McGillivray Boulevard Safety & Mobility Project
Questions and Answers (Q & As)

What is the final design?
Design Option #1: Curbside Mobility Lane to repurpose a travel lane in each direction on McGillivray Boulevard to provide separated and protected mobility lanes as well as install vertical separators, high visibility mid-block crossing and crosswalks, modular bus platforms, and restripe parking to increase safety benefits.

Why is this project happening now?
McGillivray Boulevard is slated for repaving during the Spring-Summer 2025 paving season. When City Council adopted the Complete Streets Policy in 2017, they directed staff to implement the policy through existing projects and programs including our paving program. This allows us to best use taxpayer funds by identifying and implementing safety improvements in conjunction with paving work that is already scheduled.

What are Complete Streets?
Complete Streets allow people to travel safely and comfortably regardless of age, ability or chosen way to travel. This can look a bit different for every street depending on its role in our transportation network and the context and land uses of surrounding neighborhoods. Community input supplements technical analysis a project team does to inform what a Complete Street design looks like. The City of Vancouver's Complete Streets Policy guides transportation planning, design, and investments.

What are the benefits of Complete Streets?
Complete Streets can help improve the quality of life for all community members. With a complete street, people of all ages and abilities can access the places and services they need regardless of economic status or mode of travel. They can feel comfortable and safe while traveling to schools, parks, or nearby stores. Complete Streets reduce crashes and injuries, promote healthy living, and encourage sustainable development. Examples from across the country show how similar streets are improving safety, public health, and sustainability.
In Boulder, Colorado, the city's complete streets program helped reduce annual CO2 emissions by half a million pounds. In Florida, complete streets helped to save an estimated 3,500 lives over 30 years. In New York City, bus commute times have improved and the number of bus riders has increased by 10 percent. Examples of Complete Streets in Vancouver include McLoughlin Boulevard, SE Tech Center Drive, and Columbia Street.

Why are safety and mobility improvements needed?
McGillivray Boulevard is a neighborhood street with a posted speed of 25 mph, but 90% of drivers on the corridor are speeding. This corridor has a history of collisions between vehicles, private property, and vulnerable roadway users. Since 2017, three people walking or biking were injured on McGillivray Boulevard, and one person was killed. Community members have consistently told us that:

- Vehicles are driving too fast.
- The corridor does not feel safe on bike, on foot, using a mobility device, or driving.
- Intersections with stop signs and multiple lanes are confusing for pedestrians and drivers.

Are you going to reduce the number of travel lanes? How does decreasing lanes slow driver speeds?

Yes, the recommended final design removes a travel lane in each direction. Currently, the roadway design for McGillivray Boulevard encourages vehicle speeds that are not typical or safe for a residential area. Wide roads with multiple lanes enable people to drive aggressively. Street design influences human behavior, and narrower lanes discourage aggressive driving and improve a driver's ability to slow or stop quickly to avoid collisions. Wide-lane roads create the visual impression for drivers that they are moving slower than they are. The benefits of decreasing the number of and width of lanes in each direction include:

- People who drive at the posted speed limit determine the speed of the traffic on the road.
- When a road has two lanes going in each direction, it creates a dangerous situation for people crossing the road. This is because drivers in one lane may stop to let someone cross, but drivers in the other lane may not be able to see the person crossing and may not stop. This is known as the "double threat" and is one of the main dangers of a double-lane road. To prevent this danger, it is against the law for drivers to pass a stopped school bus, as it creates the same threat scenario. Removing one lane in each direction can help eliminate this danger.
- Reducing the number of lanes on a road can reduce the chances of collisions when turning across multiple lanes.

Additional information and links to research on the benefits of Complete Streets design are included at the bottom of this FAQ.

How is this going to address drivers running stop signs and other unsafe behaviors at intersections?

A single-lane approach to a stop sign will prevent drivers from swerving around other drivers who have legally stopped at the stop signs. By redesigning the corridor and intersections we can eliminate the confusion that arises when multiple lanes of traffic approach an intersection from different directions. Reducing the number of lanes at an intersection can have a positive impact on road safety. By doing so, it removes conflict points that can potentially cause accidents and injuries to other drivers. Although it may not eliminate all instances of illegal or aggressive driving, it does reduce the opportunities for the most dangerous driving behaviors.

The project identified several intersections that need upgrades. How is this plan going to address these intersections?

The McGillivray Boulevard Project has identified roadway striping changes and other interim 'quick-build' safety improvements to be implemented in coordination with the Complete Street Program and other planned pavement work. Project components include adding a flashing pedestrian activated beacon at the mid-block crossing at 129th. The plan has identified other upgrades to support traffic flow, including a signal at SE 136th and a roundabout at SE Village Loop. These intersection upgrades constitute capital projects that will need to be implemented outside the paving program and will be included in the Transportation Improvement Program and Capital Facilities Plan for future funding and implementation.

Why don't we do enforcement instead?

Traffic enforcement is an important way to keep people safe, and the amount of enforcement on any given roadway depends on the capacity and workload of the Vancouver Police Department. Due to limited resources, consistent enforcement activity on any single roadway segment is impractical as a stand-alone strategy for increasing safety. Without design improvements, streets such as McGillivray will continue to create unsafe and uncomfortable conditions for all travelers. Complete Streets projects and safe transportation systems include the three major components of design, education, and enforcement – a recognition that a focus on all three elements generate the best compliance. Community members can help keep their streets safe by reporting unsafe driving or unsafe conditions using the Traffic Concern form on the City's website.

What happens after the project is completed?

The City monitors each Complete Street project for a full year after installation to see how the design performs. Community feedback, along with speed, travel and collision data, are reported to the Transportation and Mobility Commission. City staff may also recommend design tweaks to improve performance including future investment in recommended capital projects.

What will happen if the street design does not perform as intended?

The City continuously monitors the performance of the transportation system. After the one-year evaluation period is complete for the McGillivray Boulevard Project, performance and safety data will continue to be monitored as it is for our entire street system. If through the post-construction evaluation or future monitoring we find that the street design does not meet City mobility standards or increases safety issues, we will revisit the design. Complete Streets improvements mainly involve striping on the roadway, which can be changed in the short term if there are serious safety issues. Roadway resurfacing also occurs on a 7-to-10-year cycle- if in the longer term the roadway is not performing as expected, the striping can be changed the next time the roadway is resurfaced.

How was the design option informed by community input?

What we heard:	**What is included in the design options:**
Some people walk and use small mobility devices in the parking and travel lanes where sidewalks are missing.	Dedicated space on the road will be provided for those who walk and roll along McGillivray Boulevard. While the Project does not include construction of new sidewalks, the designation of a protected pedestrian walkway on the roadway is a first step toward a safer street for pedestrians. The City will also look for additional funding in future years to help pay for new sidewalks in areas that don't currently have them.
Current bike and small mobility lanes are too narrow.	The design includes what is called a "buffered" bike and small mobility lane, which protects people in the mobility lane from opening car doors. These lanes also provide distance between moving vehicles and people using bikes, skateboards, scooters, or other mobility devices.

What we heard:	What is included in the design options:
	The buffer area gives delivery drivers, mail carriers and others room to load and unload their vehicles in the parking lane.
The corridor does not feel safe on bike, on foot, using a mobility device, or driving.	The design moves vulnerable road users, such as cyclists and pedestrians, further away from moving vehicles. This will reduce the chance of crashes or injuries. The roadway reconfiguration design will also remove 'double-threat' scenarios for people crossing the road on foot, bike, small mobility device or in a car where one vehicle stops for the person crossing and the vehicle in the second lane does not.
Intersections with stop signs and multiple lanes are confusing for pedestrians and drivers.	Right-size the number of vehicle travel lanes to make intersections safer and less confusing for all users, and enable more efficient movement through the intersection. Reducing the street from four to two travel lanes is appropriate given current and expected low vehicle volumes on the street.
People are driving too fast.	Narrow vehicle travel lanes to slow vehicle speeds. Encourage education through signage and mailers. Work with the Vancouver Police Department to explore additional enforcement options.

What traffic impacts could we expect from the lane reconfiguration?

Based on the analysis of anticipated future traffic conditions, it has been determined that in the short-term, medium-term, and long-term, a lane can be repurposed in each direction without causing any significant increase in delay or travel time between SE Chkalov Drive and SE 164th Avenue by more than 3 minutes. The City will continuously monitor and assess the benefits and impacts of the lane reconfiguration. Furthermore, the 20-year traffic projections are below the capacity of a single travel lane in each direction. If required in the future, the City can undertake projects to address any problems that may emerge in the long term.

What traffic impacts should we expect from construction?

Information about traffic impacts during construction are shared and available prior to all planned pavement work. The City of Vancouver is committed to keeping impacted community members informed and minimizing traffic impacts as much as possible during construction. For all paving and construction projects, our Public Works team puts together interim access plans that allow ongoing service delivery and emergency access. People in the area will receive notification before construction begins.

How is this project being funded?

Pavement improvements and road striping on McGillivray Boulevard will be funded through local tax dollars. Other subsequent project elements, such as crosswalks or vertical separators in the mobility lanes may be funded through a mix of local, state, and federal funds.

Will the project impact emergency services?

No. The project team is working with Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Fire Department to make sure that any changes to the street will not negatively impact response times or access to homes and businesses. Emergency vehicles and cars will navigate the roadway as they do today and can use the parking lane to stop and respond to emergencies on the street as they do today. Cars who need to pull aside for emergency vehicles can also use the parking lane and buffer.

Will this impact access to my driveway or mailbox?

No. Any elements added to the roadway will not change existing mailbox and driveway access for residents. The design will help improve sightlines for drivers, pedestrians and people using small mobility devices. Service providers, such as delivery drivers, mail carriers and garbage truck operators can use the parking lane to stop temporarily and unload or load as they do today.

Are you removing Street Parking?

In some areas of the corridor street parking will be removed or consolidated to daylight intersections and driveways. On-street parking usage is low along McGillivray Boulevard except for the stretch between SE Talton and SE 136th Avenues, where the most parking will be preserved. To enhance visibility at intersections and driveways and to promote the separation of vehicle and mobility lane users along the corridor, consolidation of parking will occur in certain areas.

What does this project do to address safety concerns for accessing schools along McGillivray Boulevard?

When we talked to schools communities, including students and parents, we heard concerns about students walking and biking to school. We heard that this is a desirable area to live because there are three schools within walking distance, but parents don't feel comfortable allowing their students to walk or bike to school because of concerns about driver speeding, poor behavior, and yielding to students when they cross the street. The design specifically addresses these behaviors and concerns.

Are you removing street trees?

No. Trees are not planned to be removed as part of this project. Trees that are blocking the sidewalk, signage or are vulnerable to damage by tall vehicles may be trimmed by the Urban Forestry team for safety of the tree and road users, as is typical before pavement work.

What about future growth in the area?

The project team calculated expected growth on corridors throughout Vancouver using Southwest Regional Transportation Commission's (RTC) Regional Travel Demand Model. Growth forecasts from SW RTC's model show very little expected growth on McGillivray Boulevard over the next 20 years. Because the land surrounding McGillivray Boulevard is built out, it is unlikely that new development of a scale that would generate significant new trips and have traffic impacts will occur.

What outcomes can I expect from this project?

- Improved surface and condition of the roadway.
- Safer, less stressful facilities for bike and small mobility users.
- Separated, safer and less stressful pedestrian facilities where sidewalks are missing.
- Repainting and improvement of existing crossings and a new marked crossing. This could include pedestrian-activated flashing beacons and high-visibility striped crosswalks.
- Completion of the 2021 Neighborhood Traffic Calming Project between Laver and Park Streets, with an enhanced pedestrian crossing and upgraded striping.
- ADA-compliant curb ramps along the entire corridor.

Additional Information on Complete Streets Design and Outcomes

Sources:

FHWA - Roadway Configuration Safety Benefits

- Reduced right-angle crashes as side street motorists cross three versus four travel lanes.
- Fewer lanes for pedestrians to cross.
- Opportunity to install pedestrian refuge islands, bicycle lanes, on-street parking, or transit stops.
- Traffic calming and more consistent speeds.
- A more community-focused, Complete Streets environment that better accommodates the needs of all road users.

FHWA Speed Management Street Design

- Lane narrowing using pavement marking techniques reduces the width of the travel lanes. It frees up space for traffic calming measures such as chicanes. It also makes drivers more aware of their surroundings and gives drivers more time to react to pedestrians at intersections and crosswalks.

WSDOT Design Manual

- Land width consideration for low-speed roads, 11ft lanes are common, with 10 ft lane width in areas with low truck and bus volume and pedestrian oriented sections, 10ft lanes can be beneficial in minimizing crossing distance.

NACTO Lane Width

- Narrower streets help promote slower driving speeds which, in turn, reduce the severity of crashes. Narrower streets have other benefits as well, including reduced crossing distances, shorter signal cycles, less stormwater, and less construction material to build.
- “As the width of the lane increases, the speed of the roadway increases”.
- Recommended:
- Lanes greater than 11 feet should not be used as they may cause unintended speeding and assume valuable right of way at the expense of other modes.
- Wider travel lanes also increase exposure and crossing distance for pedestrians at intersections and midblock crossings.
- Use striping to channelize traffic and demarcate the road for vulnerable users.

NACTO Design Speed

- Design streets using target speed, a safe speed at which drivers should drive, rather than existing operating speed or statutory limit.
- Align the design speed with target speed by implementing traffic calming measures, including narrower lane widths.