

VACATE NE SANDY BLVD

BOUND BY NE COUCH ST, E BURNSIDE ST, NE 12TH AVE & NE 14TH AVE

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

NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE	Email
✓ CHARLIE JOHNSON		
✓ LARRY PORTER	5510 SW DOVER LOOP, PORTLAND 012	PORTERLPDX@EARTHLINK.NET
✓ TERRY PARKER	P.O. Box 13523	parker72012@gmail.com

TERRY PARKER
P.O. BOX 13503
PORTLAND, OREGON 97213-0503

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Subject: Testimony to the Portland City Council on vacating Sandy Boulevard between 12th and 14th Avenues, January 20, 2016.

Vacating Sandy Boulevard between 12th and 14th Avenues and giving up the right-of-way is an unwise move. It places developer profits ahead of common sense and the good of the community.

When the eastside Burnside-Couch couplet was proposed a few years back, it was promoted as a safety measure to fix the problems associated with the complicated 12th and Burnside intersection, and to help relieve congestion. Coupled with super-sized bicycle modifications made to 12th Avenue between Sandy and the Lloyd District, the outcome of the couplet project is that congestion has worsened to the point that many eastside business want to move out of the area. Safety has also been compromised, especially where eastbound traffic re-enters Sandy Boulevard from 14th. The curvature of the intersection is such that large trucks and busses need to use both lanes to make the turn. TriMet no longer uses this route now traveling farther East on Burnside before connecting with Sandy.

The original underlying purpose of the project was rarely brought up in a rigged and broken public participation process. If the right probing questions were asked to right people in the know, the answer went something this: the reasoning for the project is only about 20% transportation related, the other 80% is to make more land available for development. Coming from an administration with a car-hater mindset, the project also had the distinct appearance to be more of a road block than to make traffic flow better.

Vacating this portion of Sandy now would eliminate the option of correcting a least a portion of a bungled up mess from the past by reintroducing eastbound traffic back to this portion of the boulevard. This fix wouldn't put right the capacity and congestion problems now associated with Couch Street or on 12th Avenue, but it would eliminate the need for eastbound Sandy traffic to navigate the unsafe and hazardous curves at 14th, and likely reduce some congestion in the eastbound direction on both Burnside and Sandy. It would also eliminate the need for TriMet busses to use a roundabout route to go East on Sandy.

Common sense, traffic safety, and reducing congestion and therefore emissions - the good of the community - should outweigh developer profits. Vacating this portion of Sandy needs to be rejected.

Respectively submitted,

Terry Parker
Northeast Portland