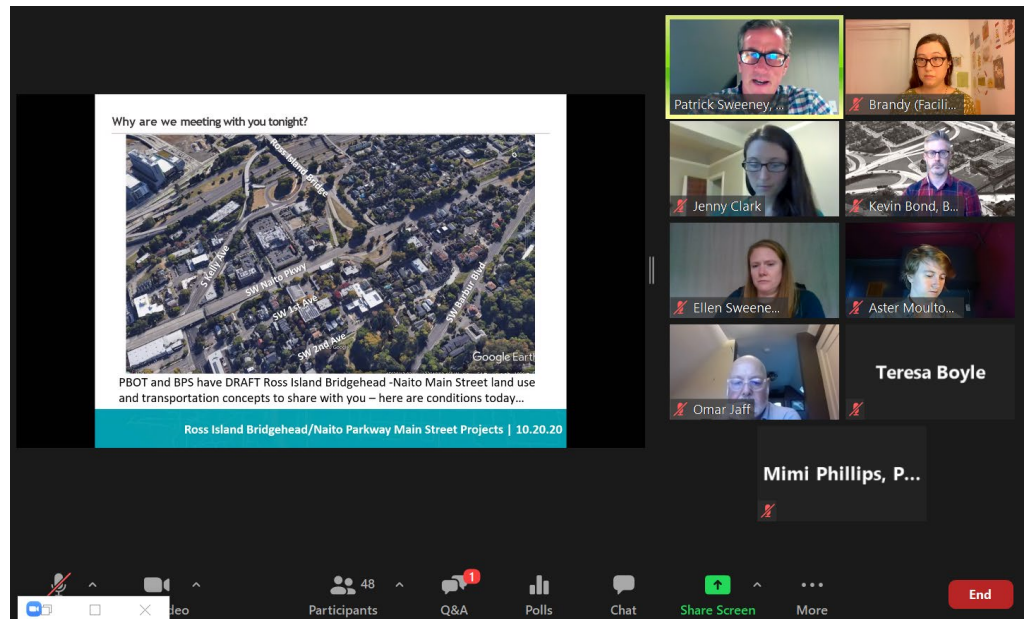


SUMMARY

NAITO PARKWAY MAIN STREET/ ROSS ISLAND BRIDGEHEAD – PUBLIC EVENT #3

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) and Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) hosted an online public meeting via a Zoom webinar on October 20, 2020 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. In total, 81 people registered for the event and about 48 people attended (the format allowed people to leave/join throughout the meeting). Staff presenters included moderator Brandy Steffen (JLA), Patrick Sweeney (PBOT), and Kevin Bond (BPS). Other staff present included Mimi Phillips (PBOT), Aster Moulton (TriMet), Chris Ford (Metro), Ellen Sweeney (ODOT), Omar Jaff (DEA), and Jenny Clark (JLA).

This public meeting was the third PBOT/BPS joint-event for these two related projects. PBOT presented about the Ross Island Bridgehead ramp reconfiguration and Naito Parkway Main Street project. Reconfiguring the highway era bridgehead ramps into a network of streets enables changing Naito Parkway from a roadway serving regional traffic



to a street that is more pedestrian and bike friendly, while also serving the local and regional vehicle traffic. BPS presented about the possible land uses along Naito Parkway to reinforce the future main street character, as well as how the development concepts are shaping up for the main opportunity sites near the Ross Island Bridgehead where the ramps are located today.

Most of the attendees who commented during the meeting expressed ideas or suggestions for making Naito Parkway a safer and accessible main street for bicycles and pedestrians; addressing building height and adhering to historic building guidelines; and reducing cut-through traffic in residential areas. Demographics were not collected during the online open house.

[Click here for the meeting Powerpoint presentation.](#)

[Click here to watch the audio/video recording of the meeting.](#)

Format

The online open house used the Zoom webinar format to show staff as panelists and attendees as muted participants. The agenda consisted of Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes), Presentation and Poll

Questions (30 minutes), Question and Answers (25 minutes), and Staff Virtual Office Hours (25 minutes). Attendees were told to hold their questions until the Question and Answers portion of the meeting and were instructed to use the “raise hand” feature on Zoom if they wanted to speak; they were also able to type comments and questions in the Q&A section (chat box option). Staff informed participants the meeting was being recorded and offered few helpful tips for using Zoom. The presentation slides and meeting recording were posted on the project website following the event. Attendees were asked three poll questions throughout the presentation on concepts they were shown. Poll responses are included in the Appendix.

The presentation lasted approximately one hour and overviewed the project background, updates to concept plans and land use features for Naito Main Street, project schedules, and issues to consider for next steps in land use planning and street design and engineering. Community engagement was highlighted as integral to the team’s approach moving forward. Key points from the presentation included:

- If the Metro transportation ballot measure passes this November, PBOT will work on design and engineering next steps for the Naito Main Street project. If not, PBOT is committed to advancing this project but will need to secure additional funding. The project timeline would be extended at least two to four years.
- The BPS project team is conducting an equity analysis with community partners that incorporates the historic cultural context of the region—including the displacement of native people and the major disruption from urban renewal (e.g. redlining) for foreign-born communities and communities of color.
- Land use and transportation concepts will be designed for neighborhood cohesion and inclusivity.
- The new infill building illustrations are conceptual and for discussion and illustrative purposes only. Redevelopment sites, building scale, forms, massing and urban design will be revisited as the discussion about development opportunity sites with the neighborhood and stakeholders continues.
- There may be zoning changes recommended for development opportunity sites

Notification

The following forms of notification were used to invite people to the open house:

- Notice on PBOT and BPS websites, including the event calendar
- Notice on Nextdoor (PBOT account to the Lair Hill/Corbett neighborhood)
- Posts on PBOT social media pages
- Direct emails from PBOT Project Management staff to OHSU, NUNM, Neighborhood Associations, and the project mailing list

Key Themes

Attendees commented about the following key themes or messages during the event. Key themes are followed by specific examples of comments received. The complete set of questions/comments is included in the Appendix under Q&A Section Live and Online (depending on how the question was answered).

Bike/Pedestrian Concerns

- Improve safety and access for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Encourage more walking, biking, and transit use.
- Make it easier to get around this district without a car.

*“It’s nearly *impossible* to safely bike from 1st & Harrison to the waterfront, especially when heading north on Naito (which is 99% of the time).”*

“Naito has incredible potential as a people-friendly low-car-traffic corridor, especially in the Waterfront Park area.”

Neighborhood Impacts

- Reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.
- Consider matching building height with existing buildings and prioritize ‘open space.’
- Consider traffic flow and feasible locations for signalized intersections.
- Include community voices in the equity analysis.

“A significant question for many living in Lair Hill/South Portland is how high buildings will be in land available for redevelopment.”

Land Use Priorities

- Provide festival streets/community gathering spaces that include a grocery store or cultural center.
- Provide inclusive and equitable housing opportunities.
- Include public art and design features that highlight historical context.

“I would love a grocery store in our neighborhood, but I just don’t think it’s economically feasible without a huge parking garage.”

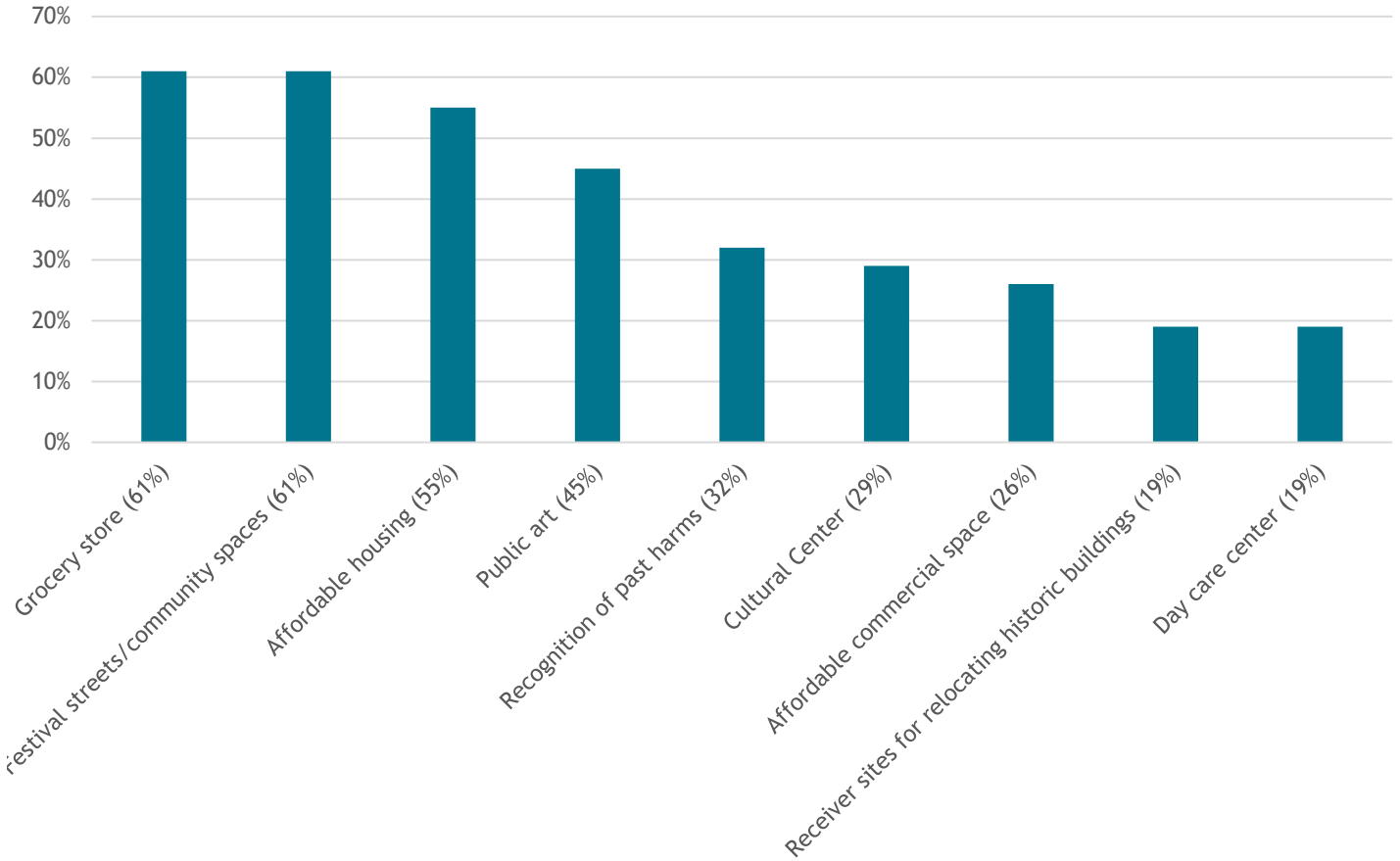
“The big picture is always important to consider. There wouldn’t be such heavy traffic on the bridges if there were more urban land uses in the downtown area.”

APPENDIX

Poll Responses

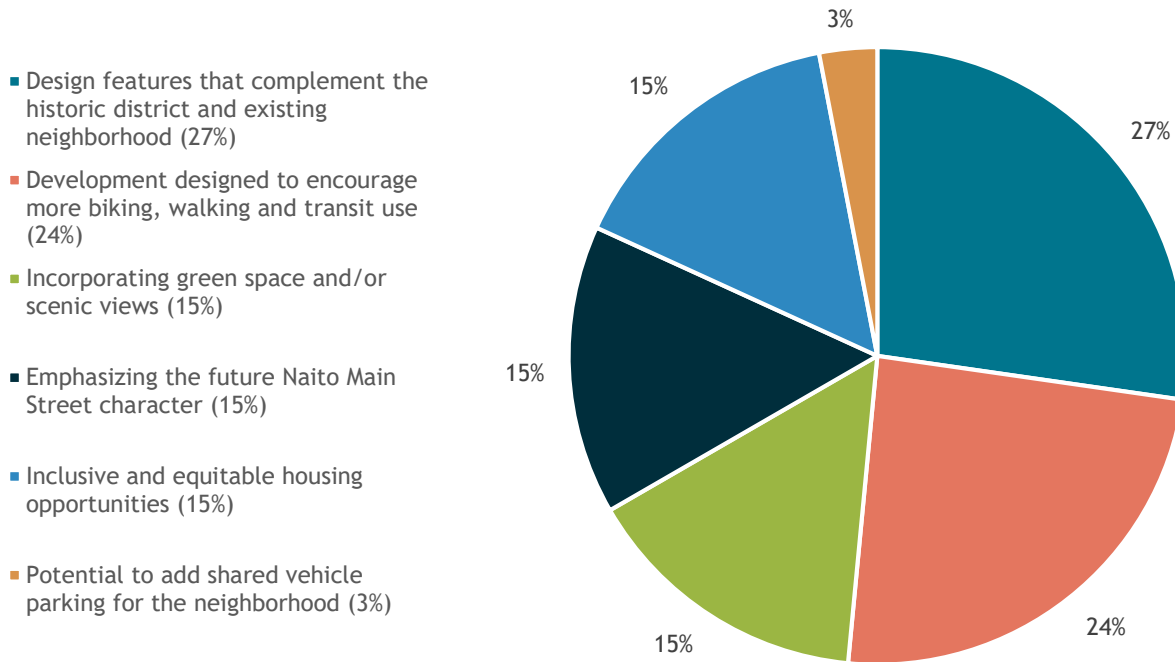
1. Which of these potential public benefits would you most like to see happen?

31 participants answered this question and could choose all answers that applied.



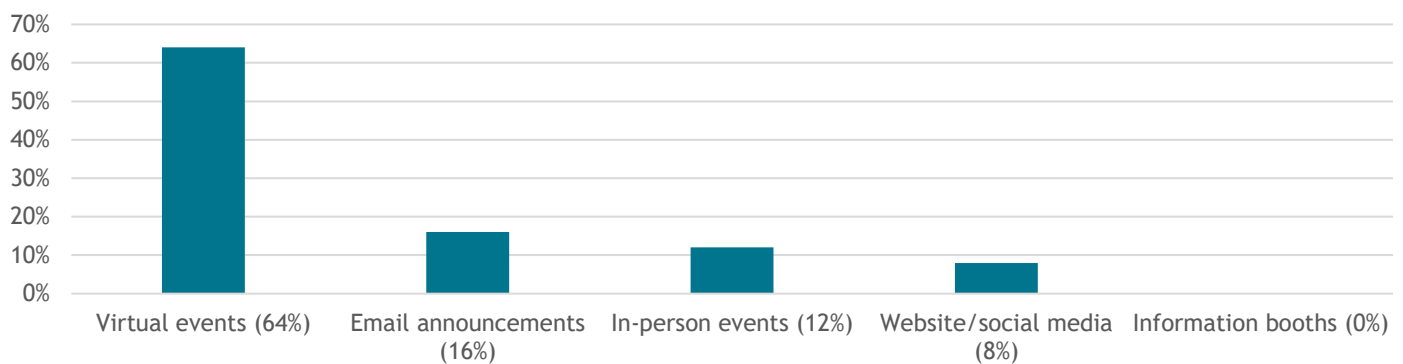
2. Which of these is the most important to you about the design of the future development at the RIB bridgehead opportunity sites?

33 participants answered this question and were allowed to select only one answer.



3. How would you like to be involved during the next phase? If you have other ideas, please share them in the Q&A area.

25 participants answered this question. *Note: this question was meant to say 'select all that apply' but instead, attendees could only select one answer.



Q&A Transcript

Live Questions

The following questions were asked by attendees during the meeting and answered live by project team members (shown in the sub-bullet).

- **Stephen Leflar** commented on how the project is within a historic context. If done right, can be a connector. The size of the buildings should be considered. He suggested CM2 versus CM3 zoning for the eastern opportunity site to better unify the neighborhood to the north and south. CM2 has lower building height and floor area ratio limits than CM3. He also suggested putting ramps on 1st Avenue from I-405 to take traffic away from PSU and down. Will Harbor Drive be eliminated, or will it continue to exist?
 - **Similar question from Q&A Jim Gardner:** Main Street Urban Form slide shows buildings much higher than supported by the neighborhood. Why encourage development at this large scale?
 - **Similar question from Q&A Michael Kaplan (SPNA president):** A significant question for many living in Lair Hill/South Portland is how high buildings will be in land available for redevelopment. Our board (SPNA) passed a resolution opposing buildings higher than 4 stories on Oct.7 Recent drawings by the city suggested the city was looking at higher buildings. Can you clarify please?
 - **Kevin (BPS)** answered the team is getting feedback on these ideas; they will inform what go into their recommendations for the land use plans. Could recommend something besides CM3. There are other zones with less height and FAR than the CM3 zone.
 - **Patrick (PBOT)** responded the project is within a specific footprint and scope. Additional ramps from I-405 to avoid that traffic is out of the scope of this project.
- **One participant (Zoe Allen Lewis)** was having technical difficulties throughout the meeting. The team provided information in the chat box and followed up with her separately.
- **Elsa Hill** commented about the apartments on 1st Avenue; she would like the height of the proposed buildings to match the height of these buildings. Concept views made them look big (10 stories) which would make them an extension of Harrison apartments. To honor south Portland is not an expansion. This would open it up to unwanted traffic from Naito to Barbur, especially due to the new max line. She would like to rethink having a signalized intersection at the Naito/Hooker Street intersection and instead move the proposed traffic signal to Naito/Porter St intersection. Elsa added that Hooker is the back door to NUNM; Porter is the front door to NUNM.
 - **Patrick (PBOT)** responded there will be traffic changes in concert with the SW Corridor Light Rail project. It will impact the way traffic works on Barbur now. We're at a concept level now; it's a long way to design and engineering. These are details the team will get into and will work with neighborhoods to get to preferred design (i.e. thinking about traffic calming and flow). Porter Avenue is one block away from traffic signals controlling traffic on and off the Ross Island bridge. It (a signal at Naito/Porter) would affect this traffic; having it on Hooker would allow traffic to even out. It would also allow for other modes to have more space to slow. The project team understands the impacts this would have on neighborhoods, and the team will be working with the neighbors on this to help keep the traffic compatible with the residential neighborhood. We

are putting a lot of emphasis on bike and pedestrian convenience, mobility, and safety, and will be looking at all the signalized intersections and optimizing them for traffic safety and working with the neighborhoods. Traffic studies will be made available to the public with the publication of the SWC Final Environmental Impact Statement.

- **Jim Gardner** commented he agrees with Elsa regarding Hooker and Porter. Porter is a less desirable cut through for Naito to Barbur. The downtown traffic toward the bridge will be diverted to 1st Avenue means southbound traffic will only consist of people trying to get to Barbur. It won't be anyone going to the Ross Island Bridge. Wouldn't it function better for southbound Naito to only be one lane rather than two? If the new Naito is going to be more of a main street, the new Naito should be narrower than what's there today. Frontage streets are along much of it and will need to go away if it's going to be an active pedestrian area.
 - **Patrick (PBOT)** responded that they are proposing the south end of Naito towards Barbur is two lanes in each direction because of traffic volumes going to and from Ross Island Bridge. Naito Main Street to the north of the Ross Island Bridge connections could be narrower because the traffic demand is lighter in that section. PBOT is still working out the details with ODOT but the concept is based on making the streetscape work with the adjacent neighborhoods and land uses.

Q&A Section Live

The following questions were answered live by project team members during the meeting (shown with sub-bullets), who read questions out loud from the Q&A Section. Note, questions are shown as received.

- **Gwen Montgomery:** What have David Evans' and ODOT's roles been on this project, and what will they be going forward?
 - **Patrick (PBOT):** DEA is PBOT's consultant for the concept plan for Naito Main Street. The contract is almost done; there will be a final report. ODOT owns Naito Parkway, so PBOT and ODOT are in conversation about a jurisdictional transfer of Naito Parkway and parts of the Ross Island Bridgehead to facilitate this project.
- **Tim Davis:** It's nearly *impossible* to safely bike from 1st & Harrison to the waterfront, especially when heading north on Naito (which is 99% of the time). Crossing Naito and Harbor Drive are treacherous, both east-bound AND north-bound, especially around Market and Columbia. Better Naito doesn't seem to address that AWFUL crossing of Market along Naito.
 - **Patrick (PBOT):** This project will pick up Better Naito at Harrison headed south. Will take the concerns for Naito/Harbor Drive back to the Central City in Motion team to discuss.
- **Jim Gardner:** Can't "remnant" parcels along Grover St ROW, on either side of Naito, be left as neighborhood open space?
 - **Kevin (BPS):** There is a proposal for a green street on Grover which could be used as open space in a sense. More of a street than a park open space. There is a need to maintain some sort of vehicular access for residents on Grover. The team is exploring open space as an option.
- **Jim Gardner:** What's labelled as First Ave commercial node may be zoned that way, but in existing use is nearly all residential north of Hooker St. Most Lair Hill neighbors should want it to stay that way. Comment?

- **Kevin (BPS):** The team is not recommending zone changes on 1st Avenue besides the one block near Arthur Street to go from RM1 to RM2; the existing commercial/mixed use zoning would remain as is. Any new construction would have to meet the design guidelines of the historic district.
- **Patrick (PBOT):** When thinking about Grover and Gibbs, two parallel streets, just south of the bridgehead, Grover is currently a cut-through route. It will totally go away. It will return back to a quiet residential street. Gibbs Street is an opportunity for the neighborhood because it will then have a signalized intersection at Naito. Further west, the SWC project will be putting ADA ramps and access points to the Gibbs light rail station with an inclined elevator to the base of Terwilliger. Gibbs Street is an important pedestrian corridor. It will help facilitate that connection. For Grover, right-of-way issues have come up. It's an opportunity for connectivity. Gibbs and Grover go together this way (have to think about both, not one or the other).
- **Jim Gardner:** What has been the "neighborhood involvement" in the equity analysis? (Michael agreed with this question)
 - **Kevin (BPS):** There are about 10-12 stakeholders who are part of the equity analysis. 3-4 of the stakeholders live and/or work in the neighborhood: folks from NUNM, Cedarwood School, etc.
- **Darrell Grant:** Are there different design guidelines for commercial buildings in the historic district than apply to residential buildings?
 - **Kevin (BPS):** Yes, there are different guidelines that apply in the historic district for residential vs commercial buildings. The historic guidelines are being updated right now. The new guidelines are still being drafted, and there's a separate advisory group that is helping shape those guidelines. The timeline for this is probably not until the first of next year. The advisory group meetings for the guidelines update project are open to the public and they happen every couple of months or so. The team can give more information to those that are interested.
- **Tim Davis:** Willie Levenson (Human Access Project leader) and I have a question: will there be ANY improved river access?!? Right now, it's impossible to put in a kayak anywhere between Willamette Park and Poet's Beach, which is unbelievably frustrating! I moved to 1st & Harrison largely to be near the river. Yet, I almost NEVER walk to the river, because Harrison and Harbor are AWFUL. Will we **ever** have actual access to the river AND find a safe way to go from 1st to the river?!?!? :)
 - **Patrick (PBOT):** For river access, project boundaries don't go to the east side of I-5. But there are two ways to get access to the east towards the river. You can cross Naito at Gibbs or at other traffic signals with pedestrian crossings. You can walk down Gibbs Street and get to South Waterfront. Another way is further north on 1st Avenue; cross Naito at Hooker and walk to a new signalized intersection at Kelly and Water Avenue which would take people down to where Harrison meets Harbor Drive and get down to the river that way. There are barriers here where I-5 and I-405 intersect. Pedestrian crossing and signals would help facilitate those kinds of connections.

Q&A Section Online

The following questions and comments received during the meeting via the Q&A Section. Note, questions are shown as received.

- **Jim Gardner:** Those "remnant" parcels along Grover could also make a great pedestrian passage for light rail riders headed toward South Waterfront. Michael Kaplan agreed: a great suggestion Jim.
- **Deborah Thomas:** So you are trying to soften the blow with history? Sorry, this is our neighborhood. Get on with it.
- **Tim Davis:** My building (Harrison East) was completed in 1965, as was Harrison West and South.
- **Jim Gardner:** Grocery Store is a pipe dream - insufficient population in neighborhood, and customers from outside would require large amount of parking - a waste of land and would bring intrusive traffic.
 - **Evan Kaeding:** I had the same thought. I would love a grocery store in our neighborhood, but I just don't think it's economically feasible without a huge parking garage.
- **Tim Davis:** Lots of great changes to Naito!! We also badly need to tear down the ridiculous 1950s-freeway-style bridge ramps on the Morrison Bridge. We've been literally *forcing* thousands of cars per day onto Naito! Naito has incredible potential as a people-friendly low-car-traffic corridor, especially in the Waterfront Park area. It would go super well with this project!
- **Tim Davis:** The three Harrison towers and three American Plaza towers are all 20-25 stories. And RiverPlace could develop several buildings in the 20-30-story range. I LOVE mixing heights in fairly close proximity, especially if land uses make the area more *pedestrian*-friendly, rather than a place for CARS to drive through quickly.
- **Tim Davis:** The *big picture* (i.e., looking metro-area-wide) is always important to consider. There wouldn't be such heavy traffic on the bridges if there were WAY more urban land uses in the downtown area. *Real* cities have unbroken miles of places in which to live, work and shop radiating out from a very densely populated downtown core. But Portland's density is incredibly low, and its land use is highly suburban. Thus, people are all but forced to DRIVE for nearly all trips.
- **Tim Davis:** I've talked to some folks at PBOT about biking along Harrison and Naito. It's REALLY awful. I wrote an *enormous* blog post about the Alphabet District, which is my favorite neighborhood in the U.S.! I LOVE the huge variety of building heights, often within the same block. Nearly ALL of the buildings would be illegal today, which is tragic:
 - <http://placesforeveryone.com/index.php/2018/04/23/alphabet/>
- **Tim Davis:** On Barbur, just before it meets up with Naito from the south, we MUST put both cycling directions on the *opposite* side of the divider from the cars, instead of the deadly configuration that's currently proposed! There will be ZERO additional people biking in SW Corridor's current design.
- **Tim Davis:** Have you worked with NUNM? Their campus has been *severely* walled off for decades!! Also, have you reached out to Keith Jones and others who lead the Green Loop efforts? Let's make South Portland a place that prioritizes PEOPLE over CARS for the first time in a century!!
 - **Mimi (PBOT):** We have been working with NUNM as well as looking at how this project will connect with the Green Loop.
- **Andrew DelGreco:** Will there be access to this recorded presentation?
 - **Mimi (PBOT):** we are recording the presentation which will be made available. I will also be posting the power point to the website.

- **Darrell Grant:** Thanks All. That was very informative. Loved the historical context as well.
- **Susan Levine:** Thanks, everyone!
- **Tim Davis:** TriMet's Orange Line bridge was a MASSIVE missed opportunity to provide a super safe new bike/ped crossing over *both* Naito and Harbor Drive. Metro/TriMet found last-minute money for it, but it didn't happen. PLEASE retrofit this bridge, so that we have a beautiful, super scenic & safe way to get to South Waterfront from Harrison/downtown!
- **Tim Davis:** PAINT provides ZERO protection from cars. :) And thanks for addressing river-access questions. It's been SO painful; the river is RIGHT THERE, but we can't reach it! The RiverPlace project proposal has a new bike/ped *bridge* over Harbor Drive, which will be incredible!
- **Tim Davis:** That entire northwest-southeast corridor running from Lair Hill Park to Ross Island Grocery has AMAZING potential. This is a SUPER exciting project!! We need to make sure that *ped/bike* traffic (and highly activated ground floors) are prioritized as much as possible over pass-through car traffic, which literally hollows out cities and creates non-places. And NUNM - wow, such potential there, too! People might realize that it's there for once! *Completely redesign* SW Naito. Right now, there's basically ONE restaurant in its entire length. It's nothing but empty parking lots. Narrow it—and possibly get rid of ALL car traffic. It's a worthless corridor right now, other than getting people OUT of Portland. LOVED your comments about SW Naito, Jim Gardner! And it's super encouraging to hear your agreement, Patrick!
- **Kevin (BPS):** BPS project website: <https://www.portland.gov/naito-mainstreet>.