

Jonathan Maus:

Welcome to the BikePortland Podcast, I'm your host, Jonathan Maus. In this episode, I'll share an interview that I just did a few hours ago over a video call with Portland City Commissioner Mingus Mapps. Commissioner Mapps is in charge of the Portland Bureau of Transportation and, in the last week, I've been covering a story about the Broadway bike lane.

I first started hearing about this project when sources got in touch with me about their concerns that newly hired PBOT director, Millicent Williams, was planning to make a major change to the Broadway bike lane for 16 blocks between Northwest Hoyt and Southwest Salmon. This is a parking-protected bike lane so it's a very wide bike lane that is right next to the curb and then there are parked cars that are essentially in the street and those parked cars act as a protective barrier to other traffic.

The project, when it was put in, was considered a major upgrade after decades and decades of concerns that the old Broadway bike lane in that stretch was a standard 1990s era door zone bike lane with a long history of crashes. What was concerning about Williams's email and her plans that were shared was that they were going to revert it back to that old configuration of the door zone bike lane where you're riding next to parked cars on your right and, on your left, you're next to what would be turned into three lanes of traffic with car drivers.

So, one thing that's important to keep in mind with all this is the timing. Really, why now? Sources that I've connected with and, really, anybody around biking or bike advocacy or bike planning in Portland, they were really surprised at Director Williams's plan. The Broadway bike lane, while people definitely have quibbles with it, you could look at any bike facility in Portland and you can start a huge raging argument with people who ride on it, there are just a lot of different opinions about what works well in a bike facility. But with the Broadway one, I personally never heard a lot of large concerns about it. Sources told me that, statistically, in terms of the way the traffic flow is working, it is actually working really well.

So, there was some surprise, I think there was even shock and disbelief, if I recall some of my sources' statements to me, that this even came up. But one thing we do know about the Broadway bike lane is that there are a number of very well-connected business owners and business adjacent interests and lobbyists and people with deep pockets who really don't like the Broadway bike lane. There are some high-end hotels along Broadway, the Heathman, the Vance, the Benson, Columbia Sportswear has their flagship store essentially is on it. One of the people I've heard that doesn't like the bike lane happens to be Tim Boyle who's connected to Columbia in terms of being the founding family. And that's just one name that I've heard who has, in very recent terms actually, contacted the city about their dislike of the Broadway bike lane.

In one of my stories, you can read that the general manager of the Benson Hotel has also contacted the city to tell them that he also doesn't like the Broadway bike lane. They have concerns about loading and they say that the bikers come by and run into people who are maybe interacting poorly with their valet people and all that stuff. There are ways to deal with, I think, some of the conflicts that some of these hotel owners have expressed and concerns that they have but that still doesn't get at the concern that people had with the email from Director Williams where it's clear in her mind that the solution is to rip out the existing facility and revert it back to the old facility.

The director's email was very, very specific and, at the end of it, she also said, "Okay, so who's getting the work orders?" and those work orders are in PBOT parlance. Those mean that the maintenance operations division would take these work orders, which are essentially marching orders, and that they would get the project done. This would've been a project that could be done without any contracting, without any public process or anything like that. And it's worth noting that this isn't Director Millicent

Williams' first time being in charge or at a high profile position at PBOT so I think it's safe to assume that she understands what work orders are.

And that's important because, as you'll hear in my interview with Commissioner Mapps, he vociferously denies that, number one, he ever signed off on any changes to Broadway, that runs directly counter to what most people's reading is of the Director Williams email. He also says that he had never been briefed on a plan and he tries to make it seem like Director Williams's email was more telling staff that she's looking into some alternatives and she's going to review some options to make it better and then she's going to get back to him with some ideas. Those two things don't really match up in my mind and I think for a lot of people reading this story, including a lot of sources that are close to PBOT that have been contacting me, it doesn't make sense to them either.

So, I talked about that incongruence with Commissioner Mapps and tried to get him to help me understand what is actually going on. I'll let you listen to the entire conversation which is 30 minutes and it's essentially unedited. So, yeah, pay special attention at the very end and the last thing I asked the commissioner was that, if there are any changes made to the bike lane on Broadway, if he's willing to promise that they will be just as safe or safer for people who are biking. I think you might be interested in how he replied to that. Here's our conversation.

Mingus Mapps:

Hey, Jonathan, how are you doing?

Jonathan Maus:

Hey. Yeah, thanks for taking some time to chat.

Mingus Mapps:

Of course. Sorry for the delay, it's been a busy week in city hall.

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah, I hear you, for sure. First thing I want to ask is, to the extent that you're aware of what I've published so far about this, I'm just curious if you have seen anything I've published that's been inaccurate or wrong?

Mingus Mapps:

Well, I'll tell you partly because I haven't finished all the stories, I've seen the headlines and I see the chatter so I haven't gone through a data forensic rebuttal of what you've written. My initial reaction based on some of the feedback I'm getting and some of the headlines is I do think there might be an issue of ... Actually, how do you put this without sounding unfair? I think, your framing, it appears to be very different from how it's been from our side of the fence or at least my side of the fence.

Just to broadly tell you what's going on, and this is true of my PBOT portfolio, my water portfolio, my environmental services portfolio, when we complete a major project, one of the things that we do is we evaluate it, see how it's working. When we get feedback that it's not working appropriately, we go in and try to fine tune it. That's particularly true in the context of transportation infrastructure. Although I could tell interesting stories about how that works in PES and whatnot but, because people have such a lived experience with transportation stuff, they often pick up the phone and say this is a problem or sometimes they say this is great. And on Broadway in particular, obviously, we've heard from a lot of

people who really love it, I've also heard from a lot of storefront businesses along that stretch, they go, "This has been really problematic for us."

Anytime we get a lot of feedback, especially on something relatively new, I try to look at it. Certainly, when I brought Millicent in, one of the directives I gave to her was, "Hey, listen, I'm hearing from a lot of folks who are along these streets who have some concerns here," I said, "Can you take a look at this and see if there's a way that we can fine tune this?"

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah, okay.

Mingus Mapps:

And, as far as I can tell, that's what she's done. I talked to Millicent several times a week, I haven't had a formal briefing on this. Certainly, at our informal conversations as we talk about this between other things on the agenda, one of the things that she's indicated to me is that she thinks that there are ways in which we could actually tune this so that we reach a more optimal outcome which I'm delighted to hear.

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah. Specifically, when she emailed PBOT staff on the 14th of September, she said in that email, "I've consulted with the Commissioner," and she laid out a very specific project. So, that, to me, sounds like she consulted the Commissioner. Are you saying that didn't happen or that you weren't briefed on that specific plan or?

Mingus Mapps:

No, we haven't been briefed on a specific plan. I certainly gave her the directive to look at the feedback that we've gotten on Broadway. I know that this is one of the things that she's been looking at and there are transportation projects and infrastructure projects all over the city that she's looking at. In our conversation so far, on Broadway in particular, she seems to indicate to me that she thought that there were things that we could do here. In terms of what exactly those were going to be, I haven't really heard it and, frankly, I think she's expressed optimism the entire time we've had this conversation is that something could be done in this space and I've even seen ... I've gotten the impression that that has even evolved over time which is very, frankly, natural and normal in the policy and infrastructure space.

Jonathan Maus:

Right, right. But the email that she wrote to PBOT staff was very specific. She talked about removing wands, she talked about getting the work orders ready which are ... Work orders are maintenance directives, they can go out and do something quickly with no contracting, no bidding, no public notice. How do you explain that email from Director Williams? And you're saying you weren't aware of that so am I supposed to believe that the director of one of the bureaus that you manage is going forward with major projects without your support or sign off?

Mingus Mapps:

I would say that I haven't read her emails and I'm not sure if this is an email for me and, frankly, I get literally thousands of emails a day. So, we really do have to work on a schedule and be fairly systematic in terms of how we make decisions, especially decisions about approving infrastructure. I definitely did

get the impression that Millicent had come to the conclusion that it was possible to do something in this space and I know that she's gone out and talked to folks from both the bike community and the local residents and businesses and she seemed to think that there was a path forward. I'm glad there's a path forward. There's no shame in building something and seeing if it improves the situation but one of the things you're always going to discover is that there are opportunities to even dial it in more effectively.

Jonathan Maus:

Right.

Mingus Mapps:

So, yeah, I think you can be ... This obsession, yeah, I got 3,000 employees, all of them have email, let's say they each produce one or two emails a day, that's 10,000 emails or something and the emails don't necessarily affect ... Emails like that don't make policy. I think that, from what you've described, it indicates to me a commitment on the director's part or a conviction on the director's part that it's possible to do better in this space and I'm glad to hear that. But even to this day, I have not actually had the full debriefing on what the range of possibilities are here.

Jonathan Maus:

So, do you think that the director was confused when she said she had your support and that she had a very specific project that she was ready to move forward with? I just don't understand. The email she wrote to PBOT staff, if it wasn't to you, was very specific.

Mingus Mapps:

All right.

Jonathan Maus:

She was ready to start a project and she said she had your approval. So, you're saying you have never been briefed. So, again, was she confused and didn't have your approval and she thought that she did or what?

Mingus Mapps:

Well, I think she's probably signaling to staff and, again, it wasn't an email to me, I haven't read it so I can't really effectively ... I don't quite know what's going on here. But from the context that I've seen so far and what you described to me, it sounds like the director has been evaluating the space for a bit. I know she's been talking to her engineers and other staff about what the opportunities here are, I think she's certainly developed a set of recommendations or is about to come ... I know she is imminently about to come to meet with a set of recommendations, I get the impression she was probably signaling to her team that she wants to move forward in a fairly expedited manner to make some changes here.

But again, we do have to close the loop and to connect with me and, depending on the size of the changes that we're talking about, probably do a public engagement process to some degree. So, yeah, that's-

Jonathan Maus:

Do you ever-

Mingus Mapps:

Go ahead.

Jonathan Maus:

Do you ever recall Director Williams being in your office and talking about this plan and saying that you supported it?

Mingus Mapps:

Certainly, we do regular check-ins, probably at least once a week. This particular proposal ... So, we have regular check-ins with set agendas, we have not gotten to the point of actually reviewing her set of proposals to me. Based on what you described to me, I would imagine that that briefing was going to come to me imminently, she might even be ready to do that. And I know one of the challenges with a commissioner, especially with a portfolio like mine, is just you only have so much face time with me and this one might ... We haven't gotten to this particular issue but I suspect that we will get to this particular issue imminently.

I bet the bureau would love to get in front of my face right away, unfortunately, I have, this week in particular, we've had counsel on Tuesday in the morning, in the afternoon and then I've been in session. Had been in meetings today from 7:30 till-

Jonathan Maus:

So ... Right.

Mingus Mapps:

... whatever and then I go back into session until 5:00. And so-

Jonathan Maus:

So, so, so-

Mingus Mapps:

I recognize we have to be pretty systematic when you're serving a city of 700,000 constituents in terms of just making choices and making decisions.

Jonathan Maus:

Right. So, does it concern you at all though that the director was planning to move forward with that project? With what you're saying, it's something that you didn't know about.

Mingus Mapps:

There's no doubt in my mind, I suspect, and basically this is also what she's indicated to me, is that she is getting very close to having a set of proposals that she wants to bring to me. And I would assume she would not bring forward a set of proposals that she didn't actually believe in but we have not completed the set where she actually comes to me. I suspect she was indicating to her team that, indeed, she's getting very close to a set of proposals that she is likely to endorse and bring to the Commissioner for support.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, so-

Mingus Mapps:

And I would expect her to be fairly confident in terms of ... I hired her because I trust her in this space so I would not expect her necessarily to bring forward a set her proposals that she expected me to shoot down. But at the same time, we obviously go through these steps in any infrastructure project.

Jonathan Maus:

Right. So, when her email says, "After reviewing all the information," and I'm aware that she looked at a bunch of different options for Broadway that PBOT staff had prepared for her.

Mingus Mapps:

Yeah.

Jonathan Maus:

At your behest is what I've learned. So, she's looking into this, you told her to look into it, she gets a bunch of alternatives from PBOT staff, she takes a few days or whatever to look at those and she writes an email to staff saying, "After reviewing all the information and consulting with the Commissioner, I would like to ask the team to do the following," and then she has 12 very detailed things and ends the email by saying, "Who will put in the work orders?" So, doesn't that concern you, Commissioner? Do you not see that as an imminent project that was going to be started with no public process and you're saying here without your knowledge, apparently, is that what you're saying?

Mingus Mapps:

I'm quite confident that, before we started actually making changes on the ground, there would have been a briefing and there will be a briefing before we go in and make changes. That's been my experience for the two and a half years I've been in this role and, frankly, that's been my experience with Millicent in the several months or weeks that she's been in this job.

Jonathan Maus:

Right. I think there'll definitely be a briefing now, Commissioner, but it sure didn't seem that way based on that email and it sure didn't seem that way until became public.

Mingus Mapps:

Well, Jonathan, I'm not governed by ... It's my bureaus, the buck stops with me, we don't make any major decisions in my portfolio without me signing off on them. So, I can't really attest to what's happening in that space but I know and trust the Director and I know that she knows that she needs to come to me before she actually breaks ground on some major projects. She comes to me with a set of proposals, I trust her analytical skills and her fairness and her listening skills. Certainly, I'm going to look at her proposals with some trust. If I didn't trust her, I wouldn't have hired her. On the other hand, my job is to ask staff to take a look at problems, come up with a set of recommendations for how we go about addressing those problems and then, as the saying goes, I'm the decider.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, thanks. Can you share with me some of the conversations you've had with hotel owners on Broadway or business owners that you're aware of in terms of their opinions or concerns about the Broadway bike lane?

Mingus Mapps:

Yeah, what I have heard over ... First, let's be fair. Certainly, I've heard from folks who are deeply committed to building more bike infrastructure and making our bike infrastructure safer and they really think this Broadway project is great. And I've also heard from, and this happens basically anytime we build infrastructure, I've also heard from especially people, residents and businesses that are adjacent to transportation infrastructure who have concerns about how the stuff I build interacts with the way they go about doing their business. I think what I'm consistently hearing is that there is friction between people trying to enter hotels or make deliveries at hotels and people on bikes and people in cars.

So, it's the classic situation of how do pedestrians, bikes and cars all share this space. Hotels probably do have this unique space where most people would like, at the very least, to be able to pull up [inaudible 00:20:55] the cab or whatnot and unload or load because they have luggage and whatnot. I'm not an engineering expert in terms of how we go about resolving this problem but what I can do as the commissioner in charge of PBOT is say, "Hey, team, we all have to share the right of way. We're getting consistent feedback from folks who say this is actually not working as well as it should work, can we go and do better?"

And it's been my impression that the bureau has been out there taking ... Number one, I think they've tried to listen to and I feel fairly confident that they've done a good job of listening to people who are stakeholders in this space. Then they put on their engineering hats to say, "Hey, can we do better?" and I think that culminates in a plan, hopefully with a set of options that talks about how we can do better in this space.

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah.

Mingus Mapps:

And the fact that the director is imminently about to come to me with a plan indicates to me that she thinks we can do better in this space but I haven't gotten to that-

Jonathan Maus:

Right, all right.

Mingus Mapps:

... I haven't seen the proposal yet, too. And I think it sounds to me like the director indicated to her team that she's confident that we can do better than the status quo so let's prepare to do better than the status quo but we still haven't finalized it yet. As you know, there are many steps to actually pushing transportation infrastructure projects or getting a transportation infrastructure project to the point where you're actually putting shovels in the ground.

Jonathan Maus:

Right, right, right, right, right. So, Commissioner, why this segment of Broadway and right now? As you've said, the budget's on life support, you're going to a budget work session next week, your

colleagues and you, there's going to probably be some difficult negotiations about general fund requests or whatever. Why would your director be pushing and you be pushing a project on Broadway right now, a place that, to my knowledge and to rank and file PBOT staff for that matter, it's not an issue in terms of vulnerable user safety or bike safety. You could look at any bike facility in the city and you'll have the mixed feedback which was the quote that you all used.

People on bikes disagree vehemently about all kinds of bike facilities all the time. It's my job to hear intelligence and feedback on bike lanes, I've never really heard much about Broadway at all. There's no crash history since it's been-

Mingus Mapps:

Really?

Jonathan Maus:

There's been no crash history since it's been put in. I want to know why, in that dire budget situation and it's not an urgent safety issue, why talk about Broadway right now? I've heard some estimates that it could cost up to a half a million dollars to make the design that you and Director Williams wanted to put in there. So, why now?

Mingus Mapps:

Jonathan, we evaluate literally all of our projects and all of our assets, especially our new assets, all the time, especially our newest assets, especially ones that we're getting feedback on. So, we're looking at stuff downtown, we get feedback-

Jonathan Maus:

Right, you're ... Right.

Mingus Mapps:

... as you know, in outer east, we get feedback about stuff in the Southwest Hills, we get feedback in North Portland and that's just this week and I think it's only Thursday. So, we're a learning organization, we're a data-driven organization, part of the data that we take in is feedback from our customers who indicate to us how-

Jonathan Maus:

Well, can you ... Yeah.

Mingus Mapps:

... the stuff I build is working for them.

Jonathan Maus:

Commissioner-

Mingus Mapps:

So, it's not-



Jonathan Maus:

From a-

Mingus Mapps:

Yeah.

Jonathan Maus:

That's the thing that I'm trying to understand is, from a data point of view, the bike lane on Broadway is working very well.

Mingus Mapps:

Well, Jonathan, I'll tell you, I think I've literally only had a chance to make it all the way through, I think, one of the articles that you printed. But I do believe that, at least in one of the articles you printed, you talked to businesses along Broadway and I think, in that article, they articulated some of their challenges, some of their concerns there.

Jonathan Maus:

Right, so-

Mingus Mapps:

And I get complaints about projects all the time and sometimes we look at them and we actually run our data and, actually, our empirical data indicates that, actually, although you feel some friction here, objectively, it seems to be working pretty well. In other cases, we take a look at the data, we take a look at the feedback and the objective data that we get and the indications is that, actually, we can fine tune this. And sometimes that means actually tweaking the timing on stoplights-

Jonathan Maus:

Sure.

Mingus Mapps:

... sometimes it means building a bike lane-

Jonathan Maus:

Sure. I get that, I get that. I would just-

Mingus Mapps:

... and this is how you go about running and building out and constantly evolving a transportation system.

Jonathan Maus:

I get that. I'll just say that, when I talk about data, I talk about crashes, volumes of vehicles moving through a space. I don't think that business owners calling your office and complaining should be considered data. So, that's not data, that's-

Mingus Mapps:

Why?

Jonathan Maus:

That's ... I want to be-

Mingus Mapps:

[inaudible 00:26:08] I can't hear from people who say-

Jonathan Maus:

If you're a data driven organization-

Mingus Mapps:

Well, Jonathan, when someone calls me and says-

Jonathan Maus:

If you're a data-driven organization and someone can pick up the phone who owns a business and have this potential change made, don't you think that that is ... Are you okay with that? How does that work? How do you explain that to people?

Mingus Mapps:

We are customer oriented and so, yeah, if you are a resident and you say to me, "Commissioner Mapps, my kid needs to ride his bike to school but there are no bike lanes between my house and the school, the city should really do something about that," I consider that a data point. And if someone is running a ethnic grocery store in East Portland and says-

Jonathan Maus:

Call the Roman Russian Market.

Mingus Mapps:

... "Hey, Mr. Mapps"... Yeah. "Hey, Commissioner Mapps, you've installed all this infrastructure here and now my customers can't get to my shop," I consider that data too. And certainly, we have a kaleidoscope of both qualitative and quantitative data that we look at to evaluate those claims and to try to figure out if there's a way we can optimize the infrastructure we've built given the resources we have.

Jonathan Maus:

Right, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mingus Mapps:

I see Adam has his hand up.

Adam:

Yeah. I understand temperatures are hot here, I do want to keep the conversation productive and we are trying to meet everybody halfway.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay.

Adam:

I don't want this to be an adversarial conversation, it's not why I set this up.

Jonathan Maus:

Sure, sure. I guess, Commissioner-

Mingus Mapps:

Adam, we're okay.

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah, everybody's fine.

Mingus Mapps:

Thank you, Adam. [inaudible 00:27:50]

Jonathan Maus:

Commissioner, I think one of the things that I'm looking at is that the solution that your office, from what I can tell, signed off on was a solution that would revert it-

Mingus Mapps:

Let me be clear, Jonathan, I haven't signed off on anything. I think I said that several times now.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, appreciate that.

Mingus Mapps:

That does feel like a little bit unfair and a little bit leading and, if that's what you're telling your readers, I think that is ... I don't know what to tell you other than that is a misrepresentation of reality.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay. I get that sense of reality from your director who says she consulted with you first and was ready to move forward, so that's what I have to go on. So, again, I guess she was mistaken.

Mingus Mapps:

Okay. And so, I've told you ... So, where is the confusion here? So, I've told you-

Jonathan Maus:

The confusion is, Commissioner Mapps, is that it seems to me that you were briefed on this plan both by-

Mingus Mapps:

That is not correct. No, that is not correct.

Jonathan Maus:

You've never been briefed about this plan?

Mingus Mapps:

We have talked.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay.

Mingus Mapps:

There's a huge difference between, number one, me asking the bureau to look into some infrastructure that we've built that we're getting feedback on, both positive and negative, go take a look at this, see if we can do better. And then the bureau and the director have gone out and taken a look at that, I know we've talked to engineers, I know we've talked to stakeholders in this space and the director has definitely indicated to me that, "Yes, I believe that there's a way to fine tune this." Now, a briefing where you sit down and go, "Commissioner, this is a proposal I have and I want to move forward with," that step has not come forward yet.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay.

Mingus Mapps:

I encourage, and I want to be clear and I certainly don't want to throw my PBOT team underneath the bus, I gave them the directive to take a look at this and to see if it's possible to fine tune it, I have not heard what the plans are yet. That's a necessary step in our democratic form of government where you still have commissioners in charge but will be, probably, less true under the next form of government. But while I am the commissioner in charge of PBOT, I will be the ultimate decider in this space and, no, I have not had that debriefing where you sign off and we all agree, yes, this is the plan we're going to move forward on.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, okay. I guess, just from my perspective, I'm just wrestling with a 12-point email with detailed instructions on what to do. I'm trying to-

Mingus Mapps:

Well, Jonathan-

Jonathan Maus:

I'm trying to wrestle with that [inaudible 00:30:35]-

Mingus Mapps:

... I encourage you to look for the email from me where I say this is what we're going to do. Because I am the decider and you did not read an email from me saying-

Jonathan Maus:

But when I-

Mingus Mapps:

... this is what our plan is. What you clearly have is a director who is trying to respond to both stakeholders in this space and has given his bureau a directive to be responsive to the needs and the concerns of community. Sometimes there's stuff that we can actually improve, sometimes there's not. Frankly, most of the time, probably, even if people do have valid concerns, there's not necessarily a path forward for us or we need more time, that is also-

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, wait. I guess-

Mingus Mapps:

... often the case especially in the safety space. But yeah, I do feel like that is a little bit of a misrepresentation, even the conversation that we've been having over the half past 25 minutes.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay, okay. To me it looked like a very specific set of marching orders and your office was saying there are no changes imminent and, to me, that looked like an extremely imminent type of email. So, I'm wrestling with the difference and the discrepancy there, Commissioner, that's all I'm trying to get at. Okay?

Mingus Mapps:

Okay.

Jonathan Maus:

So, I guess-

Mingus Mapps:

So, here, if I can reiterate again-

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah.

Mingus Mapps:

So, I do think, and I really am, man, I really am just trying to help you understand, at least my ... Based on what you seem to be reading and how you're reacting to it, I think what actually has happened here.

So, we have a relatively new piece of infrastructure, we have gotten mixed feedback from stakeholders, have a new director, gave the director a set ... Probably I gave the director, probably, a dozen challenges on things in our portfolio that we're getting feedback on, asked her to look into it and develop solutions for it or see if there are solutions there, and I recognize there are often no solutions or sometimes the complaints that come in are actually inconsistent with the objective data we have and there's sometimes, yes, you move forward, sometimes, no, you don't move forward. Sometimes, even if there is a problem there, you don't have the resources to fix it.

Asked the bureau, the director, to look into this to see, number one, are these concerns valid and, number two, is there anything we can do in this space. My impression, as I've watched this process play out, is that I think there's a [inaudible 00:33:01] ... Certainly, what I've heard is, yes, Commissioner, there are some issues here and, number two is, yeah, I think there's probably something that we can do. Now, I'm waiting for the point where we sit down and talk about what our options are and we haven't done that yet.

Jonathan Maus:

Great.

Mingus Mapps:

So, what I think you could say is, "Commissioner Mapps, it was a mortal sin from you to respond to the constituent concerns that were in this space. You should have never even directed the bureau to look at that." And I'm sure there are people who believe that, that's not, frankly, how I go about managing my portfolio, what I'm always trying to do is just try to optimize and maximize the infrastructure I got with the resources I got.

Jonathan Maus:

Yeah, yeah. I just wonder, do you know if there are specific business people or business interests, let's say, that have communicated to you that they don't like the Broadway bike lane? Are you aware of specific people?

Mingus Mapps:

Yeah, I'm sure there are. Well, there definitely are. Frankly, I could not list all of them and, frankly, if I were to list them, I might literally start with one of your articles that I think came out this week or last week where you went through and talked to businesses along that line, along that strip who voiced what their concerns are. So, that's a good place to start. And I think it would be a great, frankly, an act of public journalism if you could go through and talk to the people who both ride their bikes in that lane, have businesses adjacent to the stretch and get their feedback, I think you would probably hear what I'm hearing.

Indeed, when I read your article, I thought that part of the article looked pretty fair to me. I think this project has some folks who really love it and this project has some folks who think the city of Portland should have done better in this space.

Jonathan Maus:

Mm-hmm, okay. How much time do you have, Adam? One minute? Okay. Commissioner Mapps, I think I asked you this before but can you promise people in Portland that, if there are changes to be made on

this stretch of Broadway, that, from a bicycling perspective, it will be as good or better than what is there now?

Mingus Mapps:

Yeah, I don't know why we would do changes here in this space without ... The whole point of fine tuning your infrastructure is to make it serve the community better. Now, the difference between you have the great luxury of having an audience which is, frankly, as the name of your organization says quite clearly, BikePortland, so you're largely talking to bikers, I have to basically serve all 600, 700,000 people in Portland so I'm going to be looking at a range of interest here and I'm trying to find a balance. One of the things that I'm deeply committed to is building out a multimodal transportation system here in Portland which includes people being able to walk, bike, roll, drive to get to where they need to go.

Jonathan Maus:

Right. I guess you didn't answer my question though. Are you willing to say that any changes that happen will be as good or better in terms of safety for bicycle riders?

Mingus Mapps:

I can tell you, certainly, safety is our top priority and what I'm trying to do is to fine tune a multimodal transportation system.

Jonathan Maus:

Okay. Okay, I appreciate that. Okay, thanks.

Mingus Mapps:

All right.

Adam:

Thank you, Jonathan.

Jonathan Maus:

Thank you, Adam. That was City of Portland Commissioner Mingus Mapps. I'm Jonathan Maus, this is the BikePortland Podcast, thank you so much for listening. Thanks to everybody who is a subscriber of BikePortland, we are community supported and appreciate everybody who steps up to be a subscriber or a financial contributor. If you liked the podcast, please tell your friends, have them sign up. I haven't been doing them as regularly as I like but, you never know, that could change at any time. You can read much more about this story on our website at [bikeportland.org](http://bikeportland.org). Thanks again for listening and I'll see you in the streets.