

To: Chair Butler and Planning Commissioners
From: Jay Higgins, Transportation Planner, 503-615-2215
Memo Date: Jan. 13, 2017
Meeting Date: Jan. 23, 2017
Subject: Active Transportation Plan
Attachments: A: DRAFT Pedestrian Network Improvements map
B: DRAFT Bike Network Improvements map
C: Prioritization Criteria Scoring Matrix
D: DRAFT Prioritized Projects List
E: DRAFT Policies

People need to get around Gresham safely and all community members need to have the ability to get to the places they need to for work, shopping, and recreation. There are known gaps in pedestrian and bicycle access, connectivity, and safety. With limited resources to address all of the known gaps, this project, the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), will identify where new sidewalks, safe crossings, bike lanes, trails and paths are most needed and a method to prioritize implementation of these projects as grant or other funding resources become available.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting is to share and seek Planning Commission comment on:

- draft maps of areas needing pedestrian and bicycle improvements based on public input,
- criteria used to prioritize the identified pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and
- draft prioritized projects list.

We will also describe next steps in finalizing the Active Transportation Plan.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2015 Gresham was awarded funding through the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Multnomah County to develop an Active Transportation Plan. The funding requires that the plan be developed within the context of equity and health goals. For Gresham this is important because we see things such as people in wheelchairs attempting to navigate missing sidewalk gaps and children wanting to ride their bikes but not knowing where they can ride safely to avoid conflicts with major roadways. Considering equity and health in addition to overall access, connectivity, and safety goals give additional context to addressing the need for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

This project is a planning project and will not fund any new pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure. What it will do, however, is guide our path for investing in these networks. Current funding for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is limited and provided primarily through:

- Capital Improvement Program: ADA ramps and missing sidewalk links
- Grant programs: Metro, ODOT, and Federal
- New Development: Private development is required to construct on-site sidewalks and bike facilities.

Relative to funding the magnitude of the need is great and pace of new development does not address the immediate need for completing the pedestrian and bicycle network. Thus, we need to strategically plan for where to invest scarce resources.

Listening to the Gresham community about where the needs exist and how they should be prioritized was the first phase of this project. Numerous outreach events, described in the Memo to Planning Commission for October 24th, resulted in three draft products described below and developed by the community, staff and consultant team Alta Planning & Design, and a stakeholder advisory group.

DRAFT MAPS and PROJECT LIST

Based on public input the City and its consultant, Alta Planning & Design, developed draft maps that show areas throughout the city where pedestrian and bicycle projects had been identified (Attachments A and B). Subsequent to developing the maps each project on the map was filtered through prioritization criteria, resulting in a list of prioritized projects.

Prioritization Process

Prioritization criteria initially developed through the City's Transportation Subcommittee in 2010 to rank missing sidewalk gaps served as a base methodology for how to rank projects on the draft Active Transportation Plan maps. Minor updates to that criteria were approved by the Active Transportation Plan's stakeholder advisory committee late 2016.

The prioritization criteria are designed to prioritize high demand destinations such as town centers, connect to transit, complete the networks by focusing on the worst gaps first, promote safety, and serve the goals of the REACH grant to promote health through access to healthy food stores and ensure equitable impacts. The criteria are listed below and shown in Attachment C.

Pedestrian Projects

- Key Destinations
- Transit Access
- Level of Comfort
- Promote Safety
- Promote Health
- Equity

Bicycle Projects

- Key Destinations
- Transit Access
- Level of Comfort
- Promote Safety
- Promote Health
- Equity

Attachment C also provides more description on the exact measure and points used in scoring projects.

Project List

Attachment D is the draft Prioritized Projects List. Each project is numbered to help locate the projects on the corresponding maps. For example: The highest priority pedestrian project is C12, a crossing enhancement to be located near the intersection of 181st and Stark. Which can be found on the Pedestrian Map at C12.

More updating of the maps and projects will be done after Planning Commission comments, City Council comments and through another round of public engagement in Spring 2017.

POLICIES

The Active Transportation Plan has also created ten policies to guide future work on pedestrian and bicycling projects in Gresham. These policies were developed by staff with the Stakeholder Advisory Group and the full text is in attachment E. The first three policies about increasing safety, building a convenient network, and connections to transit, are policies in the TSP under the bicycle and pedestrian mode sections. The remaining policies include: a network that encourages social connections, promoting healthy food and physical activity, educating users about benefits of walking and biking, building cost-effectively, increasing economic opportunity through low-cost travel to work, equitable investments for underserved communities and accessible infrastructure that meets everyone's needs.

NEXT STEPS

The next phase of the project will use public engagement to share the Prioritized Projects List and maps to ensure we've captured all important projects. The consultant team will then expand their recommendations on the type of crossing treatment or bike facility that should be built. Later in Spring 2017 the Active Transportation Plan will begin a review of the City's Safe Routes to Schools programs that promote walking and biking, and will work on funding strategies and implementation for the Active Transportation Plan. The plan is scheduled to be adopted at the end of 2017.