



## MINUTES

**Meeting:** Regular Meeting  
**Time:** Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.  
**Place:** Virtual, Zoom

Join by computer, click on the following link:

<https://zoom.us/join> or <https://zoom.us/j/98722456000?pwd=OVZwNGp6Qj9FUDdvcW1WMUJpUDRnQT09>

Join by Phone: (253) 215-8782

Meeting ID: 987 2245 6000

Passcode: 969420

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### I. Call to Order

Chair Nyland Called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

### II. Roll Call/Introductions

CM Mason shared that she will be moving out of the city limits and will be resigning from the Commission

### III. Approval of Minutes (October 20, 2021)

The October 20, 2021 minutes were not available and will be reviewed at the December 15, 2021 meeting.

### IV. Public Comment on Agenda Topics

No members of the public provided comments.

### V. Business Items

#### a) Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit Update

Tina Lee, Pierce Transit, provided an overview of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Route 1. It is a 14.2-mile corridor that stretches from Downtown Tacoma to Spanaway. Tina presented the proposed routing, station locations, and connecting transit routes.

Tina focused on the recent project changes that included shifting stations to the curb between S 57th and S 84th Streets. The station shifts results in an estimated \$6.8 million savings. She highlighted the benefits of the corridor improvements, which include new signalized crosswalks, new/upgraded controlled pedestrian crossings, pedestrian refuge areas at median stations, new pedestrian scale lighting, new/upgraded curb ramps, new street trees, and transit travel time savings. Cost savings included in the 60% estimate include switching from median to curb side stations, reduced amenities at stations, design refinements along the corridor, and additional utility savings from design refinement (Power and Water). Tina shared that the project is listed in the 2022 Presidential Budget.

Tina shared that Pierce Transit is working closely with the City of Tacoma to ensure that the project



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stays on schedule. Executive leaders are meeting frequently and dedicated project staff/consultants have been hired. Tina shared that key risks to the project include providing additional analysis of the traffic impact, relocating deep utilities from under the roadway, and potential for delay that adds \$10-12M per year in construction escalation. Staff are reviewing potential risks during construction, including traffic control restrictions. Tina stated that in order to apply for the \$75M Federal Transit Authority grant funding, the project will need to maintain a timeline that results in a 60% design with updated cost estimates be completed in November 2022.

CM Serad asked for the source documents with regards to the alignment of the corridor. He is concerned with the addition of access to the Tacoma Dome Station and Jefferson Avenue alignment. Tina said that she would provide the documents that were utilized to determine the alignment, including ridership and projections. CM Serad expressed concern about the truncated alignment that does not continue down 6th Avenue. Tina will provide additional information; however, the FTA did discourage Pierce Transit from extending the project due to the already long route and staff recognized that right-of-way would be a concern. CM Serad expressed concern about the alignment on Market Street. CM Westergreen asked what type of ridership modeling occurred in 2025. Tina estimated that by 2040 the increase in population would be 40-50%. CM Westergreen asked if there is a plan to provide off-site congregate parking. Tina shared that parking facilities are provided in Parkland, Spanaway, and the terminus. CM Westergreen asked if there is any planning to possibly adapt BRT to a light rail line. Pierce Transit is not planning for that conversion; however, they do work with Sound Transit when discussing future light rail corridors. CM Gardner asked how much of the cost increase is a result of increased construction costs. Granite Construction, general contractor, has advised staff about increasing escalation costs. CM Gardner encouraged Commissioners to review the plan set on the website. CM Serad shared that 6th Avenue should be the next priority for high capacity transit. CM Serad also asked if the project is on budget. Tina shared that the budget is increasing to \$180M due to the preliminary engineering and construction costs. CM Serad asked what other roadway improvements are designing... Tina stated that the roundabout can cost approximately \$1.5-2M per roundabout. WSDOT requires projects of this size to conduct an intersection control evaluation that includes roundabouts. CM Westergreen asked what the public comment has been for the roundabouts. Pierce Transit always includes the roundabout locations in public outreach materials. Additionally, WSDOT provides an update on roundabouts at each community meeting.

b) Vision Zero Action Plan

Carrie Wilhelme, Long Range Planner, presented an update on the Vision Zero Action Plan project. In February 2020, City Council adopted Resolution 40559 to become a Vision Zero Network, reduce speed limits, and develop a plan with an equity lens. Carrie discussed the concept of safe speeds and safe networks. In Washington, 86% of fatalities happen on streets with speed limits on 30 MPH or more. As part of the speed reduction analysis, the City will be prioritize business districts and residential streets. State Law does not require a traffic evaluation for each street in business districts and residential areas; however, the City does need to justify the reduction.



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CM Westergreen is concerned that Seattle's traffic related fatalities have increased and not decreased as a result of the speed limit reduction. Carrie obtained the information from the City of Seattle. CM Westergreen asked how Tacoma's program would differ from other agencies that have not been reached their goals for Vision Zero. The concern is that city funds are not being spent on effective improvements. Carrie shared that reducing speed limits is one component of Vision Zero. CM Mason asked if the business districts also have the highest number of collisions. The concern is that folks will not see the direct correlation between reduced speed limits and prioritizing these locations. Carrie stated that the business districts were chosen because of the allowances by State Law to reduce speed limits, and because of the character of the business districts. CM Westergreen would like to see residential streets that are used to bypass traffic signals as the priority.

Staff has started to conduct community engagement, which includes Police, Fire, and Neighborhood Business Districts. Generally, a reduction in speed limits is supported. CM Reehill asked for examples of automated enforcement. Carrie shared that the only legally allowed automated speed enforcement is in school zones during arrival and dismissal. CM Serad supports Vision Zero and de-emphasizing enforcement. Changing the physiological approach of drivers will be difficult, but important. CM Gardner agreed with the need for neighborhood traffic calming and that speeding is a top concern for many SafeStreets groups. CM Westergreen does not support speed limit reduction as the primary tool for eliminating traffic related crashes, but does support the other elements of Vision Zero. Chair Nyland conveyed that, ideally, the speed limit evaluation would be a result of a Vision Zero Action Plan. He recognizes that through the resolution, City Council is expecting some quick actions through the lowering of speed limits.

Carrie provided a high level overview of the project timeline that includes kicking off community engagement early 2022 and policy/prioritization development in Spring 2022. CM Stevens requested a more detailed project timeline. CM Serad asked if the City would fund implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan. Based on City Council support of Safe Routes to School and the overwhelming need for traffic safety, it is very probable that funding for implementation will be made available. CM Mason expressed concern about the lack of signage, uncontrolled intersections, and that drivers do not always know what the speed limit is. CM Anderson supports Vision Zero and sees the need for safe walking and biking.

c) Infrastructure Projects & Funding

Chair Nyland recommended postponing this agenda item to December due to the meeting time. The Commission supported the proposal.

d) Election Nominations

Chair Nyland provided a brief overview of the role and responsibilities of Chair, Co-Chair, and Vice Chair. The primary duties include facilitating Commission meetings, meeting with city staff once a month to develop meeting agendas and debriefing after meetings, and



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## VI. Other Business/Updates

- a) Transit Oriented Development Advisory Group (Matt Stevens) – CM Stevens confirmed that the November meeting was cancelled. Jennifer shared that the TODAG presentation to City Council was postponed to November 23, 2021.
- b) Bus Rapid Transit Citizens Committee (Richard Gardner) – CM Gardner did not have additional comments.
- c) Bicycle Pedestrian Technical Advisory Group (Jennifer Kammerzell) – Chair Jenn stated that BPTAG received a presentation on Vision Zero and Transportation Master Plan 101. CM Walker will be joining BPTAG in November to discuss Council priorities. CM Reehill and CM Serad volunteered to represent BPTAG.
- d) Planning Commission Agenda - [Planning Commission Agendas and Minutes](#)

## VII. Staff Reports

- a) Responses to Commission Inquiries & Staff Comments – Jennifer encouraged new Commissioners to watch the Open Public Meetings trainings that were provided in the agenda link.
- b) Status of Grant Applications & Major Capital Projects – No updates were provided on grants or capital projects.
- c) Upcoming Public Meetings & Events – Jennifer shared that the next TODAG meeting will be November 23, 2021.

## VIII. Commissioner Comments

CM Westergreen expressed frustration with the lack of focus on neighborhood livability and accommodation of growth with increased pedestrian access and improved transit service/communication. CM Mason urged Commissioners to ensure projects and programs are consistent with the [Transportation Master Plan](#).

CM Serad asked if the Commission has considered commenting on the Home in Tacoma initiative. Chair Nyland explained that the Commission did receive a presentation and provided a letter of recommendation.

CM Stevens thanked CM Mason for her commitment and participation on the Commission.

## IX. Public Comment

No members of the public provided comment.

## X. Adjourn

Chair Nyland adjourned the meeting at 7:43 PM.



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