



Mobility Symposium #2

March 11th, 2011, 9:00 AM - Noon

1900 SW 4th Ave, Portland, OR 97201, Room 2500A

Agenda

1. **Welcome and participant introductions**
2. **Review of Minutes**
3. **Summary of previous discussion**
4. **Present revised Draft Transportation Guiding Principles**
5. **Discussion – is this what we want to achieve?**
6. **Public Comment Period**
7. **Present Proposed Transportation Strategies**
 - a. **System Management**
 - **Access**
 - **Mode Split**
 - **Vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases**
 - **Parking management**
 - b. **System Investments**
 - c. **Plan Integration**
8. **Discussion- Do the strategies support our guiding principles?**
9. **Public Comment Period**
10. **Adjourn**



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Facilitator: David Knowles

Panelists in attendance: Roger Averbeck (Bicycle Transportation Alliance), Gwenn Baldwin (Baldwin Consulting), Bob Buchanan (Pioneer Place), Rob Burchfield (Portland Bureau of Transportation), Andy Cotugno (Metro), Chris Kopca (Downtown Development Group), Alan Lehto (TriMet), Jessica Roberts (Alta Planning and Design), Michelle Rudd (Central City 2035 Advisory Group), Phil Selinger (Willamette Pedestrian Coalition), Bill Scott (Zipcar), Chris Smith (Planning and Sustainability Commission), Peter Stark (Central Eastside Industrial Council), Craig Sweitzer (Central City 2035 Advisory Group), Dan Zalkow (Portland State University)

Staff in attendance:

Portland Bureau of Transportation: Mauricio Leclerc, Grant Morehead, Sara Schooley;

Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability: Elisa Hamblin, Steve Iwata, Steve Kountz, Mark Raggett, Michelle Van Tijen, Joe Zehnder

Portland Bureau of Environmental Services: Amy Chomowicz

Public in attendance: Peter Lion

Welcome and participant introductions

David Knowles welcomed the group and asked each participant and audience member to introduce themselves.

Present revised Draft Transportation Guiding Principles

Peter Stark: There is a distinction between freight mobility needs and the needs of freight and service employee needs, and we should recognize that.

Chris Kopca: Cutting edge: what does that mean? We should use whatever works, not just cutting edge for the sake of cutting edge. Michelle Rudd concurred with this sentiment.

Andy Cotugno: We should include a statement about improving transit speeds in the Central City.

Bill Scott: How do we address through trips? Should that be a separate objective?

Peter Stark: It is already a problem on Cornell, with people bypassing 26 and 405.

Alan Lehto: We should recognize that there are different solutions for each mode

Gwenn Baldwin: We should include a more explicit reference to affordability, not only for individual users but also for jurisdictions. We should think about capital costs from the beginning.

Peter Stark: The City's STARS program includes affordability components. We should look there to ensure policy consistency.

Rob Burchfield: We need to recognize there are trade offs. We can't have everything we want. At the project level we will look to these policies to make difficult choices.

Phil Selinger: If we are going to make mode-specific references, we should be balanced with that. Pedestrian needs seem to be lost among the strategies. For example, we should include a more explicit reference to safety, especially for pedestrians.

Dan Zalkow: There needs to be greater distinction between strategies, tactics, and action items. There are a lot of steps needed in the process.

Discussion – is this what we want to achieve?

Mauricio Leclerc provided an overview of air quality, mode split, growth and travel demand trends since the Central City Plan was adopted. It was noted that VMT and mode split targets from other plans, such as the Climate Action Plan, have not been met.

Andy Cotugno: We set VMT targets in the RTP back in 1990, and we have done well in meeting those goals. GHG goals have not yet been established, but are currently under consideration by the Legislature.

Peter Stark: What tools will we have to reduce GHG emissions in the Central City?

Mauricio Leclerc: Some are outside our control, such as fuel efficiency. Others, like parking policy, jobs housing balance (land use policy), transit investment, etc., can have an impact. The Pearl is a prime example of how this can work.

Alan Lehto: This also underscores why rail investments work, not only from a transportation perspective, but also how it influences development.

Bill Scott: Land use is a key factor in allowing people to go car-free. Having viable transportation choices makes that possible. Understanding these relationships will help us target investments in the future.

Craig Sweitzer: It is important to note that development in the Pearl, particularly office development, has come at the expense of downtown.

Michelle Rudd: There is the issue of types of jobs as well. Industry and headquarters jobs have been leaving the Central City.

Andy Cotugno: It is important to note that the development projections are benchmarks, based on economic development models. We are developing policies that can help us toward these goals.

Joe Zehnder: The Economic Development Symposiums are working on ways to better refine those projections, and will include more detailed information on industry clusters.

Chris Kopca: We should recognize that this process is interdisciplinary. How can transportation investments help us to reach other goals?

Gwenn Baldwin: This is why affordability needs to be a prime consideration. How will our transportation policies affect goods and services delivery?

Andy Cotugno: Region 2040 has a goal for overall market share in the Central City, for employment and residential development. Has the Central City maintained its overall market share for employment? Do we want to modify the goal? We are probably reaching or exceeding the goal for housing.

Joe Zehnder: The employment percentage is currently about 13%. If you look at cohort cities, we are over-performing.

Bill Scott: The congestion projections are based on the model, which we have recognized already does not allocate mode split and VMT accurately.

Roger Averbeck: It is important to note that for some geographies, all of the portals are congested. 26% is misleading.

Chris Smith: The bridges aren't portals to the Central City, they are portals to downtown. How do we isolate portals to the Central City?

Jessica Roberts: TDM has had a significant impact on bike ridership. The 2004 jump could be partially attributed to those efforts.

Michelle Rudd: How will demographic shifts (aging population) affect bike ridership?

Jessica Roberts: Bicycle congestion on portals will become a problem if we don't create more options, and growth continues on its current pace.

David Knowles: Mode split goals can become the most visible articulation of policy: how you divide up the trips. How important are those targets? How do we achieve aspirational targets such as the 25% (all trips, Citywide) target in the BMP? It suggests that the City would have to over-perform.

Gwenn Baldwin: It is important to distinguish between commute and other trips. If GHG reductions are the goal, all trips need to be in play.

Steve Iwata: The logic behind focusing on work trips in the past was that if we free up capacity, other trips, such as freight deliveries, will be easier.

Phil Selinger: We should think about system functionality. Road vs. non-road is the real issue.

Roger Averbeck: Safety, and perception of safety, is the key to increasing access to the CC. People aren't going to feel safe riding in mixed downtown traffic. We will need more separated facilities.

Rob Burchfield: Home-based work trips also have the strongest relationship to carbon monoxide pollution, which was the critical issue in the past. That will change if GHG is

the issue. It is important to note that investments in road infrastructure have a definite benefit for bicyclists too.

Dan Zalkow: We have non-auto mode split goals because of limitations on parking. The same is true for road capacity, and that should be a focus of mode split goals for the Central City. A shift from bikes to transit, or vice versa, has a minimal impact on the system.

Andy Cotugno: There is a distinction between accessing the Central City and circulation within it. Most transit riders become pedestrians in the Central City, for example. The argument is not about the mode split targets, it is the place that we should care about. Mode split should be an indicator of success, not a goal.

Chris Kopca: The single biggest factor affecting the decline in regional job share in the Central City is the push against SOV travel. GHG goals can be met through other means, such as electric cars. Time in congestion affects business location decisions. In talking with employers that have left the Central City, that's the single biggest factor. If we want to reach our employment targets, we need to be realistic about that.

David Knowles: Expand on that. Parking, loss of lanes on Broadway, what specifically can we attribute losses to?

Chris Kopca: It is companies that need access to the whole region. They don't get that if they are located in the Central City. We might reach our goals in the Central City, but companies that move out to the suburbs are now driving more. Is that really an accomplishment?

Alan Lehto: We should distinguish between measuring mode split, and what the actual goals are.

Chris Smith: We need to consider cost effectiveness. The next bike trip is cheaper than the next transit trip. There are also health benefits to active modes.

Jessica Roberts: There are no plans to radically increase portal capacity. We should think about getting people out of SOVs who don't need to be there, to free up capacity for freight trips. Smart Trips can play a big role in this.

Peter Stark: Parking is a big issue. Columbia didn't locate in the Central Eastside primarily because of parking issues. We need to think about the real world consequences of these decisions.

Chris Kopca: It's true that a lot of people will use travel options once they are introduced to them. But you still need to attract people here in the first place, and restrictive policies make that difficult. We have declining market share, and we need to look at why that is.

Bill Scott: we should look at economy-wide trends. Industry trends are shifting; there are companies that want to locate in the Central City precisely because of the de-emphasis on auto travel.

Andy Cotugno: There is a branding element here. If you explicitly say you want to reduce SOV travel, that is a detriment to employment. If you say you want to increase alternative modes, that is a much more positive message.

Rick Gustafson: Do we have employment and retail data? The level and intensity of economic activity are strong indicators of the Central City health, and should be emphasized over mode split numbers.

David Knowles: We should also examine parking policy.

Mauricio Leclerc provided an overview of existing parking policies, and how they have been implemented since 1996.

Alan Lehto: Is there some threshold that we could bump up the parking ratio slightly to attract more businesses?

Bob Buchanan: By having low ratios, you take many companies out of the pool of possible tenants. Many want the option of parking their employees and customers. That's why the Pearl has been so successful: because the parking ratios are higher than downtown. This is also why focusing on mode split alone doesn't work.

Chris Kopca; 1 - 1.5 seems to be the number we need to have to get conversations moving.

David Knowles: Why have parking regulations at all? Why not control it through building form?

Rob Burchfield: Because it allows you to balance the use of the street system.

Phil Selinger: We should focus on shared use of existing parking resources. That could help drive down costs, if the risk of having underutilized parking was lower.

Chris Kopca: Most commercial parking is already available for general use. You could open up residential parking, but will residents tolerate having their parking garages open to the general public?

Bill Scott: It would be possible to design a building to facilitate this.

Chris Smith: Why are we bundling parking stalls with residential units? People should not be required to buy parking with a condo. Lenders may not like this, which is where sharing schemes come into play.

David Knowles asked members for their final thoughts.

Peter Stark: We need to keep in mind that congestion may be an inducement to alternative modes, but it has detrimental impacts on business.

Chris Kopca: Portal capacity is the most important issue we need to address. Under all of our models, there are more vehicles (autos, bikes, and transit) coming into the Central City, and we need to accommodate that.

Rob Burchfield: We also need to consider downstream capacity. Increasing portal capacity won't help if we are just pushing the bottleneck further down the system.

Jessica Roberts: We should expand on the notion of person-capacity. Bike sharing is also something we should explore further, providing a "safety net" of options that will encourage people not to drive into the Central City.

Dan Zalkow: Pricing schemes should be explored, such as congestion pricing. Plan implementation is not a strategy.

Andy Cotugno: Reasonable accommodation of cars is very important from an economic development standpoint. We should continue to pursue freeway bottleneck relief.

Alan Lehto: Integration with economic development will be a key challenge as well.

Phil Selinger: We should keep in mind that the non-SOV modes are more sensitive to the details that autos are.

Chris Smith: Economics drive parking more than regulations. We need to focus on the pricing signals. The real issue is how can we accommodate new trips in the existing ROW. Transit and bikes should see the largest growth.

Bill Scott: We should focus more on marketing. The objectives focus too much on investment and regulation.

Roger Averbeck: We need to focus on fixing safety issues, particularly at portals. Bike sharing is not going to work for the masses until there are safer, separated facilities. Other things will start to fall into place once we have done that.

Michelle Rudd: Bike sharing is already happening, at individual businesses. We have transit incentives and bikes that are available for use daily by employees.

Craig Sweitzer: Flexibility at portals needs to address all modes. Parking hasn't been an issue in the Pearl because all the residents have their own parking.

Sara Schooley: Remember that congestion can be an inducement to mode shifts.

Steve Iwata thanked the group for their participation. Staff is targeting April 19 to present the Symposium results to the Central City 2035 Advisory Group.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.