

Public Forum on the Corvallis Pavement Rehabilitation Program: NE Circle Boulevard Reconstruction/Repavement Project

The forum was hosted by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition's Transportation Action Team (TAT) and consisted of a presentation by Public Works staff of the NE Circle project and a moderated Q&A session. The forum was held on March 14, 2023; a video recording of the forum is available for public viewing at this website: <https://sustainablecorvallis.org/what-we-do/action-teams/transportation/safer-streets/>.

The following is a list, organized into categories by the TAT, of all public comments submitted during the Q&A session immediately following the presentation of the NE Circle project. Attendee name associated with each comment was removed and most typos were corrected. Many of these comments were addressed by Public Works staff during the forum; please watch the recording to hear their response.

The public comment period is open until March 24 (5pm). Additional public comments should be submitted to Corvallis Public Works staff (contacts: Josh.Bjornstedt@corvallisoregon.gov; josh.capps@corvallisoregon.gov).

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Railroad Crossing Improvement

- Both railroad crossings are in bad shape. What is the plan for addressing these.

Pedestrian refuge

- Will the ped refuge include actuated warning lights (Red Flashing Beacons)?
- Almost all of the Red Flashing Beacons are at street crossings.
- Will the pedestrian crossing at Jack London have activatable lights for pedestrian crossing (like 9th or Western Circle) or will there just be passive "Pedestrian crossing" signage?
- Why not also have a pedestrian refuge at Belvue? More walking/more crossings would encourage more walking...
- Since it seems unlikely that a pedestrian refuge can fit at the intersection of Circle and Four Acres, can a second pedestrian refuge for safely crossing Circle be added between Four Acres and Belvue, to serve Capri Villa and Belvue residents?
- Why not add pedestrian refuges at the 4 Acres and Circle intersection crossings? That is still a long distance to cross, 90 feet.
- Why no warning lights at refuge?
- I have heard that pedestrian refuges should be offset, so that the user is facing toward traffic when in the crossing. Is this considered in the design? Do you know of the research that speaks to this?

Pedestrian Crossings

- Why isn't the curb extension on Belvue on both sides?
- The current east/west pedestrian crossing at Four Acres is slightly raised. It's hard to tell if that was by design. Is there an option to maintain east/west elevated areas at the entrance for sidewalk/bike lane?

- Entrances to the shopping center parking lot area, including Four Acre Pl, might be made safer by running the auto traffic over the crosswalk at the same grade as the sidewalk. Is this a possibility?
- The current east/west pedestrian crossing at Four Acres is slightly raised. It's hard to tell if that was by design. Is there an option to maintain east/west elevated areas at the entrance for sidewalk/bike lane?

Vehicle Speed

- What is envisioned to be the designated speed? (With a smoother surface, cars may go faster than now, which would be less safe for walkers and bikers.)
- With reduction of lane width to 10.5 ft I think vehicles traveling at 35+ mph will likely regularly impose on the paint of the buffered bike lane.
- What will the speed limit be on Circle after this project? are the designs intended to maintain the speeds desired?
- Is a 30 mph speed limit possible?
- What is the speed limit on NE Circle?
- Empirical evidence shows cars do not slow down with narrower lanes at 35+mph.
- Can someone please correct Josh about speeding being only an enforcement responsibility.
- Vehicle design speed is not necessarily the SAFE speed for bikes and pedestrians.

Bike Lanes

- What are the parts of a low stress network that are not being implemented, and what additional costs would they have added?
- Are the existing wide gutter panels being retained, and if so, are they providing a smooth and safe surface for bicyclists? Will the result be a safe and smooth bike lane?
- Love the addition of a small curb extension where it's feasible. Wondering if they can talk a bit about the trade-offs between vehicle and bike lane widths, and why the vehicle lanes are not being narrowed to 10' to provide 7.75' bike lanes.
- Was consideration given to separate bike lanes? Is that still possible? Painted buffers next to bike lanes don't deter cars. Something physical is needed. I think there should be candlesticks in the buffer of the bike lane, every 30 feet. It will make drivers worry about their vehicle being scratched, which will protect bikers.
- I'm always happy to have better facilities for active transportation added, especially in a danger zone such as this one (cf: CROW's maps). Could a measure of actual physical protection be added by raising the level of the bike lanes up to curb height?
- Painted buffers next to bike lanes don't deter cars. Something physical is needed. I think there should be candlesticks in the buffer of the bike lane, every 30 feet. It will make drivers worry about their vehicle being scratched, which will protect bikers.
- Is a left-turn bike signal, from the bike lane, a possibility for the future, to safely turn left at Jack London headed eastbound on Circle?
- Yes, at 35 mph candles will likely get run-over from careless driving. (And paint worn from tires needs maintenance.)
- Could green paint be added for cyclists to more safely negotiate a left turn from the bike lane onto Conser?

- Since the speed limit is so high (35 mph and 45 mph) on NE Circle, could that be the "unusual" reason for additional caution (candlesticks) to make it safer for bicyclists?
- Why the transition ramps from sidewalk to bike lane? It seems unduly complicating. Did I misunderstand? I'd find it more natural to just stay in the bike lane in the direction of travel with a green box at the intersection.

Beautification & Shade

- Would love to see more trees along Circle.

Policy & Decision-making

- Will making changes in the future be made more expensive by having to redo any work done in this project?
- Will the old concrete taken up from Circle Blvd. be recycled in any way?
- Given that Street Maintenance Fee funds have grown to ~\$20M, was consideration given to adding funds to incorporate the parks plan project C21 or neighborhood bikeway features?
- How are decisions made regarding the sizes and weights of vehicles which are allowed on streets like Circle? For example, could large tractor trailer trucks be restricted as a means for active users to feel safer? Would placement of signs on restrictions like that be part of the street maintenance project?
- Are TSP standards based on traffic count levels?
- Your photo of the protected bike lane on Technology Loop claims that vehicles are not allowed to enter the bike lane but there's a mailbox in the photo which requires drivers to enter the bike lane. Is this SOP?
- There is a lot of commercial traffic so maintenance with that type of traffic needs to be noted to limit city maintenance costs.

Public Outreach

- Will you be notifying larger employers such as Samarian & OSU due to impact of commuters?
- Since this directly impacts the safety of people that bike, have you reached out to HP, CH2MHill (Jacobs), Edge Analytical Labs, NuScale, etc. employees?
- Those employees probably are NOT plugged into the local "transportation alternative" groups in Corvallis, but their safety is very important to them. Some employees I know there haven't heard anything about this. Thanks.
- How can the design team receive questions and concerns much earlier in the process? Before scoping and budgeting have occurred.
- If public input is not sought until it's too late for it to matter, is there any hope of getting any non-cosmetic changes made without first replacing the city staff involved?
- Will we have time in the future for considerations prior to 10% project planning stages?
- Would these folks join me in riding bikes along Circle when the project is done? I would enjoy hosting such a bike ride.

Lane Reduction & Roundabouts

- Why was there no consideration of a traffic circle at Four Acre Place and/or at Walnut (HP)?
- Is the city aware of LOS data and potential for lane removal, which would make room for buffered bike lane to standard widths, especially east of Belvue?

Access to the Retail/Restaurant Area

- What will happen to the driveway onto Circle at the former McGrath's? Will that access point be closed to cars?
- Will any of the current driveways on southside of Circle be removed (such as when Chick-fil-A is built)?
- Will there be a route for a bike to get from the Safeway lot to the OR99 bike path without crossing Circle twice?
- The proposed Chick-Fil-A development mentions a bus stop improvement. Will that be the developers responsibility and how would that interact with the bike lane?

Appreciation

- Overall, these are great improvements. Thanks to Public Works for these new plans and willingness to take comments for engineering solutions.
- Hooray for narrowing the main traffic lanes and widening the bike lanes!