

SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY (SPU) MIMP

DAC/PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMENT/RESPONSES

May 17, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT #1

Comment. Sharon Levine (Queen Anne Community Council) commented about the closure of the 6th Ave West and alleys and the repercussions of the closure. Sharon noted that she heard at the last meeting that a study has not been initiated. Sharon encourages that all the impacts should be studied and its impact on parking, pedestrian movement, and delivery truck movement. Study all issues closing with major arterial and alleys.

Response. The MIMP is a non-project action and study of environmental impacts is commensurate with the level of detail known about the proposal. At this time, it is not known when, or if, the University will propose a vacation of 6th Avenue, nor what the University's trip generation will be at that time, nor the amount of development completed or anticipated either on campus or off. The MIMP does not approve any street or alley vacation, nor does it commit Council to any particular decision on a future vacation. Rather, the MIMP alerts the community and Council that the University may wish to propose such a vacation in the future. The impacts of such a proposal would be studied in detail at that time, when the background conditions can be ascertained with precision and a specific action evaluated.

PUBLIC COMMENT #2

Comment. Kristin Carlson (neighbor) a resident that lives on 8th Ave West and West Dravus St. Kristin is interested in the traffic impacts and the mitigation plans. Kristin asked if the traffic IMPACT studies were done when the University was in session (and not during COVID or the summer).

Response. Transpo used data from the 2018 and 2019 schoolyears to estimate impacts related to University uses. Where necessary it did use some data during the COVID years, but it applied accepted engineering techniques to extrapolate impacts to non-COVID conditions. Where possible, those estimates were truth-tested against actual data.

DAC COMMENT #1

Comment. Nancy Ousley asked if the streets are wide enough for **traffic circles** and Mike Swenson noted that they will have to take a closer look on that and SDOT will be heavily involved in any traffic calming process.

Response. SDOT has sole jurisdiction over improvements within the right-of-way. The MIMP can propose ideas, but Council does not, through MIMP approval, authorize alterations to the City's transportation grid. The University would support traffic circles if the community wants them, but the design of traffic circles ultimately need to consider the traffic volumes and design vehicles. Any design proposal would go through the standard SDOT design review process. There are no active proposals with SDOT at this time.

DAC COMMENT #2

Comment. John Rush asked if there were any bicycle transportation modelling around 3rd and Bertona. Specifically, the Intent to move bicyclists across **Nickerson to the trail**. Mike Swenson noted that they will take a closer look at the connections and interactions between 3rd and Nickerson and 3rd and Bertona and will be looking at any bicycle transportation aspects and safety aspects. Intent will be to move the bicyclists across @Nickerson via the traffic signal onto the trail. Mike understands the two intersections are important from the safety aspect.

Response. Because bicyclists chiefly travel within City rights-of-way, the University has limited ability to improve bicycle connections. Connections from the campus to the trail can be provided via the signal at 3rd or in the future via the traffic signal at 6th. There are not planned or potential projects that would impact either the existing signal at 3rd or future potential signal at 6th.

DAC COMMENT #3

Comment. John Rush asked about the traffic light on 6th and Nickerson. Mike Swenson noted that that improvement was coupled with 3rd and Bertona restriction. There was no left turn (East) with the proposal from Bertona. They are proposing a traffic signal at 6th and Nickerson. This will allow people to get onto Nickerson from Bertona.

Response. SPU supports the installation of a traffic light at 6th and Nickerson under this MIMP, as was proposed in the 2000 MIMP. This signal would provide an alternate means to access Nickerson other than 3rd and would provide an additional signalized pedestrian crossing of Nickerson.

DAC COMMENT #4

Comment. John Rush asked about the impact of the traffic back up on 6th Avenue and Maris Fry indicated that according to the data studies, the projected queues at the traffic signal is between 70-100 ft. about 4 cars. Mike said they will note this in the document.

Response. Projected queue lengths with the traffic signal will be approximately 4 cars. This information will be added to the Transportation Discipline Report being prepared as part of the MIMP process.

DAC COMMENT #5

Comment. Nancy Ousley asked if the street needs to be widened at 6th and Nickerson and Mike Swenson commented that they will not be able to widen the road. For parking impact, they will look at the permit parking.

Response. We would not expect any widening of the right-of-way, but SDOT could obtain additional space for traveling cars by removing existing parking for some portion south of Nickerson. The specific distance would be based on design discussions with SDOT. Again, the University has limited ability to influence SDOT decisions about street configuration.

DAC COMMENT #6

Comment. Patreese Martin read one of the comments from the chat (from Kristen Carlson) if a study has been done that would account for people that will move to the North Queen Anne neighborhood that encourages the use of arterials. There is concern about safety for pedestrians, children, and children on side streets. An example is when folks make a right turn only from West Bertona to 3rd West, they will cut through Dravus to 3rd West even more. Mike Swenson commented that they will take a closer look and see how the shift change might be affected.

Response. The EIS studies the impacts of the proposed action of adopting a new MIMP, while the comment raises questions regarding City development policies generally. Regarding the specific issue of a potential right-only requirement on Bertona at 3rd, we do not expect an increase volumes on Dravus. The vast majority of vehicles currently turning left from W Bertona Street to 3rd Avenue W, and vehicles traveling straight through the intersection to continue along W Bertona Street, are accessing Nickerson Street to travel eastbound. While some drivers may choose to turn right on W Bertona Street and then turn left on W Cremona Street and W Dravus Street to access Nickerson Street, it is anticipated that the majority will instead turn onto 6th Avenue W and turn right onto Nickerson Street at the proposed traffic signal. The analysis of the mitigation scenario assumes that 80 percent of rerouted trips from W Bertona Street/3rd Avenue W are rerouted to the 6th Avenue W/Nickerson Street signal, while 20 percent of rerouted trips would access Nickerson Street via neighborhood streets. This represents 31 vehicle trips during the AM peak hour and 39 vehicle trips during the PM peak hour.

DAC COMMENT #7 (COMMENT)

Sue Tanner asked about **8th and Dravus** traffic and what was involved in the traffic studies. How do you determine what streets will be involved in the study with respect to traffic generation? Mike Swenson noted that through the scoping process, they looked at the campus development and the potential impacts. Both SDOT and SDCI were involved in the scoping process. Dave Church noted Sue Tanner's comment regarding the cut through traffic and suggested noting where the traffic is coming from and going in the comment letter. It may result in further mitigation measures. Dave can see what Transpo can do or recommend. Sue Tanner commented that the point of the question is that the neighborhood has problems with traffic with SPU students speeding through the neighborhood (and others) and will have to address this to SDOT. **Kelsey Timmer** noted that if the Committee would like to know the specific street intersections to include them in their comment letter and SDOT will take a closer look.

DAC COMMENT #7 (RESPONSE)

Transpo collected counts at the following intersections in the neighborhood west and south of SPU both when SPU classes were in session and when they were *not* in session to understand the impacts of SPU-related traffic along neighborhood streets:

1. 8th Avenue W (West) & W Barrett Street
2. 8th Avenue W (East) & W Barrett Street
3. 8th Avenue W & W Dravus Street
4. 6th Avenue W & W Dravus Street
5. 5th Avenue W & W Barrett Street

The traffic counts indicated that volumes along the adjacent roads are low during the AM and PM peak hours (generally under 60 vehicles per hour, or less than 1 vehicle per minute). Along several street segments the peak hour traffic volumes decrease when SPU classes are in session. Along W Barrett Street, traffic volumes increase by at most 15 vehicles during the AM peak hour, and 3 vehicles during the PM peak hour. Along W Dravus Street, traffic volumes decrease during the AM peak hour, and increase by at most 12 vehicles during the PM peak hour. Along 8th Avenue W, traffic volumes increase by at most 9 vehicles during the AM peak hour, and 2 vehicles during the PM peak hour. Along 5th Avenue W, traffic volumes increase by at most 13 vehicles during the AM peak hour, and 21 vehicles during the PM peak hour. Overall, the neighborhood streets surrounding SPU observe at most an additional vehicle trip once every 3 minutes when SPU classes are in session.

DAC COMMENT #8

Comment. Eric Hanson asked if any changes had been proposed at 3rd Avenue W (between Dravus and Nickerson). Mike Swenson noted no improvements proposed on that stretch. Eric asked if there is any data or studies about the growth of student population and more pedestrian activity crossing at 3rd Avenue W (between Dravus and Nickerson) due to the student population growth. Eric noted that it's very easy to exceed the speed limits on 3rd Avenue (coming down the hill) and unsafe for pedestrians at the crossing. Mike Swenson noted that pedestrian connections and safety were studied carefully, and they also looked at population growth and projects in the area. Mike Swenson mentioned that they can further investigate these pedestrian crossings and safety with SDOT. SDOT has very specific criteria that helps direct the level of enhancements allowed at the crossings.

No pedestrian crossing improvements are noted at this time. SDOT has a process to review locations should volumes trigger the need. The MIMP does not assume a significant increase in student enrollment over the peak levels seen in the 2010's, thus pedestrian activity is not likely to change significantly from its current levels.

DAC COMMENT #9

Comment. Sue Tanner commented that there is a concern in the neighborhood about a pipeline project that will be coming on at Barrett St. and that it will add to the traffic and there is a blind intersection at 8th Ave and Barrett St, it would be good to have a study done at this section.

Response. Impacts from the proposed MIMP are minimal at this location as noted in the previous comments response. Furthermore, property is not under control of the University and the University has no plans for development in this area. These locations should be reviewed as part of the townhouse project if volume increases warrant it.

DAC COMMENT #10

Comment. Patreese Martin asked what leverage do we have to reduce parking in the neighborhoods? And about the mitigation measures in the Transportation Management Plan around reducing parking in the surrounding neighborhood especially regarding to students who have cars on campus. Mike Swenson noted that the University is working on how to manage parking around the neighborhood. RPZ (Residential Parking Zone) program is a big lever. Mike Swenson suggested including the RPZ program and its enforcement aspects in the comment letter. Nancy noted RPZ has worked great on her block.

Response. The University supports the ongoing implementation of the RPZ program. The process to increase the current RPZ areas are outlined by the City and include broader neighborhood participation. SPU will continue to fund the program if expanded based on City process as originally required in the 2000 MIMP.

DAC COMMENT #11

Comment. Nancy Ousley asked about the street vacation process and requested about the City's policies on street vacations be made available to the Committee for review. Kelsey Timmer mentioned that SDOT can provide a copy. Figure 39 of the report – TDR- shows the street vacations.

Response. MIMP presents the street vacations in a conceptual manner. They have been identified in the MIMP such that they can be included as a future potential project, but inclusion of the MIMP does not imply approval, and does not bound a future Council to any particular decision on a vacation. Further analysis will be required by SDOT and City Council as part of any final decision.