

50s Bikeway Project

Division to Lincoln Traffic Calming Discussion

May 5th, 2011

PBOT staff: Rich Newlands, Sarah Figliozzi, Jenny Tower, Collin Maher (TriMet)

Rich started with an overview of the 50s bikeways project and followed with a presentation about traffic volumes on 52nd Ave between Division and Lincoln. A head count by staff showed that there were 30 to 35 residents in attendance. The sign in sheet showed 29 people listed, however it is common to not capture total attendance with the sign in sheet due to late arrivals and multiple entry points to the venue. A general show off of hands was done to find out where attendees lived in the area. Results as follows: 10 people on 52nd, 5 people on 53rd, 1 person north of Lincoln 1 person on 50th.

A copy of the meeting presentation and related origin-destination data can be found here: <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=53345&a=348073>

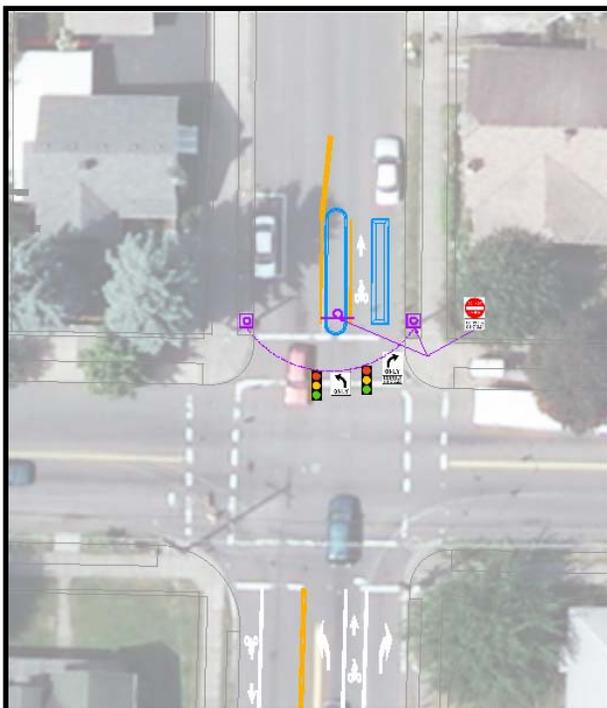
In summary, the 30-35 meeting attendees recommended Alternate C, a northbound, bus accessible, semi-diverter, at SE 52nd Avenue/SE Division. The proposal to implement a test for Alternative C first, with the acknowledgment that PBOT could begin a conversation with the larger community about further traffic volume reduction for SE Lincoln if the volumes reduction was not adequate enough, achieved close to consensus from those in attendance; one person in opposition.

A summary description of the community recommendation and process can be found online here:

<http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=53345&a=349091>

PBOT will proceed with the direction set by the attendees and report on the recommended alternative at the next Mt Tabor Neighborhood Association meeting (5/18/2011).

Recommended Improvements



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS: The following is a list of questions raised during the meeting and staff responses.

Topic areas are in **bold**, reflecting the general content of the slideshow at the time the questions were asked.

Comment: I live on 52nd, and I ride my bike, and I'm scared to ride out of my driveway.

Q: Can the project consider using stop signs through the rest of the neighborhood to discourage any future cut through traffic.

A: We will definitely look into adding stop signs into the surrounding neighborhood streets.

Q: What can I do as a resident to push for reduced speed limits?

A: We need to finalize the recommendation first. It is worth noting that the process itself to reduce speed limits is long and onerous. It takes about a year. We can notify you when PBOT begins the process.

THE OPTIONS

Enhanced intersection capacity at 50th and 60th (limited effectiveness)

Q: It seems like vehicles travelling north on 52nd, have a difficult time turning left therefore they go straight.

A: Yes this is possible. The staff preference solution explores what we can do to improve those intersections.

Q: The previous person, asked, can't we put turn lights in at 52nd, so that we can let the cars go where they want to go?

A: On all alternatives, we will add a left turn lane on 52nd heading north

Pinch points

Q: Creating southbound left turn on division would help alleviate the problem too.

A: Yes, these are all solutions that would help vehicle movement, but they might not go far enough to do what we need to create a safe and comfortable bikeway.

Preferred alternative: Regulatory treatment, allowing bus and bike traffic only.

Q: So anyone could drive through that?

A: Technically yes. This is a regulatory approach, necessary to allow the bus through, coupled with some minor capital improvements to make the entrance less inviting (for example, making it look like a driveway). Obviously to some extent we are relying on the good graces of the drivers to follow the law.

Q: South of the proposed semi-diverter, this solution may encourage vehicles to turn west bound on local streets?

A: It is very difficult for us to predict how people will modify their driving pattern. As such we will test the proposed solution and report back to the community. We have no interest in just moving the problem to a different location.

50th and Lincoln semi diverter option E

{Note: this option was discussed in theory only to demonstrate the relative volume reduction – this type of improvement would need the notification and input of a much larger study area.}

Q: We do have precedent for this type of improvement along 39th at Lincoln.

A: Yes though opportunities for neighborhood access using other streets is greater at SE 39th/Lincoln.

Q: Is there the budget to combine treatments?

A: Yes, we could combine treatments.

Q: Can you explain the bus couplet necessary for Alternative D.

A: The bus couplet would require an alternative northbound route on Division with the southbound trip on Lincoln. Based on earlier community conversations and the impact on transit users TriMet is not supportive of this idea. A truly physical semi diverter would require this couplet arrangement.

Collin from TriMet: TriMet did test this approach and, to correct PBOT, the couplet alignment is actually not feasible due to safety concerns.

Q: To confirm, are there any opportunities for traffic calming south of SE Division St?

A: Early on in the process, we explored doing all sorts of adjustments to try and reduce the traffic, but the technical analysis shows that we would exceed capacity at the intersections at 50th. The reality of the volumes didn't seem like it would work.

Q: I understand that speed bumps are out, but what about reducing the speed limit and having flashing lights?

A: The bike lanes are going to help visually narrow the road. In addition the CAC is recommending that PBOT petition ODOT to reduce the posted speed limit.

Q: I live on 50th, and both 50th and 52nd are 35mph, which is way too fast.

A: Yes, as mentioned, the CAC is recommending that PBOT make a request to slow speed limits on 52nd

Comment: the speed bumps currently on 52nd do not do much of anything. People don't have to slow down.

Q: Can we get a signal at 52nd and Lincoln?

A: No, it would it meet the warrants for a signal.

Q: Is there any data related to motorists obeying regulatory approaches such as this?

A: We don't have data for that. Again, if we select this option we would test it.

Q: Is there any discussion of a bike box to discourage traffic at 52nd and Division?

A: Bike boxes are meant to address right turn conflicts not discourage traffic. If we proceeded with restricting northbound traffic then there would be a right turn lane, therefore no conflict.

Q: Did you look to see if any of the cars heading west on Lincoln from SE 52nd might be really going to Richmond elementary?

A: No, our origin-destination information did not track vehicles past study area.

Discussion of evaluation criteria.

Q: I think anything restriction of traffic at SE Division/52nd is going to have the consequence of diverting traffic into neighborhood streets.

A: Yes, that is a big tradeoffs for local streets.

Comment: I live north of Division and I'm thinking that any kind of slowing or calming south of Division will be great for this area and safer for cyclists.

Q: How will Alternative E lead to medium high diversion?

A: Alternative E is could create significant issues for local access.

Sarah: A note about alternative E: If this group recommends this option, PBOT would do significantly more outreach because it affects so many more people.

Q: What if we have signs at SE Division/52nd that say 'no access except for local access only'?

A: It is completely unenforceable.

Q: With the diverter, I would have an out of direction trip to get home.

A: Yes. That is one of the trade offs.

Comment: You cannot achieve full local access and also reduce non-local cut through traffic.

Q: If the solution at SE 52nd/Division includes left and right hand turn signals only, you will need to look into a protected left turn. One of the current problems is that turning left is difficult to due to the higher traffic volumes southbound on 52nd.

A: yes, we would look into it.

Comment: I live in the neighborhood, and I would vote for both C and D to reduce 1000 vehicles per day.

Q: Isn't C and D basically the same thing?

A: Yes, but D has impacts to transit.

Rich conducted some quick polling to get a sense of what the group felt about the different alternatives:

People with strong objections to alternative C: 2 people

Preferences for a less aggressive approach using softer diversion tools (pinch points):3

Preferences for a more aggressive approach than alternative C: hard: 8

Rich made a proposal to implement a test for Alternative C first, with the acknowledgment that PBOT would could begin a conversation with the larger community about alternative E if the volumes reduction was not adequate enough. This achieved close to consensus from those in attendance, one person in opposition.

Q: If C doesn't work can you consider an upgrade of C to D?

A: We could look into it, but we would need to talk with TriMet again.

Rich will proceed with the direction set here and bring the full recommended alternative to the next Neighborhood Association meeting.

Other related questions:

52nd alignment and traffic volumes

Q: I live south of SE Division... I was under the understanding that SE 50th Avenue is the main collector. Why is 52nd south of Division St not a neighborhood street?

A: We're dealing with the reality of the traffic situation in the area. 52nd between SE Powell and Division is designated as a neighborhood street, but with close to 6,000 vehicles per day it doesn't function like one. Due to emergency response route needs and signal capacity, among other issues, the solutions to rework the function of SE 52nd south of Division are beyond the scope of this project.

Q: I don't see any problem with cars and bikes sharing this street. Why do you have to do anything?

A: Our primary intent is to serve the needs of this bicycle route, but we don't want to do it in a way that upsets the neighbors. With approximately 2,500 cars per day between

SE Division to SE Lincoln, this section of the bikeway has too many cars for bikes to comfortably share the road. This has been reaffirmed by the citizen advisory committee as well as many cyclists who currently use this street. Our target daily volume for shared use treatments (i.e. bike boulevard treatments such as sharrows) is 1,000 cars per day.

Q: I don't understand, your target is 1000 cars a day.

A: 1,000 cars a day is the upper end of what you would expect on a regular residential street. Bikeway design best practices and local experience with bike boulevard design show us that bicyclist and cars can comfortably share the road with this volume of cars per day.

Comment: I live on 52nd Ave, I do feel intimidated by cars when I come out of my house on my bike. There are a lot of people who feel this way.

Q: Why couldn't you use 45th as the alignment?

A: A north-south bikeway already exists in the 40s. This alignment was identified in the 1996 Bicycle Master Plan and the Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030. Further there are large number of cyclists who already use this route due to the directness of the alignment who need safety improvements.

Q: Why wasn't 51st Ave selected?

A: Same response as above. Further 51st does not provide a direct route south to SE Woodstock. SE 52nd also provides easier crossing at the arterials where there are signalized crossings.

Q: What kind of process was used to select this route?

A: This alignment was identified in the 1996 Bicycle Master Plan and the Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030. Further refinement of the route has happened through the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings since August of 2010. More information regarding the project team's outreach efforts can be found on the project website here.

www.portlandonline.com/transportation/50sbikeway

Q: I live on 52nd just south of division, what are you doing on that stretch of the bikeway to lower volumes and reduce speeds?

A: South of Division St our proposal is to install 6 ft bicycle lanes. We are acknowledging the high levels of volumes on 52nd south of division, but have limited tools to resolve that as part of this project.

Q: You've acknowledged that there are a lot of cars on this route why wouldn't a bicyclist want to use 51st instead?

A: SE 52nd south of Division St is the only straight connection to Woodward Street. The Citizen Advisory Committee reviewed other alignments but none of the alternative

alignments provided a desirable direct route. This is also evident by the high number of cyclists using the unimproved route today.

Q: You're hearing from a lot of people from south of Division. When are you going to have a forum for the area between Division and Powell?

A: There are more opportunities for input at this meeting and at the future open house.

Q: Why was there no direct mail to residents north of SE Lincoln Street?

A: A point about how notification was done: our intent was to have a focused conversation with the people that were most effected by local access issues. We focused our mailing around the street to be diverted: SE 51st Avenue east to SE 54th Avenue, south of SE Lincoln St to SE Division. Those residents on SE 52nd Ave between SE Division

Q: I'm busy and I don't have time to attend the advisory committee meetings. How can I best participate?

A: All of the advisory committee meetings materials and summaries are available on the website (www.portlandonline.com/transportation/50sbikeway). All these meetings are open to the public. Also, we rely on organizations that are set up to represent the community, such as the neighborhood associations and the business associations. We count on these associations to be a conduit with the neighborhood.

Curb extensions on Lincoln

Q: Can you describe the proposed curb extensions.

A: The curb line comes out from the road for 6' for better sight distances and shortened pedestrian crossing distances.

Q: Have you thought about installing a crosswalk across SE 52nd at Lincoln? People and buses run the stop sign all the time. Crosswalks should be considered north and south of Lincoln.

A: We'll take note of that.

Q: Aren't you kind of bottlenecking the cars and bikes together?

A: No we don't think so. A shared-used design, where bikes and cars share the lane, is a the preferred treatment for low volume low speed streets. Once non local traffic is removed from SE 52nd, between Division and Lincoln, staff believe that this section of the bikeway will be a comfortable place to bike. Without some volume reduction, bicycle lanes would need to be striped on either side, requiring removal of parking on one side of the street.

Lincoln traffic calming (separate project to the 50s bikeway)

Comment: It should be noted that speed bumps are disagreeable to some adjacent property owners. I live near some and my house rattles when the bus thumps over them.

Comment: Garbage trucks and speed bumps also create noise.

Q: Where did the funding for the Lincoln speed bumps come from?

A: HB 2001 funding increase for bicycle projects.

Other

Q: How do you gauge the volume of bicyclists in order to warrant the installation of bicycle route?

A: We're not focused on how many bicyclists are using it today, because there is no facility at the moment. We're planning for the future. This project was planned through the outreach associated with two previous bicycle master plan processes.

Q: It seems as if the problem at SE Division and 52nd is originating further south.

A: Yes, there are many drivers using 52nd Ave instead of 50th Ave. The project team evaluated the option of redirecting cars towards 50th Ave at SE Powell intersection, however this was unfeasible in terms of signal capacity. Speeds are also high. The project team proposed speed bumps however the fire bureau has rejected this idea based on emergency response needs. The Citizen Advisory Committee is also recommending that PBOT request ODOT to lower the posted speed on SE 52nd.

Q: Speed bumps are terrible for cars, I hope you use something else.

A: The fire bureau has said no to speed bumps south of Division, therefore we don't have to worry about it.

In attendance were a few residents from south of Division expressing frustration at the design along their portion of the project area. Sarah and Rich invited them to discuss their concerns with them at another time, as the topic for today's discussion was the priority at this event.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08