

FOSTER RD TRANSPORTATION & STREETScape PLAN

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, PRINT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

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June 5, 2014

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Portland City Council  
Attn: Karla Moore-Love, Council Clerk  
1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Room 140  
Portland, OR 97204

Re: Foster Streetscape Plan – Resolution 619

Dear Mayor Hales and City Commissioners,

My name is Carl Larson, advocate with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance. Our mission is to create healthy, sustainable communities by making bicycling safe, convenient and accessible. We believe the proposed Foster Streetscape Plan takes a step in this direction and encourage you to support resolution 619.

I would like to thank you for considering approval of the proposed Foster Streetscape Plan. This plan addresses serious safety concerns on one of Portland's deadly High Crash Corridors while improving the health of neighborhoods and local businesses. High Crash Corridors only make up 4% of Portland's arterial streets, but they account for 66% of the city's pedestrian fatalities and 58% of serious pedestrian injuries. Foster Road currently divides adjacent neighborhoods with long distances between safe crossings and makes bicycling and walking challenging. Without a safe place to ride a bicycle, people use the sidewalk, which is not safe or comfortable for anyone.

The plan before you today makes big steps towards correcting these dangerous deficiencies and making Foster a safe destination, more vibrant business district, and better transportation corridor.

**The Bicycle Transportation Alliance urges council to support the Foster Streetscape Plan.**

Sincerely,



Carl Larson  
Advocate



I agree with the following definition from Wikipedia. Foster Road is a major transportation artery, giving needed automobile access to the city center or the interstate. This road is home to frequent service Trimet bus lines.

Taking away driving lanes will affect too many drivers even in the outlying areas, not just now but in the future. Using Powell as a substitute for accessing the interstate is not desirable as cars are backed up now.

In the Mercury Bike Issue June 2014, Rex Burkholder , bicyclist, thinks the city should be focusing on improving its busiest corridors as he wants to get to the pub or his work fast. Don't we share the goal of getting to destinations as efficiently as possible? My husband and I use Foster Road frequently. In two-lane traffic getting stuck behind unfocused drivers makes traveling difficult. Trying to make up for lost time causes traffic violations and hazards.

The blinking lights and crosswalk at 80<sup>th</sup> and Foster Road has improved safety for pedestrians. We don't hear of the accidents there like we previously did. Establishing bike lanes in the city's busiest commercial roads is a harder fix.

However, commercial roads need to accommodate their traffic load. Closing one's eyes to that fact hurts the city a lot. Making driving burdensome so more of us will take to bikes, has caused a backlash against the city planners and the bike coalition. In speaking to my neighbors in the 45<sup>th</sup> and Holgate area about the Foster Streetscape Plan, they have expressed opposition to this plan as well as anger about pro-bike changes that have "messed up" other areas. At an open house, of which most were unaware, two folks voiced strong opposition to the proposed plan and one stated he preferred the status quo as referenced in The Bee newspaper.

Lately, I drive on Foster with a sinking feeling that a mistake could take place. I invite the commissioners and mayor to drive the 40-block stretch and decide if they would want the proposed changes on their regularly traveled route. Spending the 3.25 million dollars for a plan that is repulsive to many seems unwise. Other city issues like street improvement have popular support. Please vote against the plan before you. Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the city. I will submit source material to the clerk.

Submitted by Carol Specht; 4320 SE 45<sup>th</sup> Ave; Portland, OR, 97206; 503-775-7776;  
dcspecht@comcast.net

## CONSIDERATIONS AGAINST THE FOSTER STREETSCAPE PLAN

H. David Specht, M.D.  
4320 S.E. 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, OR 97206-4010  
E-mail: dcspecht@comcast.net

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1. The massive changes proposed need MORE than special-interest-group affirmation, which has not been properly undertaken during the planning stages.
2. Already in 1974, when I moved to Portland, Foster Road was four lanes wide and had heavy commuter traffic to and from downtown Portland. Traffic has increased and NOT abated since opening I-205, and the incomplete widening of both Powell and Sunnyside Roads.
3. In addition to the bus traffic Foster Road already had, and still has, it now supports major I-205 on-ramps and off-ramps.
4. Instead of undertaking the greater expense of expanding the already generous sidewalks with planters and trees, adding bike lanes, and reducing through, automobile lanes from four to two; the much less expensive alternative is to keep the four lanes, and make the left-hand turn lane completely continuous, either by eliminating parking entirely, and/or by selectively removing portions of sidewalks.
5. The proper way to improve pedestrian safety is to limit crossing to selective, suitably-spaced intersections with marked crosswalks, and to eliminate crossing at unsuitably-placed intersections by installing crossing prohibited signs. This would be an absolute necessity if efficient streetcars were put in place.
6. Streetcars are much preferable to bicycles. Too much has been said about making Portland the Bike-Capital of the Nation, and not enough has been said about its impracticalities. Portland has one of the worse climates for this goal. The majority of the time it is raining. Twice I have been rained on in the middle of a 50-mile bike ride on the Springwater Trail--8 laps on the highway-grade-paved, Gresham segment with my racing bike. My entire backside was coated with mud sprayed up by the rear wheel from water on the trail. Imagine this occurrence if I was riding to and from work in my business suit. Also imagine trying to carry \$100 worth of groceries home on my bike.
7. In conclusion, Portland needs to stop impeding traffic flow by creating bottlenecks like the Foster Streetscape Plan.

# TSG Services

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Nancy R. Chapin • Owner

4704 SE 65<sup>th</sup> Ave. Portland, OR 97206 cell: 503-313-1665; Fax: 503-771-3428; e-mail:

WBE # 1317

## **Mayor Hales and Commissioners:**

I am Nancy Chapin, representing the Foster Area Business Assn. and my business, TSG Services, which has been located ½ block off Foster Road in Mt. Scott-Arleta NA since 2005. I also started staffing the Business Association in 1996 and was involved in the development of the original Foster Streetscape Plan approved in 2003.

It has been my pleasure over the years to learn the history of Foster Road and its use as the path from Damascus, through Lents to SE 49<sup>th</sup> where it disappears without a trace... There is a lot happening between SE 49<sup>th</sup> and Damascus, however, but especially there has been change, growth, improvements and excitement in the area known as Lents. For several years after I-205 was built, Lents was ignored, divided in half and left to deteriorate – but not anymore. A group of residents and businesses from Lents and nearby (Ken Turner from Eastport Plaza was at the table from day one) started the ball rolling and they and more residents and business people have spent countless hours working, planting, and building Lents with PDC, the City, Rose CDC and many others. They have created a place that deserves to have the road running through it be safe, walkable, and a beautiful Gateway to this rebuilt and much-cared for area in SE Portland. Their dreams have brought a community to life and a pride in being “Lents Grown”!

The International Farmers’ Market and the new businesses in Lents and all along Foster Road deserve the Foster Road envisioned in the Plan before you. And, they need it Now, the Neighbors who live in Foster-Powell, Mt. Scott-Arleta and Creston-Kenilworth need it Now, (Foster Road is their Main Street) their friends and customers need it Now – even those who commute through it need it Now, because if they are slowed down and see all that Foster Road and its businesses have to offer they will stop and shop for their necessities, enjoy the food and entertainment, too, and help with the economic growth we all look forward to!

I, sincerely, as a business owner on Foster Road who assisted with the Foster Target Area Project in 1998-2001 and the Foster Area Business Assn. since 1996 and in the start of the Signature Event: Fun on Foster (the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual is on Sept 27<sup>th</sup> this year) and on the Advisory Committee that worked together over a year to approve this plan, urge you to pass it and fund it to the fullest extent possible as rapidly as possible. We not only recognize it as a long road, but also as well-worth being able to travel on safely by foot, bicycles, transit and other motor vehicles giving your favorite businesses on Foster as well as in Lents the chance to embrace the many opportunities the changes spoken to in this Plan will offer the entire community.

Mayor Hales and Commissioners Saltzman, Fish, Fritz and Novick: it is time to accept this Plan – again – in its updated state and to commit to spending the funding available for it now and to budget the time to find what it will take to complete and celebrate the entire project of making Foster Road a safe, welcoming artery with services, products, entertainment, gathering places and the needs of our neighbors, business owners and friends being met along the way as well as in the spiffed up and welcoming Lents!

“Investments that make it easier to walk, bike and use transit also contribute to economic development.”  
Steve Novick