an internal guiding document that creates “street typologies” to guide roadway design and function based on land use and roadway classification (CC1.1). Staff has a recommended methodology to move forward with people-based metrics (CC2) that would enable a transition to a multimodal concurrency standard (CC2.2) and are researching how to operationalize the change in the traffic impact analysis and transportation development review process (CC2.1)

Staff applied the new TSP prioritization criteria to the 2025-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)(CC2.3) and will continue to refine the process for the annual TIP update. The City updated the pedestrian crossing policy (CC3.2) and policy guiding street standards (CC3) at the time of TSP adoption, and these will be adopted into Title 11 later this year. City staff are also beginning to utilize user education materials (CC4.4) in the form of project- or infrastructure-specific materials such as pamphlets and signs on how to use the new bus and turn lanes (BAT) on Fort Vancouver Way or parking protected mobility lanes on the Mill Plain couplet and portions of Columbia Street.

### **Connect People to Transit (T)**

*Fill sidewalk gaps, add safe crossings and support speed and reliability projects that keep transit moving efficiently.*

The City continues to collaborate with C-TRAN and support transit-focused improvements on our Enhanced Transit Network such as Mill Plain Blvd, projects being constructed this summer on Fourth Plain Blvd, and investments being planned for Upper Main Street in coordination with the HWY 99 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) (T2 and T2.1). Staff are also coordinating on the next BRT extension of Fourth Plain Vine east to 162<sup>nd</sup> and south to Fishers Landing (T2.1).

Staff are also applying an access to transit lens when prioritizing project investments such as sidewalk infill, lighting, and crossings (T1) through both grant applications and complete streets projects.

### **Build Low-Stress Networks (LS)**

*Make the walking, rolling, bicycling, and small mobility networks inviting for all ages and abilities.*

The City has implemented the key policy (LS1) to adopt a citywide low-stress Bicycle and Small Mobility Network through the adoption of the modal networks as outlined in the Transportation System Plan. Staff are using the modal networks to help inform the design of pedestrian, bike and small mobility facilities on these specified roadways. In addition, staff has begun to outline a bicycle and small mobility parking program (LS3.3) to outline processes and criteria for installing community-requested and City-initiated bike and small mobility parking. The long-range planning team has used grant funding to hire a part-time intern (LS4.1) to help with travel options education, training, and events (LS4 and LS 4.3) that highlight ways to move around the city outside a vehicle.

### **Make Growth a Benefit for All (G)**

*Manage growth by leveraging investments from new development and use parking and demand management policies to support livability.*

The policies and programs in this big idea update development standards, right-size parking and recognize parking's impact on land use and travel behavior. Staff is making progress through the work of the Downtown Parking Plan which looks at updating parking codes, capacity, management, operations, and the experience of users downtown (G4, G4.1, and G2.3). Staff is also engaged in robust work implementing transportation demand management programs (G5) region-wide through the Commute Trip Reduction program (G4.2), at the City through employee travel options benefits, and in targeted neighborhood through the recently launched New Movers program.

### **Embrace the Future (F)**

*Adopt new technologies and track data to help meet our goal of carbon neutrality by 2040.*

The City endeavors to employ new technologies to help manage resources like parking, better understand travel trends, and utilize data to track progress across a number of goals. In partnership with the Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the City has access to a contracted vendor for location-based services (F1.2) to calculate vehicle miles traveled within the city and region (F2.3). This data is vital for current efforts to calculate emissions from the transportation sector and report out on progress through the Climate Action Framework and other performance dashboards (F1.3).

Staff in General Services and Public Works are currently engaged in a process to convert the City fleet to zero-emissions vehicles (F4.1) and facilitate fleet charging infrastructure at existing and future City buildings. The Climate and Transportation Planning team have initiated the development of a City-wide Electrification Strategy to look at public charging infrastructure and determine the City's role in encouraging, regulating, owning or leasing public-serving EV chargers to accelerate a transition to EV vehicles.

## **Next Steps**

Staff will continue to advance the four prioritization areas and other policies and programs within the Big Ideas as able with staff and program resources. Near-term, departments are working together to allocate transportation dollars in the Biennial Budget process to advance programs, policies and projects identified in the TSP. The City also aggressively pursues grant

funding to support planning, design and construction of projects and implementation of programs.

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Attachments:

1. [2024-2044 City of Vancouver Transportation Plan](#)