August 13, 2025

Re: Seneca Avenue Reconstruction Project Public Meeting of July 16, 2025

Dear Ms. Howell,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposed Seneca Avenue Reconstruction Project. We have appreciated the opportunities to engage in the public process, and anticipate remaining engaged throughout the successive design presentations and public engagement.

Reconnect Rochester champions transportation choices that enable a more vibrant and equitable community. Our mission supports efforts that are aimed at improving accessibility and expanding mobility options for all people -- regardless of age, ability, income or mode of transportation.

Thank you for reviewing our May input letter and incorporating many elements into the final design presented at the July 17, 2025 public meeting. We greatly appreciate that you and the project team took the time to respond to our initial letter which helps us to understand the city's constraints and methodology. As the project is finalized, we wanted to offer feedback on the design presented at the July 17 meeting.

Intersections with Norton Street and East Ridge Road

Our previous letter emphasized the value of including a protected intersection at Norton Street within this project as they are the preferred design described in both the newly updated AASHTO and NACTO design guides. Cities around the country have already installed them with great success including Milwaukee, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and many more. Research has documented that protected intersections slow drivers, increase driver yielding, and increase safety for vulnerable road users. "**Because of their higher cost, and more permanent nature, capital improvement projects should also incorporate the preferred design features such as sloping curb medians instead of flexible delineator posts and pavement markings, and protected intersections instead of mixing zones**" (AASHTO Bike 7.2.1).

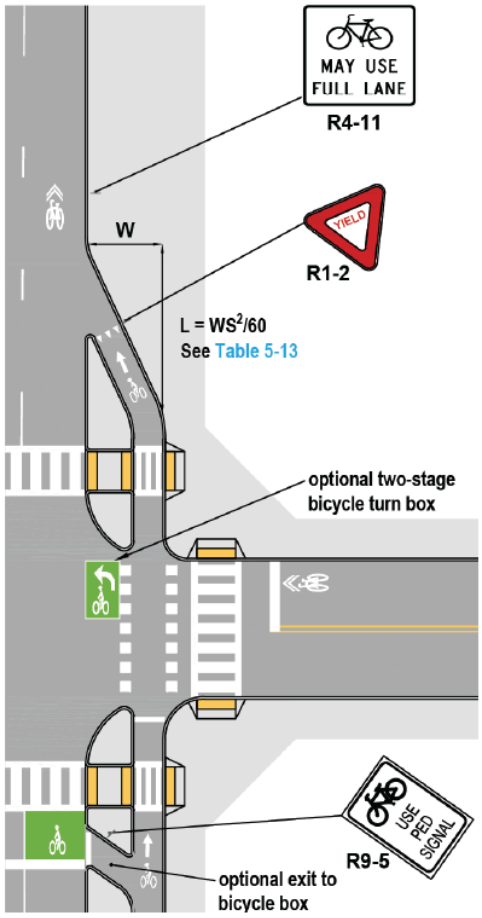

Figure 7-32 from the 2024 AASHTO Bike Guide depicts a transition between a One-Way Separated Bike Lane and a Shared Lane through the intersection. We strongly encourage designers to include this configuration at the intersections with Norton and E Ridge Road.

In the city's response letter, you said a protected intersection would hinder commercial vehicles access and likely require ROW acquisitions. While we believe that commercial vehicle access can be maintained through a protected intersection with the use of recessed stop bars (discussed in AASHTO 5.10.3) or through the installation of mountable truck aprons (discussed in AASHTO 5.10.4), we understand if it is not feasible to incorporate in this project.

If a protected intersection is not practical, we encourage designers to carry the protected bike lane through the intersections at the project boundaries. **"In general, it is preferable for a transition from a separated bike lane to a standard bicycle lane or shared lane to occur on the far side of the intersection (see figures 7-32 and 7-33). This maximizes the safety and comfort of bicyclists through the intersection"** (AASHTO Bike 7.10). Within the context of this project, we would recommend continuing the dedicated bike lane through the intersections of Norton and E Ridge similar to the design depicted in AASHTO 7-32. This design will allow for connectivity and allow drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians to have separate spaces which clearly communicate right-of-way and allow for safe crossing. Without a safe way for cyclists to cross the intersections at the project boundary, the cycle track will be severely underutilised. This design will also allow the future Joseph Ave project to more seamlessly link to the city's investments on Seneca Ave. We also encourage cross bikes, green crosswalks (discussed in AASHTO 5.12.7.2), to be coupled with two stage turn boxes (discussed in AASHTO 5.12.9) at both intersections.

Floating Bus Stop Design

In our previous letter, we advocated for a floating bus stop design as discussed in AASHTO 7.9.14. We wanted to clarify that we are not talking about a temporary solution such as the vectorial bus stop platform as mentioned in the city's reply letter, but we are discussing a permanent solution. Floating bus stop islands are essentially large bump outs which use the parking lane to provide space for bus amenities and protected bike lanes. We encourage all bus stops in reconstruction projects with protected bike lanes to follow the design guidance described in detail in AASHTO's section 7.9.14. Reconstruction projects are the opportunity to build these designs with concrete while milling and resurfacing projects should consider tools such as the vectorial modular bus stop platform when curb changes are beyond the project scope.

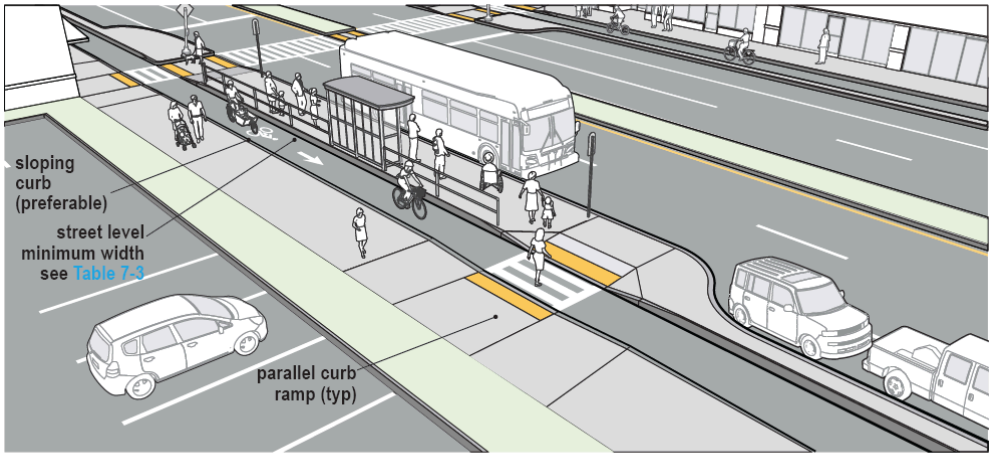

Figure 7-28 from the 2024 AASHTO Bike Guide depicting a Floating Transit Stop Design with a Street-Level Protected Bike Lane crossing behind it. This same configuration can be used with a sidewalk level bike lane. Please refer to AASHTO 7.9.14 for detailed guidance.

Nester/Bastian Bike Boulevard Crossing

Thank you for including a cross walk at the intersection of Nastian/Bastian to accommodate pedestrians using the bus stop as well as cyclists using the bicycle boulevard. As discussed in the public meeting, we want to encourage the project team to evaluate shifting the northbound bus stop to an in-lane stop (following the floating stop design mentioned above) to accommodate a short two way bike lane to connect Nester Street Cyclists heading to Bastian Street via the crosswalk. Offset intersection

transitions are discussed on page 7-63 of the AASHTO bike guide. These transitions are tricky but we encourage the project team to select a design which maximises seamless connectivity as much as possible. Also, an in-lane bus stop will prevent bus delays in re-entering the stream of traffic, improving the transit experience for residents.

Pedestrian Crossing at School 50

We appreciate the project team including a bump out at the pedestrian crossing in front of school 50. However, we caution against a design which will leave a 15' lane at the crossing. This means that the pedestrian crossing distance here will be 26'. Given the turning radius requirements from Seneca Manor Drive, we encourage the use of either mountable truck aprons or a pedestrian island to maximize the safety and comfort of this intersection for school children. As mentioned in our previous letter, we would prefer a pedestrian refuge island as these allow pedestrians to focus on one direction at a time, simplifying the crossing into two easier segments. If this is not feasible, mountable truck aprons could be used here to encourage cars and smaller vehicles to take slower turns while allowing garbage trucks and other larger vehicles to make this movement.
Also, we appreciate the inclusion of "safety bollards" in the design. However, the design appears to indicate only a few bollards covering the entire frontage of the school. The bollard design standards we've seen call for no more than 5' between bollards to maintain safety from car invasion.

We wanted to thank the project team for working with NYSDOT to continue bike infrastructure over route 104 and for eliminating the underutilised turn lanes at this intersection. This will help simplify the intersection and help to create a cohesive link for pedestrians and cyclists. We encourage future capital projects to further explore raised crossings at side streets.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our input.

Sincerely,

Bill Collins
Advocacy Committee Chair

Cody Donahue
Co-Executive Director

Henry Litsky
Policy & Advocacy Coordinator

And…
Mary Staropoli, MPA, Co-Executive Director
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