



**HOSFORD-ABERNETHY**  
NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

March 31, 2016

**To: cc2035@portlandoregon.gov**

Dear Planning and Sustainability Commissioners and Staff,

The Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND) Board would like to submit the following testimony regarding the Central City 2035 Plan.

The HAND board was represented during the development of the SE Quadrant Plan by a delegate from the board at the table with the Stake-holders' Advisory Committee, while other members attended and were able to offer comments as members of the public. The board is on record as supporting the SE Quadrant Plan, with some comments to emphasize points or request changes reflecting the effects of that plan on the residential area of HAND as well as those homes scattered within the SE Quadrant/CEID where it overlaps HAND. We recognize that there has been little change in the SE Quadrant Plan as it has rolled into the Central City 2035 Plan. Our support continues.

Our testimony includes reiteration of previous testimony as well as noting matters that have come to our attention or have evolved, as well as potential solutions to long term problems that have occurred to us since the completion of the SE Quadrant Plan.

Reviewing the Central City 2035 Candidate Project list, we want to extend our support for the following projects. Supported projects are grouped in order of importance to our community, then listed by project number. (Volume 2, Pages 757-770).

The following are of high priority and should be addressed as soon as possible:

**Traffic Calming on SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues between SE Division Street and Hawthorne Boulevard:**

Traffic Classifications

- Change SE 11th & 12th to traffic access from Powell north; beyond Hawthorne (pending Buckman Neighborhood and Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC) approval)

Emergency Response Classifications

- Keep SE 7th as a Primary Emergency Route  
- Change 11th & 12th to Secondary Emergency Routes from Powell north beyond Hawthorne (pending Buckman Neighborhood and CEIC approval)



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Freight Classifications

- Change SE 11th & 12th from Powell Boulevard north to Ankeny Street to Freight District or Major Truck Streets (pending Buckman Neighborhood and CEIC approval)
- Change SE 7th to Priority Freight Route.

Bicycle Classifications

- Add Major City Bikeway designation to SE 11th & 12th (from Powell north to Ankeny Street pending Buckman Neighborhood and CEIC approval)
- Remove major city designation from SE 7th (only if adding major city bikeway designation to 11th & 12th)

**20176: 11th/12th Ave Crossing Safety Improvements** -- SE 12th & Ankeny; 11th & Salmon; 12th & Salmon; 12th & Madison; 12th & Hawthorne; 11th & Clay; 12th & Clay

"Enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and access by installing improved crossings at 12th & Ankeny, 11th & Salmon, 12th & Salmon, 12th & Madison, 12th & Hawthorne, 11th & Clay, and 12th & Clay."

Proposed amendment: Include full signals at SE 11<sup>th</sup> and Harrison Street, and SE 12<sup>th</sup> and Harrison Street (note: signals at those intersections were included in the SE Quadrant Plan). Reduce speed limit on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues to 25mph.

**20177: SE Harrison Neighborhood Greenway** -- SE Harrison St (7th - Ladd Circle)

"Extend the Harrison Neighborhood Greenway from Ladd Circle to 7th, including traffic calming and improved crossings at 7th, 11th, and 12th."

**20185: Gideon Street Pedestrian / Bicycle Bridge** -- Clinton MAX Station

Construct a pedestrian / bicycle bridge over the railroad and light rail tracks to connect the Clinton MAX Station with the adjacent neighborhood.

**20050: Southern Triangle Access Improvements** -- SE Powell Blvd

"Improve access between Powell Boulevard and the Clinton Triangle and the Central Eastside Industrial District by providing a signalized left turns from Powell (new signal).

Add a marked pedestrian crossing on the east leg of the intersection of Powell Blvd at Milwaukie Avenue."

HAND agrees with these needs, however as noted in past testimony, traffic calming must be provided on SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues before or in conjunction with improved access.

**(New Project Proposal): Grade Separated Crossings for all non-rail modes of traffic at Union Pacific Rail Road and MAX Orange line crossing(s).**

While the need is immediate (see below), we recognize that this will be a long-term project, pending funding and design.

Project we support:

We also want to extend our support for the following projects, which are of importance to our community:



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**20180: Hawthorne-Clay Ramp Signal** -- Hawthorne Viaduct

"Signalize the top of the ramp from the Hawthorne Viaduct to Clay/MLK to improve safety and capacity for all modes."

Below is a narrative intended to paint the picture of current situations and suggested/requested means to address them. They serve to explain the priorities listed above:

**CRITICAL NEED FOR TRAFFIC CALMING ON SE 11<sup>TH</sup> AND 12<sup>TH</sup> AVENUES;**

Although currently designated a primary freight route (they are the most direct route between SE Powell Boulevard and the NE 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue on-ramp to I-84), **SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues are in reality residential and mixed-use/commercial in use.** Single- and multi-family homes on both sides of both streets are occupied by people of all ages, including young families with small children who play and walk on the sidewalks along the streets, or would like to do so were it safe. Cafes, restaurants and shops exist along both streets. The streets are heavily treed, shady and would be pleasant for active commuter transportation and casual use. They meet the description of the planned Green Loop to a T. But they do not feel safe to the residents along the streets. The stretch between SE Division Street and Hawthorne Boulevard is currently unimpeded by signal lights, and is all-too inviting for drivers who accelerate to speeds well-above the speed limit. Traffic Calming is a critical need for these streets now, and will become more so if access is improved from Powell Boulevard and across the rail tracks.

We have long advocated for signal-controlled intersections at SE Harrison along both 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> to provide a safe crossing for all modes of traffic, as well as to create a break in the long straight stretch. Those signals were once a part of the SE Quadrant Plan, but unless we have overlooked a separate and specific plan, have become lost in the Central City 2035 Plan.

HAND is requesting an amendment to Central City Candidate Project 20176 to include signalizing those SE Harrison/ SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue crossings.

We also strongly support **Candidate Project 20177**, the extension of the Harrison Greenway to SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, to provide safer travel for bikes and peds and as another traffic-calming measure.

We are aware that freight traffic users often object to trees with branches that can get in the way of trucks; branches are sometimes broken as trucks pass beneath them, putting trees and any passers-by at risk.

We notice that SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, with existing bicycle lanes, is rather bleak and uninviting. There are no mature trees and few shops and restaurants. We think freight may be happier there and bicyclists and pedestrians happier on SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues. HAND believes they should be the north/south leg of the Eastside Green Loop.

The following changes make sense to us. There are details yet to be developed, and approval by the CEID and Buckman Neighborhood would be needed. Discussions with those organizations are beginning:

\*Reduce the motorized vehicle travel lanes to one on SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

\*Add bicycle lanes and amenities



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\*Remove bicycle lanes from SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; add a 2<sup>nd</sup> lane for motor-vehicle travel in both directions.

\*While freight could still travel on SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which becomes Sandy Boulevard, with [L] turn lanes to SE 12<sup>th</sup> north-bound at Burnside Street, leading to the on-ramp to I-84, would become the primary freight route. Even though out-of-direction, with proper signal timing 7<sup>th</sup>-to Sandy-to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue may become smoother and faster route than 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

### NEED FOR GRADE SEPARATION(S) AT UPRR AND MAX CROSSING(S):

The Union Pacific Rail Road and MAX Orange Line tracks are a major obstacle to flow of traffic both north- and south-bound on SE Milwaukie and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and SE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and east- and west-bound traffic on SE Division Street. The UPRR trains are long, and often slow-moving, and increasingly frequent. Add a MAX passage and/or a pedestrian crossing at either end of the time for a UPRR train, and the north/south flow of traffic can easily be stopped for 45 minutes or more. The process of building trains in Brooklyn yards may involve the movement of the locomotive out of the rail yards to a point close enough to the crossings that the signals and crossing arms are activated, sometimes with no train visible to drivers. These impediments to traffic are expected to increase in frequency, according to sources at UPRR.

SE 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue becomes filled with waiting traffic for many blocks north of Division Street. As turn lanes from Division Street onto SE 11<sup>th</sup> Ave are filled, the through E/W lanes become blocked, also so many blocks east and west. There is no effective way out of the traffic once one is entrapped. The movement of all traffic at a major intersection in the Central City comes to a halt, affecting access of emergency vehicles, transit, personal and business travel, nearby businesses, and movement of freight. Even usually patient Portland drivers experience frayed nerves and tempers; risky behaviors ensue (incidents of pedestrians and bicyclists climbing through the couplings of slow-moving or temporarily halted trains have been reported multiple times during a single delay.)

It becomes apparent that the only definitive solutions are grade-separated crossings.

Central City **Candidate Project 20185 (Gideon Street Pedestrian / Bicycle Bridge)** should be placed close to the MAX Clinton Station and should be a high priority for development in the near future. The presence of the bridge will provide a safe option for crossing the series of combined heavy and light-rail tracks, and connectivity between the existing residential areas of Brooklyn to the south, and the anticipated residents and businesses of the Clinton Triangle with those to the north of the tracks, as well as for the residents of HAND with the MAX Clinton Station.

The **ultimate solution is a grade-separated crossing** that provides all modes of street traffic with a route above or below the rails. We recognize that such a project will have to wait for funding and design, but the need is now.

. There currently exists no easy means for traffic east-bound on Powell Blvd to turn [L]/[N] into the CEID and the Clinton Triangle; changes in infrastructure to improve that access are included in the SE Quadrant/Central City 2035 Plan (**20050: Southern Triangle Access Improvements**).



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HAND is firm in support of continued access for freight and other modes of travel between SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues and the “West Clinton” employment and residential district south of Division and east of SE 12<sup>th</sup> and Milwaukie Avenues.

We cherish historic buildings, such as the Ford Building and related structures, and long-term businesses such as Mason Supply, rather awkwardly situated straddling the intersection of SE 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Clinton Street, and advocate for their preservation.

Access between SE Powell Boulevard and the Central Eastside Industrial District, as well as the residential areas of HAND, and in and out of the Clinton Triangle is complex.

While the projects described above may seem unrelated, there would be wisdom in considering each when planning another to avoid competing and snarled projects that impede or prevent others as time goes by.

#### OTHER ISSUES NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO TRAFFIC:

##### Regarding affordable housing:

Scattered within the part of HAND that it overlaps the SE Quadrant/CEID, are old single-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings, in existence from the time that it was settled as a residential district. These homes have remained in place as the district changed around them, and predate the industrial- sanctuary and zoning by decades. They are among the most affordable homes in HAND. However, the home owners find it difficult to obtain financing for major repairs and remodels; and should they want to sell their homes prospective buyers have similar difficulties finding financing as a result of the non-conforming/conditional-use status. Just since the completion of the SE Quadrant Plan, some of these homes have been lost to potential industrial developers. While HAND does not support the development of new housing in IG-1 areas of the Central Eastside, we do support the maintenance of the existing housing located there, and would like to see protection for those homes. As we have testified in the past, it is our hope that a solution to the “non-conforming/conditional use curse” can be created before more affordable home stocks are lost.(Volume? Page?)

HAND has previously testified in support for the plans for mixed use: housing and commercial in the Clinton Triangle. We continue our strong support for provision of affordable housing along with market rate housing. We would like to see development designed to include a mix of affordable and market rate housing in each building rather than segregating them. We believe that design leads to a better integration of affordable housing. (Volume? Page?)

##### Regarding livability and public realm:

If building heights from 65 to 95 feet are to be permitted in the Clinton Triangle, we advocate for additional planning for the surrounding area on both sides of Powell Boulevard in order that optimal livability along the Powell corridor will be assured.



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Regarding zoning:

We notice that, the residential zoning between SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, between SE Hawthorne Boulevard and SE Division Street do not include the design overlay that is included in the EXd zoning elsewhere along SE 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and wonder why. We request that Central City Design Commission review be required for all residentially-zoned sites along 11th and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues. We have recently experienced problems involving new developments along within the residential zoning that are inappropriate for the location, due to transportation and/or aesthetic “neighborhood fit” issues.(Volume? Page?)

Regarding heights and views:

As the Central City continues to redevelop, we have become concerned about the potential loss of public view-sheds for people looking both east and west from the inner Eastside. Map 510-20 Draft View Corridors in the CC 20135 Plan shows proposed view-sheds for the Eastside of the Central City. This is a good start, but we would like to see further public engagement in the identification and protection of additional view-shed corridors on the Eastside. At a minimum we would advocate for a similar strategy to that used in South Waterfront where buildings were designed with spaces between them to preserve public sightlines.

We thank you for consideration of the HAND Board testimony, and for the work you are doing.

Kindest regards,

The HAND Board  
Susan E Pearce  
HAND Chair