

The Nasset St. Johns/Lombard Survey

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This survey of over 200 people in the St. Johns/Lombard region points out the wide discrepancy between what Portland's city planners claim people want and what Portland residents actually want.

Survey subjects included bike lanes, bubble curbs, boulevard conversion, zoning and narrow lots.

Background

The Proposed St. Johns/Lombard Plan was released in early August 2003 by the Portland Planning Bureau . The Plan proposes adding bike lanes to parts of Lombard, extending many curbs out to the edge of the traffic lane and restricting sections of the left turn lane by the addition of center islands. An earlier version eliminated the left turn lane entirely for sections of the study area.

Numerous informal contacts indicated widespread dislike of the some of the Plan's elements. Local resident, Sharon Nasset decided to create an independent survey.

Purpose

The Nasset survey was formulated to include important elements of the proposed Plan, elements that might be considered for addition to the Plan in the future and other items of general interest to the region.

Method

The questionnaires were widely distributed to residents without selection by age, ethnicity, social strata or willingness to come to city sponsored meetings. Questionnaires were passed out at a variety of locations including local businesses, working class resrtruants, bars and taverns and even from a vacant lot on Lombard street. Survey period was from August 27 to September 8, 2003.

Results

Approximately 240 individuals responded, most including their name and address. Responses to key questions suggest that some Portland practices deviate significantly from resident's wishes:

Respondents were *thirteen to one* against bubble curbs on Lombard.

Respondents were *seven to one* against bike lanes on Lombard.

Respondents were *twelve to one* against "skinny lots."

Respondents were *thirty to one* against removing the left turn lane.

Respondents were *four to one in favor of* local control of zoning.

Although only North Portland was targeted in the survey, we believe that similar results would be obtained city wide.

Why The Difference?

There appears to be a wide divergence between the proposed Plan, created as the result of the public's participation and actual public opinions expressed in the Nasset survey.

Possible explanations include:

- Unlike the city's method, city employees and employees of companies with an interest in city planning such as consulting, contracting and construction companies had no opportunity to over participate in the Nasset survey.
- Unlike the city's method, the results of the Nasset survey were not filtered through a multi-step process.
- Unlike the city's method, the Nasset survey results are based only on actual votes.
- Unlike the city's method, Nasset asked questions based on proposed construction features, not a desired or imagined goal. For example, in the city process, planners might ask questions such as "Would you like Lombard to be easier for pedestrians to cross." A yes answer would then be interpreted as the desire for extended curbs or center islands. The participants were given no opportunity to weigh the tradeoffs inherent in such interpretations.
- Both groups of participants were self selected, but had different make-ups.
- Certain subsets of the population, who have unusually large amounts of spare time, may have been over-represented in the city process which stretched over several meetings and several neighborhood walks.

Narrowness of the city's outreach The head planner stated that all residents and businesses in the Plan area were notified and that the Plan area is a total of 450 acres (about 0.72 square mile.) But since the total area of the Peninsula is on the order of 4 square miles, the intended notification area was only about 18% of the Peninsula. Moreover, much of this area is business not residential so perhaps only 6% of the population was notified. Several business owners who *were* within the notification area testified, at the September 2003 Planning Commission Hearing, that they were not aware of the Plan as recently as three weeks earlier (ie: August 2003). Public outreach began in March 2001.

Some neighborhood associations adjacent to the Plan area, but not within it, reported that they were not aware of the Plan.

Detailed Results

The exact questions are reproduced below in bold, followed by the summary information on the same line. Each question had four choices, which are tabulated under the question.

	Yes	No	Ratio
Do you want bike lanes on Lombard? Absolutely Yes: 12 Yes: 16 No: 44 Absolutely No: 155	28	199	7:1
Do you want extended (“bumpout”) curbs on Lombard? Absolutely Yes: 9 Yes: 7 No: 52 Absolutely No: 161	16	213	13:1
Do you think the center lane on Lombard should be removed? Absolutely Yes: 3 Yes: 4 No: 58 Absolutely No: 157	7	215	30:1
Do you think residents, not the city, should set zoning? Absolutely Yes: 74 Yes: 79 No: 20 Absolutely No: 16	153	36	4:1
Do you think the current zoning is OK? Absolutely Yes: 23 Yes: 71 No: 48 Absolutely No: 17	94	65	1.5:1
Is granting zoning variances better then wholesale changes by the city? Absolutely Yes: 38 Yes: 82 No: 33 Absolutely No: 12	120	45	2.7:1
Do you want more skinny lots? Absolutely Yes: 8 Yes: 8 No: 74 Absolutely No: 126	16	200	12:1
Do you think a stop light at Richmond and Ivanhoe will back up traffic and cause more congestion and air pollution? Absolutely Yes: 55 Yes: 73 No: 40 Absolutely No: 34	128	74	1.7:1

The Survey Form

Front Of the Survey Form

St. John's /Lombard Plan Survey

Absolutely Yes
Yes
No
Absolutely No

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

- Do you want bike lanes on Lombard?
- Do you want extended ("bumpout") curbs on Lombard?
- Do you think the center lane on Lombard should be removed?
- Do you think residents, not the city, should set zoning?
- Do you think the current zoning is OK?
- Is granting zoning variances better then wholesale changes by the city?
- Do you want more skinny lots?
- Do you think a stop light at Richmond and Ivanhoe will back up traffic and cause more congestion and air pollution?
- Do you think the new library should be on Lombard?
- Would you like painted cross walks with reflectors at every intersection on busy streets?
- Should truck traffic on the St. John's Bridge only allow local trucks?
- Should changes to the street lighting only be to increase lighting levels?
- Should a new bridge be built to eliminate most of the truck traffic from residential and commercial areas?
- Should we build the Northwest Passage Expressway connecting U.S.30, Columbia Way, North Portland Rd., Jantzen Beach and Vancouver

Comments _____

- YES I will attend the planning design on September 4, 2003 at 3:PM
1900 SW 4th Ave., Room 2500A, Portland OR.
- YES I will attend the planning commission hearing September 9, 2003 at 7 PM
1900 SW 4th Ave., Room 2500A, Portland OR.
- YES I would like this to be submitted as my formal statement to the Planning Bureau.
- YES I will contact local media (talk radio, TV & newspapers) and urge them to cover the Lombard Plan.

Send letters to: 1900sw 4th Ste. 4100 Port, OR. 97201 (fax 503.823.7800)
 E-mail the Planning Commission: Planningcommission@ci.portland.or.us
 E-mail the Design Commission: vpoelwijk@ci.portland.or.us

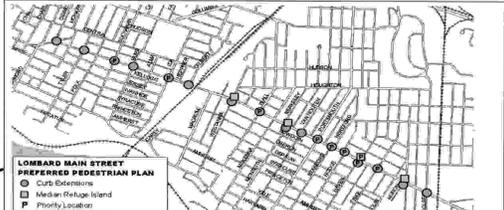
The Lombard Plan is at the St. Johns Library. Or: http://www.planning.ci.portland.or.us/cp_sjl_over.html
Join us -- call Sharon Nasset at: 503.283.9585, Sharonnasset@aol.com
 Leave this form with the survey taker or mail to: Survey, 4772 N. Lombard, 97203

Rear of the Survey Form

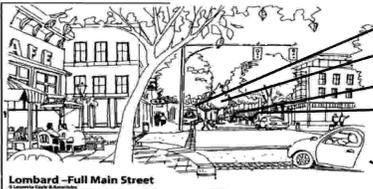
Look what's coming to Lombard

Remove center lane, leaving one Lane in each direction
 Bubble curbs ("curb extensions")
 Bus stops that make buses block the ONLY traffic lane
 Bike lanes
 Trees in the center of the street

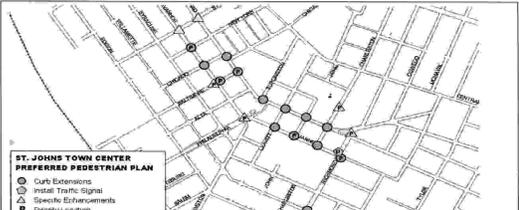
Proposed locations of Curb Extensions (Bumpout Curbs) Along Lombard St.



Actual drawing from "Proposed St., Johns/ Lombard Plan"



Lombard - Full Main Street



Bus stops block traffic

Center trees steal traffic space

One traffic lane causes congestion

Bubble curbs force bikes into traffic

Actual drawing from "Proposed St., Johns/ Lombard Plan" August 2003

Proposed locations of Curb Extensions (Bumpout Curbs) In St. Johns Town center

Actual drawing from "Proposed St., Johns/ Lombard Plan"

IMPORTANT:
 Give us your opinion on the other side of this page