

August 25, 2010

Plan Fort Collins Question of the Week: Q1 - Streets

One of our long-term goals is to “reshape” certain streets to better accommodate functions beyond automobile travel. On what streets do you think it would make sense to do this, and what functions should be enhanced there?

Responses submitted via Online Comment Form:

Answer: I wholeheartedly support this goal. Shields Street from Laporte Ave south past campus (and perhaps beyond) is certainly in need of reshaping. I would like to see through lanes reduced to one in each direction, a center turn lane, and a right turn lane at Mulberry (especially for northbound Shields). Drivers often turn off Shields into our neighborhood on Mantz Place or Sunset Ave to cut through to Mulberry and avoid waiting at the light. These drivers are completely insensitive to the fact that they are in a neighborhood and disregard stop signs and speed limits. This section of Shields is also badly in need of bike lanes!

Answer: I strongly support the idea of separated bike lanes from traffic by using landscaped medians that help reduce stormwater runoff. It would be an added benefit if the surfaces of bike lanes were constructed from permeable materials to further promote groundwater recharge. Thought should be given to creating a north/south and east/west grid of streets with these bike lanes - ideally midway between the major streets.

Answer: I am for improving the streets for bicycling. My husband and I bicycle. I would be for improvement in any street that is reasonable.

Answer: I would like to see Shields, between Laurel and Mulberry (and possibly to Mountain), re-stripped similar to what was done on Laurel between Shields and Howes. I'll leave it to the engineers to decide the feasibility but two issues should be addressed. First, as a bicycle commuter and recreational cyclist there needs to be a bike lane extended north of Laurel and 2) something needs to be done about drivers cutting through the Mantz subdivision to avoid waiting to make a right turn at Mulberry (in full disclosure I live in that neighborhood and cut-through traffic can be significant at certain times of the day). A dedicated right turn lane, if possible, would alleviate this. Signage does nothing.

Answer: Excellent question. We should start by identifying the key activity centers in the community and then, in priority order, build or allocate specific routes for safe bicycle and pedestrian corridors. In some cases this will mean the construction of usable street-grid sidewalks for pedestrians or dedicating a lane of an existing street for bicycles. In other cases, this may mean building off-street bike paths and off street-grid pedestrian pathways. In many instances, these options could be pursued in sequence. Activity centers include CSU, downtown, Harmony/Zeigler shopping area, Lincoln Center, Edora Pool/Ice Center, City Park,...

In general, stay away from grid thinking and concentrate on the places that collect people.
Denny Georg

Answer: Your plan for Mason street corridor seems an ideal place to incorporate and showcase all four of the items mentioned. (bikes, sidewalks, transit, storm water). This will give a great N/S corridor. Other streets that could benefit and make great thoroughfares for alt transportation. Remington to East Stuart and then on out to the Power trail. West Elizabeth and West and East Laurel to get an east west and around the campus. And West Lake St to get the south side of campus. Swallow to spur off Mason Street Corridor. Timberline would be great. Then hop over to Riverside somehow then connect to Laurel.

Answer: Since your question included suggested biking improvements to streets, here are several quick thoughts and wish lists (all are not necessarily careful thoughts): -W Laporte Ave and W Vine Dr (all the way out to Overland from about Sherwood and Wood Streets, respectively) could be friendlier to bikers. Their shoulders could be better (neater/cleaner, more even) in places, and with bike lanes better designated/delineated on those shoulders. The intersection of Vine and Shields could use improvement. -the intersection of Taft and Elizabeth is not bike friendly -crossing the Mason Street RR tracks on Oak St (and some other streets) is very rough on a bike. It would be nice to see those crossings improved (perhaps with the track structure such as that at Mason and Mountain Ave, and Mason and Laporte) -In my opinion, adding bike-only boulevards on streets that are very wide and quiet (like Magnolia?) or that are otherwise already bike-friendly is not a good use of resources. Such things would look nice and would make a nice statement about FC being bike-friendly (and would be easy to build on those wide streets), but I think the money would be better spent on streets that are currently unfriendly to bikes. -that being said, I have seen confusion in auto drivers crossing west-to-east across Mason on Olive regarding the left-only and straight-ahead lanes. There is some risk there that might be improved on - bike-only boulevards might be nice and feasible on Mason Street? -the current north end of the Mason Street bike trail dead ends on Prospect Road in an area where Prospect is not bike friendly. Of course it will be nice if/when that trail continues across and on up to CSU and Old Town. --the north side of Old Town (such as around Mason and Maple and Cherry) could someday benefit from improvements with bikers in mind (e.g., RR crossings, better marked bike lanes and turns). Separate bike-only blvds in that area might be beneficial and feasible. --I think more thought could be given to "complete routes". What I mean is, even if 90% of a bike trip is on a friendly route, the remaining 10% can be enough to discourage some bikers. Thanks for the chance to give input and wish lists! -CM

P.S. I just sent some "wish list" items regarding your solicitation of suggestions for bike-friendly street improvements, and then thought of more: -there are a lot of bikers and drivers, including some tourists in cars and on bikes, traveling along Lincoln Ave between Old Town and Odell's Brewery and FC Brewery (and up to New Belgium Brewery on Linden). These routes would be a great place for up-scale bike lane improvements and bike boulevards and corresponding bike (and brewery) route signage and striping (for function, safety, and great PR for the city). - the in-street RR tracks on Willow near Lincoln are a hazard. (At least they were for me once.) - Seneca and Dunbar have great bike lanes, but the stretch of Horsetooth Rd connecting them does not have good shoulders, interrupting an otherwise great North-South biking route. (But I have not seen the recent construction work there on Horsetooth.) Thanks again, -CM

Answer: I liked what the pictures showed. They show a high safety factor for cyclists of all ages and is an aesthetically appealing streetscape. As a recreational cyclist I would feel much safer with this street configuration, and perhaps ride more in my leisure time. My question is how much will it cost, and who will pay for it? I don't believe the current proposed sales tax will pass

for a variety of reasons; and that there is pervasive mistrust of government locally and nationally. Throw tough economic times for a significant number of citizens on top of this; and I go back to my question...how much will these and other Plan Fort Collins amenities cost, and who will pay for them? I am not by nature a negative person; I'm trying to be realistic in the current environment!

Answer: I'd really like to see 4-lane arterials in the western part of Old Town reconfigured. These arterials really chop up the neighborhoods (such as Mulberry west of College) and often lack adequate sidewalks (Shields between Laurel and LaPorte). I would suggest that these roads be turned into 3-lane roads with a "road diet", and that as appropriate sufficient sidewalks, tree lawns, bicycle lanes, perhaps even medians, be considered. Elizabeth west of CSU may also be a good candidate. I would also examine Laurel Street north of CSU for safety - eastbound traffic in the mornings is heading directly into the sun at the same time many students are crossing all over the place - it reminds me of the old video game "Frogger ... Additionally: I would examine all arterials for our bike lane standards. None of the arterials have comfortable bike lanes, and some (Lemay) have narrow bike lanes, half of which are occupied by the gutter. Can these roads accommodate a buffered bike lane concept to make cyclists feel safer? The bike lane on Shields is interesting, feeling very safe where there is a planted strip between bike lane and road, but weaving back and forth is a bit uncomfortable.

Answer: I like the idea of bike boulevards as illustrated in the Long Beach simulation. This could accomplish two of the goals listed: 1) it would provide a more effective separation between bikes and cars. I take little comfort when on a bike and noting the only thing that separates me from cars is a white on the pavement; 2) the landscaped separator could receive storm runoff from the street, meeting the goal of more retention of runoff on-site. I would suggest that collector streets would be a good place to locate such boulevards because: 1) they are generally under-utilized by cars given their size; 2) they provide connectivity for bike paths; 3) they would serve as traffic calming on these collector streets which go through neighborhoods. Presently such wide streets promote speeding which is a hazard where children are more likely to be present. I offer an example: Constitution between Drake and Stuart. It is too wide for the traffic load it carries; it provides useful connectivity; traffic generally moves faster than the posted speed limit; on curves, cars cut into bike lanes, not respecting the white line separator. I would be happy to give interested parties a tour to illustrate my points. Thank you, Lloyd Walker

Answer: Before adding more bike lanes or transit- evaluate current ones- for example- on Mason, most bikers I see are riding on the sidewalk- though there are two large bike lanes on that road. Maybe those lanes should be two way- maybe fines should be increased or given on roads like that, maybe signs should be posted, etc. Make that function better before adding new lanes. Also, people still ride bikes in old town ALL the TIME. Make that work better, it's just not feasible to not allow bikes there. or ticket people for doing so- fix the problems before looking at new areas. Same goes for North College.

Answer: While I think Fort Collins does a better job than most cities with bike lanes, many people I talk to tell me they don't feel safe riding (or having their children ride) on the streets. This leads them to either not ride their bikes or, perhaps worse, ride on the sidewalk. When I lived in The Netherlands I was very impressed by their separate bike roads, complete with traffic signals. I think having the medians separating bikes from traffic would be a good move, although I can see where people and businesses would not like the presumed loss of parking. As for specifics, I would like to see more attention paid to sweeping debris out of the bike lanes and extending the bike lanes on North Taft Hill through the intersections at Elizabeth, Mulberry

and Laporte. I would also like to see a bike lane on Prospect east of Shields, as that is a major route for CSU students.

Answer: I feel that by separating both bicycle and pedestrian traffic is something that would be beneficial to promote alternative modes of transportation and makes for safer travel by bicycle and walking/running. I also feel the implementation of bicycle lanes in more locations is something that needs to be addressed. This is especially necessary at busy intersections that are used by both cars and bicyclists. I think the idea of bicycle boulevards is a great idea to introduce cityscape and help slow down traffic in high pedestrian/bicycle areas. Working and focusing on developing additional bicycle lanes and maintaining our existing lanes will help to maintain Fort Collins as a top city for its focus on quality of life and forward thinking. I think that putting designated bike lane marking on Laporte, West of Shields would be useful for both motorists and bicyclists. I am not sure if anything could be done, but I feel that working on a bicycle lane and markings at the Shields and Laurel intersections would be a great place to start. Bicyclists traveling north on Shields are left in a compromising situation if they intend to travel farther north on Shields and enter into the neighborhood to the west of Shields street once they reach the Laurel intersection. Thank you for your consideration.

Answer: Riverside - bike lanes and/or better sidewalks with separation from road Lemay - wider bike lanes and/or complete sidewalks with separation from road North part of Fort Collins

Answer: In general many of the roads feel too wide, so adding sidewalks and mower strips to create better pedestrian access and a more human-scaled streetscape would be welcome overall. I like the idea that these could double as sustainable stormwater filtration as well. Landscaping adjacent to the sidewalk would be preferable to median landscaping because it provides a bit of a safety barrier, aesthetically enhances the streetscape, and in some cases can buffer some sound. Also, median landscaping can sometimes make things like lefthand turns difficult (limiting visibility, cutting off certain intersections and forcing people to make u-turns to get there, etc.). Every street should have sidewalks, and clearly marked crosswalks at reasonable distances so that people don't feel compelled to risk jaywalking. Also, curbs should be square rather than rolled to increase safety (cars can roll up the rolled curbs too easily). Accessibility ramps should be on every street corner for pedestrians of all abilities, wheelchair users, stroller pushers, and maybe the occasional vehicle-dodging cyclist. Landscaped boulevards for bikes look and sound nice. My only concern is very clear crosswalks for pedestrians in this area, as it can create a situation where people have to walk well into the roadway before crossing, and there could be trees or landscaping partially obstructing views of traffic. It makes sense that the busier main arterials should have some sort of barrier around the bike lanes, whether or not people park on the side of the road. On other roads with through traffic, there should be barriers if people are parking on the side of the road, but perhaps regular bike lanes are ok if there is no street parking (or if street parking is only allowed on off-peak hours). All streets should have somewhere safe to bike. Increased transit efficiency, maybe with bus-only lanes or BRT on Shields, College, and Harmony (and maybe Prospect and Drake). There should be effective transit (15 minute headways max during peak hours, 30-40 minutes max on off hours/weekends) from within the neighborhoods south of campus (both north and south of Harmony) up to campus/Old Town as well as from neighborhoods on both sides of Harmony to the business parks along the Harmony strip. Could we use some of the old tracks around old town to get a tram/streetcar running year-round? This could run to/from City Park and maybe even up north. There are areas where the tracks poke out of the road but I'm not sure exactly where they go. There need to be more bike trails/safe, direct bike routes directly to Old Town and through to the transit center north of Old Town. Ideally every neighborhood would have direct bike/pedestrian access to the town center. This could be along College, Lemay/Riverside, Shields, Mulberry, Laporte, or Mountain, or via trails separate

from the roads. Could the Spring Creek Trail be expanded up around campus to run to downtown, or could connections be made safer/easier? Also, is there any talk of changes to the configuration of roads/parking in Old Town? The town center is beautiful and well laid out, but the road is so, so wide. Parking in the middle is a way to use up that space, but for pedestrians it is hard to cross the street (essentially 2 crossings) and also hard to tell whether businesses are open on the other side so it can detract a bit from getting crossover customers for the small businesses. However, if the width is set, that center corridor could be a good place to create trolley/tram platforms or some permanent transit lane. Thanks for the opportunity to submit comments and ideas. Fort Collins is a great town and I look forward to seeing it take shape to become even better!

Answer: It seems completely inappropriate to ask for such input without presentation of related costs - in dollar terms and intersection service level reductions - along with a better introduction of real and perceived benefits of the action. Very much like the City Plan process, where under the visual preference survey asked residents to choose between an attractive design element and less appealing options. In the absence of monetary and opportunity cost context, there is little question as to what choices most people will make in such circumstances. Then again, the City seems well aware of that material defect in the input process and repeatedly ignores the issue....until it comes time to pay for it with a tax increase. STOP ASKING FOR VALIDATION OF A POLITICLA AGENDA UNLESS AND UNTIL YOU ARE PREPARED TO FULLY DISCLOSE COSTS!

Answer: Campus West area needs help. Heavy and fast traffic endangers cyclists and pedestrians crossing streets. At the least I recommend "scramble" traffic lights at Elizabeth and Shields and Elizabeth and City Park.



City of Fort Collins, Colorado Check out our new discussion board topic, Plan Fort Collins. We want to hear from you about how to "reshape" certain streets to better accommodate functions beyond automobile travel. Let us know what you think!

August 18 at 8:48am · [Comment](#) · [Like](#)

3 people like this.



Carpenter Family A bike lane on N. Shields would be a great start! Fort Collins Rocks! Keep up the good work!!!

August 18 at 11:07am · [Like](#) · [Flag](#)



Stephanie Katz Giard There seems to be a bike box on the road to change the light at Mulberry and Whedbee but when I am in it and the light for Whedbee turns green, it is so fast my child biking to school can't get through the intersection. It would be great if the green light on Whedbee lasted long enough for bikers to get through - especially the smaller bikers.

August 18 at 3:07pm · [Like](#) · 1 person · [Flag](#)



City of Fort Collins, Colorado Thanks everyone for joining in the conversation! More questions coming your way soon.

: Plan Fort Collins

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Displaying all 9 posts.



City of Fort Collins, Colorado One of our goals is to “reshape” certain streets to better accommodate functions beyond automobile travel. On what streets do you think it would make sense to do this, and what functions should be enhanced there? (See examples below.)

- More bicycle lanes or bike-only boulevards
- More sidewalks or pedestrian-only boulevards
- Enhanced transit service
- Landscaped medians or boulevards designed to treat and carry stormwater in areas with no or limited storm sewers

about a week ago · [Report](#)

Doug Hay North college is the most travelled and needs the most help. Let's make sure when that tax passes that monies are spent finishing curb, gutter and road improvements to North college.

last Wednesday · [Report](#)

Ruth Lytle-Barnaby Most of College needs help, its impossible to ride on College ave. Also Lemay Ave. between Horsetooth and Mulberry would be great. We have a lot of employees at PVH that would love to bike to work and Lemay does not feel safe.

last Wednesday · [Report](#)

Amy Randell A continuous sidewalk on both sides of North College would be a great improvement. This would also be a good place for a bike lane separated by a median from the highway traffic.

last Thursday · [Report](#)

Brian Lindecker The city badly needs a dedicated bike path between Fort Collins and Loveland. There needs to be separation between the bikers and the drivers. I would also vote for more bike-only, separated lanes along any/all of the major streets (College, Shields, LeMay, Mulberry, Prospect, Drake, Horsetooth etc.).

The Spring Creek trail is great but there are few avenues to getting around town safely and getting chores done.

There appears to be a growing hostility between bikers and drivers. The more they can be separated from another, the better.

I would be far more likely to bike around town if I felt safer.

last Thursday · [Report](#)

Lynn Cudlip Where ever possible consider median storm water features that reduce the need for conventional curb and gutter. The storm water features could take on different form from current features. Instead of elevated planted areas, you may consider depressions or rain gardens which serve to infiltrate water.

Prospect between Shields and Remington needs to have a separated bike lane established.

The Timberline and Drake stoplight timing needs to accomodate pedestrian traffic.

last Thursday · [Report](#)

Kevin Barrier I'm for this idea where it increases the patronage and revenue to the independent business who's sales tax expense keeps the city in business. However, if it decreases accessibility to the business, a pretty median is expensive lipstick on the pig of a boarded up shop and out of unemployed residents.

on Friday · [Report](#)

Biped Fred It seems to me that there are two questions here:

1. Which streets could be modified to produce a more bike/ped friendly environment?
2. Where are more bike/ped friendly streets needed?

As to which streets could be modified to be more friendly I'd say you first have to decide how far you are willing to lower the speed limit. I suspect that question would start all sorts of arguments. As for me, I wouldn't even consider routing bikes along streets with speed limits over 35mph. In fact, I'd make the max speed limit 30mph.

And looking at both questions 1 & 2, It makes no sense to build a wonderful

bike boulevard if it doesn't go anywhere useful, all you end up with is an underused bike path.

So my first candidate street is Stuart between Edora Park and College avenue. The speed limits are not bad, the traffic volume is not bad, and the existing bike lanes could be widened or marked better without interfering with the car traffic too much.

The biggest problem on Stuart right now are the people who use the bike lanes as parking lanes. That includes service vehicles (Comcast and Qwest), delivery vans, and even road construction signs plopped right in the middle of the narrow bike lane.

All you really need is for the City Police to write tickets, but that might be too much to ask. I've seen police cars drive right past cars parked half in the bike lane and half on the sidewalk and they never even slowed down.

Another example of a route that would be very useful for bikes is Timberline between Prospect and Vine. There are some nice wide bike lanes but the speed limit is 45mph, very heavy traffic, and cars regularly drift into the bike lane.

There really isn't a decent alternative route on that side of town, but Timberline could be improved fairly cheaply without interfering with the auto flow. What's needed is some sort of physical separation between bikes and cars.

There is room to expand the pavement on either side of the roadway, and adding any kind of physical barrier between the car lanes and the bike lanes would give cyclists a little better comfort level without interfering with the car traffic.

And finally, what about leveraging the current bike paths along Spring Creek and Poudre River? All you would need is better access points from the surface streets and bike traffic control markings (they are currently non-existent). Then you could start tying many different areas of town together with improved arterial neighborhood routes.

Good luck with this project, I look forward to better streets for bikes and peds soon!

on Friday · Report



Brandon Silar We shouldn't be looking at "certain streets", we should be looking at them all; and looking at how they interface with all other decisions we make during the PlanFC effort. A few places to start . . .

1. Much denser network of bicycle priority infrastructure, including more dedicated infrastructure (similar to Spring Creek Trail, Power Trail, mid-block ped/bike pass-throughs, etc.), new bicycle priority streets (bicycle boulevards), and conscious connections to major nodes (CSU, PSD schools, downtown, midtown, etc.) and transit infrastructure (bus stops, mason street corridor)
2. Implementation of a "bicycle level of service" in the city's Transportation Master Plan and corresponding reductions in auto levels of service where modes conflict, made possible by . . .
3. A "travel mode ranking hierarchy" which prioritizes bicycle flow and safety above auto convenience for local and collector streets at minimum, and minor/major arterials if possible; with linking of initial and O&M financing structures to this ranking hierarchy
4. Where necessary, implement aggressive auto traffic calming methods on bicycle priority streets, including vertical and horizontal deflection techniques (bumps/humps, speed tables, raised crosswalks), pathway modification techniques (full/partial closures, pinch points, chicanes), signage and signal progressions (auto speed reduction, green wave), curb elements (bulb-outs, medians), and general "narrow streets" techniques (narrow auto lanes, curbside parking, street tree programs, minimal curb-cutting, small setbacks)
5. Bicycle lanes on high volume streets; but be careful, studies suggest that motorists give less space to cyclists when cyclists are in a standard bike lane, vs. when they are in mixed flow, therefore . . .
6. More effort put to reconciling animosity between motorists and non-motorists (outreach and education; like the "Coexist" campaign, but with increased focus on motorist education)
7. Where motor/non-motor conflicts are too great, implement street standards to govern street (re)design to include segregated bicycle facilities (cycle tracks)
8. More tailored programs and requirements for bicycle supportive development, including bicycle parking requirements, TDM programs, and non-motor commute incentives
9. More customized traffic law and enforcement for cyclists including signal

pause and rolling stop ordinances

10. Reduced auto parking requirements for new development in order to bring destinations closer to the bikable-scale and to dis-incentivize short trips by car, with corresponding emphasis on shared auto parking strategies where a mix of uses allow

11. Renewed focus on grid-based street networks for future development to maximize route options and minimize arterial street widths (no more loops and lollipops)

19 hours ago · Report