

Motion to be considered at the Wednesday, September 6, 2017 Linnton Neighborhood Association meeting

The Linnton Neighborhood Association affirms the following letter submitted as public comment regarding the City of Portland Bureau of Transportation submitted on behalf of LNA's Public Safety Committee in July 2017. Public comment closed on July 31.

I am writing on behalf of the Linnton Neighborhood association to comment on the TSP.

We are requesting that a new Objective in the Western Hills Pattern Area (pages 3-12 and 3-13 in the draft TSP) be added.

Objective XX: TDM Program

Implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study and program in the West Hills to provide effective options for commuters on all through roads over the west hills north of Hwy 26 to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve neighborhood livability and cycling safety, and protect important natural resources. Explore innovative solutions suited to this unique situation.

We ask that Portland work with Multnomah County and other agencies to implement a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study and program to provide effective options for commuters on all through roads over the west hills north of Hwy 26 in order to reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve neighborhood livability and cycling safety, and protect important natural resources. We need innovative solutions for this unique situation. Forest Park, St. Johns and Linnton neighborhoods are requesting that Portland work with Multnomah County on a TDM study.

The West Hills are geographically constrained and have many important natural resources. There are only a few "through" roads, none of which can be easily expanded. Biking and walking aren't viable options for most people due to long distances, narrow winding roads and steep hills. These roads are choked with single occupant vehicle commuters on long commutes who use these roads to avoid congested highways. The resulting long periods of congestion diminish neighborhood livability and health, increase carbon emissions, limit freight mobility for North Portland, and harm the environment and Forest Park.

The West Hills are not like other parts of the region – through roads used by commuters are lined not with dense homes, schools, and businesses, but with parks and natural resources. Our roads aren't like the Southwest or Powell/Division corridors. Most commuters through this area are driving long distances from Scappoose, Vancouver, and Portland to or from Washington County. Our roads, to commuters, are more

like long bridges – long point-to-point drives. These unique characteristics require different approaches than urban corridors.

The city and county have a Climate Action Plan that includes aims to reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT), at least in part, through TDM and improved transit access. A TDM program for the west hills would also support and many adopted goals and policies in Portland's new TSP.

A TDM study and program would determine what options for drivers would be most effective and then implement them. Options could include new van and car pool systems, shuttle buses and flexible work hours. Parts of these roads are in the city, other parts are in the county, so the jurisdictions need to work together on a TDM program. The county supports doing a TDM study, but Portland has not yet agreed. Reducing the number of vehicles on these roads will also make them safer for cyclists, and will reduce air and water pollution in Forest Park.

OTHER ISSUES

Additionally, Linnton Neighborhood Association members have noted the following issues:

1. We agree with 9.39.b. Route non-local traffic, including non-local truck traffic, on Major City Traffic Streets and Regional Trafficways in order to minimize conflicts among modes.
 - a. NW Harbor Road is being used as a cut-through route for drivers wanting to avoid traffic on NW Bridge Ave. Commuters are increasingly using this neighborhood street as a short-cut to travel between Germantown Road and Highway 30. This excessive traffic disrupts the quality of life in our neighborhood, increases noise and pollution, disrupts vegetation, contributes to road erosion, increases levels of mental stress, and results in a greater threat to the safety and health of our residents and children. Harbor is a two-way, single lane without sidewalks or a shoulder.

Additionally, several Skyline school students walk on Harbor Blvd to travel to and from the school bus stop and share the road with 40+ non-neighborhood cars each school morning. There are several places where there is not enough space to walk and have a car at the same time, making it extremely dangerous when drivers cut off pedestrians. There are also several blind corners. The speed limit should be reduced to 10 mph, 5 MPH around blind corners. Strategies must be in place to reduce cut-through traffic. Neighbors are requesting "Local Access only" signs to be installed on NW Germantown/Harbor and NW Harbor/Highway 30. This area should be covered under the Safe Routes to School program. Harbor is NOT a safe route to the bus stop.

2. LNA would also like PBOT to work with ODOT on Safe Routes to School on Highway 30. The median should be replaced near the Linnton Community Center. Speed limits should be reduced in front of school bus stops. Speed limits and running red lights should be enforced.
3. We agree to encourage non-local traffic, including trucks, to use streets of higher traffic and truck classifications through design, operations, permitting, and signing. (TSP objective 9.21.b.)
 - a. The large trucks attempt to cut-through NW Harbor Blvd get stuck a few times a year and require towing, in addition to the damage they inflict on the plants they destroy in neighbor's yards. Larger signage or new placements of the signs need to be considered so truck drivers don't miss the signs. "Local Access Only" signs would be helpful for this issue as well.
4. We agree on the objective to manage traffic on Neighborhood Collectors that Metro designates as Collectors of Regional Significance so they maintain their function as distributors of traffic between Major City Traffic Streets or District Collectors and Local Service Streets, rather than function primarily for regional traffic movement. (TSP objective 9.23.c.)
 - a. Objective N: Operate Neighborhood Collectors to function primarily as circulation for local traffic rather than as regional streets, even where they carry a significant amount of regional traffic. We would like NW Germantown to be considered as a Neighborhood collector and Harbor Blvd retained as a local street and closed to the public.
5. We agree to encourage non-local traffic, including trucks, to use streets of higher traffic and truck classifications through design, operations, permitting, and signing. (TSP objective 9.21.b.)
 - a. Large semi-trucks use NW Germantown Road from Skyline to Bridge Ave. These large trucks cannot make corners without crossing over to the other lane, causing dangerous situations. Additionally, tall trucks like this knock down tree branches. There used to be a No Truck Sign (local deliveries only) at the top of Skyline/Germantown and has been missing for over 6 months. This should also be enforced.
 - b. Large touring buses also cause similar problems mentioned above. There should be restrictions for these types of vehicles on NW Germantown Road.
6. We agree to reduce traffic speeds through enforcement and design, education and enforcement in high density main streets, Centers and Corridors, to levels that are safe and comfortable for bicyclists and pedestrians. (TSP objective 9.21.e.)

- a. There is not a speed limit sign on NW Germantown Road (From Skyline to Bridge) where it changes from 30 to 25 mph. The sign that was there previously disappeared after this past winter snowstorm. Speeding should also be enforced.
7. We agree with 9.39.c. Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle access improvements into all transportation projects, especially along arterials and at crossing locations.
 - a. Marked cross walks should be installed at Forest Park trailheads on NW Germantown Road (Tolinda Trail, Wildwood, Leif to Fire lane 10).
8. Regarding: 9.39.k. Support the scenic and natural character of NW Skyline Boulevard by focusing non-local north/south traffic between West Burnside and NW Cornell Road on NW Miller. We would also like the scenic and natural character of NW Germantown and Forest Park to be supported.
9. We also support PBOT working with ODOT to implement strategies to make NW Bridge Ave and the St. Johns Bridge safer for bicyclists and pedestrians. Linnton neighbors would like to safely access the St. John's business area and farmers market via bicycle or on foot. St. John's neighbors would like to safely access Forest Park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alissa Leavitt
Co-Chair, Public Safety Committee
Linnton Neighborhood Association