

Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

Working to Make Bicycling a Part of Daily Life in Portland

1001 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1300
Portland OR 97204



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The Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) has long supported and been deeply involved in the design of the SW 4th Avenue Project for over five years. The BAC advises City Council and City bureaus on all bicycle-related matters and this project has been of particular interest to the BAC as it will create a much needed high quality connection to downtown Portland from the south. This project was identified as a top priority in the Central City in Motion plan adopted by City Council in 2018. BAC members are excited for this world-class bicycle connection to begin construction later this year, complementing the improvements in recent years to its corresponding couplet, SW Broadway. We are very grateful that Commissioner Mapps agrees.

We are concerned that the current scope and design is missing a major opportunity amidst the excitement. With SW Broadway improvements ending at SW Clay Street, and SW 4th Avenue improvements currently planned to end at SW Sheridan, neither project fills the critical gap to Terwilliger envisioned by Southwest in Motion to connect a neighborhood with 10% of the city's population and a major medical service provider and Portland's single largest employer to the Central City. This represents only one of three feasible routes to the Central City; the other two involve cresting the West Hills or surviving Barbur Boulevard which is a high speed High Crash Corridor owned and largely ignored by ODOT. The quality of bicycle facilities are defined by their weakest link and that is why we are writing this letter.

To ensure that SW 4th Avenue remains the premier major city bikeway envisioned by the Transportation System Plan and Central City, Southwest in Motion, and Portland Bicycle Master Plan for 2030, we urge that PBOT include the following improvements in the upcoming project:

- Add a right turn bike box on Terwilliger/6th at Sheridan to prevent congestion queueing in the existing bike lane
- Bike lanes on both the left and right sides of Sheridan from 6th to 4th Avenues to maintain the existing right-side bike lane for people turning right to go south on Barbur, while also empowering people on bikes to cross over at either 6th (or 5th with a full intersection bike box) and then stay on the left side.
- Move the existing bike lane on 4th between Sheridan and Caruthers to the left side to avoid conflicts with the bus and other vehicles (and will encourage a turn from the new left lane on Sheridan) and continue the left-side lane over the freeway overpass to match the rest of the SW 4th Avenue Improvements Project. Add pedestrian signal actuation for left-side cyclists at 4th and Caruthers.
- Add a bike signal cabinet that attracts northbound bicycles on Barbur using the right-side bike lane to cross over diagonally to the new left-side bike lane on 4th.
- Also, to complete the connection, fix the gap where the bike lanes drop off at SW Sam Jackson and Terwilliger. Extend the northbound lane on Terwilliger through the intersection with a turnaround where bikes can use the pedestrian phase to cross (and make the response

immediate). Fill the gap for the eastbound lane on SW Sam Jackson by bringing cyclists up onto the path (with separation from pedestrians and in a way that maintains the historic lighting) through the intersection.

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It is critical that these improvements are prioritized to be completed within the time frame of the current SW 4th Avenue Improvements Project. When the ribbon is cut on the SW 4th Avenue Project it must include these vital connections to realize its full potential. Anything less would be yet another missed opportunity at a time where we cannot afford them. We stand ready to support every effort to secure the additional funding that will be required to provide high quality infrastructure from day one.

Respectfully,



Ally Holmqvist, BAC Chairperson



Joe Perez, BAC Vice chairperson