



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 31, 2024

TO: Chair Ramos and Transportation and Mobility Commission members

FROM: Maggie Derk, Senior Transportation Planner, and Laurel Priest Associate Transportation Planner, Community Development Department

RE: **Upper Main Street Revised Design Concepts and Phase 2 Engagement Updates**

CC: Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development Department; Kate Drennan, Transportation Planning Manager, Community Development Department; Ryan Lopossa, Streets and Transportation Manager, Public Works Department

Meeting Purpose

At the June 4th Transportation and Mobility Commission (TMC) meeting, the Upper Main Street project team will present findings from the second phase of engagement, and request feedback on refined design concepts for the corridor. This presentation is the fifth with the TMC on this project; the previous presentations were in August and October of 2023, and March and April 2024.

Introduction

The Upper Main Street Safety and Mobility Project is exploring how to improve safety and mobility on Main Street between E Fourth Plain Boulevard and the northern city limits (just S of NE Minnehaha / 63rd Street). This project is being completed in coordination with planned pavement preservation work scheduled for 2025, and the [C-TRAN Highway 99 Bus Rapid Transit Project](#).

The goals of this project are to:

- Improve pedestrian safety by adding/upgrading crossings and filling sidewalk gaps that improve connections to transit.
- Improve bike and small mobility connectivity by addressing network gaps and connecting to regional trails.
- Explore transit speed and reliability treatments and improve transit stop access in anticipation for C-TRAN's Highway 99 BRT project.

Phase 2 Engagement Summary

The project team completed the second round of public engagement at the end of April 2024. A community survey—available in English and Spanish from March 27 through April 17, 2024—was used to gather public feedback on the draft design concepts and received **192 responses**. Additionally, the project team hosted **a joint in-person open house event** with the St. Johns-St. James Safety and Mobility Project on April 17, 2024 at Discovery Middle School. The project team promoted the survey and open house event and gathered additional input through:

- **Direct emails to 48 stakeholders** through which the project team shared the flyer, survey link, and an event invite to the community open house.
- **Two email updates** to the opt-in project listserv on March 27th and April 10th with 272 total successful deliveries.
- An updated **BeHeard page**, which received 740 total visits during Phase 2.
- **A business canvassing effort** along the corridor, during which the team dropped off bilingual project flyers (English and Spanish) at 28 local businesses and community destinations.
- **A canvassing effort targeted at multifamily residences** along the corridor, during which the team dropped off bilingual project flyers (English and Spanish) at four multifamily properties.
- **Digital distribution of a bilingual flyer through the Vancouver School District's PeachJar system.** This flyer was sent to Franklin Elementary, Discovery Middle, Hough Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, and Vancouver School of Arts and Academics families, generating over 1,639 impressions and 80 views.
- A short description in the **Vancouver Connects monthly newsletter** with 4,391 successful opens on April 9, 2024.
- A message in the **Office of Neighborhood's Weekly email newsletter** that reached 1,024 subscribers on April 5, 2024.
- An update in **City Currents, an internal email for City of Vancouver Staff**, on April 10, 2024, that had 888 successful opens.
- **Six posts to the City's social media channels** promoting the project survey, which garnered 17,340 impressions and 149 clicks.

- **Seven posts to the City’s social media channels** highlighting the Community Open House joint event with St Johns – St Janes Safety and Mobility Project that garnered 20,104 impressions and 15 clicks.
- **An email/text notification to C-TRAN’s Route 31 and Route 71** subscribers that reached approximately 1,200 recipients.
- **Five posts to the C-TRAN’s social media channels** promoting the project survey and Community Open House event.

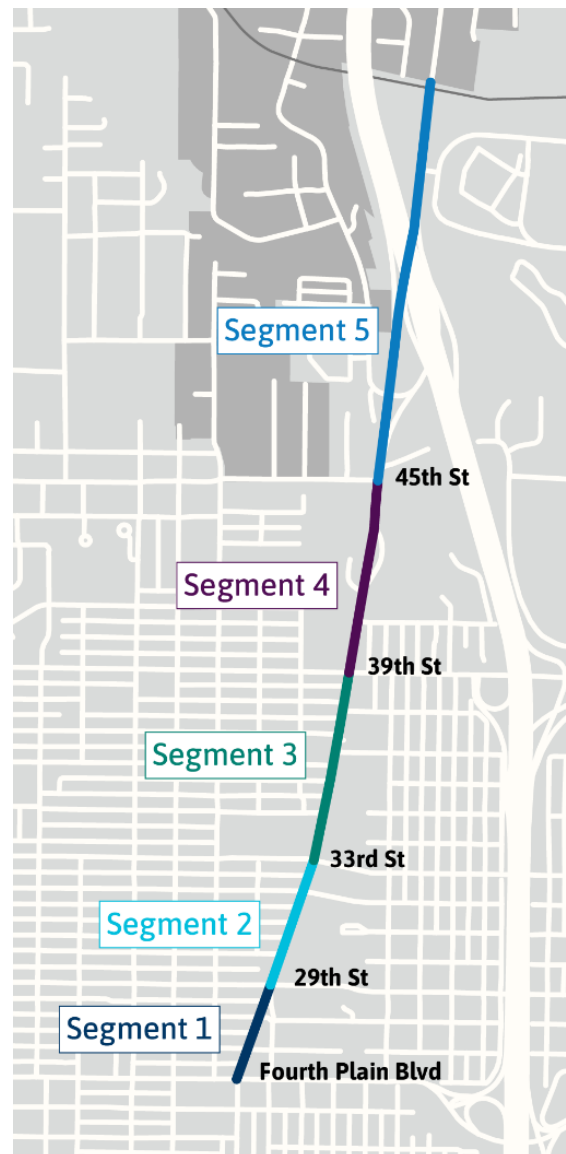
Overall, there was general support for investing in safety to improve access to area schools, local businesses, and transit stops along Upper Main Street but some people expressed concern about the proposed design concepts causing congestion for vehicles on the corridor. Specific feedback about the proposed recommendations are summarized in the following sections.

Design Concepts

The roadway width, street design, and adjacent land uses vary along Upper Main Street. The Project team broke the project area into five segments to understand what treatments would be appropriate corridor-wide, and what would need to be tailored to match the context of the roadway. These five segments are:

- Segment 1: Fourth Plain Boulevard to 29th Street
- Segment 2: 29th Street to 33rd Street
- Segment 3: 33rd Street to 39th Street
- Segment 4: 39th Street to 45th Street
- Segment 5: 45th Street to City Limits (just south of NE 63rd Street/Minnehaha Street)

The preliminary design concepts presented to the TMC in April 2024 have been updated in response to community input, feedback from the TMC, and additional technical analysis. The following sections summarize the input received and the updated design concepts. To view the original proposals, see the TMC April Memo (attached).



Corridor-wide Recommendations

Crossings

New marked crossings along Main Street will fill existing large gaps between crossings and can create a more pedestrian friendly environment. During the second round of engagement, community members were asked which of the following proposed locations they supported adding a new marked crossing on Main Street:

- 80% of respondents support a new crossing on the north side of the 31st Street intersection (across from Vancouver School of Arts & Academics).
- 71% of respondents support a new crossing on the south side of the 28th Street intersection (just north of Dairy Queen).
- 57% of respondents support a new crossing on the south side of the 35th Street intersection (just north of PeaceHealth Medical Center).
- 55% of respondents support a new crossing on the south side of the 37th Street intersection (just south of Safeway).
- 7% of respondents do not support a new crossing at any of the above locations.

Median Islands

Median islands can help slow down traffic by narrowing the roadway and improve pedestrian safety and comfort at crossings by allowing people to cross one direction of traffic at a time. Additionally, they may limit left turn vehicle movements, reducing turning conflicts. During the second round of engagement, community members were asked which of the following proposed locations they supported adding a median island on Main Street:

- 55% of respondents support a median island at the proposed 31st Street crossing.
- 53% of respondents support a median island at the proposed 28th Street crossing.
- 51% of respondents support a median island at the proposed 37th Street crossing.
- 45% of respondents support a median island at the proposed 35th Street crossing.
- 22% of respondents do not support adding a median island at any of the above locations.

Segment 1: Fourth Plain Boulevard to 29th Street

To improve pedestrian safety and comfort along Segment 1, the Project team proposed moving the existing crossing on the north side of the 29th Street intersection to the south side, removing the northbound dedicated left turn lane and adding a median island. 60% of survey respondents either support or strongly support this proposal. Some community members suggested having a crossing on both the north side and south side of the intersection. The Project team refined this proposal to:

- Keep the marked crossing and rapid flashing beacon on the north side of the intersection.
- Add a new marked crossing on the south side of the intersection.
- Replace the northbound and southbound left turn lanes with a median island that includes cut throughs for pedestrians and bike and small mobility users.
- Convert access to 29th Street as right-in and right-out.



Segments 2: 29th Street to 33rd Street & Segment 3: 33rd Street to 39th Street

For Segments 2 and 3, the Project team proposed removing one northbound (toward I-5) through lane and maintaining the dedicated left turn lanes at some intersections. Support for this proposal was mixed with 45% of survey respondents either supporting or strongly supporting this proposal and 34% of respondents opposing or strongly opposing the proposed design. Some community members want to see more investments for pedestrians and bike and small mobility users along these segments of Main Street, such as wider sidewalks or mobility lanes, but some survey respondents do not want vehicle travel lanes to be removed.

The Project team explored whether adding continuous mobility lanes along these segments of Main Street is possible, but there is not enough space in the roadway for this without removing a southbound turn lane or the dedicated left turn pockets at the 33rd and 39th Street intersections. The Project team refined this proposal to:

- Remove one northbound (toward I-5) through lane and replace it with median islands at marked crossings, a left turn lane or painted median.
- Add new marked crossings with median islands at 31st, 35th and 37th Streets.
- Narrow the existing travel lanes to 11 feet.
- Widen sidewalks in the future to reflect status as primary pedestrian corridor.



Segment 4: 39th Street to 45th Street

For Segment 4, the Project team proposed removing one northbound (toward I-5) through lane, widening the other travel lanes to accommodate buses and large trucks and adding a physically separated two-way multi-use path between 40th Street and the Discovery Trail. 61% of survey respondents either support or strongly support this proposal while 27% of survey respondents oppose or strongly oppose the proposed design. Community feedback from the survey, the April 2024 TMC workshop and the open house event on April 17th encouraged the Project team to look at alternative designs to connect bikes and small mobility users to the 39th Street bike lanes using a more direct route.

The Project team explored whether extending the multi-use path or adding mobility lanes on Main Street between 39th and 40th Streets is possible, but there is not enough space in the roadway for this without removing a southbound through lane or the dedicated left turn pockets at the 39th Street intersections. Based on traffic modeling and analysis, these options would result in C-TRAN's new bus rapid transit service getting stuck in traffic congestion. Within the proposed cross section, there is potential feasibility for adding one narrow mobility lane between 39th and 40th with impacts to the intersection and signals that the Project Team is still exploring. The Project team developed two refined proposals:

Option A includes:

- Remove one northbound travel lane (toward I-5).
- Widen the other travel lanes to accommodate buses and large trucks.
- Add a protected two-way multi-use path from 40th Street to the Discovery Trail.
- Add buffered mobility lanes along 40th Street between Main Street and F Street.
- Add a new marked crossing at the 40th and F Street intersection.
- Add curb extensions at the F and 39th Street intersection to deter cut-through traffic and support the future Neighborhood Greenway along F Street.
- Nearby parallel routes (protected mobility lanes on Columbia Street and the future Neighborhood Greenway on F Street) can be used to access destinations south of 40th Street.
- Add median islands, rapid flashing beacons, and marked crossings at 39th and F Street.
- Add wayfinding signage to help people navigate multi-use path connections.

Updated Proposal for Segment 4: Option A



Option B includes all the elements of Option A as well as a southbound mobility lane on the west side of Main Street between 39th and 40th Streets. This would require an exception for the southbound left turn lane at 39th Street to be nine feet wide instead of a more standard 10-foot width.

Updated Proposal for Segment 4: Option B



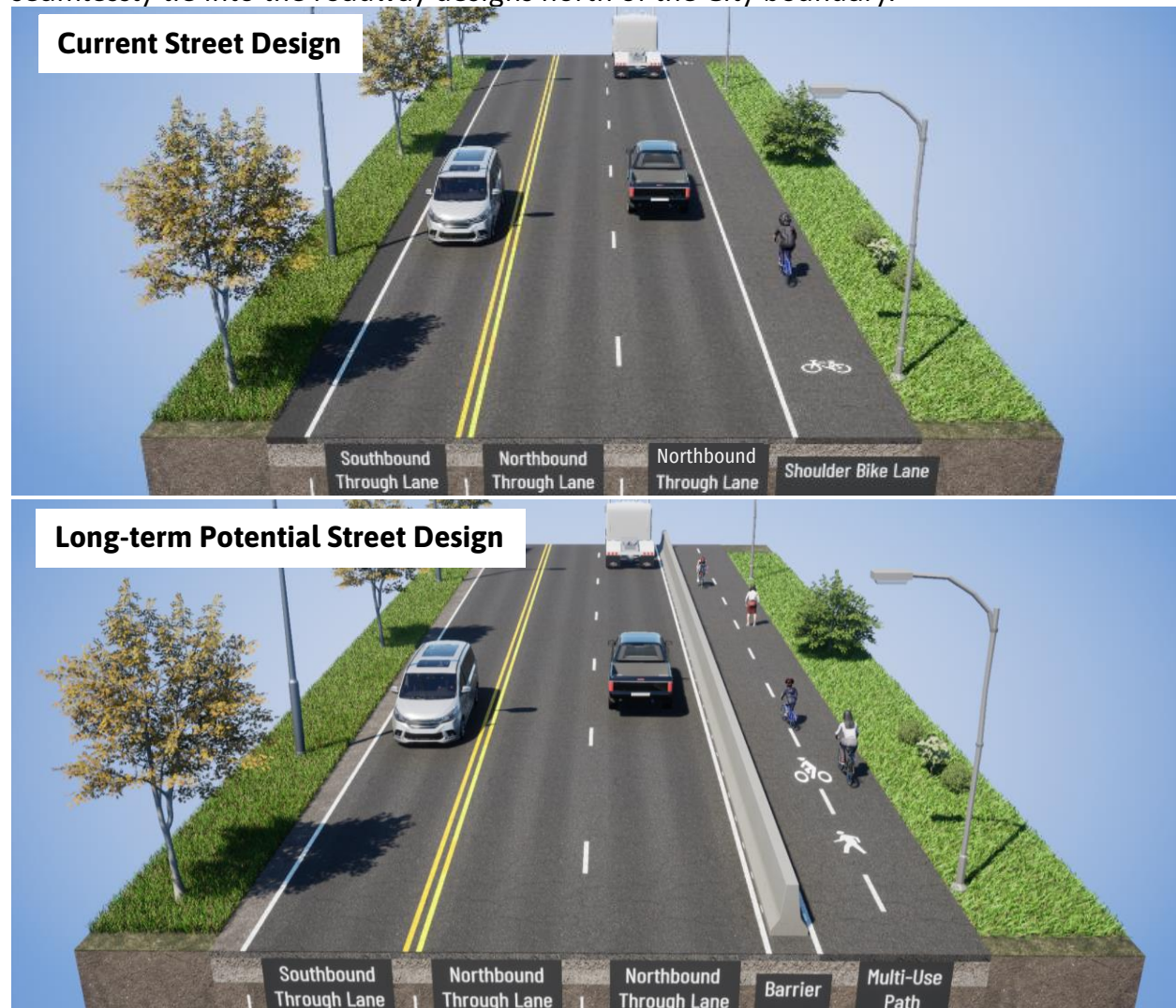
Segment 5: 45th Street to City Limits (just south of NE 63rd Street / Minnehaha Street)

Proposed design concepts for Segment 5 were still being developed during the second phase of engagement and were not shared with the TMC in April or with the public. Segment 5 of Upper Main Street has wide vehicle travel lanes that split into northbound and southbound lanes at the I-5 interchange. The proposed design concept between 45th and the I-5 interchange include:

- Continue the separated two-way multi-use path on the east side of Main Street to the Discovery Trail.
- Improve the pavement quality of the west side bike and small mobility connection.
- Replace and improve visibility of wayfinding signage.



At NE Ross Street, the travel lanes reconnect with one southbound through lane, two northbound through lanes, and unprotected mobility lanes. Preliminary assessment of this segment shows that north of NE Ross Street, a protected multi-use path may be able to fit within the existing right of way. The number and width of the travel lanes would not need to change but this change would require travel lanes to shift west. The long-term design concept for this segment of Upper Main Street would require close coordination with Clark County on a future capital project to ensure that facilities seamlessly tie into the roadway designs north of the City boundary.



Staff contact info

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Attachment(s):

- Upper Main Street TMC Project Memo – April 2024
- Upper Main Street Phase 2 Engagement Summary