

# Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

*Working to Make Bicycling a Part of Daily Life in Portland*

1120 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 800  
Portland OR 97204



October 18, 2016

Bob Stacey  
SW Corridor Steering Committee Co-Chair  
Metro  
600 NE Grand Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232

RE: SW Corridor DEIS Scoping

Dear Councilor Stacey,

The Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) apologizes for missing the formal public comment deadline of October 7<sup>th</sup>. Due to our monthly meeting schedule, BAC members did not have an opportunity to jointly review and comment until October 11<sup>th</sup>. However, we trust that the BAC comments contained in this letter will be considered by Metro staff and the SW Corridor Steering Committee. The BAC has reviewed the SW Corridor Plan materials available on the project web site. The two documents reviewed in the “Scoping Booklet” were:

- Proposed Range of Alternatives for Environmental Review (Attachment E); and
- Analysis of Additional Roadway, Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects (Attachment F).

## General Comments

The BAC definitely supports the emphasis this project has given to walking and bicycling connectivity as it pertains to the SW Corridor project. SW Portland has many pedestrian and bicycle facility challenges due to missing infrastructure and serious facility gaps in many locations. The projects currently “proposed” for environmental review along with the list of “additional bicycle and pedestrian project under consideration” would significantly contribute toward making the neighborhoods and commercial districts in the SW Corridor more walkable and bicycle-friendly. Clearly the demand far exceeds what can reasonably be funded in conjunction with this project. However, the BAC encourages Metro, city of Portland, and TriMet to invest as much as possible into active transportation improvements, if the transit project hopes to achieve the stated goal of supporting the community land use visions referenced in the 2013 Barbur Concept Plan. With land use densities not being optimal, providing excellent bicycle and pedestrian accessibility will have a pronounced positive impact on the line’s ridership performance.

The BAC supports all of the bicycle and pedestrian projects, which appear under both the “proposed” and “under consideration” categories described in Attachments E and F. In addition, the BAC would like to offer several comments related to specific projects that appear on both lists.

## Proposed Range of Alternatives for Environmental Review (Attachment E)

The BAC supports the list of “*Projects proposed for environmental review*” (pp. 13-14) with the following specific comments related to several projects:

- ***I-405 crossing improvements.*** These will be key improvements not only to benefit the SW Corridor LRT, but also the existing Orange and Green Line MAX lines. Pedestrian and (especially) bicycle improvements to cross the Broadway/I-405 barrier completed with these previous LRT projects

were disappointingly inadequate. Regardless of which alignment (Barbur or Naito) is chosen to cross I-405, Barbur and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue need to be significantly improved from the existing substandard bike lane that ends leaving cyclists in the middle of 4<sup>th</sup> with no ability to turn onto the Lincoln bike facilities. This would benefit transit access for either route in and out of the downtown.

- **Walk/bike improvements at Crossroads.** Assuming Portland can finally improve Capitol Highway between Multnomah Village and Taylors Ferry Road, the Crossroads area will remain an extremely daunting gap for cyclists and challenging for pedestrians. Every effort must be made to allow safe bicycle passage to and through the Capitol Highway/Barbur intersection. *A new LRT station at the Barbur Transit Center makes these improvements critical.*
- **Walk/bike improvements on Naito Parkway.** Similar to the Barbur alignment, safe bicycle crossing of I-405 is absolutely essential. In addition, the Barbur/Naito “merge point” must be made better for pedestrians and cyclists traveling north and south.
- **Roadway projects that could be constructed with the light rail line.** This includes two roadway improvement projects in Portland on the west side of the Ross Island Bridge and Crossroads (Capitol Hwy./Barbur). The BAC recognizes the need for these projects, but wants to emphasize that the designs must not let auto capacity compromise pedestrian/cyclist safety or convenience.

#### Analysis of Additional Roadway, Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects (Attachment F)

The BAC supports the list Portland-related projects in the list of *“Additional projects under consideration for environmental review”* (pp. 15-17 in Attachment E and described more fully in Attachment F on pp. 4-23) with the following specific comments related to several projects:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Avenue bikeway.** This route could potentially provide a much “tamer” route compared to Naito. As noted above regarding Naito, the southerly intersection with Barbur would need to be evaluated for safety and accessibility.
- **Naito Parkway to Hooley Bridge bikeway.** The significant investment in this I-5 crossing is under-utilized, and enhancing bicycle connectivity would be a great way to leverage this investment and provide better transit access to/from South Waterfront.
- **Terwilliger Parkway bikeway gap.** This is a short, but critical gap that would link transit with two major SW Portland bike routes – Terwilliger and Vermont.
- **Capitol Hill Road sidewalks and bikeway and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue bikeway.** Capitol Hill Road and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue provide one of the few existing opportunities to cross both Barbur and I-5. However, the existing facilities are incomplete and not particularly safe for pedestrians and cyclists. Making this crossing safe and convenient for all modes is extremely important, and these two projects would greatly enhance this existing crossing.
- **Spring Garden Street and Dolph Court sidewalks and bikeway.** This project would leverage previous bike and pedestrian improvements made along this route as well as provide another important crossing of I-5 and Barbur.
- **26<sup>th</sup> Avenue sidewalks and bikeway.** This project would greatly enhance an existing undercrossing of I-5 and Barbur. Extending this project north to Dolph Court or 30<sup>th</sup> is recommended to make this a better connection for neighborhoods on the north and south sides of I-5/Barbur.
- **Taylors Ferry Road sidewalks and bikeway.** This is an essential route for providing access to the entire residential area located north of I-5 and west of Capitol Highway.
- **Pedestrian/bicycle bridge over I-5 near Custer Street and Pedestrian/bicycle bridge over I-5 near Luradel Street or 53rd Avenue.** These projects will provide safe active transportation access to LRT stations for auto dependent residential areas that are behind the I-5 barrier. The existing ped /

bike bridge at the Barbur Transit Center should be studied for seismic upgrades or possible replacement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather McCarey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Heather McCarey, BAC Chair

cc: Steve Novick, Commissioner  
Leah Treat, PBOT  
Art Pearce, PBOT  
Theresa Boyle, PBOT  
Bob Haley, PBOT  
Chris Ford, Metro  
Dave Unsworth, TriMet  
David Martin, SWNI Transportation