



City of Tacoma
Transportation Commission

Justin Leighton, Co-Chair
Jane Ann Moore, Co-Chair
Gary Hofmann
Michael Hutchinson
Judi Hyman
Yoshi Kumara
Jacki Skaught
Andrew Strobel
John Thurlow
Kristina Walker

MINUTES

MEETING: Regular Meeting
TIME: Wednesday, May 21, 6:00pm
PLACE: 9th Floor Visibility Center, Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Kristina Walker, Judi Hyman, Andrew Strobel, Gary Hofmann, Yoshi Kumara,
Jane Ann Moore, Justin Leighton, Michael Hutchinson
ABSENT: John Thurlow and Jacki Skaught

1. CALL TO ORDER

Justin Leighton called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

2. ROLL CALL

John Thurlow and Jacki Skaught were absent.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The April 16, 2014 minutes were approved as is.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Transportation Master Plan – Land Use Policy Wrap-Up – Jennifer Kammerzell

Jennifer Kammerzell explained that we will be postponing the land use discussion for a few months so we can accelerate agenda items related to the transit mode. Jennifer stated that she received land use policy feedback from 3 TC members and reminded members to complete their feedback and submit them to her over the next few weeks.

No questions or comments.

b. Transportation Master Plan – Transit Mode – Dan Grayuski and Tim Payne

Josh Diekmann began the agenda item discussion by explaining the reason for discussing the regional transit mode at this time. The City has between now and the end of July 2014 to provide comment/input/feedback to the Sound Transit Long-Range Plan. The comment period will end at the end of July and the City needs to provide regional High Capacity Transit (HCT) improvement project recommendations by that date; therefore, the Transportation Commission (TC) will need to address the transit mode at this time. Local transit service improvements can be discussed at a later date since Pierce Transit is not on the same timeline as Sound Transit.



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Josh also stated that much of the stakeholder and public outreach over the next few months will be focused on transit.

Kristina Walker Question: What is the status of the TMP outreach and how does that track with the TMP schedule? *Dan Grayuski Response:* Dan shared the outreach plan over the next 7 weeks (through July) and stated that, due to the Sound Transit Long Range Plan comment period deadline, a priority of public and stakeholder outreach through July will be transit focused. Dan also commented on the expected outreach activities on-going after July and showed how the outreach corresponds to the project schedule. A request was made from TC members for staff to provide them with the outreach schedule/activities through July. Jennifer said that the detailed schedule would be provided to the TC before the June TC meeting.

Action Item: Provide stakeholder/public outreach schedule of activities through July to the TC prior to the June TC meeting.

Justin Leighton Question: Will the TMP outreach be tied to the city-wide visioning process? *Dan Grayuski Response:* Yes but the TMP will also have its own separate outreach activities. When it makes sense to be part of the visioning process the TMP will participate.

Tim Payne from Nelson Nygaard: Dan introduced Tim as a sub-consultant to Fehr & Peers whose expertise is in transit planning and will focus on the transit mode. Tim began the transit mode discussion by presenting a PowerPoint presentation.

Tim's presentation included the vision for this plan and the role of transit in the TMP, where transit fits into the Green Transportation Hierarchy, existing Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element transit policies, goals to connect centers, the current lack of language about concurrency for modes other than the autos and trucks. Tim asked the TC what is currently missing and what needs to change.

The TC responded by saying the current plan seems multi-modal and has some good policies & goals, but they are not always implemented. Accountability is needed on the implementation side as is filling in the transit service gaps.

Justin Leighton Question: Where is parking on the hierarchy? *Tim Payne Response:* Parking is tricky to place. On one hand it is provided, in part, for single occupancy vehicles, which are at the bottom of the hierarchy but, through pricing, it can also be an effective TDM/TSM tool.

Yoshi Kumara Question: How are the current Transportation Element policies used now? *Tim Payne Response:* Typically they are used for Best Practice guidance and a set of measurements to track progress. They also define the concurrency requirements. *Yoshi Kumara Follow-Up Question:* For other cities that have these policies is it helping them achieve/implement a goal? *Tim Payne Response:* Many cities use the policies to heighten the awareness of the goal and to measure progress towards the goal.

Andrew Strobel commented that the goals need to be married to performance standards and when a project is under review at the City the City should evaluate using those standards.

Justin Leighton stated that what is missing is the goals/policies relationship to the Green Transportation Hierarchy and when/how you should prioritize modes and what the trade-offs will

be. Tim Payne responded that the City does have a Complete Streets Ordinance. Ian Munce commented that the TMP needs to recognize that funding is a constraint. Also, it is not always easy to make these decisions (City wants to implement complete streets but also wants to be pro-development). Tim Payne added that grants have limitations on how the funds can be spent. They are not always flexible and allow for modal prioritization. Justin Leighton offered that it is not just about complete streets. The modal priority decisions are present in small projects such as a bike path by Wright Park which resulted in decisions about parking and accommodating bikes. According to the Green Transportation Hierarchy, bicycles would have the priority. Judi Hyman stated that not all streets can be or should be complete streets.

Tim Payne continued with his presentation. Tim asked the TC to imagine the transit improvements that could be in place at key milestones between now and 2040 and that the TMP we are working on now was adopted and implemented with numerous transit investments. What are they? TC members responded with the following:

- 2015 - the recent cuts in Pierce Transit service have been restored through a policy partnership with the City
- 2020 – Tacoma Link is open to Hilltop and Sound Transit's ST3 program is being implemented. As much as 20% of Downtown Tacoma commuters take transit. Pierce Transit launches its first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line.
- 2030 – Sound Transit LRT connects from Federal Way to Downtown Tacoma and Tacoma riders can finally take light rail to the Sea-Tac airport. Pierce Transit annual ridership is 20 million passengers.
- 2014 – University of Puget Sound and Pacific Lutheran University are connected by light rail. Downtown surface parking lots are converted to public spaces.

Kristina Walker added that Pierce Transit could be operating at 5 minute headways for local bus service and operates some routes as 24 hour service and Jane Ann Moore envisioned that Pierce Transit now serves every community in Pierce County.

Tim Payne continued with his presentation and discussed goal setting and some driving forces. Tim described that as our travel behavior changes; the way we think about funding transit improvements also has to change. The TC responded with a few thoughts about how free parking is a dis-incentive to the transit mode and that transit funding needs to be increased. Less frequent headways also results in decrease in the demand to use transit. Also, the way we develop also has an impact on transit demand. Live, work, and play types of development can result in smaller vehicle ownership rates and increased markets for transit ridership. The TC also commented about current trends and where we are headed. The recent Pierce Transit service cuts resulted in an average daily boarding's decline from 53,000 to 35,000. While average daily boarding's are down, demand is not. The capacity was eliminated resulting in fewer riders. We are heading in the exact opposite direction of where we want to go and the policy direction needs to shift.

Tim Payne and Dan Grayuski offered some additional HCT improvement ideas for consideration. They included:

- Extending the planned Sound Transit light rail from Tacoma Dome station to Downtown Tacoma and to the MLK sub-area.

- Review the corridors not selected as the preferred alignment as part of the Tacoma Link AA for HCT corridor feasibility.
- Corridors that have regional connections and feasibility for HCT service.
- Corridors that have inter-city connections to regional centers (mall area, etc.).

Tim and Dan also discussed that different transit modes (light rail, BRT, streetcar, etc.) have different applications. At this time we can be silent on the specific mode and focus on corridor-level HCT service. Also, right-of-way (ROW) decisions will need to be made to operate HCT within a corridor; however, we are not making any ROW policy assumptions at this time.

Tim and Dan further explained what would represent good candidate HCT corridors using some of the definitions that Sound Transit uses for its planning purposes. Good candidate HCT corridors would connect major employment/commercial districts, transit centers, institutions, civic destinations, activity centers, and transit supportive communities with the ability to operate regionally and principally on exclusive right-of-ways. Given this definition, the following areas were also discussed as good potential HCT connection points:

- North Downtown
- South Downtown
- Tacoma Mall
- Eastside/Casino
- 19th Ave to Tacoma Community College
- University of Puget Sound
- Pacific Lutheran University

The PSRC Transit Supportive Planning Toolkit was also referenced as a guide to help HCT corridor planning.

Kristina Walker Question: What about planning for local transit service? *Dan Grayuski*

Response: Local service will come later. The focus through July will be on regional service so we can adequately inform the Sound Transit Long-Range Plan Update.

Michael Hutchinson commented that it is important to get people to jobs and for transit to serve low income areas. Jane Ann Moore added that it is important to have HCT transit service on the eastside. Andrew Strobel stated that the casino is one of the largest employers and that Salishan needs to be connected.

Justin Leighton requested job density and population density maps for the next TC meeting to help define HCT corridors.

Action Item: *Provide job density and population density maps for the June TC meeting.*

The TC agreed that it is important to develop policies to help define the HCT corridor improvement recommendations with the understanding that destinations and HCT corridor definitions are primarily informing the focus now. Josh Diekmann added that the TC will have the opportunity to define transit policies as we further develop the TMP and transportation element. Ian Munch reminded the TC that the focus now is on transit improvement concepts that will resonate with Sound Transit and the Long-Range Plan Update.

5. Other Business

Jane Ann Moore reported back to the TC on the last BPTAG meeting and the discussion about bicycle and pedestrian improvements and how that groups efforts will inform the TMP. The BPTAG discussion also included how to prioritize the pedestrian improvements (population, safety, destinations, etc.) and that a map will be produced that overlays the pedestrian improvements. Jane said that the plan is to have a joint BPTAG and TC meeting in July or August.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Josh Diekmann discussed the transit specific outreach that will take place through July with the TC, Planning Commission, Sound Transit, and City Council. Topics for the June meeting include presentations by Sound Transit on the SCAP HCT project, a Pierce Transit discussion on its Long-Range Plan process, and further HCT corridor planning.

Judi Hyman and Kristina Walker Question: Will the TC be meeting with the Parking Task Force and will the TC be reviewing Parking Task Force recommendations such as rate adjustments for garages and on-street parking? *Jennifer Kammerzell Response:* Yes, this information will be brought to the TC for review and comment.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm.