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Date: 3/31/16
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission
Re: Central City 2035 Plan Testimony
From: BikeLoudPDX
cc: tsp@portlandoregon.gov

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commission Staff,

We at BikeLoudPDX would like to submit the following testimony regarding the Central City 2035 Plan. In addition to our own recommendations below, we have also endorsed excerpts from the testimony of other community groups. All such cases are cited accordingly.

General Comments

Inner Powell and the Clinton Triangle Area:

We support the following request from the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND)'s testimony:

We request additional planning for both sides of inner Powell Blvd. If building heights from 65 to 95 ft are going to be permitted in the Clinton Triangle area, then it is important to plan for the surrounding area to improve livability along the Powell corridor. We also have transportation and accessibility concerns about the Clinton Triangle; completion of Central City Candidate Project 20185 (Gideon Street Pedestrian / Bicycle Bridge) would be a crucial step toward connecting the Clinton Triangle to the neighborhoods, businesses, and job centers to the north, while 20050 (Southern Triangle Access Improvements) would connect the Clinton Triangle to those to the south.

The Green Loop

We at BikeLoudPDX emphatically support the concept of a "Green Loop" bicycle/pedestrian facility in the Central City, on the condition that wherever possible, bicycles and pedestrians are provided separate spaces to minimize conflict (ideally via physical separation), and that the path be given the right-of-way at most intersections (similar to "stop-sign flipping" on neighborhood greenways) and crossing treatments at all others.

We would like to endorse HAND's recommendation to strongly consider SE 11th and 12th for the Green Loop's eastern route through the Central Eastside. The roads are lined with mature trees, cafes, restaurants, and residences, provide direct connections to other bike routes and neighborhood greenways,

and could serve both the Central Eastside Industrial District businesses to the west as well as residential neighborhoods to the east. Further, there are currently eight lanes devoted to motor vehicles in the couplet (each street has two lanes for vehicle traffic and two lanes for vehicle storage), much more workable space than found on SE 6th or 7th. The Green Loop could then cross over Sullivan's Gulch on either a new bike/ped bridge at NE 7th/8th (the path could jog from 11th/12th to 8th on either Ankeny, Davis, Flanders, or Glisan) or on a rebuilt/rehabilitated 12th Ave bridge.

Even if these streets are not chosen for the Green Loop's route, we at BikeLoudPDX would like to see SE 11th and 12th traffic calmed and road dieted to create more active transportation-oriented streets.

Transportation Performance Targets (Transportation System Plan, Page 746):

Currently reads:

Lower Albina: In 2035, at least 40% of commute trips to and from the district are by non-single occupancy vehicle (SOV).

Central Eastside: In 2035, at least 60% of commute trips to and from the district are by non-single occupancy vehicle (SOV).

Both of these performance targets need to be changed to at least 75%.

At a time when we're trying to get the *citywide* non-SOV mode split up to 75%, setting a target in any Central City neighborhood, where non-SOV mode split should be at its *highest*, to be less than 75% is completely unacceptable. Being an industrial district does not excuse a neighborhood from contributing to this goal; if anything as major employment centers they should be target districts for improving non-SOV commute options.

If the reasoning behind the low performance target is to include freight trips (many of which are technically "SOVs"), then that needs to be specified in the target, and a performance goal that excludes freight trips should be established for these districts.

Bicycle Classifications

Introduction

We would like to repeat the testimony we provided for the Stage 2 TSP Update:

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 complete street/road diet makeover on Naito, and motor vehicle 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.

In consideration of the above comments regarding major city bikeways, we are requesting the following city bikeway classification changes:

- Keep SW/NW Naito as a major city bikeway (rather than the Waterfront Trail)
- Make SW/NW 4th a major city bikeway from SW Barbur to Union Station
- Make SW Madison and Main major city bikeways from the Hawthorne Bridge to 4th at minimum
- Extend the W Burnside major city bikeway designation to 4th at minimum, preferably to the Park Blocks or beyond
- Make SE 11th and 12th major city bikeways (rather than SE/NE 7th) from Powell to a reconstructed 12th Ave bridge or a new 7th/8th Ave bridge (place jog on Ankeny, Davis, Flanders, or Glisan)
- Move the SE 9th Ave city bikeway to SE 6th (only if making 11th/12th major city bikeways)
- Make SE Belmont and Morrison major city bikeways (rather than Salmon) east of 7th too
- Make SE Water a major city bikeway (rather than the Eastbank Esplanade)
- Extend city bikeway designation on SE Harrison to SE 6th
- Keep major city bikeway designation on SE 2nd Pl from Water to Tilikum Way.
- Make SE/NE Sandy a major city bikeway
- Make NE 7th the major city bikeway from NE Broadway to NE Sumner, rather than NE 9th Ave
- Make NE Multnomah St a major city bikeway
- Make NE Lloyd Blvd/16th a major city bikeway to at least Broadway (instead of Sullivan's Gulch)

Freight, Traffic, Emergency Route (ER) Classifications

In order to support the above recommendations regarding bicycle classifications, we are requesting the PSC reevaluate the freight, traffic, and ER classifications on the above listed streets. Specifically, we are requesting the following changes:

Regarding SE 7th, 11th, 12th:

- Change SE 11th & 12th to freight district streets or truck access streets from Powell to Sandy
- Change SE 11th & 12th to traffic access
- Change SE 11th and 12th to secondary ER routes (and keep SE 7th as a primary route)
- Change SE 7th to priority truck street

Other changes:

- Change NE Lloyd Blvd/16th to a traffic access street

Central City Parking Code

We support the testimony regarding parking submitted by Tony Jordan of the Portland Shoupistas. We particularly wish to highlight the following comments:

Implementing parking maximums for all uses in all parts of the central city is a strong and smart policy, but the proposed limits are much too high to meet the city's stated mode split and climate action goals... Parking maximums in the CBD should be significantly lower than they are now and/or they should be indexed to mode split targets.

Finally, city parking code should include provisions to discourage subsidizing of parking by employers and bundling of parking costs into rents for commercial or residential tenants. All new parking developments should be required to be unbundled and require payment by end users. Transportation demand management incentives (such as parking cash out, walk-bucks, and transit passes) should be required when employers subsidize parking for employees...

If we hope to meet an 80% split for non-single-occupancy trips, we should be reducing parking maximums in the CBD by 50-75% for residential, commercial, and hotel uses. Such a reduction is further justified by the relaxing of restrictions on parking use... considering the rationale for allowing shared use, that significantly less parking spaces will be needed in new construction as commuter and residential usage are complementary and many stalls may be shared, the true effect of the new maximums in mixed-use development may be to increase the allotment by a significant amount.

33.510.261 F:5

The 1:14 ratio for bicycle to car parking doesn't provide enough bicycle parking to meet the city's stated transportation goals. The ratio of bicycle to car parking should be increased to... 4.5 long-term bicycle parking spaces for every 14 motor vehicle parking spaces.

Central City 2035 Candidate Projects:

While there are many worthy projects in this list, and while we believe that we should not be forced to pick and choose safety and active transportation improvement projects, we would like to highlight the following projects as particularly important to our transportation network:

Bridges and Bridgeheads:

In a city with significant natural and man-made geographic separation, providing safe, comfortable facilities on bridges is crucial. However, it is equally crucial that cyclists and pedestrians also have safe, comfortable ways to access these bridges. The following projects will greatly improve inter-district travel (in order of project number):

20068 NE 12th Ave Bridge Replacement -- 12th Ave, NE (over I-84 and railroad tracks)

Or

20077 Inner Eastside Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge -- 7th to 8th Ave, NE (over I-84); 8th Ave, NE/SE (Glisan - Ankeny); Glisan / 11th / Irving, NE (8th - 12th)

20133 SW Main / Madison Bikeway and Transit Improvements -- Main / Madison St, SW (1st - 5th)
Amendment: Ensure design minimizes bike-bus interactions.

20150 W Burnside Bridgehead Ped/Bike Improvements -- Burnside Bridgehead, SW

20151 Burnside Bridge Transit and Bikeway Improvements -- Burnside Bridge

20180 Hawthorne-Clay Ramp Signal -- Hawthorne Viaduct

20185 Gideon Street Pedestrian / Bicycle Bridge -- Clinton MAX Station

Enhancing our major city bikeways:

As the backbone of the cycling network, major city bikeways are crucial routes for all types of cycling trips. Unfortunately, many are currently on sub-par facilities, crowded facilities, or have yet to be built at all. The following projects will greatly help our bikeway backbone build-out (in order of project number):

20065 Interstate-Larrabee Corridor Improvements -- Interstate Ave, N (Tillamook - Larrabee)

20113 NE Broadway Corridor Improvements, Phase 1 -- Broadway/Weidler, N/NE (Broadway Bridge - 24th)

20127 Better Naito Walkway / Bikeway -- Naito Pkwy, SW/NW (Salmon - Railroad)

20126 1st / 2nd / 3rd Ave Bikeway -- 1st / 2nd / 3rd Ave, SW (Arthur - Flanders)

20128 Broadway Bikeway Improvements -- Broadway, NW/SW (Hoyt - Clay)

20131 Jefferson / Columbia Bikeway -- Jefferson / Columbia St, SW (Naito - 18th)

Intersection improvements (boosting our neighborhood greenways):

From a safety perspective, intersections are the weakest link in any transportation network, regardless of mode. They're where most crashes, fatalities, and injuries, occur. Portland's block faces are only 200ft long, resulting in twenty intersections per mile. As our neighborhood greenway network intentionally utilizes "side streets" with low motor vehicle traffic, most greenway crossings at major streets do not have any sort of crossing treatment. The following projects would help with safety, comfort, and convenience for vulnerable users at intersections and help strengthen and expand our neighborhood greenway network (in order of project number):

20097 NW Flanders Neighborhood Greenway -- Flanders St, NW (24th - Steel Bridge)

20174 SE Salmon Multimodal Improvements -- Salmon / MLK, SE; Salmon / Grand, SE; Salmon / 7th, SE

Amendment: If not already completed through project #20176, also improve crossings at 11th and 12th. The crossing at 7th should be completed in conjunction with efforts to return 7th to a major freight route (see above testimony under "Bicycle Classifications").

20175 SE Ankeny Multimodal Improvements -- Ankeny / MLK, SE; Ankeny / 11th, SE

Amendment: If not already completed through project #20176, also improve crossing at 12th.

20176 11th/12th Ave Crossing Safety Improvements -- SE 12th & Ankeny; 11th & Salmon; 12th & Salmon; 12th & Madison; 12th & Hawthorne; 11th & Clay; 12th & Clay

Amendment: Include speed reduction (30mph to 25mph). If not already completed through the Harrison greenway, also include improved crossings at 11th & Harrison, 12th & Harrison. Ensure this project does not conflict with efforts to road diet SE 11th and 12th to one vehicle lane each and introduce buffered/protected bike lanes (see traffic, freight, and bicycle classification testimony above).

Closing

We would like to thank the PSC staff for their hard work, and for diligently reviewing public testimony. We look forward to staff's responses to our testimony, and hope to continue these conversations into the next stage of the Central City 2035 Plan's development.

Sincerely,

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