

From: Rick Hyman

Subject: Public Comment on Item 10 (METRO Rapid Corridors), RTC Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda 10/5/2026

August 15, 2026

To whom it may concern:

The proposed bus stop islands confining bike lanes between them and the curb are problematic for cyclists for several reasons in general:

1. Cyclists are channeled into a narrow pathway with no escape on either side in case there is an obstacle in the way.
2. Those using the bus (waiting, alighting or debarking) are put into the pathway of cyclists and vice versa adding a conflict where there is none now.
3. Cyclists riding on a street may not expect to see bus riders walk or run into their pathway. People rushing to catch a bus may not paying attention to cyclists. Passengers leaving the bus may not see cyclists approaching.
4. Where there is a driveway right beyond the bus stop, a bus is stopped there, a cyclist is riding to the right of the bus, and a motorist is turning right into the driveway, the bus blocks the motorist's ability to see the cyclist and might turn right into the cyclist.
5. The channelized area may fill with debris, hazardous to cyclists. Standard street sweepers can't fit into that narrow space. Plus, although drainage inlets are shown, water can pond in these spaces anyway; witness the cuts in the traffic island on the northeast corner of Ocean and Water Streets often filled with water after a rainstorm.

There are additional specific flaws with the Morrissey/Water intersection design in that it only provides for cyclists turning right from Morrissey Boulevard onto Water Street (not for those traveling straight through or making a left turn) and for cyclists going straight onto Water Street from Soquel Avenue (not for those trying to get into the left turn lane onto Poplar Avenue). Those other cyclists, if knowledgeable, would ignore the marked bike lanes and position themselves accordingly. But they might then endure the wrath of motorists who believe that the cyclists belong in the bike lane. Also, inexperienced or visiting cyclists might find themselves in conflicting situations if they start to follow and then emerge from the channelized bike lanes.

Such bus stop islands have also proved to be of concern to those with impaired vision, as detailed in this article: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8xw2gn8e40o> . Some specific issues:

- Detecting cyclists approaching (ambient noise, quiet bikes)
- Confirming whether an approaching cyclist has stopped or intends to yield
- Orienting themselves to the stop layout
- Navigating to and from the raised platform (especially with guide dog) (source: <https://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/webinars/231128.pdf>).

As a result, a considerable literature has emerged on this topic. There are several design recommendations to address the potential conflicts. But these cost more money. Plus, many of them are directed at slowing or stopping cyclists.

Understandably, there is support for these bus stop islands based on the elimination of the conflicting maneuvers of buses pulling into the bike lane and cyclists having to pass the stopped buses by pulling out into the travel lane or stopping behind the bus. Yes, it is somewhat uncomfortable to experience a bus pulling ahead into one's path as a cyclist and having to react, although the more one cycles, the more safely one learns to maneuver vis-à-vis the bus.

Compared to the more varied, unpredictable behavior of any number of bus passengers at all times in the vicinity of the bus stop, the visible behavior of one trained driver at one instance is more predictable and hence can more safely be reckoned with.

In conclusion, there are trade offs to installing these bus stop islands. Given their potential problems, costs, and other METRO priorities, they may not be the best investment for METRO at this time. If METRO does wish to proceed with them, it should engage the cycling and disabled communities, install the most up-to-date designs, monitor whether the result is truly more efficient bus operation, and treat them as experiments subject to modification or removal.

Rick Hyman