



**City of Vancouver**  
**SE Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP)**  
**Steering Committee Meeting Summary**  
**November 15, 2001**

**Members Present:**

Jeff Bissett  
Jim Etzkorn  
Chuck Hoover  
Dennis Johnson  
Tim Schauer  
Val Stewart for Dennis Walker  
Gary Thomsen

**Project Team Members:**

Todd Boulanger, City of Vancouver Transportation Services (COV)  
Traci Chumbley, COV  
Karyn Criswell, The JD White Company, Inc. (TWC)  
John Manix, COV  
Chris Maciejewski, DKS Associates  
Randy McCourt, DKS Associates

**Introductions / Review**

Randy McCourt, DKS Associates, started the meeting by reminding the group that they left off last time discussing the draft Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (NTMP) process and reviewing the list of potential demonstration projects. Randy shared his appreciation for the feedback received from the committee members so far and encouraged members to continue to review and provide feedback on the draft NTMP.

Randy provided an overview of the November agenda, which included NTMP goals and policies review and input, group discussion on the NTMP process, overview of a jurisdiction comparison matrix, discussion and committee input on the structure and elements of the NTMP, and additional review of potential demonstration projects.

Before going on, Randy asked the committee members if they had any questions about anything that had been covered to date. There were no questions.

**Comparison Matrix Memo Review**

At a previous meeting, committee members had requested information on comparable jurisdictions' NTM plans. Randy reviewed a Jurisdictional Process Comparison Matrix memo dated November 7, 2001. This memo (and its attached matrix) lists NTM plans from Washington and other states. Information on NTM format, problem identification, threshold/warrants, key criteria, prioritization, NTM toolboxes, petition percentage, and funding were compared. The selected comparables demonstrate that Vancouver is using an NTM plan development process that is similar to other jurisdictions.

Jim Etzkorn noticed there was great variability among jurisdictions on the required level of petition signatures. Randy indicated when jurisdictions first started developing NTM plans, the tendency was to require a simple majority of signatures to show sufficient public support. NTMPs developed more recently usually have higher petition standards. This helps to ensure fewer problems downstream.

**Maps / Updates**

Randy stated the maps have been continuously updated at the Steering Committee works throughout the NTMP development process. He encouraged members to keep gathering input. Jim stated he had comments from the Hearthwood and Ellsworth areas that he would provide to Randy. Randy stated there would be new maps reflecting all of the input received to date at the next Steering Committee meeting.

### **NTMP Goals / Policies**

Randy reminded members that they can still submit comments on the draft NTM goals and policies which begin on page 3.2 of the draft Southeast Vancouver NTMP. He reminded members that this is the same information the committee has been working on from the beginning of the process. Randy asked the members whether they are still comfortable with the NTMP goals and policies.

Todd Boulanger inquired whether there should be a special focus on truck routes. For example, should trucks be limited to just Category “A” routes? Randy agreed there should be a focus on truck routes. Jim agreed the neighborhoods are concerned about truck traffic on their streets.

Randy reminded the committee that the NTMP goals and policies will continue to be revisited at every meeting. Members were again encouraged to keep reading and reflecting.

### **NTMP Process Discussion**

Randy initiated a roundtable review of the NTM process. Members were asked to give input on the following:

- Is the level of detail correct?
- Are the right steps included?
- Are they in the right order?

Randy indicated that once the roundtable review was completed, members would be completing an exercise to help the project team in weighting criteria. The criteria are important because they will form the objective basis for prioritizing projects. Members will have a chance to state whether the criteria they previously selected are still appropriate. Randy indicated there will be criteria for each street category (see page 3.7 of draft NTMP for description of categories). The criteria may be different for each category. The criteria may be weighted differently as well.

Randy then reminded the committee where the criteria would be used in the NTMP process by reviewing the process on page 3.12, Figure 3-5.

Dennis Johnson asked, at what point does it go back to the initial complainant? Randy indicated he would like comments on the level and timing of public involvement. The presumption is that there will be a lot of public involvement at the neighborhood association level.

Randy stated the plan is very detailed to ensure that it is implemented as this Steering Committee intends it to be implemented. This could be viewed two ways—bureaucratic or pragmatic. Randy reminded the committee that he needed their comments on the level of detail: Too much? Not enough? Too many petitions? Not enough?

### **Roundtable Comments on Draft Process**

The group proceeded to provide comments on the draft NTMP in a roundtable fashion.

Chuck Hoover indicated that although he hadn't had time to review the NTMP in depth, the number of steps looks good and he fully agrees with the concept. He stated the process will need to ensure that everyone has ample opportunity to consider what is being proposed and to reach agreement on which projects to proceed on, especially with finite resources.

Dennis indicated that he, too, needed more time to review the draft NTMP. He did state the adopted NTM process will need to ensure that problems are well defined so that they can be properly addressed. There should be plenty of up-front discussions to ensure that problems are well defined.

Randy told the committee it is still several meetings away from finalizing the plan and that it still has time to review and provide input. In the next meeting, the focus of the committee will transition from the NTMP *process* to *action planning*. The input that is gathered during the process development phase will have a direct impact on the action planning phase.

Tim Schauer suggested that a timeline be included in the NTMP. Randy responded it might be possible to do timelines based upon “typicals,” such as high priority vs. low priority projects. The community will dictate timeframes, and they will vary by neighborhood. Tim stated that even with the most controversial cases, there is still some timeframe attached to it. Todd Boulanger said the current process is a timeline tied to an annual funding cycle. Randy suggested that selecting a timeframe for the process is really a policy issue. A couple of committee members suggested cases where the process could be shorter than one year. Dennis stated there may be funding for some small projects that could be completed in less than one year. Tim suggested many homeowners’ associations have budgets for such projects. So, private-public funding partnerships could lead to shorter timeframes. Randy agreed that these were excellent suggestions and that the project team could probably create timelines.

Tim inquired as to whether the City would have difficulty funding the collection of speed, volume, and collision data to determine whether further analysis is warranted. Randy indicated cost could become an issue depending on the demand for this service, but likely it won’t be an issue.

Tim asked how this process plugged into permitting processes. He cited a common scenario wherein a neighborhood is already concerned about a traffic issue and uses the permitting process for a new project as an opportunity to find a solution to the pre-existing problem, which may or may not have been exacerbated by the proposed development. Randy responded a two-track process is envisioned: 1) retrofitting solutions to already developed areas, and 2) new development standards to ensure new problems aren’t being created. There will be an entire chapter in the NTMP devoted to standards for new streets. This chapter will be reviewed at the next Steering Committee meeting.

John Manix, City of Vancouver Transportation Services, asked the group whether a Traffic Impact Fee (TIF) for neighborhood traffic impacts could be used. Tim Schauer replied that prior to the last TIF increase, TIFs for neighborhood impacts might have been easier to support. Tim offered that if a developer is contributing to solving an offsite problem (one that isn’t directly caused by his development), which means he is not required to solve it, then he should get TIF credit for this. It was recognized that it may be cheaper and faster for the private sector to construct the improvement and receive TIF credit rather than wait for the City to complete the required contracting process. Tim further suggested that if neighborhood TIFs were implemented, they should be based on the number of buildings or units, not just a flat fee. Randy informed the group that they would be addressing funding issues in greater depth upon completion of the street standards review.

Jim Etzkorn offered suggestions intended to make Figure 3-5 easier to understand. His suggestions included adding the starting point for Phase 2 on Figure 3-5, and adding additional text to Figure 3-5. Jim suggested this would be particularly useful for presentations to the Planning Commission and City Council. Randy offered to make these types of revisions to Figure 3-6, but prefers to keep Figure 3-5 as is.

There was some discussion about when neighborhood associations would get involved in the process. The discussion then turned to how to involve the public in areas without neighborhood associations, which account for 50% of the southeast area. Jim suggested that a process similar to the legal noticing procedure for development permits be used. This involves notifying residents living within a certain radius and providing an opportunity to participate or provide comment. It would then be up to City staff to schedule a meeting to bring people together.

Jim stated the Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance (VNA) Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) would like to be a resource to Vancouver neighborhood associations. The TSC's role could be to assist neighborhood associations in working through the process. He stated they didn't want to be another bureaucratic step or roadblock, but would instead act in a "neighbor-helping-neighbor" effort. This could save on staff wear and tear. Randy asked Traci and John if they supported this idea. They agreed. Randy indicated he thought it was a good idea, and one that has worked in other communities as well.

Gary Thomsen asked for clarification on whether all City neighborhood associations were members of VNA. Jim replied that all Vancouver neighborhood associations are invited to participate in VNA. George then indicated his support for the NTMP process.

Jeff Bissett had no comments.

### **Criteria Weighting**

Randy directed the committee to view Tables 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6 on pages 3.16 and 3.17. These three tables cover the Stage 2 warrant scoring process criteria, points, and basis for scoring for each of the four street categories ("A", "B", "C", and "D"). The data in these tables is based upon previous Steering Committee work on prioritizing the criteria that will be used to prioritize projects for future funding. Randy indicated the next step in the process is to get the Steering Committee's confirmation that these criteria are the correct ones for all four street categories. Input is also needed on how the criteria should be weighted for each street category.

For example, Categories "A" (regional connectors and residential) and "B" (commercial/ industrial access and circulation) have different needs from Category "C" (neighborhood streets that connect to "A" and "B" streets). If "A" and "B" streets were working right, an NTMP would not be needed, but the reality in southeast Vancouver is different. The criteria might be viewed (weighted) differently at the neighborhood level vs. arterial streets.

Jim Etzkorn raised the issue of perhaps including schools on the criteria list. Randy stated the Steering Committee had already completed a prioritization exercise and schools didn't rate high enough to be included on the criteria list for the street categories. Randy referred the committee to Figure 3-10, which reflects how it previously prioritized the criteria. Randy said the committee can still change these criteria, but the committee should do so with the knowledge that it had previously prioritized the criteria list.

Randy reinforced he was looking for feedback on the relative weight of each criteria for each street category. He cited the example of traffic speed to demonstrate that perhaps speeding isn't as big of a concern on a Category "A" street as it is on a Category "D" street, and therefore should be weighted differently depending on the street category.

Randy then referenced a new handout that provided speed and traffic count data for several streets in the southeast area. A committee member clarified that traffic counts were conducted over a 24-hour period and the data reflects this.

Todd Boulanger inquired as to whether bus transfer points are more dangerous for pedestrians than areas where there is just a transit stop? Randy indicated this could influence the weighting (points given) to the transit stop criteria on Category “A” and “B” streets, but not for “C” and “D” streets—because one wouldn’t typically see transfer points on these types of streets.

Randy then gave instructions for a group exercise to provide direction from the Steering Committee to the project team on the relative weight of the criteria for each street category list and for the additional criteria. He explained the additional criteria table, Table 3-10—Prioritization Scoring (page 3.22). In short, additional points would be awarded to potential projects based upon the additional criteria listed in this table: proximity to land use, population density, bus/truck route, share of non-city funding, and low-income area. Committee members were given a supply of colored dots (14 dots/person/category table and 7 dots/person for the additional criteria table (3-10). Members were directed to place dots next to the criteria they believed were the most important and should be weighted the most heavily when it comes to assigning points for the purpose of prioritizing projects.

A committee member asked Randy to explain the connectivity criteria and proposed basis for scoring. Randy explained that people believe that increasing the number of streets in and out of a neighborhood (level of connectivity) will increase the traffic through the neighborhood. The basis for scoring the connectivity criteria means that projects would receive more points and be prioritized higher where there is good connectivity and other problems exist. Under this scenario, options other than increasing connectivity would be explored.

John Manix inquired as to why traffic collisions were de-emphasized in the proposed criteria prioritization tables. Randy indicated that traffic speed and volume are precursors to collisions, citing Talton as a good example. This is a street where 20% of the traffic is going more than 10 m.p.h. over the speed limit. Though there has not been a significant number of collisions, they are likely to occur in the future given what is seen today. Typically, there aren’t many collisions on local streets. Randy also pointed out that many of the “fixes” for the arterial streets are extremely expensive. Therefore, if collisions are weighted strongly on arterials, the City wouldn’t be able to afford to do neighborhood street improvements because all of the funding would be spent on the arterials. In addition, there is an early warrant test, and in areas where there are a high number of collisions, they would go to the front of the line. At this phase, the criteria have a different role. We have passed the point of yes/no and are now determining what gets top priority.

Dennis Johnson stated collision history must be more important. He asked, are we waiting until there is a fatality until we do something?

Randy asked whether people were comfortable with the measures. The group proceeded with the dot exercise. The results are shown below:

Category	Warrant	Points
<b>A</b>		
	Speed	10
	Volume	8
	Connectivity	3
	Sidewalks	13
	Bike Lanes	10
	Transit Stops	5
	Ped or Bike Collisions	11
	Motor Vehicle Collisions	10
<b>B</b>		
	Speed	15
	Volume	10
	Connectivity	4
	Sidewalks	9
	Bike Lanes	9
	Transit Stops	3
	Ped or Bike Collisions	12
	Motor Vehicle Collisions	8
<b>C and D</b>		
	Speed	19
	Volume	8
	Connectivity	3
	Sidewalks	13
	Bike Lanes	2
	School Bus Stops	5
	Ped or Bike Collisions	10
	Motor Vehicle Collisions	6
	Category C Bonus	4
<b>Bonus</b>		
	Proximity to Land Use	12
	Population Density	10
	Bus/Truck Routes	4
	Share of Non-City Funding	7
	Low Income Area	2

### **Demonstration Project Selection / Discussion**

Following the dot exercise, Randy reviewed a map with the potential demonstration projects highlighted. The demonstration project will be a test run of the proposed NTMP. The criteria requirement for the demonstration project is that there has to be a problem (i.e., Talton). Randy then reviewed the list of potential projects, reminding the committee that this topic was introduced at the last meeting and tonight they would review in greater detail. The direction to the committee was to starting thinking about the potential sites for the demonstration project.

The committee was informed that the project team will be visiting these areas with Dan Burden and getting his thoughts. Committee members are invited to participate in this tour and discussion.

Chuck Hoover noted that the demonstration project needs to be one that can be audited for results. It is necessary to be able to measure before and after and compare the results. Randy agreed, affirming this is exactly the reason a demonstration project is being done—to learn before moving to full implementation.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2002, at the Fisher's Landing Transit Center.

The meeting ended at 7:30 p.m.