

Street by Street: Performance based Street Initiative. Stakeholder Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary of the April 9, 2012 meeting.

This is a summary based on a recording of the meeting and meeting notes. This is not intended to be verbatim notes rather a tool summarize the issues and advance the discussion. If you have any edits to this document please forward them to shoshanah.oppenheim@portlandoregon.gov

Meeting Attendees: Marianne Fitzgerald SWINI, Jeff Fish Oregon Home Builders, Leah Dawkins SE Uplift/Lark Planning, Dan Dishong Linton Neighborhood, Roberta Krogman Powellhurst Gilbert Neighborhood Association, Rob Sadowsky Bicycle Advisory Committee, Don Baack Southwest Trails, Roger Averbek Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, Rod Merrick Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Dave Humber, Matt Wickstrom Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) , Lana Danaher Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), Linda Dobson BES, Kurt Kreuger Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) Development Services, Chon Wong PBOT ADA , Denver Igarita PBOT Planning, Christine Leon PBOT Manager Development Services, and Shoshanah Oppenheim PBOT Capital Projects

Three years ago an Infill Advisory Group was formed to address infill development issues. The question to resolve was “What could be done when skinny lots were developed requiring the improvement of a very small frontage.” Some of the same people are around the table today to continue to find solutions to making improvement to our unpaved roads. Developers are interested in making improvements that are meaningful, rather than just the street in front of their lot and neighbors are interested in improving connections and the mobility of their community.

Our history of requiring developers to improve frontage when they develop a parcel will not alone address the miles of unpaved roads in our city. Our history of annexation of areas that were under improved, historic maintenance agreements and responsibility, the cost of building our city standards and the lack of revenue all contribute to the problem of unpaved road in the city.

Over the years there has been one standard for the entire City if on local street adjacent to single family residential – 26 to 28 feet of pavement with curb on both sides the planting street 4’ and surface stormwater facilities, 5 or 6 foot sidewalk.

Historic funding options of System Development Charges (capacity only), Local Improvement Districts and federal funding are insufficient to build the typical streets on these unpaved roads.

Our task is to develop new options.

To accomplish this goal and at the Mayor’s direction PBOT initiated the Street by Street: Performance Based Street Initiative. This initiative focuses on local streets within single family residential zones. PBOT is striving to maintain and improve the functionality of the local streets without overbuilding or overburdening the property owners. The attached handout reviews the three realms we are considering: Walkway, storm water and vehicle. Additionally, the Bureau has developed three criteria to be analyzed: mobility, reliability and safety and comfort.

Together these criteria will allow PBOT to examine how each street performs. This is a context based system of decision making for local streets.

There are several reasons for the current situation of unpaved roads, which are concentrated in Southwest and the areas that were annexed over time from the county. Developers built to different standards, many areas were built according to the rules of the county and the typography of the neighborhood. Over the years the city developed to accomplish different goals.

A Committee member offered that in SW there development plan included the historic streetcar and the primary connections were to get people to the streetcar. Historically waivers did not address storm water.

Over the years it has become more important to be more consistent with granting exceptions and the bureau has been more rigorous in establishing this program. This effort is an example of attempting to create options that will lead to more of our unpaved streets being paved and improved.

An introduction of the new program begins with seeing the right-of-way as three realms.

1. Vehicle realm – which can be separated in to the dynamic area which is surface for bikes and cars to moving on and the static area which is where vehicles are parked
2. Walkway realm – this is where pedestrians walk on either side of the street plus landscaping, this is the buffer between a yard and the vehicle realm
3. Stormwater realm – this can be many different surfaces or systems to convey or infiltrate stormwater

PBOT expects this analysis will give us more options. For example considering the vehicle realm as dynamic and static allows PBOT to consider doing something else with the parking area, using different materials, consider it as a shared space.

The focus of this effort is on local surface streets in residential neighborhoods – low volume and low speed streets.

The SAC then reviewed the handout, see attached.

PBOT and BES are looking at opportunities to build some pilots. They will provide new ideas and cost estimates for the public.

The expectation is that designs developed here and by PBOT will keep traffic low. Incorporating ideas like off set intersections and small traffic circles will maintain the function and feel of the street.

A committee member asked if this program could be used to retrofit neighborhood streets that have significant cut through traffic with speed bumps creating a shared facility.

The shared facilities that PBOT is considering would be appropriate where the conditions are in place, streets that have heavy cut through traffic may not be appropriate for the full range of options.

At future meetings the Committee will look at plan views and advise PBOT on application and design.

A committee member asked if the SAC was going to be able to look are radical ideas, like curvilinear streets and shared spaces. There are examples in Europe such as the woonerf, are interesting and could be applied in some circumstances.

Yes one of the sections that PBOT is presenting is a curvilinear street. These streets have a lot of appeal.

The Committee asked what the SAC was trying to achieve. There are many priorities addressing stormwater, making the city walkable, improving mobility. A purpose and need statement will be reviewed and agreed upon.

PBOT is at the starting point of this effort, the Bureau is looking at more affordable context sensitive options.

A committee member suggested that it is dangerous to put cost and affordability at the top of the list. And it is important to remember that southwest is a complex area.

Staff continued that performance is the framework for this program and that there are three factors to analyze performance.

1. Mobility- think about the ability to walk or use a wheelchair across the surface. The higher the mobility rating the higher the functionality. Compare concrete vs. gravel or a soft surface.
2. Reliability- this is the life cycle or the structural integrity. Compare concrete and asphalt which are very reliable with dirt, which is not very reliable. Gravel is better and chip seal is even more reliable.
3. Safety and comfort- this is applied to the walkway realm, how do people feel when using this realm, consider children, seniors, people with disabilities, are they able to use the facility comfortably which being less than fully alert.

A committee member asked about permeability.

Staff recommended that we will address porous pavement in a later meeting, this meeting is just an introduction.

The composite score a streets mobility, reliability and safety will help with another objective- establishing a fee that developers will pay in lieu of making improvements. What happens now is that developers only improve their frontage when they develop a parcel, often that improved frontage is not connected to the rest of the system. The fee can be put into a street development fund where the funds can be spent building performance based streets that

improve the functionality of unpaved streets in areas created in the Portland Plan –east, inner, west, industrial and downtown.

A committee member asked if there are there any funds available to subsidize the Developer Improvement Fund?

Until the program is more established identifying specific funding will continue to be a challenge.

PBOT wants to provide options that will make sense for every budget.

To provide estimates for the sections, PBOT is assuming a 350' long block. Recognizing that east and west are vastly different PBOT, hopes to use ten years of local street improvements and the pilots to develop a block cost then a dollar per linear foot of frontage cost.

The main objective for this program is to develop tools that the community can use on a street by street basis that considers a wide range of system factors and places different levels of importance on the different modes based on the functionality of that specific street.

PBOT has developed a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) who will help analyze the various options and provide solutions to issues like storm water infiltration and accessibility. PBOT will take what is heard at this group back to the TAC and have that group of experts work out the details and make recommendations to the SAC.

Our schedule is to take a recommendation to council by the end of the summer and develop a public information plan for the fall. Public information will include visiting neighborhood coalitions, neighborhood associations and various modal committees.

There was a question of who sits on the TAC.

The TAC is made up of the following staff: * indicates both SAC and TAC
April Bertelsen PBOT, Christine Leon PBOT*, Andrew Aebi PBOT, Chon Wong PBOT* Lola Gailey, Dan Anderson PBOT, Denver Igarta PBOT*, Greg Jones PBOT, Lana Danaher BES*, Brian Oberding PBOT, Dawn Uchiyama BES, Tim Kurtz BES, Jamie Waltz PBOT, Dan Layden PBOT, Shoshanah Oppenheim PBOT* and Kurt Krueger PBOT*.

It is important to PBOT that members of the SAC check in with the organizations that they represent and keep them updated about the work we are doing on this committee. PBOT expects questions from the group and advocacy over the next few months about how to improve the street by street performance based street initiative.

There was the recommendation to meet throughout the city so that we could see different features. PBOT will consider the best way to inform the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. If it is to provide a list of locations, have a field trip, or various presentations.

One committee member recommended to finish this project this before City Council turns over and make sure that PBOT is ready for the next legislative session if there are issues that need to be resolved at the Legislature.

Please take a minute to look at the work of Leah Dawkins a member of the Committee, staff member at Southeast uplift and one of the authors of Roadway Unimproved the Document can be found at www.Roadwaynotimproved.com.

Action item: PBOT is to develop a website and post all the maps, notes and agendas on the website.

Next meeting: May 7, 2012 12:30- 2:30 PM
Hollywood Library 4040 NE Tillamook Street