



City of Vancouver
SE Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP)
Steering Committee Summary
August 23, 2001

Members Present:

Jeff Bissett
Heather Coston
Jim Etzkorn
Chuck Hoover
Doug Green
Kevin Griffiee
Gary Thomsen
Deb Wallace

Project Team Members:

Todd Boulanger, City of Vancouver
Transportation Services (COV)
Matt Ransom, COV
Traci Chumbley, COV
Randy McCourt, DKS Associates
Chris Maciejewski, DKS Associates
Kristy Laing, The JD White Company, Inc.

Opening

Randy McCourt, DKS Associates, said that the Steering Committee will help guide the City and consultants with the SE Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (SE NTMP), resulting in an action list of measures and a programmatic system. He checked in with the group to ensure the emailed files could be opened – all confirmed that they had no problems. Randy asked that comments regarding the July meeting summary should be emailed to Todd Boulanger at the City of Vancouver (todd.boulanger@ci.vancouver.wa.us).

Randy distributed a Neighborhood Traffic Management Inventory Map, which gives a comprehensive inventory of traffic calming devices in SE Vancouver, with the focus on neighborhood / local streets. He asked that the committee email him with information on other traffic calming devices in the SE area. Also included in the handout was a street width pie chart, showing the percentage of streets in various paved width groups.

A Steering Committee member noted that the Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance is still willing to help with surveys of neighborhood streets. Randy responded that three to five neighborhood streets would be surveyed in September or October, including neighbors' perception of the streets. A Steering Committee member requested that these perceptions be matched with the neighbor's relationship/proximity to the street. Randy responded that the intent is to get information from fronting property owners on the street, asking six questions that focus on perception.

Policy Discussion

Randy told the group that he will be using some of the key phrases discussed at the July meeting to create a statement of the purpose and goals of the NTMP project. He referred to the list, on page two of the agenda, of the previously mentioned phrases. Randy clarified that the word compromise on page two is referring to the engineering standards versus the needs of the community.

Suggestions and comments for supplementing the list included:

- Accessibility
- A well-designed street can help facilitate relationships and community
- Barrier Free (don't block neighbors ability to walk a few blocks, don't separate neighborhoods)
- Noise, part of livability (list under 'Desires')
- Facilitate cohesive community
- Overwide Streets are a function vs. design mismatch
- Pedestrian Improvement Funds
- Solutions should be non-threatening
- Solutions should not punish all drivers

A member noted that part of livability is being able to get around quickly. A member added that from a neighborhood street standpoint, he is most concerned with safety issues, and feels that people are threatened by traffic that is moving too quickly. Another member said that there is a need to balance responsible driving with the reality that not all will abide. People will continue to drive, and the City should not get to the point where drivers feel threatened.

The committee discussed the list of neighborhood transportation components that were identified last month as to what they desire in a neighborhood traffic program and how desires associate with a direct measure. For instance, reasonable speed can be measured by miles per hour. The committee discussed the standard for street width, and a member asked for better-defined standards, as some streets in Vancouver seem wide. Matt Ransom, City of Vancouver, said that the committee's input could help to change the standards. Randy said that street widths should be appropriate to their use. A committee member identified Poplar Street (far NE corner of the city limits) as being an example of unfriendly neighborhood street surrounded by tall fences.

Randy noted that multi-modal access may also be difficult to measure. A committee member said that C-TRAN has multi-modal access information in relationship to transit. Another committee member discussed some alternative route planning that was used in the Fisher's Landing area. Neighborhoods were designed so people don't use the same arterials.

Some of the listed desires may be included in the new standards, such as landscaping, schools and parks accessibility, design and sustainability.

A member said the committee needs to have a goal that is solid – for example, "in 20 years, Vancouver is fully accessible." A suggestion was made to put a time frame on the goals. Randy asked if the request of fully accessible (sidewalks and wheelchair accessible) is both on local and arterial streets. The committee member responded that it should be for both, and that without pedestrian accessibility and sidewalks, you do not get a high quality of life.

The group reviewed threats of traffic that were identified at the July meeting. A member requested that street width be added as a threat and that discouraging wide streets should be added to the desires list. He said that in one neighborhood, the association is trying to move the curbs in (i.e. bulbs) to slow traffic. Another member said there is a safety issue when wheelchairs cannot get onto the sidewalk due to curb heights and lack of curb cuts.

A committee member said that there is a catch 22 with reducing truck numbers in neighborhoods. If the city wants more commercial development, it will bring in more trucks and more money. Trucks also bring jobs into the neighborhood, reducing commute trips. The member was uncomfortable with listing trucks as a threat. Randy said that the city needs to ensure that trucks are properly accommodated.

A member said that there needs to be a willingness to spend money on pedestrian improvements rather than roadways.

Randy said that the list would be modified as the process continues. He then had the members mark local street cut-through routes on a map. He said this, and other distributed maps, will evolve as work continues. This information will help the project team prioritize community needs.

Next Steps

The next Steering Committee meeting will focus on the NTM process. Randy said that the committee will receive a draft directive statement with goals that the team is laying out.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.