

January, 2025

The Honorable Mayor Mike Johnston and DOTI Executive Director Amy Ford

We applaud the goal from Mayor Johnston and Director Ford to get more people using sustainable transportation. We hope you will listen to the community of people who bike and walk in Denver on what is needed to get more people feeling comfortable and safe enough to use sustainable transportation on our streets.

We are writing to you to propose Denver's first neighborhood greenway. This affordable design element can be implemented by adding island diverters on Denver's existing neighborhood bikeways every 3 blocks. Doing this would turn our streets into greenways that are friendly for residents who walk, bike, and roll. It could even be done next to a school like Skinner Middle School on the West 41st Avenue Bikeway to improve safe routes to schools for children.

- They accomplish Mayor Johnston's goal of a more vibrant Denver, utilizing a low-cost intervention to turn a handful of residential streets into parks that residents can enjoy. • This design has already been implemented in places like San Luis Obispo on the [Morro St Bikeway](#), and the greenway concept is also popular in places like Portland, OR and Vancouver, BC. We could even add in amenities such as park benches like Vancouver, did. Imagine a street that is safe enough that parents feel comfortable letting their children play in the street.
- In addition, neighborhood greenways align with [your support of the VAMOS plan](#) during your mayoral campaign, which calls for a large number of diverters to be installed on neighborhood bikeways. Councilmembers Gonzales-Guitierrez, Parady, Flynn, Kashmann, Watson, and Alvidrez also supported the VAMOS plan during their recent campaigns for City Council.

This letter is a follow-up to the [letter sent to Mayor Hancock and Executive Director Phipps in December of 2022](#) asking the same. We hope this administration will take this ask from the community more seriously than the previous administration did.

Denver's current execution of neighborhood bikeways lacks bold vision and buy-in from the community. The residential shared streets during the pandemic were [widely successful and popular with residents](#). [A survey showed](#) that 86% of residents wanted them to continue. The subsequent designs are watered-down compromises that have resulted in a very small portion of the population feeling comfortable on them for biking or walking. While DOTI utilizes NACTO guidelines calling for traffic volumes of less than 2,000/day, this cutoff ignores the reality that hourly traffic volumes are [much higher during rush hour](#) and that on a narrow residential street, even one close pass by a driver can be [uncomfortable](#) or downright dangerous, and discourage

people from riding a bike again.

We believe that installing diverters that eliminate high speed cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods is something that all community members would get behind. Diverters create what some neighbors fondly call “urban cul-de-sacs” by eliminating cut-through traffic. Diverters allow residents to park in front of their homes and for deliveries to take place. Survey after survey shows that people who bike or would like to bike prefer diverters over roundabouts or speed humps. A recent survey by the Denver Bicycle Lobby shows that 80% of respondents prefer diverters over traffic circles. [A CU Denver study](#) shows that only 19% of neighborhood bikeway users feel “very comfortable/safe” on our current neighborhood bikeways. There is a tremendous opportunity to make residents feel more comfortable while biking.

We’ve seen DOTI often ignore its own design guidelines, but always in favor of drivers, as opposed to making bikeways safer or more comfortable for people who bike. As one example, recently a group of volunteers documented traffic counts of close to [300 cars/ hour during rush hour](#) on the Franklin St neighborhood bikeway. That is five times the recommended volume of 50 cars per hour on a neighborhood bikeway. The single one-way diverter that was installed does not achieve the necessary traffic volume reductions, and DOTI has informed us there is no funding available to remedy the situation.

We hope this new administration will innovate and run a temporary pilot program for our first neighborhood greenway in the summer of 2025, creating a greenway with two-way island diverters (the one-way diverters are too easy to drive around) every 3 blocks on one residential neighborhood bikeway. To quote you [Mr. Mayor in your support of VAMOS](#), “We don’t have to overbuild at the start. We can take a big idea, and start with a very small step. One small step at a time until we get to this big dream, of a bikeable, walkable Denver.” We hope to be able to work with your administration on this.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Regards,

The Denver Bicycle Lobby
Bike Streets
Denver Streets Partnership

ABOUT DBL: Denver Bicycle Lobby is a rapidly growing group of over 500 residents of Denver who advocate for more sustainable and vibrant streets.

ABOUT Bike Streets: Bike Streets is a low-stress Denver Bike Map working to make it easier for people in Denver to Bike.

ABOUT Denver Streets Partnership: DSP is a coalition of community groups advocating for people-friendly streets in Denver.

Addendum

Example of Vancouver, British Columbia Neighborhood Greenway Diverter



Example of Vancouver Neighborhood Greenway Diverter



Morro St Bikeway- San Luis Obispo



Flex post diverter in Portland with concrete islands. Could also use precast concrete.



Flex post quick build diverter in Portland



Planter Diverter in Portland



Diverter in Portland



Bike Streets Diverter Demonstration Project



Bike Streets Diverter Demonstration Project



Example of diverter near the University of Denver on the 1800 block of E Jewell Avenue