

Eugene's dryly worded plan contains only vague proposed policies that largely correspond to existing city policies without calling for measurable increases in city efforts and results to increase cycling.



The plan also prioritizes a large number of "bicycle boulevards," including on 15th from Jefferson to the UO, on Friendly, Blair and Monroe streets and many more on residential streets in outlying subdivisions. "One of this plan's primary goals is to create a robust bicycle boulevard network," the document states.

But it's not clear from the plan exactly what the city is committing to build when it says "bicycle boulevard." The plan says the facility "can vary greatly," but states "it is assumed that all bicycle boulevards in Eugene will at a minimum have signs, pavement markings, traffic calming, (if needed to keep vehicle speeds low), and some type of intersection crossing treatments."

Unlike bike lanes, bike boulevards do not legally dedicate any part of the roadway to bicyclists. They are cheap, but without traffic diverters and "do not enter except bikes" signs, it can be difficult to say that they offer significant improvement over the already existing low traffic street they are put on. Because they are not built in busy areas, bike boulevards often also do not connect to workplaces and shopping where many cyclists want to go.

Not included in the draft priority list are a lot of important bike improvements long sought by cycling advocates, including:

- Bridge connecting the Fern Ridge Path to Target

- Beltline bridge to Bethel
- Bike lanes on West 13th, north Willamette Street and Franklin Boulevard
- Closing the riverfront path gap between the Autzen (Frohnmayr) and Knickerbocker bike bridges
- A bike path or bridge from the river path to the Laurel Hill neighborhood
- A railway underpass connecting Alder Street to the river
- Improvements to dangerous intersections
- Uphill bike lanes on Dillard Road and Lorane Highway
- Bike lanes on West 11th and buffered bike lanes and/or a separated cycle track on Coburg Road
- A two-way cycletrack on 13th leading into the UO

The priority plan offers only one mile of separated, safe cycle track — considered by many advocates as the best way to increase cycling. A Danish study found that cycle tracks were three to four times more effective at increasing ridership than bike lanes.

In many ways the proposed 20-year priority list would represent a substantial reduction in bike projects compared to the last 20 years in Eugene. In that period, the city built the DeFazio, I-5 and Delta bike bridges, the Fern Ridge trail and completed a big gap in the riverfront bike system.

Comments from the Eugene City Council last week on the planning project mostly focused on councilors wanting bike facility improvements in their wards. Councilor Pat Farr pressed for better bike connections to downtown and the riverfront trail system. "It's a concern for the people from Bethel."

Inerfeld told BPAC that the priority list was based on past spending levels for bike projects. "We thought we should have a plan that's realistic," he said. "The big challenge is getting the funding." **EW**

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