

12th Street Buffet Proposal

Safe and Comfortable Options for All Users of 12th St

Overview

The 12th Street Buffet is a quick-build to durable interim proposal that installs a parking-protected bike lane on 12th Street between Pacific and Taylor by repurposing one of the two existing northbound vehicle lanes*. It runs as a 3-month trial, then transitions to a durable build using long-lasting but adjustable materials, so future Heights Streetscape Plan improvements can layer in without costly rework.

Like a buffet, it serves every user of the street: parking and predictable flow for drivers, shorter and safer crossings for walkers, protected space for cyclists, and preserved parking access for businesses.

The trial period gives the city real-world data before committing further. If the evaluation is positive, the temporary materials are swapped for durable ones (thermoplastic markings, heavier delineators, permanent signage) while the layout stays the same and stays adjustable.

Compared to other interim approaches, this proposal preserves the district's parking supply and gives drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians the same flow they'll experience in the final Heights Streetscape buildout, so people only have to learn the street once.

This is an alternative approach to the bicycle-handling portion of the 30% design currently in progress for 12th Street between Taylor and Pine.

Before and After Photos

Before



Source: Hood River, Oregon, The Heights – Crafting our Vision (2018)

After



Source: City of Philadelphia



Source: Megan Ramey



Source: City of Roanoke

Side by Side Comparison

Adopted Plan	Current Proposed Interim	This Proposal
		<p>Rough mock up - scale needs to be verified.</p>

Scope of Work

Trial Phase (Months 1–3)

- Reduction of 12th Street vehicle traffic from 2 northbound lanes to 1 northbound lane between Pacific and Taylor
- Pacific to Belmont: Conversion of the second northbound travel lane to a 2-way bikeway
- Belmont to Taylor: Conversion of the second northbound travel lane to on-street parking, maintaining parking supply. Installation of a 2-way separated bikeway on the east side curb with a 2-foot buffer between the parking lane and bikeway to accommodate vehicle door opening
- Use of temporary materials (paint, flexible delineator posts, and signage) that allow easy adjustment during evaluation

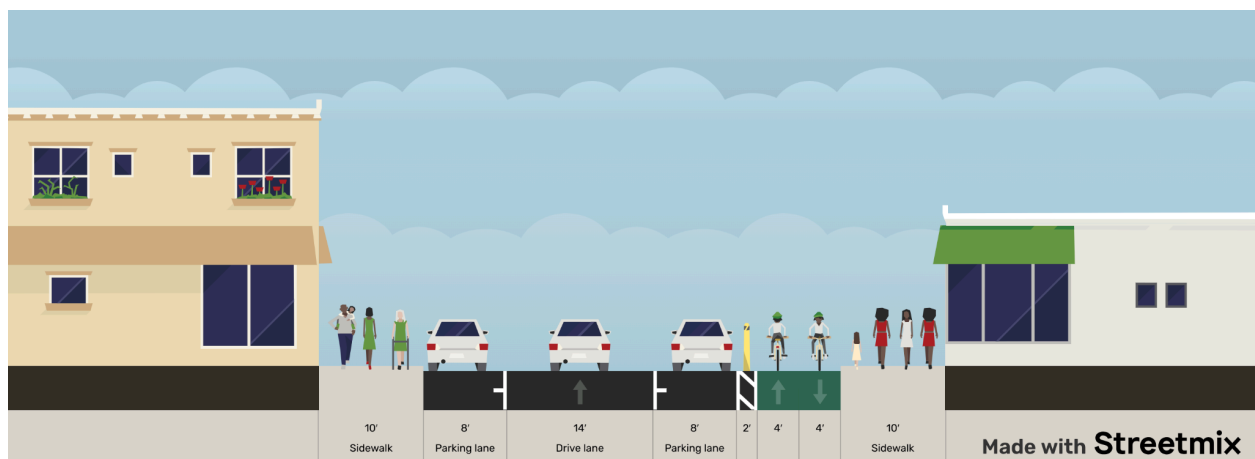
Durable Lightweight Implementation (Month 4 onward)

Following trial evaluation, temporary materials are upgraded to more durable lightweight infrastructure while preserving the same general layout:

- Thermoplastic pavement markings in place of standard paint, for longer lifespan and better reflectivity
- Heavier-duty flex posts or rubber curb delineators at key buffer points and intersection approaches
- Permanent regulatory, wayfinding, and informational signage
- Design refinements informed by trial data (buffer widths, intersection treatments, etc.)

This approach keeps the infrastructure adjustable while providing the permanence and durability expected of established street design. The corridor will be refined in the future as part of the adopted streetscape plan without the cost or disruption of full reconstruction.

Street Cross-Section (Belmont to Taylor)



Note: Parking in the center was created by repurposing the second northbound travel lane. The 2-foot buffer between the east side parking and the 2-way separated bikeway accommodates the swing of vehicle doors while protecting cyclists from being struck into traffic.

The arrangement also provides for 14 feet of distance between bikes and cars traveling in opposite directions, eliminating the need for bulky freeway scale jersey barriers.

The Buffet Approach: Benefits for All

This design serves the different needs of everyone who travels 12th Street:

- **For Drivers:** Maintained parking supply, reduced through-traffic congestion, and more predictable street operations with lower speeds
- **For Walkers:** Separation from bicycle traffic, shorter crossing distances due to single vehicle travel lane, and fewer conflict points with vehicles changing lanes
- **For Cyclists:** Comfortable, separated infrastructure with parking protection from traffic and adequate buffer distance from opening car doors, accessible to riders of all ages and abilities
- **For the District:** Alignment with the adopted Heights Streetscape Plan and evidence-based best practices

Project Timeline

Months 1–3: Trial Phase. Temporary installation operates in real-world conditions while the city collects data and community feedback. Minor adjustments can be made quickly during this period using the flexible materials.

End of Month 3: Evaluation and Decision Point. The city reviews collected data, public input, and observed outcomes, and decides whether to transition to permanent installation, extend the trial with modifications, or discontinue the project.

Month 4 onward: Permanent Lightweight Implementation. Assuming positive evaluation, temporary materials transition to durable lightweight infrastructure with any design refinements identified during the trial. The design remains adjustable for future refinements.

Cost and Implementation

This project uses quick-build methods throughout both phases. The trial relies on paint, flexible delineator posts, and temporary signage. Transition to permanent lightweight implementation involves upgrading to thermoplastic markings, more durable delineators, and permanent signage while preserving the same general layout.

The phased approach significantly reduces financial risk compared to full reconstruction while still delivering lasting infrastructure. Ongoing maintenance (periodic flex post and thermoplastic refresh) is minimal compared to traditional capital projects.

Real-World Evidence from Philadelphia

The City of Philadelphia implemented parking separated bike lanes (PSBLs) on Market Street and JFK Boulevard in 2018. Results from the city's [comprehensive evaluation](#) demonstrate measurable benefits:

- Safety: Nearly 20% decrease in total crashes after installation, with 20% reduction in injury crashes
- Vehicle speeds: Average 6% reduction in speeds across all time periods
- Bicycle usage: 96% average increase in cyclists using the PSBL side of the street
- Comfort: Cyclists reported feeling significantly safer in protected facilities
- Parking maintained: The facilities preserved on-street parking capacity

Learning and Evaluation

The 3-month trial generates data that informs both the go/no-go decision and any refinements to the permanent design. The trial is deliberately short enough to reach a timely decision but long enough to observe patterns across varied weather and traffic conditions. Trial timing should capture an active cycling season to produce representative usage data.

During the trial, the City will collect:

- Vehicle speeds and volumes before and after implementation
- Bicycle usage and comfort observations
- Pedestrian behavior and crossing safety
- Parking occupancy and business district impacts
- Community feedback from residents and businesses

Findings from the trial directly inform:

- The decision at the end of Month 3 on whether to proceed to permanent installation
- Design refinements incorporated into the permanent light phase
- Future extensions of the buffet approach to other corridors in the Heights and beyond

If the trial reveals issues that cannot be addressed through design adjustments, the temporary materials can be removed at minimal cost and the corridor returned to its original configuration.

Analysis and Implementation Considerations

The following items should be evaluated before implementation, and would form the natural scope of a staff analysis of this alternative.

Right-of-way fit and surface conditions: A field survey of 12th Street between Pacific and Taylor should confirm that the proposed cross-section fits within the existing 60-foot right-of-way. The survey should also verify that the bikeway area provides a smooth, rideable surface, excluding any adjacent gutter pan, and should document any surface defects, gutter conditions,

or drainage issues that could affect bikeway usability or require mitigation.

ADA curb ramp alignment: Because the proposed layout matches the Heights Streetscape Plan, curb ramps installed under the 2028 ADA deadline can be placed in their intended long-term locations rather than installed in interim positions and rebuilt later.

Connectivity and access: The analysis should confirm that the Pine-to-Taylor Safe Routes to School connection is improved, and should address transit stop placement, business loading access, and emergency vehicle access on the single-lane segment.

Operations and maintenance: The analysis should address winter operations, including snow plowing compatibility with flex posts and parking-protected configurations, and ongoing maintenance expectations for both the trial-phase and durable-phase materials.

Cost estimate: A detailed estimate should be developed for each phase.

Trial phase:

1. Pavement markings and paint, including bikeway striping, parking reconfiguration, intersection markings, and buffer markings
2. Flexible delineator posts and installation
3. Temporary signage, including regulatory, informational, and wayfinding
4. Temporary traffic control during installation
5. Contingency for minor surface repairs if needed

Durable phase:

1. Thermoplastic pavement markings
2. Upgraded delineators, such as heavier-duty flex posts or rubber curb elements
3. Permanent signage
4. Design refinements identified during the trial

Preliminary cost ranges should be developed for each phase, refined after the field survey is complete.

*A demonstration of the ability for the roadway to maintain function with only 1 lane open during peak AM weekday travel was completed on 4/20/26 as part of materials assessment being performed in the roadway. A single lighted indicator sign and cones and no human flagging were shown to be adequate.

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