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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Bill Needleman & Kevin Donoghue  
**From:** Jason Schrieber  
**Date:** June 19, 2008  
**Subject:** Draft Sustainable Transportation Action Plan

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This memorandum describes Nelson\Nygaard's proposed "Sustainable Transportation Action Plan" for the recommended strategies that have evolved through the public forum, Committee meetings, and our research of Portland's transportation programs and infrastructure as compared to our understanding of best practices across the country. The Action Plan includes a **phased implementation timeline** for all recommended peninsula transportation improvements, policies, and programs, including immediate-term actions (within 1 year), short-term actions (within the next 5 years), and long-term actions (within the next 10-20 years). An **implementation schedule** will be distributed separately for discussion at our next Committee meeting.

## Phased Action Plan

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### IMMEDIATE TERM ACTIONS (WITHIN ONE-YEAR)

#### Parking and Transportation Demand Management

- **Institute a Trip Reduction Ordinance.** Commit the City and all City staff to the principles of reducing vehicle trips on the peninsula by taking the lead on TDM programs and setting an example for peninsula businesses and residents.
  - Identify a Mobility Coordinator to manage and promote TDM programs.
  - Institute a parking cash-out program.
  - Provide a universal transit pass to all employees.
  - Install bike racks at all City buildings and provide secure covered bike parking and employee showers at most if not all City buildings.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Establish a Transportation Management Association (TMA).** Create an independent peninsula-wide TMA and define roles and responsibilities between the TMA and the City.
  - *Responsibility:* GPCOG and City?
- **Establish a “Sustainable Transportation Fund”.** Create a separate City account that will be funded by revenues from parking fees, permits and in-lieu payments. All proceeds to be reported monthly and managed by a Mobility Coordinator specifically for walking, biking, and land or water transit improvements.
  - Identify a Mobility Coordinator (same as above?).
  - Establish transparent revenue and expenditure reporting procedures.
  - Establish a sustainable transportation website to report finances, improvement initiatives, and opportunities for project prioritization.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Adopt a TDM Ordinance.** Require all new development on the peninsula to become members of the peninsula TMA and require implementation of TDM programs.
  - New development will be required to do at least the following: have an on-site Mobility Coordinator or utilize the services of the TMA if available, market Go Maine options to all tenants, evaluate establishing a Universal Transit Pass for all tenants, require parking cash-out of all non-residential tenants, require unbundled parking for all residential tenants, and conduct annual trip and mode split monitoring.
  - Development may optionally participate in the Parking Impact Fee program and provide a free car-share space (given an incentive).
  - Require for all new development: bicycle parking and minimum standards, screened/wrapped parking, minimum driveway sightlines and maximum slopes, level

sidewalks on all frontages (no dropped curbs), minimum sidewalk widths & landscaping standards, and transit information & shelters where appropriate.

■ *Responsibility:* City

- **Require Parking Cash-Out.** Require employers to subsidize all employee commute modes equally and create incentives for commuters to carpool, take transit, and bike or walk to work. (Possibly part of TDM Ordinance)
  - Marketing of parking cash-out advantages to employers should be done by the TMA and/or the Mobility Coordinator by demonstrating the real cost of parking versus alternatives.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Require “Unbundled” Parking Costs.** By ordinance, require all future housing development to “unbundle” the cost of parking from the cost of the living areas, either by charging a rent or lease fee or selling the parking space separately. (Possibly part of TDM Ordinance)
  - Parking can continue to be built to the minimum zoning requirement if desired. However, the practice of unbundling, especially when combined with residential parking benefit districts and shared parking practices, generally reduces parking demand significantly while increasing housing affordability. Developers and the community soon see the advantages of building less parking when parking goes unsold.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Establish a Transportation Resource Center.** Create a visible one-stop information kiosk or storefront to market Portland’s sustainable transportation programs, disseminate multi-modal transportation information, and provide visitor assistance.
  - Locate on Monument Square near Congress.
    - *Responsibility:* City in cooperation with local businesses, METRO, CBITD, and South Portland Bus
- **Pursue a “Park Once” Strategy.** Through customer-friendly efforts to encourage availability and turn-over, manage peninsula parking as a system that optimizes the efficient use of existing resources without needing additional parking.
  - Manage all public parking as an integrated system.
    - *Responsibility:* City (existing)
  - Promote shared parking among different existing and future land uses through revised zoning language flexibility, reduced parking requirements, and leasing of public spaces by the City for shared parking purposes.
    - Require as a condition of approval for new development that all non-residential parking be shared with other users and/or made available for public parking when not needed for its primary commercial use.
    - *Leasing details:* City offers private parking operators a guaranteed lease payment for all existing spaces at a competitive rate in return for being able to operate those spaces as part of the “Park Once” pool. For a lower lease rate, land owner can be guaranteed a set quantity of spaces to be located on-site or within a 5-minute walk. City assumes all personal liability, security and maintenance costs and can lease parking to individuals or businesses at rates based entirely on demand.

- *Responsibility:* City. Requires zoning changes, Council approval and legal framework for leases and liability.
- Implement a multi-modal transportation and parking wayfinding system, including information on parking location, pricing, and real-time parking occupancy.
  - *Responsibility:* City (building on existing wayfinding program) in coordination with Chamber of Commerce.
- **Create a Commercial Parking Benefit District.** Implement coordinated parking management policies for on- and off-street parking, using demand-responsive pricing to promote parking goals of 85% occupancy on each block face and in each garage, matching demand with available supply, and promoting turnover of short-term spaces. Return surplus revenue to walking, biking and transit improvements on the peninsula.
  - Eliminate or extend existing metered time-limits to maximum allowed by meters.
  - Monitor parking occupancy and turn-over by block face.
  - Increase rates on block faces where parking is over 85% occupied. Decrease rates where parking is underutilized.
  - Install meters or pay stations on un-priced blocks if occupancy exceeds 85% or implement residential sticker program.
  - Eliminate street occupancy permit program.
  - Increase parking ticket fees.
  - Direct surplus parking revenues into the STF. Involve existing business and neighborhood organizations in project prioritization.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Create a Residential Parking Benefit District.** Prevent “spillover” parking in neighborhoods adjacent to commercial areas through a permit system and utilize revenue streams for neighborhood walking, biking and transit improvements.
  - Expand resident sticker program to all neighborhoods of the peninsula.
  - Offer monthly commercial permits to off-peninsula commuters with all revenues directed to STF programs on the blocks where permits are sold.
    - *Responsibility:* City
- **Implement a “Parking Impact Fee”.** Create a financial incentive for new developments to participate directly in TDM programs while creating a revenue stream to fund the STF by allowing zoning-required parking to be removed for a fee.
  - Details: The fee should be set to approximately 50% of the cost of constructing a parking space in order to provide an incentive. Likely models include tiering the fee based on total number of spaces required by zoning. For example, a \$2,000 fee plus \$500 for each additional space can allow smaller developments to easily participate while providing strong incentive to larger developments that are likely to build structured parking. A project requiring only 5 spaces could build zero spaces for a fee of \$15,000, or \$3,000 per space. A project requiring 50 spaces could build zero for a fee of \$712,500, or \$14,250 per space (less than current above-grade garage construction prices). One hundred spaces would be \$2,675,000, or \$26,750 per space removed (far less than current below-grade garage

construction prices). All fees would be annualized for a term of 35 years (the industry standard lifespan of a parking structure) with payments made each year.

- *Responsibility:* City
- **Establish a Car Sharing Program.** Car sharing reduces both household vehicle ownership and the percentage of employees who drive alone because of the need to have a car for errands during the workday. It is an important tool for reducing parking demand.
  - Option 1: Formally approach ZipCar with an incentive and initial subscriber package. Initial subscribers would guarantee a minimum level of utilization. Likely candidates are USM, MMC and the City. An incentive package would include guarantees that ZipCar could obtain secure accessible off-street spaces for no charge. This would be facilitated by commitments from existing parking operators (including the City) as well as requirements in a TDM ordinance for new development.
    - *Responsibility:* City & private institutions
  - Option 2: Establish an independent non-profit car-share organization. Some degree of public subsidy may be necessary during initial years of operation. If similar incentives can be provided, the car-share model can work successfully for drivers over 25 years of age. (Closest example is Ithaca Car Share.)
    - *Responsibility:* City & private institutions
- **Implement a Peninsula Park & Ride Facility.** Expand upon the capacity of the PTC lots in cooperation with surrounding land owners to serve commuters, local businesses, and visitors.
  - Begin implementing a parking charge for all PTC parking, including on-street and in coordination with nearby private lots. Dedicate a portion of revenues to PTC providers to reduce their fares proportionally.
  - Integrate METRO service directly to PTC front door.
  - Partner with USM and MMC to provide remote park & ride parking for their employees.
  - Sign and improve clear pedestrian connections to Congress Street.
    - *Responsibility:* City, METRO, Concord Trailways, Amtrak, nearby businesses, USM, MMC.

## Transit System

- **Marketing.** Market all transit resources in Portland as a single system to show the richness of the transit network in and through Portland.
  - Develop a consolidated system map (METRO, South Portland Bus, Casco Bay Ferries, Zoom Turnpike Express, Concord Trailways, Amtrak, etc.)
    - *Responsibility:* GPCOG?
  - Provide map in laminate holders at peninsula hotels, transit stops, large employers, etc.
    - *Responsibility:* City?
  - Create a centralized website for the map & directly link it to each provider's website, as well as to businesses, travel agencies, hotels, etc.
    - *Responsibility:* City? GPCOG?

- **Establish Transit Priority Corridors.** Emphasize importance of key corridors on the peninsula for increased transit service.
  - Establish a north-south priority corridor along Preble/Elm between Forest and Congress and along Franklin, Pearl or Union between Congress and the Eastern Waterfront. Where appropriate, utilize signal coordination, bus priority signalization and bus lanes.
  - Details: Final details being designed. Concepts include:
    - Short-term: Likely to include exclusive bus lanes in each direction on Preble Extension and on each direction of the Preble/Elm pair. An alternate is to shift parking on Elm entirely to the right side and run a contra-flow bus lane up Elm with 2-way general use circulation on Preble and Elm. Install a pedestrian crossing of Preble Extension at Hannaford's. Bus priority markings and signing would be installed on Franklin, Pearl or Union, and a clear transit center would be signed and marked on Commercial.
    - Medium-term: Bus priority signalization would be provided at Marginal Way to advance buses ahead of queues, especially with 2-way configurations. Premium shelters would be installed. Bus lanes or a bus-only corridor would be recommended between Congress and Commercial.
    - *Responsibility*: City in coordination with METRO and South Portland Bus.
  - Establish an east-west priority corridor, approximately along Congress between Franklin and State. Implement turn restrictions, curb extension bus stops, additional on-street parking, and one-block-only travel for non-transit vehicles.
  - Details: Final details being designed. Concepts include:
    - Short-term: Eliminate all left-turns on Congress between High and Pearl (except by buses). All vehicles entering from side streets must turn right (except buses). Consider signing to limit vehicular travel to one-block. Move all loading zones to side streets. Install new on-street parking in all existing loading zones and bus bays. Buses will stop in the travel lane, preferably at curb extensions. Through bikes will be encouraged through shared-lane markings to travel in vehicle lanes, passing buses on the left. Stops will be consolidated to serve all lines at clear intervals along the corridor. Some signals may be removed with right-turn only operations. Where signals remain, bus stops should ideally be far-side.
    - Medium-term: Extend corridor to Franklin and State. Install missing curb extensions. Eliminate all non-transit vehicles during peak periods. Consider eliminating non-transit vehicles during entire transit service period.
    - *Responsibility*: City
- **METRO Route Changes.** Make adjustments to existing service to better serve peninsula residents, commuters and visitors without additional hours of service.
  - Revise existing Route 8 to directly serve the Eastern Waterfront from Congress Street, continuing to the PTC.
  - Adjust routes to operate with consistent 15, 30 and 60-minute headways.
  - Provide consistent 15-minute headways on key peninsula route segments by overlapping routes and staggering departures.
  - Adjust off-peninsula ends of existing routes to be able to extend service along an entire transit priority corridor.

- Consolidate parallel services to the extent possible onto transit priority corridors
- **South Portland Bus Route Changes.** Make route adjustments to deliver service overlapped on transit priority corridors while staggering departures with METRO service.
  - *Responsibility:* South Portland Bus
- **Establish a Universal Transit Pass.** Develop a bulk payment plan for institutions, employers and large residential developments to purchase unlimited transit passes on the METRO, South Portland, ZOOM Express and Casco Bay systems for all participating employees or residents. Coupled with a seamless system map, ease of transit use and its attractiveness as an alternative increase dramatically.
  - Bulk fees are based on numbers of participants paying a substantially reduced per person fee (typically assuming an average trip rate, such as two rides per person per day). Actual utilization shares represent better fare recovery for transit providers.
  - Bulk fees can be negotiated annually based on ridership statistics and surveys for participants.
    - *Responsibility:* METRO, South Portland Bus, ZOOM Express, CBIT and the City

### **Pedestrian & Bicycle System**

- **Install Crosswalk Markings on Larger Roads.** Intersections along Franklin Arterial, Federal Street and Commercial Street in the vicinity of High and Park Streets were most often identified at the public forum for this type of improvement.
  - USM & Bayside area: I-295 at Surrenden Street, Franklin Arterial intersections, Federal Street intersections. Also I-295 at Deane, Exeter, Payson and Roberts.
  - Downtown & Waterfront area: Franklin Arterial intersections, Federal Street intersections, Commercial Street between High and Park Streets, Temple Street at Free, Fore and Middle Streets
  - West End: Vaughn Street at Brackett Street
- **Pedestrian Signal Improvements.** Crossing indications and timing should be improved at a number of locations, including Washington & Eastern Promenade and Washington & Foxx. Improvements were requested at the forum along Congress, Park and on Frederick at Fore River Parkway.
- **Bicycle Parking.** Required throughout the peninsula.
  - Implement a City-sponsored amenity program where businesses can purchase a \$300 post & ring short-term rack at a discount that the City will install for no charge.
- **Bike Stations.** Install comfort stations with some on-site or adjacent retail amenity and covered secure bike parking. Incorporate bicycle repair if possible.
  - Recommended locations include Cumberland Avenue between Mayo and Smith Streets, Congress Street at Myrtle Street, Spring Street at Temple Street, and Congress Street at Gilman Street (at the hospital)
- **Bike Facilities.** Many residents hoped to see more bike lanes, particularly along Congress Street in Bayside, Commercial Street and Washington Avenue.

- Locations for new lanes include: Franklin Arterial, Congress Street, Brighton Avenue, Park Avenue between Deering Avenue and State Street, Franklin Arterial, Commercial Street, Washington Avenue, St. John Street, and Valley Street
- Locations for bike boulevards include: Surrenden Street, Fore Street, Spring Street, Cutter Street, and Walnut Street.

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## **SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (WITHIN THE NEXT 5 YEARS)**

### **Parking and Transportation Demand Management**

- Install networked multi-space pay stations and occupancy sensors to improve customer friendliness, revenue management, and occupancy monitoring of downtown parking.
- Offer in-car meters for parking in resident sticker zones.
- Implement a “traffic congestion impact fee” for all new development, based on downtown development projects’ proposed number of parking spaces and/or estimated peak-hour vehicle trips. Use impact fee revenues to fund the STF. Pursue a nexus study to determine most appropriate assessment methodology and fee structure.
- Require employers to provide Universal Transit Passes to all new and existing downtown employees as part of TMA membership.
- As a condition of approval for new downtown development, require provision of Universal Transit Passes to all new residents, funded through condominium homeowner association (HOA) fees or rents. Provide free or deeply-discounted passes for existing residents, funded by the STF.
- Expand PTC park & ride and consider additional park & ride options for METRO, South Portland Bus and ZOOM Turnpike Express service.

### **Transit System**

- Create amenity standards for transit stops based on the number of riders boarding at each location. Maximize amenities including enhanced signage, shelters and other amenities along transit priority streets.
- Consider signal priority for and other operational enhancements on all streets with combined service of at least 10 minutes during peak periods.
- Incorporate real-time information in all high-amenity bus shelters using Next Bus or other technology.
- Implement a program to share costs of new transit service with schools through cost-share arrangement between METRO, USM and the public school district and/or Universal Transit Pass program for high school and college students.

### **Pedestrian & Bicycle System**

- Public staircase improvements are necessary at Spring & Oak and on Spring at Park in the West End.
- Additional pedestrian-only streets should be considered in Deering Oaks and the Old Port.

- Several locations for reconnecting streets were identified, including Franklin, Wilmot, Cotton, Cross, Free, South, Union, and Deering Street Place.
- Multi-use paths should be created, including the Bayside promenade trail.
- Spring Street median should be removed with reverse-angle parking and bike lanes provided.

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## **LONG TERM ACTIONS (WITHIN THE NEXT 10-20 YEARS)**

### **Parking and Transportation Demand Management**

- If total downtown parking demand cannot be met with existing supply after above recommendations have been fully implemented build new public shared parking as needed.

### **Transit System**

- Change the vehicle used by all transit providers to a hybrid bus or other unique vehicle and increase frequency to at least every 10 minutes.
- Install electronic fare collection equipment on all transit vehicles.
- Create BRT service along Forest Avenue Corridor (Details under development).
- Initiate fixed-guideway trolley service along Commercial Street waterfront (Details under development)
- Initiate fixed-guideway light-rail service from points north to the Easter Waterfront, continuing across the peninsula through Bayside to the PTC and on to points west and south (Details under development)

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## **Implementation Schedule**

The figure below (pending) is intended to function as a phased implementation timeline for referenced by all parties for all the peninsula improvements, policies, and programs recommended here. The Action Plan contains the following information:

- Recommended Actions: A list of recommendations grouped by topic area
- Next Steps: Immediate next steps that should be pursued in order to begin implementation.
- Lead Implementer(s): The key agencies or non-governmental organizations that are the logical implementation lead.
- Necessary New / Changed Ordinances: Local legal changes needed to proceed, where applicable.
- Estimated Public Capital and Estimated Operations and Maintenance Costs: Estimated planning-level implementation costs, including capital, operations, and maintenance costs.
- Note(s): Additional explanatory comments as needed.
- Timeline: Recommended implementation phasing (Immediate, Short-Term, etc.).