

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Portland's neighborhood greenways (formerly known as "bicycle boulevards") are residential streets designed to prioritize bicycling and enhance conditions for walking. In Portland, there are currently more than 70 miles of neighborhood greenways, which were developed in three distinct phases since the first project on SE Salmon and Taylor streets more than 30 years ago. This report aims to:

- **Identify where neighborhood greenways are working well and where they are not;**
- **Create an understanding of the role neighborhood greenways play in Portland's transportation system; and**
- **Offer recommendations on policy guidance and performance guidelines to expand and improve the neighborhood greenways system.**

There is specific and strong policy support for neighborhood greenways and bicycle transportation in general at both the local and regional levels. The Portland Plan, The Climate Action Plan, The Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030, The Regional Transportation Plan and Climate Smart Communities Strategies all envision a growing role for bicycle transportation. Most plans recommend that Portland as a whole achieve 25 percent of all trips by bicycle. This is in service to reducing overall automobile use to no more than 30 percent of all trips.

This report sets forth guidelines for how neighborhood greenways should operate. Neighborhood greenways are a key component of Portland's transportation system, and must operate as such. The recommended performance guidelines are based on national and local guidance, Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT's) experience constructing and operating neighborhood greenways for more than 30 years, and an understanding of the role neighborhood greenways must play in Portland's transportation system in promoting health, prosperity and equity, as well as in reducing congestion. The report recommends the following operational performance guidelines for neighborhood greenways:

- **Vehicle speeds of 20 mph, measured as 85th percentile speed;**
- **Automobile volume target of 1,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT), with 1,500 ADT acceptable and 2,000 ADT maximum; and**
- **Bicycle and pedestrian crossing opportunities, measured as a minimum of 50 crossing opportunities per hour, with 100 crossing opportunities per hour the preferred level of service.**

To assess how neighborhood greenways are performing, PBOT staff collected data on automobile speeds and volumes, ease of crossing busy streets, and bicycle volumes. We found that:

- **In Portland neighborhoods where overall bicycle use is high, bicycle ridership on neighborhood greenways is also high;**
- **The vast majority of neighborhood greenways are meeting PBOT's suggested operating speed and volume guidelines for automobiles, including nearly all segments built after 2008; and**
- **Short, but significant, sections of older neighborhood greenways that should serve as the foundation of the bikeway system are not meeting PBOT's operating speed and volume goals for automobiles and should be improved.**

In addition to adopting the recommended performance guidelines above, this report also recommends modifying several existing Transportation System Plan (TSP) policies to clarify the role and importance of neighborhood greenways in the transportation system.