

City of Portland  
**Pedestrian Advisory Committee**



**January 21st, 2020**  
**6:00 – 8:30 PM**  
**City Hall, Pettygrove Room**

<b>Committee Members:</b>	<b>Alternate Members:</b>
Brian Landoe* Patricia Jewett* Evelyn Ferreira Matthew Hall* Kenzie Woods* Josh Channell Tiel Jackson* Josh Roll* Ashley Schofield* Kevin Glenn* Zoe Klingmann*	

*\* Indicates committee members in attendance // + Indicates committee member excused*

*Staff Present: Michelle Marx, Owen Slyman*

*Special Guests and Speakers: Emma Sagor (PBOT), Michelle Marx (PBOT)*

**6:00-6:10: Public Comment (10 min)**

*No public comment.*

**6:10-6:30: Hot Topics/Project Status and Updates/Announcements/Committee Business (20 min)**

Michelle Marx opened the meeting by providing Vision Zero updates, as the PAC had requested in their previous meeting. Marx mentioned that there have been two fatalities on Portland streets since the start of 2020, one involving an individual crossing the I-84 to I-205 interchange on foot and the other involving a motorcyclist crashing into a vehicle at NE 65<sup>th</sup> & Sandy. Marx mentioned that sometimes, PBOT will not be at liberty to share detailed information regarding Vision Zero incidents.

A PAC member mentioned they believed there to be more deaths in the total Portland Metro area and that the Vision Zero program was not working as it should.

Another member mentioned that Oslo, Norway had its first year with 0 pedestrian and bicycle fatalities.

A member asked what proportion of the Vision Zero budget goes toward engineering solutions as opposed to programs pursuing behavioral change. Marx answered that in spring, Dana Dickman, PBOT Traffic Safety section manager, would be speaking to the PAC and could answer more detailed Vision Zero-related questions.

The PAC received 30 applications for 5 PAC open seats; Marx noted that the applicants recommended by the PAC will ultimately be confirmed by Commissioner Eudaly. New members' first meeting and onboarding will be in March.

A PAC member asked whether the applicants were invited to sit in on a normal PAC meeting; Marx answered that they will be invited to the February 2020 meeting.

Marx mentioned that mentioned that representatives from PBOT Maintenance Operations will present on sidewalks and curb ramps at the February PAC meeting. Representatives from TriMet will present on the SW Corridor Conceptual Design Report. She added that PBOT staff will present on the Freight Master Plan, the Safer Outer Stark project, and Vision Zero's 20 mph speed limit reduction later in the year. The PAC will also receive follow-up presentations on the Outer Division Safety Multi-Modal Project and Metro's Regional Investment Measure. Marx said that she is working with Commissioner Eudaly's scheduler to find a time where the Commissioner would speak to the PAC

A PAC member mentioned that they would like to have someone knowledgeable about traffic modeling come in to discuss how modeling works, the assumptions it makes, and why it produces the outcomes it does. Marx responded that these are questions PBOT has not entirely reconciled, with the large questions being how much vehicular delay the city is willing to live with and at what point delay

leads to unpredictable and/or unsafe behavior from drivers. A PAC member added that traffic modeling should be analyzing mode shares and uses other than a high-auto mode share.

A member mentioned that there will be a Lombard Multimodal Safety Project open house on January 29<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 pm.

A PAC member noted that it would be helpful to have someone speak on how project outcome data points are interpreted. Marx responded that one of her frustrations is that project planning involves making the best possible guess about the future at a fixed point in time, without much opportunity or funding to re-evaluate projects that have been completed.

Marx mentioned that a PAC member's suggestion for a pedestrian- and bike-only lower deck in the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project is being explored by the project team. A member asked whether the project team had considered any of the committee's comments and suggestions on emergency management measures; Marx said she would consult with the team.

The PAC reviewed their draft letter in support of Fixing Our Streets 2. The only change was correcting one typo. The committee voted unanimously to submit the letter to City Council.

#### **6:30-7:25: Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility (55 min)**

*Emma Sagor, PBOT*

Emma Sagor from PBOT presented on the Bureau's Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility project. Sagor is a representative from the American Cities Climate Challenge, an effort to augment and accelerate climate impact at the city level after the federal government exited the Paris Climate Accords that includes projects like Rose Lanes, transportation demand management, and Pricing Options for Equitable Mobility.

Sagor defined pricing as a fee or charge to use a part of the city's transportation system. Many parts, like buses and some on-street parking, are priced already, but others, like major roadways and off-street corporate lots, are neither consistently priced nor priced in relation to their demand. Sagor elaborated that pricing impacts how many people use certain modes of transportation, the times of day when people travel, overall pollution and congestion levels, and the amount of revenue available for other things. She mentioned that along with the Comprehensive Plan and the Central City 2035 plan, a November 2017 City Council resolution instructed the City to look deeper into pricing as a tool to manage its transportation network. Sagor added that PBOT is learning from other cities and convening stakeholders as part of the process.

Sagor noted that Metro's regional congestion pricing study and ODOT's I-5 and I-205 tolling projects show that this is a regional conversation, as congestion is a growing problem across the area and single-occupancy vehicles remain the least efficient way for people to travel. She added that from the City's perspective, congestion impacts economy, health, and climate outcomes, affecting vulnerable communities most significantly. Economic impacts include people and goods routinely stuck in traffic

and increased vehicle wear-and-tear. Health risks include increased air pollution and links between time spent in traffic, depression, and obesity. As roughly 42 percent of greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation, pricing tools also look to mitigate negative climate impacts.

Sagor added that the current system is inequitable, as not all Portlanders have the same transportation options, and the burdens that vulnerable communities face are worsening due to gentrification and displacement. Sagor elaborated that travel times are often higher for those who live in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and transportation is expensive, with many pricing options being regressive. Pollution, health, and safety risks are highest in vulnerable communities as well. Sagor explained that to combat this, PBOT is working to provide options other than driving, considering transportation impacts in housing and land use planning, and investing \$15 billion in the city's transportation system by 2040, but even with these items, congestion is expected to increase.

Sagor mentioned that the solution is not as simple as building more roads as space is limited, infrastructure is expensive, and building more roads induces demand, reinforces existing inequities, and exacerbates the climate crisis. She added that increasing transit service is part of the solution, but even with good transit options, people still make other choices if they are free or perceived to be free, citing a combined carrot and stick approach as most effective in reaching mode split goals.

A member of the public commented that free and frequent transit with better connections will make more people use it.

Sagor continued that pricing strategies are proven to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions, but they cannot be considered alone. Meeting mobility goals will take multiple, connected strategies. She added that people drive for many reasons, as it is often the fastest, most reliable option, especially for communities that have been displaced further from jobs and services, and driving can be essential for transporting kids, elderly Portlanders, and Portlanders with disabilities.

Sagor mentioned that small changes often make large differences, as in 2008, a three percent decline in vehicle miles traveled led to a 30 percent decline in traffic congestion. PBOT's focus is reducing car trips by those with the most other options.

Sagor added that a 25-person task force was formed with the central question of whether Portland can use pricing more intentionally to improve equitable mobility. This task force is charged with making recommendations to City Council. The outputs of ODOT and Metro processes will feed into the City's processes, while the City task force informs how the City is involved in ODOT and Metro processes.

A PAC member asked how the task force will work with Metro's Regional Investment Measure. Sagor responded that she would check in with the group to get a better idea, and that it is one piece of many ongoing conversations.

Another member asked how the City can motivate people willing to wait in their cars as congestion increases to change their behavior. Sagor answered that this illustrates the importance of

price signals, as they force people to weigh their time and money with their various options for transportation.

Another PAC member asked if there was any talk about offering incentives to employers to encourage non-peak travel, work from home, and other workplace efforts to reduce congestion. Sagor responded that she had looked at Seattle, in which companies of a certain size must have a trip reduction coordinator, among other requirements. Sagor said that PBOT is exploring options with the business community.

A member commented that they want to encourage PBOT to strongly advocate for equity goals when working with ODOT. Sagor followed up that PBOT has been aiming to first identify what an equitable mobility system looks like and then see if pricing would move the city closer to that ideal system.

A member asked whether PBOT was planning on conducting any surveying to see what people would be willing to pay for transportation trade-offs. Sagor responded that she has no plans for that right now but is working with OPAL Environmental Justice, who will be convening focus groups.

Another member mentioned they were encouraged to see that pricing changes are being paired with transit improvements and asked if the City had looked at any examples of pairing ability to pay with pricing. Sagor said she had not seen any examples of this but was looking at some tests with rebates and discounts for those who most need them.

A member mentioned that living in Orange County, California, even people with money would choose congestion and more time in their cars over toll roads. They mentioned that the psychology behind pricing tools is a crucial part of their effectiveness.

Another member mentioned that Vancouver, Washington and other outlying communities should be part of the pricing conversation as people are displaced farther outside of central Portland.

A PAC member asked whether the group will be defining equity as part of the process and whether they will be taking political popularity into account. Sagor answered that defining equity is a large part of the first project phase for task force, but this will be a living definition. The task force has not been asked to think specifically about political popularity. Any recommendation this group makes will be brought to City Council.

#### **7:25-8:20: PedPDX Actions Status (55 min)**

*Michelle Marx, PBOT*

Michelle Marx, PBOT Pedestrian Coordinator, provided updates on the actions identified by the PedPDX plan. All actions and their statuses as of January 2020 are available on the [Pedestrian Advisory Committee website](#).

A PAC member mentioned they were hearing some unhappiness about vision clearance on residential streets since it may remove lots of parking along these streets and asked why vision clearance was not being prioritized at high-crash intersections and corridors. Marx answered that current vision clearance requirements actually only apply to the arterial/collector network and to Neighborhood Greenways, which are high-volume residential streets. Vision clearance guidelines otherwise do not apply to residential streets, but PBOT is evaluating the need for vision clearance guidelines at controlled crossings and on local streets.

Another member asked whether vision clearance is a state law. Marx answered that state law requires on-street parking to be 20 feet back from intersections, but a superseding clause allows cities to set alternative requirements. The member asked whether parking is evaluated as a part of traffic incident reports, but Marx answered that it is not a part of incident reports, so it cannot be tracked with much reliability.

Marx noted that PedPDX Action 2.4, providing high-visibility crosswalks at all marked crossings when restriping or providing new crosswalks, has been the first completed action. A member of the public asked about the timeline for Action 3.2, developing a pilot to study prohibiting turn-on-red within Pedestrian Districts and at High Pedestrian Crash Intersections. Marx answered that it feels premature at the moment and that PBOT needs to find cost estimates, but it might be worthwhile to identify a partner for evaluation and analysis. She added that PBOT is looking at the Lloyd District for a pilot study.

A PAC member asked what the benefit to pedestrian detection is, compared to an always-activated signal. Marx answered that detectors are more responsive, and that automatic walks can often be slower than detection or a button. She added that detection allows for intersections to time the lengths of individual walks. Another member asked how detectors distinguish people waiting to cross the street vs. people on the corner for other reasons. Marx responded that PBOT is still testing those systems as part of PedPDX Action 4.1. She added that there is a lot of displeasure and confusion with push-button technology, and automatic, on-demand seems like the best option. Another PAC member asked whether detection cameras would store any data. Marx answered that they wouldn't, recognizing that there are privacy concerns.

Marx went on that PBOT is looking to re-evaluate existing marked crosswalk lighting and hopefully identify Vision Zero funding. A PAC member asked whether PBOT has looked at lighting closer to the street; Marx answered that PBOT has not yet pursued solutions, but that would be a potential solution.

PedPDX Action 7.2 calls for expanding automated enforcement activities; a PAC member asked about the scale of that expansion. Marx responded that the current contract is a fixed-price agreement for speed cameras and their systems.

A member of the public mentioned that Portland Police cannot process all the tickets they could, asking if PBOT had any efforts to help that. Marx responded that she believed the Vision Zero team was working on something related to that effort.

A PAC member asked whether the safety education mentioned was targeted toward drivers or pedestrians; Marx answered that it was directed toward drivers.

Another member asked whether future projects will include physical infrastructure to prevent parking. Marx responded that PBOT is working to update the standard drawings for curb extensions such that they would prevent parking. She added that there have been some thoughts of bike corrals as parking prevention, but these are not always visually permeable enough.

A member asked if there was any information on testing pedestrian counters. Marx answered that PBOT is currently under NDA, but if testing is successful, they will create a contract.

**8:20-8:30: Public Comment** (10 min)

*None.*

***Meeting adjourned.***

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