

TO: Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission; PBOT
FROM: Doug Allen
SUBJECT: TSP Proposed Draft -- SUPPLEMENTAL TESTIMONY
DATE: September 27, 2017

I am sorry for providing this comment so late in the process, but I am hoping that it is non-controversial and makes enough common sense that it could be added to the TSP Proposed Draft.

While riding the bus home from Wednesday's PSC meeting, I was reminded of an issue that plagues bus riders at all hours, but is significantly worse at night. Darkness is now arriving earlier.

I would like there to be a policy for all Transit Streets that street name signs be in a location and of adequate size, contrast, and reflectivity so as to be readily visible to bus passengers. Transit Streets should be a priority for sign upgrade and replacement.

When taking the bus to a new destination, or even on a familiar route in the dark and in the rain, it is often difficult to know one's current location. TriMet's on-board system of stop announcements is frequently inoperative, and when operating correctly, it only displays and announces selected stops, such as transfer points and the first stop after turning onto a new street. Unless one requests a stop with adequate advance warning, it is easy to end up going past one's desired stop, and having to walk back, sometimes a considerable distance. Being overly cautious results in the bus stopping unnecessarily at the stop prior to the desired one.

Street name signs are particularly difficult to read from the left-hand seats, but can be just as hard to read from the right side. I have often found myself sitting in a bus at an intersection where the sign is on the far corner, either too small to see, or oriented so that a blank side of the sign faces me. Signs for all cross streets along a transit route should be double-sided, and positioned for visibility by transit riders.

Most of us know how badly the street name signs in Portland have deteriorated, losing reflectivity, covered with algae, lichen, moss, and dirt, and seriously faded by light. The replacement signs are larger and easier to read, but they are too few. As I rode east on SE Belmont, practically the first legible sign was at SE 30th, one of the newer, larger signs.

This issue has bothered me for years, but as I get older it is even harder to see at night, and I am hoping that the TSP update is an opportunity to finally begin to fix this problem.

Sincerely,

Douglas R. Allen
734 SE 47th Ave.
Portland, OR 97215