



MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Commission

FROM: Raymond Hess

DATE: September 13, 2019

SUBJECT: **Construction Impacts to Active Transportation – Response to Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Recommendations**

This memorandum provides the current status of implementing Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Recommendations that pertain to construction impacts to active transportation.

[Pedestrian Safety and Access Task Force Report](#)

Objective No. 1) H. Provide Safe and Accessible Pedestrian Routes in all Construction Zones. (p.12)

“The City should ensure through building codes, fees, policy and enforcement that a direct, safe and accessible pedestrian route is provided in all construction zones, including providing a protective shed where appropriate. All pedestrian construction routes should comply with the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MMUTCD) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. When construction requires the relocation of a transit stop or interferes with access to transit in any manner, the City shall coordinate with the transit provider to ensure that safe and barrier free access is maintained during the entire course of construction. In accordance with best practices, when space is limited, a sidewalk diversion into the roadway on the same side of the street as the sidewalk should be provided rather than a sidewalk detour to the other side of a street. A pedestrian construction route should take precedent over on-street parking and all but one through motor vehicle lane in each direction when creating barrier free sidewalk diversions.”

Staff response/update:

Existing city policy (Title IV, Chapter 47, Section 4:22) identifies the requirement to maintain pedestrian passage during construction, and it is the city’s practice to require that all construction projects maintain a safe and accessible pedestrian route, compliant with the MMUTCD, State of Michigan barrier-free regulations on private property, and the proposed Public Right-of-way (ROW) Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). Enforcement of existing code is an area for improvement. For construction in the ROW the City Engineer will focus on enforcement of existing code, and ensure that construction

inspection staff are adequately trained and directed to enforce code prior to the 2020 construction season.

Sidewalk diversion to the same side of the street as the existing sidewalk is the city's preferred practice and the standard to which construction projects are held unless not practical or possible due to physical constraints. Utilizing on-street parking space and/or additional lanes of traffic for a pedestrian route is an option that the city will pursue when feasible. Staff recognizes that sidewalk closure for construction in recent history is not aligned with this preferred practice. To improve adherence to this best practice, staff involved in construction review and barricade permits will begin coordination to establish guidelines for sidewalk closure with consideration to length of time, availability of adjacent space, and physical constraints.

Regarding transit stop relocation, the city and TheRide coordinate on a case-by-case basis to ensure that safe and barrier free access is maintained during the entire course of construction for city capital projects. To reduce impacts from private construction, staff can modify the terms of the ROW permit, and the Public Services Standard Specifications, to require that the applicant coordinate maintenance of access to transit stops. This item will also be enforced by construction inspectors.

Implementation Strategies – 3. Funding) B. Provide Incentives to Keep Pedestrian Routes Open During Construction. (p.25)

“The City should re-evaluate the costs to developers for closing a pedestrian route for construction relative to the cost for keeping it open, and should adjust fees as necessary to give the developer an incentive to keep a pedestrian route open. The City should consider waiving the meter bag fee when metered parking spaces are being closed for the purpose of providing a place for pedestrians to walk at a construction site.”

Staff response/update:

An incentive is currently provided, when pedestrian access is maintained the City does not require a barricade permit. However, additional incentives to keep pedestrian routes open are not necessary because the city requires that pedestrian routes be kept open, unless access physically cannot be maintained in a safe manner, in which case a pedestrian detour is implemented.

The city completed a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to evaluate the existing code and associated costs to developers in April 2018. Only one RFP response was received and the cost exceeded available budget. A recommendation will be made to include this in a future budget.

cc:

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