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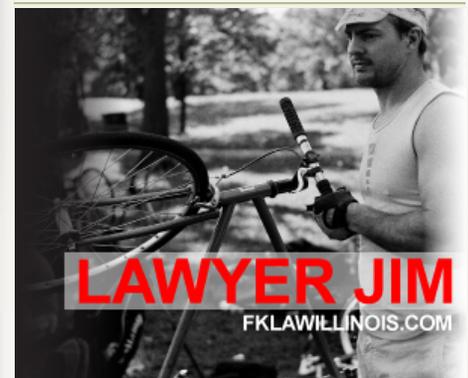
CDOT Acts Quickly To Remove Dumpster Blocking Dearborn Bike Lane

January 9, 2014 [13](#)

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Tuesday, September 13, 2016

20 Comments

CDOT Has a Full Plate of New and Upgraded Bike Lane Infrastructure

by [Steven Vance](#)

CDOT is working on a new design for the intersection of Cortland Street and Marshfield Avenue near the eastern entrance to the Bloomingdale Trail.

During [last week's Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council meeting](#) Chicago Department of Transportation staffers shared a number of updates on the city's bike network.

At the event, CDOT planner Mike Amsden, who manages the department's bikeways program, explained how funds from Blue Cross Blue Shield's \$12 million sponsorship of the Divvy bike-share system are helping to pay for bike lane maintenance.

While new Chicago bikeways are often paid for by federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement grants, this money can't be used to repair existing bike lanes. Therefore funding for restriping faded lanes has to be cobbled together from various sources, which is why many bikeways shown on the city's bike map are actually faded to near-invisibility.

A primary source for bike lane maintenance is CDOT's Arterial Resurfacing program, paid for by state and federal funds. When a street is repaved through this program, CDOT will use the funding to restripe existing bike lanes or, if deemed appropriate, add new bikeways.

Another potential funding source for restriping is the \$1.32 million in discretionary "menu" money allocated annually to each of Chicago's 50 wards, but only a fraction of the wards have opted to spend the funding that way. From 2012 to 2015, only nine aldermen or participatory budgeting elections allocated menu money for bike lane restriping or construction, spending a grand total of less than \$1 million, according to a review of menu expenditures posted on the city's [Office of Management and Budget website](#). That was less than 0.4 percent of the \$264 million in menu funds available to all 50 aldermen during that four-year period.

Fortunately, in recent years CDOT has been using a significant amount of the Blue Cross sponsorship for bike lane maintenance. From 2014 (when sponsorship started) to 2016, about \$2 million of that \$12 million has been earmarked for restriping, according to CDOT spokesman Mike Claffey. He said that those funds pay for restriping of all markings on the affected street – including crosswalks and center-line stripes as well as the bike lanes – “to make it safer for everyone.”

Several important downtown bike lane streets that are currently in terrible shape due to construction projects will be repaved soon:

- ▶ Kinzie from Desplaines to Wells – scheduled for mid-September
- ▶ Dearborn from Madison to Wacker – scheduled for mid-September
- ▶ Randolph between Michigan and Clinton – construction started last week

Amsden also discussed new bike lane construction, and upgrades to existing bikeways, that are currently in progress or slated to begin very soon. These projects include three miles of brand-new or improved protected bike lanes, including some stretches of curb protection and special treatments at intersections.

On **Franklin Boulevard** between Sacramento and Central Park in Humboldt Park, the existing protected lanes – located curbside in the boulevard’s center drive and aside delineated flexible posts – were removed as part of a street repaving project. The protected lanes will soon be rebuilt with some concrete protection, Amsden said.



Crews are wrapping up construction on a curb-separated bike lane on Elston approaching the intersection of Damen and Fullerton. Photo: John Greenfield

As part of the redesign of the Fullerton/Damen/Elston intersection north of Bucktown, **Elston Avenue** has been moved north and east to bypass the intersection of Fullerton and Damen. Fully curb-protected bike lanes are being added to the new curved stretch of Elston and the lanes are nearly finished. [Check out our recent post about that project here.](#)

Randolph in the Loop will also be getting [a protected bike lane](#) as part of the resurfacing project.

CDOT is also working on striping 14 miles of buffered bike lanes, which have additional striping on one or both sides of the bike lane to help keep cyclists away from moving traffic and/or opening car doors. These include a 2.6-mile segment buffered lanes of **Cottage Grove** from 95th and 115th. Amsden said that new bikeway will connect with five Metra stations and carry bicyclists to the [Pullman Historic District](#), which was designated as a national monument last year.

Other bikeway projects planned for completion this year include an extension of the [Wood Street](#) neighborhood greenway, which currently runs from Milwaukee to Augusta in Wicker Park and Ukrainian Village, south to Hubbard. The Wood greenway may also [be extended north to Cortland](#) in 2017, and a neighborhood greenway may be added on Cortland from Damen to Ashland.

The department also plans to build a new neighborhood greenway on [Glenwood Avenue](#) from Broadway to Ridge in Edgewater, including a southbound contraflow lane. The Glenwood greenway will eventually be extended [north through Rogers Park](#) to the Evanston border.

CDOT is also designing new neighborhood greenways on **School and Roscoe Streets** in Lakeview, from Lincoln Ave. to the Lakefront Trail. They also plan to create a connection from the south end of the **Dearborn two-way protected bike lane** at Polk to 9th and Michigan.

Finally, CDOT is still working on designs for a proposed neighborhood greenway on Manor Ave. in Ravenswood Manor, which Amsden said was one of the most controversial projects. We'll have more details on that story tomorrow.

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johnaustingreenfield

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Thor · 16 days ago
 "Kinzie from Desplaines to Wells – scheduled for mid-September"

Yay, it really needs it.
 1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → Thor · 16 days ago
 The sidewalks and curb ramps at Kinzie/Kingsbury are under construction right now.
 2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



forensicgarlic → Steven Vance · 14 days ago
 and they've done a pretty poor job accomadating pedestrians while they're working on them.
 1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



RW · 16 days ago
 Just a reminder to keep an eye out for community meetings about these things! I attended the one pertaining to the proposed Dearborn PBL and Printer's Row improvements and the meeting was full of very aggressive NIMBYs protesting against very modest changes. At one point I was told to grow up and buy a car by one older man, and the CDOT reps were told by several people that they were incorrect about how many car travel lanes exist on Polk.

So the biking, walking and transit community needs to be at these things, to provide a counter to the folks who should probably just move to the burbs.
 4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → RW · 16 days ago
 Good point!

Part of the problem is that CDOT doesn't advertise these meetings themselves, and rely on the meeting host (an organization or an alder) to promote it. So the marketing really goes out to a limited geographic area, and not to the people who use that area.
 2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



RW → Steven Vance · 16 days ago
 Oy. Is there no master calendar that CDOT produces with a schedule of all these events? It wouldn't be too hard to populate it into a Google Calendar, and to share it via here and the Chainlink.
 1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → RW · 16 days ago
 They don't produce a calendar or a schedule.

The best way I know to be apprised of upcoming meetings is to be on the mailing list of a bunch of different alders.
 1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Pat · 16 days ago
 That Cortland rendering:
 That intersection isn't a 4 way stop, nor does that rendering show it to be one. Why would cyclists use the turn out, rather than just merging into the lane and turning left? Pointless.

I still don't understand why they never put a sidewalk ramp from the western entrance of the 606 directly to the street on Marshfield. As it stands now, cyclists have to turn into the alley north of it and ride the sidewalk for a ~50ft to access the entrance.



Johnaustingreenfield

Fixed, thanks.

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Concobhar Mac Conmara

LOL we should ban you from the page!

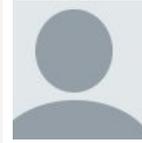
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Jacob Wilson

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Henry

I've called 911 twice about that intersection in recent months: once when it was frozen exactly...

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The real issue is the section from Marshfield to the Cortland Bridge. If anything, improving that that should be a priority over all else.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



David P. → Pat · 16 days ago

I think what is shown in the rendering is a good start, but any bike lane will immediately be filled with cars whose drivers are stopped there while waiting to pick up people from the Metra station.

I do think a stop sign at that intersection would be good to have. There is already a stop sign at every other intersection between Ashland and Damen. as it exists, if you go through Ashland on the green, you are faced with merging left across faster-moving car traffic to turn left onto Marshfield, or else stopping and doing a box turn when traffic clears. If you are stopped at Ashland and proceed on the green, you have faster-accelerating car traffic on your left that you have to contend with. In the afternoon rush hour, drivers blocking the box on Ashland are rampant, so you can often get ahead of car traffic since bikes can make their way through the intersection when cars can't.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → David P. · 16 days ago

I'd rather there not be a stop sign, because I don't want to be obligated to stop when there's no traffic.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Pat → David P. · 16 days ago

I can already picture a driver thinking "Hey that turnout is a perfect place to wait for for my honey to get off the train!".

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → Pat · 16 days ago

YUP.

Anywhere a car can maneuver into, a car will be there (at some point).

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



briandelmore → Pat · 16 days ago

The turn-out is safer because it allows you to see both ways before crossing, and doesn't force you to go into the turn lane. Especially good for less experienced cyclists who may not be comfortable maneuvering into the turn lane, especially when it's a highway underpass.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Pat → briandelmore · 16 days ago

I respectfully disagree.

I can see many instances of people following this turnout only to stop in the bike lane before crossing (and hitting or being hit by a cyclists going straight) or just not stopping at all.

Would be an OK design if it were coupled with a four-way stop, but like I said, doesn't seem to be the case (based on the rendering)

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → Pat · 16 days ago

Merging requires "taking the lane" which is a skill that not everyone has developed or will developed. This is infrastructure to accommodate those people.

Anyone else is welcome to merge to the left before making

the turn.

I would, personally, prefer a left-turn bay for bikes only, so that a cyclist only has to cross one direction of traffic (not two directions, as CDOT proposes), and it makes merging a little easier.

Here's an example of a bike left turn bay in Portland:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/...>

Here's an example of a right-side left-turn pocket in Portland, just like what CDOT proposes (the difference is that this is a multi-lane one-way road):
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/...>

[see more](#)

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Pat → Steven Vance • 16 days ago

Wouldn't a biker have to merge to get to that turn bay anyway?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Steven Vance Mod → Pat • 13 days ago

Yes.

It's also not ideal, but it accommodates those who feel comfortable merging across one lane (of slower moving traffic because of some other traffic calming things that would be installed simultaneously) and provides a safe waiting area.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



ItsEasyBeingGreen → Pat • 14 days ago

Yes but not sit in the middle of the road waiting for cross traffic to clear.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



johnaustingreenfield Mod → Pat • 16 days ago

"The real issue is the section from Marshfield to the Cortland Bridge. If anything, improving that that should be a priority over all else." Exactly, the Cortland/Ashland intersection is a death trap with terrible sight lines. Fixing it is complicated by the fact that Ashland is an IDOT road, and the state tends to be pretty resistant to making bike/ped improvements at intersections where their goal is to move as many vehicles through per hour as possible. See also: Logan/Western.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



R → johnaustingreenfield • 16 days ago

Not to mention how many people in cars "block the box" during rush hour at Ashland/Cortland..could make a killing writing tickets there

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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