

Cooper Jones Active Transportation Safety Council (ATSC)

Summary Meeting Report

April 28, 2020

Participating: Alexandria Alston, WA Bikes; Barb Chamberlain, WSDOT; Dongho Chang, Seattle City Traffic Engineer; Charlotte Claybrooke, Safe Routes to Schools; Chris Comeau, Bellingham City Planner; David Jones; Josh Diekmann, Tacoma Transportation Engineer; Eric Edwards, Richland Police; David Jones; Katherine Miller, Spokane Capital Programs; Jon Pascal, Kirkland City Council; Julia Reitan, Feet First; Portia Shields, Yakama Nation; Harold Taniguchi, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs; Scott Waller, WTSC; Kerri Wilson, Intercity Transit; Anna Zivarts, Rooted in Rights; Pam Pannkuk; Alonzo Wade; Pat Hughes, Trillium Leadership Consulting.

Agenda

A. **Confirm monthly meeting schedule.** May 27, June 24, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

B. Action Team Update:

1. **Automated Speed Enforcement:** (Scott) Will have a discussion paper for the May meeting, including process observations. We have collected a wide range of information into a draft document, and sent to AT members for comments. We are on track with what the ATSC imagined for how Action Teams will work. Will want to include Block to Box.
2. **Injury Minimization:** (Charlotte) Two years ago there was a recommendation to address injury minimization and speed. 20 individuals are on the work group (some of them from ATSC). Created in 2019 a literature review and potential policy. Looks at speed at which a likely serious injury or fatality will occur (20 mph for car/bike). Put on hold due to workload/COVID but hope to soon address the 20+ comments on the draft and be ready for next phase.

C . Looking at Equity Definitions – OK

D. Equity Lens Framework – Revisions sent with Notes

- Call it a framework.
- Community engagement – can we include that to mean that we will invite other people to the Action Team to provide awareness
- Questions feel practical. Like them!
- What if we don't have data but we know it's a problem? Is this sequential or can we hop around? We can indicate what data is needed.

- If inclusion and representation are values, ATSC needs to continue to be aware of how we're doing as a group. Scott will continue recruitment efforts. Committee has given suggestions.
- How will the Framework be used? By each Action Team before and during... and by ATSC committee to sift through potential projects/Action Teams to undertake.

Break: 10:50 – 11:00

E. Dreaming Bigger – Opportunities beyond what we've already done for taking on projects

Scott - We've done some foundational work by identifying Critical Criteria, Equity Framework and Selection Process.

Barb - Guiderails: in our statute

- Review and analyze data and programs
- Identify points at which transportation system can be improved
- Look for patterns
- Monitor progress
- Seek opportunities to expand consideration and implementation of the principle of systematic safety

In our Charter:

- Leverage existing ideas already happening to make them bigger or better
- Recommend Model policies around safe systems
- Do we understand contributing factors (political, social ...)
- Changes to systems and operations

Dreaming Bigger Questions and Responses

1. **What have you seen/experienced in this COVID-changed world that attracts you?** David cue up some stories about what we are seeing now – we are seeing and doing some things that were previously unthinkable.

- Julia: People are deliberately staying close to home, in walking distance. Makes me think about - Paris – can we meet our needs within 15 minutes walking?
- Barb – People are friendlier. How do we preserve that? We interact more with our neighbors now than we were before we were supposed to stay away.
- But a friend also noted she's experiencing racism.
- Scott – not as many vehicles on the road. More comfortable riding bike. Makes me wonder why we need all these vehicles on the road. How we construct work, entertainment, play that means we have to drive?!
- Anna – as someone who is transit dependent, takes longer, I don't use services far outside my area. West Seattle bridge – longer commute complaints – compared to how much time it takes to use transit – so little. People have normalized expectations about how long car transportation should take. Public health, air quality is better, most applicable to more vulnerable.
- Harold – Walking now every day, before didn't. Wife drove to office, we walked it, cars whizzing by – she was shocked. Sidewalk, very narrow grass strip. Also, no sidewalks in areas. Simple awareness is up of the environment and how safe you feel.
- Huge interdependency of how we survive and thrive together – everything we took for granted has been challenged. We're forced to appreciate things differently and the human beings that make it happen – respect for interdependency – how to translate into our work?
- Kerri – live near Chehalis-Western trail. Incredibly busy. To drive to grocery store, have to cross the trail three times – people noticing and being more cautious when crossing.
- Jon Pascal, City of Kirkland – we have a policy and focus on 10-min walking neighborhoods to prioritize land use and transportation. More people seeing the value of it. Cross Kirkland Corridor – complaints about why it's not closed – it's a vital connection for walkers and bikers, we have focused on educational elements instead.
 - Want to see more pilot projects to close streets/parking areas to walking and biking – haven't found that success yet – this is an opportunity to test that. Haven't been able to do it – enforcement issues.

- Julia - Wide enough outdoor trails feels like a safe space – you can “be” with others and also keep a distance. It feels like people will want that to continue.
- As more people are walking and biking, it becomes easier for them to see selves as a walker/biker when they are driving.
- Observing more kids walking and biking, many by themselves or with friends.

Cautionary Tales:

- Dongho – This time is showing vulnerabilities. Not enough room to pass each other walking in the street and getting out of the way of vehicle. State law gives right-of-way to the vehicle on a roadway, even if there isn’t a sidewalk. Duty of the ped to get out of the way, not the other way around, car has to avoid.
 - Let’s look at how the law is written - is it equitable and safe – does it bring back balance in general. Formally close the street with signs. Set the value system to protect and value most vulnerable users in society.
- Scott: people speeding more. Motorcycles passed me on a 30-mph going 70
- Dongho – ditto. School zones data – very high speeds during times kids picking up food and school supplies, turn the flashers back on. 3 fatalities this month – horrific high-speed collisions of cars with fixed objects, haven’t seen in the past. More volumes 60% reduction of traffic, but incidents are severe.
- Barb – within King Co – trails closed except for essential transportation. Even though they are for recreation and use rec dollars. Multiple jurisdictional entities had to make decisions in view of the public.
- Jon P – also same, King Co and Kirkland each have pieces of a trail. Was deemed a Public works transportation corridor by policy – helped to reinforce the corridor staying open.
 - We need governance space to collaborate and make decisions to figure this out. Higher level leadership: liability, recreational. (i.e., trails on 520 and I-90 were “closed” by jurisdiction other than the state – those are ours!)

2. How do we then translate these experiences into something this Advisory Council can have a meaningful and productive role? Harold cued up the ideas portion: What can we do to take advantage, make it more permanent?

Charlotte - envisioning places that are more middle class not as much dense apartments close to arterials.

- Do research, case studies, recon, data gathering or collecting stories in pockets of communities - where we're concerned about equity and demographic issues – are they also walking on higher speed arterials? SR 900.

Julia - interested in funding, the expectation that state funding – could be purposed Transportation for America – if you fund local street and sidewalk improvements, = 16% more jobs than if building highway and big projects.

- Can we look into data/ to promote funneling more money locally to complete street improvements and have a local benefit for jobs – this will be huge as we put the economy back together.
- Could be part of the stimulus package – that's IMMEDIATE. Can we act without waiting until December?

Barb - Guardrails – we don't get to go around our process of what requests go forward. This is probably similar to an approval of our asks – need to do due process. Could comment on policies about spending.

- Dongho - Can we as ATSC request leg and gov to make some temporary change in law for people walking? Josh can help vet and talk to government relations team. Could be considered in an emergency leg session if there is one. Contact Jon Snider re executive order? And then get it to be permanent – esp needed in rural areas

That's the inequity! We built our laws where our most vulnerable are at the most unsafe. If they can't get out of the way – they end up being a victim.

- Could the "walk in the street" change be tied to the definition in the 20mph Neighborhood Safe Streets Law? That focuses on residential streets. Also need to encourage more towns to adopt/apply that law.
- We need an article in a major platform that lists "What WA Cities Can Do for Street Safety" similar to the national lists. Applications of WA state law, opportunity to enforce vulnerable user law to make it safer to walk/roll, etc.

Some of the national lists: <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2020/03/31/ten-nacto-endorsed-ways-every-city-should-respond-to-covid-19-on-its-streets/> and <https://www.itdp.org/2020/04/13/five-temporary-covid-measures-that-us-cities-should-make-permanent/>

- A state Vision Zero policy could be a Big Idea worth an action team examination. Target Zero isn't the same thing and people conflate the two.

3. Do we redefine safety – to include public health, does it enhance our work or spread us too thin? Anna cued up...

Alex - like broadening the definition of safety. Has to be done intentionally and thoughtfully. Previous leg efforts have become messy. Like it to be part of our conversation to reduce traffic fatality and injury – makes it harder at the leg level.

- Use the argument of economic potential of lower impact developments to show how to facilitate public safety – (Scott)
- Evaluate public health impact of current traffic laws. We don't fully grasp the cost of our current system and who bears those costs. (Anna)
- Bring drivers into it – they want to NOT hit people – how do we include them in the considerations? “This is good for drivers too.” (Julia)
- Enlist insurance companies – benefits to them: reduced driving = reduced accidents = reduced payout. Will they fund a Safe Driving Campaign to educate/talk about how to continue safety, how to improve safety? Social distancing learning could be repurposed for vulnerable users' law – stay 6 feet away – now we know how to do it! (Barb)
- How will schools manage the return to school – can we recommend children should be able to walk and bike in their communities – in order to not gather on buses or in large groups.

This is an interesting time for us to illustrate what we mean and what we're trying to bring about. Keep bandwidth open to think about possibilities for using this current situation to create images, messages, stories that will be compelling once the restrictions go away.

F. Next Steps:

1. Scott: Create a group on MS Teams for ATSC
2. Pat: Send Revised documents
3. Exec Team: Prep for May and June meetings
4. Action Team prepare discussion paper for May
5. Can the Exec Comm draft an Op-Ed on this conversation