



**City of Vancouver**  
**SE Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP)**  
**Steering Committee Meeting Summary**  
**October 25, 2001**

**Members Present:**

Sean Brinkley for Jeff Bissett  
Jim Etzkorn  
Andy Furrer for Dennis Walker  
Chuck Hoover  
Nannette Kistler for Mary White  
Tim Shauer  
Gary Thomsen  
Deb Wallace  
Lyn Wilson

**Project Team Members:**

Todd Boulanger, City of Vancouver Transportation Services (COV)  
Traci Chumbley, COV  
Matt Ransom, COV  
John Manix, COV  
Randy McCourt, DKS Associates  
Chris Maciejewski, DKS Associates  
Karen Ciocia, The JD White Company, Inc. (TWC)  
Kyle Brown, TWC  
Tony Depietro, TWC

**Introduction**

Randy McCourt, DKS Associates, welcomed the group to the October steering committee meeting. The main focus of the meeting will be to discuss the DRAFT Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP) process which was detailed in a memorandum distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. The last portion of the meeting will consist of current work such as testing of alternatives, survey work at the neighborhood level, and project sites.

**Response Routes**

A map showing emergency response routes was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. Dennis Walker, City of Vancouver Fire Department, was interviewed to identify emergency response routes. This information will become a part of the NTMP criteria in order to ensure that emergency vehicles respond in a timely fashion. Fire station locations, detailed on the map, also speak to the need for appropriately balancing adequate emergency response (street access & response times) with the traffic-calming needs of the neighborhood.

Future routes will also be considered (i.e., area surrounding Kurt Warner Chevrolet near Mill Plain and I-205). A classic transportation planning problem is retrofitting roads that do not adequately connect. Emergency response representatives are very unhappy with this lack of connectivity and would prefer roads that are more grid-like, allowing enhanced access to the neighborhoods through the establishment of multiple approaches to a fire. In addition, emergency response officials would prefer traffic calming that accommodates emergency access vehicles with minimal delay.

**NTMP Process—Stage 1 Overview and Discussion**

Randy stated that he would like the group to understand the steps involved in the draft process and the criteria established for each step. Randy then provided an overview of the process.

### *1. Problem Identification*

Current programs allow residents to communicate with their local government if they are concerned about a traffic issue. One issue with this is that residents can abuse the system, shopping for approval from multiple staff members, resulting in an overuse of staff time. Neighborhood associations are more likely to present the collective views of a neighborhood rather than that of one individual.

A committee member stated that many areas in southeast Vancouver are not represented by neighborhood associations. Randy stated that neighborhood associations could be used in areas that have representation, while those that do not could utilize the Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance (VNA). There should at least be one place where everyone can go to voice their concerns.

A committee member stated that they were concerned that the VNA's safety committee would veto a neighborhood complaint. Another committee member stated that if the VNA committee is used to field complaints, a specific criteria is needed. It was suggested that complaints could be fielded by the police, transportation department, neighborhood associations, and schools which could then be compared relative to a threshold established relative to police records of complaints and citations. A committee member suggested that school principals collect complaints.

A committee member stated that a process that focuses on smaller, growing issues is needed rather than one that emphasizes larger problems.

### *2. Threshold*

A committee member inquired as to what criteria are used by cities in responding to neighborhood concerns. Randy stated that in some cities, a letter must be signed by the chair of the neighborhood association in order for a project to be considered by the city. There are many issues surrounding neighborhood associations' endorsements of a concern, though the benefits include a decision based on a board's policy. A committee member suggested that criteria could be established to prevent future conflicts between associations and their residents. Another member noted that a focus on the threshold in which the city becomes involved would be beneficial.

Randy stated he is hearing that processes should consist of neighborhood involvement. There should be a city policy that is used to determine whether a complaint requires immediate mitigation. A committee member stated that an established process would be useful in fielding complaints throughout the City.

A committee member suggested that school principals be the primary contact for school zone complaints that could then be communicated to the City. Another committee member suggested a complaint hotline.

Randy stated a minimum amount of analysis should be implemented when a genuine concern is received from a neighborhood association. This would consist of the collection of data such as traffic volumes and speed, or collecting data from police citation databases.

### *3. Stage 1 Action Plan / Analysis*

Randy stated that once the problem has been identified, the issue can then be analyzed by staff to determine whether the complaint is valid.

A committee member suggested the City show residents how to use reader boards and radar as a means of educating the public and lowering costs to the municipality.

A committee member stated that the process should acknowledge future and current growth when considering action.

A committee member stated that neighborhoods can often apply for grants to obtain traffic-calming devices.

Randy summarized that he is hearing that the City should be more calculated in determining whether to install traffic calming. The City should take into consideration the impacts of traffic calming devices on the transportation system.

### **NTMP Process—Stage 2 Overview and Discussion**

#### *4. Prioritization / Funding and 5. Project Development*

Once the thresholds in step 3 have been met, the priority of the specific project would be determined.

At this point in the process, there needs to be a step that allows the neighborhoods to respond to the proposed traffic-calming measure to determine if there is sufficient support for traffic calming.

The problem would be put into the context of the City's overall need. Funding is also critical because the public is often of the opinion that nothing is being done, though the reality is that the funding has yet to be established. The process can often become political if funding issues are not prioritized and communicated to the public.

A committee member suggested that an estimated dollar amount be established for a particular mitigation measure for the public to get a better understanding of the expense of various remedies. Randy stated that if a particular level of detail is achieved without adequate funding, public dissatisfaction with the process often results due to wasted resources of both the neighborhoods and the City. Available funding should guide the process.

John Mannix, City of Vancouver, stated that the public should be aware of a timeline and the solution's reality throughout the process.

A committee member emphasized education programs that communicate the integral nature of funding in these processes. Another committee member stated that this could be useful in the public realizing the amount of funding and process-oriented steps involved in traffic calming. A City-wide education program would communicate that traffic-calming devices are not simply installed as a response to a complaint; rather, they require substantial funding, support, and staff time.

Randy added that cost controls should also be part of the process.

#### *6. Implementation (Construction)*

This step involves developing an implementation schedule, notifying the neighborhood association, and completing construction of the project.

Randy stated a petition process would be helpful in identifying neighborhood support, though those in support of the project might view this as another level of bureaucracy to hinder the process of traffic calming. A committee member emphasized that the petition process can be useful in identifying public support prior to continuing with expensive design analysis. John added that it is often difficult to define an area for petitioning and have support for a project since each resident has a different perspective.

Before circulating a petition, a public involvement program with open houses, etc., should be used to allow residents the opportunity to voice their opinions and bring the neighborhood together to educate the public. A committee member stated that further alternatives can also be borne out of this public process.

A committee member stated that 60% support on a petition should indicate a majority opinion. Another committee member stated that showing the location of proposed speed humps or other traffic calming devices to residents would help their understanding of a project.

A committee member stated that a meeting regarding the preliminary plan should be held before substantial design concepts are drafted. Randy added that at this step, the level of detail is such that speed humps, for example, can be located on a map, though construction details have yet to be drafted.

#### *7. Monitor (Before / After Study)*

A means by which the public can respond to the effectiveness of the project should be in place following construction. Further analysis needs to occur on the traffic calming measures for further refinement of future programs.

#### *8. City Standards / Development Review*

The process also needs to account for areas that have yet to be developed. Otak will be present at a future meeting to discuss this issue from a design standpoint.

### **Conclusion**

Meetings will now consist of more dialogue from committee members rather than project team presentations. It is important that everyone attend the meetings in order to have effective dialogue that represents the various viewpoints.

A sample questionnaire was distributed to the committee. This questionnaire will be sent to the various neighborhoods in the project area to gauge general public perception. The project team will have the results available to the committee by January 2002. Randy stated the project team is beginning to study connectivity options in an area north of Mill Plain and south of SE 18<sup>th</sup> Street at a high level of detail.

The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.