

Commissioner Steve Novick

Director Leah Treat

Mayor Charlie Hales

Planning and Sustainability Commission

Planning and Sustainability Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Irvington Community Association (ICA) to inform you that it is our strong preference to make NE 7th Ave. a bike greenway rather than 9th Ave. When one takes into consideration the city's plan to build a pedestrian bridge over I-84 and the following factors, logic dictates that 7th be considered the preferred route.

First, 7th Ave. is already used by cyclists as a de facto bike greenway. It is unlikely that converting 9th to a greenway will entice most of those cyclists to use 9th rather than 7th. If cyclists were going to be persuaded by the calmer cycling environment on 9th, they would currently be using that route since 9th is currently less stressful in regard to traffic than is 7th. However, they are not. That indicates there are other factors which encourage cyclists to endure the dangerous traffic environment on 7th.

Some of those factors likely include the fact that 7th is a more even grade than 9th, which makes it easier to bike. Ninth includes a number of steeper inclines. As opposed to 9th, which runs into Irving Park, 7th is a through route. A new path around the perimeter of Irving Park is unlikely to entice commuter cyclists as it would be adjacent to a recreational area where baseball and soccer games occur as well as park users, with their dogs.

When interviewing cyclists about their preferences, most cyclists who use 7th currently indicated that they would not shift to 9th even if it were converted to a greenway.

Another reason we oppose converting 9th to a greenway versus 7th, is that 7th would be significantly cheaper to convert to a greenway. Pavement would have to be replaced on at least two blocks and a multi-use path would need to be built in Irving Park.

Finally, in regard to 7th Ave., the street has become more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists due to an increase in traffic, particularly between Hancock and Knott. If 9th were converted to a greenway, the city would still need to spend substantial money to improve 7th since cyclists and pedestrians would continue to use 7th. There are currently 5000 cars per day using 7th. The most efficient method to solve that problem, and address the needed north-south bikeway, is to convert 7th to a greenway.

We are aware that some residents along Ne 8th and 9th Avenues have been told by some of their neighbors that implementation of a greenway on 7th will result in traffic flooding onto 8th and 9th. We have attempted to explain that any diverters on 7th would actually divert traffic towards MLK and due to other design elements of 8th and 9th, they would not be seeing a huge increase in vehicular traffic. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, the residents of 8th and 9th have not been receptive of these explanations. It should also be noted that none of the communications from the residents of 8th and 9th have explained why 9th would make a superior greenway. Rather, their sole argument seems to be based

on the unfounded fear that their streets will look like what 7th looks like currently. We do not believe that unsupported fear is a good basis for failing to make 7th the preferred greenway.

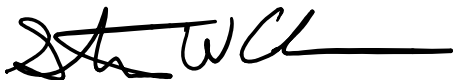
For the above reasons, we recommend that the city convert NE 7th Ave. into a bike greenway between Alberta and Broadway. We are also in favor of the greenway going further north and south as it is important that the city implement north-south greenways to connect with the current bike infrastructure. In fact, we support changing NE 7th to a Major City Bikeway classification between NE Schuyler Street and the proposed bike/pedestrian crossing of I-84. We believe that converting 7th to a greenway will solve multiple problems and will be an important step towards increasing the percentage of cyclists in Portland and getting closer to vision zero.

In addition to urging the city to classify 7th Ave. as a greenway, the ICA agrees with Go Lloyd that NE Broadway has too many designations. We urge the city not to classify Broadway as a Major City Traffic Street. We also agree with Go Lloyd's support of the addition of NE Broadway and Weidler Streets between the Broadway Bridge and NE Grand or 7th Avenue as City Walkways, and agree that it should not stop at Grand or 7th. We too support continuing their classification as Walkways further east.

In addition, we urge the city to improve the Broadway/Weidler corridor. In addition to other potential improvements, such as potentially expanded sidewalks, protected bike lanes, additional crossings, improved transit, and additional greenery, Broadway needs to be right-sized so that it is safe for cyclists and pedestrians. We believe that an investment in this corridor will result in several things. It will result in the corridor performing up to its potential commercially. A thriving Broadway corridor will encourage more development and density in the Lloyd District and the Hollywood Town Center, thus helping the city meet its various goals. It will increase pedestrian modes and cycling. It would be particularly effective in creating an important east-west cycling corridor.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Cole", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steven Cole

President, Irvington Community Association

503-788-0618