



BIKE LOUD PDX

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To: Gabe Graff
Central City in Motion Project Manager

cc: Director Leah Treat
Commissioner Dan Saltzman

Dear Mr. Graff:

We are looking forward to the changes the Central City in Motion project will bring to our bicycle network. A comprehensive protected bicycle network does not currently exist in Portland and is needed to allow more people to choose to bike safely, comfortably, and conveniently.. The current conditions of increased road injuries, increasing congestion, and urgency of climate action demand bold action in transforming our transportation system into one that is safer, more equitable, and more sustainable as a whole instead of relying on project by project improvements.

Below is our vision for what a comprehensive bicycle network would look and feel like:

Directness

Directness can be measured in both time and distance. To minimize distance, **direct routes should be prioritized**. Routes should run along main streets with destinations, avoiding jogs and detours onto secondary streets. This will allow biking to be as fast, if not faster, than other modes such as driving.

Along the bicycle routes stops should be minimized. Stop signs should be flipped as needed, and the **Green Wave should be recalibrated and expanded to new routes to ensure the number of stops is minimized**. For this reason, we discourage the use of two way cycle tracks on one way streets because of the disruption of signal timing for the contraflow lane.

Signalized intersections along bicycle routes should have leading pedestrian and bicycle intervals. In the case where it is cost prohibitive to add a bicycle signal in the short term, adding signage to allow the bicycles to use the walk signal, given there is a leading pedestrian signal, could be appropriate, as implemented recently in Boston and New York City.

Intersections should have intuitive and safe connections. The bike lane should connect continuously all around the intersection, so that it is easy to make turning movements. People driving and biking should not have to cross over one another's travel lanes at intersections, as this is dangerous and unpredictable.

This situation currently exists at SW 2nd Avenue and SW Oak Street and SW 2nd Avenue and SW Stark Street.

Routes should follow riders' desire lines and avoid unnecessary bends and weaves in the path so bicycles can remain at speed for as long as possible. When the bicycle path deviates from linear, bends must be gentle enough that a rider does not have to slow.

Cohesive

The Dutch CROW manual recommends a maximum distance of 250 meters, or 0.15 miles, between parallel streets for a cohesive network. **With a downtown block size of 200 feet, this metric would guide us to build a protected bike lane every four blocks.** At that distance there is always a convenient way to get to your destination, and people biking do not need to consult a map before setting off on a trip.

We would like the design elements used along the bike lanes and intersections to be consistent so users can easily understand turning movements and improve wayfinding for riders. Two stage turn boxes that can fit at least three people on bikes are a **minimum** requirement at intersections with the understanding that **fully protected intersections are our goal.**

We need to aim for consistent material use, and we prefer that bike lanes are constructed out of asphalt so they can be easily differentiated from the sidewalk. Grade separated bicycle lanes signal pedestrians that they are no longer on the sidewalk and prevent confusing modal mixing. Cycling cities like Copenhagen or Montreal grade separate their cycle tracks from both autos and pedestrians, but given the constraints of the CCIM project, our preference is to build our protected bike lane networks on the street level, instead of sidewalk level.

Comfort & Safety

We have a strong preference for concrete planters or sturdier infrastructure that can be bolted quickly to the pavement and possibly moved later after permanent infrastructure is built. If candlesticks are used, centering them in a painted buffer zone is necessary, placing them on the line is not sufficient. While candlesticks are inexpensive to implement, they are an inadequate long term solution due to how easily they are damaged by careless driving and give the cycle track the aesthetics of a construction zone. They are not world class infrastructure.

Improving signals at intersections is critical to the safety of riders. **We would like roads with or intersecting with bicycle routes to ban right turn on red for autos** and provide separate turning signals for cars and bicycles to turn at alternating times. All efforts should be made to design intersections to be most efficient for bicycles.

This would be an ideal time to create more car-free streets in the central city. By removing auto access we can improve reliability and safety of transit, pedestrians, and bicycle riders while also creating more “sticky” public spaces where Portland residents enjoy spending time.

Recommended Network (Cycling)

We expect that the CCIM produces at **bare minimum** the following network of safe, comfortable bicycle facilities that are AAA-accessible (all ages and abilities).

Inter-district:

- East-west routes that *access and cross* the Broadway, Steel, Burnside, Morrison, Hawthorne, and Tilikum Bridges
- Connectivity between the Lloyd District and the Central Eastside

Westside:

- North-south connectivity between PSU and Old Town/Chinatown
- North-south connectivity between South Waterfront and Old Town/Chinatown
- North(west)-south(east) connectivity between the Pearl and Downtown
- East-west connectivity between the Pearl and the neighborhoods to the west
- East-west connectivity between Goose Hollow/Stadium District and Downtown
- East-west connectivity to and from the Broadway, Steel, Burnside, Morrison, Hawthorne, and Tilikum Bridges

North/Northeast:

- North(west)-south(east) connectivity between Albina and the neighborhoods to the north, and the Lloyd District
- North-south connectivity through the Lloyd District
- East-west connectivity through the Lloyd District
- Access to the Broadway/Weidler commercial couplet
- North-south and East-west connectivity between the neighborhoods north and east of Albina/Lloyd, and the Broadway and Steel Bridges

Southeast:

- North-south connectivity for the area between the river and the SE 1st freight tracks
- North-south connectivity for the area between MLK/Grand and the neighborhoods east of SE 12th
- East-west connectivity between the neighborhoods east of SE 12th, and the Burnside, Morrison, Hawthorne, and Tilikum Bridges
- North-south connectivity between the neighborhoods south of Powell and the Central Eastside
- Access to the MLK/Grand commercial couplet
- Access to the Burnside commercial corridor
- Access to the Belmont/Morrison commercial corridor
- Access to the Hawthorne commercial corridor

Improved Transit network

We also support the Portland Bus Lane Project's recommendations for bus only lanes including but not limited to the Hawthorne, Burnside, and Steel bridges, and NE Grand & MLK Boulevard. Prioritizing space for public transit over single-occupancy vehicles creates a safer environment for all road users, provided that transit stops are designed to intuitively delineate separate spaces for transit passengers and people biking, which can be easily done with grade separation and material differences. We would like to reiterate their suggestions here:

PM peak bus lane on NW Everett between the Transit Mall and the bridge.

Peak-period bus lane on NW Glisan between the Steel Bridge and NW 5th.

SE Hawthorne peak-only bus lane (between SE Grand and SE 20th); eventual conversion to all-day bus lane with protected bike lane.

Burnside Bridge bus-only lanes

E Burnside bus-only lane between the bridge and 14th Ave.; conversion of the bus stop on Burnside between 11th and 12th to a floating transit stop with 3 travel lanes

Convert curbside parking on SE Belmont to a pro-time bus lane from SE Grand to SE 20th

We look forward to continuing to work with you on the Central City in Motion plan as more details develop.

Sincerely,

Emily Guise, co-chair, BikeLoudPDX

Catie Gould, co-chair, BikeLoudPDX