

TAC MINUTES

January 16, 2020

In attendance:

Members

Renee Quistorf
Tyler Rourke
Richard Smith
Brett Barrett

Staff

Tim Miller, Public Works
Corey Hert, Public Works
Skip Algard, Transit
Kelsey Svaren, Public Works

Guests

Bob Creamer
Sonja Bodge
Ann Morgan

Meeting called to order at 8:08 a.m. Chaired by Tyler Rourke

- M/S/P for November 2019 Minutes.

Announcements & Requests to Add Agenda Items

- Brett asked Tim how to request bike markers at intersections on streets with bike lanes in order to trigger traffic lights.
 - Tim responded that those requests can be made to Traffic Engineering and that they appreciate community input to help identify areas that need added attention.
- Tyler asked if there is a way to fix the bike marker at the intersection of Hoyt Ave and Pacific Ave heading southbound. Using the marker triggers the westbound left-hand traffic signal.
 - Tim noted that signal has have damaged detection loops that require some phases to be set to recall. At present the westbound left turn phase may be served each cycle even if no traffic is present there. Normal operation will be restored when the construction project is completed. He noted that he would follow up.
- Ann expressed concerns at the same intersection, adding that construction has restricted pedestrian access to sidewalks and forces pedestrians to walk into the bike lanes.
 - Skip explained that the final stages of construction have been delayed due to the long lead time waiting for final materials. Tim added that he will talk to the Construction Manager see if there are any short-term resolutions that can be implemented during this final phase.

Citizen's Comments

- Ann mentioned a Nextdoor discussion she saw online that reported cars parking in the bike lanes along the west side of Alverson Blvd.
- A considerable discussion ensued regarding the reporting of, responses to, and tracking of traffic related metrics across the City. Richard noted that it may be beneficial to map this information in a way that allows for visualization to better identify and respond to high priority areas.

- Tim clarified that the committee is able pursue specialized topics of their choice, but the primary mission of the committee is to help improve policies related to transportation within the City. Specific concerns in neighborhoods are still relevant and important to address but should be secondary to policy related topics.

Engineering Report

- Tim updated the committee on the Rucker Renewal Project. Construction is currently taking place along the four blocks from Pacific Ave to Everett Ave. The project is still ongoing, but progress speed is dependent on weather conditions. At this time, Hoyt Avenue has opened completely to thru traffic.
 - Tim added that the City provides a [map](#) on the website to show pedestrian and motor vehicle access options to streets, intersections, and businesses in the downtown corridor.
- Corey noted that Traffic Engineering is working closely with Construction Managers to ensure the City can continue to offer the best options for accessibility to pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic.
- Tim added that the Grand Avenue Park Bridge is still scheduled to open sometime in 2020, either late spring or summer.
- Tim re-iterated Skip's earlier statement, that the long lead time in receiving signal poles can add time to City construction projects. There are only a few manufacturing companies in the United States, making it difficult to estimate how quickly items may be delivered after ordering.

Police Report

- None

Transit Report

- Skip began with an update concerning impacts of the most recent snow event on Everett Transit. He noted that they have done well keeping buses timely and on the streets. Chains were removed from buses on Wednesday and all buses switched over to snow routes mid-day. There was one reported collision, at no-fault of the bus driver.
- Skip followed up on a question from Renee in the November meeting regarding the bicycle parking element of the Broadway Improvement Project. Skip said that there will be colorful, artistic bike lock stations modeled after plants and will be installed by Summer 2020.
- In December, City Council approved the purchase of two more electric buses. Transit should have them by Fall, which will bring the City to nine electric buses in total, which is approximately 25% of the fleet.
- Skip noted that the buses perform well in the Summer and Fall, but the range does drop significantly in colder weather due to the amount of energy it takes to heat the buses.

- Brett asked if there are any manufacturers that include a separate battery for the heating element.
 - Skip responded that electric buses are still a fairly new technology and the City is exploring options for future orders. Several issues of this nature should be addressed in the next few years as more communities incorporate electric buses into their public transit systems.
- As a Planner for Everett Transit, Skip helps develop timetables and routes for the City. He noted that one of the City's goals is to average a 90% on-time rating when compared to the bus schedules. The City is currently averaging an on-time comparison of 79%, with total 2019 ridership at 1.6 million, about a 9% decrease from the previous year. This decline reflects a national trend, in part due to rideshare, bike share, and scooter programs. The region is also working toward a One Bus Away program to help streamline information for all transit operations in the area.
- Richard asked about the decrease in ridership and whether the City is exploring ways to help mitigate the downward trend, especially as the population in Everett is expected to grow for the foreseeable future.
 - Transit is working on approaches to garner more ridership, but funding restrictions continue to be a major hurdle that limits the implementation of these strategies.

Agenda Items:

Item 1: – Reduce Speed Limit to 30 MPH on Roadways Designated as Bike Routes with Bike Lanes

Informational Briefing; Tim Miller, Public Works

- Tim presented several slides detailing streets with bike lanes in the City of Everett. The speed limits currently range from 25mph-45mph, containing between two and six thru lanes on each street.
- Tim also presented a slide to show the 85th percentile, or prevailing speed, of all the 35mph-45mph streets with bike lanes. Based on data gathered by the City, Tim noted that only three of these routes fall have prevailing speeds, less than 5mph over the posted limit.
- Tim shared some commonly held, but false statements regarding vehicle speed and posted limits:
 - Lowering a posted limit will slow down traffic
 - Lowering a posted speed limit will increase safety and decrease the number of crashes.
 - Raising the posted speed limit increases traffic speed.
 - Drivers will always travel at 5mph over the posted speed limit.
- Tim also shared a few data driven [assessments](#) related to speed limits and motor vehicle drivers:
 - Most motorists choose a speed in which they personally feel both comfortable and safe.
 - A speed limit sign should not dictate speed. It should reflect how drivers are behaving on the road.

- To slow prevailing speed, change the road character or design narrower roads, which make speedy drivers less comfortable.
- Tim also shared results of a [study](#) from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, which observed the effects of raising and lowering speed limits from data collected in 22 States.
 - The study concluded that raising or lowering a speed limit does not show a strong correlation to an increase or decrease in vehicle speeds.
 - It was observed that changing a speed limit does not show a significant effect in the rate motor vehicle related accidents, either positive or negative.
 - In motor vehicle accidents that included a bicyclist, the study noted that cyclists using bike lanes were involved in significantly fewer crashes than cyclists using a through traffic lane or sidewalk. Overall bicycle lanes were not present or available in 97.2% of analyzed bicycle crashes.
- Based on the presentation, Tim concluded that the City should not arbitrarily set speed limits, but rather continue to use data-based methods, considering the prevailing speed and other factors.
- A considerable discussion took place, focused on the following topics:
 - Reconciling how data from the presentation applies directly to the City of Everett and its long-term transportation goals.
 - Recognizing well-known issues and additional potential challenges within the City revolving around non-motorized vehicle transportation.
 - Opportunities to increase safety and comfort levels for those who choose non-motorized transportation options.

Item 2: – Update: Riverside Business Park U-Turns

Informational Briefing – Corey Hert

- Postponed to February meeting.
- **Adjourned at 9:49 am**

Next Scheduled Meeting: February 20, 2020