

PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

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Dan Saltzman Commissioner **Leah Treat** Director

PedPDX: Portland's Citywide Pedestrian Plan Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

Tue. January 23, 2018 5:30-7:30 PM

University of Oregon Portland Campus

White Stag Block: 70 NW Couch St

(Smart Park two blocks away at NW Naito + Davis)

Members of the public are always welcome!

Committee Members in Attendance:

Peggy Alter, Eugenia (Jenya) Andreev, David Bouchard, Matthew Cramer, Matthew Denney, Djimet Dogo (guest), Evelyn Ferreira, Shelley Garteiz, Janet Hawkins, Isatou Jallow (guest), Eric Koszyk, David Loftus, Deborah Monzon, Claire Vlach, Gudeta Way-Woya, Alex Youseefian.

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1. Welcome 5:30 PM
 - a. Professor Andrew DeVigal introduces *Reporting Within Communities*
 - b. Introductions of members of the public/ UO students
 - Francesca Patricolo (FP) introduces Professor DeVigal from the University of Oregon who will be leading a group of graduate students from the UO school of journalism on a collaborative story-telling project centered on walking in Portland. Dr. DeVigal stresses the importance of starting with 'community-first' when reporting on individuals' stories.
 - UO graduate students introduce themselves along with community members in attendance.



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2. Walking stories + Commissioner remarks (CAC + invited guests) 5:35-6:30 PM
 - a. Why do you care about walking?
 - b. What do you experience walking where/ how you walk/ as who you are?
 - c. What are your hopes for Portland as a great walking city?
- FP asks the CAC + Commissioner Saltzman to share with the group about why they care about walking, how they experience walking in the city, and to share their hopes for Portland as a walking city. Aynonymized repsonses are paraphrased/summarized below:
 - **Comment:** "I'm here because it's the city I'm from, a city I care about" – wants to make Portland more accessible for pedestrians and a more pedestrian friendly city overall. States that he is happy to be in attendance and share his voice and opinion
 - **Comment:** Shares that she is originally from New York and doesn't own a car. Highlights that walking is good for physical and mental health. Points out that alternatives to walking are not practical or pleasant for everyone. Goals are to enhance livability, environment equality, and address safety concerns for vulnerable users (children – especially the young).
 - **Comment:** "Walking is important because it gives people a choice – more options are better. Makes cities more pleasant in general if they're made better for people who walk."
 - **Comment:** Share that he walks everywhere (to work and other destinations downtown). Notes that sidewalk surfaces really impact accessibility, and would like to see the types and quality of infrastructure we have downtown expanded to other neighborhoods.
 - **Comment:** "Walking is a basic human right." Notes that there is a 'huge difference between downtown and East Portland in terms of walking." She is originally from Russia, where most people didn't own cars. Shares that she grew up walking around (it was the normal way to get around). Joined CAC to address gaps in infrastructure – really interested to see what can happen.
 - **Comment:** I use various methods of transportation – sidewalks, bike, river. Nots that she has witnessed many changes on N Williams, but is not sure if they were in the 'right direction'. Mentions that safety is key to livability. Brings up the need to address issues related to business/sidewalk relations, gives example of café tables on sidewalks.
 - **Comment:** Notes that he just moved back to Portland from Washington DC and joined the CAC because he cares about public policy and making walking more enjoyable and safer – especially for people with children. Notes that

walking is important for environmental and health reasons. Suggests the need for more overhangs so people don't get wet and to address cleanliness and safety (especially on bike trails and off-street paths). Mentions concerns about IV drugs and needles on walking paths - importance that people feel safe to walk.

- **Comment:** Everyday walks and takes transit to work. Passionate about pedestrian safety (mentions drivers not complying with flashers, etc.) – Safety is a major concern – cites lots of pedestrian deaths and injuries on city streets. Shares concerns about youth, those with mobility issues, and older adults. Chair of neighborhood association – lack a built environment that provides for safe sidewalks and walking (in SW Portland). Concerns about equity – how to invest equitably and accessibility. Passionate about making (and funding) plans.
- **Comment:** States that her job is to be the technical support and leverage the stories that the team is sharing. “I have a two-year-old and a four-year-old, and safety is a major concern”. Children can experience cities on their own. Recently moved to Portland and notes the demand for housing in neighborhoods with access to retail and high levels of walkability. As a transportation planner, recognizes and appreciates the fabulous work that Portland has already done. Expand walkability to all of Portland.
- **Comment:** Moved to Portland from Houston, TX. “I couldn't afford to keep my car when I moved here, doing so completely changed my life – an opportunity to learn about Portland and what it means to be a ‘citizen’ of the city. Couldn't imagine going back to my previous life. Improved my health and mood – I have just loved it. Part of my desire to be on this committee is to help people have the experience that I did.”
- **Comment:** Fondest memories of my childhood are walking, we have a public health crisis on our hands. Believes in Portland and our ability to come up with creative ideas and solutions. Wants to expand walkability to other parts of the city.
- **Comment:** Wants to expand walkability to immigrant and refugee communities who walk by necessity rather than by choice.
- **Comment:** Walking is the answer to health issues and environmental issues as well as social isolation/fragmentation. Lived all over Portland in walkable areas – now lives in Mt Tabor (no sidewalks, etc.). Concerns about personal safety while walking – “Safety is a really big issue.”
- **Comment:** “We all walk for different reasons (health, social, etc.) Sometimes walking is not a choice – when this happens, it needs to be safe.” Notes sidewalk gaps, sidewalks on one side of the street and not others. Concerns about the safety of families walking with kids.

- **Comment:** “Sometimes I drive to Oregon City in order to walk (because I feel it’s safe there). When I walk, people stop to talk, smile, chat. I see walking bringing people closer – very important side of walking.” Walks for health reasons to stay in good shape. Notes the issue of sidewalk gaps – most refugees are going to East Portland and they need to be able to walk to grocery (not used to taking public transit, etc.) – How to help people who want to be part of the community, but are scared to walk?
- **Comment:** Shares that wife was hit by a cyclist on Tillikum Crossing. Shares that ignorance and inconsiderate behavior are split across all modes (walk, bike, car). Concerns are centered on the legal/educational picture so that people can great around across all these modes.
- **Comment:** Speaking on behalf of OPAL’s views and some members of the blind community. “I chose downtown because I realized how bad the infrastructure is in many part of the city outside of downtown. A lot of the problems we have due to cars – the dominance of that mode share causes so many problems. I have never been hit by a car but have walked in a lot of dangerous areas. There are a lot of things we can do that don’t cost a lot of money and would make our streets much safer.”
- **Comment:** “I think in being as inclusive as possible, it’s important to thank drivers as well when they stop for you.”
- **Comment (Commissioner Saltzman):** Shares excitement about the creation of the Pedestrian Plan so the city can guide investments and identify priorities. Makes a connection to achieving Vision Zero goals – notes that some motorists are clueless about pedestrians (crossings, etc.). “I live in an area with great sidewalks, I recognize that there are parts of the city that are not. I’m excited that you’ll be bringing this plan to Council.”

3. PedPDX Vision, goals, and objectives

6:30-6:55 PM

- a. Feedback on draft
- b. Feedback on vision alternatives

FP provides a quick recap of previous meeting where the task centered on developing a PedPDX Vision. She reminded the group how the activity was structured (*What should Portland (Do, Have, Be...) to be a great walking city?*) and described the process by which feedback was used by a technical advisory committee to develop a vision to share for feedback by the CAC. The proposed vision statements were each intended to reflect the goals and themes, which emerged from CAC comments and input.

The three proposed vision statements shared were:

- 1) Portland is a great walking city
- 2) No matter who you are or where you live, Portlanders can walk to meet their daily needs
- 3) Portlanders walk because its safe, fun, and convenient for everyone, anywhere.

FP provided a quick overview of each theme (Safe & Secure; Equitable & Inclusive; Comfortable & Inviting; Healthy People and Environment) and how they related to associated goals and objectives.

Question: Which of these vision statements would you change, support, alter, etc.? Our goal is to be innovative.

- **Comment:** It would be great to make the vision statements more aspirational/elevated. Vision statement should orient us to our goal for the future. Stronger language. "Portland is a great walking city" is not that creative, aspirational.
- **Comment:** Language should be more prescriptive (i.e. Portland shall be...).
- **Comment:** Changing the word "is" to "will be" is more of a call to action (*referring to first vision option*). "Will be" gives you hope and outlines a commitment.
- **Comment:** Infuse 'action verbs' into the vision statement to make it clear that we're doing something.
- **Comment:** Vision statement needs to provide a sense of urgency/clarity. For instance, 'what is a walking city?' The vision statement should make it clear what it means – more specific, urgency, proactive.
- **Comment:** In the category of 'comfortable/inviting': Should read: "advance alternative street designs informed by community priorities". Maybe 'cost effectiveness' a secondary priority.
- **Comment:** (*builds off previous comment*) Where you can't put in the 'world class sidewalk' –what you can build to meet the walking needs, etc.
- **Comment:** (*seconds the need for strong language*) We need to be moving on solutions as quickly and urgently as possible.
- **Comment:** Should we include a timeframe so that we know when we need to meet our goal by? Timeline helps us know how long it takes/should take to meet our goal. Concern about future/present tense
- **Response:** There is a '20-year timeline for PedPDX. Vision statements are future tense – makes us reconsider our use of a vision/mission statement.
- **Comment:** Cost effectiveness rubbed me the wrong way, but there is a place for this somewhere.

Taylor Phillips (TP) explains the relationship between the Transportation System Plan, and pedestrian planning projects (241 of 417 transportation system plan projects include some pedestrian element).

- **Question:** Is the funding for these projects related to a specific bond measure, etc.?
- **Response:** the list is not funded, but rather the way the goals of the TSP/Comp Plan are realized.

TP introduces the pedestrian network completion program.

- **Question:** Who updates it [the project list]?
- **Response:** PBOT does, based on the Pedestrian Plan.

- **Question:** Can you speak to the turnaround time for ADA/Curb Ramp requests?
- **Response:** Prioritize when reported by or on behalf of a person with disability.
- **Response:** Program has limited resources, we only approve when submitted by or on behalf of someone with a disability. When we get requests from other individuals, we log them, but reserve funding for ADA mobility/access.

- **Question:** How often do property owners install sidewalks using LID?
- **Response:** A few a year. Mostly on major streets.

- **Comment:** We should think of alternative funding sources for sidewalk repair in neighborhoods that are not so well resourced.

- **Comment:** This system of requiring homeowners to install/maintain sidewalks is almost in direct opposition to what we're trying to do with this plan.
- **Response:** I actually disagree, I think this is a really important tool for us. The piece of city code that requires homeowners to build sidewalks is how we've gotten so much built. As a city agency, it allows us to prioritize public dollars to areas that are less likely to receive public funding.

- **Question:** I know there were parts of the city that did their own improvements without the city being involved. If it's so much cheaper to do it this way, are there ways to do without using city employees? – but with some guidance, perhaps.
- **Response:** We can talk about this, perhaps at a later date.

- **Question:** How is the property owners building their own sidewalks enforced citywide? But that can be a question for another time.

5. Updates

7:20-7:25 PM

- a. Spring community engagement
- b. Next meeting: Wed. Feb. 28 @ UO
 - i. Safety analysis
 - ii. Alternative walking treatments

6. Public comment

7:25-7:30 PM

- **Comment:** The issue of personal safety is something that I keyed in on. There are issues that are beyond the scope of the plan related to systemic outcasts and societal oppression. Whatever PBOT can do to address the caste system is needed. Not ignoring that “sense of safety” also includes the marginalized. I didn’t hear anything about fascism, racism, etc. – but issues were raised around IV drug users, houseless folks invading a bubble.
- **Comment:** Have you considered an educational/outreach campaign to inform property owners about their responsibilities around sidewalk maintenance? It might help expedite the system.

7. Adjourn