



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Selby and Members of the Olympia City Council

FROM: David Copley, Chair, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

DATE: October 17, 2017

SUBJECT: 2018-2023 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Priorities

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide input on the 2018 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to the Olympia City Council.

The BPAC would like to commend the City Council for the volume of bicycle and pedestrian projects in this year's Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), and for the attention given to American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance in new and existing facilities. We also appreciate the format of this CFP. By including predesign and planning details for prospective projects, we all are better equipped to move forward on projects with realistic expectations and effective resource management.

While the content in the draft CFP is generally favorable to the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, there are some major issues that merit a second look. Projects such as the West Olympia Access Project are a missed opportunity, which may do more harm than good, if they do not include consideration for bicycles and pedestrians. There are also priority needs, such as east-west bike access through downtown, which are absent from the CFP. We have listed below a summary of what we consider priority needs and edits to the CFP.

Bicycle Corridor - In 2016, we were able to celebrate the completion of the Bike Corridor pilot project. We encourage the City Council to fund permanent improvements to the pilot project as well as to fully fund a second downtown Bike Corridor this year. This could only be an economic boon to downtown businesses. The new Bike Corridor would extend the existing pilot project from Sylvester Park to the Olympia Woodland Trail trailhead at Eastside Street.

US 101/West Olympia Access Project - The US 101/West Olympia Access Project area is already challenging for bikers and walkers; this project will make it even more difficult for people to move through the west side on bikes or on foot. It will affect what are currently quiet streets that are welcoming to people walking and biking. This project merits reconsideration. This \$35 million investment should include greater provisions for cyclists and pedestrians. We encourage the City to seek innovative ways to move people walking and riding bikes through this project area.

Downtown Access and Through Traffic - We encourage the City Council to continue to fund bike facilities on streets that lead to and through downtown so that employees and customers can safely ride downtown, leaving vehicles at home. We appreciate the momentum towards comfortable Bike Corridors leading to downtown, but there is still a lack of a safe east-west connector across town. The isthmus connection to 5th Avenue and Deschutes Parkway is particularly daunting for people on bikes.

Make the Most of Roundabouts - We are pleased about the roundabout improvements planned at so many unsafe intersections. We hope the City will prioritize connecting sidewalks and bike lanes along the streets adjacent to these new roundabouts. Many of the roundabouts are close to bike/pedestrian trails and will benefit those using the trail network. Let's leverage each roundabout's sidewalks and bike lanes by prioritizing the adjacent streets for sidewalk and bike improvements - especially those near trails. Navigating a roundabout just to have the sidewalk end in a ditch is not safe.

Safe and Plentiful Bike Parking - Consider defining a level of service for bicycle parking downtown and on City-owned properties. Bike parking is currently scattered. Bicycling improvements should include safe, covered, and well-lit bike racks at the destinations such as parks. We are trying to encourage a greater range of our citizens to bike downtown and to other places of interest. Good bike parking at prominent locations allows less confident cyclists to have a predictable place to transition to walking, instead of navigating more challenging streets.

Downtown Parking - We encourage the City Council to take advantage of and prioritize space management strategies for downtown parking before considering a parking garage. We would like to see leveraging of the public and private, on- and off-street parking that is currently available, and improvements made to the bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities downtown. If downtown is easy to access by foot, bike, or bus, more people will leave their cars at home and parking congestion will be reduced.

Consider Major Investments - The West Olympia/101 Access Project is a major investment in our transportation network. We encourage the City Council to consider a similarly large investment in bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure. For example, imagine how the Harrison Avenue corridor with major transit, bike, and pedestrian investments could transform the west side.

With unprecedented population growth in our region, we need to be strategic and mindful to how people will live and move through Olympia in the future. Continuing to invest the majority of our resources in single-occupancy car infrastructure seals the future of our transportation system as the reality of waiting in lines of car traffic. By betting on roads, we marry our future to car dependence, which we know is not healthy for our personal health, the environment, or our community. More roads have never, ever resulted in less traffic.

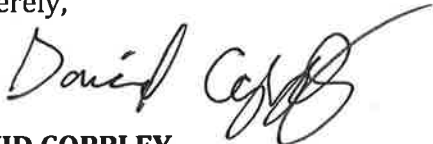
Olympia can be the great city we envision if we invest in a variety of transportation options. The needs of bikers and walkers should be considered at the beginning of projects. We have witnessed an increasing level of support and investment from the City Council in these matters, and encourage

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you to continue on that path. Investments in biking and walking infrastructure will help us attract and gracefully integrate a growing regional population.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the BPAC's recommendations during the course of your CFP review process.

Sincerely,



DAVID COPPLEY
Chair
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

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cc: Michelle Swanson, AICP, Senior Program Specialist, Public Works Transportation
BPAC Members