

The Portland Tribune

City's 'preventative' project focuses on N. Williams Ave. bike traffic

*By Peter Korn
August 11, 2014*

About 4,000 bicyclists a day travel on North Williams Avenue, one of Portland's busiest bike commuting routes. Possibly an equal number choose alternate north/south commuting routes because the North Williams bike lane has become so crowded during morning and evening rush hours.

A number of bicycle and pedestrian accidents in recent years, combined with a number of complaints about safety, have led the Portland Bureau of Transportation to come up with a re-design of North Williams. Construction will begin in September on a \$1.5 million street improvement program that will extend on from Northeast Broadway to North Killingsworth Street.

Two lanes of vehicle traffic on North Williams will turn into one lane but transportation officials say they expect cars won't take substantially longer to travel on the street because left and right turn lanes will be added so that delays at intersections should be shorter.

Bicyclists will see something relatively new for Portland — a bike lane on the left side of the street. Moving the bike lane from the right side of traffic to the left is expected to decrease conflicts between bike riders and buses. The new lane will also be much wider than typical bike lanes to accommodate more riders. And one of the city's headache intersections at North Vancouver Avenue and North Cook Street will get a traffic signal, as will the intersection of North Williams and Cook.

"We're taking a preventative approach here," says Portland Bureau of Transportation spokeswoman Diane Dulken. "We're not waiting for crashes to occur or for Williams to turn into a high-crash corridor."

The new Bureau of Transportation street design and construction plans will be available for public viewing at an open house from 6 to 8 p.m. Aug. 12 at Immaculate Heart Catholic Church, 2926 N. Williams Ave.

Willamette Week

Portland Is Selling a Vacant Lot That Could Have Gone to Homeless Camp

City Commissioner Nick Fish vetoed a possible sale of the property to Right 2 Dream Too.

*By Aaron Mesh
August 8, 2014*

A surplus piece of property that Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish vetoed this spring as a possible new location for homeless camp Right 2 Dream Too will soon be going where Fish wants it: on the open market.

The parcel, at 2439 NW 22nd Ave., will go on sale Wednesday, if the City Council approves an ordinance to accept offers.

The property is a pipe and equipment storage yard for the Bureau of Environmental Services. It was one of 21 sites picked in February by real-estate broker Cushman & Wakefield as places to move the Old Town homeless camp—and one of four identified by City Hall as real possibilities.

But both Fish and Right 2 Dream Too leaders rejected the property as an option. Camp leaders said the location, deep in Industrial Northwest, was too far from social services.

Before they said no, however, Fish told City Commissioner Amanda Fritz to take the BES lot off the

list. He explained to WW in April that he was committed to getting the best possible price for the land after previous embarrassments.

“My responsibility is to make sure that we learn from past mistakes, and that when we dispose of surplus properties, we do it by the book,” Fish said then.

The property has a market value of \$788,750.

Meanwhile, the search for a new site for Right 2 Dream Too, which preoccupied City Hall for much of the spring, is in limbo.

The Oregonian reported in June that a new city deal could leave the camp in its current location, next to the Chinatown gate, until 2017.