

PRIOR/VENABLES FAQ

How does Prior/Venables function today?

Prior and Venables from Clark to Gore Avenue currently act as a primary arterial street feeding traffic to and from the viaducts, with two full lanes of traffic eastbound during the pm peak and two full lanes westbound during the am peak (when parking is stripped). East of Clark, Venables street experiences significantly lower volumes acting as a secondary arterial/local collector.

Today, during peak periods Prior/Venables from Clark to the viaducts carry approximately 1,500 vehicles per hour, operating at a volume to capacity (V/C) ratio of approximately 0.95. This is at the upper limit of what is considered manageable congestion on the road network, as any increase in volumes would result in significant adverse impacts. We do not support an increase in vehicle volumes above this 0.95 ratio for any routes affected as a result of the proposed road network modifications.

Approximately half of the traffic on Prior/Venables west of Clark originates from or is destined for Venables St. east of Clark, the other half turns to or from Clark.

How will Prior/Venables function with the proposed road network changes?

The modifications to the road network proposed in this plan, start at Beatty as the western boundary and end at Gore Avenue as the eastern boundary. There are no planned modifications to Prior/Venables east of Gore Ave., in terms of physical construction or daily operation (signal timing, parking hours etc...). Prior St. between Main St and Gore Ave. will be expanded to four lanes and will operate in a similar fashion to Prior St. east of Gore Ave.

Our analysis shows that even with our most conservative assumptions with regard to vehicle volumes and potential transportation impacts (worst case), traffic on Prior/Venables will not increase as a result of the proposed changes, as the total number of lanes connecting to Prior during peak periods from the new Pacific will be the same as connects today from the Viaducts (two lanes in each direction for peak periods). The required traffic signal operation at Main St. will also limit green time for E-W movement from Prior to Pacific to allow for significant N/S movement along Main St as compared to the signal operation at Gore and Prior today where there is effectively no N/S movement.

In fact, a moderate decline in vehicle volumes is anticipated on Prior St. and Venables as today the viaducts act as a magnet for commuter traffic with some commuters going 'out of their way' to access the viaducts via Prior St. With the removal of the viaducts, a significant proportion of commuters will naturally redistribute to other routes on our grid network.

Doesn't the City's graphic on the website show traffic more than doubling along Prior?

No. The graphic shows a doubling of traffic on Pacific eastbound as a result of the new Georgia Street ramp connection. A significant proportion of this traffic will turn at Quebec and Main, and will not travel east along Prior/Venables. To clarify this question, the graphic has been updated in Figure 1 to include upper bound estimates for future vehicle volumes on Prior/Venables (*this was not included in the original graphic as it was intended to highlight routes that would potentially experience significant changes in vehicle volumes*).

Currently Pacific Blvd and the Georgia Viaduct combined carry over 3,000 vehicles per hour eastbound during the peak pm period, with the 970 vehicles on Pacific forced south onto Quebec, and the 2,040 on the viaduct choosing between Main and Prior (Figure 2). In the proposed road network, the traffic on Pacific and Georgia Viaduct are combined and accommodated on the 'new Pacific', however, as the capacity of this new road is only 2,135 vehicles per hour, there is a diversion from these routes of approximately 900 vehicles per hour to the broader network during the PM peak period (Figure 3).

Illustrating the allocation of this diversion was the intent of Figure 1. Of the 2,135 vehicles on the new Pacific Boulevard, a significant proportion will continue to turn at Quebec or Main destined to the south and south-east, with the remainder travelling further east along Prior/Venables. The City would not support an option that increased vehicles on Prior/Venables.

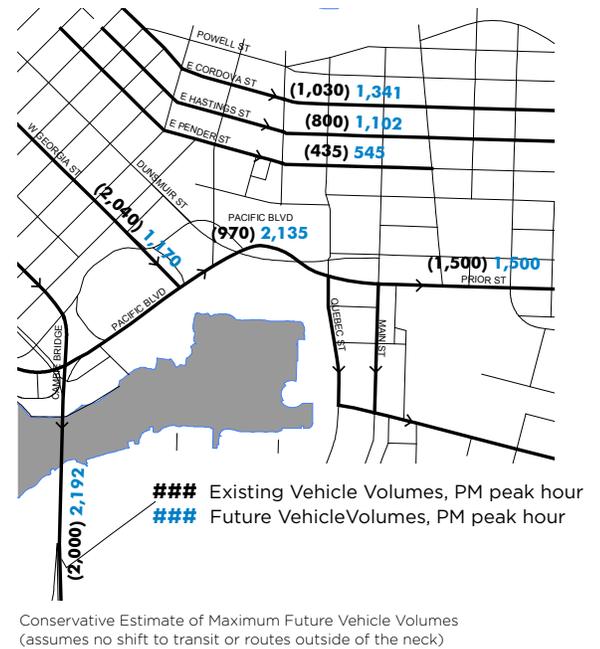


FIGURE 1: Revised Graphic from Open House Board 17, Analyzing the Diverted Traffic

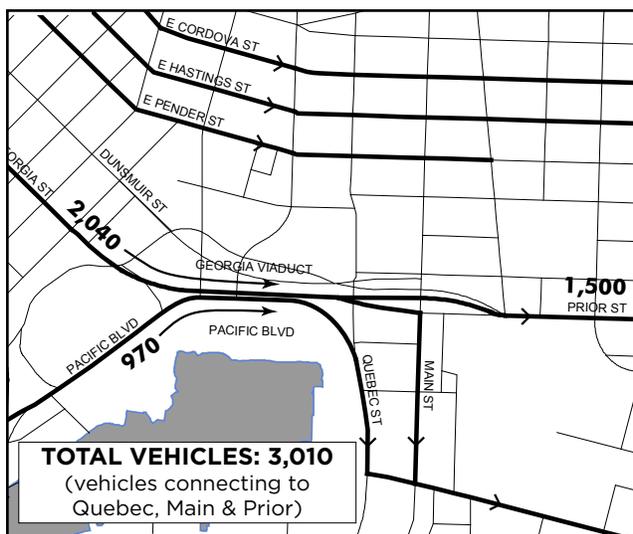


FIGURE 2: Clarification on Impacts to Prior: Existing Vehicle Volumes on Georgia & Pacific

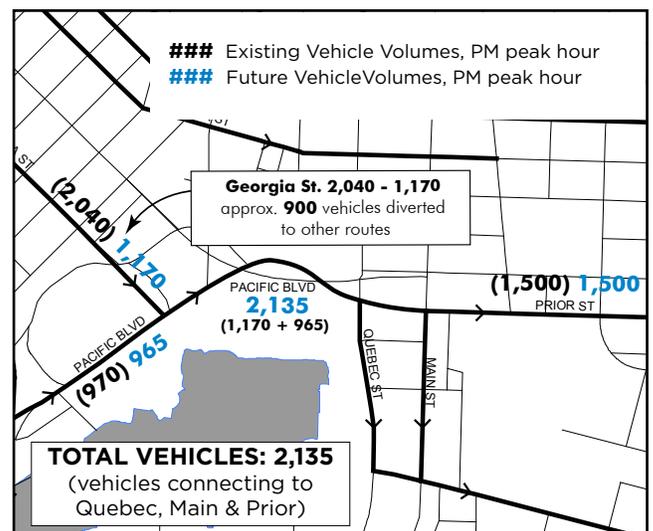


FIGURE 3: Clarification on Impacts to Prior: Future Vehicle Volumes on New Pacific

Are there any plans to modify Prior/Venables in the future?

The proposed street network allows for, and is consistent with, longer term objectives of traffic calming of Prior/Venables. The new Pacific and widened section of Prior St from Main to Gore have been designed for an optimal connection with a future Malkin Connector which would have an overpass over the railyards and would 'T' into Clark at Charles Street (vehicles would be required to turn at Clark with no through connection). This would divert commuter vehicles and goods movement trucks away from Prior/Venables between Gore and Clark.

The Malkin Connector is a component of the grade separation strategy for the Burrard Inlet Rail line, to allow for an improved rail connection between the false creek flats railyards and Port operations on the South shore of Burrard Inlet. This strategy is supported by the federal government, Port Metro Vancouver, the City of Vancouver and rail operators; to support and improve Vancouver's role as a major Gateway to Pacific markets.

Work is needed to design this connection, including discussions with businesses, property owners, and the community to fully appreciate and mitigate potential issues from various perspectives. Staff have begun this work and will evolve it as part of the Eastern Core Strategy (False Creek Flats) which we intend to report to Council later this year.

We are also proposing sufficient right of way along new Pacific and the widened portion of Prior from Main to Gore, to accommodate a potential future relocation of the separated bike facility from Union/Adanac to Prior/Venables, allowing for a possible greenway on Venables.