



BIKELOUD

APANO



**PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM**

To: Ben Baldwin and Grant O’Connell (TriMet), Rian Windsheimer and Shelli Romero (ODOT), Winston Sandino and Kristin Hull (PBOT)

Cc: Commissioner Mingus Mapps, Representative Khanh Pham, PBOT Director Millicent Williams, Scott Cohen, Art Pearce, Julia Reed, Zef Wagner, Nicole Peirce

Re: Make the 70s Greenway crossing of SE Powell safe for all

We are writing to convey our concern that current designs for improvements at SE 79th and Powell will not create a crossing that is direct, safe, and comfortable for all users. **We ask that TriMet, ODOT, and PBOT work together to develop and implement a design for the 79th and Powell crossing improvement project that prioritizes the safety of people walking and biking.**

SE 79th and Powell represents a key link in Portland’s transportation plans, where the 70s Neighborhood Greenway—meant to let people of all ages and abilities travel in safety and comfort without a car—crosses one of Portland’s [deadliest high-crash streets](#). Because the \$185 million 82nd Avenue project plans do not include bike infrastructure on E 82nd, people who bike will be expected to detour onto this greenway as a [primary route for safe north-south travel](#). TriMet’s current plans would leave the crossing at SE Powell difficult to navigate on foot or bicycle and put those users at unnecessary risk:

- The intersection of SE 79th and Powell currently has unmarked crosswalks on both sides of 79th. **The current planned design would close the east-side crosswalk, adding out-of-direction travel and increasing pedestrian exposure to traffic** by requiring up to three separate crossings to reach the bus stop at the southeast corner of the intersection. Some pedestrians will likely continue to use the unmarked straight-line crossing that will be officially closed, putting them at further risk. BikeLoud has asked representatives from TriMet, PBOT, and ODOT why the crosswalk closure is necessary; **none of the three agencies have been able to say who requested the closure or why the crosswalk is being closed.**
- Because the east-side crosswalk will be closed and cut off by a new median extension, people biking north through the intersection will be routed onto the left-side sidewalk, then across both Powell and 79th again to regain the right-hand lane on 79th. PBOT

expects that cyclists will make two separate crossings, first of Powell, then of 79th; TriMet believes that cyclists will angle northeast across Powell, potentially through the path of right-turning cars. **If professional planners disagree on how the design will be used, it is unlikely to be clear to ordinary road users**, either for cyclists using the crossing or for drivers watching for crossing cyclists.

- Current plans are to enhance the remaining crosswalk with mast-mounted rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs). While flashing beacons improve driver compliance relative to unenhanced crosswalks, they are less effective than full signals or **pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs) that create a solid red phase for drivers to allow pedestrians to cross**. On a four-lane road like SE Powell, a flashing beacon crossing would leave drivers legally free to drive at speed through the intersection while people begin crossing the road—a dangerous situation especially for families seeking to use the greenway with their children.

Plans for an improved crossing at SE 79th and Powell have been in progress for years, delayed by the pandemic and by the challenges of interagency coordination. The time for action is now—but **the current plan would continue to reinforce the car-first design of the Powell corridor, and building it as currently envisioned would lock in that compromised design for decades to come**.

Instead of eliminating yet another crosswalk on Powell, TriMet should enhance both crossings, create clear, direct routes through the intersection, and protect families with children by bringing car traffic to a full stop. We ask that the three transportation agencies involved in this project work quickly together to make this key crossing safe and attractive for people of all ages, abilities, and modes of travel.

Sincerely,

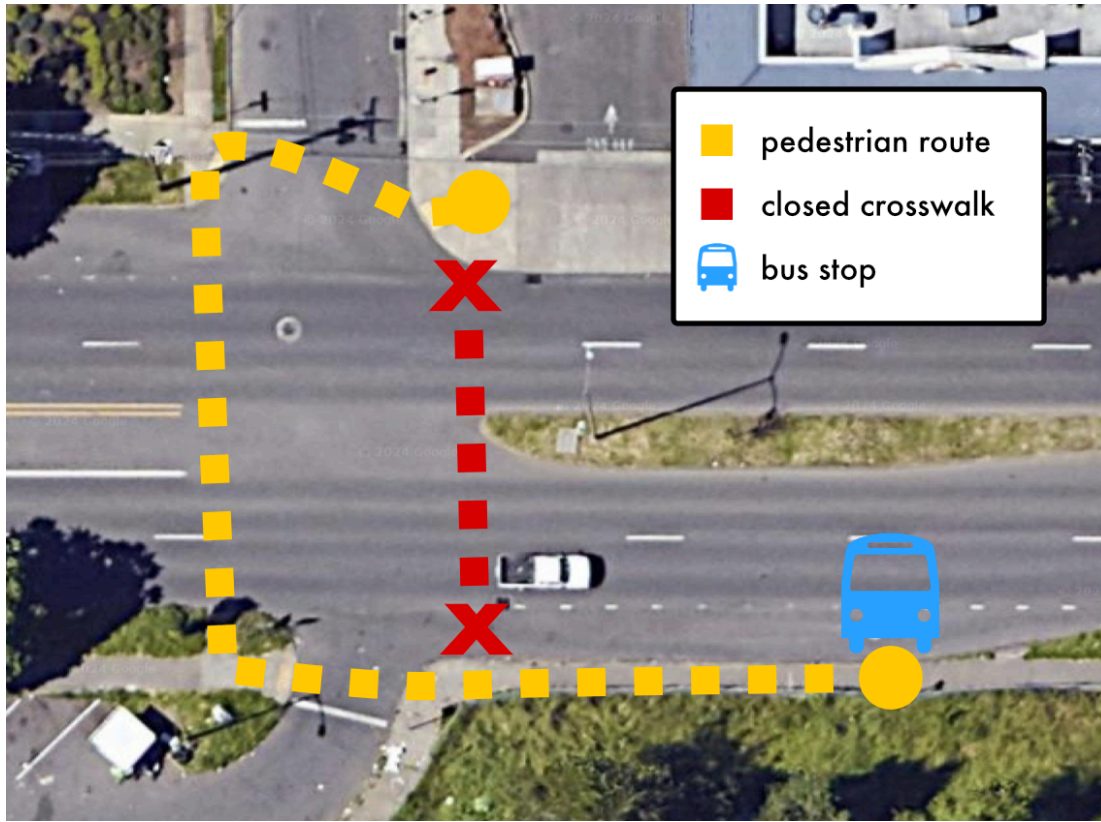
The BikeLoud Board

Claire Vlach
Oregon Walks

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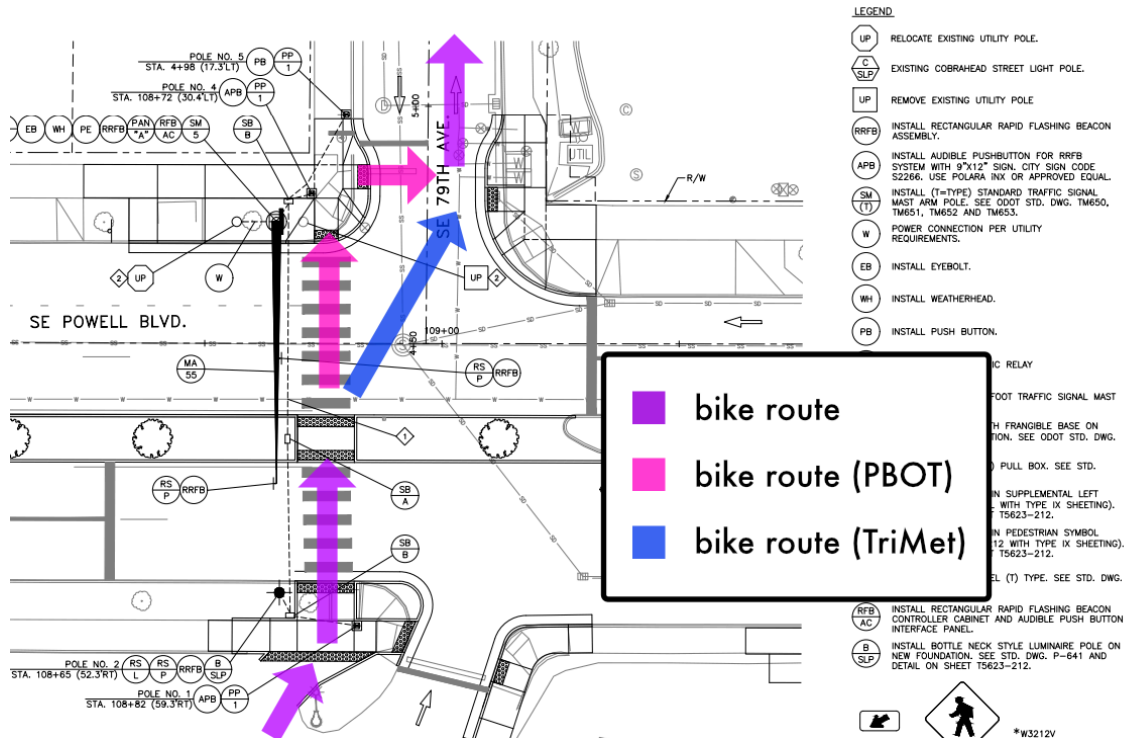
Reece Nitschke
Vestal Bike Bus

Pedestrian routing under current plans:



| | |
|--|------------------|
| | pedestrian route |
| | closed crosswalk |
| | bus stop |

Bicycle routing under current plans:



| | |
|--|---------------------|
| | bike route |
| | bike route (PBOT) |
| | bike route (TriMet) |

- LEGEND**
- RELOCATE EXISTING UTILITY POLE.
 - EXISTING COBRAHEAD STREET LIGHT POLE.
 - REMOVE EXISTING UTILITY POLE
 - INSTALL RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACON ASSEMBLY.
 - INSTALL AUDIBLE PUSHBUTTON FOR RRFB SYSTEM WITH 9"x12" SIGN. CITY SIGN CODE S2266. USE POLARA INX OR APPROVED EQUAL.
 - INSTALL (T=TYPE) STANDARD TRAFFIC SIGNAL MAST ARM POLE. SEE ODOT STD. DWG. TM650, TM651, TM652 AND TM653.
 - POWER CONNECTION PER UTILITY REQUIREMENTS.
 - INSTALL EYEBOLT.
 - INSTALL WEATHERHEAD.
 - INSTALL PUSH BUTTON.
 - C RELAY
 - FOOT TRAFFIC SIGNAL MAST
 - WITH FRANGIBLE BASE ON
 - ION. SEE ODOT STD. DWG.
 - PULL BOX. SEE STD.
 - IN SUPPLEMENTAL LEFT
 - WITH TYPE IX SHEETINGS.
 - T5623-212.
 - IN PEDESTRIAN SYMBOL
 - T2 WITH TYPE IX SHEETINGS.
 - T5623-212.
 - EL (T) TYPE. SEE STD. DWG.
 - INSTALL RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACON CONTROLLER CABINET AND AUDIBLE PUSH BUTTON INTERFACE PANEL.
 - INSTALL BOTTLE NECK STYLE LUMINAIRE POLE ON NEW FOUNDATION. SEE STD. DWG. P-641 AND DETAIL ON SHEET T5623-212.
- *W3212V