

Item # 649

TESTIMONY

186144

IGAW/ODOTIF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE

Email (optional)

✓ Marianne Fitzgerald	10537 SW 64 Drive 97219	fitzgerald.marianne@gmail.com

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Submitted
by Marianne
Fitzgerald

ASHCREEK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



ASHCREEK

February 4, 2013

Mr. David Kim
Metro West Area Manager
Oregon Dept. of Transportation Region 1
123 NW Flanders
Portland, Oregon 97209-4012

Re: ODOT OR 99W Northbound at I-5 Northbound Safety Project

Dear Mr. Kim:

The Ashcreek Neighborhood Association is concerned that the proposed design of the "OR 99W Northbound at I-5 Safety Project" does not adequately address the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians in our neighborhood.

The proposed project calls for additional motor vehicle lanes to the northbound off-ramp and the northbound on-ramp. However, it does not propose a bicycle lane in an area where there is a gap in the bicycle system along Barbur/99W between SW 60th and SW 65th. Currently, bicycle riders must share the sidewalk northbound, and take the traffic lane southbound, through this area.

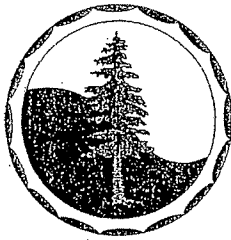
The Ashcreek Neighborhood Association, a recognized neighborhood association within the City of Portland that represents some 5,000 neighbors, urges ODOT to provide bicycle lanes and sidewalks (and/or a traffic separated, wide, multi-modal path) on each side of this project area. We recognize the limited width of the overcrossing but believe there is room for creative solutions within the project area. It is a key connection between Portland and Tigard and near the Sylvania campus of Portland Community College. The proposed "safety" improvements will make it less safe for bicyclists and pedestrians. We urge ODOT to construct dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and signage to help bicyclists and walkers navigate this busy area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Sincerely,

Dean Smith, President
Ashcreek Neighborhood Association
c/o SWNI
7688 SW Capitol Highway
Portland, OR 97219

Cc: Lili Boicourt, ODOT
Dave Taylor, ODOT
Roger Averbeck, SWNI



Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

7688 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, OR 97219 (503) 823-4592

186144

Submitted
by

Marianne
Fitzgerald

October 30, 2008

Jason Tell, Regional Manager
Oregon Dept. of Transportation Region 1
123 NW Flanders
Portland, OR 97209

Re: Comments on Draft 2010-2013 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Mr. Tell:

Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. (SWNI) is a nonprofit coalition that provides services to promote citizen participation and crime prevention. SWNI is a coalition of 17 neighborhood associations and three business associations in the southwest quadrant of the City of Portland. The following comments have been developed and approved by the Board of Directors of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

Southwest Portland, part of the West Hills, has many slopes and streams so the street system does not follow a grid pattern. Much of the transportation system was built without needed sidewalks and bicycle facilities, even along busy arterial and collector streets. It is expensive to add pedestrian and bicycle facilities to the regional and neighborhood arterial streets to meet requirements for stormwater management and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and it is dangerous and difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel safely through these streets today. The 17 SWNI neighborhood associations have been working through its coalition committees, in cooperation with the City of Portland, to identify priorities among many many important safety needs.

Capitol Highway improvements have been our highest priority since the Capitol Highway Plan was approved by the Portland City Council in 1996. We need funding to construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities along SW Capitol Highway between Multnomah Village and Taylors Ferry Road. This segment has

been approved for Preliminary Engineering but not construction, and we seek your support in our efforts to implement the vision in the Capitol Highway Plan.

* **The proposed Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project improvements in Southwest Portland along 99W/Barbur Blvd focus on bridge maintenance and safety for motor vehicle travel. These projects in the draft STIP are in segments of 99W/Barbur Blvd. that do not have bicycle paths, and the proposed improvements must address the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians that travel along these routes as well as motor vehicles.** 99W/Barbur Blvd. is one of the main bicycle routes through Southwest Portland between downtown Portland and Tigard, and has seen a tremendous increase in bicycle travel over the last few years. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the proposed projects are needed to be consistent with the goals of the Oregon Transportation Plan for mobility and accessibility, sustainability and safety and security; and to be consistent with the goals of the Oregon Highway Plan for traffic safety and travel alternatives. All of the bridges along Barbur Blvd. between downtown Portland and SW 68th need bike lanes.

The Vermont and Newbury Viaduct projects (bridge #01983 and #01984) need the proposed deck overlays but also need to be restriped to allow bicyclists to travel safely along this busy bike route. The Hillsdale Neighborhood Association and SW Trails Group have written numerous letters to ODOT with recommended and needed improvements to these bridges. A bicycle path along 99W also needs to be added to the 99W/Multnomah Blvd Viaduct improvements (bridge #02010) in the STIP.

* The I-5/99W Interchange (Exit 294) safety improvements that add motor vehicle travel lanes must not sacrifice safety for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling through the intersection of 99W and I-5 at this freeway interchange. Today, there are incomplete bicycle and pedestrian lanes on 99W/I-5 between SW 60th and SW 68th, and where there are facilities, they are only on one side of the street (note: they are not all on the same side of the street, and there is only one safe crossing). We invite ODOT to meet with the local neighborhood associations to discuss possible solutions that might make this intersection and interchange area safer for all modes. We urge ODOT to incorporate those bicycle and pedestrian improvements into the design of this project.

Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. strongly supports local project funding of the Red Electric Trail segment from SW 30th to Vermont. The Red Electric Trail is one of the highest priority transportation projects needed in Southwest Portland that will make it safer for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel east-west through our neighborhoods. The segment that is proposed for funding in this MTIP is one of several trail segments that will eventually connect the Fanno Creek Trail in Washington County with the Willamette River Greenway.

This segment of the Red Electric Trail would connect residents with several important destinations, including the Hillsdale Town Center; several elementary, middle and high schools; a public swimming pool; regional athletic facilities; religious institutions; a farmers market; shops; grocery stores and restaurants. In addition, many bicyclists that travel through Southwest Portland to and from Washington County and downtown Portland, and across the Sellwood and Ross Island Bridges, would benefit from this project.

The Red Electric Trail generally follows an old railroad grade and is one of the few routes that would provide safer off-street bicycle and pedestrian travel along a relatively flat trail in Southwest Portland. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance, in its Blueprint for Better Biking: 40 Ways to Get There (2006), identified the Red Electric Trail/Fanno Creek Trail (project #28 in the BTA report) as the project most likely to increase bicycling in Southwest Portland.

We recommend that Metro's next corridor study be the Barbur Blvd/I-5 corridor between I-405 and the city line at SW 65th. This is one of the major corridor refinements identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (p. 7-39) and is critical for efficient freight and motor vehicle travel as well as transit, bicyclists and pedestrians. It is one of the corridors being considered for High Capacity Transit in the future. When these two roadways become congested--which happens all too frequently--motor vehicle traffic overwhelms our local streets and adds to safety concerns in our neighborhoods. A corridor plan that is coordinated with the High Capacity Transit Plan and Portland Comprehensive Plan update could create opportunities for safer travel by all modes through this area of Southwest Portland, and would help the region accommodate anticipated growth over the next 40 years.

We applaud Metro and ODOT in their efforts to make it safer for people in our region to travel safely by walking and riding bicycles and transit. We have a long list of needed infrastructure improvements in Southwest Portland. **We urge ODOT to make it safer to ride bicycles and walk along 99W/Barbur Blvd in the 2010-2013 STIP.**

Sincerely,



Brian Russell
President
Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

186144

Subject: Council Agenda Item 649 , Concerns re bicycle and pedestrian safety needs for this project

From: Marianne Fitzgerald <fitzgerald.marianne@gmail.com>

Date: 6/24/2013 9:41 AM

To: Commissioner Steve Novick <steve.novick@portlandoregon.gov>, Mayor Charlie Hales <charlie.hales@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Amanda Fritz <amanda@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Dan Saltzman <dan@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Nick Fish <nick@portlandoregon.gov>, ana.jovanovic@odot.state.or.us, winston.sandino@portlandoregon.gov

CC: Roger Averbeck <transportation@swni.org>, Dean Smith <smithd1111@comcast.net>, Michael Kisor <ashcreek4@magicpubs.com>, Marcia Leslie <mmac_les@yahoo.com>, Charles Radosta <cradosta@kittelson.com>, Mike McCarthy <MikeM@tigard-or.gov>, "Geller, Roger" <Roger.Geller@portlandoregon.gov>, April Bertelsen <april.bertelsen@portlandoregon.gov>, HORNING Jessica <Jessica.Horning@odot.state.or.us>, BOICOURT Lili D <Lili.D.BOICOURT@odot.state.or.us>, 'CHRISTOPHER Basil R' <Basil.R.CHRISTOPHER@odot.state.or.us>, Jason Tell <jason.a.tell@odot.state.or.us>, David Kim <david.kim@odot.state.or.us>, Marianne Fitzgerald <fitzgerald.marianne@gmail.com>

On Thursday June 27, City Council is scheduled to discuss Item #649, Intergovernmental Agreement with ODOT for design and construction of I-5 NB ramps at 99W/SW Coronado.

I recommend you postpone approval of this item until ODOT resolves ongoing issues with the community regarding lack of safe bicycle and pedestrian travel in this area. We have told ODOT repeatedly that this project is a "safety" project for automobiles by widening lanes. The proposed design will make it less safe for people walking and biking in this section of SW Barbur Blvd/99W in Portland.

Background:

- letter from Ashcreek Neighborhood Association dated February 4, 2013 expressing concerns (attached)
- three photos describing existing conditions (no bike lane and inadequate sidewalk) (attached)
- link to project website at http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/pages/OR99W_ramps/index.aspx

Public Involvement:

Representatives of the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. coalition and the Ashcreek and Far Southwest Neighborhood Association have met with Mr. David Kim and other ODOT staff regarding this project on numerous occasions and have not been told of satisfactory solutions to address these infrastructure deficiencies and safety concerns. Besides myself, the neighborhood attendees include Roger Averbeck, Michael Kisor, Marcia Leslie and Charles Radosta. ODOT staff attended a SWNI Transportation Committee meeting on November 19, 2012, and we participated in a site visit with ODOT and City of Tigard staff on March 19, 2013 to discuss our concerns and recommended solutions. We also organized a site visit with ODOT staff on August 5, 2011, in an attempt to have our concerns incorporated early into the project design. We have not had any follow-up since March 19 other than an April 20 email from Lili Boicort of ODOT describing some tweaks to widen the shoulder for bicyclists at the northern edge of the project, before the bridge. I was particularly disturbed by the public involvement response to question #9, "the community is happy this project is finally being built", as disingenuous, given the concerns neighbors have expressed over a design that has not substantially changed since proposed in November 2012.

Proposed Solution:

- 1) Neighbors desire a continuous bike lane along both sides of Barbur/99W between ~SW 58th (where the bike lane ends) and SW 65th (the boundary between Portland and Tigard, where the bike

lane begins). As you can see from the attached photos, there is no bike lane in this stretch. ODOT claims that the area is too dangerous and would rather leave it up to bicyclists to figure out how to maneuver through this freeway interchange area. ODOT also claims there is no room for a bike lane although elimination of the unneeded continuous median/left-turn vehicle lane and/or narrowing the travel lanes would allow room for bike lanes. Instead, bicyclists are expected to share the lane with motor vehicles in both directions, or opt for sharing a 4-foot wide sidewalk over the bridge in the uphill northbound direction (see October 2008 photo). ODOT did widen the shoulder in a small segment southbound near 11280 SW Barbur following our March 19 site visit, and Lili's April 20 email said ODOT would widen the shoulder in a small segment northbound near 11280 SW Barbur, but plans have not changed for the remainder of the project area where there continues to be gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

2) Because there is no sidewalk along the north side of Barbur between ~SW 58th and SW 65th, it would be ideal for ODOT to incorporate ADA-accessible provisions for pedestrians into this project. The biggest concern is the transit stop at 11280 SW Barbur that has no safe crossing for pedestrians accessing transit from the south side of Barbur nor any nearby signalized crossings. Pedestrians using the narrow sidewalk on the south side of Barbur must share it with bicyclists (see photo). Many years ago ODOT promised a pedestrian crosswalk with a median at 11280 SW Barbur that has never materialized but is still needed. A dedicated bike lane would reduce the need for bicyclists to use the sidewalk.

I urge the city to not approve this Intergovernmental Agreement until ODOT incorporates bicycle and pedestrian safety elements into this project along the entire stretch of project (per Exhibit A, 11280 SW Barbur to 11450 SW Pacific Highway).

ODOT built this section of Barbur and I-5 in the mid-1980's with only minimal compliance with ORS 366.514 requiring footpaths and bicycle trails. Neighbors have been advocating for safety improvements for many years. With ODOT now embarking on a major reconstruction of the project area, it seems the time is NOW to address these bicycle and pedestrian safety issues. We have tried to do so with current project managers through two site visits and other meetings. The solutions ODOT has verbally proposed are tweaks that will make conditions slightly better than if we had not done the site visits. The improvements do not fully address the significant bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure gaps and safety issues throughout the project area.

Without such actions to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians in this project, ODOT and PBOT's commitment to improving infrastructure for active transportation will continue to be merely words, not reality, in Southwest Portland, and conditions will continue to be unsafe to walk and bike in our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,
Marianne Fitzgerald
10537 SW 64th Drive
Portland OR 97219
(503) 246-1847
fitzgerald.marianne@gmail.com

member, Ashcreek Neighborhood Association and Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. Transportation Committee

Portland City Council Item #649, June 27, 2012

My name is Marianne Fitzgerald, 10537 SW 64th Drive, a member of the Ashcreek Neighborhood Association and President of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. I have been a resident within ½ mile of this construction project for over 34 years.

I lived in the neighborhood when ODOT constructed the current bridges over I-5 and ramps in 1985, although not active in neighborhood issues at the time. I saw that ODOT built substandard sidewalks and no bike lanes in this project and I thought, "this is it?".

Fast forward 25 years, I'm now involved. In 2008, this project appeared on ODOT's draft STIP list, and I jumped at the chance for neighbors to get involved early in the process. SWNI wrote a letter to ODOT and JPACT on October 30, 2008, requesting bicycle and pedestrian improvements all along the Barbur corridor, and in particular, in this project that is under discussion.

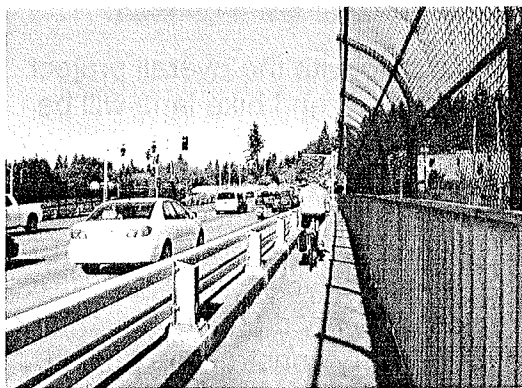
Over the five years since that letter, I periodically contacted ODOT for project status.

When we learned a project manager had been assigned to the project, neighbors organized a site visit with ODOT staff on August 5, 2011. Nothing happened.

Then, when ODOT staff presented the draft project design to the SWNI Transportation Committee in November 2012, we noted that the proposal to widen lanes to make the area safer for motor vehicles actually made it less safe for pedestrians and bicyclists. Ashcreek Neighborhood Association wrote a letter to ODOT on February 4, 2013, and neighbors organized a second site visit on March 19, 2013. Again, nothing happened.

When this project appeared on the City Council agenda this week, I was gravely concerned that our concerns had not been addressed. I sent an email to City Council on Monday June 24 expressing concerns. I've had two meetings with ODOT staff on this project over the last three days, so something finally happened.

ODOT has modified the design to add a short bike lane and signage to make it safer for bicyclists to travel northbound, although bikes will be expected to ride in the vehicle travel lane or share the narrow sidewalk with pedestrians (see photo).



ODOT has modified the design to add a striped shoulder to make it safer for bicyclists to travel through the area southbound, although it is only 3-feet wide at pinchpoints and 4-feet wide at best.

ODOT has added a pedestrian refuge to a dangerous crossing area to make it safer for pedestrians to cross the busy street at the transit stop north of the bridge, although it says it is unsafe to include crosswalk striping with the pedestrian refuge.

These improvements, which it's my understanding that ODOT incorporated into the designs since our March 19 site visit, will be safer than the proposal that we saw in November. We thank ODOT for listening to our concerns and doing what they could in this timeframe.

Could ODOT do more? Of course they could, particularly if they had taken our neighborhood concerns seriously back in August 2011 and had the kind of dialogue that we have had in the past three days much earlier in the process.

- We are still hoping they can take an innovative look at the unused center median along the bridge to make the shoulders as wide as possible for bicyclist safety.
- We are still hoping they can take another look at the crossings to make it safer now and in the future. ODOT also needs to work with TriMet to make these crossings at transit stops as safe as possible for our most vulnerable users.

Could PBOT do more? Of course they could. PBOT was invited to both of our site visits, but did not attend. PBOT is mentioned in this staff report, but when I asked ODOT staff yesterday which PBOT staff they had been working with, no one could come up with a name, which tells me they weren't. The staff response to Public Involvement Question #9, that "the community is happy", tells me that whoever wrote that didn't check his or her facts in preparing this council item.

This project is located within the adopted Barbur Concept Plan and SW Corridor Plan area, and we expect to see a lot of growth over the next 25 years. I hate to lose this opportunity to make things better, and have to wait another 25 years for the next opportunity.

The lesson learned here?

Whenever projects are proposed to be constructed in areas that lack multi-modal infrastructure, PBOT and ODOT staff need to put pedestrian and bicyclist safety needs front and center, and see how improvements can be incorporated along with motor vehicle safety improvements. Whether it's the Barbur Demonstration Project or projects on Powell, Woodstock, Cully or East Portland, we must seize every opportunity to make these projects support needed multi-modal infrastructure improvements whenever infrastructure construction projects are proposed.

About Item #649? This Intergovernmental Agreement has little to do with the overall project design, although ironically this parcel is the only one where a sidewalk and bike lane will be constructed, which is not noted in the staff report.

In response to Question #9, I would say the community is disappointed. Again we thank ODOT for making needed improvements to the design—it is MUCH better than six months ago. But we should not have to settle for "okay" when it comes to pedestrian and bicycle safety and encouraging the use of alternative modes throughout the region. We need to take advantage of every opportunity to make these improvements, from the start of every construction project.

Thank you for considering these comments today, and in future endeavors.

Summary of ODOT Region 1 Public Involvement for the OR 99W/I-5 Ramps Project

In 2011, ODOT staff presented the project at a SWNI meeting.

In August of 2011, ODOT participated in a walking tour with SWNI members Marianne Fitzgerald, Roger Averbeck, and 3 other neighborhood representatives.

In April of 2012, the Project graphic was created and disseminated to the public.

Throughout the development and design phases, ODOT has provided information to Citizen Participation Organization's 4B, 4K and 4M at relevant public meetings and held individual stakeholder meetings.

In July of 2012, PBOT was updated on the project in an ODOT/PBOT Coordination meeting.

In November of 2012, ODOT attended a SWNI Transportation Committee meeting.

In March of 2013, ODOT participated in a second walking tour with Marianne Fitzgerald, Roger Averbeck and 3 other neighborhood folks. The City of Tigard also sent a representative.

In June of 2013, ODOT held a phone and in-person meeting with members of SWNI regarding the project.

Early in the Spring of 2014, ODOT intends on hosting a Pre-Construction Open House and will invite members of the public to participate. Additionally, ODOT will develop and issue a media release for broader notification and awareness of this project.

OR 99W Northbound at I-5 Ramps Safety Project

Active Transportation Project Elements Requested to ODOT By SWNI

Request	Part of Project	Alternate Actions Taken and Justification
1. Add bike lanes in both directions of OR 99W between SW 65th Avenue and SW 60th Avenue	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 4-foot shoulder stripe will be added on OR 99W southbound In April 2013, ODOT Maintenance crews moved back barrier on OR 99W southbound to create a wider shoulder leading onto the I-5 bridge Inner lanes already reduced to 11 ft. Width of 12 feet necessary in outer lanes to accommodate freight and transit vehicles.
2. Way-finding signs for bicyclists to use while traveling through the project area	Yes	
3. Sidewalk on OR 99W northbound between SW Coronado Street and SW 64th Avenue	Yes	
4. Improve pedestrian crossing at 11200 SW Barbur to access transit stop	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot stripe a crosswalk at this location due to safety concerns but we will be installing a pedestrian refuge island.
5. Trim or remove vegetation in project area to improve sight distance/visibility	Yes	
6. Construct sidewalk along OR 99W southbound in front of Busters BBQ	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project scope includes improvements in northbound direction only New sidewalk requires right-of-way purchase; project budget doesn't include property acquisition
7. Cut back island and build ramp at OR 99W and SW 60th Ave. so bicyclists can safely return to right shoulder while heading north	Yes	
8. Add bike detector stencil on OR 99W northbound for bicyclists turning right onto SW 60th	Yes	
9. Include a bike ramp from the shoulder to the sidewalk on OR 99W northbound just prior to the barrier	Yes	

99W I-5 OR 99W Northbound at I-5 Northbound SAFETY PROJECT

A 2014 project is planned to improve safety and operations in the area of OR 99W northbound and I-5 northbound, spanning the Tigard/Portland city limits. Once complete, traffic in the area should see a reduction in crashes and a better flow.

For more information, visit the project website at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/pages/OR99W_ramps/index.aspx



An additional lane will be added on OR 99W between Coronado Street and 64th Avenue. Along with improved signage, this will help reduce confusion and create better movement between OR 99W north and I-5 north. This photo is looking south.



This off-ramp from I-5 north will be widened to allow for improved flow between I-5 north and OR 99W. This photo is looking north.



moved barrier to reduce pinchpoint

new ped refuge

shoulder widening



Shoulder widening is planned along OR 99W northbound. This photo is looking north.



new shoulder striping

stencil bike detector

cut back island for bike access/refuge & yield

landscaping and wayfinding

new sidewalk and bike lane

new bike ramps

	Current striping configuration on the I-5 northbound off-ramp where it intersects with SW 60th Avenue.*
	Proposed striping configuration on the I-5 northbound off-ramp where it intersects with SW 60th Avenue.*

*This photo is looking north.



New sidewalk will be added, improving pedestrian safety along the OR 99W northbound on-ramp to I-5. This photo depicts one section of new sidewalk.



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