

## **The Greenwood Avenue Road Diet is a Failed Experiment**

News flash. After one year of monitoring, the city experiment failed to show any benefits. An astounding 89% in a city survey opposed this lane reduction. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the Council failed to stop this experiment and is proceeding with other road diets on other critical east-west corridors.

The city has highlighted a safe route for all as the benefit, but the police department recorded 32 crashes during the experiment versus 17 crashes for the year prior to the experiment. ODOT recorded an average of 16 crashes per year over a six-year period prior to the experiment. This experiment has double the number of crashes for each type of trip.

Speed was reduced by only 10% and is still about 20% higher than the posted speed limit.

Congestion and volume counts were mostly worthless due to errors in how this “experiment” was conducted. Time delay (congestion) was only measured between Wall Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. This fails to record the substantial time delay for motorists approaching from the west towards Wall Street and from the east towards 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Portland bicyclists and pedestrians shifted to Greenwood when Portland closed a few weeks after the start of this experiment.

The consultants collected only one data point in mid-May 2024 to serve as a “baseline.” This baseline selection conflicts with other historical counts that vary month-to-month and year-to-year. Then the post-construction counts were only collected on three points over 12 months. These few points of data prevent any recognition of a “grouping” of data points to make a reasonable conclusion or eliminate any high or low anomalies. For the record, the first two counts of bicycle and pedestrian trips were a combined 2% of the total trips. The last count was at the beginning of summer and was a combined 5% of the total trips.

For the record, vehicle counts dropped in the experiment which means the Portland closure was not a factor in the increased congestion between Wall Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> street. [Traffic shifted to Mt. Washington.]

The worst failure is the “big deception.” The city plans to extend the road diet eastward through the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street intersection. The city engineer acknowledged that congestion is controlled by intersection capacity. Congestion would skyrocket on Greenwood (and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street) from this planned extension. The city has not shared the 2020 analysis that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street /

Greenwood intersection was operating at 98% of capacity in 2018 and projected to operate at 133% of capacity (Both calculations assumed a 4-lane Greenwood Avenue.)

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the Council added to this string of failures by agreeing to a request by the city engineer for more time to collect more data with no explanation of what that new data might be. In the meantime, continuation of this experiment buys time for the city to continue the replacing vehicle lanes with bike lanes on other “east-west corridors” (Franklin Avenue , Revere Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue access to the Parkway). This experiment already demonstrates lane reduction leads to more congestion not just on this street, but on other streets as drivers shift their routes to cut through your neighborhoods to avoid traffic jams.

Another fact the city hides is that their transportation engineer predicted only a 1% increase in bicycle trip share and 2.6% increase in pedestrians trip share after spending over \$700 million on the Transportation System plan.

The Council has broken their promise to prioritize traffic flow after you made your priority clear in 11 surveys. The city is making vision-driven decisions using committees dominated by bike advocates. If you care how your money is spent, the length of your commute, or vehicles cutting through your neighborhood, you need to voice your concerns now. Educate your neighbors and friends. Email your neighborhood association or email the city manager and Council.