

Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

Working to Make Bicycling a Part of Daily Life in Portland

1001 SW 5th Avenue, Room 1300
Portland OR 97204



Date: September 12, 2025

To: Michael Jordan, Portland City Administrator
Millicent Williams, Director PBOT
Chief Bob Day, Portland Police Bureau
Skyler Brocker-Knapp, Portland Solutions
Wendy Cawley, City Traffic Engineer
Anne Hill, Public Environment Management Office

From: City of Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

RE: **A Recommendation of the City of Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee regarding the maintenance of neighborhood traffic diverters on neighborhood greenways in NW Portland**

The desired outcomes for NW 20th Avenue between Everett and Glisan, and NW Johnson Street under the I-405 freeway all relate to livability: decreased crime and safe and comfortable conditions on the city's network of bikeways and neighborhood walkways.

Recently, the discussion about these corridors has focused on crime reduction and broadly defined measures of livability. Reducing crime and improving livability could be achieved by increasing police access to the NW 20th Avenue corridor northbound from Everett and the NW Johnson corridor from 14th to 16th. Providing more "eyes on the street" also is considered a method of reducing crime in these corridors.

To support these important goals, the Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee recommends the following at the two locations mentioned above:

1) NW 20th Avenue and Everett Street intersection:

- Maintain the existing traffic diverter.
- Remove parking at the NW corner of Everett and 20th for improved police access.

Discussion

The BAC's understanding suggests the police face difficulty driving northbound at the current aperture at Everett and 20th and that there are safety risks and other challenges associated with driving the wrong way on NW 20th.

To address these challenges and risks, the BAC advises removing on-street parking to widen the aperture to create safer and more reliable northbound police access. The BAC also recommends maintaining the existing low volume traffic conditions on NW 20th, which benefit people bicycling and walking on 20th, and also support safe crossing of 20th at NW Flanders.

NW 20th has a full width travel lane for bikes. Police are able to, allowed to, and according to neighborhood reports, already drive northbound on NW 20th. Removing on-street parking would create easier access and allow police to shift into the northbound (bicycle) lane when necessary. The northbound (bicycle) lane is wide enough for a police vehicle.

The BAC believes maintaining the diverters and implementing the changes recommended above will provide desired crime fighting access benefits without making conditions for bicycling and walking in the area less safe.

2) NW Johnson Street at 14th Avenue and 15th Avenue:

- Maintain existing traffic diverters

Discussion

The BAC's understanding is the police also would like improved access at NW Johnson to limit the need to travel the wrong way on NW Johnson. Unlike at NW 20th and Everett, the openings on NW Johnson for motor vehicle travel are generous and can safely accommodate police vehicles.

The BAC recommends that PEMO, PBOT, and PPB work together to establish clear, measurable benchmarks for reducing crime and improving livability at these intersections and along the related corridors. The measures should include bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Additionally, the BAC recommends the police be provided with adequate resources to create a broader plan to support crime reduction and related livability improvements in the area.

If there are needed refinements to these recommendations that would better accommodate the police and efforts to address crime and related livability challenges, the BAC encourages the PPB to coordinate with PBOT to design them and to share any needed changes with the BAC prior to implementation. The BAC would also like to explore a stronger relationship with PPB, perhaps by creating a PPB liaison for the committee.

Reducing crime is crucial and critical to Portland's success. Neighbors in the area have called for action for a long time. The BAC supports efforts to reduce crime and address neighborhood concerns. The BAC also wishes to remind City leaders that crime and livability challenges are not unique to these roadways and this underpass. Crime exists on streets without diverters, and at underpasses without diverters.

What is specifically different about the areas in question is the existing traffic conditions, which are the result of a thorough analysis, community participation, public outreach, and a transparent decision process that was two years in the making. The diverters successfully create safer conditions for bicycling and walking, both of which provide more effective eyes on the street than people driving in vehicles.

We offer these recommendations with the acknowledgement that crime and livability must be addressed and that there are multiple ways the City defines livability, including more bicycling, more walking, more transit riding, and less driving. The BAC believes Portland can maintain existing bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure while also addressing crime and livability issues.

Finally, the BAC requests that the metrics developed by the City be presented to the BAC for feedback before they are finalized and that the City consult the BAC before implementing any changes that are different than those the BAC recommends. As noted in the August 2025 [“Resolution of the City of Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee regarding the maintenance of neighborhood traffic diverters on neighborhood greenways in Northwest Portland”](#) transparent and data-driven processes that include the participation of multiple stakeholders must be the minimum for any consideration that could result in the altering or removal of transportation infrastructure installed to facilitate increased bicycle and pedestrian use. It is our hope that would be the case going forward.

Sincerely,



Jim Middaugh, Chair
Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee



Joseph Perez, Vice-Chair
Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee