CITY OF BEND

NEIGHBORHOOD GREENWAYS & DIVERTERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

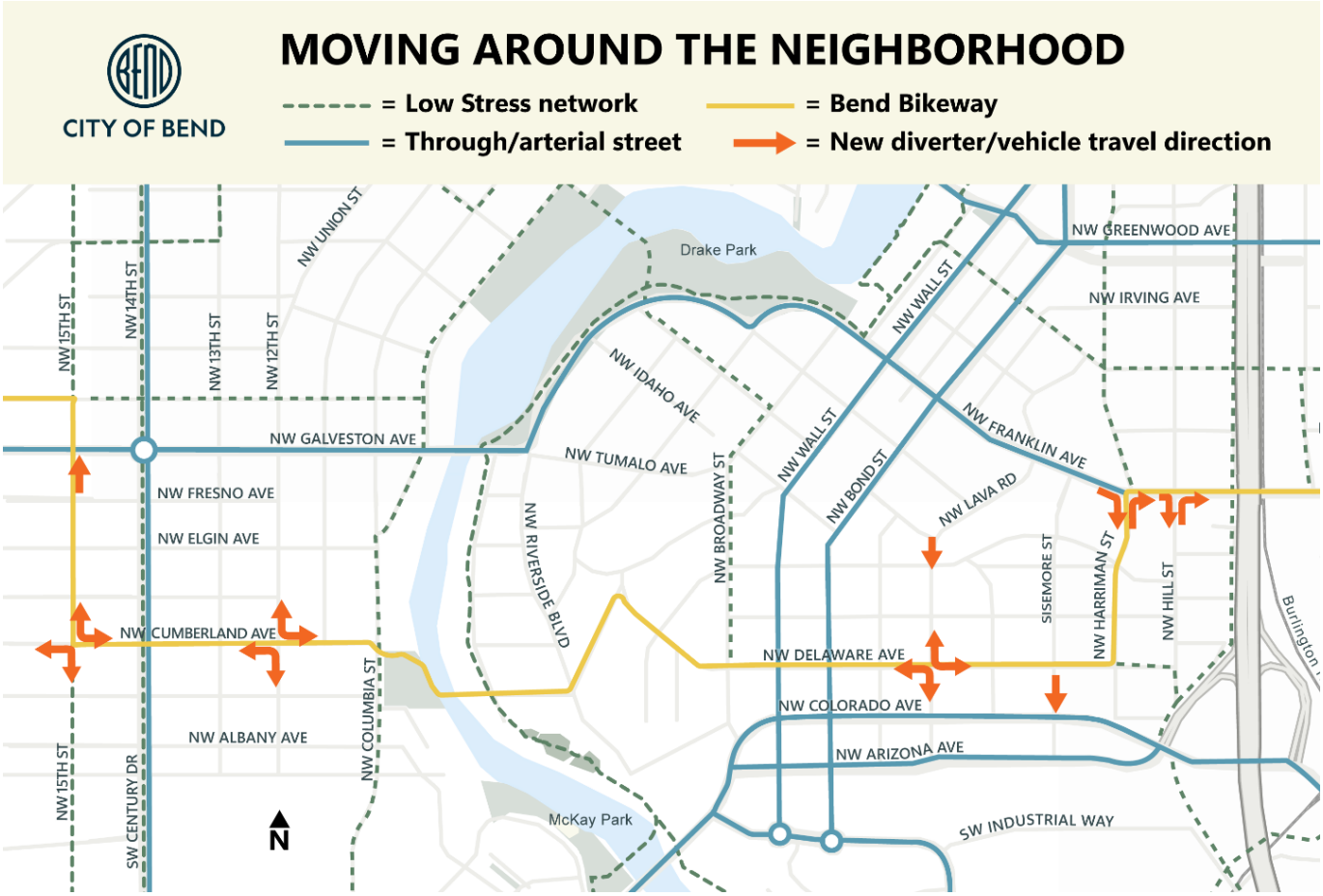
The Bend Bikeway Project: Creating walkable, bikeable, slow and low-traffic neighborhood streets.

Q: Why is the City changing neighborhood streets?

A: In response to community concerns about speeding, increased traffic, safety and gaps in walking and biking routes, the City is updating Bend's neighborhood streets. These changes reflect more than a decade of Bend's growth planning. As the population grows, more people are using the same streets. How we travel needs to adapt. The goal is safer, calmer streets with predictable travel times, fewer crashes, and more options to walk, bike, or take the bus. That means using new tools and designing streets a little differently.

Q: What are diverters, (also known as "modal filters)?"

A: Diverters are physical barriers that redirect motor vehicles while allowing people walking and bicycling to pass through. Local motor vehicle access is preserved by using a different route to move around the neighborhood. Installing these on Neighborhood Greenways in Bend neighborhoods intends to minimize cut-through vehicle traffic in key locations and reduce conflicts between motor vehicles and people who walk or ride bikes.



Q: What are Neighborhood Greenways?

A: Greenways are low-speed residential streets, often in older neighborhoods without sidewalks. The City is redesigning them to improve walking, biking and rolling while still allowing local vehicle access. The City typically starts with signage, roadway markings ("sharrows") and a 20-MPH speed limit. On most streets, these features are enough to create a comfortable shared street. But, if speeding or cut-through traffic continues, additional traffic calming tools such as diverters, speed humps, traffic circles and parking changes may be added.

Q: How were the diverter locations chosen?

A: The City Council approved diverters at some intersections in Bend along Neighborhood Greenways as part of the Bend Bikeway Project. In the Old Bend and River West neighborhoods, diverters were recently added to reduce cut-through traffic and minimize conflicts with cyclists or pedestrians.

Locations for the new diverters were based on the Bend Bikeway Project routes to meet the 2023- 2025 City Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Goal of building connected and protected crosstown routes. Public feedback collected as part of the Bend Bikeway Project also played an important role, as community feedback showed a desire for Neighborhood Greenways to offer more comfortability than "just paint."

Q: Why Old Bend and River West neighborhoods first?

A: Old Bend and River West are the first neighborhoods to receive these types of diverters because the intersections are centrally located and lie along the Bend Bikeway routes, connecting to many destinations. The Bend Bikeway Project's routes help achieve the 2023-2025 City Council's goal of creating connected and protected crosstown walking and biking routes.

Despite the 20-MPH speeds and sharrows on the Neighborhood Greenways (NW 15th Street, NW Cumberland Avenue and NW Delaware Avenue, for example) community feedback indicated it wasn't enough to change driver behavior on these routes.

Q: Are these routes completed?

A: No. The City is still working to enhance the Bend Bikeway routes in the Old Bend and River West neighborhoods. In addition to the traffic diverters, the City will be installing Wayfinding signs to help people navigate key destinations along the routes, and "Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons" and street lighting to help users safely navigate busier street crossings.

Additionally, there is Bend Bikeway work being done outside of the Old Bend and River West neighborhoods. Visit: **bendoregon.gov/bendbikeway** for more information.

Q: Why is the City improving walking and biking on Neighborhood Greenways instead of building separated paths in these neighborhoods?

A: In River West and Old Bend neighborhoods, building separated paths on streets like Galveston, Riverside and Franklin would require substantial right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation and long-term construction. This would be highly disruptive and cost tens of millions of dollars.

By strengthening the existing Neighborhood Greenway routes with the addition of diverters, the City was able to further prioritize walking and biking on about two miles of these routes for a total cost of approximately $60,000 – achieving meaningful safety and comfort, while also avoiding disruptive and costly separated path construction projects.

Q: This is a "pilot project." What does that mean and what happens next?

A: "Pilot project" means the City is installing these treatments on a temporary, trial basis to see how well they work before deciding whether they should be made permanent. Once installed, the City will monitor the pilot project over two years to understand how it affects neighborhood traffic, safety and comfort.

It can take time for driving patterns to adjust after a change is made. Experience in Bend and other Oregon communities shows that Neighborhood Greenways and diverters/modal filters often become more effective as people adapt and choose routes that are better designed for higher traffic volumes.

Q: What is the City monitoring during the pilot project?

A: During the two-year pilot project evaluation period, the City will monitor several factors, including:

- Traffic volumes on the streets with modal filters and adjacent streets to see how traffic patterns change
- Vehicle speeds
- Cut-through traffic patterns
- Safety indicators, such as changes in speeding behavior, yield rates and reported crashes
- Community feedback on safety, comfort, and access

Q: What is the monitoring timeline?

A: Over the next two years this project will be monitoring at the following intervals:

- Before installation: The City has collected existing traffic speed and volume data to establish baseline conditions.
- After installation (spring/early summer 2026): The City will be use observations and input from community to make minor adjustments at intersections to help balance local access needs with cut-through traffic targets.
    - The City is taking feedback on the diverters through a simple comment form located on the **Bend Bikeway Project webpage.** The comment form will be vital in this stage, and in following stages.
- Short-term (three months): The City will be collecting new traffic and speed data after traffic patterns in the areas have adjusted, and before the Franklin Avenue underpass closure (planned to start September 2026).
- Mid-term (around 12 months): Continued monitoring and community feedback.
- Long-term (two years): The pilot will remain in place long enough to evaluate seasonal changes, construction impacts and longer-term behavior shifts.

Q: These are an eyesore. Why didn't you make them more aesthetically pleasing?

A: The materials were selected because they were inexpensive, effective and easy to adjust based on feedback. Removal of the temporary traffic signs will result in a cleaner look. The City is also looking into ways to provide a more refined appearance. As this program is monitored, different materials could be incorporated.

Q: Who makes final decision about the diverters pilot project?

A: Following this two-year pilot project, City staff led by the City Engineer, will analyze the monitoring data and community feedback. The findings will be shared with City Council and the community. Based on those results, the City may make the modal filters permanent, adjust or enhance the design, expand the approach to other neighborhoods, or remove these diverters if they are not meeting the project goals.

Q: How do emergency response vehicles get through these, and how do they impact response times during an emergency in these neighborhoods?

A: Emergency services were involved throughout the design process to ensure continued emergency access. Fire, ambulance and police services use routing software that accounts for street restrictions such as traffic diverters. These changes may alter which streets responders use to reach a call on these specific streets and could result in increases in response times. However, emergency access to all locations is maintained and overall emergency response capability is not currently compromised.

Q: How does snow removal work on these intersections?

A: To our experienced plow crews, these features are no different than the dead-end streets, partially-built streets, medians, curb extensions and speed humps in other areas of town. The plow crews annually adjust their routes as new streets get built or reconstructed. Where we have areas that the plow can't reach such as the paths, bridges, and roundabout crossings, we have crews operate smaller sized equipment and do hand-shoveling work.

Q: How does waste hauling work or mail delivery work on these intersections?

A: Services will be maintained.

Q: Won't reducing traffic on certain streets create more traffic on other streets in the neighborhood? What are you doing to protect safety on those streets that are also in neighborhoods and are now seeing more traffic? What about longer delays on the main streets?

A: Creating safer, connected routes for people to walk, bike, and wheel is an important strategy to reduce traffic overall.

When the pilot project was being designed, traffic modeling showed that in the long-term, after drivers readjust their travel habits, traffic would change and not overload nearby neighborhood streets. Modeling suggests that majority of traffic will reroute to roads that are intended for larger volumes of traffic, however some local traffic rerouting to other local roads is still expected. The City will be monitoring volumes and speeds of traffic over the pilot project.

Q: Why did you have to remove some parking spots?

A: It is typical for streets to have 20' of no parking ahead of intersections to preserve safe sight lines. In many neighborhoods, curb paint has worn off over time, and people got used to parking right up to the intersections.

The City is re-establishing the 20' zone that should have always been there, and we recognize some parking spaces will be removed. We are attempting to limit the number of parking spaces that get removed at traffic diverter intersections as much as possible.

Q: In some locations, two one-way lanes seem to be sharing the same space. How does that work?

A: Unintended driving patterns have been seen at some of the intersections. Based on community feedback and observation, we are looking at best ways to adjust diverters to better serve local traffic, while still prioritizing bikes and pedestrians. The City appreciates hearing input and experiences.

Q: There are many different approaches to traffic calming across the City. How do you pick which tool is used?

A: A variety of tools can improve safety, slow down traffic and lower traffic volumes as part of street design.

The City has used similar traffic calming tools - mostly as center medians - on busier streets including the Greenwood Avenue and Hill Street median, or the Wilson Avenue and 2nd Street median. We've also used curb extensions in many neighborhoods to slow turning vehicles, and we've built turn-restriction diverters (for example, 8th and Kearney). Greenways are often a phased process – when initial actions don't change driver behavior, additional improvements are needed.

Traffic Calming Tool	Description	Target Action
Curb extensions (bulb-outs)	Narrow the roadway at intersections or crossings to shorten crossing distance and improve visibility.	Reduce conflicts
Modal filters	Allow people walking and biking to pass through while limiting or redirecting vehicle traffic.	Reduce volume
Diverter / modal filter	Physically redirects vehicle movements while maintaining walking and biking connections.	Reduce volume
Diverter / right-turn only	Restricts certain vehicle movements (such as through- or left-turns) while allowing local access.	Reduce volume
Speed hump	Vertical deflection in the roadway that encourages lower driving speeds.	Slow speeds
Raised crossing	Elevated pedestrian or bike crossing that improves visibility and reinforces slower speeds.	Slow speeds / Reduce conflicts
Traffic circle	Small circular intersection that slows vehicles and reduces conflict points.	Slow speeds / Reduce conflicts

Q: How was the community informed and engaged with this project?

A: The Bend Bikeway Project Design Update Open House on February 29, 2024 was publicized by:

- Mailers sent all owners and occupants along these existing neighborhood greenways
- Media coverage via KTVZ, Bend Bulletin and Central Oregon Daily
- Email invitations sent to the 175 subscribers of the previous Neighborhood Greenways project mailing list
- Socia media posts with each channel reaching about reaching approximately 2,000 people
- A key takeaway from this round of engagement is that the community wanted a higher level of service than currently offered on the existing Neighborhood Greenway routes by further limiting vehicle speeds and volumes.

The Bend Bikeway Informational Open House (Online Only) December 16, 2024 was publicized by:

- Mailers to all owners and occupants along the existing Neighborhood Greenways
- Media coverage as mentioned above
- Project email list ~ 500 subscribers
- Construction notification postcards mailed to residents within 250 feet of each intersection to let them know there would be construction soon
- Neighborhood fliers mailed to neighborhoods impacted in late March of 2026

The City will continue to engage with the community members in a variety of ways, including future pop-up events. You are invited to provide direct feedback through the comment form at **bendoregon.gov/bendbikeway**.

Q: How can I learn more?

A: **bendoregon.gov/bendbikeway**

Join a bike tour on May 5 to tour these. Bike tour departs from City Hall promptly at 5:30 p.m. and finishes by 7 p.m.

Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities & Language Assistance Services
You can obtain this information in alternate formats such as Braille, electronic format, etc. Free language assistance services are also available. Please email **accessibility@bendoregon.gov** or call 541-693-2198. Relay Users Dial 7-1-1. All requests are subject to vendor processing times and should be submitted 48-72 hours in advance of events.

Servicios de asistencia lingüística e información sobre alojamiento para personas con discapacidad
Puede obtener esta información en formatos alternativos como Braille, formato electrónico, etc. También disponemos de servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Póngase en contacto en correo electrónico **accessibility@bendoregon.gov** o número de teléfono 541-693-2198. Los usuarios del servicio de retransmisión deben marcar el 7-1-1. Por favor, envíe sus solicitudes con 48-72 horas de antelación al evento; todas las solicitudes están sujetas a los tiempos de procesamiento del proveedor.