



To: Mayor Payne and Members of the Olympia City Council

From: Tom Dillon, Chair, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Date: September 29, 2025

Subject: 2026-2031 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan (CFP); Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee would like to thank the Olympia City Council for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Capital Facilities Plan (CFP). We appreciate the focus you have placed on bicycle and pedestrian projects in this year's CFP and believe that Olympia is moving in the right direction.

It is the understanding of this committee that significant work has already been put into the projects listed for 2026, and that changing course on them would incur significant cost and rework. With that in mind, our review of the 2026 projects focused on potential red flags, such as projects that would run counter to the City's goals as listed in the Comp Plan. We did not find any such red flags.

For projects in 2027 and beyond, in addition to looking for potential red flags, we also attempted to look at equity implications and network-level impacts of the proposed projects. We made the following observations:

- Due to limitations in the available data, it is very difficult to assess equity impacts. We are concerned that, if the City is not careful, benefits from pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects would disproportionately accrue to affluent communities whose residents are more able to engage with the City planning process. We recommend that the City develop quantifiable equity measures to help ensure that projects are benefitting the communities that need them the most. We would hope to see policies such as "targeted universalism" (e.g. the curb cut effect where facilities designed for people using mobility devices end up benefitting the entire population) implemented to support the City's equity goals.
- We noted that several projects are upgrades to existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. While we appreciate the improved facilities and understand the reasons behind the prioritization of those projects, we also want to note the importance of expanding and filling in gaps in the network to allow a broader segment of the community to access safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- We would like to see more projects which explicitly address goals from multiple areas of the Comp Plan. The current Fones Road project is an excellent example of this. At a basic level, this would look like taking advantage of utility work that requires significant asphalt work to

incorporate re-striping of roads to bring them up to modern standards. Other examples would be using neighborhood pathways to meet both transportation and parks goals or bundling bicycle and pedestrian improvements with new park facilities (such as the Yelm or Kaiser Woods parks) to ensure that those new facilities contribute to our transportation and environmental goals while ensuring access to nearby residential areas.

- When possible, we would encourage the City to include bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure when doing traffic calming projects. While this is often done currently, we would like to emphasize its importance to avoid the possibility of doing car-centric projects while not addressing the infrastructural deficiencies for other users.

The only red flag that we saw in the plan was the proposed “US-101 West Olympia access project”. The research around highway expansion projects and induced demand has consistently shown that adding capacity to highways is not correlated with benefits for drivers and in this case would run directly counter to the City’s goals around VMT and reducing the dependence on single-occupancy vehicles. We recognize that this project does not yet have any local funding allocated, but believe that the magnitude of its impact on our community obligates us to raise our concerns as early as possible.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Dillon", with a stylized, cursive script.

Tom Dillon

Chair

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

CC: Max DeJarnatt, Associate Planner, Public Works | Transportation
BPAC Members

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