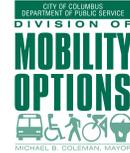




HILLTOP COMMUNITY MOBILITY PLAN



WEST BROAD STREET GREATER HILLTOP AREA COMMISSION MEETING – NOVEMBER 10, 2009 WWW.HILLTOPMOBILITY.COM

Where are changes proposed to W Broad St as a result of the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan?

Changes were originally proposed on W Broad St between I-70 and the railroad tracks near Wilson Rd. These changes are divided into "East of Hague Ave" and "West of Hague Ave". Due to a previously scheduled resurfacing project on W Broad St between Hague Ave and Central Ave, the mobility plan's recommendations can extend through the I-70 interchange to Central Ave.

When will changes to W Broad St occur?

For the section of W Broad St west of Hague Ave, implementation will be programmed for design and construction as funds become available through the City of Columbus' capital budgeting and prioritization process.

For the section of W Broad St between Hague Ave and Central Ave, implementation will occur in 2010. The City of Columbus Hilltop Community Mobility Plan recommendation can be coordinated with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) on a previously scheduled resurfacing project. This fortunate timing of separate projects allows for efficient implementation of improvements while maximizing financial resources. The coordinated resurfacing/restriping project will be paid by 80% federal money and only 20% local city funds.

What changes will be made to W Broad St east of Hague Ave in 2010?

Traffic analysis conducted by TranSystems, City of Columbus, and ODOT indicates that the number of automobile lanes on W Broad St can be reduced while maintaining traffic flow. From Clarendon Ave to Central Ave, the existing roadway can be reduced by one lane (generally six to five lanes). Therefore, bike lanes can be created between Clarendon Ave and Central Ave.

From approximately Harris Ave to Clarendon Ave, the roadway can be restriped to provide two westbound lanes, one eastbound lane, and a two-way left turn lane. The remaining space of the roadway can be used for on-street parking and/or bike lanes.

At this time, City of Columbus officials have four alternatives under consideration for W Broad St between Harris Ave and Clarendon Ave. All alternatives besides the existing condition accommodate vehicles using two westbound travel lanes, one eastbound travel lane, and a two-way left turn lane. The differences between the alternatives between Harris Ave and Clarendon Ave are: (also see accompanying sheet)

- Parking South Side
 - *Recommended by consultant*
 - Full-time on-street parking on *south* side of W Broad St
 - Bike lanes in eastbound and westbound direction
- Parking North Side
 - Full-time on-street parking on *north* side of W Broad St
 - Bike lane in eastbound direction only. Wide outside lane in westbound direction
- Parking Both Sides
 - Full-time on-street parking on *both* sides of W Broad St
 - No bike lanes
- Restripe Existing Condition
 - Off-peak parking allowed both sides of W Broad St
 - No bike lanes

After a year of analysis and public outreach during the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan, the consultant recommends providing full-time striped on-street parking on the south side of the road, and creating bike lanes on both sides of the road, for the section of W Broad St between Harris Ave and Clarendon Ave.

Why are bike lanes under consideration on W Broad St?

- Bike lanes on W Broad St are desired by Hilltop residents, which became clear when hundreds of people spoke out during public input for the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan.
- A major recommendation of the Bicentennial Bikeways Plan, a citywide plan approved by Columbus City Council in 2008 and strongly endorsed by Mayor Coleman, calls specifically for the creation of bike lanes on W Broad St.
- Columbus City Council passed a resolution to express support of Complete Streets principles in July 2008 to accommodate all road users including bicyclists in all street construction, reconstruction, and repair projects.

The alternative called "Parking South Side" allows for bike lanes in both directions, while "Parking North Side" allows a bike lane in only one direction. Why?

This difference arises from the fact that the alternatives have two westbound travel lanes, but only one eastbound travel lane. Note that parking is always restricted at bus stops. Since there is only one eastbound lane, on-street parking is beneficial on the south side of the road. Buses have sufficient room to pull over outside of the travel lane at bus stops, traffic flow is maintained in the single eastbound travel lane, and sufficient room exists in the road for bike lanes in both directions.

A lack of parking on the south side would cause stopped buses to impede traffic flow in the single eastbound lane. The "Parking North Side" alternative has a bike lane in only one direction because it has to provide a wider eastbound lane in order for cars to pass stopped buses. The wide lane eliminates the potential for bike lanes in both directions.

What are the benefits of the W Broad St alternatives over the existing condition?

The existing roadway of six travel lanes is inferior to the other alternatives above.

- The area of W Broad St east of Hague Ave, in the Highland West District, currently has a very high number of vehicle crashes. The center two-way left turn lane will provide a **refuge for turning vehicles, remove turning vehicles from the traffic stream, and add a buffer** between eastbound and westbound traffic.
- The area also has high pedestrian crashes. **Pedestrian safety** will be improved by having **fewer lanes of traffic to cross**. On-street parking and bike lanes both provide a buffer between the sidewalk and traffic, **enhancing comfort** for pedestrians.
- Reducing the number of automobile travel lanes will **decrease speeding**, thereby **increasing safety** for all users of the roadway.
- The changed roadway will **maintain automobile traffic flow**. Extensive traffic analysis and simulation has shown that two westbound lanes, one eastbound lane, and a two-way left turn lane will be sufficient. The turn lane will provide **greater vehicle access to businesses and parking lots** for customers.
- **On-street parking will be striped for full-time use**, rather than the existing restricted parking. Striped parking sends a stronger signal to customers that parking is available without having to check signs for restrictions. Striped parking **enhances safety** because the road is clearly divided between travel lanes and parking lane, thereby reducing confusion that can lead to crashes.

Why does the consultant recommend the alternative called "Parking South Side"?

The Hilltop Community Mobility Plan began in Fall 2008 and has included intense study and public involvement regarding W Broad St. Approximately 950 people have provided written comments about their transportation desires for the Hilltop community. The study team held three public open houses, two days of public community "walk audits", and numerous meetings with community and business leaders. The study team also spent several weeks at the library and local stores talking to residents.

The extensive community input showed that strong support exists in the Hilltop for reducing the number of automobile lanes and creating bike lanes on W Broad St. These community desires support existing policies of the City of Columbus that include increasing safety for all users of the roadway and balancing the transportation infrastructure among all modes, including bus, bicycling, walking, and driving.

The "Parking South Side" alternative is the only alternative of those described above that provides bike lanes in both directions on W Broad St between Harris Ave and Clarendon Ave. Additionally, as part of the striped parking, this alternative provides on-street parking on the south side of W Broad St between Highland Ave and Clarendon Ave, which fulfills a longstanding desire of the Greater Hilltop Area Commission that supports local businesses.

Although discussion continues among the mobility plan Community Steering Committee and other neighborhood leaders, the time to decide the immediate future of W Broad St is quickly approaching. If community consensus cannot be reached, the existing roadway might be restriped as is in 2010.

Why does the consultant not recommend parking on both sides of W Broad St?

- During public outreach in August and September of 2009, two potential alternatives for W Broad St were presented to the public. One option included on-street parking on both sides of the street, and did not include bike lanes. Another option included on-street parking on one side of the street, and did include bike lanes. *Only 14% of respondents stated that they preferred on-street parking on both sides of W Broad St with no bike lanes. On the other hand, a strong majority of respondents (86%) preferred an option in which parking was placed on one side of the street in order to allow for bike lanes.*
- In public input from 700 people in January and February of 2009, Hilltop residents stated their strong support for enhancing bicycle transportation throughout the Hilltop. *When asked where specifically bicycling should be made easier, the top location was W Broad St. Significantly less support existed for the need for on-street parking on W Broad St.*
- In order to not impact private property along W Broad St, improvements can only consider the existing 60 feet of pavement width of the roadway. In order to adequately move automobile traffic and provide bike lanes, on-street parking can fit on one side of the street. Bike racks can be installed for bike parking free of charge at a business's request.
- A review of area parking capacity between Harris Ave and Clarendon Ave reveals that the overwhelming majority of parking spaces are located in off-street parking lots that are currently underutilized. Community or business groups could facilitate shared parking agreements, because different facilities have different parking demand depending on time of day and day of week. For example, churches and businesses could potentially share parking because their demand does not often overlap. Increased signage can be used to guide customers to off-street parking lots, as is done in other successful central Ohio business districts.

What if I do not plan to ride a bike? Are bike lanes still good for the Hilltop?

- Bike lanes are **good for the economy and local businesses**:
 - In a study of a commercial street in San Francisco, two-thirds of merchants surveyed over four years after bike lanes were painted said that the lanes had a **positive overall impact on business**.
 - In a study of a commercial street in Toronto, people who had biked and walked to the area reported that they spent more money per month than those who drove there.
- Bicycle infrastructure is **good for home real estate values**. The National Association of Realtors' policy statement on transportation pushes to embrace all transportation types, including bicycling, in transportation projects. A bike trail study near Indianapolis showed that a home close to the trail would sell for an average of 11% more than a home further away.
- Bicycling infrastructure is **good for Hilltop residents' finances**. The cost of operating a sedan for a year is approximately \$7,800 according to AAA, while the cost of operating a bike for a year is only approximately \$120. While **gas prices fluctuate unpredictably**, bicycles run on the free fuel of a healthy body. This cost-effective transportation **benefits low-income families**.
- More bicyclists can be accommodated in less roadway space than a similar number of drivers, allowing for an efficient use of pavement and the potential to reduce congestion.

- Bike lanes on W Broad St will increase the **livability** of the Hilltop. This unique feature will be among the first bike lanes in a Columbus business district. Bike lanes will contribute to a **distinct, vibrant community** on the west side.

Are there other benefits of bike lanes on W Broad St?

- Bicyclists, like drivers, want to travel the shortest route possible, and W Broad St provides the most direct route to downtown Columbus. The trip of about three miles between the Hilltop and downtown is a relatively easy distance to ride a bicycle. In fact, national data shows that nearly 50% of all trips in metropolitan areas are three miles or less.
- The bike lanes between Hague Ave and Central Ave provide an initial segment of a future corridor of continuous bike lanes on W Broad St further to the east and west.
- When the amount of bicycle infrastructure increases, the number of bicyclists increases. **As more people ride bicycles, it becomes safer to ride a bicycle.**
- Bike lanes are more **effective at creating more bicyclists** than other on-street bike facilities such as sharrows and wide curb lanes. In Portland, Oregon, bikeway miles, the majority of which are bike lanes, increased by 337% between 1991 and 2006. During that same time, daily cyclists increased by 422%, an increase of thousands of bicyclists. National surveys show that bicyclists' stated preference is for bike lanes over wide curb lanes due to increased comfort. The League of American Bicyclists endorses bike lanes because they: encourage bicycle use; improve cyclist and motorist predictability; and encourage **safer bicycling behavior** of riding in the street with the flow of traffic.
- Bike lanes recommended for W Broad St exceed national standards to provide space for cyclists outside of the "door zone" of parked cars.
- **Bicycling is healthy.** One-third of American adults are obese, and 55% of U.S. adults do not meet recommended activity guidelines. The US surgeon general has recommended more walking and bicycling for daily travel to increase physical activity.
- Bicycling has **zero pollution emissions** and no negative effect on the environment.

Sample quotes from Hilltop residents regarding bicycling on W Broad St:

- "A lot of people nowadays are riding bikes, it saves money." - Female, Age 18-34, near Hague/Valleyview
- "I think that creating bike lanes will encourage more bikes to travel to work and other places. It may also increase the foot traffic by slowing down the traffic on the major corridor. This may also bring new businesses to the area, like coffee shops, bike shops, galleries or eateries." - Female, Age 18-34, near Binns/Sullivant
- "I take a very indirect route from my home in Westgate to downtown via McKinley Avenue to the trails. It adds a lot of time to my spring, summer and fall commute as well as being somewhat unsafe." - Male, Age 35-64, near Palmetto/Roys
- "Everyone needs a place, and bikes are cleaner for our environment" - Female, Age 18-34, near Terrace/Olive
- "I want to be able to commute downtown on my bicycle. Broad Street is the most direct route." - Female, Age 18-34, near Binns/Mound
- "So many people are riding bikes instead of driving as a cheaper means of transport." - Male, Age 18-34, near Columbian/Sullivant

- "It would be nice to have a safe way to get downtown on a bicycle. Last year I took Sullivant downtown on my bicycle and was hit by a car." - Female, Age 18-34, near Hague/Eakin
- "Everything is close by and I would prefer to bike to my errands rather than drive but the conditions along Broad, Wilson, Central are too hazardous to do so." - Female, Age 35-64, near Broad/Sylvan
- "Broad Street needs traffic calming. Right now, the [bike] ride down Broad Street is terrifying." - Female, Age 18-34, Hilltop
- "It is very important for me to be able to ride my bike on Broad (as hobby or to get to the trail) and be safe. I do it now and it is dangerous not having a special lane." - Female, 35-64, near Algonquin/Broad
- "A bike lane would ensure cyclists a safe place to ride." - Male, Age 18-34, near Eldon/Broad
- "I believe that reducing the number of travel lanes and adding bike lanes will provide innumerable benefits to the area - lowering speeds, creating a more neighborhood feel, and providing better travel opportunities for bikers. People need to be able to get out to the shops on W. Broad from the neighborhoods out east. Let's get with the times and start providing safe, clearly marked and attractive sidewalks, bike lanes and roads. The west side needs it!" - Female, Age 18-34, near Westgate Park
- "Not everyone has a car, so a bike lane anywhere is a good idea." - Female, Age 18-34, near Alkire/Winding Hollow
- "It's important to have a means for people to want to be out & about on the West side. Part of that is encouraging things like bike riding. I would definitely use it!!! Not to mention, having a safe alternative to driving helps promote a "green" lifestyle. I would really love to see safer alternatives to travel through the community...biking, walking etc. I see no reason why the Hilltop can't surpass The Short North and Clintonville in its charm and appeal. I love it on the West side!!!" - Female, Age 35-64, Hilltop
- "I've been dying for bike lanes down W. Broad since I moved to the Hilltop. I think we need to make all of Columbus more bike friendly - and the West side is a great place to start. Many of us work downtown, and we are SO CLOSE, we should be taking our bikes to work. Currently it just isn't safe --- I have friends who've ridden to work downtown and have really had some scary situations with cars that have caused them to give it up. That is a darn shame in a time when gas is so expensive and we are striving for a more fit population. Plus, bike lanes would help create a more neighborhood friendly environment - something we are all striving for the West side to have." - Female, Age 35-64, near Broad/Powhatan
- "I want to encourage people to ride their bikes all the way downtown. It is an environmentally and healthy alternative to driving. If we want our neighborhood to attract the kinds of people and businesses that care about the environment and health and wellness and want to care for their property we need to offer the kinds of alternatives that the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan has proposed!!!" - Female, Age 18-34, near Southampton/Olive

How can I get more information about the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan?

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