



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Wednesday, July 6, 2022

Open to public attendance in Committee Room G

Lower Level, City Hall

Committee members may attend electronically

PRESENT

Councillor Patrick Johnstone

Alice Cavanagh*

Garey Carlson

Matthew Chan

Spencer Gillis*

Dan Hawke

Vic Leach

Tanushree Pillai*

Randi Poitras*

Peter Valbonesi*

REGRETS

Asifa Lalji

Iain Lancaster

Arshdeep Singh

GUESTS

Brian Patterson

P J Bell

Mitchell Reardon

Chair

Representative, Business Community

Representative, Local Cycling Advocacy Organization

Person with Professional or Technical Expertise

Community Member

Person who Walks, Uses Transit, or Cycles as Part of
their Daily Mode of Transportation

Representative, Local Pedestrian Advocacy
Organization

Person who Walks, Uses Transit, or Cycles as Part of
their Daily Mode of Transportation

Representative, Indigenous Community

Person with Lived Experience of Navigating the City's
Transportation Network with Physical or Cognitive
Barriers

Person with Lived Experience of Navigating the City's
Transportation Network with Physical or Cognitive
Barriers

Representative, School District 40 or DPAC
Community Member

Urban Systems

Urban Systems

Happy Cities

STAFF PRESENT

Mike Anderson

Erica Tiffany

Katie Stobbart

Manager of Transportation

Senior Transportation Planner

Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor Johnstone opened the meeting at 5:34 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS AND ICEBREAKERS**

There was a round of introductions, and Committee members and guests responded to the question, "What is your favourite seat on the bus?"

3. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

4.1 **Minutes of May 11, 2022**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the May 11, 2022 Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee be adopted.

Carried.

All members present voted in favour of the motion.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Active Transportation Network Plan

Mike Anderson, Manager of Transportation, introduced Brian Patterson and P J Bell, Urban Systems. Messrs. Patterson and Bell provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled “City-Wide Active Transportation Network Plan.”

In response to questions from the Committee, Councillor Johnstone and Messrs. Anderson, Patterson, and Bell advised:

- The intention is to ensure routes are accessible to people who use other types of devices, not just bicycles, and that by building this way, conflict is reduced with other road users (e.g. pedestrians, wheelchair-users, etc.);
- Four to five-and-a-half metres is the ideal street width to avoid both discomfort and higher vehicle traffic. Speed bumps and other traffic calming measures can also help to address roads that are too wide;
- Intersections will be considered as part of the feasibility review;
- There are opportunities to consider Indigenous art on wayfinding and beautification pieces; and
- The timeline for this to come before Council is September.

The Committee had the following comments arising from discussion:

- The AAA network features bicycles heavily, but not as much other modes of travel, particularly those taken by seniors;
- West End Vancouver has examples of intersections where vehicles cannot go straight ahead but bicycles can—staff may want to consider this in the planning process;
- Surface treatments make a big difference for comfort among wheelchair users. Consult with wheelchair users before using something overly textured;
- The paint that sometimes is put on surfaces affects the amount of surface tension and slipperiness, so that should be taken into account;
- Flat starting spots would help to minimize the impact of hills, as it is easier to get momentum going on a flat spot;

- Pedestrian push buttons are inconsistent, which is a challenge for blind people and others, so placement of push buttons should be considered;
- It may be useful to consider tree cover and other features that make routes usable in the peak of summer; and
- A safe riding program run through Parks and Recreation to get people using these routes safely would be great, e.g. an after-school program.

5.2 Belmont Plaza

Mike Anderson, Manager of Transportation, introduced the item, noting that the Uptown Streetscape Vision adopted by Council in 2020 called for the Belmont Street parklet to become a full plaza. Mr. Anderson introduced PJ Bell and Brian Patterson, Urban Systems, and Mitchell Reardon, Happy Cities, for a verbal update on the development of a conceptual design for the plaza.

Messrs. Bell, Patterson, and Reardon advised the following:

- The current plaza is the width of half the street, whereas a permanent plaza would extend the full width of Belmont Street next to Sixth Street, and would extend about 50 metres from Sixth Street down Belmont;
- Two conceptual designs are being explored: an events-based plaza, and a green space with trees, plaza, and park;
- Concerns that have been expressed about the site include loud vehicles, sale of items including illicit items, smoking in the plaza, and late-night noise;
- The plaza is very well used but there is a contested nature to it, and some of the challenges and misuses of the space risk continuing;
- Through discussions with the City and Urban Systems, Happy Cities proposed an expanded interim plaza take place this summer until the permanent plaza is introduced;
- The interim plaza would have a different design approach, co-designed with input from all key stakeholders and regular visitors to the space;
- Through this co-designed process, there would be a focus on building relationships and social infrastructure, in addition to the physical infrastructure that would accompany these changes;

- Not everyone will get everything they want from the space, and there will be conflicting views to address throughout this process;
- The interim plaza provides an opportunity to test design elements that could be included in the permanent plaza;
- During the week of July 18, co-design sessions will be held, with the intent to finalize the design in the following week and prepare for implementation in the week of August 8;
- There are a number of risks that may derail this project, so a series of milestones and off-ramps have been established, with regular meetings; and
- The interim plaza process will not delay the implementation of the permanent plaza.

The Committee had the following comments:

- There is potential to improve the family-friendliness of the space, perhaps by including a small playground;
- People who are using the plaza currently are often customers of local businesses on the block, so it is important to find a compromise, rather than pushing people away;
- There is so little seating in Uptown that there is a lot of conflict around that seating. By adding more seating, conflict around that seating could be reduced;
- There is a need to assess the traffic impact of the plaza;
- Some of the businesses at the far end of Belmont Street are more adult-oriented, so having more adult-oriented seating and features at that end and family-friendly features at the Sixth Street end could be successful;
- The issues the plaza currently faces are largely enforcement issues, so there needs to be a discussion of how to address that; and
- Some plazas, like the one next to the Legion, allow smoking, and accommodating the fact that people do smoke is a discussion to have.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

There were no items.

7. STANDING REPORTS AND UPDATES

There were no items.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There were no items.

9. END OF MEETING

On MOTION, the meeting ended at 7:17 p.m.

10. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Remaining meetings for 2022, which take place at 5:30 p.m. unless noted otherwise:

- December 7