



Minutes

Meeting: Regular Meeting
Time: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.
Place: Conference Room 243, Tacoma Municipal Building, 2nd Floor
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

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I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Nyland called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

II. Roll Call/Introductions

Commissioners Leighton, Morris, and Anderson were excused.

III. Approval of Minutes (April 21, 2021)

The minutes were moved and approved as presented.

IV. Public Comment on Agenda Topics

No members of the public provided comments.

V. Business Items

- a) Streets Initiative – Low Income/Unfit/Unsafe/Missing Link Sidewalks
Sandra Guffey provided an overview of the current Unfit/Unsafe Program, including the status of the Low Income Program. The Transportation Commission identified \$300k for 2018/202 and \$250k for 2022/2024 from the Streets Initiative Fund (SI) Active Transportation program to assist property owners that have unfit/unsafe sidewalks and are considered low-income. The program is request based. Once a property is identified, the site is inspected and notification is made to the property owner. They can participate in the City's shared cost program, which funded by Real Estate Excise Tax and other SI Funds, or contract the work on their own at full cost.

In 2019, the Low Income program focused on the Eastside, North End, and South End Neighborhood Districts. They received 54 Low Income participation responses. In 2020, they focused on the Central, Eastside, and sites associated with Streets Initiative Package 26 (New Tacoma, South End, and South Tacoma) Neighborhood Districts. They received 30 Low Income participation responses. Currently, \$455,972 remains in the SI Fund for the Low Income Program. The program is expected to receive an additional \$500k through the life of the Proposition. In an effort to spend down the funds with the mission of providing safe and connect pedestrian accommodations, staff proposed using some of the remaining funds on missing link sidewalks and concrete cutting/patching in low income neighborhoods.

Jennifer Kammerzell presented a proposal to fund missing link sidewalks. Locations that meet HUD Low



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Income criteria, prioritized in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Action Plan, and on a transit route would be prioritized. For example, there is a large stretch of missing sidewalks on Roosevelt Ave near Roosevelt Elementary School. It is in a HUD Low Income area, abutting a prioritized SRTS school, on a transit route, and can partner with an existing SI project that may provide for better construction costs. Jennifer also presented a proposal to fund a concrete cutting and patching program. This is a newer technology that would identify lifted/heaved sidewalk and cut the concrete to eliminate the trip hazard. It is a temporary repair that quickly corrects a trip hazard. For locations that cannot be cut, the City would replace those sections. The areas identified would be limited in size depending on funding. Prioritized areas would include low income neighborhoods, high pedestrian areas, and near public facilities.

CM Mason asked why the expenditures for the low income program was so low and why more people aren't participating. Sandra shared that when there was a program for low income assistance, the participation was low then too. It isn't clear why there is not more participation. CM Mason asked if participants pay all or a portion of the sidewalk repair. Sandra explained that there would be no cost to low income participants, which is \$6 per sq ft. The City's Unfit/Unsafe program would pay the remaining costs similar to other folks that participate and do not qualify for low income assistance. CM Mason would like to ensure that if the Commission approves this pilot program, the funding is flexible to always fund low income assistance. CM Stevens asked if the City could extend the requirement for utilities to pay for sidewalk installation as part of construction projects. (Response: This will require extensive discussions with utility partners and the development community. The process would be very similar to the ADA Transition Plan that outlines where and when street work triggers curb ramp improvements. Support to include those requirements in the Tacoma Design Manual took over a year. As the City discusses Vision Zero, Impact Fees, and updates the Transportation Master Plan, this would be the opportunity to strengthen policies and code, and identify possible funding sources.) CM Stevens also asked if the mapping could be made public or accessible. (Response: The missing sidewalks layer for mapping is not public. It can be provided to those that have access to ArcGIS. Public Works is currently working with IT to make various street asset layers public.) CM Gardner agrees with CM Stevens comment. He supports prioritizing accessibility to schools and transit.

CM Alonzo provided a correction on Slide #5 as it relates to the funding totals. He also asked how folks are notified about the program once they are reported on 311. He is interested in helping to promote the partnership. Sandra shared that folks are notified when they are "turned in". The City's shared program funding is limited and is complaint based. It is a voluntary program. There is a large backlog of sites notified of unfit/unsafe that do not meet the low income criteria. Proactively advertising the program may result in an increase of the backlog site that do not meet the criteria. At this time, the City no longer pursues abatement, which often resulted in a lengthy legal process and liens on property. For these reasons, sites may remain on the list for many years until a City or private project occurs in the area, the home owners change their mind, or a trip/fall occurs. Co-Chair Nyland is concerned about the number of locations that are unfit/unsafe and does not want to see the funds diverted to missing link or concrete cutting/patching. If there aren't enough low income sites, then he asked if there is a way to use these funds to help repair other locations. Sue O'Neill shared that the limited funds for the Unfit/Unsafe program is the barrier. Property owners are responsible for \$6 per sq ft, SI funds for low income qualifiers is responsible for \$6 per sq ft and the City's Unfit/Unsafe program pays the remaining cost of approximately \$15 per sq ft. Unfortunately, there aren't enough funds in the Unfit/Unsafe program to meet the needs of those that want to participate and means limiting the number of low income sites that can be partnered with too. Co-Chair Nyland asked if there is a better way to notify folks or identify possible participants. Sandra shared that there may be a way to work off the Pierce County Tax records or the utility assistance programs. She will evaluate those options further. Co-Chair Nyland asked if



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staff considered using these funds on unfit/unsafe locations instead of diverting funds to a new program. Staff had not evaluated that in an effort to keep with assisting low income property owners. CM Alonzo asked how much money would be needed to address all low income requests. Sue explained that it depends on the number of responses. In 2019 there were 54 and in 2020 there were 30. Co-Chair Nyland proposed that staff continue to use the Low Income funds to repair unfit/unsafe sidewalks. He asked staff to return with two proposals in June. One would include utilizing all funds on low income and unfit/unsafe sidewalks, and bolstering how to conduct better outreach and identify eligible sites. The other proposal would be a hybrid of focusing on unfit/unsafe sidewalks and decreasing funds for missing link sidewalks and concrete cutting/patching. The Commission supported the proposal.

b) Impact Fees Update

Kendra Breiland, Fehr & Peers, provided an overview of the updates to the Impact Fee Program. She shared the state law that guides impact fee exemptions for low-income housing. Several cities take advantage of that exemption allowance of 37%-80%, including Puyallup, Tumwater, Lacey, Thurston County, and Pierce County. Kendra also presented an example of what geographical zones could look like, along with the growth patterns for each zone. Downtown and Hilltop included the highest growth rate, which is consistent with zoning. She acknowledged that the rates need some refinement and are based on high level assumptions. She also reviewed the potentially eligible transportation projects and how they overlay with the example subareas. The capital value of projects by subarea indicated that west of I-5 there was over \$160M in capital projects. Northeast Tacoma has very few proposed capacity projects, as well as low expected growth. Based on the proposed projects and growth rates, Kendra shared that the highest fees might be in Tideflats and lowest fees in Downtown and Northeast Tacoma. This would have to be better vetted and refined in the next phase of Impact Fee development. Kendra asked the Commission to provide feedback or insight on how to treat accessory dwelling units (ADUs), geographical zones, and if

Co-Chair Moore asked for clarification on how higher fees in one area might encourage development in an area that have lower fees. Kendra shared that from an economic standpoint that is the case; however, there is a healthy debate on how impact fees truly affect development. The benefits often do outweigh the fee and generally, impact fees have not adversely affected growth. CM Mason asked if the presentation was focused on residential and has concerns that the lower trip growth shown for the Tideflats is inaccurate. Kendra explained that the program would be for residential and commercial, and recognizes that additional review of growth rates is required and not covered in this scope of work.

CM Gardner asked if there are proposed fees for the various zones. Kendra stated that it is too early to determine that. The project list needs additional evaluation and review, and the growth rates need refinement and study. CM Gardner asked if the transit projects include a partnership with transit. Co-Chair Nyland asked if the city has to be done in geographic zones and if it would be the same zones for all fees. Kendra explained that zones are often more defensible and structured based on the needs of the zones. Jennifer asked Commissioners to send additional comments or questions by May 26, 2021.

c) Streets Initiative Active Transportation Funds Update (Jennifer Kammerzell, Public Works)

Jennifer Kammerzell provided an overview of the current Streets Initiative Active Transportation Program funding status. It included the status of active transportation projects such as SRTS grant funded projects, Water Flume Line Trail Phase 3, new signals for pedestrian safety. The City is on track to meet commitments of leveraging Proposition funds for grant match. There was a slight decrease in revenues in 2020; however,



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the outlook is still favourable and projected to meet prior projections. Projects listed in the next two years are more realistic and current requests. Jennifer also provided an overview of the programs related to active transportation, such as curb ramp requests, Vision Zero, Low Income Sidewalks, SRTS Implementation, and partnership projects. Erik Sloan will provide the Commission with the 2019 and 2020 Annual Report.

VI. Other Business/Updates

- a) Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (Justin Leighton/Evette Mason) – CM Mason is no longer on TODAG due to her retirement. CM Stevens will attend as CM Leighton’s alternate.
- b) Bus Rapid Transit Citizens Committee (Richard Gardener/Jane Moore) – CM Gardner shared a safety brochure and that Pierce Transit is working on 60% design.
- c) Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (Jennifer Kammerzell/Jane Moore) – Chair Jennifer Halverson Kuehn shared that the group met on 4/21 and discussed Sound Transit South Tacoma Sounder Access Project Identification, Bike Month, and Capital Projects – S 25th Street Bike Lanes.
- d) Planning Commission Agenda – 5/19 Impact Fees, Home in Tacoma, Tideflats Subarea Plan

VII. Staff Reports

- a) Responses to Commission Inquiries & Staff Comments
Jennifer shared that Carrie Wilhelme will be the new Long-Range Senior Planner that will lead the Vision Zero Plan and TMP Update, as well as the new liaison to the Transportation Commission. She will continue some oversight for the SRTS program, but we will be looking to fill that Associate Planner position soon too. Jennifer also provided an overview of the Climate Action Plan Storymap website that will launch to the public of Friday for feedback. She will forward the link to the Commission when it goes live. She also shared that the feedback from the Sound Transit TDLE community engagement effort has been compiled and is available on their website <https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/news-events/project-updates/planning-access-future-stations>.
- b) Status of Grant Applications & Major Capital Projects
No additional staff comments were provided.
- c) Upcoming Public Meetings & Events
No upcoming meetings or events were noted.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

CM Skaught shared that there is a Transportation Forum on June 4, 2021 at 6:30 led by the League of Women Voters for the 4 counties of PSRC.

Co-Chair Moore attended a webinar titled The Collision Analysis You Want Your City To Do – To Save Lives offered by OregonWalks.org that was very informative and that the 3 main collision causes are speed, lighting, and wide lanes.

CM Gardner shared a picture of the diverter on E 64th Street at A Street. The project will be completed the end of May.

IX. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comments.

X. Adjourn

Co-Chair Nyland adjourned the meeting at 7:33 PM.



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