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Date: 8/9/2016
To: Planning and Sustainability Commission
Re: Central City 2035 Plan Testimony -- Proposed Draft
From: BikeLoudPDX
cc: tsp@portlandoregon.gov

To the Planning and Sustainability Commission,

We want to thank BPS staff members for reviewing our Discussion Draft testimony, and for the subsequent changes made to the Draft. In particular, we want to thank staff for reconsidering the (perhaps unintentional) policy of only designating existing, and not planned, on-street bicycle facilities as major city bikeways. We hope that a similar forward-looking approach will make for a stronger Stage III TSP as well. We also want to specifically voice our appreciation for the changed bicycle and traffic designations on SE 11th and 12th, and for related project #20176. Many bicycle riders have echoed the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District's strong support for traffic-calming and the introduction of major city bikeway-quality bike facilities on SE 11th and 12th. We also want to specifically applaud the major city bikeway designation change from NE 9th to NE 7th; BikeLoudPDX's officially-preferred bikeway route through the Lloyd District to NE Sumner is NE 7th the entire stretch. Bolstered by project #20186, #20194, and #20077, SE/NE 7th will be a strong addition to the eastside cycling network and will greatly improve connectivity between SE and NE. There were other street classification requests of ours that were incorporated into the Proposed Draft too that for brevity purposes we will not outline individually here, but we thank staff for those as well.

Transportation Performance Targets

Portions of our testimony were not, however, incorporated into the Proposed Draft. Regarding "Transportation Performance Targets," we were encouraged that these were improved from 40% in Lower Albina to 55%, and from 60% to 65% in the Central Eastside. However, we must again reiterate that the City has a stated goal of reducing SOV trips to 25% city-wide. On account of their density and proximity to job, commercial, and other important destinations, all neighborhoods in the Central City should lead the way on this endeavor and far surpass the 75% non-SOV mode share goal. To reiterate from our previous testimony, "if the reasoning behind the low performance target is to include freight trips (many of which are technically "SOVs"), then that needs to be specified in the target, and a performance goal that excludes freight trips should be established for these districts."

Bicycle Classification Map

We note a lack of direct bicycle connectivity on the west end of the Morrison Bridge and would recommend extending the major city bikeway classification on SW Alder and SW Washington in the gap between SW Broadway and SW 2nd. Similarly, without a major city bikeway designation on either NE Davis or Couch streets, the Burnside Bridge will continue to have poor westbound bicycle accessibility. Regarding connectivity to the Hawthorne Bridge, the major city bikeways on SW Main and Madison should extend all the way from the bridgehead west to the Park Blocks. Another connectivity problem is that NE 3rd Ave needs a direct connection to NE Lloyd Blvd and the western portion of the Lloyd District, as well as connection to the eventual Sullivan's Gulch Trail.

Regarding bicycle connectivity between the Park Blocks (soon-to-be Green Loop) and Naito Parkway (soon-to-be "Better Naito" replacement, "Best Naito"), there may need to be some readjustment regarding which north-south streets are chosen as major city bikeways, and therefore, which streets will presumably receive the best bicycle treatments and be able to handle the largest number of cyclists. There are arguments for and against nearly every street from 1st to Broadway, however we would like for the following to be considered:

- Remember that while the Park Blocks/Green Loop is designated as a major city bikeway, it will not serve the needs of faster cyclists, who will want their own parallel facilities to reduce conflict between them and the slower/less seasoned/out-of-town/recreational cyclists the Green Loop will surely attract (as it should)
- Designate SW/NW 4th a major city bikeway from SW Barbur to Union Station
- Designate SW/NW 6th as a major city bikeway from SW Lincoln to Union Station to form a bicycle couplet with SW/NW Broadway

In the case of SW 6th Ave, it connects numerous destinations, particularly within Portland State University and the Pioneer Courthouse Square area. It also provides a direct connection to the Broadway Bridge for any cyclists heading to destinations in Northeast and North Portland. There are few conflicting parking garages and on-street parking spaces on 6th. The issue of streetcar/MAX track crossings could be remedied with the addition of rubber-filled flangeways, designed to be pressed down by streetcars but not by people biking.

On the eastside, we strongly request changing the bicycle designation of SE/NE Sandy to major city bikeway. (We are also advocating major city bikeway status for Sandy northeast of 12th in the TSP.) Sandy's diagonal layout provides a uniquely efficient and convenient route for bike traffic along a long stretch of Southeast, Northeast, and East Portland. Designating Sandy as a major city bikeway is essential to creating an accessible bicycle network, and amending the street's high-crash corridor status.

In our Discussion Draft testimony, we made the following classification designation requests that were not incorporated into the Proposed Draft that we would like to again recommend:

- Make SE Water a major city bikeway rather than the Eastbank Esplanade (this was changed south of Clay, however we would recommend extending the major city bikeway designation on Water to the Morrison Bridge, and changing the Esplanade to city bikeway south of SE Salmon)
- Reinstate the major city bikeway designation on SE 2nd Pl from Water to Tilikum Way

Notably lacking from the Proposed Draft are further details and clear directives on what makes a "bicycle district." Our understanding is that a bicycle district is a designated area where people should feel comfortable riding their bicycles on any street in the district, and "where the City intends to make bicycle travel more attractive than driving." Without specific policies describing design and infrastructure requirements for a "comfortable" or "more attractive" street, the designation of "bicycle district" alone will not create the intended multi-modal environment. We request that this term be clearly defined in the

next version of the Central City 2035 Plan. Some recommendations on types of specifics to add to the definition:

- Use of “Bikes May Use Full Lane” and other signage to remind other road users of cyclists’ legal rights
- Re-timing signals to better match bicycle speeds, particularly on uphill roadways
- Specific on-street bicycle parking minimums for staples and corrals
- Specific off-street bicycle parking minimums for new development (including a variety of parking types to accommodate different bicycle types and user needs, such as horizontal parking for cargo bikes and people physically unable to use vertical racks)
- Improved bicycle wayfinding
- NACTO-compliance requirement when building new facilities or upgrading existing bicycle facilities
- A clear roadway-allocation hierarchy that prioritizes bicycle facilities over a second lane of motor vehicle traffic and/or on-street motor vehicle parking
- Guidelines for improved visibility at intersections and driveways (especially regarding ORS 811.550)
- Guidelines regarding acceptable pavement quality, including exposed streetcar/MAX line tracks

Central City 2035 Candidate Projects

Most of the Central City 2035 Candidate Projects that we listed as being of utmost importance for cycling safety and connectivity (which we continue to endorse as such) have been classified as “Year 1-10” projects, which we applaud. However, project #20185 (Gideon Street Pedestrian / Bicycle Bridge), which would alleviate a major accessibility issue for pedestrians and bicycles, would put a halt to dangerous bike/ped behaviors that have been witnessed at this crossing, and would presumably be the southwestern corner stone of the Green Loop by providing a guaranteed freight track crossing, has been listed as “Year 11-20.” This crucial project should have been built as part of the Orange Line construction, and needs to be completed as soon as possible. We want to echo the Proposed Draft testimony of HAND, who thoroughly outlined the safety and accessibility problems this bridge would alleviate.

Project #20065 has been split into two projects, one in the 1-10 year timeframe and the other in the 11-20 year timeframe. We want to reiterate that existing facilities here are incredibly dangerous and not compliant to any safety standards, and unfortunately the route is difficult to avoid as it serves an important purpose in providing north-south cycling connectivity. We want to make sure that safety concerns about this overpass are addressed readily and do not become victim to an ever-lengthening construction timeline.

Thank you very much for consideration of this testimony. If BPS staff have questions about our testimony please contact us at: bikeloudpdx@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Jessica Engelman and Emily Guise
BikeLoudPDX Co-Chairs