City of Ashland
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Subcommittee Meeting
November 4, 2010
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

Agenda

I. CALL TO ORDER: 9:00 AM

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 7, 2010

III. PUBLIC FORUM: 3 Minutes Per Person, 10 minutes Total

IV. ACTION ITEMS: None

V. NON ACTION ITEMS
A. Bike Rack Study Session

III. ADJOURN:

Note for sub-committee members: Please contact Nancy Slocum at 552-2420 or slocumn@ashland.or.us if you can not attend the meeting.

Next Scheduled Meeting: December 2, 2010

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Public Works Office at 488-5587 (TTY phone number 1 800 735 2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

City of Ashland
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
SUBCOMMITEE MEETING
Thursday, October 7, 2010
Siskiyou Room, 51 Winburn Way

Summary Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER: 9:03 AM
Members: Steve Ryan, Brent Thompson (Acting Chair)
Absent: Tom Burnham
Staff: Mike Faught, Jim Olson, Nancy Slocum
Attendees: David Chapman, Jane Babbitt, Margery Carson, George Psomas

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of August 5, 2010 were approved as amended.

III. PUBLIC FORUM:
No one spoke.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Critique of Action Summary Form

Staff explained the new form that outlined the status of traffic safety-related agenda items. The Subcommittee appreciated the information and need copies of the Traffic Regulations. Thompson praised staff for the Will Dodge Way project.

B. Request for Stop Sign on 'B' Street at Third Street

Thompson disclosed that he drove by this as well as all the sites on the agenda. Olson reviewed the staff report. The purpose of a 4-way stop was to assign the right of way at a four leg intersection where traffic volumes were nearly equal. Third Street carried a traffic volume of 750 vpd while B Street carried 2400 vpd. Olson noted a four-way stop would not work well at this intersection. History showed two accidents in the last five years. Stop signs should not be used to slow traffic.

Jane Babbitt, 366 B Street, asked about warrants. Olson explained that the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and the City set criteria or warrants for the placement of four-way stops. The four warrants include:

1. Installation of a 4-way stop as an interim to the installation of a traffic signal;
2. A crash history of 5 or more crashes within a 12 month period;
3. Traffic volumes of 300 vph on the major leg or a combination of 200 units (vehicles, bikes and pedestrians) per hour on the minor leg;
4. A combination of the above criteria.

Babbitt understood that this intersection did not meet warrants; however, she was concerned about local pets and the nearby school bus stop. She witnessed driver confusion as non residents often slow down or stop while traveling B Street, then are passed by other drivers. Some drivers on Third stop, then move forward, assuming a four way stop. She noted the need for traffic calming measures, enforcement and education. Babbitt spoke to neighbors who agreed, but who could not attend the meeting because of other commitments.

Olson suggested a sign under the stop sign that read "2 way stop" and a traffic study to see if drivers were speeding. Babbitt said the sign was already there and agreed that the study should be conducted on 'B' Street between both Third and Fourth and Fourth and Fifth. She also noted a number of large vehicles that parked on Third near the intersection thus blocking visibility.

Margery Carson, 455 B Street, was a daily pedestrian in the neighborhood and was concerned about toddlers. She thought it unsafe to cross B Street at this intersection. She was in favor of a stop sign, but understood about warrants. Carson did request a marked crosswalk.

George Psomas, 385 B Street, was against a stop sign. He noted an additional stop would increase noise and pollution near his home. He agreed that warrants were not met, but did favor traffic calming efforts.

Discussion:
Thompson asked Olson if a marked crosswalk typically slowed traffic. Olson said crosswalks were unsafe at uncontrolled intersections. Thompson remembered a 1999 B Street plan that included pedestrian refuges (medians). Olson said there was a plan to rebuild B Street; however, there was currently no funding. The plan was 90% complete and did not include any traffic calming features. He thought pedestrian refuges could be included however.

Chapman suggested pedestrians look and wave at drivers when they want to cross an intersection. He also encouraged neighbors to call the police when they see a "pattern" of speeding violators.

Ryan addressed neighbors, educating them on the current TSP update and the need for continued public input. Faught agreed. Ryan also noted that warrants could be overwritten by staff.

Thompson would like to see median and other traffic calming features incorporated into the planned B Street reconstruction. He also suggested painting this intersection's curbs yellow if needed for vision clearance.

Motion and Vote:
Ryan moved to accept staff's recommendation for no change at this intersection. Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Subcommittee asked staff to proceed with the traffic study.

C. Request for Crosswalk on Siskiyou at Morton Street
Olson spoke to Reverend Sheppard who spearheaded this request to support her growing congregation. As there was only limited parking available at the church, parishioners were parking on the opposite side of Siskiyou. Olson explained his reasons against adding a crosswalk at this intersection: an alternative crossing location within 350 feet of either side; no raised median possible as recommended by ODOT; distance across is over 90'; and pedestrians would be required to cross five lanes of traffic. He said this location was very similar to the Garfield situation and he recommended against a crosswalk.

Motion and vote:
Ryan moved to accept staff's recommendation to take no action at this intersection. Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Request for Stop sign at Helman Street and Nevada Street

Olson noted that the intersection functioned well with Nevada Street having the obvious right-of-way. There were no reported crashes within the last five years and low traffic volumes. Since the northerly leg of this intersection only provides access to the dog park, this intersection functions more as a "T" intersection rather than a four way intersection. Some safety improvements were completed with the 2007 Nevada Street Sidewalk LID project. He recommended no changes.

Chapman reminded Subcommittee that the bike path would eventually be relocated and the intersection rebuilt.

Motion and vote:

Ryan moved to accept staff's recommendation to take no action at this intersection. Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

E. Request for Crosswalk Closure at Lithia Way and East Main Street

Olson explained that westbound traffic on East Main was currently forced to turn right at the signal-controlled intersection at Lithia Way. This right turn conflicted with the pedestrian walk signal and put pedestrians in conflict with turning traffic. To close this crosswalk would force pedestrians to cross East Main to the southerly crosswalk, then cross Lithia Way and again cross East Main depending upon their destination. This would add two additional conflict points and require out of direction travel by the pedestrian which would not likely be utilized. Staff recommended placement of a MUTCD sign saying: "Turning Traffic Must Yield to Pedestrians."

Thompson did not see another option. Ryan did not want to add sign pollution, however, saw the obvious limitations of the intersection.

Motion and vote:

Ryan moved to accept staff's recommendation to add a "Turning Traffic Must Yield to Pedestrian" sign at this intersection. Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

V. OTHER

Chapman reminded staff to investigate the possibility of adding parallel parking to the west side of the first block of East Main directly adjacent to the covered bicycle rack. He also noted that as the bike path crosses North Mountain Avenue, there is a need for a storm drain as rainwater builds up and bicyclists are force to go out of their way. Staff will move forward on both these suggestions.

Ryan noted that the bollard on Fourth Street at the Railroad Park, lost it's safely sleeve. Chapman said there was a need to research and improve the visibility of bollards.

III. ADJOURN: 10:38 am

Respectfully submitted by:
Nancy Slocum, Accounting Clerk I

Bicycle Racks

Purpose

Bicycle racks are an important element of the streetscape, both as an aesthetic aspect of the streetscape and as a functional element for those who travel by bike. Bicycle racks are also opportunities for distinctive design and public art objects. Where part of a special maintenance or public art program, uniquely designed, yet functional bicycle racks may be submitted for approval..

Requirements

See standard detail CD173. See City Ord. 18.92 for placement of bike racks on private property.

Location

Bicycle racks should be located according to the following guidelines:

1. Placement and spacing of bicycle racks should consider dimensions when occupied
2. Bicycle rack placement should be frequent in active commercial districts.
3. Racks should be provided near major destinations such as schools, libraries, transit stops, major shopping and service destinations, and other locations with high pedestrian traffic
4. Racks should not be placed a accessibility (blue paint) zones.
5. A rack should not be located closer to the curb than (24") two feet. Three feet from the curb is ideal, although in certain circumstances, the distance may be greater.
6. Bicycle racks should not be located directly in front of a store/building entrance or exit or in a driveway.
7. There must be at least 3 feet of clearance between bicycles parked at racks and any other street furniture, with the exception of other bike racks, which should be placed a minimum of every 3 feet on center.
8. Street utility vaults must have a 12 inch clearance from a bicycle parked at a rack.
9. An aisle for bicycle maneuvering shall be provided and maintained between each row of bicycle parking. Bicycle parking shall be designed in accord with the illustrations used for the implementation of this chapter.
10. Each required bicycle parking space shall be accessible without moving another bicycle.
11. Areas set aside for required bicycle parking shall be clearly marked and reserved for bicycle parking only.
12. Bicycle parking shall be located to minimize the possibility of accidental damage to either bicycles or racks. Where needed, barriers shall be installed.
13. Bicycle parking shall not impede or create a hazard to pedestrians. They shall not be located so as to violate vision clearance standards. Bicycle parking facilities should be harmonious with their environment both in color and design. Facilities should be incorporated whenever possible into building design or street furniture.

STANDARD SPECIFICATION SECTION 01095 – FUNCTIONAL ITEMS ("Site Furnishings")

Description

01095.00 Scope - This work consists of constructing items such as listed below and other Functional Items as shown or directed.

Materials

01095.10 General: -Conform with following standard details in accordance with the from the most current version of the Ashland Medford Engineering Design Standards for Public Improvements as well as these Special Provisions for Functional Items:

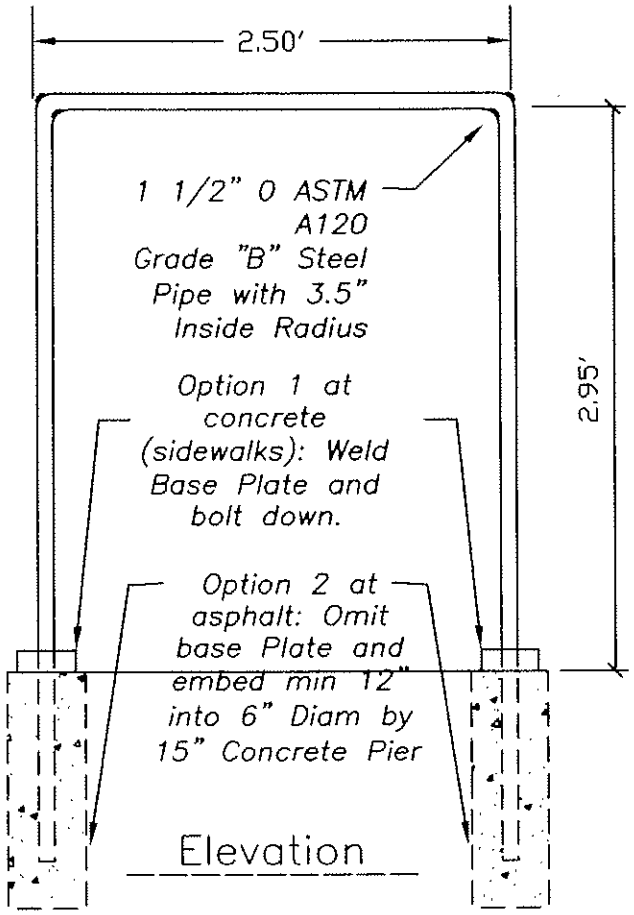
DETAIL		Preferred	Alternate
CD171	**Pedestrian Clearances**	Maximize Pedestrian Area available while maintaining minimum clearances	See "Downtown Sidewalk Usage Map" for exceptions
CD172	**Sidewalk Cafes**	Annually permitted by Public Works Dept. In zones C-1, C-D-1,E-1	Not permitted in other Zones.
CD173	**Bicycle Racks**	Hitching Post Bike Rack Purchase from City 541-552-2290	Submit on-street designs to Engineering for pre-approval
CD174	**Trash Receptacles**	Timberform "Plaza" Model # 2770-DT-P 800-547-1940	Victor Stanley "H-Series" Model # U-24 800-368-2573
CD175	**Planters**	Timberform "Craftsman" Model # 800-547-1940	Eagle One "Catalina" Model # C505 1-800-448-3160
CD176	**Tree Grates**	Neenah Foundaries Model # R-8707390 800-558-5075	Poly-Grate II Model # TSB55 (800) 523-6899
CD177	**Benches**	Timberform "Restoration" Model # 2118-6 800-547-1940	Victor Stanley "Classic" Model # C-138 800-368-2573
CD178	**Publication Racks**	Shorack Modular Rack Model #49-16/100 800-527-1134	Shorack Broadsheet Model TK-80 800-527-1134
CD181	**Bollards**	Trystan "Park Avenue" www.trystanprocucts.com 877-348-5845	CD182 at bike paths CD141 temporary closures CD140 elsewhere
CD183	**Bus Shelters**	Handi Hut "Yosemite" Model # 4-2H 800-603-6635	Engineered Structure to match structure at 132 Ashland St.
CD184	**Water Fountains**	Murdock "Old Style" Model # M-C76-1- AVAF 800-591-9880	Murdock Model # C-30 800-591-9880

Construction

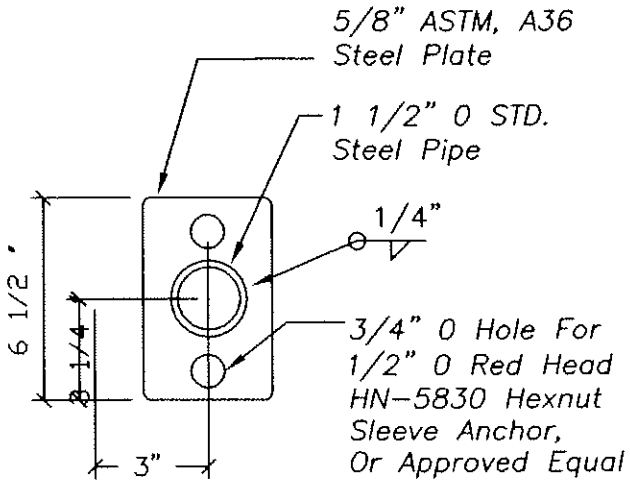
01095.40 General - Install all functional items as indicated as follows and in full accordance with the manufacturers installation procedures, recommendations, and requirements.

APPENDIX A

PRE-APPROVED MODELS : City of Ashland Hitching Post Type
Finish: Sandblast to Bare Metal, Powder Coat Forest Green.



Elevation

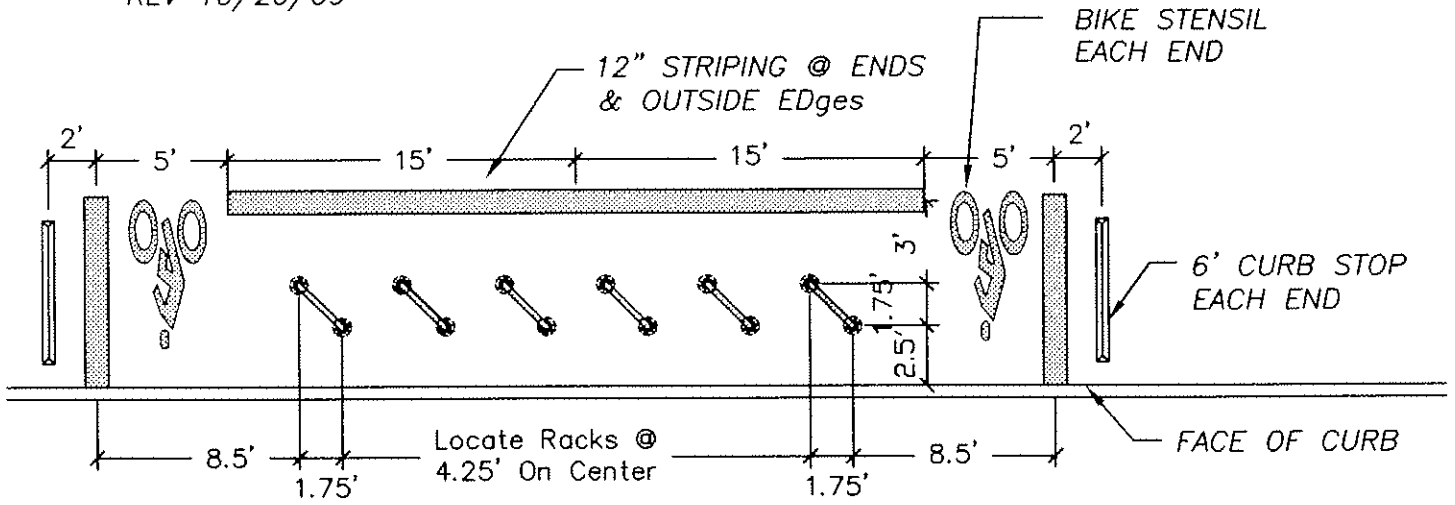


Base Plate Detail

Plan View

BICYCLE RACK

REV 10/20/09



ON-STREET MULTIPLE PARKING

REV 10/20/09

CITY OF ASHLAND	PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING www.ashland.or.us 541-488-5587 fax 488-6006	DRAWING NO. CD173 OF

Land Use Code
Off Street Parking

18.92.040 Bicycle Parking

A. All uses, with the exception of detached single-family residences and uses in the C-1-D zone, shall provide a minimum of two sheltered bike parking spaces.
B. Every residential use of two units or more per structure, and not containing a garage, shall provide bicycle parking spaces as follows:
Multi-Family Residential: One sheltered space per studio and 1-bedroom unit
1.5 sheltered spaces per 2-bedroom unit
2.0 sheltered spaces per 3-bedroom unit
Senior Housing: One sheltered space per 8 units (80% of the occupants are 55 or older)
C. In addition, all uses which require off street parking, except as specifically noted, shall provide one bicycle parking space for every 5 required auto parking spaces. Fractional spaces shall be rounded up to the next whole space. Fifty percent of the bicycle parking spaces required shall be sheltered from the weather. All spaces shall be located in proximity to the uses they are intended to serve. (Ord. 2697 S1, 1993)
D. All public and commercial parking lots and parking structures shall provide a minimum of one bicycle parking space for every five auto parking spaces.
E. Elementary, Junior High, Middle and High Schools shall provide one sheltered bicycle parking space for every five students.
F. Colleges, universities, and trade schools shall provide one bicycle parking space for every five required auto parking spaces, of which one half is to be sheltered.
G. No bicycle parking spaces required by this standard shall be rented or leased, however, a refundable deposit fee may be charged. This does not preclude a bike parking rental business.
H. The required bicycle parking facilities shall be constructed when an existing residential building or dwelling is altered or enlarged by the addition or creation of dwelling units, or when a non-residential use is intensified by the addition of floor space, seating capacity, or change in use.
I. Bicycle Parking Design Standards
1. The salient concern is that bicycle parking be visible and convenient to cyclists and that it provides sufficient security from theft and damage.
2. Bicycle parking requirements can be met in any of the following ways:
a. Providing a bicycle storage room, bicycle lockers, or racks inside the building.
b. Providing bicycle lockers or racks in an accessory parking structure, underneath an awning or marquee, or outside the main building.
c. Providing bicycle racks on the public right of way. This must be approved by City of Ashland Public Works Department.
d. Providing secure storage space inside the building.
3. All required exterior bicycle parking shall be located on site within 50 feet of well-used entrances and not farther from the entrance than the closest motor vehicle parking space. Bicycle parking shall have direct access to both the public right-of-way and to the main entrance of the principal use. For facilities with multiple buildings, building entrances or parking lots (such as a college), exterior bicycle parking shall be located in areas of greatest use and convenience for bicyclists.
4. Required bicycle parking spaces located out of doors shall be visible enough to provide security. Lighting shall be provided in a bicycle parking area so that all facilities are thoroughly illuminated and visible from adjacent walkways or motor vehicle parking lots during all hours of use. Bicycle parking shall be at least as well lit as automobile parking.
5. An aisle for bicycle maneuvering shall be provided and maintained between each row of bicycle parking. Bicycle parking shall be designed in accord with the illustrations used for the implementation of this chapter.
6. Each required bicycle parking space shall be accessible without moving another bicycle.
7. Areas set aside for required bicycle parking shall be clearly marked and reserved for bicycle parking only.
8. Parking spaces configured as indicated in the figure at the end of this chapter meet all requirements of this chapter and is the preferred design. Commercial bike lockers are acceptable according to manufacturer's specifications. A bicycle parking space located inside of a building for employee bike parking shall be a minimum of six feet long by 3 feet wide by 4 feet high, unless adequate room is provided to allow configuration as indicated in the figure at the end of this chapter.
9. Sheltered parking shall mean protected from all precipitation and must include the minimum

protection coverages shown in the figure at the end of this chapter.
10. Bicycle parking shall be located to minimize the possibility of accidental damage to either bicycles or racks. Where needed, barriers shall be installed.
11. Bicycle parking shall not impede or create a hazard to pedestrians. They shall not be located so as to violate vision clearance standards. Bicycle parking facilities should be harmonious with their environment both in color and design. Facilities should be incorporated whenever possible into building design or street furniture.
J. Bicycle Parking Rack Standards.
1. All required bicycle parking racks installed shall meet the individual rack specifications shown in the figure at the end of this chapter. Single and multiple rack installations shall conform with the minimum clearance standards shown in the figures at the end of this chapter. Alternatives to the above standard may be approved after review by the Bicycle Commission and approval by the Staff Advisor. Alternatives shall conform with all other applicable standards of this section. Bicycle parking racks or lockers shall be anchored securely.
2. The intent of this Subsection is to ensure that required bicycle racks are designed so that bicycles may be securely locked to them without undue inconvenience and will be reasonably safeguarded from intentional or accidental damage.
a. Bicycle racks shall hold bicycles securely by means of the frame. The frame shall be supported so that the bicycle cannot be pushed or fall to one side in a manner that will damage the wheels.
b. Bicycle racks shall accommodate:
i. Locking the frame and both wheels to the rack with a high-security U-shaped shackle lock, if the bicyclists removes the front wheel; and
ii. Locking the frame and one wheel to the rack with a high-security U-shaped shackle lock, if the bicyclists leaves both wheels on the bicycle; and
iii. Locking the frame and both wheels to the rack with a chain or cable not longer than 6 feet without removal of the front wheel.
c. Paving and Surfacing. Outdoor bicycle parking facilities shall be surfaced in the same manner as the automobile parking area or with a minimum of two inch thickness of hard surfacing (i.e., asphalt, concrete, pavers, or similar material) and shall be relatively level. This surface will be maintained in a smooth, durable, and well-drained condition.

CITY OF
ASHLAND

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
BICYCLE PARKING SUMMARY
AUGUST 2010

No.	LOCATION	STATUS	No. of Racks	POSITION
1.	@ curb extension south of City Hall in Plaza	Existing	3	On concrete pad
2.	@ curb extension south of City Hall in Plaza	Recommended	3	Pour 8x9 concrete pad
3.	@ #5 N. Main St. (opp. Small Change)	Existing	1	S/W
4.	@ #31 N. Main St. (opp. Mountain Supply)	Existing	1	S/W
5.	@ #51 N. Main St. (opp. Black Sheep)	Existing	1	S/W
6.	@ #57 N. Main St. (opp. Mix Sweet Shop)	Recommended	3	On new curb extension
7.	@ N. Main St. Bridge, South side near Granite St.	Existing	1	S/W
8.	@ N. Main St. Bridge, South side near Granite St.	Recommended	1	Add rack next to exist
9.	@ #75 N. Main St. (opp. Big Town Hero)	Existing	1	S/W
10.	@ #99 N. Main St. (opp. Patricia Sprague Realty	Existing	1	S/W
11.	@ N. Main St. Bridge (opp. Blue Bird Park)	Recommended	1	S/W
12.	@ #60 E. Main St. (opp. Water St. Café)	Existing	1	S/W
13.	@ #40 E. Main St. (opp. Bugaboo)	Recommended	1	S/W
14.	@ #37 E. Main St. (opp. Art Fix)	Existing	1	S/W
15.	@ #20 E. Main St. (opp. City Hall)	Existing	1	S/W
16.	@ #42 E. Main St. (opp. Reds Threads)	Recommended	1	S/W
17.	@ #50 E. Main St. (opp. Chateulin Restaurant)	Existing	1	S/W
18.	@ #58 E. Main St. (opp. Macaronis Ristorante	Existing	1	S/W
19.	@ #67 E. Main St. (opp. Wells Fargo Bank)	Recommended	1	S/W
20.	@ #131 E. Main St. (opp. Horsefeathers of Ashland)	Existing	1	S/W
21.	@ #161 E. Main St. (opp. Rogue Valley Runners)	Existing	1	S/W
22.	@ #167 E. Main St. (opp. Martin H. Levine CPA)	Existing	1	S/W
23.	@ #199 E. Main St. (opp. Soundpeace)	Existing	1	S/W
24.	@ # 130 E. Main St. (opp. The Crown Jewel)	Existing	1	S/W
25.	@ #166 E. Main St. (opp. Varsity Theater)	Recommended	1	S/W
26.	@ # 176 E. Main St. (opp. Christian Science Reading Rm)	Existing	1	S/W
27.	@ #243 E. Main St. (opp. Chase Bank)	Existing	1	S/W
28.	@ #275 E. Main St. (opp. Ashland Drug)	Existing	1	S/W
29.	@ #295 E. Main St. (opp. Well Spring)	Recommended	1	S/W
30.	@ #268 E. Main St. (opp. Sister Moon)	Existing	1	S/W
31.	@ #343 E. Main St. (opp. CD or not CD)	Existing	1	S/W
32.	@ #345 E. Main St. (opp. Geppetto's)	Existing	1	S/W
33.	@ #353 E. Main St. (opp. Cripple Creek Music)	Recommended	1	S/W
34.	@ # 383 E. Main St. (opp. Aedion)	Existing	1	S/W
35.	@ #395 E. Main St. (@ planter end)	Existing	1	S/W
36.	@ #344 E. Main St. (opp. Glass Art)	Recommended	1	S/W
37.	@ #346 E. Main St. (opp. Ameritite)	Existing	1	S/W
38.	@ #358 E. Main St. (opp. Pasta Piatti)	Existing	1	S/W
39.	@ #376 E. Main St. (opp. Evo's parking lot)	Recommended	1	S/W
40.	@ #33 Third St. (opp. Underground Market Place	Recommended	1	S/W
41.	@ #37 Third St. (opp. Outdoor Store)	Existing	1	S/W
42.	@ curb extension @ Third St. and Lithia Way	Recommended	3	Pour 6'x9' concrete pad
43.	@ Library – mark curb side auto parking (4-20's	Recommended	3	Pour 6'x8' concrete pad

Engineering
20 E. Main Street
Ashland, Oregon 97520
Tel: 541/488-5347
Fax: 541-/488-6006
TTY: 800/735-2900
www.ashland.or.us

	spaces and 1-8 maneuvering space) pour pad in park row area			
44.	@ Library - @ east end of marked parking area reserve 16' length for on street bike parking	Recommended	3	On street
45.	@ #110 Lithia Way (opp. Stone sculpture)	Recommended	3	Pour 6'x9' concrete pad
46.	@ #116 Lithia Way (opp. Key of C)	Existing	1	S/W
47.	@ #116 Lithia Way (opp. Atomica)	Existing	1	S/W
48.	@ #180 Lithia Way (opp. John L. Scott Realty)	Existing	1	S/W
49.	@ #75 Lithia Way (opp. Ashland Auto Repair)	Recommended	3	On asphalt park row @ yellow X
50.	@ #77 Oak Street (opp. Paris Green)	Existing	1	S/W
51.	@ #93 Oak Street (opp. Emz Blendz Soap Co.)	Existing	1	S/W
52.	@ #101 Oak St (opp. Standing Stone Brewing Co.)	Existing	6	On Street
53.	@ #101 Oak St (opp. Standing Stone Brewing Co.)	Existing	1	S/W
54.	@ Water St Parking Lot (under Lithia Way bridge)	Existing	15	Under bridge
55.	@ parking structure (lower level)	Recommended	1	In hatched area adjacent to pay station
56.	@ parking structure (lower level)	Recommended	2	In hatched area adjacent to fence enclosure
57.	@ parking structure (lower level)	Existing	4	Steel bike lockers
58.	@ parking structure (mid level)	Recommended	2	In hatched area adjacent to pay station
59.	@ parking structure (upper level)	Recommended	2	In hatched area adjacent to pay station
60.	@ Pioneer Street (opp. Shakespeare Theater, west side above cross walk)	Recommended	6	On street multi-parking (CD 173)
61.	@ courtyard north of parking structure	Recommended	2	Place 2 racks on sidewalk adjacent to planters
62.	@ courtyard north of parking structure	Existing	4	Sidewalk
63.	@ Plaza Island	Existing	8	5 covered, 3 open
		TOTAL	120	

TOTALS

- EXISTING RACKS 69
  BICYCLE ACCOMMODATION ---------- 138

- EXISTING LOCKERS - 4
  BICYCLE ACCOMMODATION ---------- 4

- RECOMMENDED RACKS 47
  BICYCLE ACCOMMODATION ---------- 94

TOTAL **120** **236**

Engineering
20 E. Main Street
Ashland, Oregon 97520
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TTY: 800/735-2900

Sidewalk vs. Street: Which is safer?

Submitted by iowabicycle on Tue, 04/27/2010 - 11:35

By Michelle Stepanek
Iowa Bicycle Coalition, Bicycle Safety Communications Intern

As bicyclists are continuing to be seen flowing through traffic on the roads with motor vehicles as well as riding along next to pedestrians on the sidewalks, it's important to address and answer the question: which is safer, the streets or sidewalk?

When Iowa Bicycle coalition's director Mark Wyatt was asked the question of which is safer, he responded, "If you ride your bicycle on the sidewalk, you are nearly invisible. Motorists are supposed to look for foot traffic on sidewalks, but don't expect them to. The bicyclist is far enough away from traffic that they are out of the normal line of sight for a motorist. If you are operating your bicycle as you would operate a vehicle on the road, drivers know what to expect".

Sidewalks have uneven curbs and pathways which could cause major accidents. Additionally, cars are persistently pulling in and out of drive ways. With the risk of cars not seeing you, cars also are not looking for fast moving bike traffic on sidewalks. Sidewalks are made for walkers, not bikers. Sidewalks are generally narrow and may contain obstacles not found on the roadway. You have more room to maneuver when riding on the road.

According to Jeff Goodman, bicyclist and attorney, "bikes are legally entitled to operate on the public roadways of Iowa". According to Iowa code 321.234, bicyclists may operate as vehicles. Similar laws are in the books of all 50 states. Many communities have laws to prohibit bicycling on sidewalks which congest pedestrian areas.

Bicycle operation on the road does come with responsibilities. "Bicyclists must ride with the direction of traffic, obey stop signs and traffic signals, and use hand signals to indicate turns or lane changes," says Wyatt.

There are some exceptions to the rule. If the road's design is considered unsafe, or even deadly to pedestrians and bicyclists, the side walk can be seen as an appropriate alternative. Jeff Goodman adds, "There are some instances where, due to traffic congestion or other adverse conditions, short detours, sidewalks may be advisable".

So, when answering the question, which is safer, the street or sidewalk, it's clear. The best answer is biking on the street; guaranteeing not only you're safety, but ensuring safety for pedestrians and operators of motor vehicles as well.

On-Street bicycle corrals

In August 2010 a trial bicycle corral was installed on the South-East corner of Commercial Drive and East 6th Avenue. So far the corral has seen high use and has provided additional parking for cyclists at this busy location. In addition, this new on street bicycle parking has provided a more spacious and comfortable pedestrian space for all. We are interested to hear your comments and experiences regarding this trial, please send them to bikeparking@vancouver.ca.

Photo of the new bicycle corral on Commercial Drive at 6th Avenue.

What is a bicycle corral?

A bicycle corral is an arrangement where bicycle racks are placed on-street, instead of on the sidewalk. An option where there is a high-demand for bike parking is the placement of bicycle racks on the street. Relocating bicycle parking from the sidewalk on to the street provides more parking spaces for cyclists, as well as provides pedestrians with more space on the sidewalk.

Why on-street bike parking?

Bicycle Corrals can accommodate many more bicyclists than a typical bike rack on a sidewalk. A single vehicle parking space can be replaced with 9 bicycle racks, enough space for 18 bicycles! These facilities make more efficient use of the parking lane in areas with high cycling demand. The increase in parking can be a benefit to businesses with regular cycling clientele.

Pedestrians also benefit from bicycles parked on-street. Bicycles parked on the sidewalk create additional obstacles and hazards to pedestrians. By moving the bikes onto the street, the sidewalk becomes less cluttered creating a more comfortable environment for pedestrians. The corral also promotes keeping cyclists on the roadway, as cyclists riding on the sidewalk pose a large safety concern to pedestrians. Raising the visibility of cycling continues to reinforce it as a viable transportation alternative.

By placing a bicycle corral at the corner of a street a defacto corner bulge is created. This provides greater visibility for pedestrians and vehicles turning out of the sidestreet. This bulge effect also shortens the crossing distance of the street which improves safety for pedestrians crossing the street.

Photos of before and after the installation of the trial bicycle corral.

Where would you install a bicycle corral?

On-street bike parking can potentially be located on any street which currently has vehicle parking. Bike parking cannot be located on any street which has rush hour regulations or other parking restrictions, such as bus zones.

The best location for on-street bike parking is at the corner of the street in front of a business which currently has a high bicycle parking demand. The corner works the best as it creates a corner bulge as mentioned above and the bicycle parking area can be made bigger as it can extend into the corner clearance. This can also help with pedestrian and vehicle visibility at busy intersections.

Has this been done in other cities?

Many other major cities throughout the world have successfully replaced vehicle parking spaces with on-street bicycle parking. In North America, cycling cities such as Portland, Montreal, Ottawa, Seattle and many others have all used on street parking in some shape or form.

How can I get Bicycle Corral in front of my business?

The first on-street bike parking facility is currently under review to determine its success and to determine the best way to continue moving forward with the program. On-street bike parking facilities must be requested by the business fronting the facility and they must sign a maintenance agreement which says that the business will sweep and keep the corral free of debris since City street sweepers will no longer be able to access the street.

The City will review all potential bike parking locations and work with business and property owners to determine if on-street bike parking is the best solution. Please send in your requests at the information below if you are interested.

Comments?

If you have any comments regarding this trial for on-street bike parking or general bike parking initiatives within the City of Vancouver please contact us at bikeparking@vancouver.ca