

**From:** Margaret Smeekens [mailto:bamazng@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 5:27 PM  
**To:** Planning and Sustainability Commission <psc@portlandoregon.gov>  
**Subject:** In Support of NE 7th Avenue as a designated Greenway

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to provide my input on the proposed revision to the Transportation System Plan with respect to bicycle classification maps.

My husband and I own the home on the Northeast corner of NE 7th and Brazee, and the increased auto traffic on NE 7th poses a huge safety problem for our community. We see families, children, and "other abled" adults struggle to cross 7th Ave at our intersection many times daily and we witness very scary scenarios wherein folks have nearly been seriously injured. As regular bike riders, we also experience the impatience and danger of having auto traffic speed around us, cut us off at intersections, and/or pull in front of our bikes and then suddenly brake.

Please hear our concerns and act in a manner that will increase the safety and live ability of our community and, specifically, for those of us who live right on NE 7th Avenue. Making NE 7th avenue a designated greenway and establishing it as a major city bikeway is the best way to accomplish these goals.

We currently have an established de facto bikeway on NE 7th Ave. The proposed TSP calls for establishing a major city bikeway on NE 9th, and leaving NE 7th as a minor city bikeway.

At a recent public meeting, PBOT employees indicated it would cost \$2 million to upgrade NE 9th to a major bikeway, including a path around the periphery of Irving Park. It was also articulated that it would only cost \$1 million to upgrade NE 7th to a major bikeway.

I am opposed to the proposed plan 9th Ave. for several reasons:

- The City is asking taxpayers for a gas tax because of underfunding of transportation projects. We need to start with responsible planning of projects and not ask taxpayers to fund an extra million to fund bikeway improvements on NE 9th when NE 7th is an already established bikeway.

- Bicycle commuters already use NE 7th, they appreciate the grade, the pavement quality and directness of the street.

- The use of NE 9th will require a path around the periphery of baseball and soccer fields in Irving Park. Cyclists and ball players will have to watch out for each other, detracting from both experiences.

- Numerous organizations such as the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, Bike Loud PDX, Bike Oregon.org, the Irvington Community Association, the Eliot Neighborhood Association, GoLloyd and the King Neighborhood Association would like the available funds to be spent upgrading NE 7th to a major bikeway, and not NE 9th.

- It is hard to see taxpayers who do not live in Eliot, Irvington, King, or Sabin neighborhoods favoring spending an extra million to upgrade 9th instead of 7th to a major bikeway, particularly when neighborhood cyclists would not use NE 9th.

- The new bike/ped bridge over I-84 will be on 7th. Having bikes move to 9th north of Broadway means unnecessarily negotiating 2 blocks of travel on Weidler or Broadway, which will further demotivate cyclists from using a bikeway on 9th.

-Conditions for cyclists and pedestrians have to be improved on NE 7th, even if 9th were converted to a greenway the City would still need to do something about 7th, thus adding additional cost.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this matter. I genuinely hope that NE 7th can be designated a greenway, before it becomes as busy and dangerous as NE 33rd!

Margaret Smeekens  
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