

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

"LaClaire, Lon" <lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca>

Date: 7/31/2020 4:28:15 PM

Subject: Memo: Local Business and Public Life Recovery Initiatives and Tactical Transit Priority

Attachments: Memo - Public Life Recovery and Transit Priority.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- Staff have established public life and mobility recovery initiatives including over 230 patios, 9 plazas, 5 temporary parklets and 30km of slow streets.
- There are multiple demands on public space at this time and staff are aiming to balance the needs of different uses. For example, staff have been working with BIAs across the city and have supported temporary patios in the curb lane even where this may impact transit operations. However, staff have not supported the removal of rush regs to facilitate additional parking.
- BIA representatives recently met with senior City and TransLink staff to better understand each other's aims and objectives. TransLink made it clear that supporting business recovery is part of their mandate.
- The City has been awarded funding from TransLink to complete four transit priority related projects for completion in 2020. These are on Main St and Kingsway, Granville St, Robson St and 49th Ave. This week TransLink will be providing a regional update on the tactical transit priority projects being considered across the region, including projects in Vancouver.
- Bus lane hour extensions are also planned on Burrard St and W Georgia St this year, with further projects being scoped for 2021 delivery.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager
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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

July 31, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Rosemary Hagiwara, Acting City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Local Business and Public Life Recovery Initiatives and Tactical Transit Priority

Purpose

This memo summarizes the work to date on public life and mobility recovery initiatives and outlines upcoming projects, particularly those to support businesses and tactical transit priority. The memo considers the need for business and public life recovery projects to take a balanced perspective regarding the uses on each corridor, and underlines the importance of providing transit priority measures that support people accessing employment, food and other essential services as we recover from the pandemic. Later this week, TransLink will be providing a regional update on the tactical transit priority projects being considered in Vancouver.

Public Life and Mobility Recovery initiatives update

At the direction of Council, staff are temporarily reallocating road space to support business and public-life recovery, including supporting transit ridership recovery.

Staff have established the following public life and mobility recovery initiatives:

- **Temporary Expedited Patio Program:** to date the program has approved over 230 patios within the public realm with more than 50 additional patios on private land;
- **Pop Up Plaza Program:** to date the program has implemented 9 plazas and 5 temporary Parklets to support public life;
- **Slow Streets:** to date this initiative has approximately 30km of streets to support walking, cycling and recreating; and

- **Tactical Transit Priority Projects:** the City was recently awarded funding from TransLink to complete four transit priority related projects for completion in 2020, totalling over 32kms of bus lanes and other transit priority measures.

Balancing demands on public space on major arterials

Many of Vancouver's important retail areas are on major arterials – for example: South Granville, Downtown Granville, Robson Street, Main Street, Denman Street, Davie Street, Commercial Drive and Hastings Street. Many of these streets are also important city and regional transit routes, truck routes, have parking restrictions during peak periods, and some are co-managed by TransLink as part of the Major Road Network. As such, these corridors have a dual role in supporting citywide public life and economic recovery, while also providing local access to shops and restaurants.

In these core retail areas, there are multiple demands on public space, especially during a pandemic, including supporting business needs, public life and mobility. These include measures such as temporary patios, queueing areas, space for parking and pick-up/drop-off, loading spaces, parklets, plazas, wider sidewalks and transit priority measures.

To balance these demands on public space, staff have been using Council priorities and existing City policy to guide prioritization and decision-making. Staff have been working closely with 13 BIAs across the city to identify how public space can support their business needs, particularly looking for 'win-win solutions' for business, transit and public life.

For example, many BIAs have wanted their businesses to get temporary patios in the curb lane. Staff have supported this, even where it means temporarily removing peak hour parking restrictions (when parking is not allowed at peak times in order to manage traffic congestion and improve transit reliability). This approach has also been supported by TransLink, even though these changes may have some impact on transit service. In some locations staff have been able to add temporary accessible bulges at bus stops to expand sidewalk space and also help support more reliable transit service. In other instances, specific transit priority measures have been planned elsewhere along the route to offset impacts from public life recovery initiatives.

Staff have generally not supported removal of peak-period parking restrictions where the goal is to simply create more parking. Lifting these parking restrictions would create more parking maneuvers and increase congestion, which would have a significant impact on the road network and transit service speed and reliability.

Upcoming Tactical Transit Projects

TransLink recently announced new Bus Speed and Reliability (BSR) funding for tactical transit projects that increase speed and reliability for bus passengers at a time when TransLink is also seeking to increase transit ridership through the recovery period. The City submitted applications to utilize some of this funding and was recently awarded approximately \$345,000 to implement four projects by the end of 2020.

These projects are:

- **Granville Street:** between 5th Avenue and SW Marine Drive, for peak period bus lanes and other tactical intersection changes;

- **Main Street and Kingsway:** between National Avenue and Kingsway on Main Street and between Main Street and Fraser Street on Kingsway, for peak period bus lanes, bus bulges, and other tactical intersection changes;
- **Robson Street:** between Jervis Street and Burrard Street, for bus bulges, bus stop suspensions, and turn restrictions; and
- **49th Avenue:** for transit priority spot improvements, between Boundary Road and Main Street, including some potential sections of bus lanes where space permits.

The focus of these tactical transit projects is largely outside of business areas. Where they do go through business areas, full-time bus lanes are not being proposed. Where there are bus lanes or other transit improvements in BIA areas, staff are seeking support from the BIA. In addition to the above projects, extension of bus lane hours were already planned for sections of **Burrard Street** and **Georgia Street** in the Downtown, and these projects are also scheduled for implementation in 2020.

Beyond this, the City has previously been awarded BSR funding for other transit corridors, the planning for which was just getting underway and as such project scopes are not yet defined. Given the timing constraints for the new BSR tactical transit funding, implementation for these previously awarded BSR projects is likely delayed until 2021. These include:

- **Hastings Street;** between Granville Street and Boundary Road;
- **E Broadway,** both between Fraser Street and Commercial Drive and between Arbutus Street and Alma Street; and
- **W 4th Avenue,** between Burrard Street and Alma Street.

Appendix A includes a summary map of the above projects, separated by the anticipated 2020 and 2021 implementation. At the next Mayor's Council meeting, TransLink will be providing a regional update and their own corresponding map on the tactical transit priority projects being considered across the region, including Vancouver.

In order that everyone better understand the competing needs of road space reallocation for public space and transit needs, BIA representatives recently met with senior City and TransLink staff, including their CEO, to better understand each other's aims and objectives. TransLink made it clear that supporting business recovery is part of their mandate. TransLink is being flexible in their approach in being responsive to desired public space measures that may impact transit in commercial areas.

Summary and next steps

In partnership with the BIAs, business recovery has been a top priority, especially along the retail corridors identified above. Staff have been clear that the City priority is to support local business with space for private patios and additional public space for walking, sitting or queuing.

Supporting further transit ridership, including reducing transit travel times and delay, is also an important consideration in a recovery period. Transit provides a low cost and affordable mobility option, whether for essential workers, employees accessing retail areas, or customers wanting to shop and dine. With reduced transit capacity due to ongoing COVID-19 physical-distancing requirements, fast and reliable transit is particularly important.

Staff will provide Council with updates on these initiatives as they progress.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact me directly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lon LaClaire', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

604.873.7336 | lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca

Appendix A – Transit Priority Map

Transit Priority Corridors

Legend

- 2020 Bus Speed and Reliability Improvements (bus lanes)
- - -● 2020 Bus Speed and Reliability Improvements (tactical interventions)
- Scoping/study (likely 2021 delivery)

