Transportation Working Group Thursday March 20, 2014 6:00pm-8:00pm Portland Spirit



Attendees: Dan Yates, Rick Michaelson, Paul Carlson, David Lorati, John Comery, Mike Redmond, Troy Doss, Kathryn Krieger, Geraldene Moyle, Mark Raggett, Derek Dauphin, Lora Lillard, Bob Hillier, Grant Morehead

Grant starts the meeting at 6:15 Starts with introductions

Grant starts with a brief overview of the Central Eastside Industrial District (CEID). The maps he is presenting show the freight transportation classifications in the CEID. Freight classifications are the same everywhere – the entire CEID is classified as a Freight District. Need a hierarchal system to help develop more nuanced classifications.

Show a map of what is happening in the West Quadrant Plan—map of downtown and the Pearl. There is traffic and freight hierarchy there. The stars on the map are "kapows," or rather, these are areas of conflict. The goal of this process is to develop similar maps.

Main questions for this working group meeting entail: Portals and freeway access Origin and destination points What are the paths to get there? Where are the Kapows/conflicts?

Dan Y talks about one "kapow" at the Morrison Bridge. There is concern about access to I-5 southbound going over this bridge. Recent changes on the west end has made this movement harder.

Could we use the new viaduct to get access to Ross Island Bridge? Traffic modeling shows that traffic issues on the eastside of the Ross Island bridge are largely caused by issues on the west side.

Mike: The people in the room are not the ones to talk to. When you are talking about practical changes you need to talk to truck drivers. The data comes from them. The problem might be that there are not a lot of people here to inform the city.

Grant: this is the first meeting and the first time we are talking about this as part of the SE Quadrant process. We will take these ideas to a bigger group and begin to think about potential improvements to the area.

Mike: If you really wanted freight in the city then you would see them on this map.

Bob: The PFC will also have this at the table. They will identify the kapows. That group has been meeting for 10 years and they can help with the kapows. I work for the city and I care about freight.

Dan: There are a few people in this city who care about freight and they are in this room.

Mike: I have seen the last 20 years—Taylor St on-ramp never happened. I am skeptical that anything will happen. I am looking at getting kicked out of the District for noise.

Grant: The Central Eastside Street Plan developed a street hierarchicy, for the areas west of MLK. Truck loading streets on 2nd Ave. I hope to get to a document with a lot of detail, but for right now this is just the beginning.

THE GROUP STARTS THE EXERCISE: NORTHSIDE MAP

Rick: The problem I see in front of me is how to get mid and large trucks into the area.

David: it's not just trucks, its deliveries to businesses.

Dan: Big objects get moved into the district and we have to look at that.

Do we have basic information on truck movement in this area? Is there a plan to do a study?

Bob: There are some studies that have been conducted on Clay St. But nothing has been done for a while. This is a unique area for freight, lots of industrial.

Rick: What we need is to make freight a priority—if we have to push back on bike then I think we should.

Dan: The Morrison Bridge is a big area that has been affected. You can't do the loop anymore (on the west side) because of a new curb extension on the ramp approaching Naito. Now trucks cannot get on Naito as easily – they have to go to 2nd then Stark. But Stark has a bike lane. There is no room for trucks because of the curb extension.

The issue with Ross Island is 8th Ave. The turning radius is difficult. The continuous right turn on Woodward is difficult for trucks to make the swing. TriMet has tried to make that a bus left turn lane. They have been putting pressure on ODOT to change that road.

Rick: One potential way to improve truck access would be to make the clover ramps to/from Morrison and Naito truck only. Make it entrance and exit.

Troy: The access to I-5 is difficult both ways. If I was a driver I don't know which way I would go. One problem is that it's a pain to get to 11th. If I had an easier way to get across the MLK/Grand couplet to 11th and 12th could function better and get on I-26 instead of meandering through.

Dan: 11th is not going to be usable by anyone once you have trains and buses through there. I am afraid that Water Ave is going to be useless. As soon as you get trains and buses traveling through OMSI then Water is going to be backed up.

Rick: Would it help to have good east west routes?

Dan: It's still three bus routes that are frequent. Trains will run really frequently.

Grant: For freeway access to the south—do people go to Irving and 12th?

Troy: Franz and the Portland Bottling Co. have to take Irving to 12th. How does Pacific Fruit get around? Has there ever been work with the companies to ask them to sketch a route of how they get in and out?

Mike: Companies are already doing it. But the fear is that these areas are going to go away. Its currently working! The problem is when everything is changing.

Dan: There are competing city agencies—one is BES which does the bioswales. Maybe we can get some key streets that do not have in-street stormwater facilities and save specific streets that can be for freight.

Grealdene: Maybe specific streets can be saved just for freight if everyone is taking those?

Troy: But which ones are less crucial? You can't do storm water here like you do in other places. It's a freight district. It can't be everything—many streets are only 40 feet between the curbs and two way. So if the goal is storm water then how can you get that but prioritize freight? How about bikes? What streets are so critical that we can improve and not mess up? Maybe there is a way to do one way streets that can improve turn access for trucks. Somewhere in the district, between 6th and 11th? How do we manage freight?

Bob: There has been this suggestion before. There has been some thought to that. There is a better way to improve access.

Rick: a couplet might not be the only way.

Mike: They just want to make a turn without hitting a car.

Dan: The Lloyd District is looking at a bike bridge at 8^{th} . Get the bikes off 12^{th} and other places that can have capacity for trucks.

Rick: Is there places that can have sidewalks at 6 feet? That has ADA and doesn't need canopy so drivers can make turns?

Troy: What is the largest truck we need to plan for? I know Franz has triples, but what is the right size for other companies?

Mike: My company is going to expand. We will probably have to move. I want to keep my routes and just want them to function. Protect it, don't take it away.

Rick: If one significant company needs to move out as a result of transportation constraints, then the plan is a failure.

Troy: We want diversity in here, but that's not on the backs of other industries.

David: Truck drivers know what they are doing. The things that scare me are the operational standpoint. Development issues. Even the routes that work stop working. We might figure it out, but some of the things are scary, like Water Ave. When it becomes a real cluster then it's going to affect 2nd, 3rd, Clay and Stark. It will change the district for a lot of people. That is what I am worried about.

Dan: How do we protect the existing routes and make improvements? Don't waste one inch of the space with other things.

Mike: There is some common sense approach and letting the semis get in somewhere and not tell them you can't.

Troy: What about having two different types of zoning which allow for different loading?

Rick: I am worried that Stark is already backing up onto Water. We need another eastbound route.

Troy: It's the only street that really crosses MLK/Grand.

David: Clay is worse since the green street project was constructed. You can't get to Hawthorne because of people trying to get onto Clay. Clay is backing up Water. From King to Water onto Clay.

Troy: People are coming off Taylor and the freeway and its difficult for people coming through.

Dan: Water is becoming harder because we took away the left turn lane on Clay. If there is a train coming then Water gets blocked because one person wants to turn left going southbound and you can't go around them. When the sidewalk was expanded during the reonvation of the Holman building we lost the left turn queuing lane. The city needs to put signage to get to OMSI from Hawthorne so people use the slip ramp.

David: I also want to mention that on Water, lots of cars are coming from 2^{nd} or 3^{rd} to Water that need to make a left. Yamhill has the only four way stop. You need to add more stops between Taylor and Clay because you have busy Water and bikes coming through and people coming off the freeway and it's so hard to take a left there. It's a "someone is going to kill you" spot. It would slow down Water and stop bikes that might help. But it would let people go through who are heading westbound to turn left.

Rick: One big Kapow is the weaving traffic from Yamhill and MLK and southbound from Morrison and Hawthorne traffic. Traffic is trying to weave each other to get from the two bridges.

John: When you come off those bridges you have to stop. If there was a way that traffic could carry through then that might help. Right now you have to stop at both bridges.

Troy: You don't want to spit them off to 2nd and 3rd. Here is a crazy idea- what if we make a direct route and get off Morrison. Kind of like Hawthorne. Get ramp to drop you off on the right hand lane instead of spitting you off of the left. It is the same problem Rick talked about. You have to shift it over. It might be worth looking at. It would help weave, discharge on MLK, and make it smoother. Even if you signalize, it's hard to get traffic to flow in the middle. There are only a few streets to help east/west cross movement.

Rick: What if we took away all the clover leafs?

Dan: It helps the queue when the bridge goes up.

SOUTH SIDE MAP:

Paul: One thing right off, the rail line backs up traffic. Ross Island Sand and Gravel are usually coming up on 4th and onto Water. Go over RI or Powell.

Rick: There is not a clear route from OMSI to Ross Island. Sometimes you do the right or wrong street. If there was better signage it could help people find it and alleviate traffic.

Troy: One big Kapow is near the 26/99 interchange. It runs along Woodward for a few streets.

Paul: Making a left into the district off that area is difficult.

Troy: 12th and Clinton will be bike access and alleviate other areas. Division Pl. will be for others. Caruthers will be a multi use path. You will have some cyclists using Division pl, but most will use Caruthers. If Division Pl. can be a key street to take you east and west and create a lot of urban form and help freight and transit. This area needs to carry freight for 10+ years. Some will carry bus and freight, some autos and then the rest we will need to figure out.

Dan: what can help is helping those who get lost. I have helped people get to OMSI, PCC, Spirit or the Opera. They get scared to go into industrial district. We need to work on keeping cars moving.

David: Use matters here because the industrial uses cooperate with other industrial uses. Complementary use and development will help circulation. People have to tolerate it.

Mike: We are sending people on 11th for I-5 South and Morrison for I-5 north. What is the priority here? Bike? TriMet? If freight is priority, then let me see it.

Dan: Save the truck routes.

Troy: You cannot put everything in the same cross section. If you make one mode the best for a certain street then they are going to take it. Is Milwaukie and Powell a Kapow for freight? The left turn movement? I am talking about eastbound Powell to northbound.

John: Should Water connect to 11th on east/west route? If you take parking then you get another lane for trucks and bikes, if you have to share with bikes. You can plan around them and say parking and bike go somewhere else. Or go one-way.

Priority of east/west routes

John: Stark, Yamhill, Taylor and Clay are current routes. Need something from Water, Stark and Division. They are the only ones that get you all the way through.

David: Taylor is the best route because it has a light and is quickest. If it was Stark then it would help.

Mark: If we could add more signals to cross MLK/Grand then it could take pressure off Taylor and Stark. It would help everyone. It would help east/west.

Troy: Can prioritize bike and ped on those ways and prioritize freight and auto on another way.

Mike: If drivers could have a map that told them which streets they could use. Love idea to make truck routes and protect them.

Troy: If I cannot identify routes for bikes then I will get push back. You cannot have everyone wanting the same intersections. Moving is not the solution. Where can we help place the conflicting needs?

Rick: Staff is with us on that, then we need to prioritize.

Dan: where is the best place for truck routes?

John: Do you need more than two routes? Is it better to have one way or a sufficiently wide lane?

Rick: If two routes E/W and S/N, that is enough?

Bob: 12 foot travel lanes are best. Not going that fast so 12 foot is good. Turn radius is critical.

David: Are bikes going to stick to the route?

Troy: The majority of the flow will switch to the easiest route possible. If you give them a sweet route and a place that they don't have to stop, then they will take it.

Rick: West of MLK—the trucks load on Taylor, a truck has to decide which way he will back in—depends on the building. They need to use all the streets. I want to make the point that if you don't keep flexibility then you will come into problems.

John: East/west streets for thoroughfares for going through the areas.

Troy: Public awareness for bikes. Bring up that it's a truck route. If we don't find a solution, then it will only get worse. If you can't propose solutions then no one is going to fall back. We need solid proposals so that diversity works here and is viable.

Rick: If we can reduce the width of sidewalks it can really help.

Paul: Access off of Clay, across the Oregon Granite/Tile Shop. Is freight taking that?

Everyone says they are taking that route.

David: I want to use 3rd to get to I-5 south. Shoot up 8th. Might need add signals. This is the first preferred freight route I agree with.

Dan: We have to solve problems at Woodward and 8th. Add a signal so that trucks can get to Powell.

Troy: Could it have a cloverleaf to help people get on RI? It used to have one in the 50s. ODOT took it out in the 60s.

David: 6th-12th Ave...who gets what?

Grant: This might be for next time, but there is talk for a bike route through there.

Troy: Cyclists take 7th. You can make things harder with bulb outs, but for right now is it working with bikes and freights.

Mike: It's a bad design if you put them on the same street. Why not put them on 8th? Need colored routes for bikes and freight. Bikers want to get to work. Freight needs to get to work to give them a job. Bikers have easier flexibility.

Troy: 8th has a lot of loading. 7th is good for bikes. Might need to get alternative to 7th. Avoid putting bikes and peds on freight routes. How can 7th work slightly better? It seems like it is working pretty well.

How can you connect bikes north south into Lloyd without taking 12th? What about signalization on 7th? People go slow on there, maybe use current infrastructure.

Grant presented a brief overview of the "Green Loop" concept that has been developed as part of the West Quadrant Plan. This concept will be discussed in detail at the next Transportation Working Group meeting.