



BIKELOUD

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To: Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment

Re: Support Great Streets, not wide lanes

Dear Co-chairs Gorsek and McLain and members of the committee,

BikeCloud PDX is a member-driven nonprofit seeking safe and dignified transportation options for all. We appreciate the work that has gone into this transportation package and support much of HB 2025—especially its funding for the Great Streets program to make Oregon’s main street corridors safer and more accessible for all users.

That said, the bill as drafted includes a provision that would undermine the state’s safety efforts: **Section 160**, which would prohibit reducing the width of a travel lane on a freight route to less than 12 feet. **We urge the committee to remove this section.**

Wider lanes facilitate high-speed driving, create longer crossing distances for people on foot, and reduce space that could otherwise be used for sidewalks, bike lanes, or safer shoulders. While 12-foot lanes may be appropriate on high-speed freeways, they are not suitable on streets where people live and work.

For those reasons, ODOT’s own Highway Design Manual suggests “reduction of travel lane widths” as a traffic calming option (Highway Design Manual 218.2) and recommends 11-foot travel lanes as the preferred option both in traditional downtowns of all sizes and in rural communities (Highway Design Manual tables 300-8 and 300-13).

Likewise, the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) recommends that within cities “**lanes greater than 11 feet should not be used** as they may cause unintended speeding” (NACTO Urban Street Design Guide).

Some of the most dangerous roads in Oregon are state highways that run through cities and towns, serving both as thoroughfares for travel and freight and as community main streets. Those are the places the Great Streets program is meant to help, but Section 160 would prevent ODOT from implementing its own best safety guidance in those communities.

Oregon law already limits reduction to vehicle-carrying capacity on freight routes, and requires review by a stakeholder forum when local governments request those changes. **Section 160 would shut down the ability to consider those local needs.**

If Section 160 remains a part of this bill, Oregon would be dedicating funding to safer streets while at the same time outlawing the changes on the ground that are needed to make those streets safe.

We urge the committee to support HB 2025's funding for Great Streets—and to remove Section 160 and its blanket prohibition of safer lane widths on state highways.

Thank you,

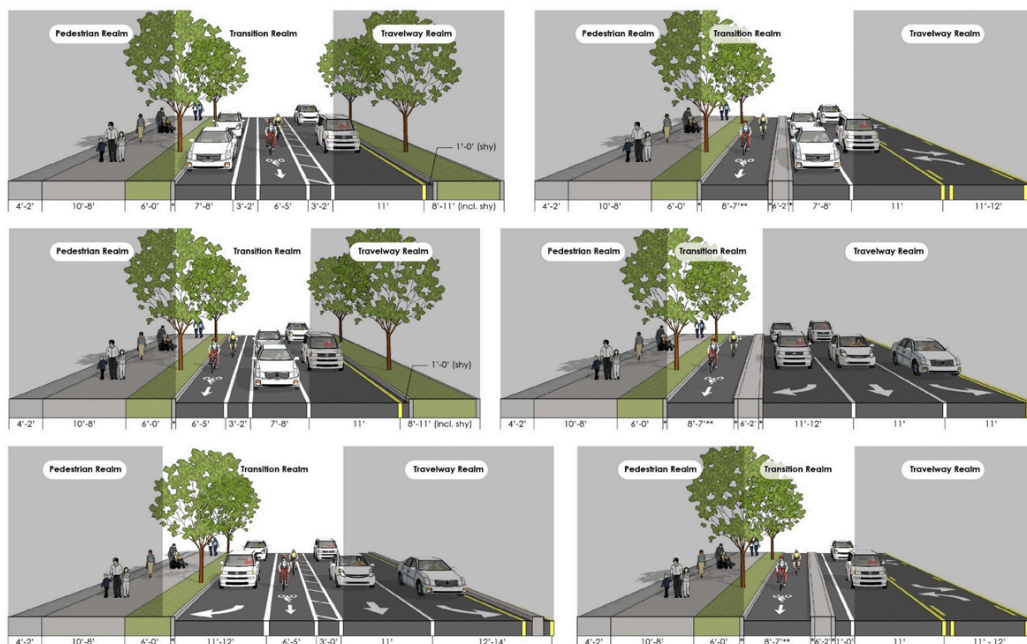
David Binnig
Secretary, BikeLoud PDX

ODOT Roadway Engineering Section | Highway Design Manual

Cross Section Elements

300

Figure 300-6 Example Cross-Section Options for Traditional Downtown/CBD, See Table 300-8 for additional information



* 0.5' (curb) or 2' (curb & gutter)

** Consider raised bicycle lane

Note: When painted buffers or vertical elements like curbing or flexible delineators are proposed to provide separation in a bicycle facility design, evaluate long-term maintenance needs and provide a solution to identified problems.