



Active Transportation & Complete Streets Projects

Name of Project St Johns Truck Strategy Phase II

(project name will be adjusted to comply with ODOT naming convention if necessary)

Project nomination narrative

Project nomination narratives provide in depth process, location and project definition details and serves as the nomination form for project funding consideration.. **Project narratives should be kept to 12 pages total per project.** The narrative form is available electronically at:

<http://www.oregonmetro.gov/regionalflexiblefund>. Please complete the following:

Project Definition

Base project information

1. Corresponding RTP project number(s) for the nominated project. 10229
2. Project extent or area description. The project is entirely located within the St Johns neighborhood of North Portland. There are four distinct sub-areas to the project: the N Portland Rd/Columbia Blvd intersection, N Columbia Way between Columbia Blvd and N Fessenden Ave, N Fessenden Ave-St Louis St between Columbia Way and N Lombard Ave, and N Lombard Ave from St Louis St to N Bruce St.
N Portland Rd is a two lane Major City Traffic Street and a designated Major Truck route connecting the Interstate 5 freeway to N Columbia Blvd. N Columbia Blvd is a four lane Regional Trafficway and Priority Truck Street that provides access to the Rivergate industrial area. N Columbia Way, N Fessenden and N St Louis are all Neighborhood Collector streets and are classified for local truck access only. N Lombard St from N St Louis north is a two lane Major City Traffic Street that is also a designated Major Truck Street which connect the St Johns Bridge to the Rivergate industrial area and N Columbia Blvd for freight traffic heading north and east through the North Portland peninsula.
3. Purpose and need statement (The purpose and need statement should address the criteria as they apply to the project, for example: increase non-auto trip access to essential services in the X town center, particularly for the high concentration of Y and Z populations in the project area). The project is the second phase of a multiphase improvement program known as the St Johns Truck Strategy. Overall purpose of the strategy is to reduce the impacts of heavy freight movement on the livability, growth and commercial redevelopment potential of the St Johns town center. Transportation System Plan policy has long acknowledged that the problem of heavy freight movement generated by the St Johns Bridge and the Rivergate industrial area that flows through the St Johns town center. Chief among the problems is cut-through truck traffic that uses the N Fessenden-St Louis corridor instead of the designated freight route that goes around the neighborhood, but is over two miles longer than the cut-through route. Use of the cut-through route impacts a neighborhood with high concentrations of environmental justice communities.

4. Description of project design elements. The main design elements of the four sub-areas are: a) redesign of the N Portland Rd/ Columbia Blvd intersection, b) traffic calming on N Columbia Way, c) traffic calming along the N St Louis/Fessenden Ave corridor, and d) freight route and multi-modal safety improvements to N Lombard St, between N St Louis Ave and N Bruce St. The N Portland Rd/ Columbia Blvd intersection improvements realign a critical juncture between the freight route and access into the neighborhood to encourage use of the designated freight route and discourage use of N Columbia Way to N Fessenden Ave as a cut-through route to the St Johns Bridge. The intersection realignment will change the through movement from southbound N Portland Rd to N Columbia Way to a left turn movement. Reconstruction of the ramp connection to westbound N Columbia Way will improve the turning radius for large trucks.
The N Columbia Way traffic calming improvements extend from N Columbia Blvd to N Fessenden Ave. Traffic calming in this sub-area primarily entails re-striping of the roadway to convert one of the two southbound travel lanes to a center turn lane with median island refuges to improve pedestrian crossing safety. This also includes extending existing bicycle lanes and infilling missing sidewalk.
The N St Louis/Fessenden Ave traffic calming design elements include installation of the following improvements to reduce speeding, improve pedestrian crossing safety and reduce its use as a cut-through route for non-local truck trips: restriping of the roadway to reduce travel lanes widths and widen existing bicycle lanes, median refuge islands at six intersections, curb extensions at two intersections, rapid flash beacons at two intersections, speed reader boards at two locations, and a HAWK signal/beacon at one location.
The N Lombard Freight Route improvements include: restriping of the roadway to increase travel lanes widths for trucks, realignment of the N Jersey/St John Ave intersection to improve safety issues associated with poor sight distances, curb extensions at two intersections to improve pedestrian crossing safety and modification of an existing pedestrian signal to provide advance truck detection.
5. Description of post implementation measurement of project effectiveness (Metro staff is available to help design measurement methodologies for post-construction project criteria performance). Post implementation evaluation measures have not yet been developed for this project but will likely include monitoring the corridor's crash history, bicycle volumes, traffic volumes and intersection capacity.

Map of project area

1. Provide a map of the project consistent with instruction in Exhibit B

Project sponsor agency

1. Contact information for:
Application lead staff
Rich Newlands
1120 SW 5th Ave, Suite 800 Portland, OR 97204
503-823-7780
Rich.Newlands@PortlandOregon.gov
2. Describe whether the lead agency has recently led or failed to deliver a federal aid transportation project, and how the agency currently has the technical, administrative and budget capacity to deliver the project. The Portland Bureau of Transportation is one of the few local agencies in the state that are fully certified by ODOT to deliver federal aid projects

and it has extensive experience with delivering such projects, from project development through design engineering and construction. The bureau currently has the staff capable to provide all the administrative services related to project management and all technical services related to design engineering, and construction management.

Location

1. Describe how you identified the travel corridor/area for the project and how regional and local data relevant to the project criteria support this location as your top priority(s). (See [Appendix D](#) of the Nomination Packet for criteria relevant to prioritizing project location)

Access:

St Johns is a designated town center in the Region 2040 Plan. In 2004 Portland City Council adopted the St Johns/Lombard Plan to support its redevelopment as a mixed use center. There is one high school, two elementary, and one middle school within 1/2 mile or less of the project area.

Safety:

The primary objective of the project is to reduce the impacts of heavy freight traffic that moves through the area on neighborhood livability. The most significant livability issue impacted by the heavy freight traffic moving through the area is associated with pedestrian and bicycle safety and access to transit service. The equity analysis of census demographics shows the area immediately surrounding the project having 'significantly above average' concentrations of non-white and low income populations, and 'above average' concentrations of environmental justice and underserved populations, and young people populations.

Highest priority criteria

1. Describe how the project improves access to priority destinations mixed-use centers, large employment areas, schools, and essential services for EJ/underserved communities. (See maps/data on Metro FTP site). The project improves access to the St Johns town center and the four public schools in the immediate vicinity primarily by reducing the barrier effect that heavy truck volumes moving through the area creates. On the N Fessenden-St Louis Ave corridor, traffic calming and pedestrian crossing safety design elements will improve pedestrian and bicycle access across a major arterial that divides the neighborhood and limits safe, convenient access from the north side of the corridor to the town center's commercial district. With the surrounding neighborhood being relatively transit dependent, improved pedestrian crossing facilities, along with an improved pedestrian environment through traffic calming, will also facilitate use of transit service to access regional employment centers.
2. Identify the safety issues in the project area. How does the project design address safety in the area? (See bike/pedestrian crash map/data on Metro FTP site). The primary safety issues along the N St Louis-Fessenden corridor are related pedestrian crossings and bicycle access. The width of the street (52 ft), the lack of protected or enhanced crossing opportunities along the corridor combined with the large amount of non-local truck and commuter traffic have made pedestrian crossing safety a consistently identified concern through public involvement. The project design, in general, proposes a traffic calming approach to help reduce and mitigate the overall speed and volume of traffic that uses the corridor. Pedestrian crossing safety is further improved through the installation of eight new crossing improvements along the 1.3

mile long corridor, spaced approximately every two blocks, and in conjunction with bus stops and school routes. Median refuge islands and curb extensions are the primary tools proposed to improve sight distances and reduce the crossing distance. Bicycle safety is improved through the addition of a buffer to the existing bicycle lanes.

Along the N Lombard truck route, the primary safety issues are similarly related to pedestrian and bicycle access, but also include adequate travel lane widths for large trucks (south of N Reno St) and sight distance issues at N Jersey/ St Johns St related to a kink in the roadway alignment. To address pedestrian crossing safety, the project proposes curb extensions at N Catlin and N Reno, along with the infill of missing sidewalk sections. Bicycle access is improved by the installation of bicycle lanes north of N Reno St. South of N Reno St, where the N Lombard St curb to curb width narrows to 36 ft. the proposal is to shift bikes to adjacent local streets both east (N Central, a recently improved bikeway) and west (N Willamette, designated Bikeway) of N Lombard. Because the width of this section also does not allow for adequate travel lane widths to accommodate its truck route function, the project will also restripe the roadway to increase the travel lane widths from 10 to 12 ft by removing on-street parking from one side of the street. The issue of sight distances for all roadway users at the intersection of N Jersey and St Johns St is addressed through a realignment of the intersection.

3. How does the project serve traditionally underserved (minority, low-income, limited English speaking, youth, elderly, disabled) communities? Explain how your project responds to data identifying concentrations of underserved communities and what project elements address the transportation needs of these communities. (See Transportation Equity maps/data on Metro FTP site for help identifying concentrations of EJ and underserved communities and how well they are served/not served). The Equity Analysis shows that the project area is within the following groups with 'above average' concentrations: 'Environmental Justice and Underserved' and 'Young'. The analysis also shows that the project is within the following groups with 'significantly above average' concentrations of the following groups: 'Non-White' and 'Low Income'. The project serves the needs of these communities by providing street improvements that directly address neighborhood livability issues that impact these communities, including high volumes of truck traffic, speeding, pedestrian crossing safety, bicycle safety and access to transit service. These improvements include median refuge islands, curb extensions, beacons, and sidewalk infill to address pedestrian crossing safety and access to transit service, traffic calming measures, such as travel lane width reduction, median islands, and speed reader boards to address speeding and discourage non-local truck traffic, and improved bicycle facilities to address bicycle access and safety.

High priority criteria

1. Describe any outreach that has been conducted with EJ/underserved communities to date. (Targeted outreach to these communities may be facilitated by Metro during the regional public comment period for comments on project scope. Additional outreach during project development phases (final design, preliminary engineering, etc.) may be a condition of funding approval. The project development phase, completed in January of 2013, included an extensive public involvement process over a 16 month period. Initial demographic analysis

indicated that the St Johns area has experienced significant growth in its Latino population since 1990, increasing by 480%. The percentage of Latino residents in 2010, 19%, is considerably higher than the county as a whole (11%). At that point, the public involvement scope was restructured to provide more targeted outreach to that community. This included advertising in local Latino newspapers, focus group discussions with Latino parent groups at Sitton Elementary, James John Elementary and George Middle School, and a separate Spanish language open house event.

2. Describe any conflicts with freight/active transportation you've identified in your project area. How does the project design address or provide mitigation to these conflicts? Addressing the conflict between freight mobility and neighborhood livability is the central objective of the overall St Johns Truck Strategy. This plan, adopted by City Council in 2001, establishes an overall strategy composed of 8 separate sub-projects for encouraging freight traffic to use the established freight route, thorough improvements to the route to increase its efficiency and safety, while at the same time discouraging use of non-designated routes, primarily the N St Louis-Fessenden corridor. Phase II implementation of the strategy moves forward with project elements that directly address the conflicts with pedestrian, transit and bicycle functions that the large freight volumes create in the N St Louis-Fessenden corridor. The N Portland Rd/Columbia Blvd intersection improvements work in conjunction with the traffic calming improvements along N St Louis and Fessenden Ave to both discourage non-local freight use of that route and mitigate its impacts on pedestrian and bicycle safety. The N Portland Rd/Columbia Blvd intersection improvements are designed to discourage large truck movements by simultaneously increasing access to N Columbia Blvd and decreasing the ease of access to N Columbia Way, which provides a direct easy link to the N Fessenden cut-through route. The traffic calming design for the N St Louis-Fessenden corridor is intended to reduce its design speed, and, therefore, its desirability as a route to the St Johns Bridge relative to the N Columbia Blvd ('around the horn') freight route, while at same time mitigating the pedestrian and bicycle safety and access impacts.
3. Does the project design include "last mile" connections? Please explain. (Last mile connections create safe and comfortable biking and walking routes that directly connect transit stops to nearby origins and destinations, and can include the provision of secure and convenient bicycle parking at stations). The traffic calming element of the project along the N Fessenden-St Louis corridor performs as a 'last mile connection' in that it significantly improves access to transit service that runs along the corridor. The #4 Division/Fessenden line serves the corridor with 15 minute headways, both during the peak and offpeak hours, at 18 bus stops within the project area. Because the project will improve pedestrian crossing safety it will, in turn, improve access to transit service.
4. Describe how the project will lead to an increase in non-auto trips through improvements in the user experience. ([See Appendix C](#) for design elements that improve the user experience).
5. Does the project serve a high density or projected high growth area? Please explain. (For high growth areas, explain how the project is coordinated with growth plans to focus or orient future development to maximize use of the project). Question 4 response: The recommended

design coming out of the plan development phase includes several design elements that enhance the user experience. The most prominent design element in this regard are the improvements along both the N St Louis-Fessenden Ave corridor and N Lombard St that reduce the level of interaction between active transportation users and vehicles. These include the median island refuges and curb extensions for pedestrian crossings. All of the median islands are intended to be planted with street trees to further redefine the character of the street as residential instead as arterial through route. All curb extension locations will be opportunities for stormwater swale plantings. At key crossings locations (school routes, adjacent transit stops and designated bike and walking routes) additional beacons (HAWK signal and rapid flash beacons) are recommended. Separation from vehicles for bicyclists is enhanced along the N St Louis-Fessenden corridor through restriping of the street to allow a buffer for the existing bicycle lane. On N Lombard St, where the right-of-way allows, new bicycle lanes are recommended; where the width is constrained, the recommendation is to shift the route to parallel low volume streets.

Question 5 The project runs through the Region 2040 designated St Johns town center. In 2000, the Portland Planning Bureau and the Portland Bureau of Transportation received a Transportation Planning Growth Management (TGM) grant to develop a comprehensive land use/ transportation plan to support redevelopment of the town center. The resulting plan, the St Johns/Lombard Plan, was adopted by City Council in 2004. The plan rezoned much of the town center area to accommodate higher density growth, consistent with the policy goals of the Region 2040 growth management plan. Among the supporting transportation action items within the plan is 'TC6' directing the City to continue to implement the St Johns Truck Strategy in order to address the impacts to growth potential and neighborhood livability presented by the large amount of freight that moves through the town center.

Priority criteria

1. Please describe the outreach/education/engagement element of the project nomination (Metro Regional Travel Options staff is available to help design an effective and appropriate level of education and marketing for your project nomination). Extensive outreach for the project has already occurred during the project development and refinement phases. As noted below, the project concepts contained in the St Johns Truck Strategy were developed after an 18 month public involvement program in 2001 that included an Advisory Committee with business and resident representatives, two public open house events and a City Council hearing. The project refinement phase completed in January of 2013, which resulted in the design recommendations discussed in this application, were also developed with the participation of a Stakeholder Advisory Committee and two public open house events over a 16 month period. The project recommendations have been endorsed by the St Johns Neighborhood Association, Friends of Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association and the St Johns Boosters Business Association.
2. Are there opportunities to leverage other funds or investments with this project? Describe any opportunities you have identified and how you plan to coordinate with other project(s) or leverage other funds. This project leverages prior investments from the Regional Flexible Funds program and the state's Transportation Growth Management (TGM). Phase I plan

refinement, design engineering and construction were completed in the summer of 2012 through a \$1.5M Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program grant received in 2004. This project implemented the two priority freight route improvements identified in the St Johns Truck Strategy (Truck Safety Improvement Areas 1 and 2). The improvements focused on addressing inadequate turning radii for large trucks on the designated freight route at the N Philadelphia/ Ivanhoe, N Ivanhoe St Louis, and N St Louis/ Lombard intersections, along with upgrades to the traffic signal system to improve capacity and efficiency. In 2002, Portland received a Transportation Growth Management grant to develop the St Johns/ Lombard Plan, a comprehensive land use and transportation plan to support the development of the St Johns town center and Lombard main street.

3. Describe how the project may help reduce the need for road and highway expansion. Most of the project's major design elements improve the access, safety and convenience of using alternative modes of travel (walking, bicycling and transit). This includes pedestrian crossing improvements, general traffic calming, improved bicycle facilities, and sidewalk infill. As such, the project supports the use of alternative transportation modes and reduces the demand for roadway expansion within the project area.

Process

1. Describe the planning process that led to the identification of this project and the process used to identify the project to be put forward for funding consideration. (Answer should demonstrate that the process met minimum public involvement requirements for project applications per [Appendix A](#)) The project originated in 2001, when Portland City Council adopted the St Johns Truck Strategy. The primary purpose of the strategy was to develop a set of conceptual public improvement recommendations to reduce the impacts of non-local truck trips within the St Johns community. The St Johns Truck Strategy was the result of a 16 month planning process, which included a Stakeholder Advisory Committee made up of representatives from the St Johns and Cathedral Park neighborhoods, the adjacent business community and trucking industry. The committee met 14 times in development of the strategy. The public involvement process also included 13 separate meetings with various interested community organizations and coordination with other affected governmental agencies, including the Oregon Dept of Transportation, Port of Portland, Federal Highway Administration, Metro and Tri-Met. In 2008 the Portland Bureau of Transportation received an RFF grant to perform plan refinement work on three of the eight design concept elements of the St Johns Truck Strategy in order to develop specific, design engineering ready recommendations. Work began on plan refinement phase in the summer of 2011 and was completed in January of 2013, with recommendations adopted by a new Stakeholder Advisory Committee made up of local residential, business and freight representatives and the St Johns and Cathedral Park neighborhood associations. The committee met seven times over the course of the project and held two open house events. Additional Latino outreach efforts were made, as discussed in response to question 1 under 'high priority criteria'.
2. Describe how you coordinated with regional or other transportation agencies (e.g. Transit, Port, ODOT, Metro, Freight Rail operators, ODOT Region 1, Regional Safety Workgroup, and

Utilities if critical to use of right-of-way) and how it impacted the project location and design. The St Johns Truck Strategy was developed with the direct participation of the Port of Portland, ODOT and Metro on the plan's Advisory Committee back in 2001. The plan refinement work done for Phase II, completed in January of 2013 was coordinated with the Port of Portland, ODOT, Metro and Tri-Met through the project's Technical Advisory Committee.