

North Williams Community Forum, Monday, November 28, 2011
Transcribed Notes from Table Discussions

On Monday, November 28, 2011, the City of Portland held the North Williams Community Forum so that City staff and decision makers could hear from the community about the issues they think are most important in relation to the North Williams Avenue Traffic Operations Safety Project. Staff wishes to acknowledge the partnership between the City of Portland's Inter-Group Dialogue, Resolution North-West, and Uniting to Understand Racism (UUR) in the facilitation of the small group dialogues. Eighteen volunteer facilitators participated. Notes were taken at each table by volunteers from the North Williams Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

The following suggested Dialogue Agreements were shared with participants:

- Be fully present here and willing to experience whatever happens.
- Listen with your heart, as well as your mind. What is the message behind the words?
- Listen to understand, not just respond. Ask questions and offer paraphrases to be sure you understand the other person's meaning.
- Lean into discomfort. Speak your discomforts. They often are a source of learning.
- Speak your uncertainties as well as your certainties.
- Choose your own level of participation and disclosure. Feel free to share your learnings from this experience with others outside the group, but do not share the names of the people involved in the conversations.

Participants at each table were asked to address the following four questions:

1. What do you like the best about the way North Williams Avenue operates today?
2. What do you dislike the most about the way the street operates today?
3. What action can we take to honor the history of the street and the district, using elements of the traffic operations safety project?
4. Although the funding for the traffic operations safety project is modest, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee asks you to imagine a project with unlimited funds. In that case, what would be your dreams for North Williams Avenue?

The following notes were transcribed by City staff from the handwritten notes taken at each of the table discussions during the forum. Each table has been assigned an identifying letter; this assignment is arbitrary based on the order in which the notes were transcribed.

TABLE A

What do you like best about Williams?

So easy intuitive to bike Williams
Connections to RQTC
Wide bike lanes, posted speed limit is appropriate
Safe feel on non peak
Flat, easy slope
Timed lights
No streetcar trucks

Friendly TriMet users

What don't you like?

No good way to bike to school
Boise-Eliot school needs Safe Routes to School
Mattress at Fremont
Bike facilities should work for all
Scale of study to include Vancouver
Parking problem
Daylighting – don't park too close to curb
Bus-dancing, bikes dancing with buses up hill
Taking extra traffic from I-5

How to honor the community?

Want more inclusion.
“We can't know”
Name crosswalks after people, history

TABLE B

Good Now

Not heavily traveled in afternoon. Safe and good pace. Sunday's slow. Better than MLK
Businesses on both sides...people walking, talking, loving, respectful
Fast travel, feels like a neighborhood. Feels old and historical.
Nice through street

Not Good

Hard to cross. Nasty at night. Disrespectful people. Unsafe bikes/unpredictable.
Anger at hospital...destroyed character of the neighborhood.
Parking too close to corners
Have they discussed the streetscape with the Portland Fire Department?
Have they counted # of lanes going north...if they take a lane, how will it affect car traffic on MLK?
What about motorized bikes?

Future

More Respect
Traffic light @ Stanton
Slower culture
Active streets/lovely business
Visibility
Less of a highway for bikes or cars
Bike boxes (stagger stopping)
Stop light @ Cook/Fargo

Honor

Plaques at corners...in cement @ sidewalks....in gazebo @ Dawson Park
Neighborhood street signs
Preserve and restore historic buildings
Wide bike lane

TABLE C

Relationships to Williams

Own homes near hear & on the neighborhood
Go to school @ PCC
Bike commute
Drive up Williams

Like

It has a bike lane
Know our neighbors
Shops opening
Community
Relatively low volume of car traffic compared to MLK
Revival of businesses
Incline of Williams is slight vs. other north/south corridors
That we're having this discussion
Diversity of the area (comp. to SE especially)
Identify of the area
That it's one-way streets

Dislike:

That people think the shops opening now are great, but fail to appreciate the history
Bus/bike/parked car/ped conflicts
Lack of crosswalks with signals encourages jaywalking – have to step into street to get people to take you seriously
Bikes don't stop for other modes (peds) because of fear of bikes/cars behind them not stopping too
Dawson Park area
@ Thompson, road seems to narrow
People coming off freeway makes it dangerous for all (cars & bikes especially)
Bike lane crosses the Right turning traffic @ Fremont
Other cyclists present issues more than cars
↳ Need to deal w/ cyclists who don't follow laws
Need more education about cyclists being entitled to take the lane to pass bikes & note have cars honk @ them for doing so.
People need to treat each other better in general
↳ Lack of community

↳ Rain may cause people to hibernate & be less friendly
Not enough space for 2 traffic lanes because of the way people in Right car lane take over more of Left lane – just not enough space to be safe for all that’s going on.

Honor history

Reflect on businesses from past in future developments

Exhibit on street @ various intersections – push a button & it tells you a story about neighborhood or exact location / self guided tour

↳ Lower traffic street lends itself to this

Made sure to continue to recognize historical significance of the church mentioned at end of the slideshow.

Dream

Program to encourage people to be nicer

License all bicycles

Consider moving bike lane to Rodney?

↳ If so, need bike signals @ Russell Fremont & Alberta

Take one parking lane off Williams

Have Rodney as corridor & Williams = bike lane

Get rid of parking on Right side of street – turn Fremont & Williams corner into a parking garage (would have to be free garages)

Maybe mixed use building with store front or community center on 1st floor and garage on upper floors.

Lights where they come off freeway – timed lights.

Install a signal for bikes & peds @ freeway traffic entrance to Williams (Cook)

Flashing ped crossings – Hawk – Ped beacons

Get rid of one traffic lane because then people won’t use it as an alternative to I-5 & MLK.

Bus & car traffic on right lane – bike lane on left (most support at table for this)

Lower speed limits

TABLE D

Best today

Asking about today assumes history. What if you don’t know it? Not much is “best” – transportation – wise Buildings and new construction feels vibrant – though learning history the tensions of history aren’t evident in riding along street – I’ve had to learn it later. The more I learn, the more the transportation feels ambiguous, complicated, not just about that.

Like to come eat here.

Close- in housing & businesses to come to. (Negative: abandoned buildings.) Riding bike to downtown – convenient – great draw for my age group 20’s – 30’s. Bike rush hour – exciting – critical mass – energy.

Bike commute– Vancouver & Williams feel safe streets but at rush hour it could be better. City feels friendly to bike commuters – unlike other cities. Energy of street, interaction of people (rang true).

Dislike

Dangerous cocktail – need to be cognizant. Biking on Williams – I avoid, go to Rodney, Vancouver better – wider. Williams doesn't feel as nice. Bus-bike interaction doors of cars – lot of near hits, close encounters.

Profile of white bicyclists – triggering to car drivers? Push envelope.

I don't feel safe. Prefer streets like Prescott – Going.

Fearful at night. Need more lights, crosswalks. Worry for son – adult. Bus/parked car use into bike lane. Some bikers treat like a race – swerve out, no lights – for me as a reasonably paced biker, I feel the impact when cars respond. Poor bikemanship increased there because of doors/buses

As biker, scary if I wait for a bus and other bikers swerve around

Construction narrowing the road, sidewalk

Nervous for all, including pedestrians.

Designated transportation arterial – but not engineered for that! (Lights, curb cuts, width, egress, ADA, pedestrian.)

This precipitated the anger: We tried to get crosswalks, etc. Kids died. Now with ingress of whites this is offered. Hegemony.

Dream –

Block off access on Rodney as bikeway – more bike safety, less car entry

Honor

Past –

SAC was designed without honoring and including voices of community members.

Process – community based.

Bike community might have been over represented on SAC

↳ Clarified: media portrayal not necessarily framing!

Answer land use questions to determine transportation infrastructure – not necessarily starting from traffic (another comment: not necessarily helpful because drivers not neighborhood residents.)

Allow bikes on Williams

Allow bikes on main drag – but create a bikeway off Williams/on Rodney – might help bikes manage own preferred pace, use. Feels viable to her as cyclist.

Like the Rodney idea.

Need to honor car access – no car-free Going – not fair, e.g. to elders who need TriMet lift
Infrastructure:

Consistent speed

Curb cuts

Crosswalks.

How to honor history of past, of not being provided, pain/harm

Imagine from scratch, acknowledging all uses.

Conversation had to end!

TABLE E

Like

I like the bike lanes (terrifying w/out them)...they're better than nothing

Bike lanes are good – though wary of buses.

No pollution w/ bike lanes...improves livability

Convenient thoroughfare for commuting from downtown

Impressed by how Tri-Met bus drivers merge w/all those bikers...they get to stops w/out killing all those easy targets – good attitude/keep their cool

City provides infrastructure for choice of travel – in this corridor, good mix, even if details need fine-tuning (private cars, peds, bikes, buses).

Dislike

Speeding cars

Driving down makes me nervous...bikes should stop at stop signs...bikes need to abide by rules.

5PM – it's dark, so many people - - Coliseum

Turning off of Williams is hard –so many bikers who don't follow rules

Bikers who are rude – curse you out

Too many modes sharing the road...I don't want to share road w/ buses (asthma) – as a biker

Hard to cross street, esp. near yoga studio/business area

I wouldn't bring little kids down Williams

Encouraging new riders is a City plan – more vulnerable riders ... more vulnerability around air quality sharing roads not good considering air quality

Too much conversation on avoiding crashes... not enough on air quality.

Walking or biking my kids to school (Boise-Eliot)...have to cross Vancouver & Williams – no crosswalk, no light, no cars stopping – would never let my kids do it alone ... not even at Fremont (at light)

↳ neighborhood livability, health at walking/biking

Cars don't stop at cross walks... bikes don't either...even when I'm standing in the crosswalk.

Bikes good b/c cars. Slow down when there's even 1 bike on ride. Dozens of cars going down through crosswalk.

Cars turn left while looking to the right.

Hard to cross the street...as a pedestrian, especially during rush hour – takes some patience and there aren't always safe gaps.

Too many land parcels that are vacant, not enough destinations – could be controlled by zoning or PDC – it's just a throughway, no place to stop ... encourages folks off of I-5, MLK, attracts commuters who blow the neighborhoods

Size/placement of bike lanes – I'd rather take over a lane...instead of being stuck in door zone of cars – location on right/by parking – not safe.

By-way to get on Fremont Bridge – when traffic backs up, folks cut into neighborhoods & go fast to try to avoid back-up.

Large van at Williams & Fargo makes it hard to see – have to enter bike land to see...crossing.

Williams can be scary due to visibility.

Williams = not designed for bikes/bike lanes....that's not what Williams was...not designed for bikes.

Businesses got killed on MLK w/ median /can't park there – when Williams became a 1-way, changed the tenor of the street.

The streets—no streets were designed for this.

Density issues (e.g. Beech and Failing) w/ new businesses – before, vans for beer/wine deliveries parked in the bldgs.

Parking!

People used to rely more on public transportation, now more cars.

Honor/Dream

Density of traffic impacts livability – place large speed bumps on side streets (E/W).

Cut Williams to one lane but consider neighborhood impact.

Charge for on-street parking to use w/in neighborhood.

Ped activated lights at crossings of Vancouver/Williams especially for neighborhood schools.

Ask neighbors what their priorities are for spending money – maybe transportation isn't the main concern of neighbors.

Honoring comm: Tanner Creek description honoring thru years (as example)... what was here 10-15-30 years? (people liked this idea)

N Williams is too small for all the traffic...we need room for cyclists to safely pass each other...move bike lanes to a tree-lined street (maybe Rodney)...but volume of bikes makes it too much...Rodney only accessible to cars for locals...bike lanes move off of Williams.

Change street name to reflect history of neighborhoods (no idea for new name at present).

Utilize Tri-Met bus stops for honoring (like on Interstate Max) – add shelters and info

Consider location of parking for visibility.

For report out:

Crashes – Air quality

Speed bumps

Charge for parking

Ask neighbors priorities

Cyclists pass each other.

Change Williams street name.

Ped activated lights for schools.

TABLE F

Like

Restaurants/development

Speed

Convenience

Light timing

Art on Fremont

Vibrancy

Dislike

Bike passing danger

Parked cars/bikes/bus – negotiating movement

Cars parking in bike lane (parallel parking stops bike traffic)
Bikes running red lights
Lighting

Honor

Interactive historic educational art, like railing at freeway entrance (Williams and Wheeler)
↳ what used to be here (each place)
Human-friendly, pedestrian draw
↳ Grocery
Local artists to create educational landscapes and art features

Dream

Bike share
Grocery
Underground parking
Cycle Track
Raised pedestrian crossing
Community Garden
Slower travel
Rodney to Neighborhood Greenway/Bike Boulevard

TABLE G

Likes

Connects to Rose Quarter
↳ Bus, car, bicycle, MAX
Volume of bicycles makes it visible, safe
Flat
Not many stops
One way

Dislikes

Doesn't work for everyone
Biking with kids to school crossing Williams
Bikes don't stop for pedestrians
Kids have hard time crossing
Crossing problems – Morris – Cook – Vancouver – Boise – 3 lanes of traffic
Buses make it hard to see bikes and cross through Williams.
Parking = up to the curb all along the road.
↳ Makes it difficult for pedestrians to see cars or bikes coming.
Interactions between bus and bikes
Excess speed
Avoiding I-5 and use N Williams
Bikes without lights

Honor

Ask community members who have lived here for a long time what they would like to see honored.

Crosswalk designs that illustrate significant history symbols.

Other traffic designs to honor the history.

TABLE H

Like:

Restaurants, crosswalks (marked), development

Fast on bicycle, feel part of the neighborhood, Dr. Unthank railing

Businesses, exposure to business

Very gradual climb to the Alameda Ridge

On-way street – good thru-way, but part of a neighborhood

Convenient, good flow, mix of active transportation & driving

N Williams & Fremont - art space

New light timing that is easier to make

Vibrant, interesting places to stop & eat, people around, but calmer than MLK

Why aren't we talking about Vancouver?

It's a bit calmer

It's a good place to take people visiting

Bicycle rush is exciting & cool – people watch the people on bikes.

Dislike:

Bikes between cars & parked cars, plus buses

No speed limit for bikes means lots of bikes passing which feels scary, especially if cars passing

Unsafe bike passing in the bike lane

Narrow bike lane with parked cars

Bus passing bikes passing buses (leapfrog)

Exhaust fumes from buses

Looking out for bikes in the travel lane because they're passing other bikes

Crossing the street – people don't yield, & watching others cross & no yield to them

Cars parking party in the bike lane

Bikes running red lights

Cars crossing bike lane to park (Parallel)

Cars turning in the bike lane (or not yielding to cyclist)

Driving & turning right – it's hard to see

Very dark in some parts, too hard to see – especially in the winter

Honoring history using elements of the project

History plaques with bicycle functionality, e.g. Unthank railing

Pedestrian maps with historical information

Human elements – activities

A pedestrian friendly environment - planters, enhancements to walk, crossings, slow traffic
Grocery store (small?)
Not just A to B – encourage stopping destinations
Inviting – bicycle & car parking
Walk to meeting places
Architecture – get attention for it
Place making
Historical views on plaques at each street corner, with stories
- Stories of why they are not longer there – tell that story.

Dream Questions

Bikeshare stations on Williams – neighborhood encouragement
Grocery store (small)
All the vacant lots developed – with community amenities: garden, meeting places
Cycle track – wide enough for passing & with good intersection integration
Restaurants, salons
Don't do too much though!
Raised pedestrian crossings
Changed light timing, slower speeds so people watch out for each other
Rodney as a neighborhood greenway/bike boulevard
Parking off Williams!
Statues for history & plaques
Left-side bike lane!
Bus stops out of the bike lane [a tiny sketch included here]
Painted intersections (Rodney)
Easy access to commercial options for everyone (don't move bikes off Williams)
Take away a travel lane instead of parking
Not needing a separate “bike map” – be able to bike anywhere
Space for all users to hang out

TABLE I

Problems:

Aggressive Cyclists
Fast cyclists taking vehicle lane to pass slow cyclists
Congestion due to parked cars trying to cross bike lane and yielding to peds
Cyclists don't respect pedestrians
Peds have to run across street.

Solutions:

- 1) Tickets
- 2) Education –more activities on road now
- 3) Need signal at crosswalk – not just signs & beacons.

Discussion

Agrees that education is the best way to resolve issues & respect for all users.

Main danger is auto traffic. Let's develop a system that makes it easier to bike & walk. Wants more space for bikes so fast bikes can pass slow bikes.

Fast bike should wait for traffic to pass before entering vehicle lane. Parking lots should be built because it's too congested w/ bikes & parking on Williams.

No place for people to park. All modes are equally important. Engineering can solve some problems, but education for all involved is essential.

Talk about it on TV

Why not bike through fare on a parallel route (Rodney?) (like Ankeny for Burnside)

Cars go up Rodney, Mallory to avoid traffic

N. Williams is already heavily used as a Like street, and part of the project is traffic calming

Not even thought went into the street layout

Eliminate parking on Williams to give that space t bikes

2nd bike lane

TABLE J

What do we like best about Williams Ave today

Not a lot of traffic lights – 11 yr resident/bicyclist

Clearly marked bicycle lanes

Traffic moves on the street far better for users: cars, buses, bikes, peds

Aren't many cross streets

New construction between Fremont & Alberta

Historic nature – great history of buildings

Potential for more develop – rehab & new construction

What don't you like about Williams?

Bad bicyclists – makes it hard to drive

Bicyclists don't obey traffic laws

Afraid to hit bicyclists

Surf lanes – leave lanes – in front of car

*2 and 3 abreast down bicycle lane – passing w/o looking

Kids on back of bikes – scary to get around

↳ Shouldn't be allowed on busy narrow street

Fargo and Williams – leave church – cross Williams (Tropicana Restaurant)

↳ Can't see traffic because of parked cars

Congested coming off freeway to cross Vancouver / Williams

↳ So Fargo and Monroe become feeder streets

Drivers are frustrated – drive aggressively

Hard to turn left off Williams – as bicyclist

Cars open doors to get to Williams – narrow lanes

Cars parked up to crosswalk so you don't see pedestrians

Restaurants increase pedestrians' inability to cross

I-5 is all day – 4:30 – 6:00 PM especially, makes it rough for everyone.

Traffic for restaurants spill into neighborhood because there's no place to park
Doesn't like how it looks – degradation of community space
Doesn't relate to businesses who are located there, too expensive. Shops don't connect with her interests.
Certain times of day the auto traffic is too fast, tough for bicyclists, pedestrians, buses.
Buses don't pull over. They stop in middle of street
Too many apartments
Cars that turn right have conflict w/ bike lane on right
Synchronization and traffic lights 4:30 – 6:30 PM, congestion is incredible
*Black Broadway historical acknowledgement – lost other Black history markers

What actions can we take to honor history of street?

Reduce barriers to multiculturalism
Reduce barriers to business district
Increase Black businesses
Honor bicyclists who feel like the underclass
Communication between individuals with our agenda – Raise consciousness
Give bicycle lane its own light – going onto I-5 freeway @ Fremont & Alberta
*Bicyclist need rules of the road – license – courtesy, follow the same rules as cars
Walking tour honors history

What is the dream?

Change law so stop sign is a yield sign for bicyclists so they don't lose momentum
*Move parking allowed back two car lengths so you can see better when you turn onto Williams
Cameras to ticket bad drivers and bicyclists
Make bicyclists have license plates on bikes/insurance (as long as immigrants aren't restricted)
Bicyclists have own lane 10 feet off ground
Promote community to continue conversation after change is made

TABLE K

What do like the best about the way N Williams operates today?

The variety of people on the street living in the area or using the area
More action, more life
Even though more congested, (Church on Beech) businesses have added to community in a positive way
Still has a residential character urban league – park variety of housing
Get to interact with street – commute is enjoyable – diverse of structures. A lot is gone but not all – 3 1/2 year-old daughter can see other kids.
Comparing to the 90's planning process – density, transportation corridors – the planning is being done – thinking about keeping access to hospital
Off street parking – Mississippi – will our residential areas still be good if you can't park your car? Only parking spaces are church – balance business

Variety of things going on require attention – children who have to cross Williams – drop off/pick up areas

Issue could be perception that planning can happen without consideration of humans

What do we not like?

Barriers [i.e. median diverter] – blocking intersection (by Emanuel [at Graham St.]

Speed of cars

Bicycle – not as respectful of pedestrians – speeding

Speed – legacy of changing to a couplet – one way

Tension – byproduct of status quo – tacks in the roadway

Is coexistence possible? Feel afraid for the bicycles even as good driver

What action can we take to honor history?

The way to honor history: through integrity of process

↳ Ask people what think then do what you want anyway...

↳ Take into account feelings of community

↳ Equity – who benefits? Who is burdened?

↳ If the answer doesn't honor the history

Vacant lots!

↳ Emanuel displacement

↳ Displacement

↳ Minority population required to be moved (vouchers) to Gresham, suburbs – during development of New Columbia

↳ Pain

Important to preserve character and embrace business owners and specifically historic businesses

Dream

Development fund to bring back displaced people and business in the corridor.

Has to be conducive financially – businesses.

Right to return, support for return for displaced community members; people left behind are the most vulnerable – elderly, poor.

Urban League facility - Loaves and Fishes services expand with own funds

Support existing businesses?

Rename Williams or Vancouver for an African American community activist.

TABLE L

Question: What plan is in place for N Williams? 5 year plan? 10 yr plan? Should be some rules – with every privilege there has to be rule

[Discussion of question] N Williams: neighborhood collector, transit route. Had bike lane for long time in Bike Plan 2030 major bike route, part of Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area.

[More discussion:]

Don't like what's happening on Williams – hard to see cyclists. Williams not well lit, seen # of cyclists almost hit because someone wasn't paying attention. Cyclists don't always pay attention, aren't conscious of fact dealing with cars, and don't use lights.

Anecdote of green bike boxes – wasn't aware of how to use them, doesn't know where to find this information.

If make changes on Williams – hope stick to one plan – like it the way it is as long as cyclist dress properly and well lit

Like:

The fact has Williams is one-way helps

N Williams direct route, earliest was to get to N Portland.

Only ride N Williams when need to – traffic (cars/bikes) moving so fast, bike lane is so full a lot of jockeying for space in bike lane, want safe solution for all.

Like businesses on Williams/Mississippi

Gentlest way to get to N PDX. Get passed on bike – challenge that bike lane not wide enough, provide separation.

Bike/Bus weave – Solve bike bus interaction.

Good street to ride

Important connector to Going (for example) or other Neighborhood Greenways. Williams is part of grid. Williams is now destination to come to.

Suggestion:

Majority of cyclists @ peak rush hour – one hour – why not have auxiliary lane doing rush hour so cars can't be in one lane from 3 pm – 5 pm (for example).

Dislike

Only concern I'm going to hit someone.

Dislike empty lots – not community, suggests it's an area to just pass thru

Filling in lots allows for opportunity

↳ Developed areas = slower traffic.

How Honor Street / District

Name bike facility in honor of leader of neighborhood – come from community.

Put plaque in bike lane w/ names of community members.

It's late to honor community – most businesses closed – bike lane is affecting churches.

See history on Williams – educate people.

Dedicate 1% for Arts, similar to Max station @ Expo Center.

Dream Project

Pool money to provide restitution

Money from PDC to foster development in this community – business or community

↳ Let community have voice in long-term planning in community.

How long people ride bikes for? Is this a fad that will last for short term?

Teach people how to ride bike and give citations to folks who don't ride properly.

↳ Money for education and training.

Dream – health in communities

- ↳ if continue 1/3 of kids born post-2001 will have diabetes
- ↳ Create safe environment for biking and walking.

TABLE M

Best

Mixture residential/commercial
Bike artery for traffic
Active
Like one way, it's peaceful
Like the way it is developing
A real liveliness
Bikes add to commercial aspect
N/S corridor
Good bike artery
Quick
Still a lot of culture

Dislike

Both car lanes are too narrow – they are squeezed/dangerous
Entering roadway, difficult to see due to parking
Buses make it difficult – inherent conflict
Too fast
Too much pass through traffic, lots of WA state license plates
Don't like parking on both sides – hard to park on left, drivers cut off bikes trying to park on right
Too many big trucks
Narrow bike lane north of Russell
Danger of dooring for bikes
Unpredictable behavior
Pedestrians crossing mid-block
Not working for any mode

Action

Walking and biking tours - guided map – safe environment – make it walkable
↳ Clarified – e.g. plaques on buildings or street design elements.
Art – community participate in making it prettier. Keep old buildings and rejuvenate.
Signs, some permanently placed
Acknowledge destruction of neighborhood
↳ Hospital & coliseum
↳ Danger losing track
History captured, preserved

Alberta/Williams – car accidents – extremely dangerous. Slow down – good place to put art (like 33rd & Going “JOGS” plaques)

More stop signs/ slower - use corner as natural places for slowing

Parks for plaque placement

↳ educational material placement

Series – self-guided – treasure hunt

New businesses don't cater to old neighbors

Work toward community building between new businesses & long term residents – how?

Acknowledge – people's issues have not been addressed

↳ We wanted this 20 years ago

↳ Acknowledge injustice

Ways to help more ownership in properties

Dreams

No cars, walking/cycling only

Cycle track – physically separated like Cully Blvd

Marked crosswalks, flashing lights (yellow)

Community Center

↳ local long-time residents

↳ job creation/Child care/ e.g. Dishman

Curb extensions – to extend & less traffic lane to cross

Wider bike lanes

Rodney – make into dedicated bike boulevard (with improvements to Williams)

Green bike box at Williams/Killingsworth instead of having bikes go into center

One car traffic lane instead of two

Remove parking at rush hour (but would push people to side streets)

African-American history museum

Support for African-American businesses

SUMMARY [FOR TABLE M]

Like

Mixture of residential & commercial

One-way

Good bike artery / N-S corridor

Dislike

Car lanes & bike lane too narrow

Difficult to see when entering road-way

Buses are an inherent conflict

Unpredictable in all forms of traffic use

Parking on both sides.

Too fast. Too many.

Should be residential street, not commercial arterial “neighborhood collector.”

Acknowledge

Ways to improve # of ownership for long-time residents
More stop signs
Museum of African American history

Dream

Self-Guided map
Plaques or educational material.
Use natural places for slowing as places to put these.
No cars
A cycle track
Curb extensions
Street car

TABLE N

Best about Williams

Moves traffic well – bicycle as well – but tricky for peds – high volume
Variety on street – not just commercial corridor
Ease of use in all modes
Efficient
History of area
Off hours are great on bike
Feels safer than other bike streets

Dislikes

Too fast – cars cut through side streets
Volume of cars and speed intense
Sharing bike lane w/ so many others can be a little scary
No pedestrian signals
Leapfrogging with buses

- ↳ Buses knowing when they move through bike lane
- ↳ Tri-Met awareness of bikes

Sense of entitlement by bikers, + speed, feels dangerous
Visibility for cars is almost zero – especially backing out
Bike lane feels narrow
Killingsworth & Williams – bike lane is marked well, but no marking on Ainsworth & Williams
Crossing Williams hard – not marked
Environment doesn't allow for caution
Cars turning right through bike lane

History

Embracing diversity of traffic use
Make street safe
Who is using street?
Having everyone at table w/ their needs

TABLE O

Like Best

Two lanes – much more difficult on N Vancouver

Like the business vitality; lots of thriving businesses close to neighborhoods w/ good transit

A bike lane to ride and not in the car lane

Access to drive either lane, straight shot

Easy access on bike w/ child cargo attached

Very quick, little # of stop signs and stop lights; flat and direct thoroughfare.

Like least

Uncomfortable to drive and walk

Cross the street

Dislike the way the cyclists shoot out into the car lane while passing other cyclists

Getting forced off the road by the bus and getting sandwiched between doors

Getting off the bus and walking into the bus lane

Avoid N Williams during the rush hours

Long wait to cross Williams in a car in the business area

Too much confusion in the business area and now housing is going in

Not a well thought out design

Buses & bikes leap frog; cyclists are not sociable with each other

All modes of transportation are uncomfortable

Nervous about the # of cyclists on the road when driving

Getting across Williams is just unsafe

Not enough stop lights and stop signs to break up the flow and speed of commuters

Bike lane too narrow because of parking and vehicle traffic

Difficult to find a gap between cyclists and cars to cross the street

Created a freeway on Williams but need to remember this is residential and business area

What is the identity of the community?

Honoring the history

No monument needed; history is what it is, would be insulting

How do you get at honoring the history - is it possible to change the streets back to tow way?

Elevated higher than the street; think carefully about putting statues on the street

Doing more engagement processes like tonight.

Wish list

All an elevated structure for bikes

We don't have to fight again about the City's processes

Stop

Register your bike @ a cost to help pay for changes

With more commercial there will be more traffic.

More residential/great neighborhoods

Affordable grocery store

More thoughtful development w/ engagement of all users
Prioritizing walking for the young and elder

TABLE P

What do you like best about the way N Williams Ave operates today?

Extends through entire North quadrant

Not many stop signs

Commercial corridor

Broadway/Vancouver/Weidler area

What are some things you dislike?

Need to address the behavior of cyclists – it's not just buses/cars that make other cyclists feel unsafe

Speed – too fast for cyclists and pedestrians

Disenfranchisement with historical conflict

Empty lots – sad reminder of past; not sure why they're empty

↳ Emanuel bought up many lots; didn't develop

↳ Displaced more than 120 families

It can be hard to feel a part of the community – disconnected, with many people coming and going

Have to be hyperaware to be safe

Discomfort with travel; unsafe; congested

With design of street it has become a pass-through street to go other places

Why is Vancouver only one lane?

City plans so many things on top of each other (bus, bike, car, pedestrian) – spread it out to other streets

What actions can we take to honor the history of the street and the district, using elements of the traffic operations safety project?

Turn Rodney into a neighborhood greenway; cut back on bike lane use

Less cyclists – would that encourage cars to drive faster?

Raise awareness of what the neighborhood used to be like – turn vacant properties into parks with kiosks / info to teach people what has happened

Look how PDC disburses money (percent minority, women-owned, etc.) to make sure resources are evenly distributed

Figure out logistically how City departments can work together to distribute benefits equally

How will the Office of Equity be involved in this?

Imagine a project with unlimited funds

Go back to 2-way Williams, like it used to be, turn Vancouver into a greenway

Timed lights to set car speeds to 15 mph

If Williams stays one-way have a cycle track

Move bike lane to other side of street

Continuously colored bike lanes

Heavy-traffic intersections have light sensors so lights will flash when people are trying to cross

Low-income housing units in the new apartment complexes

Money towards minority-owned businesses so people from neighborhood feel comfortable / welcome / benefit from development

TABLE Q

Things to like

It has a bike lane, crosswalks, access to businesses

One-way (not necessarily a preference at table)

Things to dislike about how the street operates

Bike volume is high, hard for bikes to work out their own speed, lots of bikes passing

Cyclists don't pay attention to pedestrians

Cars are moving too fast

It's hard to pass two lanes of traffic

Not enough accessible parking, particularly for [people with disabilities]

Confusion and frustration between bikes and buses

Intersection at Cook – cars reroute and create chaos

Stressful as a car driver because there are so many bicyclists

Honor

Public art to tell the story of the neighborhood

Walking tour with history of the neighborhood

Photographs

Information to share where this community of people has moved to

The Elks Club or Clio's up in North Portland

People have different experiences knowing their neighbors

One story: the best sense of community was the Villa before they tore it down. "I like to know who is around me."

To complete the plan or recommendations provided to the PDC in 2005 during the City's crosswalk improvement process, which would respect the historical/community intent

Unlimited \$\$

Alternating/coordinated traffic signals at Cook and other intersections for bikes/cars

Improved lighting, add reflectors in crosswalks

Lighted sidewalks and half signals

More affordable housing; rent-stabilized housing

More cultural buildings and public art

Example: OAME – similar equitable investment in minority-owned businesses

Fix up the historical buildings

More bike alternate routes – Rodney – to reduce traffic

One lane of car traffic

Businesses that are bringing in business should step up and deal with congestion issues – rent out a church parking lot

More access for mobility issues, more parking for people with disabilities, more shuttles

Transform a vacant lot to a parking structure (not everyone at table was sure this was a good idea)

More sophisticated facility to separate buses from bicycles – tiered system of buses, cars, bikes

Caution about unintended consequences, example of Hawthorne bulbouts that create traffic jams with buses and people who speed by them

Wider sidewalks and bike lane

Protected / separated bike lane [sketch showed cycle track]

Signs to educate bicyclists and begin to shape etiquette

TABLE R

Like or works well

Two lanes

On-street parking – needed by businesses, needed by churches

Traffic goes well

Obey crosswalks/lights

Bike lane

Number of bicyclists

Feels like a neighborhood – not wall-to-wall

When street works well, when people share well

Historic buildings

Dislikes

Bicyclists not stopping

Diverters in road, in the way

Cyclists going into travel lane (not all agree)

Uncomfortable in car, too close to bikes

Difficult to turn right – long wait, cyclists not showing consideration

Bikes, pedestrians, cars, buses – tension, too hectic

Difficult to get out onto Williams at Beech

People on foot get lost

Street too dark

Dangerous as pedestrian

Actions?

Better pedestrian crossings, signals

Better street lighting

Make street slower

Bike parkway elsewhere

Physically separated bikeway

Slower traffic

Bring communities together – more dialogue

Businesses serve neighborhood

Questions, comments

How do we better look out for each other?

Old Williams is lost – move forward collectively

Why not use another street?

What happens when street fills up?

Cars will park everywhere from new development; will make parking problems worse

Especially tough for elderly, losing parking

For more information about the North Williams Avenue Traffic Operations Safety Project, contact project manager Ellen Vanderslice at ellen.vanderslice@portlandoregon.gov or 503-823-4638.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Contact the Title VI Coordinator at Room 1204, 1120 SW 5th Ave, Portland OR 97204, or by telephone 503-823-2559, City TDD 503-823-6868.

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