

# Project prioritization

Based on previous discussions of the Traffic Calming Subcommittee, we have drafted possible criteria for scoring projects and prioritizing them. For practical reasons, we have treated prioritization as separate from identifying and evaluating possible solutions.

Note that we did not focus on refining the maximum number of points in each category, as there were too many open higher level questions for which we needed input from TCS.

We developed the ranking system based on extensive review of three locations:

- Glenway
- Lakeside
- Park St

We chose these projects based on

- Our own familiarity with the area,
- Representing projects that we anticipated scoring high (Park St), medium (Lakeside) and possibly low (Glenway) and that would also probably require different types and scales of solutions
- Lakeside was extensively discussed at TC, and Park St is geographically very close but also different than Lakeside

A narrative summary of our discussion of the three projects is at the end of the document.

## Input sought from the commission and staff

### Scoring crossing quality: Holistic ranking versus multiple criteria

We spent a lot of time discussing how to score the difficulty/ease of crossing a street on foot, wheelchair, or bicycle. We started out trying to rely on a large number of objectively measurable criteria such as:

- Number of lanes to cross (travel and parking)
- Total crossing distance
- Type of crosswalk (crossing prohibited, unmarked, marked (two stripe), marked (continental), RRFB, fully signalized)
- Distance to nearest low-stress crossing
- Curb ramps, tactile strips, auditory ped signal

While this worked reasonably well for a single crossing such as the one on Glenway, larger areas or more complex intersections led us to abandon this approach as overly complicated. For instance, on the stretch of Park Street we looked at, the crossing facilities vary widely and have peculiarities, such as diagonal crossings lengthening the total crossing distance, intersection with only three possible crossings, or slip lanes with right-on-red. On Lakeside, there is less variation of the crossing types, but when evaluating the whole corridor from John Nolen to Park St, there are different crossing types which each would need to be scored separately and then averaged (or broken down into separate projects, which runs counter to the

“fix corridors” idea; see also below). An additional difficulty is that different types of crossing infrastructure need to be evaluated in context. A two-stripe marked crosswalk is low stress for a low-volume residential street but is high stress on Park St.

For these reasons we propose a holistic 3- or 5-level crossing assessment, relying on city staff’s professional judgment. The more detailed criteria discussed above and in the spreadsheet would guide that assessment without needing to be scored individually.

## Ranking streets/crossings vs fixing corridors

Earlier TCS discussions have led us toward an approach that would improve a whole corridor or area (did we settle on a term?) versus focusing on individual streets or crossings. The scoring system, however, led us away from this and a ranking of individual streets needs to be reconciled with the corridor/area idea. We don’t have a recommendation for this. It may be possible to go through the prioritization exercise and then see if there are clusters of highly ranked projects that are close to each other. Alternatively, the corridor idea could be brought in when trying to determine solutions. One recent example for this is the TC discussion about traffic calming on Swanton, which was approved, but may have a negative impact on a cut-through route, which in itself did not score high enough to be considered for speed mitigation).

## Accessibility metrics

A lack of accessibility should be part of the prioritization, and we would appreciate input from the committee. Currently, we think accessibility is captured through the lack of sidewalk criterion as well as in the crossing rating.

## Racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic equity: Residences versus destinations

We had previously discussed using the existing (or evolving) environmental justice areas (yes/no assessment) or the Social Vulnerability Index (continuous measure) to incorporate equity. One limitation of this approach is that it is focused on where people live, not on where they travel. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services Building on Wilson St is not located in a high SCI/EJ area but many residents of those areas are traveling to it; or a Black church may be located in a now-gentrified area.

## “Engineering judgment points”

It may be helpful to allow staff to add a small number of points to account for location specifics that are not readily captured in the other scoring criteria. We would like to hear specifically from staff if they think this is helpful or not. Given that the current thinking is that the initial prioritization would go to TC, these special factors could also be taken into account at that stage.

## Bike gap

We had previously identified the lack of a clearly defined bike plan, making it difficult to clearly identify gaps in the low-stress bike network. We do take into account the level of traffic stress in

the ranking, but this leaves out the importance of a corridor in the bike network. While a yes/no judgement on whether something is a bike gap may be possible using staff judgment, a more fine-grained scoring appears difficult.

## Narrative and maps for each project

### Glenway St at Cross St

The spreadsheet provided by TE listed this location as a difficult crossing. There is a pedestrian path leading to Glenway on the west of Glenway, offset from the intersection with Cross St.. Glenway itself has a steep grade, probably contributing to visibility issues and difficulty detouring. The nearest low-stress crossing is either up the hill at the Southwest Path with an RRFB or downhill at Monroe Street (fully signalized). The west side of Glenway lacks a sidewalk. The crossing is at an angle, increasing the crossing distance. While there is a painted and possibly raised median island and a caution sign, the crossing does not appear to be low stress. On either side of Glenway, land use is low-to-medium density residential. On the west side, there is a park; the commercial activity is downhill at Monroe. Wingra School is about two blocks away. While close to the SW Path, this is likely not a gap in the low-stress bike network.





## Lakeside St, from John Nolen to Park St.

Lakeside Street has been extensively discussed at TC. The corridor is experiencing speeding. Crossings include one fully signalized crossing at John Nolen, but most are unmarked, two-stripe, or ladder crosswalks. The speed limit is 25 mph, with a school zone. Land use is mostly low-to-medium density residential, with a commercial center in the middle and near the intersection with Park, and a school. Lakeside is part of the bike network and does not have bike lanes. Sidewalks are continuous.

## Park St between Olin and Lakeside/Fish Hatchery

We focused on this particular stretch of Park Street because it is close to Lakeside and might allow comparing/contrasting the points for these two. Park St has about 26,000 ADT. There are generally two travel lanes, two parking lanes, and often turn lanes. Crossings include unmarked crossings, two-stripe marked, and fully signalized. The intersection with Fish Hatchery is complex:



No direct pedestrian crossing is possible on from the north to the southeast corner of the intersection. Some crossings are diagonal. There is a shallow angle slip lane. Signal timing may not accommodate single stage crossings. Not all curbs have tactile paving (this may be no

longer true). There are medium busy Metro stops in the area. There is high commercial activity and some higher density residential development (Peloton building). There is no parallel bike route, Park St has painted, unbuffered bike lanes or shared bike/parking lanes (LTS 4). Sidewalks are continuous.