



ACTION 10:

Monroe Corridor Redesign

Collaborate with the city to redesign, fund and reconstruct NW Monroe Avenue from SW 14th Street to SW 26th Street to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit operations and safety.

Opportunity

In many ways NW Monroe Avenue (Monroe) is OSU’s “Main Street,” with a vibrant mix of restaurants, businesses, and residential developments functioning like a commercial downtown. Monroe is also an essential transit corridor serving the university with a high volume of transit boardings and alightings, including one of the busiest bus stops in the entire CTS system at NW Kings Boulevard and Monroe. High volumes of pedestrian and bicycle traffic are also typical, particularly between SW 26th Street and SW 14th Street.

Current State

Despite the high volumes of multi-modal traffic along Monroe, the project team heard from many individuals during public outreach events who felt unsafe walking, biking, and driving there. Today, Monroe allows all travel modes, but it is not designed to safely accommodate the intersecting needs of pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and transit users.

Cost
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Timeline
Medium

Lead
City of Corvallis

Complementary Actions
Beaver Bus - CTS Connections (Action 6)
Neighborhood Bikeways (Actions 11)
Car-Free Campus Core (15)

Partners
University Facilities, Infrastructure and Operations

Discussion

An Opportunity for Collaboration

Northwest Monroe Avenue is cited in both City and OSU plans as an opportunity area for place-making and transportation safety improvements.

- The OSU Corvallis Campus Vision recommends bicycle and pedestrian gateway improvements on NW Monroe Avenue to make the campus edge more welcoming and porous.
- The Corvallis Campus Vision also calls for the design and construction of a Mobility Hub for transit on Monroe Avenue, which would likely increase future pedestrian, bicycle and transit rider activity along the corridor.

- The OSU Transportation Plan identifies NW Monroe Avenue as a Pedestrian Access Route and calls for sidewalk improvements along the length of the roadway where it borders campus.
- The City of Corvallis Transportation System Plan (TSP) includes many projects along Monroe, for individual intersections as well as for the corridor as a whole. Specifically, the TSP project PB16 suggests that OSU and the City collaborate to study potential pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements along Monroe from SW 14th Street to SW 26th Street. Such a project would likely incorporate other overlapping intersection projects from the TSP (See Table 4).

Table 4: Planned Transportation System Plan Projects along Monroe to support pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders

City TSP Project ID	Project Type	Project Name	Primary Funding Source	Description
PB16	Refinement Study	Monroe Avenue Shared Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transit Street Study	City/OSU	Conduct a study to evaluate the safety of walkers, bicyclists, transit users and motor vehicles along Monroe Avenue from 14th Street to 26th Street. Develop street design alternatives which enhance the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists, while also supporting multimodal access to local businesses along the corridor.
PB69	Pedestrian Safety Improvements	Monroe Ave/ 16th St	City	Intersection safety improvements may include adding curb extensions.
P34	Pedestrian Safety Improvements	Monroe Avenue and Kings Boulevard Pedestrian Safety	City	Intersection safety improvements may include adding curb extensions to reduce pedestrian crossing distance.

Source: 2018 City of Corvallis Transportation System Plan

Incorporating Best Practices in Design

In 2006, OSU collaborated with the City and hired a landscape architecture firm to develop a streetscape improvement schematic design for Monroe Avenue that would recognize the multimodal nature of the corridor and transform it into a “great street” (Figure 16). Recommendations from the resulting master plan included raised intersections, shortened pedestrian crossings, pedestrian-scale lighting, and additional covered bike parking and bus shelters. The plan was never implemented, but many of these design elements remain relevant and potentially effective.

A new design process, as called for in the City’s TSP and here in the OSU Sustainable Transportation Strategy, would build on past efforts and incorporate new best practices in street design to prioritize pedestrian, transit, and bicycle modes while also accommodating vehicle traffic and on-street parking. Best practices in urban transportation design have evolved since the 2006 Monroe Avenue improvement plan was drafted, and today Corvallis and OSU have access to many more design tools and resources. For example, a new design process could incorporate design recommendations from the OSU Transportation Plan and the City’s Active Transportation Toolkit, as well as state and national sources such as NACTO (North American City Transportation Officials) Design Guides.

Prioritizing Transit

Almost all CTS routes to campus run along Monroe Avenue, and the busiest transit stops in the system lie along this corridor. Focused investment in the comfort, convenience and safety of transit riders here will serve people taking transit to OSU from around the city. Best practices for Transit Street design help improve on-time transit performance and reduce user conflicts through designs like “Island Stops” that route bike lanes between an elevated stop and the sidewalk (Figure 16). Designing safer pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure both along the road and at crossings is also critical to support transit riders before and after their trip.

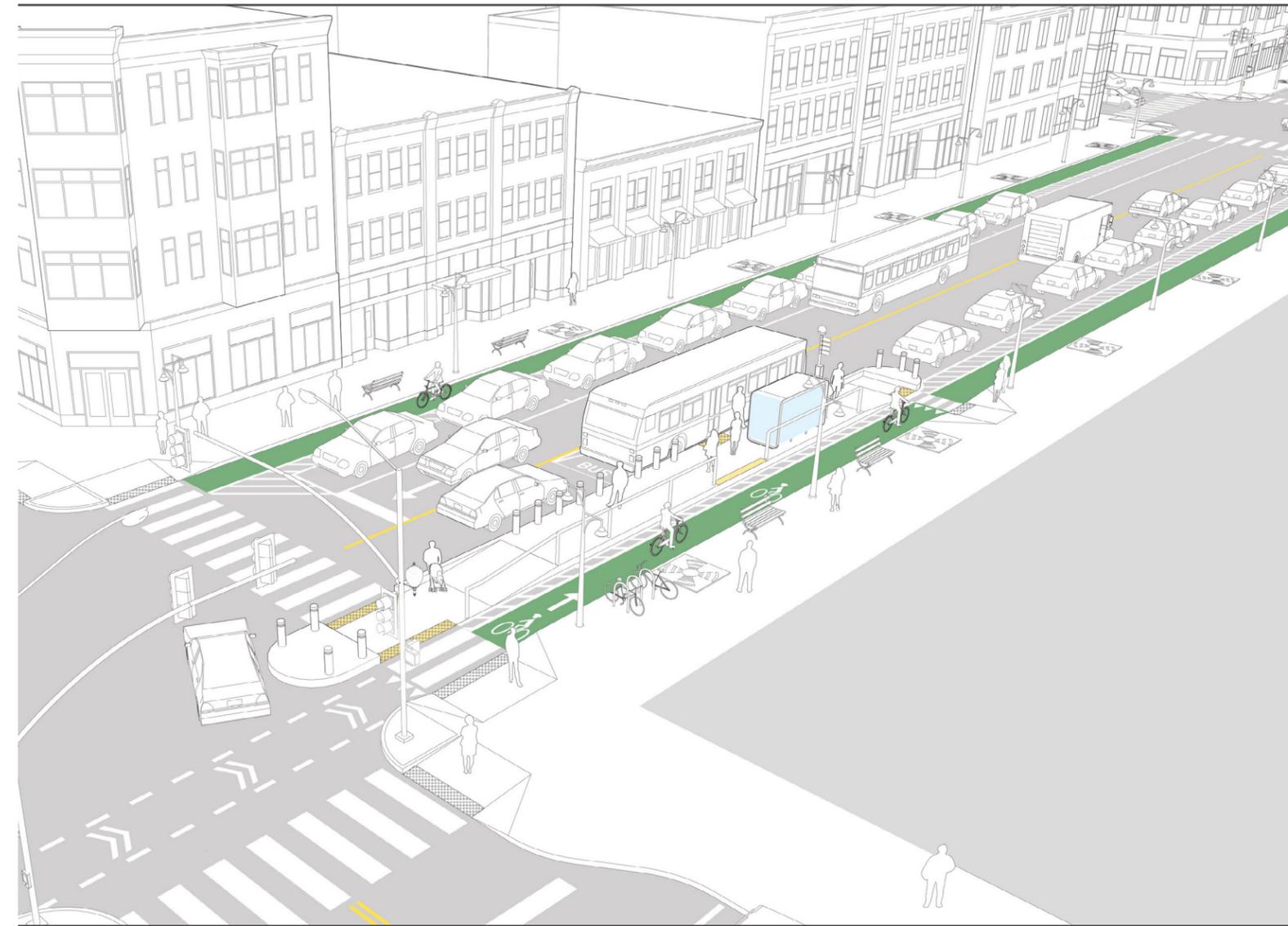


Figure 16: The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) has developed design guidance for “Transit Streets” that prioritize bus operations. (Image source: NACTO.org)