

Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

Working to Make Bicycling a Part of Daily Life in Portland

1001 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1300
Portland OR 97204



February 15, 2023

Interim Director Tara Wasiak
Portland Bureau of Transportation

Dear Interim Director Wasiak,

Through several conversations starting summer 2021, the Bicycle Advisory Committee has been hearing about the changes planned for the Hollywood Transit Center to modernize the facility and bus, bike, MAX and shared mobility connections. This includes replacing the existing ramp and stair structure, and moving the bus stops onto NE Halsey Street as early as the beginning of 2024. One key connection to Hollywood Transit Center for people walking, bicycling, and riding transit is NE 42nd Avenue.

NE 42nd connects to a car free bridge over I-84, a major transit center, the Hollywood commercial area which contains multiple street and cross streets of destinations (which is unfortunately bisected by NE Sandy boulevard - though there is a light at NE 42nd) including multiple grocery stores (i.e., Trader Joes, Whole Foods, Grocery Outlet), schools, restaurants, shops, businesses, parks, a weekly year round farmers market, gyms, office buildings, places of worship, doctor's offices, dentists, low income housing, the bikeway on NE Hancock and the bikeway on NE Tillamook.

NE 42nd should be a safe and comfortable place to walk and roll to access all of what the Hollywood neighborhood has to offer. However, many of us have expressed significant concerns about cycling on NE 42nd Avenue. In fact, one member who rides on this street regularly referred to it as one of the most dangerous they travel on and very uncomfortable to navigate with children in tow. High traffic volumes are coupled with small bike lanes (~4 feet) that are regularly encroached upon by southbound drivers making right turns at Sandy (encouraged by a 16' wide right lane) and Broadway (where the offset intersection design encourages drivers to hug the rounded corner). Plus, these bike lanes drop-off entirely on the block adjacent to Trader Joe's. The proposed relocation of buses out of the existing Transit Center will require buses to stop on NE 42nd. Increasing the amount of time that buses spend on NE 42nd is only likely to exacerbate conflicts between vehicles and bikes. We ask for green painted bike lanes, flexible posts and other items that indicate the importance of bicycling in this corridor.

Not only a key transit connection, NE 42nd Avenue is classified as a major city bikeway in the 2030 Bike Plan and 2035 Transportation System Plan: *"Major City Bikeways are intended to form the 'mobility backbone' of Portland's bicycle transportation system and provide primary connections to major attractors throughout the city, such as downtown or regional centers. The classification of Major City Bikeways is intended to set a new threshold for bikeway function. To achieve the width required to provide safe, comfortable facilities on streets developed as separated in-roadway bikeways it may be necessary to make trade-offs such as removal of travel lanes or on-street parking... This recommended classification is intended to give greater weight to the requirements of bikeway design on Major City Bikeways than on other bikeways. On Major City Bikeways the entire corridor should function seamlessly."* The street is also classified as a neighborhood walkway which should provide a safe and comfortable walking environment on low-volume streets or connections that do not allow motor vehicles. Between the higher traffic volumes, the brick building and parking up to the curb at NE 41st limiting westbound visibility, and the

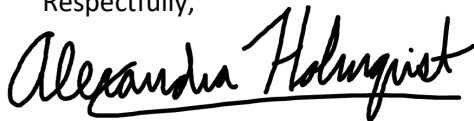
offset intersection at NE Broadway and the light at NE Sandy where people walking (including to the 12 bus from the Hollywood Transit Center) and driving (making right turns specifically), this walkway does not provide a safe and comfortable connection.

Unfortunately, complementary walkway and bikeway improvements to NE 42nd Avenue are not currently included as part of the Hollywood Transit Center improvements. Wider, protected bicycle lanes would provide much safer, more comfortable facilities. Operational changes could make this possible without requiring the acquisition of additional right of way. Making NE 42nd one way northbound and NE 41st one way southbound (or vice versa) would provide the space to increase the width of the bicycle facility and add protection, also increasing the separation of people walking from people driving. This solution was one TriMet staff said they would be supportive of at our recent meeting in January as long as buses could still travel in both directions.

We are excited to hear that there will be a new dedicated pedestrian/bicycle signal at NE 42nd and Halsey. One additional improvement we recommend for this intersection is left turn calming installations to help reduce issues with cars cutting off crossing pedestrians when racing to make the turn. We also urge Portland Bureau of Transportation staff to explore opportunities to work with Trader Joe's to make their driveway on Halsey either the main or only driveway to limit the traffic directed in order to further improve the environment for people walking, bicycling, and riding transit on this multimodal connector.

We are hopeful that we can work together to set a new threshold for bikeway function with NE 42nd!

Respectfully,



Alexandra Holmqvist
Chairperson
Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee



Joseph Perez
Vice Chairperson
Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee