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To: Planning and Sustainability Commission
Re: TSP Stage 2 Testimony
From: BikeLoudPDX
cc: tsp@portlandoregon.gov

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission Staff,

We at BikeLoudPDX would like to submit the following testimony regarding Stage 2 of the TSP. In addition to our own recommendations below, we have also endorsed excerpts from the TSP testimony of other community groups. All such cases are cited accordingly.

Section 2: Revised TSP Objectives

Traffic Calming (Objective 6.13.D & F)

Current: D. Implement measures on Local Service Traffic Streets that do not significantly divert traffic to other streets of the same classification, except when needed to give priority to pedestrians and/or bicycle traffic.

Recommended: D. Implement measures on Local Service Traffic Streets that do not significantly divert traffic to other streets of the same classification, except where needed to emphasize pedestrians and/or bicycle traffic priority.

Section 4: Bicycle Classification Descriptions and Other Bicycle Objectives

We strongly support the addition of the “major city bikeway” designation. Much as it is important to distinguish between interstates, surface arterial roads, and neighborhood streets when discussing automotive traffic, it is important to distinguish between different types of bicycle facilities based on use.

However, we disagree with the way in which the major city bikeway designation is being applied in Section 5: Bicycle Classification Maps. It appears that the designation has been limited to existing bikeways. As a conceptual plan for 2035, the major city bikeway designations in the TSP (and Central City 2035 Plan) should not be limited to existing facilities, but should also potentially apply to planned facilities. It is important as we move forward with building out our bicycle infrastructure that we have a big-picture plan. A designated network of bicycle “highways” showing where we expect large numbers of bicycle trips, especially commuting and long-distance trips, to occur is crucial for building a strong network, rather than just a cluster of bikeways. We request that the “major city bikeway” network be redetermined, choosing the best bikeway candidates be they existing or planned routes.

In regards to which routes to designate as major city bikeways, an ideal major city bikeway is direct, flat (relative to parallel routes), contains minimal jogs, allows for faster cycling, allows for shorter wait cycles at lights and intersections, requires less wayfinding, and provides direct access to major employment/job/other destination districts. Major city bikeways should be on routes with less conflict between commuter bike traffic and local pedestrian/bicycle traffic, and suit the needs of the inter-neighborhood bicycle trip. In many cases, this means major city bikeways should be designated on arterial streets currently having, or planned to have, separated bicycle facilities, rather than on greenways and crowded multi-use paths. Meanwhile, cyclists preferring a slower trip, or one farther away from motor vehicles, can continue to use multi-use paths and the neighborhood greenway system.

As an example from the Central City, NW/SW Naito Parkway and SE Water Ave should be major city bikeways, while the Waterfront Park Trail and Eastbank Esplanade should be city bikeways. Conflict between faster and slower cyclists, pedestrians, joggers, dog-walkers, tourists, etc. has already prompted signs to be posted on both multi-use paths requesting “Fast Bikes Use Naito/Water.” This indicates a high level of inter-modal conflict occurring at our current 7% bicycle mode share, which we are trying to nearly quintuple in the next twenty years. In situations where bicycle facilities on a major city bikeway-designated street are substandard or insufficient (as Naito and Water are in this example), the major city designation should provide guidance toward prioritizing the improvement of facilities on these streets.

In a similar situation, North Tabor Neighborhood Association has voted in favor of designating East Burnside as the area’s major city bikeway, as “it provides the only direct uninterrupted route east from 41st to Gresham.” We agree with this assessment and would also advocate for E Burnside to be designated a major city bikeway.

We would like the decision regarding placement of major city bikeways to be guided by Policy 9.6, Transportation strategy for people movement. This policy states that we should “Design the system to accommodate the most vulnerable users, including those that need special accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Implement a prioritization of modes for people movement by making transportation system decisions according to the following ordered list: 1. Walking 2. Bicycling ...” The importance of this policy is two-fold. One, it states that walking is paramount, and as such pedestrians should not need to fight cyclists for a comfortable place to walk, as is the current situation on many crowded multi-use paths. Two, it states that cyclists are second in the hierarchy, above the needs of motor vehicles, meaning that allocating road space to motor vehicle needs above bicycle needs is in violation of this policy. If the best route for a major city bikeway (flat, fast, direct, etc.) is on an arterial road, and motor vehicle travel takes up more than one lane in each direction of that road, space should be allocated to be bicycle facilities. In the above examples, this would likely mean a road diet on Naito, and parking removal on Water. Refusal to do this on streets designated major city bikeways, or only designating major city bikeways on routes that would not require taking road space from motor vehicles, is in direct violation of Priority 9.6.

In summary, we would recommend a complete redraw of the major city bikeways to include planned bike routes as well as current bike routes, and to consider the needs of the commuter and inter-neighborhood cyclist when creating the major city bikeway network.

Section 5: Bicycle Classification Maps

The bicycle network proposed in Section 5, composed of the 2030 Bike Plan with additions from the TSP, once built, will be a source of pride for Portland and provide a solid network for what will hopefully be 25% of all trips. However, there are some routes missing from the map, many of which are contained in other plans or are currently being planned.

- Add city bikeway designation on SE Harrison from 6th to 16th (as per the Central City 2035 Plan).
- Add city bikeway designation connecting SE 16th and Harrison (Ladd Circle) to SE Clinton using a south or southwest route (e.g. via 16th or Orange) to supplement the southeast connection on 21st.
- Add major city bikeway designation on SE Clinton from 75th to 87th to replace the current route on Woodward/Brooklyn from 75th to 87th (which should be redesignated as a city bikeway, with the exception of the portion that runs on the sidewalk on 82nd, which should not have any sort of city bikeway designation).
- Designate NE 7th from Lloyd Blvd to Sumner St as a major city bikeway instead of NE 9th. As 7th is more direct and has a more gradual incline, it is preferred over 9th.
- Cesar Chavez should join the other major arterial streets in inner southeast and get a city bikeway designation from NE Sandy to SE Woodstock. In accordance with our testimony above for Section 4, in the absence of a superior nearby north-south cycling route, Cesar Chavez should be designated a major city bikeway.

We also support the North Tabor Neighborhood Association's endorsement of adding the following missing routes:

- Add city bikeway designation from NE 37th and Hassalo to NE 37th and Sandy, and NE 38th and Sandy to Hancock.
- Add city bikeway designation to the north-south route from NE Hoyt and 45th, through Creston Park, to SE Woodstock and 46th.
- Add city bikeway designation to the following route: NE Oregon from 30th to Floral, Floral to Hassalo, Hassalo to Senate, Senate to 44th, 44th to Oregon, Oregon to 47th, 47th to Wasco, Wasco to 49th, 49th to Multnomah, Multnomah to 53rd.
- Add city bikeway designation to the following route: NE Oregon from 63rd to 65th, 65th to Hassalo, Hassalo to 68th, 68th to Halsey.

Regarding major city bikeway vs city bikeway, we recommend the following designation changes (this is not an exhaustive list but rather are just some specific examples; see testimony regarding bicycle classifications in Section 4 above):

- Designate E Burnside as a major city bikeway (this has been endorsed by the North Tabor Neighborhood Association).
- Designate SE Division as a major city bikeway from at least the 205 path to the city limits. This area of SE Portland currently lacks an east-west major city bikeway between Market and Powell.
- Designate SW Terwilliger as a major city bikeway to the edge of Lake Oswego. This is the only direct arterial route to this area of SW Portland and to Lewis and Clark College.
- Designate SW Vista and SW Patton as major city bikeways. These roads comprise the only direct arterial route from NW Portland to outer SW Portland and the West Hills.
- Designate NE Killingsworth from NE 42nd east to Highway 30B a major city bikeway. Killingsworth is one of the few direct routes to outer NE Portland.
- Designate NE/SE Sandy a major city bikeway along its entire length. Unlike other arterials, diagonal Sandy does not have any parallel routes.

Section 6: Street Design Classification Descriptions

Objective 6.13 G (Traffic Calming)

Current: Use traffic calming tools and other available tools and methods to create and maintain sufficiently low automotive volumes and speeds on neighborhood greenways to ensure a comfortable cycling environment on the street.

Recommended: Use traffic calming tools, traffic diversion, and other available tools and methods to create and maintain sufficiently low automotive volumes and speeds on neighborhood greenways to ensure a comfortable cycling environment on the street.

As exists on a small number of blocks around Portland, such as NE Klickitat between 24th and 25th, we would like to see an official, streamlined PBOT program that would allow a block (or multiple blocks) along a neighborhood greenway to either become car-free (bollards at both block entrances) or local traffic only (bollards mid-block). If all property owners along one block of an official bikeway or neighborhood greenway--streets where active transportation supposedly takes priority and automotive travel is limited to required local trips only--agree that they would prefer the street be turned over entirely to active transportation, and the block(s) is(are) located in a neighborhood with a street grid, they should be able to petition PBOT to create such a street. We would recommend that a special street classification be created for such a program, and for the streets of this type that currently exist.

Section 7: Street Design Classification Maps

As it impacts SE Harrison (a popular neighborhood greenway), we would like to support the following street design designation change requested by HAND:

Change the following route from a community corridor to a local street (given Richmond approval for the stretch east of SE 29th): SE 26th from Division to Harrison, Harrison from 26th to 30th, and 30th from Harrison to Hawthorne.

As general policy, we recommend that all neighborhood greenway streets not already classified as such be reclassified to local streets. Where this is not possible, PBOT should provide NACTO-compliant separated bicycle facilities for that otherwise-designated stretch.

Section 10: Performance Measures

This is arguably the most important section in the entire document when it comes to building a livable, sustainable future for Portland. Plans are great as long as there's a means of measuring their success, and a means of ensuring they get adopted. If adhered to the letter, the TSP could be a ground-breaking document for Portland; if dismissed it's nothing but a waste of paper, time, and effort (both on the part of the city and the public who followed its creation and amending).

Taking measurements and setting goals:

When speaking of performance measures, it's essential that the right things get measured. There's a lot of talk of "commute trips" in the TSP, but what about other types of trips? If we are trying to create twenty-minute neighborhoods, we should be equally concerned about trips to the grocery store, to entertainment and recreational destinations, to schools and daycares. When it comes to congestion and capacity

measurements, we should also look at pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as transit. There are many places in the city, particularly commercial corridors, multi-use paths, bridges, and choke-points, where pedestrian/bicycle routes are becoming quite crowded, and multiple transit routes are over capacity during peak hours. As we seek to increase active transportation mode share, we need to monitor how these facilities are functioning in terms of capacity and congestion.

In terms of motor vehicles, it's important to remember there are many negative impacts other than carbon footprint or emissions. Vehicles also create noise and light pollution, they increase the sense of streets' "crowdedness" or "busyness" in an unpleasant manner, there are aesthetic concerns about cars parked along the street, while more driveways means a potential loss in terms of greenery and street trees. There is also a local economic cost when a large portion of families' discretionary income goes to car payments, fuel, and insurance, and there is a cost to transportation departments as building and maintaining facilities for vehicles is significantly more costly than for other modes. Most importantly, electric vehicles pose the same safety and comfort concerns as gas-powered vehicles. In other words, we should be measuring the full societal and economic cost of the motor vehicle, not just the cost in terms of carbon emissions.

Achieving our goals and targets:

As accurate, thorough, and ambitious as our measurements and goals may be, they are meaningless if there is no set method for following through on them. We can't keep living twenty years out; we have to set shorter-term, intermediary goals (e.g. five, ten, and fifteen years out) that show our progress on our way to the big twenty-year goals. More importantly, we need some kind of emergency measures that kick in if those intermediary goals aren't being met to make sure we stay on track. We see nothing in terms of intermediary goals or measures to ensure progress is being made on anything in this plan, not sidewalk construction, nor bicycle network buildout, nor mode share, nor climate action goals.

We also need measures that kick in once a certain mode share is reached. This relates back to the issue of ped/bike/transit crowding and congestion. Once the mode share of a road or stretch of road shifts away from SOV and/or toward active transportation a certain prerequisite amount, we need to reassess how that road is being utilized and the road space allocated. How many feet are being dedicated to each mode? Should a travel lane or row of parking be repurposed as a bus-only lane, protected bike lane, wider sidewalk, or parklet? How many maintenance dollars are being spent on the vehicle lanes vs the bike lanes and right-of-way? As mode share shifts, precious road space and transportation funding should shift with it. (We are incredibly imbalanced even at the moment, considering current mode share vs. road space and funding).

The measures and goals listed out in the TSP primarily focus on Portland residents, even though we are a city with a large out-of-town draw. We need ways to define and achieve our goals as they pertain to suburbanites and visitors too. What percentage of trips from Metro-area residents do we want to occur by each mode? What about through-traffic just passing by Portland? What about visitors who come by plane, train, and long-distance bus? There are many options: tolls, congestion pricing, creating intentional bottlenecks (paired with park-and-rides) at city entrances, stickers that identify local vehicles and corresponding parking pricing, additional rental car tax, there are many conventional and creative tools that we should be acknowledging and making way for in the TSP to address trips made by non-Portland residents within Portland.

Objectives 11.13.G & H

G. By 2035, reduce the number of miles Portlanders travel by car to 11 miles per day on average...

This goal needs clarification. Is this a weekday average? Does it include all Portlanders or just those who drive, or who drove that day? Does it include all car trips made by Portlanders, or just those inside city limits? 11 miles seems like a low goal to set, but it's hard to tell without exact parameters.

...and 70 percent of commuters walk, bike, take transit, carpool, or work from home at approximately the following rates: Transit 25% Bicycle 25% Walk 7.5% Carpool 10%

“Work from home” is missing from the list; is it supposed to be the remaining 2.5%? Whatever happened to getting single-occupancy vehicle trips down to 25% (here it's presumably 30%). Is “carpool 10%” a practical goal, considering it is the only travel mode that's actually been decreasing? Where does “ride share” (in the form of Uber, Lyft, etc.) fit into this?

H. By 2025, increase the percentage of new mixed use zone building households not owning an automobile from approximately 13% (2014) to 25%, and reduce the percentage of households owning two automobiles from approximately 24% to 10%.

Why just focus on new households and those in mixed use zones? We'd like to see measures and goals in regards to reducing car ownership within all housing types.

Section 11: Glossary of Transportation Terms

We would like to endorse the following definition change as proposed by Southeast Uplift (and also endorsed by Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District). The recommended change has been underlined:

"High-capacity Transit"

Current: High-capacity transit is public transit that has an exclusive right of way, a non-exclusive right of way, or a combination of both. Vehicles make fewer stops, travel at higher speeds, have more frequent service, and carry more people than local service transit such as typical bus lines. High-capacity transit can be provided by a variety of vehicle types including light rail, commuter rail, streetcar, and bus.

Recommended: High-capacity transit is public transit that maximizes an exclusive right of way, and minimizes the non-exclusive right of way. Vehicles make fewer stops, travel at higher speeds, have more frequent service, and carry more people than local service transit such as typical bus lines. High-capacity transit can be provided by a variety of vehicle types including light rail, commuter rail, streetcar, and bus.

We would also like to endorse the following definition changes as proposed by the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND). The recommended changes have been underlined:

"Access"

Current: The ability to approach or make use of transportation facilities, parks and open space, public infrastructure, or businesses and services that are open to the public. Good access means within close proximity (up to ½ mile) that is free from physical barriers for those with limited mobility.

Recommended: The ability to approach or make use of transportation facilities, parks and open space, public infrastructure, or businesses and services that are open to the public. Good access means within close proximity (up to ½ mile walking distance), that is free from physical barriers for those with limited mobility, and is free from lengthy path disruptions and/or a frequent need to find a detour route as a result of topography, infrastructure, bridge lifts, long freight trains, etc.

"Bicycle Boulevard"

Current: A street with low traffic volumes where the through movement of bicycles is given priority over motor vehicle travel. (Source: Portland Bicycle Master Plan)(see City Greenway)

Recommended: Mark as "archaic" (else encourage a return to the term to improve understanding for all road users).

"Buffered bike lane "

An entry for "protected bike lane" exists. Include in the glossary a definition for "buffered bike lane" as well.

"Complete Streets"

Current: Complete streets provide accessibility to all users of the right-of-way regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. They are designed and operated to make better places and to enhance safe access for all modes, including people walking and bicycling, those using a mobility device, motorists, and transit users.

Recommended: Complete streets provide accessibility to all users of the right-of-way regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. They are designed and operated to make better places that prioritize livability and to enhance safe access for all modes, including people walking and bicycling, those using a mobility device, motorists, and transit users.

"Congestion"

Current: A condition characterized by unstable traffic flows that prevents movement on a transportation facility at optimal legal speeds.

Recommended: A condition characterized by unstable traffic flows that prevents movement on a transportation facility at optimal speeds, as determined by the legal speed limit and the safety requirements of all road users.

"Multimodal "

Current: Having a variety of modes available for any given trip, such as being able to walk, ride a bicycle, take a bus, or drive to a certain destination. In a transportation system, multimodal means providing for many modes within a single transportation corridor.

Recommended: Having a variety of modes available for any given trip, such as being able to walk, ride a bicycle, take a bus, or drive to a certain destination. In a transportation system, multimodal means providing for many modes within a single transportation corridor, with particular consideration and accommodation given to vulnerable road users.

"Station Community"

Current: Areas generally within a ¼ to ½ mile radius of a light rail station or other high capacity transit stops that are planned as multi-modal, mixed use communities with substantial pedestrian and transit supportive design characteristics and improvements.

Recommended: Areas generally within a ¼ to ½ mile walking distance of a light rail station or other high capacity transit stops that are planned as multi-modal, mixed use communities with substantial pedestrian and transit supportive design characteristics and improvements, including transit access free from lengthy path disruptions and/or a frequent need to find a detour route as a result of topography, infrastructure, bridge lifts, long freight trains, etc.

"Traffic Calming"

Current: Roadway design strategies to reduce vehicle speeds and volumes, prevent inappropriate through traffic and reduce motor vehicle travel speeds while also improving traffic safety and neighborhood livability. Traffic calming strategies provide speed bumps, curb extensions, planted median strips or round and narrowed travel lanes.

Recommended: Roadway design strategies to reduce vehicle speeds and volumes, as well as aggressive and otherwise unsafe behavior, prevent inappropriate through traffic and reduce motor vehicle travel speeds while also improving traffic safety and neighborhood livability. Traffic calming strategies include speed bumps, curb extensions, planted median strips or round and narrowed travel lanes.

Additionally: what about traffic calming aimed at other modes such as bicycles? e.g. on multi-use paths and other shared spaces.

"Transit station areas"

Current: Areas within a half-mile of light rail and other high-capacity transit stations. Some transit station areas are located within centers or civic corridors and are subject to policies for those types of places.

Recommended: Areas within a half-mile walking distance--free from lengthy path disruptions and/or a frequent need to find a detour route as a result of topography, infrastructure, bridge lifts, long freight trains, etc--of light rail and other high-capacity transit stations. Some transit station areas are located within centers or civic corridors and are subject to policies for those types of places.

Section 15: Parking Code

We would like to endorse the following TSP testimony, submitted by Tony Jordan, founder of Portland Shoupistas:

Commercial Parking in Mixed Use Zones Mixed Use Zones Project

Parking requirements for residential developments proximate to frequent transit should be removed in anticipation of the Centers + Corridors recommended permit program availability. These requirements have had a detrimental effect on the production of new housing stock, decrease the affordability of the housing that is created, and contribute to a fractured streetscape with cars driving across our sidewalks.. Furthermore, trends in technology (TNCs and self-parking cars) and vehicle ownership and usage point to a future where we are likely to have an oversupply of parking.

Maximum parking entitlements for residential developments along corridors are encouraged and should be lower than 1.35 stalls per unit, a suggested amount would be the .7 stalls per unit regularly requested by neighbors.

Parking buy-down opportunities for developers should be expanded (assuming minimum requirements stay in place). Developers should be able to buy down their entire requirement, rather than a maximum of 50%. The recently passed inclusionary zoning bill in Salem allows for a buy down of all affordable units in a development, there is no reason mandatory parking should be given a higher priority than mandatory affordable housing for people.

More flexibility in siting any required parking should be allowed. Shared parking among developments and off-site parking should be encouraged. Ideally, parking requirements should be eliminated in favor of on-street parking management, in which case there is no need to regulate shared and off-site parking other than enacting a maximum entitlement.

Closing

We would like to thank the Planning and Sustainability Committee for all your hard work in creating and amending the TSP. Portland desperately needs a clear guide on improving livability, safety, and sustainability, but more importantly, needs the public and political will to follow it.

Sincerely,

Emily Guise, Jessica Engelman, and Ted Buehler
BikeLoudPDX Co-Chairs