



HAWTHORNE BOULEVARD BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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HBBA Mission

HBBA promotes, supports & celebrates the prosperity and livability of our District of SE Hawthorne from 12th to 55th.

HBBA Vision

HBBA conserves the uniqueness of our past and embraces the possibilities of the future

Hawthorne Boulevard Pave and Paint

HBBA Position - October 1, 2020

In the fall of 2019 the Hawthorne Boulevard Business Association (HBBA) learned of the planned repaving of Hawthorne by the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT). We created a subcommittee to begin managing the discovery and communication for the project with our business and neighborhood communities.

We began working with PBOT to understand the expected project timeline and the options inherent in how the street could be reconfigured when the surface was repainted. It became clear that transparency was important so that our community would have time to understand these options and provide feedback and ideas. We planned a series of communication sessions to take place throughout 2020 as PBOT worked through the project discovery phases. We held two of these meetings prior to the COVID shutdown. Then we held two online meetings to continue the information gathering process for PBOT. These communication sessions generated three configuration options for Hawthorne:

1. Keep the current lane configuration the full length of Hawthorne Boulevard.
2. West of Cesar Chavez, reduce the number of traffic lanes in each direction from two lanes to one and create a center turn lane. This would be the same configuration as the boulevard east of Cesar Chavez.
3. Reduce the number of traffic lanes in each direction from two lanes to one lane with no center turn lane. Bicycle lanes would be added in each direction. There were two configurations identified for this option.

At the outset, we established that the HBBA would not take a position on any of the configuration options until PBOT had completed the SE Hawthorne Alternatives Evaluation Report. The HBBA board voted to wait until we understood their impact. On August 31st PBOT published the report. It is available at

www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/hawthorne-pave-and-paint-evaluation-report.pdf

We have now held two online communication sessions with PBOT and the Hawthorne community to review their findings. PBOT will also continue to have other communication sessions. Based on these reviews and the findings published in the report, the HBBA is ready to take a position on what we believe is the best alternative for the businesses and community of Hawthorne Boulevard.

We recommend configuration option #2 for the repainting of Hawthorne. This option has many important benefits and fewer drawbacks than the other two options:

Pedestrian Safety - Pedestrian safety is our highest priority for the community. Reducing the traffic lanes from two to one with a center turn lane will increase safety and create a

calmer commercial environment. Hawthorne is a walking street and we are striving for vision zero as another goal set by PBOT. This option will reduce incidents of speeding and allow for the creation of safer pedestrian crossings.

Transit Efficiency - Hawthorne is an important corridor for public transportation. Currently, the traffic lanes on Hawthorne are not wide enough for our city buses to travel without impacting the traffic in adjacent lanes. The second configuration would create a wider travel lane. The third option that creates bike lanes would slow down all traffic on Hawthorne. PBOT estimates that option 3 would increase the time for buses and cars to travel the length of Hawthorne by 8 to 16 minutes. This tradeoff for people that commute by bus is unworkable.

Equity and Climate - The HBBA is supportive of our bicycle community. We appreciate the positive impact that bicycles have for the environment and culture of our city. However, Hawthorne is not wide enough to enable option 3. As stated, Hawthorne is an important public transportation corridor. A slower commute time would disproportionately impact lower income people and people of color. Also, the impact it would have on traffic congestion would lead to an increase in tailpipe emissions from cars waiting in traffic.

Another important population in our city is the elderly. Oregon's over 65 population is growing faster than the nation as a whole. The impact on travel time and the reduction of available parking would impact this group disproportionately.

Parking Impact - As a progressive city that promotes "small business enterprise" please note that option #3A and #3B would greatly reduce valuable parking spaces. Option 3a is expected to reduce available parking on Hawthorne by 15 to 20%. Option 3b would reduce the number of available spaces by 50 to 60 %. These options will not only hamper visitor willingness to shop in this iconic business district but would also impact livability in adjacent neighborhoods with an influx of sidestreet parking issues.

Bicycle Travel Lanes - The configuration options that would enable Hawthorne Boulevard to be used for bicycle travel have too many drawbacks. The stated priorities of this research effort by PBOT prioritize safety, equity and greenhouse gas emissions. Bicycle lanes would undermine Portland's ability to make meaningful progress with these goals. Increased travel time and the reduction in parking would also adversely affect businesses on Hawthorne. HBBA will always advocate for the safety of the Salmon/Taylor and Lincoln/Harrison bicycle greenways adjacent to the Boulevard.

PBOT will be evaluating public survey results based on the new information in the SE Hawthorne Alternatives Evaluation Report. A determination of preferred alternatives is expected about the end of November, 2020.

PROJECT TIMELINE

