

Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting
City Hall, Lovejoy Room
6-8:00pm | October 22nd, 2019

BAC Members Present: Christopher Achterman, Clint Culpepper, Catherine Gould, Sarah Iannarone, Rithy Khut, Iain MacKenzie, Phil Richman, David Stein, Alexandra Zimmerman

BAC Members Absent: Reza Farhoodi, Alexa Jakusovsky

PBOT Staff Present: Roger Geller, Owen Slyman

Other Attendees: Crystal Stonebreaker, Mike Stonebreaker, Jonathan Maus, Cage Byrd

Guest Presenters: Kim Ellis (Metro), Mathew Berkow (PBOT)

I. Metro/ODOT Regional Mobility Policy Update

Kim Ellis, transportation planner at Metro, presented on the updates to Metro and ODOT's Regional Mobility Policy. Currently, Metro and ODOT are developing work and engagement plans, which includes mapping out the relevant issues and objectives and updating how the region defines mobility and measures success. The project recommends amendments to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1F for the Portland area.

Ellis explained that the current mobility policy focuses on the volume-to-capacity ratio at intersections as a measure of Level of Service. If the volume attempting to go through an intersections approaches or exceeds the capacity (resulting in a value of 1.0 or greater than 1.0), then system changes are required to increase the automotive capacity of the intersection/roadway for additional development to occur. This metric has existed since the 1950s, when it was used to set up the interstate system; it is currently used at the system plan level (for example, Metro's Regional Transportation Plan and PBOT's Transportation System Plan) to identify different options. Another part of the mobility policy update involves regulating plan amendments: using transportation thresholds defined in the Oregon Highway Plan for state-owned roads and local codes for city- and county-owned roads.

Currently, the project is seeking feedback on its proposed objectives and approach, as Ellis noted that the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan has failed to meet mobility standards. Ellis added that the disconnect lies between the policy level and its actual implementation, a gap that

the project is working to close through policy recommendations. The policy update aims to support and advance Metro's 2040 Growth Concept.

On the 2-year timeline, the process is currently in the scoping, policy analysis, and best practices research stage. Metro and ODOT will then develop and test policy approaches with case studies in 2020, after which the Metro council will act on recommendations. This encompasses the first step: updating the regional mobility policy; then comes incorporating the policy through an Oregon Highway Plan amendment or update; then those policies are incorporated through Regional Transportation Plan and Functional Plan updates. Finally, those policies will be implemented through Transportation System Plans and other local ordinances, and state and local standards will be updated as well.

Sample measures Metro and ODOT are considering to measure mobility include Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), mode share, throughput of people and goods, trip length, safety, duration of congestion, access to jobs/destinations/options, travel time/reliability, vehicle hours traveled, and system completeness, among others. For evaluation, the agencies are conducting background and best practices research to better understand the lay of the land, which will feed into the development of criteria.

Currently, the agencies are relying on existing committees for feedback as well as hosting technical expert panels and a community leaders forum. Ellis added that the ultimate decision-makers will be the Metro Council and Metro's Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. A summary report of the stakeholder interviews and scoping activities will be available next week on the project website. The website also includes project documents and information as well as an interested parties list sign-up.

Roger Geller commented that existing policy requires the provision of automotive capacity that jurisdictions cannot or do not want to add. As an example, the development located south of the Burnside Bridge at SE MLK & Ankeny triggered development guidelines to put in a new signal; now, PBOT must make sure that new signal will not flood the neighborhood greenway (Ankeny) with auto traffic. Geller asked Ellis if Metro had any sense how the best practices identified in the upcoming 2020 report may differ in urban vs. suburban areas. Ellis responded that each part of the metro region is in a different state of development; recognizing that there are differences in these areas will include best practices research from California, Washington, and Florida. Metro is partnering with Portland State University to analyze differences between urban and suburban contexts, recognizing that they are at different stages with different levels of past investment.

Geller asked what Metro could learn from European best practices. Ellis answered that Portland State is looking at Europe for examples; some may be relevant, but the scale is often different.

A BAC member mentioned that current policy is car-centric and asked how it is impacting the planning process for the Regional Transportation Funding Measure. Ellis answered that the policy update includes the Transportation Funding Measure and could determine how the funded projects get designed. The new policy will be more supportive of advancing designs that meet regional guidelines for reducing vehicle miles traveled.

The member expressed concern that the bond measure would be scoped based around a motor-centric worldview, limiting the efficacy of the Regional Mobility Policy update. Ellis noted that the Regional Transportation Plan is implementing Metro's Climate Smart Strategy, and that projects being considered in the Transportation Funding measure focus on safety, equity, and congestion. Metro sees road projects as connectivity projects that benefit transit, walking, biking and manage congestion rather than building their way out of it, and they will be updating the Regional Transportation Plan with these things.

A BAC member asked whether the mobility update must be adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), which Ellis confirmed must happen for ODOT- and other state-owned facilities.

Another member voiced a concern that the policy update might be tailored toward something that can get through the Oregon Transportation Commission rather than the best policy. Ellis responded that Metro has worked collaboratively on the scoping agreement and formed a partnership with the OTC to build broad support and commit to innovative policy.

A member commented that they would like to see the city looking toward places it aspires to be like rather than places it currently resembles. They noted that they did not see the words "climate change" in the document and would like to see the future costs of climate change and climate-related adaptation included in the plan, with real cost estimates and valuations.

Another BAC member asked how Metro aims to change the revenue stream to fund the projects it wants to complete; they expressed that motorists need to pay a reasonable charge for what they are being provided. The plan should include public education about the real costs of driving a car with the aim of changing behavior. Ellis answered that education will be discussed as part of adjusting the Regional Transportation Plan. The member then asked how much funding is

being provided toward developing regional trails, like the Springwater trail; Ellis said Metro will be looking at them as part of the transportation network.

Roger Geller commented that the policy hopes to get at issues like removing travel lanes when that would otherwise be problematic with Volume to Capacity Ratio standards. Ellis elaborated that the policy would take an example like that and make a holistic adjustment.

A BAC member mentioned that a measure of success to consider might be a comparison of bike-to-work vs. drive-to-work rates. They added that they prefer simple, easily-definable metrics for a large update like this. The member asked whether there was any talk of adding climate change goal to state planning goals, as it might be appropriate to change the rules entirely. Ellis answered that the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) was involved in rulemaking last year, and climate goals were tabled. However, there has been recent direction from Governor Brown to state agencies to do more for climate change, including implementing a statewide climate strategy and bringing climate goals into planning.

Another member asked whether there is some way to tally up outcomes from past years and declare what specific changes the update hopes to make. They added that the top priority should be reducing emissions, and they do not see how other measures will survive as long as Volume to Capacity is included.

A member mentioned that they were not seeing or hearing anything for plans around general micro-mobility, and that there should be conversation about lanes as low-impact travel lanes, not just bike lanes. They expressed interest in looking at all alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles.

Another BAC member asked about the listing of "Rose Quarter" on the project fact sheet as a state initiative the update would support. Ellis responded that the Rose Quarter has been removed from that section in more recent versions.

II. Committee Business

The BAC discussed proposed additions to committee bylaws. A member mentioned that they dislike the requirement that statements made by the BAC must be approved by City staff. Geller mentioned that this clause refers to approaching media and external groups, but that if the BAC did not agree with this rule, they could reach out to other City advisory committees and craft a joint communication about it. A member asked who is adopting the bylaws; Geller answered that City Council will be. Another member asked whether the additions came from PBOT or the Office

of Community & Civic Life; Geller responded that they are partially from PBOT Communications and partially from the Office of Government relations.

Another member mentioned that anything members say in BAC meetings can be recorded and if that mean that members are speaking on behalf of the committee when they make comments during meetings. Geller responded that if a BAC member answers a question on behalf of the Committee, they would need to clarify it with either himself or PBOT Communications, but if a BAC member is speaking as an individual, wholly disconnected from the BAC, it is all right. Geller added that the City is removing a level of independence when it comes to bodies outside of the City, but that these new clauses in contention will not necessarily take effect until the Committee bylaws are changed again, which could take up to a year. The BAC could delay the implementation of the new clauses for the time being.

A BAC member expressed wanting more information on the process of revising bylaws and that they see the proposed additions as an erosion of the role of community oversight. Another member asked what the process would be for creating a work group that would craft a response to the proposed changes; Geller answered that a sub-quorum group is acceptable as long as that group brings back its work to the larger group. A BAC member volunteered to draft a letter to be distributed to the Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Portland Freight Committee.

Another member reminded the group that they wanted to craft a joint letter with the Pedestrian Advisory Committee in response to the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project, and that the bike parking code update will be at City Council on November 13th.

III. Streets 2035

Matt Berkow from PBOT's Development, Permitting, and Transit group presented on the Bureau's Streets 2035 plan, an effort jointly sponsored by PBOT's Planning group focused on space allocation within City right-of-way. Portland's Comprehensive Plan calls for the right-of-way to provide for multiple forms of transportation, street trees, stormwater facilities, and more, meaning the City must make decisions about what gets space as Portland's population grows while its roadways do not. Streets 2035 aims to develop a context-sensitive decisionmaking framework that guides space allocation to better achieve city-wide and individual bureau goals, increase certainty clarity for people wishing to develop adjacent to the right-of-way, and create a consistent starting point for capital projects design.

Berkow explained the project's three phases. The first phase is dedicated to discovering existing conditions, the second phase is to reconcile right-of-way policy and define its zones and functions, and the third phase is to deliver outcomes and final products.

A BAC member commented that equity and justice should be the starting points for creating project goals, which should make the process more community-driven. Another member asked about the role of PBOT Maintenance Operations in the plan, worrying about street trees and their leaves compromising bicyclists and users of mobility devices. Berkow acknowledged the constraints present and emphasized that the project is still in the discovery phase. Another BAC member asked what constraints Berkow was referencing and expressed interest in hearing a policy framework that would give teeth to that conversation. Berkow mentioned that collectors and above have more demands on their street space usage, and that infrastructure must be context-sensitive; East Portland has different needs and requirements than West Portland, as an example given by Berkow.

Another member commented that they hope the City can come to a resolution quickly and that Streets 2035 will give better guidance to Development Review about public works processes, giving the example of NE Multnomah St., where a bikeway will have to be added.

Another member expressed their worry about determinism in policymaking, and that Streets 2035 needs to incorporate values sensitivity and include measures for social equity, air quality, and Vision Zero alongside developer concerns.

A member mentioned they were still operating under the assumption that cars are #1 in this framing. Geller mentioned that the City has been discussing priorities and the potential for compromise when required. Another member mentioned they would like to see typology that includes opportunities for car-free streets included, as now exists by Portland State University. A second member echoed the sentiment, mentioning they struggle with situations where two auto lanes force bikes to share a lane with transit; they would prefer to see more opportunities for car-free or car-light streets.

Another member mentioned the need for a system in the process in which the City acknowledges it is planning for fewer cars than now and increased density and population. A second member noted their observations from a trip to Copenhagen, which looked at its most vulnerable users as a central portion of the planning process; they also noted the practice of putting sensors on Google's mapping vehicles to measure air quality.

Another member asked at what point the Streets 2035 team has looked into state stormwater management requirements, including how bike and transit lanes fit into the process chart and priorities. Berkow mentioned that it's mostly about how the streets reflect city policies.

A BAC member asked why the measure is for 2035 and not 2020, for example; Berkow mentioned that the name is more about what streets should look like in 2035 rather than a concrete time goal.

Geller added that a lot of weight is placed on good design as a "carrot" in the planning process, but we seldom think about the "stick." He mentioned Copenhagen's \$8/gallon gas, 100% vehicle registration fee, and consistent parking removal as three examples, elaborating that the City cannot rely solely upon design to get us where we want to be; the most successful cities are using financial strategies, too.

A member brought up their experience with a visitor from the Dutch Chamber of Commerce years ago, who was astonished at the sight of a free parking garage for public employees. The member emphasized the need for the public to know that they are subsidizing someone else's driving.

Meeting Adjourned.