

Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

Working to make bicycling a part of daily life in Portland



November 14, 2018

Mayor Ted Wheeler

Commissioners Chloe Eudaly, Nick Fish, Amanda Fritz, and Dan Saltzman

Re: **Central City in Motion Plan**

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

As the City of Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC), we urge you to adopt and implement the Central City in Motion Plan (CCIM) with the additional recommendation to complete all 18 projects as currently defined within 5 years. Passing CCIM will help accelerate progress toward the City's desired goals as expressed through our Vision Zero Action Plan, Climate Action Plan, Transportation System Plan, 2035 Comprehensive Plan, and 2030 Bike Master Plan. Adopting the CCIM will also provide PBOT with a great opportunity to put into practice its recently published Protected Bicycle Lane Design Guide at a time when PBOT's Shared Electric Scooter Pilot is proving there is substantial latent demand for efficient and environmentally-friendly travel modes in the Central City. It is clear in the Central City we need more functional, connected, and safe on-road facilities to keep pace with the demand for all low impact travel modes, including bicycles. This is what the CCIM plan can provide for Portland.

The BAC also strongly opposes the accompanying Parking Supply and Demand Management Strategies document that was released just last week. This document did not go through any formal review and is generally counter to our goals surrounding single occupant vehicle usage, carbon emissions, efficient use of the public right-of-way, and Vision Zero. We are well aware of the vocal minority in our community that has pushed PBOT staff to create this document and believe this document to be unnecessary as it runs contrary to the broader goals that can be achieved through implementation of the projects within the CCIM plan. Parking demand will naturally decrease as single-occupancy vehicle usage declines in the coming years. If the City of Portland wants to focus on housing, we would recommend increasing supply for people, not cars. Granting subsidies to increase the parking supply for the benefit of the business community is a

poor use of our limited transportation dollars as we are shifting to modes that do not require the same parking footprint as in past generations.

We believe Portland's greatest transportation challenges can no longer be met with the status quo. Prioritizing a majority of the public right-of-way for single occupancy vehicle travel and parking has caught up to us in the form of congestion, poor air quality, and unsafe streets. Portland's health and economic vitality can benefit with more safe spaces to ride bicycles. The lack of progress building truly protected infrastructure during the past several years has led to a stagnation in bike mode share. Building standard, unprotected bike lanes is not sufficient to encourage people ages 8-80 who are "interested but concerned" to try biking anywhere, let alone in the Central City. Acquiescing to organizations that oppose this vital infrastructure to preserve space for a mode that every transportation-related plan seeks to significantly reduce guarantees that mode share will not shift enough to achieve our goals.

Take a closer look at our roadways in the Central City and ask yourself if you'd feel safe riding a bicycle throughout. Would other members of your family feel safe? What about your friends and neighbors' kids? Portland is rapidly losing ground to cities throughout the world when it comes to building safe and comfortable places to bicycle. Climate Mayors agree, infrastructure that allows for people of all ages and abilities to bicycle in and around downtown areas has become essential in thriving 21st century cities.¹ One common theme for these cities has been to build protected bike lanes.²

Based on data from the Downtown Portland Business Census & Survey, compared to last year, more people are choosing to bicycle, while at the same time, fewer people are choosing to drive into the Central City. With new housing opportunities within the Central Eastside and other close-in neighborhoods, 6 percent more people chose to bike downtown than last year and 11 percent of workers decided not to drive and chose instead an alternative transport method. With the increase in bicycling, building a 21st century network of protected bike lanes in the Central City will further add to the growing numbers of people who bike to work in the Central City.

The committee and wider community has spent hours in discussions and planning with PBOT staff helping them narrow the project priority list for CCIM. We have supported PBOT's effort to plan, prioritize, and implement transportation improvements in the city's core. We believe CCIM has been sufficiently vetted by a vast group of stakeholders, including the BAC, such that these handful of essential and transformative projects have risen to the top of recent project lists that fall within the initial allocated budget.

¹ <http://climatemayors.org/about/members/>

² Learn more about protected bike lanes: <https://peopleforbikes.org/green-lane-project/protected-bike-lanes-101/>

We commend PBOT for the extensive outreach they have conducted over the past two years bringing this list of shovel-ready projects to City Council. There have been plenty of opportunities for stakeholders, including business owners and operators to provide input on the project list and make their voices heard. While no list can be perfect, we believe that, if implemented, these projects can make a significant impact to guide the city and region towards achieving their transit, bike, and single occupancy vehicle mode share goals.

Beyond CCIM, we ask that all projects from inception of the initial list be reevaluated and implemented as funding allows. We support all of the proposed projects. Furthermore, we ask that much greater consideration be given to more innovative solutions for bicycling to thrive in Portland. Innovations should include, but not be limited to, more car-free streets including the transit mall, mandatory periodic diversion along greenways, daylighting of intersections from parked cars to reduce crash risk, and consideration of electric bikes and other modes like scooters and skateboards. Portland could be the first city in the world to introduce low impact travel lanes as the next evolution from our bike lanes.

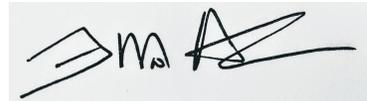
Thank you for your support in adopting CCIM and let us know how the BAC can help advance bicycling as a legitimate mode for all Portlanders. We appreciate your commitment to keep Portlanders moving safely throughout the central city using sustainable modes.

We appreciate your consideration.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Portland's Bicycle Advisory Committee,



Rithy Khut, Chair
Bicycle Advisory Committee



Elliot Akwai-Scott, Vice-Chair
Bicycle Advisory Committee

Cc: Interim Director Chris Warner, Bureau of Transportation
Gabe Graff, Project Manager: Central City in Motion, Bureau of Transportation
Roger Geller, Bicycle Coordinator, Bureau of Transportation