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

City of Tacoma
Transportation Commission

MINUTES

MEETING: Transportation Commission Meeting

TIME: Wednesday, January 21, 2015 5:30pm

PLACE: 9th Floor Visibility Center, Tacoma Municipal Building
747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

PRESENT: Justin Leighton, Jane Moore, Andrew Strobel, Kristina Walker, Judi Hyman, Jacki Skaught, John Thurlow, Yoshi Kumara, Mike Hutchinson, Vance Lelli, Gary Hofmann

ABSENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER

Justin Leighton called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Yoshi Kumara arrived at 5:49pm. Jacki Skaught arrived at 6:18pm.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kristina Walker clarified that Downtown: On the Go! should be spelled out. Clarify Mike's attendance, note source of Justin Leighton's concern. Minutes were approved with these changes.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS
A. TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN – FINANCING (RANDY YOUNG)

Randy Young introduced the role of financing in the Washington State Growth Management Act. He next moved to a handout and discussed Tacoma's current funding sources, amounts, and the expected future funding sources and amounts of various types.

The biggest share of funding for the City of Tacoma is currently from Grants and Other Government Agencies, such as gasoline tax that goes to the State and federal government and then comes back to the city through grants. It is very typical for cities to rely on this type of funding as their primary source.

Private money, which is Tacoma's second largest source, comes from Local Improvement Districts (LIDs). These typically fund small projects in an area that is willing to partner with the city to pay for it. Assessments are the primary method of coming up with LID funds. Kent is another city in Washington that has used LIDs heavily including for some larger projects.

The City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Public Works Department at (253) 591-5525 (voice) or TTY-711.

747 Market Street, Room 408 ▌ Tacoma, WA 98402 ▌ (253) 591-5525 ▌ FAX (253) 591-5097 ▌
http://www.cityoftacoma.org/publicworks

Gas tax money that comes directly to Tacoma is primarily for street operations rather than larger projects. Public utilities often partner with the city to fix water, electrical, or other facilities while the city is doing street work. The city also issues some debt for transportation projects, but it is only about 10% of current funding. Real estate excise tax can fund capital improvements for parks, transportation, or other city needs.

Justin Leighton Question: Does the dollar amount we're seeing represent all of these funds?
Randy Young Response: No, it includes other projects and purposes.
Jennifer Kammerzell Comment: We can look up the share of these funds that goes to transportation currently.

Street vacations provide value to the private sector.

Justin Leighton Question: Do street vacations include alleys?
Randy Young Response: Yes, which makes it more important for Tacoma since there are many alleys here.

Future funding from local match and other sources is available to match grants.

The next 6 years of projects total an additional 10-15% compared to current funding levels so we need to figure out how to bridge that gap.

Kristina Walker Question: Going from 25 to 39 million dollars is a big jump but does that include the Tacoma Link extension, which is about $50 million?
Randy Young Response: The number we're looking at is a 6-year annual average so we need to multiply it by 6 to get the total project package.
Jennifer Kammerzell Comment: The Link extension is a partnership with Sound Transit rather than a city project.

Justin Leighton Question: We're already using our Transportation Benefit District authority so why isn't it included on the list?
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: The list we're looking at is for capital projects only, while TBDs only fund operations.

The $67 million list does not include the additional projects and opportunities that the city would like to go after. The second page provides potential additional sources of funding for transportation, some of which have been analyzed by city staff.

Bonds are an option for borrowing to complete projects at an earlier time, similarly to a mortgage or car loan. These are typically for long term purposes and repaid by taxes. The two types of debt include councilmanic and general obligation, or voter-approved, debt. Councilmanic debt is so named because the decision comes from City Council using their authority. These debts must be paid back from existing sources. Fife increased their tax rate on utilities and promised these funds to transportation, for example. There is a ceiling of 1.5% of all the taxable property in the city, minus existing debts. There is approximately $18 million left and we should not borrow this in complete in case of emergencies and to maintain good credit.

Justin Leighton Question: Is the $18 million what's left or the total?
Randy Young Response: It's what's left and the total comes to approximately $50 million.

Judi Hyman Comment: About half of the land downtown isn't taxable.
Randy Young Comment: Yes, this may be something to address in the future.

Voter-approved debt can total 2.5% of taxable property minus the amount borrowed through councilmanic debt. The city must go to the voters and get 60% approval to raise property taxes for this debt.

Business License Fee for Transportation
Renton started this in the 1990s to come up with their local match. The business license law didn't prevent these funds from being used for transportation purposes. The program worked out well and got approved for the future. Redmond did the same shortly after. Renton charges $65 per employee, 2/3 of which goes to transportation. Redmond charges $92 per employee with $56 going to transportation. Tacoma could do this but it must be led by the business community through proving it's worth their while.

Impact Fees
Authorized by GMA in 1990 to finance growth but cities in Washington can't charge the full cost to developers. It's a one-time payment from new development or expanded redevelopment and can cover streets and roads only. Some cities fear these as a disincentive to business but many cities charge these and are successful at drawing businesses because the fees help serve this growth.

Non-Motorized Mitigation Fee
Similar to impact fees, it's a SEPA mitigation fee for new development and supports pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The City of Issaquah just adopted this fee.

Property Tax Levy Lid Lift
We may raise the tax ceiling with voter approval and then increase property taxes. The City of Kirkland recently passed this measure through the voters.

John Thurlow Question: The streets task force previously heard that raising the lid was not an option. Have the property values increased enough since 2009?
Randy Young Response: Most likely, the growth since 2009 provides some room to increase.

Red Light Camera Fines
Adopted in Fife. Never popular but effective.

Street Utility
Used to be a direct charge from the government to businesses and properties. Washington State Supreme Court struck this down. The Association of Washington Cities has been lobbying for a similar method through odometer readings or some other method.

Transportation Benefit District
Currently goes to operations only but originally designed to go to capital projects. Vehicle licensing fees or sales tax of 0.2% are the funding options. Cities go with both methods. The licensing fee is set to $20 maximum directly by the city but voters can approve a higher fee up to $100.

Justin Leighton Comment: Whatcom County did this after their bond measure lost and is now buying back transit service.

Kristina Walker Question: Could you collect the councilmanic $20 and additional voter approved and split it between operations and capital.
Randy Young Response: Yes, cities can come up with their own package.

Vance Lelli Question: Could the business licensing fee be based on something other than employees, such as square footage?
Randy Young Response: This is possible but it can't be directly connected to value or it's a tax.

Kristina Walker Question: What are we doing with this financial information?
Josh Diekmann Response: This feeds into selection of project lists and fiscally constrained vs unconstrained.
Dan Grayuski Response: We'll also have conceptual cost estimates for these project lists. We will have more cost needs than we can pay for so we'll come back to TC to discuss which funding sources are most palatable.

Judi Hyman Question: Do we have to make up for years that have gone by?
Randy Young Response: The 6-year capital facilities plan we looked at was used for ease. The city updates this 6-year list every year but it wasn't immediately available at the time.

Andrew Strobel Question: Will you put out a survey to rank these methods?
Dan Grayuski Response: We'll want that information from you but first we'll want to calculate the potential values of these sources.
Justin Leighton Comment: Some task forces already did research on options on this list. Perhaps we should look to their findings and maybe consult the city's financing staff and previous work.
Josh Diekmann Comment: We can provide further information when we're trying to decide on sources to tap.

Judi Hyman Question: Are you looking for our advice or are we developing the financing plan?
Randy Young Comment: The team is forming a transportation plan, not a financing plan, but we must be consistent with the costs for proposed projects in the Comp Plan project list.
Mike Hutchinson Comment: Perhaps we could write a letter to City Council with a recommendation.
Justin Leighton Question: Of this information, what belongs in the plan?
John Thurlow Comment: We did talk about the TMP being realizable in some sense.
Dan Grayuski Response: We'll include the funding gap and recommended strategies from TC on how to close this gap.
Justin Resnick Response: This information will help us sculpt our financial policy language.

Justin Leighton Question: So when will this come back?
Josh Diekmann: We'll likely deal with this in more depth during the Comp Plan portion where we develop the funded and unfunded project lists for the Transportation Element.

B.   TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN – PERFORMANCE MEASURES (JUSTIN RESNICK)

John Thurlow Question: What about the Redmond method?

Justin Leighton Question: Yes, didn't we agree to use that?
Josh Diekmann Response: These work in tandem.
Dan Grayuski Response: Equity is an example of something key to measure for Tacoma.
Jacki Skaught Question: Could we just add these to the plan?

Justin Leighton Question: Are we looking for gaps or other measures to add?
Justin Resnick Response: Yes, we want to make sure we're tracking all the important topics and measures.

Justin Leighton Comment: We should tease out system completeness further. How many intersections aren't ADA accessible, etc.
Jane Moore Comment: Percent built bothers me.
Josh Diekmann Response: System completeness is slightly different from these measures, it's purely the project list and how much we've built it out. Project selection is an important aspect.

Judi Hyman Comment: It depends who's interpreting this.
Josh Diekmann Question: Should we remove system completeness from the performance measures list and save it for concurrency instead?
Dan Grayuski Response: Yes, we should probably remove it. Redmond includes safety, connectivity, transit ridership, etc.
John Thurlow Comment: The Redmond policy includes connectivity, which captures a lot of what we're talking about. It looks like a lot of work but gets it right. Propose to add connectivity.

Kristina Walker Comment: Consider CTR data in addition to TMA participation.
Yoshi Kumara Question: Should we select one data source?
Justin Resnick Response: We can look to the WSDOT data on CTR for mandatory participation by large employers and TMA participation data to include voluntary participants.

Kristina Walker Comment: Downtown: On the Go! shouldn't be responsible for monitoring but can provide information to the city.

John Thurlow Comment: Keeping percent built by mode makes sense.
Yoshi Kumara Comment: This is what should be included as the system completeness measure.
Jacki Skaught Comment: Modes don't spend dollars – perhaps "per" instead of "by" mode.

Vance Lelli Question: Spent per CD in total or by need?
Andrew Strobel Question: This measure sounds dangerous politically. Does this jive with the system completeness level of service?
John Thurlow Comment: Agrees with Andrew. However, if investment was cut by CD or NC it would give an idea of how much investment is going to each area.
Justin Resnick Response: We could strike the second metric.
Andrew Strobel Comment: Yes, the second metric would create unneeded competition.
Kristina Walker Comment: We should clear that up in our policies if this is our wish.
John Thurlow Comment: We should also cut it by NCs as a method to engage the NCs to set priorities.
Justin Leighton Question: NCs are also drawn to cross CDs purposely. Define need, such as incomplete intersections, non-ADA crosswalks, etc. We should also track what counts as an investment – schools, transit, etc. Is it within curbs, sidewalks, trails, etc?

Judi Hyman Question: Are NCs all up and running?
Justin Leighton and John Thurlow Response: Generally yes.
Yoshi Kumara Question: Should we say "percent of need served in each NC"?
Jane Moore Comment: We need to be consistent with how we use the word sustainability.
Jennifer Kammerzell Question: Should staff define need?
Andrew Strobel Comment: It seems like NC is the way to go and coming up with trackable "needs", such as sidewalks or collisions.

Jacki Skaught Comment: High numbers is the message on collisions.
Justin Leighton Question: Can we expand this a bit? Can we include feelings of safety? Should school beacons exist near all our schools?
Judi Hyman Question: Can we install ped beacons on any street we want without breaking policy?
Josh Diekmann Response: Existing school zones that should have beacons added would be appropriate.
Justin Leighton Comment: It's about measuring progress toward identified feelings of safety improvements.

Kristina Walker Comment: These two physical activity measures are great. Health department also tracks trail access.
Andrew Strobel Question: Should we include street trees?
Justin Leighton Comment: It's measured by neighborhood and it's a canopy measure. Trees are considered a street element.
Andrew Strobel Comment: Is this measurable?
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: Would have to explore further but likely.
Josh Diekmann Response: Existing measurement includes the ROW but not sure how often it will be updated.

Percent of maintenance complaints addressed.
Andrew Strobel Question: Is this data being pulled from the 311 app?
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: Yes, we can compile that info.

Judi Hyman Comment: We should also include sensors and ITS signals.
Kristina Walker Comment: Clarify that pavement markings include bike / ped facilities.

Judi Hyman Question: Parking enterprise fund touches curbs. Can fund access to parking. Capital investments can come from this funding source. Should we look to this?
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: Staff can report back on that.

Josh Diekmann Comment: We have done a good job of developing performance measures for all modes except auto.
Dan Grayuski Follow-Up: Commissioners should consider adding vehicle congestion as a performance measure.
Justin Leighton Response: Agree that we need a performance measure for auto / freight. Staff and consultant team, please develop this measure.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

   A.   **PARKING TASK FORCE**

City will be releasing an RFP for license plate recommendation. The Parking Task Force recommended against booting vehicles but the City moved forward with booting. PTF didn't want to recommend this because the cars are worth less than unbooting them. Will fund smart hand-helds for parking enforcement officers so they can issue warnings.

B. BILLBOARD TASK FORCE

No comments.

C. BPTAG

The group reviewed rail crossings and heard from Justin Resnick on the TC's work.

6. STAFF REPORTS

Jennifer Kammerzell reviewed the remaining schedule out to April 15th for TC to review the TMP. The Comp Plan will extend out to June to allow commissioners to have comments on the process. April 15th will be the final deadline for reviewing the TMP.

Kristina Walker Question: Is there opportunity for public comment?
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: Yes, March 4th is the last time for TC comment before going out to the public. We'll walk through it on the 18th.

Josh Diekmann Comment: The ER/ITS outreach also occurred last Monday. Tonight was Planning Commission as well and PC will provide comments on GNPs and the Vision. This schedule will give the TC opportunities for feedback to the Comp Plan.

Kristina Walker Comment: PC saw a draft document and questioned the incomplete Streetcar policies.
Jennifer Kammerzell Response: This group will see the GNP document back again.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm.