



2017-18 Vision Zero Task Force

Meeting #4 Summary

Thursday, September 21, 2017 | 9:30 a.m. – noon

Portland Building, 1120 SW 5th Ave, 2nd floor, Room C

Next meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2017 | 9:30 a.m. – noon

Columbia Square, 111 SW Columbia, 8th floor conference room

Task Force Members in attendance

Leah Treat, PBOT (chair)

Roger Averbeck, Pedestrian Advisory
Committee

Jae Douglas, Multnomah County Health

Ty Engstrom, Portland Police Bureau

Kristi Gladhill, ODOT Region 1

Duncan Hwang, APANO

Charles McGee, Black Parent Initiative

Lake McTighe, Metro

Chris Monsere, TREC

Noel Mickelberry, Oregon Walks

Don Russ, Portland Fire & Rescue

Vivian Satterfield, OPAL

Kari Schlosshauer, Safe Routes to School

National Partnership and Bicycle
Advisory Committee

Steven A. Todd, Multnomah County
Circuit Court

PBOT staff present: Mari Valencia Aguilar, David Backes, Margi Bradway, Wendy Cawley, Michelle Dellinger, Dana Dickman, Matt Ferris-Smith, Elizabeth Mahon, Clay Veka, Sharon White, Millicent Williams

Welcome and introductions (Margi Bradway, Clay Veka)

Margi Bradway welcomed Vision Zero Task Force members on behalf of Director Treat (who was finishing at the JPACT regional committee meeting). Director Treat joined the meeting a bit later.

Margi provided an update on crashes year-to-date in 2017. She introduced Sgt. Holbrook with the Portland Police Bureau, who described the recent deadly crash on Lombard. Speed and intoxication were likely factors.

Other updates:

- Oregon Transportation Commission is holding meetings to flesh out the new Safe Routes to School funding.
- Rose Quarter project: City of Portland is working to ensure the safety benefits are maximized.
- Due to the state legislature and local gas tax funding, plus marijuana tax revenue, PBOT has more funding than has been available in recent history. There is a lot of work to do, with big responsibility to deliver. Challenges include increasing construction costs.

Summary: 2017 legislative bills related to Vision Zero (Margi Bradway)

Margi provided an update on implementation of new legislation.

HB 2682 allows Portland to lower statutory posted speeds by 5 mph on residential streets. PBOT needs to take an ordinance to Council. We will be launching a communications campaign to let people know what the speed limit is and why it is important.

- Question: Can you drop school zones and greenways to 15 mph?
 - Response: We believe this bill provides us with that authority. Our initial rollout will focus on 20 mph on residential streets.

Another law allows local jurisdictions to track vehicle speed using red light cameras. 11 mph above posted is the minimum required to issue speeding citations. The new law takes effect Oct. 6. Portland has a red light camera contract running through the spring of 2019. We still need to determine whether this contract will allow us to launch a speed on green program before the current contract is up.

The new distracted driving law goes into effective October 1. There is a press conference on Sept. 29 in Salem. Many legislators championed this bill.

- Comment (ODOT): We are working on getting out info out because people have a lot of questions. How does it compare to Washington law, etc. Basically: no handheld electronic devices while driving.

- Comment (PBOT): We are also working to make sure we are providing consistent messages.
- Comment (Police): Fines and penalties are also enhanced. On third conviction after Oct. 1, it becomes a misdemeanor—you can go to jail. Officers have the ability to run your driving record. We often see people using their phones. Hopefully this law will make an impact on distracted driving.
- Comment (PBOT): We are having a hard time reducing the number on traffic deaths. Infrastructure takes time to build. But a law like this can more quickly lead to behavior change.
- Comment: In the messaging, I suggest making it clear that holding a phone is not allowed even when you are stopped, even when your car is not moving.
 - Comment: Yes, I agree. This law clarifies that it is illegal to use a device even while stopped.
- Question: What about when pulled off to the side of the road? Is that OK?
- Response (Police): You have to be parked in a legal spot; the car engine does not have to be off.
- Comment: I suggest that when you message to people—help them understand the legal, safe alternatives to maintain connection or functionality while driving.
- Comment: Discussions on social media are already out there and happening. There is a lot of confusion and misinterpretation. My recommendation is that a high level summary needs to be very clear. A few bullet points. What is allowed and what is not. Keep it simple.

Presentation: Street teams outreach and enforcement missions (Dana Dickman, Sergeant Ty Engstrom)

Dana noted that PBOT has been piloting street teams this summer and completed two so far. The first one was a partnership with the Division Midway Alliance and focused at SE 122nd & Division on July 20. The second was on outer Stark with the Rosewood Initiative on August 31. Both were in partnership with Portland Police. Police focused on people driving, while the street team members spoke with people walking and biking. Generally, people were glad to have us out there. Traffic safety has a huge impact on people's day to day lives.

One reason we chose to do joint missions with police is because they were already doing Vision Zero missions focused on the most dangerous behaviors. It was helpful to be able to explain the police presence to people on the street. Our plan is to do the next street team outreach on Lombard this fall, to break for the winter, and resume in April with two per month.

Sharon White, PBOT Street Team lead requested that task force members interested in participating contact her. That help and participation are always welcome.

- Question: Just to clarify—what is a street team and what do they do?
- Response (PBOT): Street teams are inspired by New York, where about 25 paid staff talk to people moving about at a certain intersection one week. The following week, Police come out to the same location to enforce traffic laws. We decided that that approach was not quite appropriate for Portland. Our street teams are PBOT staff and community volunteers wearing VZ vests; there are about 8 people.
- Question: You were mostly talking with people walking and taking transit, right? How about people biking and driving?
- Response (PBOT): At the events so far, the police focused on people driving. Street team members do talk to people biking when we have the chance to do so safely.

Sergeant Engstrom provided an update on Portland Police Bureau missions. The Vision Zero missions are typically on Thursday nights with two officers from each of the precincts at predetermined locations based on high crash corridors or complaints or serious crash call-outs. Police work the location for one-and-a-half to two hours. Sergeant Engstrom provides officers with the Vision Zero context and gives guidance to focus on the most dangerous behaviors.

With back to school, the Traffic Division has been focused on school zones, having issued about 96 citations and 109 warnings. The majority of citations have been issued from the photo radar van in school zones.

Dana shared that three TV stations covered the July 20 street team outreach and mission, and that the August 31 mission included a TV crew member ride-along with an officer and focused on distracted driving. This media coverage has been an effective way to promote Vision Zero.

- Question: In talking to people, how do they understand Vision Zero? Do they think it's a good idea?
 - Response (PBOT): We've been in places where traffic safety is a big concern. 122nd and Division, for example—if you stand there for two minutes, you can see why traffic safety is important to people. On Stark, police responded to someone driving 60 miles per hour. We've gotten many positive responses.
 - Comment: Three things I want to note: First, going 60 on Stark means there is a problem with the design of that street. Second, I encourage you to send as many people as possible to the Share the Road Safety Class. Third, thank you for reaching out to Families for Safe Streets to get feedback on the street teams handout.
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Presentation: Multi-pronged approach to corridor transformation, Outer SE Division as a case study (Dana Dickman, Duncan Hwang)

Dana Dickman introduced the ongoing safety project on outer SE Division Street.

In December, City Council approved funding to institute a multi-pronged safety approach on outer SE Division St following two pedestrian traffic deaths on the same night. The project includes education and outreach, placemaking, additional street lighting, automated speed enforcement, speed limit reduction to 30 mph, speed reader boards, and accelerated street design work that will add medians and making biking safer. A corridor project can take multiple years to go through design, but we need to move faster to reach zero deaths. Additionally, PBOT put out an RFP for community engagement and placemaking, and APANO and Division Midway Alliance were the successful proposers. Duncan will say more about this.

Duncan Hwang (APANO) talked about placemaking as an opportunity to bring more voices to the table, and create a better place and identity for the neighborhood. APANO, with PBOT and RACC support, received a Metro grant for \$20,000 and PBOT is matching it. The community will be working with local artists to transform the 85th Ave and 137th Ave pedestrian bridges. The project will reclaim underutilized infrastructure for Vision Zero.

Additionally, the program has brought on “street fellows” from the Chinese and Vietnamese speaking communities in the Jade District and from the Division Midway area. The street fellows are engaged in the planning process and in community outreach. An important first step in capacity building has been to educate the street fellows on the basics of street design; the principles are complex and difficult for non-professionals to understand.

We are learning that Vision Zero is about managing tradeoffs – it is easy to support in principle and more difficult when real tradeoffs have to be made. A dream design may not be feasible with right-of-way constraints and our street fellows have accepted the current design moving forward. Residents are generally on board with Vision Zero, but there is opposition to parking removal and people are afraid that their delivery trucks will be impacted. Business owners are concerned about traffic interruptions. A business mitigation fund would be a nice balance to those potential impacts. Another issue is that many side streets are unpaved, so may not have side street on-street parking as an alternative. Perhaps we can link safety project with additional paving to provide that side street parking. Messaging and buy-in is ongoing work.

Exercise and discussion: Engineering and designing safe streets, Outer SE Division as a case study (Michelle Dellinger)

Clay Veka reminds Task Force members that, through data analysis in developing the Vision Zero Action Plan, we found that Division Street has a high number of crashes for people walking, biking, and driving. The goal of the safety project is to eliminate serious crashes.

Michelle Dellinger describes the outer Division St safety project. It is exciting to have the opportunity and resources to really redesign a dangerous street. We need to flip Division from an auto-centric street to a street that supports walking, biking and transit. For people driving currently, they can turn anywhere they want, go where they want, oftentimes travel as fast as they want. In contrast, people walking may have to go far out of direction to get where they want to go safely.

Gap Study: Pedestrian crossings are a top priority for the project. We did a gap study to count how many seconds there are between people driving across the street. It takes people about 25 seconds to cross Division Street now, on average. (Handout describes the gap data.)

EXERCISE: Take a few minutes to review the gap study chart and identify how many gaps there are to cross (at least 25 seconds) during the peak hour at SE 125th Ave.

Crosswalk Spacing: With this project, we are also piloting new crosswalk spacing guidelines, which call for 530 feet as the average maximum distance between enhanced crossings for Main Street or Pedestrian District designations, and 795 feet on City Walkways outside of main streets and pedestrian districts. (Slide describes these locations on Division.) A crosswalk spacing standard describes the maximum average distance between marked crosswalks; design of the crosswalks are dependent on street context (e.g. number of auto lanes).

Pedestrian hybrid beacon provides a red stop light for people driving and a walk signal for people walking. A flashing beacon cannot be coordinated for timing, and does not provide people with a walk signal, which can result in confusion.

- Question: What about enhancing Division Street in Gresham?
 - Response (PBOT): We've had conversations and Multnomah County is interested in coordinating investments on the High Crash Network.
- Question: How does your work coordinate with TriMet's project?
 - Response (Michelle): We are coordinating, but it certainly adds a significant layer of complexity to the project. 30% plans for TriMet are due on October 4th.
 - Response (PBOT Project Manager): There will be an interim period when this safety project is complete and the transit project is yet to be built where there will be some crossing gaps. Those gaps TriMet will fill in with the transit project.
- Question (Metro): At a regional level, we are discussing a crosswalk spacing standard. We are hearing concerns about mobility for people driving. Are you going to study how the crossing spacing standard impacts people driving? This project would be a good case study for us to use.

- Response (Michelle): We will be collecting data, yes.
- Question: Will the Division project meet these new crosswalk spacing standards?
 - Response (Michelle): That's our goal.
- Comment: If you are in the middle of a City Walkway, it's still about 400 feet to get to a safe crossing, which will still result in a lot of out-of-direction travel for people walking.
- Question: Are there national standards for crosswalk spacing?
 - Response (PBOT): No. We based our guidelines on other PBOT policies, bus stops, and Portland block sizes.

EXERCISE: With the aerial map on your table and measuring stick, evaluate the need for additional crosswalks in the Jade District using the new crosswalk spacing guidelines.

- Group 1: Our group identified crossings every 530 feet, which includes a midblock crossing and two crossings at t-intersections. My personal thought: downtown is very walkable with 200 foot blocks and many crossing opportunities. 530 feet is still far apart. As land uses further develop, and with bus rapid transit coming online, it is potential that crossings will be needed that are more frequent than 530 feet.
- Group 2: We also used the 530-foot standard, but we started looking at the street context. We considered existing bus stops, major destinations, where people driving experience congestion, and access points. We placed crossings at 84th, 89th, 90th. We identified these by looking at land use and existing businesses and the patterns through the area. Also, the pedestrian bridge is very underused, especially as compared to the pedestrian bridge in the Division Midway area, possibly because traffic speeds are calmer in this section. We also looked at bus stops and where people are trying to access them.
- Group 3: We placed crossings at similar locations, including at 84th. We also had a long discussion about the bridge.
- Comment: I would love for the people in the neighborhood to drive this type of decision. Whatever Duncan says, I put faith in him. Duncan knows best!
- Question: What about cost? Could you just use paint at a crosswalk?
 - Response (PBOT): On this road type, studies show that just painting a crosswalk can actually result in more crashes.

Michelle showed Task Force members data on different crash trends. (See handout.)

EXERCISE: What are the themes of crashes that you see in the Midway crash diagram?

- Comment: This diagram only shows reported crashes, so it excludes low-speed crashes that result in property damage only.
- Comment: As you go east from 122nd, speeds increase, impacts and crashes becomes more frequent. Surprised by how many sideswipe and angle crashes.
 - Response: There are lots of driveways and traffic out here.

- Comment (Police): I see people turning left in front of oncoming traffic. In contrast, downtown Burnside, you can't turn left. Left turns are limited.
- Comment: Looks like people turning left onto Division is a big problem.
- Question: What are the tools available for driveway consolidation?
 - Response (PBOT): We aren't pursuing driveway consolidation as part of the capital project, but we are doing access management through planted medians.
 - Response (PBOT): This is an area we would love TREC to research. Other VZ Network cities are also grappling with this. We have not done aggressive access management to consolidate driveways; this is new territory for us.
 - Comment (Metro): Washington County continues to stress access management, and they have a lower crash rate. They employ access management a lot and would be good to touch base with.
 - Comment (PBOT): Our current practice is to wait for redevelopment, and scrutinize each opportunity.
- Question: My question is for Duncan, about your engagement with business owners. In my experience, business owners are often underrepresented on committees, possibly because many people who run businesses are tenants rather than owners. How do you have such a high level of business engagement?
- Duncan: People get involved because of parking and freight delivery. Also, we are based in that community and have existing relationships. We also go door-to-door and make a point of having the timing of events work for business owners and residents alike.
- Duncan: Community members have come to some consensus about this proposed design. Initially, people wanted everything: on-street parking, protected bike lanes, etc. Conversation with PBOT staff has forced us to understand and make tradeoffs.
- Question: How do you manage the U-turns so they don't conflict with people walking and biking in a parallel direction?
 - Response (PBOT): These U-turns are designed for cars and small trucks, not for large trucks. The turning radius will be such that vehicles do not encroach into the pedestrian space.

Public comment

No comments provided

Discussion: Task Force meeting schedule and communications (Clay Veka)

The next Vision Zero Task Force meeting will be held in a different building, Columbia Square, located at 111 SW Columbia St in the 8th floor conference room. The Portland Building is undergoing a 3-year renovation and, at the end of October, our PBOT group will be moving to the Congress Center building for the duration.

For 2018, Clay proposed moving back to quarterly meetings instead of every two months. Shifting the schedule would provide task force members the opportunity to fully engage and PBOT staff the opportunity to develop robust, engaging agendas. She asked for task force member feedback on that proposal.

- Comment: Quarterly is fine. I'm wondering if day and time could be revisited. This meeting time conflicts with OTC and JPACT.
 - Response: Yes, we can definitely revisit the meeting day to address those conflicts.
- Comment: Two things. I have appreciated the level of organization you've brought to the meetings. It's one of the standout features for me. Quarterly is fine. I wonder if there are decisions and timing of decisions that could be delayed if we move to quarterly.
 - Response: We have enough leeway on major decisions to make a quarterly schedule work. Major decision points are generally fairly predictable.

Last question from Clay: We send out bi-weekly updates on Vision Zero. If you are not getting an email from us about every two weeks, you should. Please let me know if you are not getting them. Also please let me know if you have any comments on content, structure, or frequency.

Adjourn