



Betsy Reese <betsy.w.reese@gmail.com>

Print Fwd: At Last - City and State are moving beyond design phase on big traffic safety project for N. Broadway/Flint/Wheeler - ODOT/PBOT Public Input Session Wednesday November 19th

1 message

Betsy <betsy.w.reese@gmail.com>

Wed, Nov 19, 2014 at 4:23 PM

To: Betsy Reese <betsy.w.reese@gmail.com>

To all of the safety advocates, near neighbors, commuters, etc., who care about the notoriously dangerous N. Broadway/Flint/Wheeler intersection:

True to their word, ODOT and PBOT have been moving forward on significant traffic engineering improvements to this intersection. This is your opportunity to review the plan at this stage and provide input on it. All modes of transportation need these improvements to reduce conflict and improve traffic flow and safety. I encourage stakeholders from all viewpoints to participate in this crucial public input stage of traffic engineering changes finally being realized after more than 15+ years of strident public outcry and advocacy by many individuals and organizations. Photos of ambulances, crashed cars, and mangled bikes helped spur this progress, but let's see if we can get motivated now to see it through without the galvanizing force of a fresh tragedy.

At this point, I recommend that we should all:

1. Wholeheartedly tell ODOT and PBOT that we support and welcome this plan so as to not further delay or derail this progress.

and

2. Ask that issues not fixed by these changes be addressed in other ways, such as less expensive signage and striping, education and encouragement, enforcement, and/or law changes.

For background on this issue:

1999 through 2012 - See http://portlandtransport.com/archives/2012/12/featured_class_3.html for an overview of the history of injury collisions and advocacy surrounding this area. Be sure to click through to the PDF and read the comment section for explanation.

2012 - At the City Council hearing to endorse the plan to widen I-5 through the Rose Quarter, "city and state staff said the most urgent traffic-safety issues are on the surface streets around the Rose Quarter".

http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2012/10/as_portland_city_council_plan.html ODOT made a public commitment to realign the I-5 slip ramp onto Broadway, and PBOT submitted the N Broadway Safety Crossing Enhancement Project for STIP funding. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/STIP/E23%20-%20Broadway%20Safety%20Crossing%20Enh.pdf>

2013 - When it was announced that the proposal would not be funded through STIP, ODOT announced that, in collaboration with PBOT, they would take the project under their wing for the design phase as a part of their project to realign the I-5 slip ramp.

2014 - The **I-5 Southbound Off-Ramp at North Broadway Project** is designed to enhance pedestrian crossing safety at high demand crossing locations, facilitate smoother traffic flow in the area for all modes, and can be realistically funded and constructed in the short term.

You're Invited to the Project Open House

Meet the ODOT and PBOT project teams and learn more about the project at an informal open house

Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Left Bank Annex*

The Great Room, Second Floor

101 N. Weidler Street (located on the northeast corner of N. Weidler and N. Vancouver)

<http://goo.gl/maps/GwrSN>

**Limited parking available east of the building. Consider public transit, on-street parking or the parking lot at Paramount Apartments located at 1750 N. Wheeler Ave.*

<http://goo.gl/maps/SPqey>

Project website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/Pages/I-5-Southbound-Off-Ramp-at-North-Broadway-Project.aspx>

Project factsheet: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/Documents/I5atNBroadway_Fact%20Sheet_November_2014.pdf

Project map: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/Documents/I5atNBroadwayMap_Project%20Elements_Nov2014.pdf

I am just the messenger here, with the motive of keeping this issue on people's radar, and encouraging people to go to the open house or send in written comment. I am not the ODOT and PBOT spokesperson, and not the elected spokesperson for any group or any of you. Personally, I do appreciate your feedback. I am open to modifying my own position with new information or perspectives you may provide.

My personal perspective is this: Unfortunately ODOT and PBOT engineers, after much work, determined that near-term changes cannot include the two major components of last year's STIP proposal. Those two eliminated components are: 1. Signalizing the intersection, and 2. Removal and relocation of the U-turn-around in the Ross Streetcar Island. This intersection is so very complicated and I sincerely believe that engineers have tried very hard to come up with a workable plan within budget constraints. After meeting with ODOT, PBOT representatives, and some neighbors and advocates, I feel not only reconciled with the disappointment of high hopes for significant safety and traffic flow improvement changes being dashed once again here, but actually excited about the current proposal and its promise to be executed to completion in the next couple of years (construction is tentatively scheduled for summer of 2016). The realization of this project will get us more than just band-aids spurred by tragedies, but instead finally a well-thought out plan that will improve both safety and traffic flow for all modes in this area.

Below are some of my brainstorming ideas for what I see as remaining issues. I have already received feedback on some of these from PBOT and ODOT that they are unfeasible due to federal money use constraints and nonconformity issues, or due to scope, schedule and budget of this project. I nevertheless share them here with you to help point out what issues I am trying solve, and hopefully stimulate your own creative thinking for solutions.

1. Reduce/eliminate dangerous illegal lane changing of vehicles coming from Flint and Wheeler across four lanes to the U-turn-around in the streetcar island by:

- a. signage and striping



(Sign above shows prohibited lanes to turn into, for example. In the case of Flint and Wheeler at Broadway, the red Xs would be in the three left lanes of Broadway - reduced to only two at Flint after the proposed plan is executed, and there would be no straight arrow. The right turn arrow would be shown only into the nearest and right-hand lane, as is the law anyway.)

- b. enforcement, in conjunction with:

c. education (e.g., of Lower Albina businesses re this illegal lane changing/crossing with inadequate distance, better routes to take to Broadway/Weidler, etc.)

2. Reduce/eliminate wrong-way eastbound bikes coming up the sidewalk or across N. Broadway from N. Wheeler in front of The Leftbank heading toward northbound on Flint.

- a. Scout out and promote other routes for bikes, (put on bike blogs, listservs, general media, get computerized mapping programs to indicate safe and preferred routes, etc.)

- b. education
- c. enforcement

3. Keep drivers from colliding with wrong way bikes in 2 (above)

- a. Get drivers to look to their right when pulling out onto Broadway from Flint or Wheeler by: signage, etc., ideas?
- b. When punching it across three or four lanes to the u-turn-around is no longer the goal (see 1 above), drivers will be less eager and fixated on traffic coming from their left down Broadway in all lanes.
- c. Consider closing Wheeler completely at N. Broadway (For Lower Albina, the light at N. Benton is a superior route for heading east on Weidler or to the I-5, and intersection of N. Interstate and Dixon is superior for heading west on Broadway).
- d. Discourage through-traffic from using Wheeler southbound between N. Dixon and N. Broadway by installing chicanes (for example, as explained to me by Greg Raisman of PBOT)

4. Keep traffic flow on Broadway from being interrupted abruptly, and reduce danger of rear-end collisions and motor vehicle-pedestrian collisions at Broadway/Flint/Wheeler.

- a. Educate both drivers and pedestrians of the distance required for a pedestrian to legally cause traffic to stop by breaking the plane of the curb into the intersection.
- b. Enforce above by ticketing or warning drivers who stop for pedestrians waiting at the curb but not breaking the plane, and for drivers who stop for pedestrians who break the plane with insufficient stopping distance for oncoming traffic.
- c. Enforce above by ticketing or warning pedestrians who break the plane with insufficient stopping distance for oncoming traffic.
- d. Educate pedestrians not to obey drivers who stop abruptly and/or motion them them to cross when there is other oncoming traffic.

5. Keep bikes from running the stop sign on Flint at Broadway (including: overshooting the bikelane on Broadway, failing to yield to pedestrians crossing Broadway, failing to yield to bicycles in the bike lane on Broadway, etc.)

- a. Install some kind of chicane, pork chop, etc., to force a stop (brainstorm idea of Mathew Machado, PBOT)
- b. Educate and enforce stop sign
- c. Additional signage or striping, pavement paint, etc.
- d. Create visual screen to force a stop (? related to input from Greg Raisman re., this intersection)

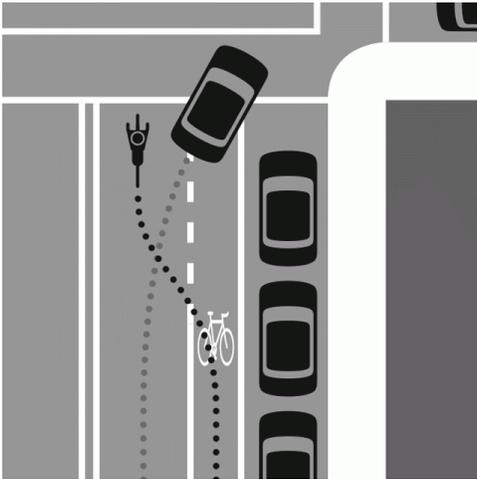
6. Prevent right hook of bicycles in bike lane on Broadway by vehicles turning right at N. Flint and N. Ross

- a. Educate drivers that in Oregon straight-bound bikes have the right of way over right-turning motor vehicles. Bikes are required to stay in the bike lane, motor vehicles are required to stay out of it and turn across it.

b. Warning signage at these intersections with a high incidence of right hook collisions, for example



c. Change the Oregon law to allow motor vehicles to merge into the bike lane when clear, just like they would merge into any other right-most vehicle lane before executed a right turn. Allow bikes to use the vehicle lane when clear to pass right turning vehicles on the left. For example:



d. Or, stripe these two intersections to create a right-turn sharrow before Flint and Ross to allow the above, as in other locations in Portland, such as outer SE Division.

Let's not let the next injury collision, or worse, to be the reminder that we can't forget about this dangerous intersection.

Thanks, everyone.

Betsy Reese

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TO ALL: Thanks for caring about Broadway/Flint/Wheeler. Similar information may be sent to other email address lists. Sorry if you receive essentially duplicate information if you belong to more than one group with an interest in this topic. The address list here is open information and available for anyone to use. Anyone who wants on or off this topic list, or does not want their email address shared surrounding this topic, please let me know and I will remove it. I try to cc or forward emails to anyone I mention by name in an email, so they can chime in, correct me if I'm wrong, and most of all, know what I'm saying about them. Please feel free to forward, reply, quote, publish, or correct anything I've said here. I'd appreciate a cc whenever you do.

If you cannot make the open house, please send in your written comments. No suggestions for improvement on the design? Let them know that you support this work and would like to see it done as soon as possible. Send feedback to:

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Thanks, Betsy 🌹

