

# Bikeable Portland Concept

Draft – January 2026

## Background

As we enter the final few years of our [Portland Bicycle Plan for 2030](#), the Portland Bureau of Transportation is proud of the progress it has made in making Portland more bikeable. PBOT has been especially effective in building the city's bicycle transportation network, having gone from just over 300 bikeway miles at the plan's adoption in 2010 to more than 460 miles today. Those miles include higher quality bikeways than existed 15 years ago that have been built to a higher standard.

We were able to accomplish this progress because of Portlanders' work in shaping a civic culture that celebrates and connects around bicycling. Many of the city's biking cultural assets have been around for two decades and counting, such as Pedalpalooza and BikePortland. 2026 will see BIKE TOWN celebrating its 10-year anniversary and 2027 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sunday Parkways. This project will catalyze momentum for the next 20 years of biking in Portland by aiming to restore bike ridership back to pre-pandemic levels.

## Project Goal

As proposed by PBOT's bicycle coordinator, the goal of this project would be to ignite and sustain the momentum we once had for making Portland bikeable by leveraging and celebrating our progress in building Portland's world class bike network. The project's intent is to get more people to choose to bicycle by focusing on three mutually reinforcing actions:

1. Igniting a civic conversation about the ease, desirability and benefits of biking and Portland's commitment in continuing to advance as a bikeable city.
2. Creating consistent opportunities for Portlanders to get support in biking.
3. Celebrating over two decades of a strong, vibrant, and inclusive bike culture.

## **Proposed Concepts**

### **Bike Together program**

This effort will see PBOT contract with an organization who will enlist coaches who will be responsible for lead rides and encourage participation. Each coach would be responsible for an area that encompasses 1 square mile or approximately 4,500 households.

Coaches would:

1. Lead regularly scheduled, advertised rides in neighborhoods throughout a project target area. Rides would reliably leave daily from set locations at set times.
2. Promote the rides throughout their assigned area of the project target area. Promotion would be in the form of door-to-door canvassing, putting up flyers in neighborhood destinations and attending events and public meetings.

Depending on scale, the effort could reach up to 181,000 of Portland's 304,000 households in the following neighborhoods: Central City, Interstate Corridor, Lents-Foster, Montavilla, Hollywood, MLK-Alberta, Belmont-Hawthorne-Division, Woodstock and Sellwood-Moreland-Brooklyn.

### **Civic Conversation about bicycling**

There are two main avenues for advancing a civic conversation about bicycling. Both involve developing and displaying prominent messages and messengers celebrating and encouraging bicycling.

One track will make use of pavement markings on Portland's largest canvas—its public right-of-way. Two types of pavement markings are envisioned:

1. A doubling of shared lane markings across our bike facilities in Portland as a lower-cost way to quickly increase the visibility of Portland's bike network.
2. Special temporary pavement markings that encourage people to change behavior where/when they can. This work will be done in collaboration with and guidance from the Sustainability and Climate Commission and will use temporary materials appropriate for seasonal use. Below are examples of what a stencil could look like.

A second track will sponsor, host and encourage events designed to: celebrate



Portland's determined history in creating a comprehensive network for bicycling, encouraging use of that network, and supporting the shaping of a culture that invites citywide uptake of bicycling.

### **Branding, Storytelling and Evaluation**

This element creates an exciting anchor webpage that tells the goal of Bikeable Portland by elevating individual voices from community members and political leaders and gives people the opportunity to share what a bikeable city means to them. Additional resources are set aside to advance this message through fliers, mailings, billboards and other, affordable means, as well as fund regular assessment surveys to evaluate the penetration and effectiveness of the entire set of efforts. This will be in coordination with the above two efforts.

### **PBOT support staff and materials**

This budget category funds PBOT staff time and overhead for three years.

### **Contingency and targeted capital improvements**

Some funding will likely need to be reserved for contingency given the newness of this project. This reserve will be budgeted as we get closer to the project. However, the intent is to apply the bulk of this funding to relatively simple and affordable capital projects. These are projects that can be undertaken to improve conditions for bicycling in the project area and that will enhance other supportive encouragement efforts.

The bikeway network in much of the target area is formed by neighborhood greenways. Those greenways include known areas of higher-than-desired traffic volume. Areas like SE 21st between Clinton and Division, SE 16th between Stark and Sandy, SE Ankeny between 3rd and 6th. Similarly, E Burnside between 73rd and 94th are sub-standard bikeways for this critical connection between inner SE / NE and East Portland. Diverters and improved bike lanes in such identified hot spots will be the focus for this flexible capital funding.

This program area can also augment encouragement by providing bicycle access for the specific events and activations called out in this project.

### **Project Timeline in alignment with other biking milestones**

The timeline of the project below is interwoven with other celebration moments and milestones that are already planned. This project can serve as a conversational anchor

for each of these cultural moments that overall will capture the public's attention and ignite interest and participation in biking.

Calendar Year	Events / Activities / Milestones
2026	<p>July to December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planning and set-up of the Bikeable Portland project</li><li>• Launch of website</li></ul> <p>July: BIKE TOWN's 10-Year Anniversary Celebration</p>
2027	<p>Year One of Bikeable Portland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch of Bike Together program</li><li>• Deployment of pavement markings and other Civic Conversation opportunities</li></ul> <p>Summer: Sunday Parkways 20-Year Anniversary Celebration</p>
2028	<p>Year Two of Bikeable Portland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued implementation of all elements that were set up in Year One</li></ul>
2029	<p>Year Three of Bikeable Portland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued implementation of all elements that were set up in Year One</li></ul> <p>June to December: Evaluation and Reporting of Bikeable Portland</p>
2030	<p>Reporting for Bicycle Plan for 2030</p> <p>Release of Bicycle Plan for 2030 completion report and any activities related to future planning effort</p>

## Identifying the project target area

The map, below, labelled “TARGET AREA” shows several things: The bikeway network (blue, green and magenta lines are bike lanes, neighborhood greenways and off-street pathways, respectively); bicycle commute rates by census tract when that peaked in 2015 (the yellow-brown continuum with the darker colors being the higher rates, which ranged from 6% to 33%); and “housing areas” identified in Portland Housing Bureau’s “State of Housing in Portland 2024” Report. The city’s 24 housing neighborhoods are outlined in black. The Target Area includes those neighborhoods bordered in bright blue.

The target area mostly overlaps those parts of the city where bicycling rates have been historically high but dropped over the last decade. Depending on program scale, we would select areas within this overall target area for implementation.

Cost is largely tied to geographic area, as we assume that each ride leader can manage an area of approximately 1 square mile and 4500 households. The size of that area also dictates costs for pavement markings and capital projects.

