



# Transportation Commission Ordinance Revisions

Transportation Commission Meeting

March 4, 2026

# Ordinance changes

- Refine street geometry process to eliminate potential for stalemate
- Clean up list of powers and approvals
- No significant changes to day-to-day function of Transportation Commission

# Street geometry process

# The process by current ordinance

## 33.56 6(a) Road Construction Projects.

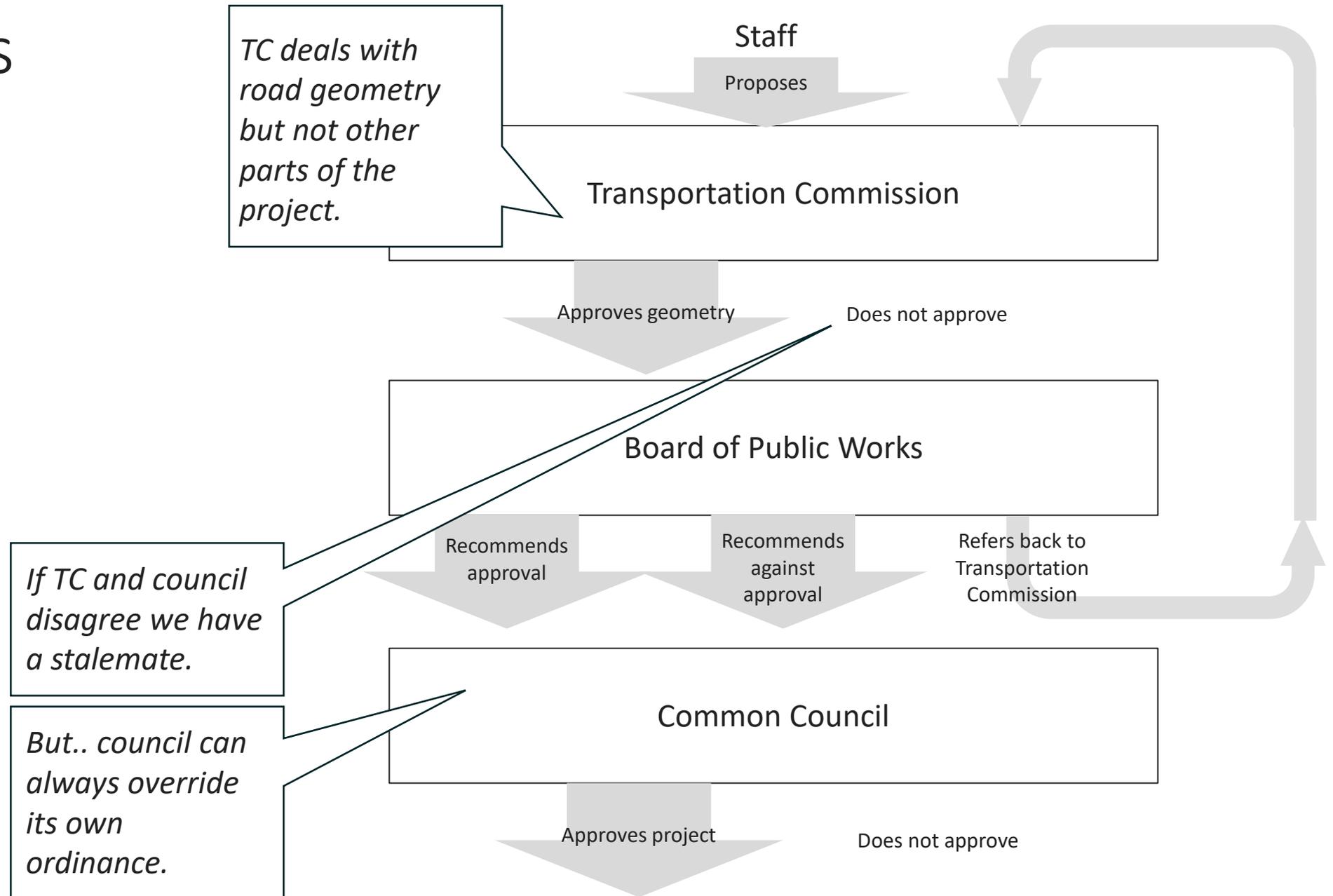
Final authority for approving road construction projects lies with the Common Council, which takes action after receiving a recommendation from the Board of Public Works. The Transportation Commission shall determine the right-of-way use and geometric designs to be included in the final plans and specifications sent to the Board of Public Works and Common Council for approval, with Transportation Commission approval required for any geometric design variances from the Complete Green Streets Guide. In making a recommendation to the Common Council, the Board of Public Works may recommend approval of the road construction project, including the road geometry approved by the Transportation Commission, refer the road geometry decision back to the Transportation Commission for reconsideration, or recommend against approval of the road construction project on the basis that it does not agree with the Transportation Commission's decision regarding road geometry. For road construction projects identified as appropriate for administrative approval and in compliance with the Complete Green Streets Guide, The Transportation Commission may authorize the Director of Transportation or designee to determine the right-of-way use and geometric designs to be included in the final plans and specifications sent to the Board of Public Works and Common Council for approval.

# Goal of the process

- “Transportation Commission Approval Required for any geometric design variances from the Complete Green Streets Guide”
- “Final authority for approving road construction projects lies with the Common Council.”

# The process per current ordinance

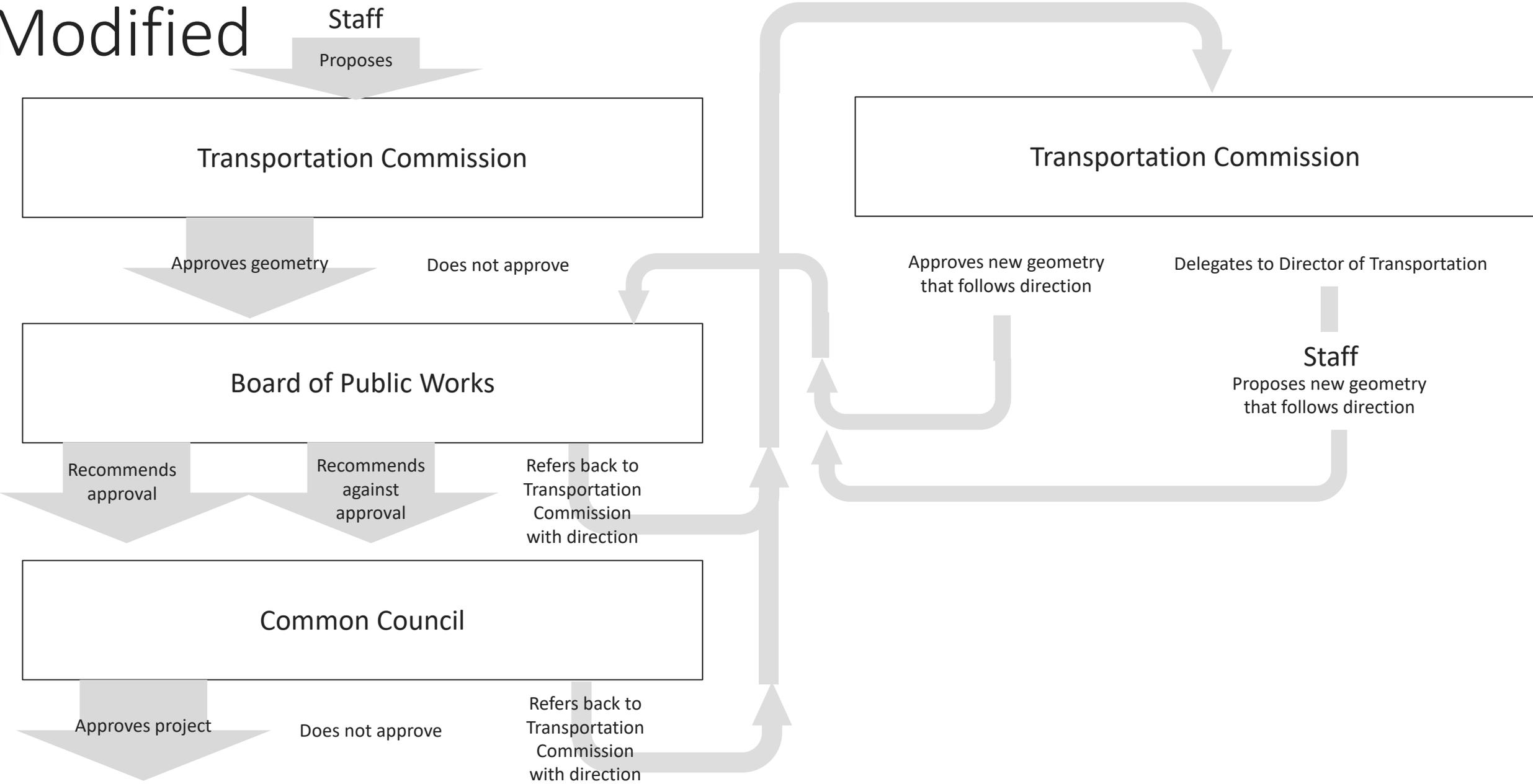
33.56 6(c)



# Issues with the current process

- If BPW disagrees with TC , BPW can refer back to TC but there no mechanism for resolution. This sets up a potential endless loop.
- If Council disagrees with TC or BPW, Council can vote “no” but there is no mechanism for resolution. This encourages Council to go outside the process and pass a one-off resolution or ordinance dictating geometry
- Normalizing one-off geometry resolution or ordinances undercuts Complete Green Streets and adds to Council workload
- The current process seems to work well on nearly every project. The intent is not to change the process but to create a “safety valve.”

# Modified



# Proposed process if Council disagrees with TC decisions

- Council can refer back to TC with direction
  - This means that Council can express its intent but does not need to figure out details
- TC can either approve a geometry that meets council direction or delegate to staff
  - This means TC is involved and can refine based on Council, but also is not forced to approve something it does not agree with
  - In delegating to staff, TC can put its objections and recommendations on the record
  - This avoids any standoff
  - Staff can assure that any selected design meets standards

# Proposed process if BPW disagrees with TC decisions

- BPW can refer back to TC with direction
  - BPW can express its concerns (generally related to how geometry relates to non-transportation elements like drainage or trees) but does not need to specify a new design
  - Goes back to TC so TC can respond
- TC can either approve a geometry that meets BPW direction or delegate to staff
  - This means TC is involved and can refine based on BPW, but also is not forced to approve something it does not agree with
  - In delegating to staff, TC can put its objections and recommendations on the record
  - This avoids any standoff
- Council can override BPW decision with its own direction

# Other changes

# Alder terms

- 33.56(3)(b)and(c): With staggered Alder elections, Alder terms are set to 1 year

# People with disabilities

- 33.56(6)(a)(3): add that TC works to eliminate disparities for people with disabilities (as well as people of color and people of low income)
- 33.56(6)(b)(1): add mobility devices as an element of the city's transportation system

# Budgets and Reports

- 33.56(6)(a)(5): eliminate provision that TC makes recommendations on budgets to the Common Council
  - this matches actual practice
- 33.56(6)(a)(6): eliminate provision for annual report
  - this matches actual practice

# Powers

- 33.56(6)(b)(3)(xi): add reference to make clear that all items in 33.56(7) are included in powers
- 33.56(6)(d): “Complete Green Streets” section is removed since it is covered or duplicated word for word in other sections

## d) Complete Green Streets.

1. Determine the right-of-way use and geometric designs to be included in the final plans and specifications sent to the Board of Public Works and Common Council for approval. (In 33.56(6)(c))
2. Modify Complete Green Streets Guide. (In 33.56(6)(b)(3))
3. Approve updates to Transit Priority Network. (In 33.56(6)(b)(3))
4. Approve updates to the All Ages and Abilities Bike Network. (In 33.56(6)(b)(3))
5. Approve any design variances from the Complete Green Streets Guide. (In 33.56(6)(b)(3))

# Powers

- 33.56(7): clarify what TC has final decisions on:
  - Remove “Regional transit contracts (services and pass programs)”
    - this is a Council power

# Powers

- 33.56(7): clarify what TC has final decisions on:
  - Route “realignments,” in addition to “additions, extensions, or contractions”
    - Realignment should also require approval
  - “Significant changes to headways and hours of service”
    - changes that are not significant do not need to go to TC (e.g. the last bus of the day is 5 minutes later)
    - definition of significance can be made in policy
  - “Significant changes in bus stop locations, removals of bus stops, or consolidation of bus stops,” not just vague “bus stops”
    - changes that are not significant do not need to go to TC (e.g. a stop is moved 10 feet)
    - definition of significance can be made in policy

# Powers

- 33.56(7): clarify what TC has final decisions on:
  - “Significant changes in complementary paratransit services,” not just “Transit for people with disabilities”
    - Paratransit was not specifically called out
    - People with disabilities also use fixed route but that is covered with other items
  - Add “governance of Parking Meter Test Area Programs set forth in Sec. 12.143(1), MGO”
    - Harmonizes ordinances

# Powers

- 33.56(7): clarify what TC has final decisions on:
  - “Approve updates to the School Crossing Guard policies and operations” instead of “school crossings”
    - Common Council authorized TC to make future updates to School Crossing Protection Criteria on 12/9/25
  - Add “Transportation-related” to “safety programs and projects”
    - Some kinds of safety programs are not related to transportation and would not go to TC
  - “Addition or removal of traffic signals” instead of “Traffic signals”
    - Routine changes to signals (timing, equipment) do not go to TC
  - Spell “buses” correctly

# Appeal process for final decisions

- More flexibility on agenda timing: “a Council agenda that is at least seven (7) days but no more than ninety (90) days after receipt of the appeal” instead of “the next Council agenda that is at least seven (7) days after receipt of the appeal”
- Add grounds to reverse or modify decision based on being “not in compliance with applicable state or federal law or regulation; or would put the City in breach of a prior contract or covenant that the Common Council does not wish to breach.”

# Questions?