



Dear Commissioner Saltzman, Mayor Wheeler, and Director Treat,

Tamar Monhait died in a side collision with a garbage truck August 21, Alan Marsan was killed in a right-hook collision with a box truck this February, and Lydia Johnson was killed in a right-hook collision with a box truck last July. These tragedies are not a new problem in our city. Ten years ago the deaths of Tracey Sparling and Brett Jarolimek spurred Mayor Adams to study how the city could help prevent the tragic loss of life on our streets due to “hook-type” collisions.¹ The resulting report identified hook-type collisions as the single most common crash type for people cycling and provided specific actions that the city could take to decrease the risk of these collisions:

- Mandating Truck side guards
- Installing Bike-activated signals
- Implementing Bike signal advances
- Eliminating right turns and/or adding a bike signal phase at major bikeway intersections
- Applying bike boxes (advanced stop lines)
- Widening bike lanes near intersections

We would recommend adding to this list the following additional safety tools: window fresnel lenses, convex cross-over mirrors, video/LIDAR proximity detectors, and increased use of “Yield to Bikes” signs (MUTCD - R10-15).

We thank the city and PBOT for installing bike boxes and signals at select intersections. Nevertheless, given Portland’s commitment to Vision Zero, we call on the city and PBOT to accelerate implementation of the above recommendations. In particular, the report commissioned by Mayor Adams highlighted the use of truck side guards as an effective way to reduce the risk of death and/or serious injury and the Portland Vision Zero Plan also lists installation of truck side guards in its action plan². The Seattle DOT recently mandated truck side guards,³ citing a study showing a ~61% reduction in risk of fatality for people cycling.⁴ Portland should follow Seattle’s Vision Zero example in mandating side guards for all large city and city contractor vehicles. We urge the city to draft an ordinance that creates a side guard mandate, and implements a specific timeline for its implementation.

The installation of bike/ped signal advances, the elimination of right turns across bike lanes, and bike lane widening are also effective and inexpensive ways to reduce “hook” collision risk at

intersections. We further request the city explore mandates for other technologies, such as blind spot detection systems, for commercial vehicles.

1. <https://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=191337>
2. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/71738>
3. <https://www.volpe.dot.gov/our-work/truck-side-guards-resource-page>
4. <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2017/02/seattle-puts-side-guards-on-its-trucks-to-protect-cyclists/515403/>

Sincerely,

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