



Sam Adams Mayor North Williams Traffic Operations and Safety Project Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Mobile Meetings

September 6th, 2011, 4:30-6:30 pm September 8th, 2011, 4:30-6:30 pm

Tom Miller Director

September 6th Mobile SAC Meeting – by bicycle

SAC members in attendance:

Allan Rudwick, Neighbor
Ben Foote, Neighbor
Debora Leopold Hutchins, Sistas Weekend Cyclers, Committee Chair
Gahlena Easterly, Neighbor
Jordan Freeauf, Eddie Murphy Cabinets
Paul Anthony, Humboldt Neighborhood Association
Shara Alexander, Neighbor
Susan Peithman, Bicycle Transportation Alliance

Members of the public in attendance

Sharon Maxwell-Hendricks
Jacquelyn Coleman
Joe Clinkenbeard
Roger Averbeck, Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee
Johanna Riemenschneider
Carl Larson, Bicycle Transportation Alliance
Jimmy Tardy
Jonathan Maus, BikePortland.org
David Lee
Chris Smith, Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
Roger Noehren

City and project staff present:

Ellen Vanderslice, Project Manager, Portland Bureau of Transportation Michelle Poyourow, Public Involvement Consultant

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1. Introductions

The group met at N Williams and Weidler. Michelle Poyourow announced that they would ride north on Williams to San Rafael, then cut over to Rodney and ride north as far as Going; then they would head south on Vancouver until Tillamook, cut over again, and ride north on Williams; the ride would finish at N Williams and Killingsworth.

The group would stop for discussion at major intersections.

2. NE Rodney and Fremont

The group stopped after crossing Fremont. Ellen Vanderslice told the group what is involved when the City decides to make a residential street – such as Rodney – into a "neighborhood greenway," where bicycling is smooth, safe and easy. One of the challenges is getting people across major cross streets, like Fremont, especially when the neighborhood greenway "dog-legs" as Rodney does at Fremont. For an example of how this can be dealt with, see NE Going St. at 33rd Ave.

Riders asked if Rodney could be made into a neighborhood greenway; Ellen said yes, it could, and it would be up to the Williams Stakeholder Advisory Committee whether or not they wanted to include Rodney in their planning.

Michelle pointed out that north-south streets in Portland generally, and around North Williams in particular, don't go very far before they "T" or "dog-leg," which makes those few streets that do go through (like Williams and MLK) in high demand for driving and bicycling alike. Rodney dog-legs three times along the same length that Williams runs uninterrupted.

Some members of the group said that they preferred riding on Rodney to Williams. One pointed out that crossing major streets is actually easier in a large group because drivers will eventually stop and let them go through in a pack. All alone, it can be a long wait at Fremont before there is a gap in traffic.

3. N Going and Williams

Michelle pointed out to the group that Going is a neighborhood greenway, heading east, and that many people ride north on Williams and turn right on Going in the afternoon. In the morning, people riding on Going have to cross Williams before turning left on Vancouver. Mrs. Easterly pointed out that drivers tend to go very fast in this section of Williams, racing between the light at Skidmore and the light at Alberta.

4. N Vancouver and Fremont

Riders expressed their concerns about the area just south of Fremont on Vancouver, where there is more car traffic heading towards the Fremont Bridge, the bike lane gets narrow, and people exiting the bridge in cars "dart" across Vancouver.

Michelle warned the group about the upcoming crossing of Williams on Tillamook. Visibility is terrible and cars traveling north on Williams may be going very fast.

5. N Tillamook and Williams

The group pulled into Port City Development's lot and stopped for a break. Some people stood on the corner and watched auto, bike, bus and foot traffic interact.

6. N Fremont and Williams

The group pulled off of Williams to watch bike and car traffic interact at Fremont. Some people said the section of Williams just north of Fremont was the most stressful, due to parking and un-parking cars, and a conflict between opening car doors and loading and unloading passengers and the bicycle lane.

Michelle pointed out that this block, just south of Fremont, has the highest volume of car traffic on Williams. She summarized the differences between Williams and Vancouver:

	Vancouver	Williams
Daily car traffic at Cook (2004)	10,691	11,725
Daily bike traffic (at Russell)	3,225	3,100
Lanes	1-3	2-3
Land use	More residential	More commercial
Exceeding speed limit (at Beech, 2007)	12%	31%

7. N Williams and Killingsworth, End

Michelle reminded the group that, for bicycle traffic, Williams continues past Killingsworth until just south of Lombard; then Vancouver carries bike traffic further north to Columbia Blvd.

One member of the committee asked how much bicycle traffic is expected to increase on North Williams in the future. Ellen replied that the City doesn't have a model for future bicycle traffic, only data from the past. The committee member wondered how Williams would handle any more bike traffic in the future than it has today.

A committee member commented that riding on Williams meant inhaling more fumes, and riding closer to buses and cars, than she liked.

A member of the public suggested that the City should be putting more effort into education, making bicycling and active living accessible to people of color and low-income people, so that it's not just something enjoyed by affluent people; it isn't enough to just have bike lanes.

September 8th Mobile SAC Meeting – by foot

SAC members in attendance:

Allan Rudwick, Neighbor
Debora Leopold Hutchins, Sistas Weekend Cyclers, Committee Chair
Dwight Terry, Terry Family Funeral Home
Gahlena Eastery, Neighbor
Jerrell Waddell, Life Change Christian Center
J.W. Matt Hennessee, Life Change Christian Center
Karis Stoudamire, Boise Neighborhood Association
Michelle DePass, Neighbor
Mychael Tetteh, Village Market, Major Taylor Cycling Club
Tom Anctil, Anctil Heating and Cooling

Members of the public in attendance

Andrew Seger
Angela Kremer, Eliot Neighborhood Association
Dalton
David Lee
Joe Clinkenbeard
Lew Frederick, Oregon State Representative, District 43
Rebecca Hamilton, Portland Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Scott Lieuallen

City and project staff present:

Ellen Vanderslice, Project Manager, Portland Bureau of Transportation Michelle Poyourow, Public Involvement Consultant Carol Herzberg, Portland Development Commission

1. Introductions

The group gathered at N Williams and Weidler. Michelle Poyourow led brief introductions, and then everyone walked north on Williams.

At the first TriMet bus stop, half of the group boarded the bus in order to experience the bus-bike conflict from the inside of the bus. Nothing interesting happened, however. The group that walked beat them to N Tillamook and Williams.

2. N Tillamook and Williams

The group discussed safety concerns about this intersection, and watched cars, bikes, buses and pedestrians interact.

One committee member commented on how long it took a woman who got off the bus to cross the street, in a legal crosswalk. Another pointed out the very bad visibility to the south for people wanting to turn onto or cross Williams.

Michelle told the group that just south of this intersection is where the speed test was performed in 2008 that found 52% of cars exceeding the speed limit.

The group walked north, and at N Page a committee member tested the marked crosswalk. Both times, drivers on Williams stopped and stayed stopped.

3. N Cook and Williams

The group stopped to watch auto traffic pull onto Williams from the Fremont Bridge, at N Cook.

Someone began counting Washington license plates on cars heading north on Williams, and the group discussed how much traffic might be using Williams instead of I-5 to go home to Washington state.

Michelle suggested that they think of traffic not as individual people who each "should" or "shouldn't" be driving on a particular street, but rather as water that flows along the easiest path. Everyone will choose a smoother, quicker route given the chance – whether they are biking or driving – and if Williams is quicker than the freeway or MLK, traffic will naturally flow to it.

Some attendees asked if this intersection would get a signal; Michelle responded that Rob Burchfield, the city's traffic engineer, had spoken to the SAC in the spring about signals at N Cook and Williams and N Cook and Vancouver. He has found that both intersections meet the "warrants," i.e. defined need, for signals, due to the high number of "preventable" crashes between cars there. N Cook and Williams also has had a handful of car/bike and car/pedestrian crashes.

One attendee said that it was very hard to make a right turn onto Fremont in a car because of the bike traffic crossing the right-turn lane; sometimes the bikes go too slow (because the signal is red).

4. N Failing and Williams

The group crossed the street and walked north, observing the busiest commercial area of Williams. At Failing, a very large truck was attempting a right-hand turn from Williams onto Failing, but couldn't initially clear the corner. Because of this, traffic backed up to Fremont.

5. N Skidmore and Williams

The group stopped for refreshments at the market. One attendee commented that if you drive very fast starting at Shaver, you can make the green light at Skidmore. A committee member with property nearby said that he witnesses crashes at Skidmore and Williams often.

6. N Going and Williams, End

The group stopped at Going for more discussion and to use the City's radar gun to check vehicle speeds. The highest auto speed recorded was 45 mph (the speed limit is 30 mph). Another car was recorded at 41 mph while the driver was observed to be using a handheld cell phone. Most motor vehicle speeds were between 28 and 32 mph, but the group noticed that the leading cars of any cluster would tend to be exceeding the speed limit as they approached Going. Most bicyclists were recorded at about 12 mph. One fast bicyclist was clocked at 21 mph.