

Memo



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Date: March 19, 2020
To: Metro Council and Interested Parties
From: Ken Lobeck, Funding Programs Lead, 503-797-1785
Subject: March 2020 MTIP Rose Quarter Formal Amendment & Resolution 20-5088 Approval Request

FORMAL AMENDMENT STAFF REPORT

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING AND ADVANCING THE ODOT ROSE QUARTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING AND RIGHT OF WAY PHASES INTO THE 2018-21 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MR20-10-MAR2)

BACKGROUND

JPACT DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL SUMMARY

At their March 19, 2020 meeting, PACT discussed consideration of the formal MTIP amendment to add Preliminary Engineering (PE) funding and add Right-of Way (ROW) funding plus advance the ROW phase to FY 2020 from F Y 2021. The funding increase would add a total of \$129,391,997 to the project. The amendment was added to the action item portion to the agenda due to the prior discussion at TPAC which is described in the next section.

Chairperson Shirley Craddick introduced the MTIP amendment and explained that TPAC had requested JPACT discussion prior to approval. Margi Bradway, Metro Deputy Director for Planning and Development provided a short summary of the changes occurring to the project through the Amendment and additional details of the TPAC discussion. Mandy Putney, ODOT Policy and Development Manager then described the need for the MTIP amendment, why the funding increase was now occurring, why it was advantageous to ODOT and the public complete the amendment now, and summarized the major project activities that have occurred with the project.

Several JPACT members voiced their support and understanding for the amendment, but also expressed their concerns about needing additional public opportunities to receive updates about the Rose Quarter Improvement project and have further opportunities to provide feedback, comments, concerns, and raise issues with ODOT. Since the project is quite large, phase experienced cost increases, and is politically polarizing to some, a few JPACT members expressed their concern for the need to receive project updates and be aware of the opportunities for additional public comment. Mandy Putney stated ODOT would provide JPACT updates for JPACT members and also outlined the various public comment opportunities that are available from the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to community outreach meetings. From the discussion, it appeared that JPACT members also would like periodic project Rose Quarter Improvement Project updates as well from ODOT.

Much of the discussion was focused was on ensuring sufficient venues exist to provide comments, concerns and raise issues for these large projects to help ensure the MTIP amendment process is not used as a political statement when project changes are required in the MTIP and STIP. JPACT members appeared satisfied that ODOT will be providing sufficient comment opportunities through the OTC, community outreach group presentations, project update workshops and periodic updates

to JPACT members. JPACT then moved the staff recommended motion to approve the amendment as submitted by ODOT and voted unanimously to approve it.

DISCUSSION & DISAGREEMENTS AT THE MARCH 6, 2020 TPAC MEETING:

The March 2020 Formal Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Formal/Full Amendment initially proposed the advancement of ten Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) 2021-2024 new draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects into FY 2020 including the ODOT's Rose Quarter Improvement project in Key 19071. The formal amendment to Key 19071 proposed adding \$48,126,545 to the Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase bringing PE phase programming up to its full needed level at \$71,391,997. The second part of the amendment to Key 19071 proposed adding \$58 million for Right-of-Way (ROW) phase and advance the ROW phase to FY 2020. The amendment adjustment to the Rose Quarter Improvement Project fully programs PE and ROW phases and increases the project programming level from \$27,391,997 to \$129,391,997. The project was one of twelve total included in the March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment bundle covered by Resolution 20-5052.

During the amendment notification to Metro's Transportation Policy and Alternatives Committee (TPAC) on March 6, 2020, several concerns about recommending the programming adjustments to JPACT for the Rose Quarter Improvement Project. Several TPAC members stated they personally did not support the Rose Quarter Improvement Project and could not vote in favor of the project being included in the amendment bundle.

Discussion ensued resulting in TPAC members recommending that the Rose Quarter Improvement Project be removed from the March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment Bundle under Resolution 20-5082. TPAC members provided their approval recommendation to JPACT for the remaining eleven projects in the amendment bundle.

Discussion and debate continued among TPAC members over how to address the amendment request for the Rose Quarter Improvement Project. TPAC members appeared to be split about 50-50 in support or opposed to the project. Of those who oppose the project, four objections were noted:

- Opportunity costs for the project:
 - Monetary concerns towards the project
 - Questions concerning the need for the project in regards to the costs and benefits
- Concerns the project does not meet Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) goals and strategies
- Questionable benefits that are in conflict with RTP Climate Smart strategies.

Of the three above objections noted above, TPAC members did not elaborate and provide additional details supporting their objections. As a result, the opposition to the Rose Quarter Improvement Project was sufficient to block reaching a majority approval to move forward with the MTIP Formal Amendment. The oppositions raised to the project were focused on the implementation and delivery of the project and not any components of the MTIP amendment, or amendment process through Metro. This greatly concerns Metro staff and is discussed later in the staff report.

After additional debate and discussion, TPAC members agreed to forward the Rose Quarter Improvement Project MTIP Amendment request to JPACT without an approval recommendation for discussion at JPACT. The action was a compromised motion proposed by the city of Portland's TPAC representative with the overall goals to:

- Separate the Rose Quarter Improvement Project out from the other eleven projects in the March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment Bundle with Resolution 20-5082 allowing them to proceed through the normal Metro approval process.
- Forward the Rose Quarter Improvement Project to JPACT as a separate project (now under Resolution 20-5088) for discussion of current work under way, and past completed actions for:
 - A better understanding the overall federal transportation delivery process
 - Efforts accomplished through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to address environmental concerns,
 - Identify planning actions in support of the project to address congestion relief, safety, environmental issues, etc.

The majority of TPAC members accepted and passed the neutral/non-recommendation motion as noted above, However, the vote was not unanimous and included several abstentions as well.

What are the requested actions for JPACT?

- ✓ Staff has pulled the Rose Quarter Improvement Project from Resolution 20-5082 and will have it proceed separately to JPACT under Resolution 20-5088 per TPAC's direction
- ✓ Staff have clarified and updated the staff report and supporting materials allowing the Rose Quarter Improvement Project to work through the Metro approval process as a stand-alone MTIP Amendment.
- ✓ Staff concurs with TPAC and recommends discussion and debate as needed at JPACT to resolve and remove the political aspects of the Rose Quarter Improvement Project from the changes requested by ODOT for the MTIP Amendment.
- **Staff still recommends JPACT approve Resolution 20-5088 and recommend approval to Metro Council to allow submission to USDOT and final approval for inclusion in the MTIP.**

The following pages provide additional details concerning the above actions.

WHAT IS THE MTIP?

- ✓ The MTIP reflects the investment priorities established in the current metropolitan transportation plan and shall cover a period of no less than 4 years, be updated at least every 4 years, and be approved by the MPO(s) and the Governor(s).
- ✓ The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the delegated arm to USDOT for the development, update, management, and completing required amendments to the MTIP.
- ✓ Projects added to the MTIP through a process called "Programming". Programming refers to the process of selecting projects for funding, identifying funding resources, and scheduling implementation. Programming is a distinct phase of transportation decision making that occurs in conjunction with long-range planning. It focuses on the short-term planning priorities and commits funds for expenditure. Projects are selected by matching available revenue with planned projects that meet the criteria for that funding stream.
- ✓ **For lead agencies with projects required to be included in the MTIP and utilizing funds outside of the MPOs management or control, then the MPO acts as the conduit to complete required programming or amendment actions to the MTIP on behalf of the lead agency.**
- ✓ TIP projects must be consistent with the 20-year (or longer) long-range transportation plan, reflect near term investment priorities, and indicate progress toward system performance

targets. The TIP must contain a minimum of four years' worth of projects and must be updated at least every four years.

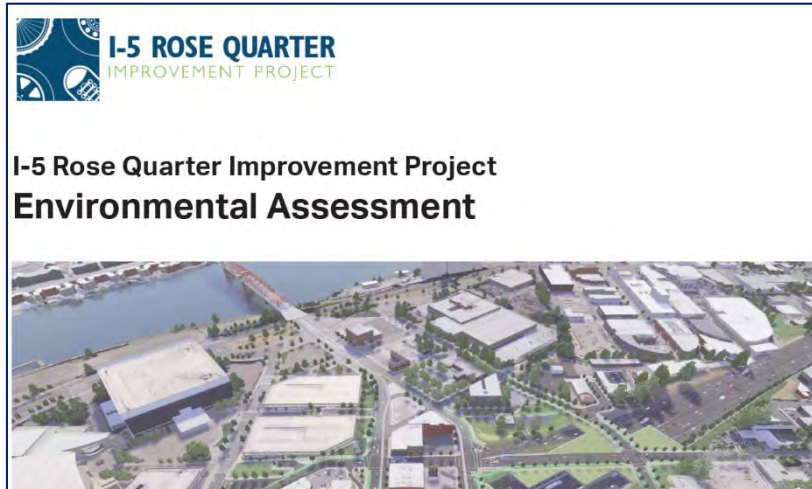
- ✓ Per the governing Code of Federal Regulations and Statutes, the MTIP must:
 - Include projects for any mode that will be using Federal funding or Federal subsidy [23USC§134(j)(2)(A)].
 - Provide a project description and location for each project [23USC §134(j)(2)(C)].
 - Prioritize the projects [23USC §134(j)(1)(A)].
 - Indicate the sources of funding that will be used to construct the project [23USC §134(j)(2)(B)(ii)]. Demonstrate a contribution to achieving performance targets [23USC §134(j)(2)(D)].¹
 - Include a consultation process with stakeholders prior to adoption [23USC §134(j)(4)].
 - Undergo a period of public availability and comment [23USC §134(j)(1)(B)].
 - Be adopted by the MPO governing board and submitted to the governor [23USC §134(j)(1)(D)(ii)].
- ✓ Complete required formal/full amendments and administrative modifications for USDOT ensuring for each project included in the MTIP, the following areas are satisfactorily addressed:
 - Required eligibility for MTIP Programming.
 - Verify proof of funding for any and all new funds added to the MTIP.
 - Determine fiscal constraint is still maintained as a result of the amendment action
 - Passes RTP consistency review and validation areas to include:
 - Identified in the constrain section of the approved RTP
 - Determine if the project is considered regionally significant.
 - Identified as either capacity enhancing type projects or no-capacity enhancing, exempt projects
 - Evaluate and review project changes for possible air quality impacts
 - Evaluate and review project changes for travel demand modeling impacts.
 - Validate project scope and limits are consistent with the RTP project entry.
 - Validate project scope, limits, and funding changes can occur legally based on USDOT amendment guidance
 - Verification that the project scope and limits match up to regional RTP goals and strategies
 - Verify and validate project obligations against programming for annual fund obligation targets compliance and complete technical funding corrections as required to help keep the STIP and MTIP matched down to the project level and the overall programming balanced between both documents
 - Complete required public notification and opportunity for public comments periods for all formal/full amendments.
 - Monitors and secures required supplemental project approvals (e.g. funding awards, OTC approvals requirements, etc.) for any and all submitted amendments
 - Identify and provide initial project tagging assessment in support of later performance measurement needs.

Summary: The MTIP functions as a 4-year snapshot in time of how the region will expend federal, state, and local funds on regional significant projects. As long as projects satisfy USDOT's eligibility, funding, and programming requirements, and RTP consistency requirements, the project will be included in the MTIP and amended as required. However, the MTIP is not a political document. It does not advocate one project over another.

SUMMARY OF THE ROSE QUARTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In addition to the amendment table that contain the regular detail about the amendment, the following provides a few extra points about the Rose Quarter Improvement Project:

1. The Rose Quarter Improvement Project is a named and approved project from HB 2017 which was approved by the Oregon Legislature and signed by the Governor.
2. The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) is charged with the oversight responsibility from HB2017 in Section 27c to complete the estimated costs, develop the project's design features, determine the approach and schedule to deliver the project, and oversee delivery.
3. The Rose Quarter Improvement project is a federalized project and was required to complete the NEPA process. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was approved as of February 15, 2019 and is 118 pages long.
4. The EA examined and evaluated environmental impacts to include:
 - a. No build-alternative versus the build alternative
 - b. Affected Environmental and Environmental Consequences to include
 - i. Air Quality
 - ii. Aquatic Biology
 - iii. Archaeology
 - iv. Climate Change
 - v. Environmental Justice
 - vi. Hazardous Materials
 - vii. Historic Resources
 - viii. Land-use impacts
 - ix. Noise impacts
 - x. Section 4(f): Impacts to historic properties, park & recreational facilities, and wildlife plus waterfowl refuges
 - xi. Right-of Way needs and impacts
 - xii. Socioeconomic impacts
 - xiii. Transportation impacts
 - xiv. Utility requirements and impacts
 - xv. Water Resource impacts
 - xvi. Cumulative impacts
 - c. Public Involvement and Agency Coordination requirements



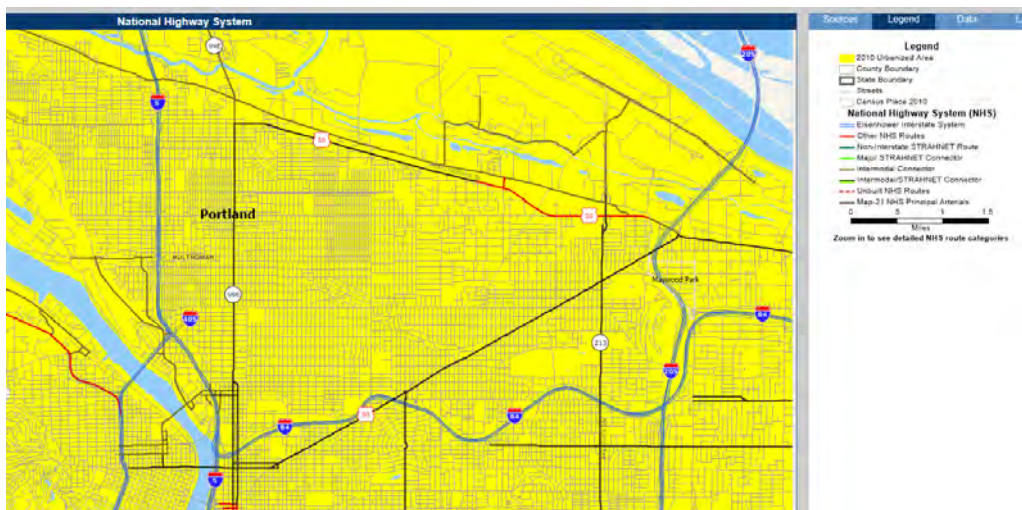
AMENDMENT CONSISTENCY REVIEW:

As part of the March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment Bundle submission requirements, Metro requested ODOT provide additional details about the projects to ensure all RTP consistency areas were properly addressed. The below items summarize the validation and verification process:

- **MTIP Programming Requirement Verification.**

- ✓ Sources:

- a. Federal funds committed to the project
 - b. Project is located on the National Highway System (NHS) – Yes, project is identified as an “Eisenhower Interstate System” route on the NHS
 - c. Capacity enhancing project.
 - d. Summary: The project is required to be programmed in the MTIP.



- **Proof of Funding.**

- ✓ Source: HB2017 Legislation

(Tax and Fee Distribution and Projects)

SECTION 71a. (1) The following amounts shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in this section:

(a) The amount attributable to the increase in tax rates by section 45 of this 2017 Act and the amendments to ORS 319.020 and 319.530 by sections 40 to 43 of this 2017 Act.

(b) The amount attributable to the vehicle registration and title fees imposed under sections 32, 33, 37 and 38 of this 2017 Act.

(c) The amount attributable to the increase in taxes and fees by the amendments to ORS 803.420, 803.645, 818.225, 818.270, 825.450, 825.476, 825.480 and 826.023 by sections 34, 35, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 63, 64, 66, 67 and 70 of this 2017 Act.

(2) The amounts described in subsection (1) of this section shall be distributed in the following order and for the following purposes:

(a) For calendar years beginning on or after January 1, 2022, \$30 million shall be used for the Interstate 5 Rose Quarter Project. This amount shall be used for the Interstate 5 Rose Quarter Project only until the later of the date on which the project is completed or on which all bonds issued to fund the project have been repaid.

(b) \$10 million per year shall be deposited into the Safe Routes to Schools Fund for the purpose of providing Safe Routes to Schools matching grants under section 123 of this 2017

- **Funds Available/Fiscal Constraint Validation.**

- ✓ Source: OTC January 10, 2020 approval letter



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon Transportation Commission

Office of the Director, MS 11
355 Capitol St NE
Salem, OR 97301-3871

DATE: January 10, 2020

TO: Oregon Transportation Commission

FROM: 
Kristopher W. Strickler
Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda F** – Approve release of the *Draft 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* for Public Review and Comment

Requested Action:

Approve releasing the *Draft 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* to the public for review and comment and approve the list of projects to advance to begin delivery.

Background:

The *Draft 2021-2024 STIP* (Attachment 1) is the department's short-term capital improvement program required by federal regulations that outlines project funding and scheduling information for the Department and the state's metropolitan planning organizations.

In December 2017, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) approved the [funding allocation for the Draft 2021-2024 STIP](#). Approval of these funds allowed the project selection to continue on the existing timeline for Highway Leverage, Safety Leverage, and Fix-It programs. During this time period, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) worked with the various regional Area Commission on Transportation (ACTs) and stakeholders to seek comments and input into the projects selected

2021-2024 Draft STIP Advance Phase List
1/7/2020

Attachment 2

Key #	Project Name	Phase	Phase Amount	Year	Justification
Region 1					
K20300	OR217 at US26 Westbound Ramp/US26: OR217 - Cornell	PE	\$ 111,839	2020	This project should align with the adjacent US26 (Sunset Highway) Sylvan to OR 217 project. Advancing to the current STIP will save on costs and be more efficient for project delivery. Bid scheduled for August 2020.
K20382	Morrison Street: Willamette River (Morrison) Bridge	CN	\$ 5,000,000	2020	Adding additional SSM to local agency project to allow construction to move forward due to higher estimates.
K21599	US26: Salmon River - Zigzag	PE	\$ 1,583,489	2020	This project needs to align with the adjacent project in the current STIP to reduce costs, reduce impact to travelling public, and for efficiency in project delivery.
K21626	US26: Eugene River - Trout	RW	\$ 33,886	2020	This project needs to align with the adjacent project in the current STIP to reduce costs, reduce impact to travelling public, and for efficiency in project delivery.
K19071	I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	PE	\$ 44,000,000	2020	By February 2020, the current available design funds will be expended so funds will need to be advanced to keep the design moving until 2021. This includes cost of obligating the right-of-way phase in 2020. The advanced design funds will pay to get the project through right-of-way obligation in 2020. If right-of-way is delayed to 2021, there is potential for cost increases due to market changes.
K19071	I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	RW	\$ 58,000,000	2020	By February 2020, the current available design funds will be expended so funds will need to be advanced to keep the design moving until 2021. This includes cost of obligating the right-of-way phase in 2020. The advanced design funds will pay to get the project through right-of-way obligation in 2020. If right-of-way is delayed to 2021, there is potential for cost increases due to market changes.
K20471	OR99W: Tualatin River northbound bridge	CN	\$ 1,202,900	2020	reduce anticipated traffic impacts. In addition there is potential for lower bid prices when constructed earlier. The PC was started in the 18-21 STIP. Construction was cancelled due to the rebalance. The overlay has dense cracking in some areas and large cracks in others. The overlay that is on the bridge has reached the end of its service life.

- RTP Consistency Review. Validation Areas:

✓ **Project is included in the constrained approved RTP: Yes.**

Source: Approved 2018 RTP Constrained Project List. RTP ID 11176 and 10867

Published 3/15/19

2018 Regional Transportation Plan Financially Constrained List of Projects and Programs

RTP Investment Category	County	Nominating Agency	Primary Facility Owner	RTP ID	Project Name	Start Location	End Location	Description
Throughways	Multnomah County	ODOT	ODOT	11176	I-5 from I-405 to I-84 (Rose Quarter/Lloyd District) Construction	I-84	Greeley St.	Construct improvements to enhance safety and operations on I-5, connection between I-84 and I-5, and multimodal access to and connectivity between the Lloyd District and Rose Quarter.

Throughways	Multnomah County	ODOT	ODOT	10867	I-5 from I-405 to I-84 (Rose Quarter/Lloyd District) PE, NEPA, ROW	I-84	Greeley St.	Conduct preliminary engineering and National Environmental Policy Act review, and right of way work to improve safety and operations on I-5, connection between I-84 and I-5, and multimodal access to and connectivity between the Lloyd District and Rose Quarter.
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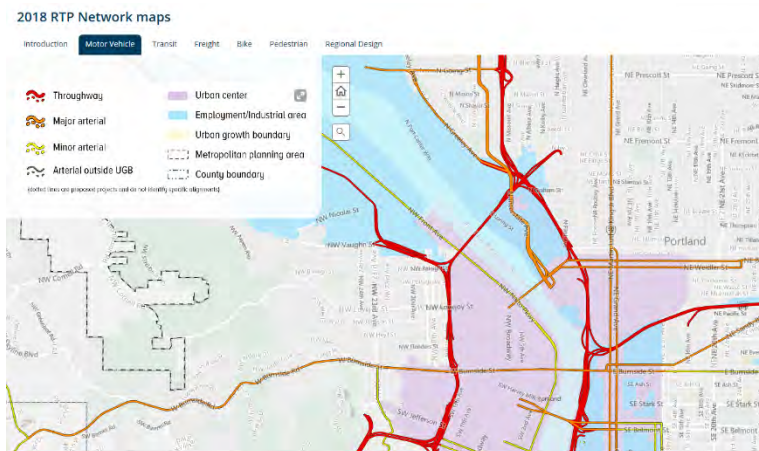
- RTP Consistency Review. **Is this a Regionally Significant Project?**
 - ✓ Yes. The project is located “on-system” (in the modeling network), is capacity enhancing, and contains federal funds.
- RTP Consistency Review. **Is the project exempt from transportation modeling and air quality analysis?**
 - ✓ No. The project is not defined as a non-capacity, exempt project per 40 CFR 93.126, Table 2 or 40 CFR 93.127
- RTP Consistency Review. **Is the project included in the Metro modeling network verifying that transportation travel demand modeling and air quality analysis requirements have been completed?**
 - ✓ Yes

PROJECT SCOPE ASSUMPTIONS

The Project is at a preliminary level of design (approximately a 15 percent design level) and assumes the following key features:

- **A new auxiliary lane in each direction on I-5 between I-84 and I-405** to support merging and improved connections between interchanges in an area where three interstates come together
- **Wider safety shoulders** in each direction on I-5 between I-84 and I-405 to provide space for disabled vehicles to move out of traffic and allow emergency vehicles to respond more quickly
- **Highway covers over I-5** that replace and structurally upgrade existing overpasses and create public space
- **Local street multimodal improvements**
- **A new east-west crossing** to connect NE Hancock Street with N Dixon Street
- **A new bicycle and pedestrian bridge** from Clackamas Street to the Rose Quarter entertainment area

- RTP Consistency Review. **Is the project located in at least one of the five Metro modeling networks?**
 - ✓ Yes. The project is located on I-5 in the Motor Vehicle network. I-5 is defined as a Throughway




- RTP Consistency Review. **As modeled and included in the constrained RTP, does the project's major scope elements and limits match up with the project in the metro modeling network?**
 - ✓ Yes. The project as submitted for programming in the MTIP contain the same major scope elements and project limits as identified in the RTP. Sources: RTP modeling network, and Rose Quarter Improvement Project Environmental Assessment

- Finally, does the project match up with the goals and strategies identified in the RTP?
 - ✓ Yes. RTP Goal #5 – Safety and Security, Objective 5.1 Transportation Safety – Eliminate fatal and severe injury crashes for all modes of travel.

Summary of RTP Consistency Review:

- ODOT submitted the amendment request along with all required support documentation including
 - a formal request for the amendment
 - STIP Impacts Worksheet (explaining the need for the amendment)
 - STIP Summary Report (request financial changes and name/description updates if required)
 - OTC support documentation
 - Project location maps
 - Answers to Metro questions for clarification
- As a result of the amendment programming review and RTP consistency review:
 - The requested programming changes are legal.
 - Fiscal constraint is maintained. The additional funding for PE and ROW phases along with advancing the ROW phase into 2020 has been verified along with OTC approval for the advancement.
 - RTP consistency is maintained and no scope issues appear evident as a result of the requested changes.
 - Finally, ODOT has provided adequate justification for the needed funding changes and phase advancement.
 - The funding increase exceeds the 20% threshold for funding changes so the changes must be made via a formal/full amendment

2018-2021 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program Exhibit A to Resolution 20-5088					
Proposed March 2020 Formal Amendment Bundle Amendment Type: Formal/Full Amendment #: MR20-10-MAR2 Total Number of Projects: 1					
ODOT Key #	MTIP ID #	Lead Agency	Project Name	Project Description	Description of Changes
Project #1 Key 19071	70784	ODOT	I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	On I-5 between I-84 and I-405, continue prior planning and project development efforts of the Broadway-Weidler Facility Plan and the N/NE Quadrant Plan Planning, project development, and right of way efforts of the Broadway-Weidler facility plan and the N/NE Quadrant, which identified transportation investments that would result in improved safety and operations as well as supporting economic growth. Proposed multi-modal improvements include: ramp-to-ramp (auxiliary) lanes, highway shoulders, highway covers, new overcrossing, I-5 southbound ramp relocation, new bike and pedestrian crossing, and improved bike and pedestrian facilities	ADD FUNDING The formal amendment adds \$48,126,545 to the PE phase increasing it to \$71.3 million. It also adds \$58 million to the ROW phase allowing ROW phase activities to begin. Construction is not being programmed currently. The total programming increases to \$129,391,997. OTC approval was required and occurred during their January 2020 meeting

Project Description Note:

The project description is being updated as an implementation phase is being added (Right-of-Way). As the project moves into implementation of delivery phases (Right-of-Way, Utility Relocation, and Construction) the description calls out the major scope elements as best as the data field space will allow. The MTIP contains both a detailed description field and a short field. The detailed description field is not visible in the MTIP public document. The detailed description had already been updated to reflect the above updated description. The short description is now being corrected to reflect the same description to avoid a perception that scope change had occurred. There is no change in project scope.

A summary of the amended projects is provided below.

Project 1: I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	
Lead Agency:	ODOT
ODOT Key Number:	19071 MTIP ID Number: 70784
Projects Description:	<p>Project Snapshot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed improvements: Planning, project development, and right of way efforts of the Broadway-Weidler facility plan and the N/NE Quadrant, which identified transportation investments that would result in improved safety and operations as well as supporting economic growth. Proposed multi-modal improvements include: ramp-to-ramp (auxiliary) lanes, highway shoulders, highway covers, new overcrossing, I-5 southbound ramp relocation, new bike and pedestrian crossing, and improved bike and pedestrian facilities Source: Existing Project Funding: Much of the required funding for Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way (ROW) phases will be from HB2017 state funds and combination of other federal funds. Project Type: Highway – capacity improvement project Location: On I-5 between I-84 and I-405 in north Portland Cross Street Limits: I-84 in the south north to I-405 interchange Overall Mile Post Limits: 301.40 to 303.20 which equals about 1.8 miles Current Status Code: 4 = (PS&E) Planning Specifications, & Estimates (final design 30%, 60%, 90% design activities initiated). STIP Amendment Number: 18-21-3617 MTIP Amendment Number: MR20-09-MAR
What is changing?	<p>AMENDMENT ACTION: ADD FUNDING</p> <p>The purpose of the Project is to improve the safety and operations on I-5 between I-405 and I-84, and within the I-5 Broadway/Weidler interchange. In support of this purpose, the Project will improve local connectivity and multimodal access in the vicinity of the Broadway/Weidler interchange, and improve multimodal connections between neighborhoods located to the east and west of I-5. The amendment adds funding the PE and ROW phases, plus advances the ROW phase from the new draft S2021-24 STIP forward to FY 2020 and into the current 2018-21 STIP. As a result, the</p>

	Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase increases from \$27,291,997 to \$71,391,997. \$58,000,000 is added to the ROW phase.
Additional Details:	<p>As of January 2020, an updated Cost to Complete report has been issued. The project's revised total estimated cost has increased from \$450-\$500 million to \$715 to \$795 million as shown at right.</p> <p>The major scope improvement elements include improvements to the I-5 mainline, highway covers, local street improvements, and construction of the Clackamas Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing. The estimated cost breakout among these scope elements per the Cost to Complete Report is shown at right.</p> <p>Additional project summary details are provided in Attachment 1 to the staff report.</p>
Why a Formal amendment is required?	Per the FHWA/FTA/ODOT/MPO approved Amendment Matrix, Cost increase above 20% for \$1 million or greater projects requires a full/formal amendment
Total Programmed Amount:	PE and ROW phases are generally now completely programmed. Construction will be added later. The formal amendment increases the total project programming to \$129,391,997. The total estimated project cost range is \$715 to \$795 million
Added Notes:	Approval from the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) was required to add and advance the ROW phase into FY 2020. Approval occurred during their January 2020 meeting.

Year of Dollars	Preliminary Cost Estimate (2017)	Base Estimate Range (2025)
TOTAL	\$450.0 - \$500.0	\$715.0 to \$795.0
INFLATION	\$0.0	\$130.0 to \$147.0
RIGHT-OF-WAY	\$6.0	\$42.0 to \$52.3
UTILITY		

Table 5-2 Cost By Design Feature- millions (2025 Dollars)

PROJECT FEATURES	COST RANGE
I-5 Mainline	\$397.8 to \$442.4
Highway Covers	\$257.3 to \$286.0
Local Street Improvements	\$44.2 to \$49.1
Clackamas Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing	\$15.7 to \$17.5
TOTAL	\$715.0 to \$795.0



Note: The Amendment Matrix located on the next page is included as a reference for the rules and justifications governing Formal Amendments and Administrative Modifications to the MTIP that the MPOs and ODOT must follow.

METRO REQUIRED PROJECT AMENDMENT REVIEWS

In accordance with 23 CFR 450.316-328, Metro is responsible for reviewing and ensuring MTIP amendments comply with all federal programming requirements. Each project and their requested changes are evaluated against multiple MTIP programming review factors that originate from 23 CFR 450.316-328. The programming factors include:

- Verification as required to programmed in the MTIP:
 - Awarded federal funds and is considered a transportation project
 - Identified as a regionally significant project.
 - Identified on and impacts Metro transportation modeling networks.
 - Requires any sort of federal approvals which the MTIP is involved.
- Passes fiscal constraint verification:
 - Project eligibility for the use of the funds
 - Proof and verification of funding commitment
 - Requires the MPO to establish a documented process proving MTIP programming does not exceed the allocated funding for each year of the four year MTIP and for all funds identified in the MTIP.
- Passes the RTP consistency review:
 - Identified in the current approved constrained RTP either as a stand- alone project or in an approved project grouping bucket
 - RTP project cost consistent with requested programming amount in the MTIP
 - If a capacity enhancing project – is identified in the approved Metro modeling network
- Satisfies RTP goals and strategies consistency: Meets one or more goals or strategies identified in the current RTP.
- If not directly identified in the RTP's constrained project list, the project is verified to be part of the MPO's annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) if federally funded and a regionally significant planning study that addresses RTP goals and strategies and/or will contribute or impact RTP performance measure targets.
- Determined the project is eligible to be added to the MTIP, or can be legally amended as required without violating provisions of 23 CFR450.300-338 either as a formal Amendment or administrative modification:
 - Does not violate supplemental directive guidance from FHWA/FTA's approved Amendment Matrix.
 - Adheres to conditions and limitation for completing technical corrections, administrative modifications, or formal amendments in the MTIP.
 - Is eligible for special programming exceptions periodically negotiated with USDOT as well.
 - Programming determined to be reasonable of phase obligation timing and is consistent with project delivery schedule timing.

ODOT-FTA-FHWA Amendment Matrix	
Type of Change	
FULL AMENDMENTS	
1. Adding or cancelling a federally funded, and regionally significant project to the STIP and state funded projects which will potentially be federalized	
2. Major change in project scope. Major scope change includes:	
• Change in project termini - greater than .25 mile in any direction	
• Changes to the approved environmental footprint	
• Impacts to AQ conformity	
• Adding capacity per FHWA Standards	
• Adding or deleting worktype	
3. Changes in Fiscal Constraint by the following criteria:	
• FHWA project cost increase/decrease:	
• Projects under \$500K – increase/decrease over 50%	
• Projects \$500K to \$1M – increase/decrease over 30%	
• Projects \$1M and over – increase/decrease over 20%	
• All FTA project changes – increase/decrease over 30%	
4. Adding an emergency relief permanent repair project that involves substantial change in function and location.	
ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS	
1. Advancing or Slipping an approved project/phase within the current STIP (If slipping outside current STIP, see Full Amendments #2)	
2. Adding or deleting any phase (except CN) of an approved project below Full Amendment #3	
3. Combining two or more approved projects into one or splitting an approved project into two or more, or splitting part of an approved project to a new one.	
4. Splitting a new project out of an approved program-specific pool of funds (but not reserves for future projects) or adding funds to an existing project from a bucket or reserve if the project was selected through a specific process (i.e. ARTS, Local Bridge...)	
5. Minor technical corrections to make the printed STIP consistent with prior approvals, such as typos or missing data.	
6. Changing name of project due to change in scope, combining or splitting of projects, or to better conform to naming convention. (For major change in scope, see Full Amendments #2)	
7. Adding a temporary emergency repair and relief project that does not involve substantial change in function and location.	

- Reviewed and initially assessed for Performance Measurement impacts to include:
 - Safety
 - Asset Management - Pavement
 - Asset Management – Bridge
 - National Highway System Performance Targets
 - Freight Movement: On Interstate System
 - Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) impacts
 - Transit Asset Management impacts
 - RTP Priority Investment Areas support
 - Climate Change/Greenhouse Gas reduction impacts
 - Congestion Mitigation Reduction impacts
- MPO responsibilities completion:
 - Completion of the required 30 day Public Notification period:
 - Project monitoring, fund obligations, and expenditure of allocated funds in a timely fashion.
 - Acting on behalf of USDOT to provide the required forum and complete necessary discussions of proposed transportation improvements/strategies throughout the MPO.

APPROVAL STEPS AND TIMING

Metro's approval process for formal amendment includes multiple steps. The required approvals for the March 2020 Rose Quarter Formal MTIP amendment (MR20-10-MAR2) will include the following:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
• Initiate the required 30-day public notification process.....	February 27, 2020
• TPAC notification and approval recommendation.....	March 6, 2020
• JPACT approval and recommendation to Council.....	March 19, 2020
• Completion of public notification process.....	March 27, 2020
• Metro Council approval.....	April 2, 2020

Notes:

- * If any notable comments are received during the public comment period requiring follow-on discussions, they will be addressed by JPACT.

USDOT Approval Steps:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
• Amendment bundle submission to ODOT for review.....	April 7, 2020
• Submission of the final amendment package to USDOT.....	April 7, 2020
• ODOT clarification and approval.....	Late April, 2020
• USDOT clarification and final amendment approval.....	Early May 2020

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. **Known Opposition:** None known at this time.
2. **Legal Antecedents:** Amends the 2018-2021 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program adopted by Metro Council Resolution 17-4817 on July 27, 2017 (For The Purpose of Adopting the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program for the Portland Metropolitan Area).
3. **Anticipated Effects:** Enables the projects to obligate and expend awarded federal funds.

4. **Metro Budget Impacts:** None to Metro

JPACT RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- **JPACT recommends Metro Council approve Resolution 20-5088 to allow submission to USDOT and their final approval for to complete the required funding and phase advancement changes in the 2018-21 MTIP**
 - JPACT approval: March 19,2020
 - TPAC notification: March 6, 2020

Attachments:

1. Project Purpose/Executive Summary/Project Cost Summary to the January 2020 I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Cost to Complete Report
2. January 10, 2020 OTC Staff Report
3. Proposed OTC Actions on Rose Quarter
4. Joint Letter RE Rose Quarter Improvement Project
5. ODOT Memo on Funding Programming
6. MTIP Amendment Public Comment Summary
7. Public Comments



I-5 ROSE QUARTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



COST TO COMPLETE

JANUARY
2020

PURPOSE OF THE COST TO COMPLETE REPORT

With the passage of House Bill 2017 (HB 2017), the Oregon Legislature (herein, State Legislature) made a significant investment to improve the transportation infrastructure within the State of Oregon (State). HB 2017 statutorily directs construction and dedicates funding to the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (Project) as part of a suite of investments to reduce congestion and improve operations in the Portland metro region, and to add vitality to the statewide economy.

Central to the effective implementation of HB 2017, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is committed to effectively delivering programs and projects in an accountable, transparent, and efficient manner. To meet this goal, and the requirements set forth in Section 27c of HB 2017, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and ODOT have conducted a study to deliver a report to the Joint Committee on Transportation by February 1, 2020, documenting the estimated cost required to complete the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project. Section 27c of HB 2017 states:

SECTION 27c. The Oregon Transportation Commission shall conduct a study and make a report on its findings to the Joint Committee on Transportation established under section 26 of this 2017 Act and to the appropriate fiscal and policy committees or interim committees of the Legislative Assembly as follows:

(2) No later than February 1, 2020, the costs to complete the Interstate 5 Rose Quarter Project.

This Cost to Complete (CTC) report documents the approach and plan to deliver the Project within a projected cost and schedule, and describes the Project's design features, constructability, and the selected delivery method. This CTC report documents the Project's scope assumptions as part of the current cost estimate.

Figure 0-1 I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Mainline



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT OVERVIEW

A PROJECT OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE

Interstate 5 (I-5) is the main north-south route moving people and goods and connecting population centers across the West Coast of the United States from Mexico to Canada. In the Portland region between Interstate 84 (I-84) and Interstate 405 (I-405), I-5 carries some of the highest number of vehicles in the State and is critical for truck freight and businesses moving goods, commuters traveling to and from Portland, and locals traveling within the region. This segment of I-5 experiences the State's highest crash rate on an urban interstate and is the single worst traffic bottleneck in the State. These impacts contribute to degraded travel reliability on I-5 through the Portland region, and produce further statewide effects. Within this segment of I-5, travel times are increasing for all commuters with over 12 hours of congestion each day. This segment of I-5 is also the worst truck freight bottleneck in the State, and the 28th worst truck freight bottleneck in the nation, affecting the regional and statewide economy.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Project is to improve the safety and operations on I-5 between I-405 and I-84, and within the I-5 Broadway/Weidler interchange. In support of this purpose, the Project will improve local connectivity and multimodal access in the vicinity of the Broadway/Weidler interchange, and improve multimodal connections between neighborhoods located to the east and west of I-5. ⁱ

PROJECT NEEDS AND BENEFITS

The Project addresses the following needs and provides the following benefits:

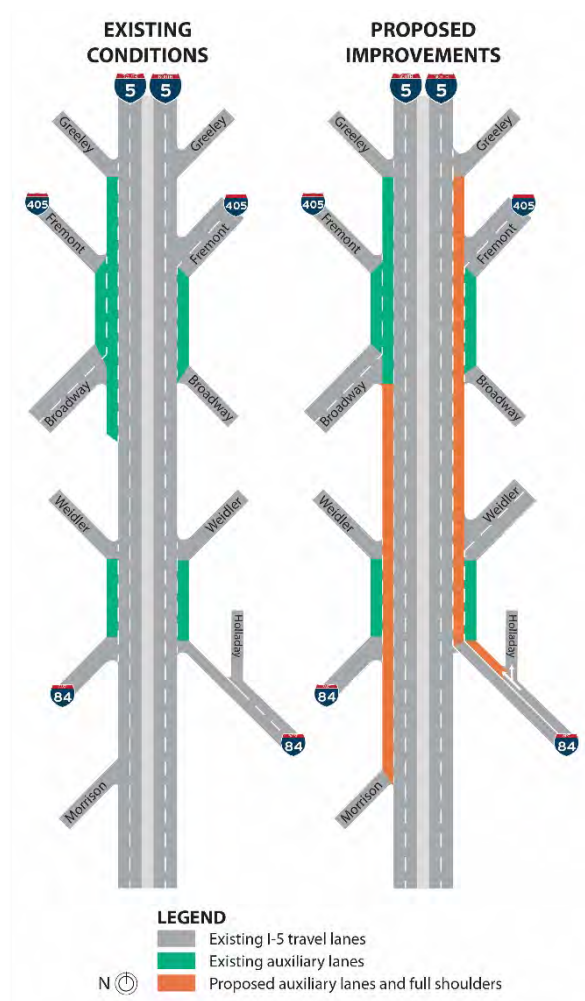
I-5 safety and congestion – The segment of I-5 between I-405 and I-84 incurs 3.5 times more crashes than the statewide average and has some of the highest traffic volumes in the state (12 hours of congestion each day). The Project's auxiliary lanes and wider safety shoulders will reduce frequent crashes and save drivers nearly 2.5 million hours of vehicle delay each year.

Travel reliability – As congestion and safety issues increase, travel reliability on the transportation

network decreases. On I-5 between I-84 and I-405, reliability has decreased during most hours of the day. Project improvements will reduce the number of crashes and alleviate congestion, which will improve travel reliability for all modes and freight.

Economic opportunities – The Portland metro area and the entire State will benefit from the safety and operational improvements of the Project as the economy depends heavily on freight movement. The Project will also be a catalyst for near-term job creation and future redevelopment in the area. The Project will maximize opportunities for minority-owned and small businesses and will seek to hire from a diverse workforce program, with the goal of generating economic opportunities for underrepresented communities.

Figure 0-2 Proposed Auxiliary Lanes and Shoulders



Multimodal enhancements – Some of the existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Project area expose users to navigational challenges, such as crossing freeway on- or off-ramps. Changes to the local street system and the addition of highway covers will reduce conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians, people riding bicycles, or people rolling in the Project area. Changes to overcrossings will enhance walking and bicycling comfort.

Broadway/Weidler interchange operations – The complexity and congestion at the I-5 Broadway/Weidler interchange creates navigation challenges for vehicles, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The Project will simplify the configuration of the interchange, easing navigation for all modes of travel.

PROJECT SCOPE ASSUMPTIONS

The Project is at a preliminary level of design (approximately a 15 percent design level) and assumes the following key features:

- **A new auxiliary lane in each direction on I-5 between I-84 and I-405** to support merging and improved connections between interchanges in an area where three interstates come together
- **Wider safety shoulders** in each direction on I-5 between I-84 and I-405 to provide space for disabled vehicles to move out of traffic and allow emergency vehicles to respond more quickly
- **Highway covers over I-5** that replace and structurally upgrade existing overpasses and create public space
- **Local street multimodal improvements**
- **A new east-west crossing** to connect NE Hancock Street with N Dixon Street
- **A new bicycle and pedestrian bridge** from Clackamas Street to the Rose Quarter entertainment area

These features are consistent with adopted regional and local land use and transportation plans. See the Project Planning, History and Community Engagement section in this Executive Summary for more information.

REDUCING CONGESTION AND IMPROVING TRAVEL SAFETY

The new auxiliary lanes will connect on-ramps directly to the next off-ramp on I-5. As an example, about 99 percent of the vehicles that merge onto I-5 heading south from the Fremont Bridge (I-405) during the evening peak hour period are exiting at the three exits within the Project area – the Broadway, I-84 and Morrison Bridge exits. The addition of an auxiliary lane will allow drivers to make these trips without merging into the two through lanes on I-5 before exiting. This will reduce rear-end and sideswipe crashes, both of which are major causes of delay.

Adding safety shoulders will also help reduce the number of sideswipe and rear-end crashes and reduce delays caused by those crashes. The new shoulders will also provide a place for vehicles in crashes to move safely off the roadway and safer and quicker access for emergency service vehicles to reach emergencies within or beyond the Rose Quarter area.

The Project's assumed multimodal improvements will provide enhanced separation for pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicles on the local street network. The Project assumes new multiuse paths and a pedestrian-and-bicycle-only bridge across I-5 connecting NE Clackamas Street and the Rose Quarter entertainment area.

PROJECT PLANNING, HISTORY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Decades of planning and partnership by ODOT and the City of Portland (City) have occurred to address the safety and operational needs on I-5 and within the Broadway/Weidler interchange through the Rose Quarter. Beginning in the late 1980s, ODOT developed several studies, including the I-5: Greeley-N. Banfield Study (1987) and Modified Concept (1990-96), the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Trade Corridor Study (1999), the I-5/I-405 Freeway Loop Study (2005), and the ODOT/City Practical Design Workshop (2007) to evaluate transportation infrastructure design options.

ODOT and the City reached agreement on a practically designed set of concepts through the 2010-2012 N/NE Quadrant Plan and I-5 Broadway/Weidler Facility Plan effort. Together with a 30-member Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC), ODOT and the City evaluated more than 70

design concepts and narrowed the scope of freeway improvements to accommodate and incorporate modifications to the local system in line with the City's land use planning goals. During the 2010-2012 planning effort, ODOT and the City engaged with more than 2,800 individuals and held 19 SAC meetings, 14 subcommittee meetings, 4 open houses, and more than 85 community briefings and walking tours. In 2012, the Portland City Council and OTC adopted the plans and the recommended design concept, which are now reflected as the Project.

The Project design concept is included in adopted Portland regional land use and transportation plans. The Metro Council (the Portland region's metropolitan planning organization) and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (which makes recommendations to the Metro Council) adopted the proposed Project as part of the Regional Transportation Plan in 2014 and again in 2018. Portland City Council adopted the proposed Project into the Central City 2035 Plan (CC2035 Plan) and the Transportation System Plan in June 2018.

Beginning in 2017, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and consistent with federal regulations, ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted the Environmental Assessment (EA) process for the Project and published the Project's EA on February 15, 2019 for a 45-day public review and comment. The EA conducted an in-depth evaluation of the benefits and impacts of two alternatives: one in which the Project would move forward as planned (the Build Alternative), and one in which the Project would not be built (the No-Build Alternative). This CTC report reflects the cost estimate for the Build Alternative as described in the EA. This is an informational report to describe the costs of the Build Alternative and does not represent a final NEPA decision nor presume a defined outcome of the NEPA process.

As discussed in greater detail below, this report reflects a 15 percent level of planning and design development and assumes no deviation from the current EA level of review. FHWA will make a final decision regarding the level of NEPA review and concur on the selected Project alternative; to date, no final decision has been made.

During the Project's EA phase, ODOT emphasized engaging the historically impacted communities of

color in the Project area. Engagement activities included interviews with Black Portlanders, work with a 14-member Community Liaisons Group to inform outreach, Project presentations at more than 100 events and community gatherings, 9 public events with more than 280 attendees, community walking and biking tours, door-to-door outreach with more than 60 businesses, updates via the Project website and newsletters, and a 45-day public review and comment period on the draft EA.

The Project team continues to intentionally listen, inform, engage, and empower the historically impacted African American community, the primary community displaced by past public and private development decisions in the Project vicinity, as well as other communities of color. Transparent, inclusive engagement will continue to be a central feature of the Project throughout design and construction.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (DBE) AND WORKFORCE PROGRAM

ODOT and the City have collaboratively engaged the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) community and prioritized a DBE and Workforce program. Goals of the program include identifying new and innovative ways to engage DBE firms, increasing workforce capacity, and informing and preparing prospective bidders in an effort to increase economic benefit among local firms and workers.

EQUITY BY DESIGN

Equity has been an integral component of early Project design, and will continue to be throughout all design phases and construction. Equity is significant in informing design decisions and direction. Throughout Project delivery, the Project team will intentionally listen, inform, and engage communities of color, especially the historically impacted African American communities. These principles relate to design decisions as well as how the Project team conducts community engagement. The Project team will use an iterative community engagement approach to inform design decisions so the Project reflects community values.

PROJECT COST

The Project cost estimate is described below and includes the 2017 preliminary cost estimate, an updated cost estimate, and the factors affecting the cost change.

PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE (2017)

Prior to, and during the development of HB 2017, ODOT prepared a preliminary Project cost estimate. This preliminary cost estimate was developed prior to a defined delivery schedule and was reflective of construction costs in the most current dollar value at the time, in 2017 dollars. This preliminary cost estimate ranged from \$450 million to \$500 million in 2017 dollars.

Within HB 2017, the State Legislature statutorily directed \$30 million annually beginning in 2022 and directed the OTC to submit a cost to complete report further detailing the total estimated Project cost.

UPDATED PROJECT ESTIMATE SINCE HB 2017 – FACTORS AFFECTING COST

Since 2017, the Project team has further developed the design and refined the cost estimate to reflect the anticipated year of construction, new standards, and information learned during the EA process. Based on the current Project delivery schedule, main construction is expected to begin in 2023 with anticipated completion by 2027. Changes in cost from the preliminary 2017 estimate to the cost estimate presented in this CTC report are attributable to the effects of updated code and tax requirements, design progression, technical analysis, and inflation on construction and engineering costs.

Inflation – The 2017 preliminary cost estimate was developed prior to the Project's inclusion within HB 2017 and reflected a construction cost with the best known information and most current dollar value at the time. Inflation was not included in the 2017 preliminary estimate as a construction schedule had not yet been defined for the Project. Since the HB 2017 estimate, inflation has been incorporated into the current Project estimate.

By accounting for the average annual inflation rate, between 3.0 percent and 3.5 percent, and carrying this inflation rate through to 2025 (the midpoint of construction), the Project's base estimate increases by \$130 million to \$147 million based on inflation.

Fire and Life Safety (FLS) protection – Fire and Life Safety (FLS) systems for the highway covers are now required to include active components, and a more responsive system overall. This results from revisions to, and incorporation of, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) code and the need to adhere to FHWA requirements to allow hazardous cargo movement along I-5. The \$18 million to \$25 million for the highway cover FLS systems are incorporated in the current Project cost.

Technical analysis and design progression – Since 2017, the Project team has refined Project design assumptions through both the EA process and by advancing the Project's design into preliminary engineering. The new factors affecting cost include the following:

- Additional right-of-way (ROW), including easements, needed to accommodate safe and efficient construction access and staging
- Reimbursable utility requirements that are better defined as a result of ongoing discussions with utility providers
- Increased length of retaining walls based on recently obtained ground elevation survey data
- The addition of sound walls adjacent to sensitive noise receptors
- Use of continuously reinforced concrete pavement (CRCP) along I-5 instead of asphalt (CRCP has a higher initial cost but a significantly lower long-term maintenance cost)

Cost refinements – As part of this cost estimate, the Project team has incorporated more than a dozen cost reduction measures that continue to improve safety and modal performance. ODOT will continue ongoing value engineering (VE) efforts during design to include added contractor input and other opportunities to further reduce the overall Project cost. ODOT also anticipates revenue from the sale of surplus property at the conclusion of Project construction. Estimates of the surplus value will be developed as part of the transition from design to construction by 2023.

Table 0-1 compares the preliminary 2017 cost estimate to a range of current Project costs. The range is reflective of the following factors:

Low End of Range (\$715 million)

- Assumed annual inflation rate of 3 percent from 2017 to 2025
- Less variability in quantity and unit price assumptions
- Higher potential for VE – the process used to analyze and determine cost savings solutions – with the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC), when selected to join the team

Upper End of Range (\$795 million)

- Assumed annual inflation rate of 3.5 percent from 2017 to 2025
- More variability in quantity and unit price assumptions
- More limited VE opportunities with the CM/GC, when selected to join the team

Table 0- 1 Change to Estimated Project Cost from HB 2017

Year of Dollars	Preliminary Cost Estimate (2017)	Base Estimate Range (2025)
TOTAL	\$450.0 - \$500.0	\$715.0 to \$795.0
INFLATION	\$0.0	\$130.0 to \$147.0
RIGHT-OF-WAY	\$6.0	\$42.0 to \$52.3
UTILITY REIMBURSEMENT	\$0.0	\$7.6
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING	\$64.0 to \$71.0	\$74.2 to \$81.0
CONSTRUCTION	\$380.0 to \$423.0	\$461.2 to \$507.1

All values are in millions

It is important to note that the current Project cost estimate reflects a design that is 15 percent complete, and requires continued, extensive public engagement to inform design refinement and Project decisions. The base Project cost presented in this report is estimated at a 70th percentile. This means

that there is a 70 percent probability that the final Project cost will be within, or less than, this range for the current Project scope and schedule.

Delay to the Project delivery schedule will result in cost impacts, including the effect of inflation. For example, a three-year delay would result in an additional \$66.3 million (3.0 percent inflation) to \$86.4 million (3.5 percent inflation) in delay-related inflation cost. See Section 5.4 for more information on the inflation effect of delays.

COST AND RISK MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE CM/GC DELIVERY METHOD

ODOT selected the Construction Manager / General Contractor (CM/GC) delivery model to effectively manage the Project's technical complexities, community interests, desire to accelerate schedule, VE process, and need for innovation. This model allows ODOT to contract directly with a CM/GC early during the design process on the basis of qualifications, experience, expertise, and price, rather than selecting based solely on the lowest bid. Engaging the prime contractor during early design allows ODOT to receive valuable constructability input throughout the life of the design that can be used to positively impact the Project's technical complexities, schedule acceleration, need for innovation and overall Project cost savings. Further, ODOT expects the selected CM/GC to collaboratively participate in extensive community engagement to determine solutions that address critical Project issues such as:

- Implementing complex construction staging of highway covers over the highly traveled I-5
- Improvement of several I-5 bridges to accommodate extending the auxiliary lanes and adding full shoulders
- Maintaining mobility on I-5, and accommodating access to regional entertainment and recreation facilities, Portland Streetcar, light rail, and other multimodal users in the Project area
- Continual and extensive engagement with the community

ODOT will benefit from the CM/GC's input during design regarding constructability and specific means and methods, and from their participation in risk assessment analysis. These methods and this approach will help to accelerate the Project schedule,

reduce long-term Project cost, and support successful contract negotiations.

The Project team has implemented a rigorous process to assess the Project's risk profile. The Project team will continue to actively identify, mitigate and manage risk throughout design and construction. Pending direction from the OTC on the Project's environmental review process and FHWA's NEPA decision, ODOT will procure a CM/GC to join the Project team.

ADAPTING TO AFFORDABILITY

ODOT recognizes the potential need to phase the Project given currently available funding. ODOT will seek additional funding and capitalize on the innovation and expertise of the CM/GC to help identify cost saving solutions that continue to provide benefit to the traveling public.

The funding priorities of HB 2017 are focused on reducing congestion in the Portland metropolitan area for commuters and truck freight and improving safety along I-5 between I-84 and I-405.

ODOT will continue to identify and seek additional federal, state, and local funding and partnership opportunities.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS

Some stakeholders have requested expanded highway covers to accommodate a wider range of uses including, but not limited to, multistory buildings. As these requests are beyond the current Project scope and are not yet sufficiently defined, any costs of design, engineering, and construction of expanded covers are not contemplated in this CTC report. Preliminary estimates suggest a range of \$200 million to \$500 million of additional cost to design and build

expanded covers, depending on the required length and strength of the covers. Much of the cost is attributed to providing the structural capacity to accommodate the weight of the buildings.

To maintain the Project's current delivery schedule and begin main construction in 2023, a final decision regarding the expanded highway covers must be made no later than June 2020. The potential for expanding the scope of the highway covers will require community engagement and input and support from stakeholders.

Stakeholders also requested additional technical analysis of the Project, including preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), as well as the development of an advisory group to guide the Project and an independent evaluation of the highway covers. The Project team anticipates direction from the OTC to address these issues.

COST VALIDATION

ODOT has engaged an independent estimator (IE) to validate Project costs through the development of a production-based estimate that accounts for constructability, access, work sequencing, and market conditions. Additionally, ODOT has selected an owner's representative team to collaboratively provide program management leadership to support successful Project delivery, including cost estimating services.

The owner's representative has prepared an independent estimate to compare to, and validate, the IE's estimate. The IE's and owner's representative's estimates will be compared to the CM/GC's estimate at future pricing milestones once the CM/GC has joined the Project. This process will aid ODOT in negotiating a fair and reasonable price for work.





Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon Transportation Commission

Office of the Director, MS 11

355 Capitol St NE

Salem, OR 97301-3871

DATE: January 10, 2020

TO: Oregon Transportation Commission

FROM: Kristopher W. Strickler
Director

SUBJECT: **Agenda F** – Approve release of the *Draft 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* for Public Review and Comment

Requested Action:

Approve releasing the *Draft 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* to the public for review and comment and approve the list of projects to advance to begin delivery.

Background:

The *Draft 2021-2024 STIP* (Attachment 1) is the department's short-term capital improvement program required by federal regulations that outlines project funding and scheduling information for the Department and the state's metropolitan planning organizations.

In December 2017, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) approved the [funding allocation for the Draft 2021-2024 STIP](#). Approval of these funds allowed the project selection to continue on the existing timeline for Highway Leverage, Safety Leverage, and Fix-It programs. During this time period, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) worked with the various regional Area Commission on Transportation (ACTs) and stakeholders to seek comments and input into the projects selected.

In addition to the approval for the Draft STIP to go to public comment, the agency is requesting to advance specific phases from projects selected for the 2021-2024 STIP to begin work. The projects and phases are listed in Attachment 2. This request will allow projects to begin working and allows construction to be delivered earlier.

Next Steps:

With OTC approval, the *Draft 2021-2024 STIP* will be released for formal public review. The public review timeline is February 1 to March 31, 2020. During that time, ODOT will seek and review comments from the public and other stakeholders. After the public comment period, a number of technical steps must be completed before the preparation of the Final 2021-2024 STIP.

In June of 2020, ODOT will return for OTC approval to release the Final 2021-2024 STIP for federal approval from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Agency (FTA). At this meeting the Commission will also receive a summary of the public comments.

Final approval from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is expected in September 2020.

Attachment:

- Attachment 1 – Draft 2021-2024 STIP
- Attachment 2 – Draft 2021-2024 STIP Advance Phase List
-

Copies to:

Jerri Bohard	Travis Brouwer	Cooper Brown	Lindsay Baker
McGregor Lynde	Jeff Flower	Tom Fuller	

Attachment 2

Key #	Project Name	Phase	Phase Amount	Year	Justification
Region 1					
K20300	OR217 at US26 Westbound Ramp/US26: OR217 - Cornell	PE	\$ 111,839	2020	This project should align with the adjacent US26 (Sunset Highway) Sylvan to OR 217 project. Advancing to the current STIP will save on costs and be more efficient for project delivery. Bid scheduled for August 2020.
K20382	Morrison Street: Willamette River (Morrison) Bridge	CN	\$ 5,000,000	2020	Adding additional \$5M to local agency project to allow construction to move forward due to higher estimates.
K21599	US26: Salmon River - Zigzag	PE	\$ 1,583,489	2020	This project needs to align with the adjacent project in the current STIP to reduce costs, reduce impact to travelling public, and for efficiency in project delivery.
K21599	US26: Salmon River - Zigzag	RW	\$ 52,899	2020	This project needs to align with the adjacent project in the current STIP to reduce costs, reduce impact to travelling public, and for efficiency in project delivery.
K19071	I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	PE	\$ 44,000,000	2020	By February 2020, the current available design funds will be expended so funds will need to be advanced to keep the design moving until 202. This includes cost of obligating the right-of-way phase in 2020. The advanced design funds will pay to get the project through right-of-way obligation in 2020. If right-of-way is delayed to 2021, there is potential for cost increases due to market changes.
K19071	I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project	RW	\$ 58,000,000	2020	By February 2020, the current available design funds will be expended so funds will need to be advanced to keep the design moving until 202. This includes cost of obligating the right-of-way phase in 2020. The advanced design funds will pay to get the project through right-of-way obligation in 2020. If right-of-way is delayed to 2021, there is potential for cost increases due to market changes.
K20471	OR99W: Tualatin River northbound bridge	CN	\$ 1,202,900	2020	Advancing construction to 2020 will get this project to construction a year before the Oregon 217 Aux Lane project to reduce anticipated traffic impacts. In addition there is potential for lower bid prices when constructed earlier. The PE was started in the 18-21 STIP. Construction was cancelled due to the rebalance. The overlay has dense cracking in some areas and large cracks in others. The overlay that is on the bridge has reached the end of its service life.
K20478	OR213 (Cascade Hwy South) at S Toliver Rd	PE	\$ 451,353	2020	Design for this project has started in the current STIP and right-of-way needs to initiate in 2020. Construction needs to initiate as soon as possible to avoid cost increases due to inflation.
K20478	OR213 (Cascade Hwy South) at S Toliver Rd	RW	\$ 2,250,182	2020	Design for this project has started in the current STIP and right-of-way needs to initiate in 2020. Construction needs to initiate as soon as possible to avoid cost increases due to inflation.
K21610	Region 1 rockfall mitigation strategy	PL	\$ 250,000	2020	Initiate project early to prepare for funding proposals for the 24-27 STIP cycle and to coordinate maintenance work in upcoming seasons.
K21611	Bus on shoulder pilots	PL	\$ 300,000	2020	Evaluate the Portland-metro freeway system (~100 miles) to identify bus-on-shoulder opportunities. This is anticipated to include a system-wide geometric assessment, identification of potential pilot project corridors, coordination with regional partners, and development of a Concept of Operations for each corridor.
K21637	OR281, OR282 and OR35 signs, signals and lighting	PE	\$ 148,630	2020	initiate design in 2020 so project is ready for construction in 2021. this strategy will get safety improvements in place as soon as possible.
K21684	I-84 (Eastbound): Tooth Rock Tunnel	PE	\$ 616,459	2020	The rutting in the slow lane is 1 to 1.25 inches deep. The deck was patched several times in 2016 and 2017 by the Bridge Crews. There are cracks in the roadway every 20 feet. Most cracks are less than a quarter inch, but there are cracks up to half an inch.
K21707	US30: St. Johns Bridge	PE	\$ 1,640,017	2020	This is an historic bridge in an urban area, so the PE phase should be started early due to the complex nature of the project.
K21710	US30: Troutdale Bridge	PE	\$ 671,377	2020	This historic bridge is located at the start of the Historic Columbia River Highway and is in an environmentally sensitive location, and also on a river that is popular for floating and other recreation.
K21712	OR99W : Rock Creek Bridge	PE	\$ 74,079	2020	The rails on this bridge are substandard. Both rails have collision damage (broken off sections, loose approach rail...)
K21766	I-84: Multnomah Falls - Cascade Locks	PE	\$ 5,782,433	2020	This is a major project on I-84 that requires close coordination between Pavements and Bridge. The PE phase should be started early to enable sufficient time to develop traffic control and staging plans.
K21880	Cornelius Pass Rd, Rock Creek Bridge	PE	\$ 831,820	2020	Local agency has requested early start on the design phase to support future request for funding construction in the 24-27 STIP cycle.
K21882	Hawthorne Bridge Ramp to OR99E (Portland)	PE	\$ 1,620,457	2020	Local agency has requested early start on the design phase to support future request for funding construction in the 24-27 STIP cycle.
K21885	Knights Bridge Rd, Molalla River Bridge	PE	\$ 639,887	2020	Local agency has requested early start on the design phase.
Total			\$ 125,227,821		

Region 2

K20314	Richardson Gap Road: Shimanek (Thomas Creek) Covered Bridge	CN	\$ 3,444,608	2020	The bridge is in very poor condition with a leaky roof and other concerns and work needs to be completed as soon as possible.
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2021-2024 Draft STIP Advance Phase List
1/7/2020

Key #	Project Name	Phase	Phase Amount	Year	Justification
K20445	OR153: Salt Creek (Ash Swale) Bridge	RW	\$ 234,700	2020	to keep the construction phase on schedule
K20445	OR153: Salt Creek (Ash Swale) Bridge	PE	\$ 300,000	2020	to keep the construction phase on schedule
K21237	US20: Cox Creek - Reeves Parkway	CN	\$ 3,000,000	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; can pave roadway in 2020
K21538	I-105: Willamette R - Pacific Hwy.	PE	\$ 695,500	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21539	I-5: N. Santiam - Kuebler	PE	\$ 483,600	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21540	I-5: Goshen - Cottage Grove (SB)	PE	\$ 670,100	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21542	OR22: Big Cliff Dam - Mongold Slide	PE	\$ 482,700	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21543	OR126: Greenwood Dr - Vida	PE	\$ 403,100	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21548	OR18: Oldsville Rd - Ash Rd.	PE	\$ 400,000	2020	pavement conditions deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21553	I-5 Salem - Albany ITS Project	PE	\$ 1,100,000	2020	VMS optimization on I-5 to assist with winter weather events that have caused problems in the past
K21576	Lane County Signing Improvements & Guardrail Installations (2024)	PE	\$ 370,900	2020	address high crash incident sites as soon as practical
K21583	US30: Queue Warning System (Rainer)	PE	\$ 395,000	2020	reduce the ongoing high traffic incidents and high congestion
K21763	US101: Siuslaw River Bridge (Florence)	PE	\$ 881,400	2020	bridge driving surface deteriorating; cost savings by completing sooner
K21988	Deer Creek Park Road bridge	PE	\$ 350,200	2020	Requested by the locals.
K21998	Scotts Mills Road: Butte Creek bridge (Scotts Mills)	PE	\$ 545,300	2020	Requested by the locals.
K22001	South Beaver Creek Road: South Fork Beaver Creek bridge	PE	\$ 355,600	2020	Requested by the locals.
K22003	Mill Creek Road bridge	PE	\$ 406,400	2020	Requested by the locals.
K22004	Salem Avenue: Cox Creek bridge (Albany)	PE	\$ 143,000	2020	Requested by the locals.

Total **\$ 14,662,108**

Region 3

K21714	US199: Clear Zone Improvements	PE	\$ 120,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP.
K20133	I-5: Ashland-Gold Hill Culverts	PE	\$ 200,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP
K21676	OR99/OR238/OR62: Big X Intersection (Medford)	PE	\$ 1,012,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP
K21716	OR140: Lakeview Dr. Left Turn Lane	PE	\$ 429,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP
K21678	OR42: Slater Crk - Hard Cash Ln and Slide Repair	PE	\$ 784,000	2020	PE funds need to be advanced for this project due to the deteriorating pavement. Slide and rock fall mitigation within project limits is being combined with this project to alleviate construction conflicts. Construction is scheduled for 2023.
K20166	Region 3 Variable Message & Curve Warning Signs	PE	\$ 822,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP
K21722	Purchase Stockpile Property	PE	\$ 220,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed property acquisition timelines in the DRAFT STIP
K21679	I-5: Exit 125 Northbound @ Garden Valley Blvd	PE	\$ 486,000	2020	PE funding is needed to be advanced to meet programmed construction timelines in the DRAFT STIP

Total **\$ 4,073,000**

Region 4

K21640	US197 Over I84 Bridge (The Dalles)	PE	\$ 89,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21642	I84 Westbound Bridge Over Union Pacific Railroad (Rufus)	PE	\$ 190,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21644	I84 Bridge Over OR19 (Arlington Viaduct)	PE	\$ 750,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21653	US97: Earl Street to Colfax Lane (Madras)	PE	\$ 1,446,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21667	US20: Ward / Hamby Rd Intersection	PE	\$ 713,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes. This is a critical intersection, being advanced to reduce potential serious crashes.
K21667	US20: Ward / Hamby Rd Intersection	RW	\$ 150,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes. This is a critical intersection, being advanced to reduce potential serious crashes.
K21756	US20: Central Oregon Hwy Culverts Corridor Project	PE	\$ 250,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21757	I84: Columbia River Hwy Culverts	PE	\$ 425,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K21758	US20: Sisters interchange Bridge (Bend)	PE	\$ 62,386	2020	To meet required construction timeframes
K22072	US20 at N. Locust Ave. Intersection (City of Sisters)	PE	\$ 250,000	2020	To meet required construction timeframes provided by the City of Sisters who is providing funding.

Total **\$ 4,325,386**

Region 5

K21651	Eastern Oregon variable message signs	PE	\$ 400,000	2020	The snow zone drum signs that this project will replace are out-dated technology and they need to be upgraded to variable message signs as soon as possible to improve winter driving safety. Also, the project will include geo-tech drilling at some locations, which is work that needs to be done early in project development.
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2021-2024 Draft STIP Advance Phase List
1/7/2020

Key #	Project Name	Phase	Phase Amount	Year	Justification
K21754	I-84: Ladd Canyon-Clover Creek	PE	\$ 224,968	2020	We are advancing the PE to give us enough time to construct the project in 2022. We are planning on constructing this project in 2022 based on pavement preservation needs and work load balancing.
K21873	OR86: Fish Creek	PE	\$ 650,000	2020	The project will be placing a temporary detour bridge and there is going to be considerable Geotech work that needs to be done early. This is also a Fish Passage project and coordination with the regulatory agencies will be required, and extra time allowed for the coordination and reviews.
K20528	US395: Jct I-84 to Pendleton South City limits	PE	\$ 500,000	2020	I-84 - Pendleton SCL is a pavement preservation project that includes ADA ramps, sidewalks, and signal upgrades. Need to use 21-24 funding to increasethe current PE Phase to complete design. The project will be consulted, which requires additional time on the front end to get a contract developed.
Total			\$ 1,774,968		
Grand Total			\$ 150,063,283		

**PROPOSED OTC ACTIONS ON ROSE QUARTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
January 2020**

Subject to the review of legal advice, the Commission directs ODOT to:

0. Request regular progress updates from ODOT to the OTC and community on the Rose Quarter Project. The OTC will direct ODOT to provide regular updates to the Commission and community on our progress on the Project.

1. Approve the submission of a Rose Quarter Cost to Complete Report to the Legislature. Pursuant to the requirements of House Bill 2017, the OTC will consider the submission to the Legislature this month of an updated “Rose Quarter Project Cost to Complete Report” (“Report”). The Report will update an initial Project cost estimate of approximately \$450 million to \$500 million issued in 2017. The Commission received the Report late last week and had not seen it prior to that time. The Report estimates that the current cost to build the Rose Quarter Project is between \$715 million and \$795 million.

2. By March 20, 2020, Direct ODOT to complete an Environmental Assessment for the Rose Quarter Project or direct ODOT to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement. On or before March 20, 2020, the OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT to complete the Project’s Environmental Assessment, which has been underway for more than a year, with additional analysis on specific elements outlined in this letter or, instead, complete an Environmental Impact Statement. No decision on this issue will be made at the January 2020 meeting.

3. Direct ODOT to establish a Rose Quarter Executive Advisory Committee. In the spirit of cooperative decision-making, the OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT, in consultation with the Chair of the OTC, to establish a Rose Quarter Project Executive Advisory Committee (“EAC”) on or before February 15, 2020 with the goal of convening the first meeting of the EAC on or before March 1, 2020. If established, the EAC will be chaired by OTC Vice Chair Alando Simpson, its meetings will be open to the public, and its recommendations to the OTC and ODOT will be advisory in nature.

4. Direct ODOT to establish a Project Community Advisory Committee. The OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT, in consultation with the Chair of the OTC, to establish a Rose Quarter Project Community Advisory Committee (“CAC”) on or before February 15, 2020 with the goal of convening the first meeting of the CAC on or before April 1, 2020. If established, the CAC will be chaired by an ODOT senior administrator, its meetings will be open to the public, and its recommendations to the OTC and ODOT will be advisory in nature.

5. Direct ODOT to recommend Rose Quarter Project “Principles and Values.” The OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT, in consultation with project partners and liaisons from the EAC and CAC, to develop “Principles and Values for the Rose Quarter Project” recommendations that support transparency, inclusivity, and equity in the development and

construction of the Rose Quarter Project. ODOT will submit these recommendations to the OTC for review and approval.

6. Direct ODOT to conduct a Rose Quarter Project I-5 cover evaluation and alternatives report (“Cap Report”). The OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT, in consultation with the Albina Vision Trust, to retain a qualified consultant to conduct a “Rose Quarter Project I-5 Highway Cover Evaluation and Alternatives Report” (“Cap Report”) and deliver an initial draft of the Cap Report to ODOT on or before July 1, 2020. In turn, on or before October 1, 2020 (unless this deadline is extended by the OTC), ODOT will make recommendations to the OTC about how ODOT can, within the scope of its authority, support the development of a transportation system over I-5 in the Rose Quarter Project area which promotes the redevelopment of the Albina neighborhood in a manner that creates economic opportunities for area residents and resident minority-owned businesses.

7. Direct ODOT to continue to coordinate with Regional Partners. The OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT to work with regional partners, including but not limited to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Metro, Portland Public Schools, the Albina Vision Trust, and local minority-owned business representatives, to ensure a community-connected process is used as ODOT and the OTC determine the final design of and construction schedule for the Project.

8. Direct ODOT to establish Rose Quarter Project Equity Principles. The OTC will determine whether to direct ODOT, in consultation with project partners and liaisons from the EAC and CAC, to incorporate equity practices, including CMGC design and contracting practices, in the Project’s design and construction to maximize opportunities for local minority-owned contractors and small businesses in the Project area to work on the Project.

9. Direct ODOT to consider a Rose Quarter Project Environmental Peer Review. The OTC will determine whether to direct ODOT to consider undertaking an air quality and noise quality peer review process of the Rose Quarter Project environmental report findings and make recommendations to the OTC and ODOT related to any additional mitigation measure which ODOT and the OTC should consider.

10. Direct ODOT to undertake further steps to establish congestion pricing on I-5 in the Rose Quarter area. The OTC will determine whether to direct ODOT to undertake further steps to establish congestion pricing on I-5 in the Rose Quarter I-5 area. Consideration of congestion pricing in the Rose Quarter I-5 area should occur in as close a proximity to completion of the Rose Quarter Project as is reasonably feasible.

11. Direct ODOT to continue to work with PPS to attempt to address PPS’s concerns about the Rose Quarter Project. The OTC will consider whether to direct ODOT to continue to work with the Portland Public Schools (“PPS”) to attempt to address PPS’s concerns about the Rose Quarter Project. If this proposed action is approved by the OTC, the Director will convene the next meeting with PPS representatives with the goal of holding the next meeting on or before February 16, 2020.



City of
Portland



March 27, 2020

Bob Van Brocklin, Chair
Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capitol St NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project

Dear Chair Van Brocklin and Members of the Oregon Transportation Commission:

Thank you for your continued engagement of local and regional partners on the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (project). As partners in serving the community and building our city and state's future, we appreciate the steps that you have taken to stand up a project governance structure. Recent progress made in accordance with actions adopted by the OTC on 1/23/2020 is encouraging. **However, in this joint letter we are calling on the OTC to develop an alternative outcomes-based process and partner agreement that clearly demonstrates a path forward and/or proceed with a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The alternative process must be inclusive of solutions to address the project cost overrun (i.e., tolling revenue on the I-5 corridor), and realize climate benefits and community development opportunities.**

As you know, this land is special. It was the heart of Oregon's African-American community. The project area encompasses Harriet Tubman Middle School, which preceded the construction of Interstate-5, and is within the historic Albina neighborhood. The forced displacement and associated disinvestment in the decades following I-5 construction is our shared history. This project provides an opportunity to tell stories from Albina's rich history, create new transportation systems that help heal and connect us, and demonstrate responsibility for the past and commitment to a shared future. These are matters of statewide significance. Governor Brown and the state legislature have demonstrated leadership in their words and actions to ensure that significant public resources will be invested to address these common state and local priorities.

The action before the OTC directing ODOT to complete an Environmental Assessment (EA) or EIS is significant. Let us be clear – we share your interest in delivering the right project in a timely manner that maximizes limited transportation resources. However, it is critical to ensure alignment on project outcomes in order to support a successful path forward.

As previously stated in various forms of testimony, some of our project concerns have not been sufficiently addressed. The January directives from the OTC began to lay the groundwork to address core community concerns. However, the current progress on individual action items since then falls short of providing the comprehensive framework necessary to gain stakeholder buy-in and move us forward. The specific timing of actions, Steering Committee decision-making authority and overall commitments remains unclear and must be laid out to build trust with key stakeholders.

Given the continued level of uncertainty in project scope and outcomes, as well as the significant cost increase as presented in ODOT's January Cost to Complete Report, there must be a process in place that is strong enough to address these challenges. Questions relating to scope, cost, and design alternatives would typically be done through an EIS. Without the structure of an expanded EIS, a process and partner agreement should be provided that demonstrates a clear path to determine the right project for this special place in our state history.

Since January 2020, we have been consistent in collectively requesting the following:

- 1) Historical acknowledgement and leadership commitment to restorative justice
- 2) Governance and cost transparency
- 3) Project scope consensus (surface improvements, highway covers, congestion pricing)
- 4) Commitment to environmental justice (reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air quality in N/NE Portland by maximizing opportunities for demand management, reducing congestion by designing for all transportation modes)

Specifically, steps to address missing elements from the above include:

- The OTC's guidance to ODOT reflected 11 significant actions identified on various timelines and with various implications. **We request clarity on the structure, tool or process that will be used to reconcile these timelines and ensure the required transparency and accountability to gain stakeholder support.**
- ODOT has yet to demonstrate how project principles and values will be supported by institutional commitments and policy. Project principles and values should focus on restorative justice and environmental outcomes, including:
 - Setting a new standard for disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) contracting by the State, prime-contractor development programs, workforce development opportunities, anti-displacement and restorative community building investments, and long-term wealth creation and land ownership opportunities.
 - Environmental outcomes that seek to align the project scope and schedule with plans to study congestion pricing and TDM options in the I-5 Corridor to manage project costs and improve climate and equity outcomes in time to inform Project design and delivery; improving air quality in N/NE Portland, which is disproportionately impacted by air toxins; and working with Portland Public Schools to mitigate project impact on Harriet Tubman students.While we understand the intent to have the Steering Committee finalize project principles and values, **this is an important moment for the OTC and ODOT to demonstrate institutional leadership with an explicit commitment to restorative justice and environmental outcomes.**
- We acknowledge the steps taken to assemble the Community Advisory Committee and the Steering Committee. We thank ODOT for implementing a robust CAC recruitment with intentional outreach to community members who have historically been excluded from the decision-making process. ODOT has also engaged professional facilitators to help guide an inclusive and transparent committee process. However, these advisory bodies cannot constitute a meaningful governance structure without further clarity about their roles, expected deliverables, and greater transparency on how their feedback will be incorporated into project timeline and milestones. **Further, the decision-making structure should clearly define how feedback mechanisms will function between these committees,**

OTC, participating agencies, and ODOT staff. We request ODOT develop a partner agency agreement that outlines how collaboration will continue to take place as part of this governance structure and an outcome-based process.

- ODOT should reaffirm the scope of the project and commit to a complete project that reflects local, regional and community priorities while meeting the needs of the state system. **We request an inclusive highway cover design process that supports the active and safe spaces envisioned by the Albina community. This process should link I5RQ project governance with larger I-5 corridor planning efforts and be made clear in the scope and timeline of project delivery.**

These are particularly challenging times that require us to move forward using creative methods to engage our community with innovative action plans to invest in community building. We renew our request for a clearly defined framework for an alternative process, one which addresses the concerns outlined above in order to ensure the project will successfully address outcomes around equity, climate, and multi-modal infrastructure delivery.

Sincerely,

Rukaiyah Adams, Albina Vision Trust Chair

Portland Public Schools Board of Education

Lynn Peterson, Metro Council President

Ted Wheeler, City of Portland Mayor

Chloe Eudaly, City of Portland Commissioner

Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County Commissioner



FUNDING PROGRAMMING

DATE: March 12, 2020

Summary:

ODOT has programmed the full funding required for the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project right-of-way (ROW) phase to accomplish the following:

- Acquire the land needed for contractor access during construction
- Achieve Legislative schedule expectations under HB 2017
- Efficiently use Project funds and lower risk of inflation and increased cost resulting from on-going area development on sites needed by the Project

In 2018, ODOT conducted a risk workshop with interested construction contractors to build Project awareness and to gain insights into what contractors viewed as key Project risks. Primary among those risks is the need in the Project's densely constrained urban environment to provide adequate space for the contractor to stage equipment, materials and construction offices and provide safe, efficient and separated worker access around the Project vicinity in proximity to the traveling public. Sufficient space, gained through the right-of-way (ROW) process, is needed regardless of the final scope of the project that will evolve from now through 2022.

Through HB2017, the Oregon Legislature funded the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, with an expectation that ODOT would complete construction by 2027. Meeting this expectation requires ODOT to complete the normal 12 to 18-month ROW process to receive FHWA approval to enter construction. ODOT must begin the ROW Phase in spring 2020 to remain on schedule.

Meeting or accelerating the Project schedule drives funding efficiency and reduces inflation effects that can be substantial on a project of this scale. Advancing property acquisitions helps to avoid or minimize delays and lessen the risk of increasing ROW costs stemming from on-going area developments needed for the Project.

Finally, in addition to ROW funding, it is important that ODOT increase programmed funding now for the preliminary engineering (PE) phase to avoid any service interruption and maintain Project team efforts and momentum in community engagement, design and oversight/governance.

**Metro**600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Memo

Date: April 1, 2020
To: Metro Council and Interested Parties
From: Ken Lobeck, Funding Programs Lead, 503-797-1785
Subject: I-5 Rose Quarter MTIP Amendment via Resolution 20-5088 Comments Summary

BACKGROUND

As part of the processing and approval steps for a full/formal Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) amendment, Metro is required to complete a 30-day public notification/opportunity to comment period which is posted on Metro's website on the MTIP page. The MTIP page provides guidance on submitting comments to Metro about the amendment. The 30-day comment period covered February 26 through March 24, 2020.

Submitted email comments concerning the I-5 Rose Quarter Project totaled 78 comments. All of the submitted email comments were in opposition to the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project. The "No More Freeways PDX Coalition" also included twelve attachments which were submitted in 2019 in opposition to the project's Environmental Assessment (EA) citing those comments support their opposition to the MTIP amendment. They are highlighted as individual comments for review on the summary list in purple font in the summary list.

The 78 total comments focused on the following areas:

1. **Climate.** Commenters assert the I-5 Rose Quarter project is inconsistent with climate goal strategies and will add to greenhouse gas emissions.
2. **Safety.** Commenters assert the project will not improve safety, but make the freeway and driving through the corridor more dangerous.
3. **Funding.** Commenters assert that the project wastes transportation funding.
4. **NEPA process.** Commenters assert that ODOT did not comply with the environmental process and the EA was not properly developed and did not address the overwhelming negative public comments against the project. About 80% of the comments demand the project be delayed until a full environmental impact statement (EIS) is completed.

The following pages provide a copy of the submitted comments. At the end are Staff Summary Notes and Observations for Council Members related to the MTIP amendment.

Metro March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment Resolution 20-5088 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Summary of Email Comments Log (#1 -#35)					
#	Date & Time	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
1	4/1/2019	Group	Metro Planning Department Staff	Elissa Gertler Director of Planning	Rose Quarter Environmental Assessment Comments Concerns and & assessment that the EA is inadequate in its evaluation of serious crashes
2	3/26/2020 4:56 pm	Individual	N/A	Alan Kessler	Opposition based on Metro letter, climate goals & costs
3	3/26/2020 7:49 pm	Group	No More Freeways Coalition	Aaron Brown	Opposition based on climate goal violations, costs, and safety
4	3/26/2020 9:04 pm	Individual	Oregon Walks	Doug Klotz	Opposition based on climate goals violations
5	3/26/2020 9:40 pm	Individual	N/A	Allan Rudwick	Opposition based on costs and climate goals violations
6	3/27/2020 10:11 am	Individual	N/A	Stephen Bachhuber	Opposition based on excessive cost and waste of money
7	3/27/2020 10:07 am	Individual*	N/A	Heather Buletti	Opposition based on adds congestion, need sustainable transportation options
8	3/27/2020 10:06 am	Group*	Neighborhood Workshop	Neil Heller Incremental Development Officer	Opposition based on climate goals and costs
9	3/27/2020 10:01 am	Individual*	N/A	Mark Wheeler	Opposition to the project based on costs
10	3/27/2020 9:09 am	Individual	N/A	Chris Smith	Opposition based on unresolved EA negative comments and costs
11	3/27/2020 9:01 am	Individual*	N/A	Tom McTighe	Opposition based on costs and negative community support for the project
12	3/27/2020 9:01 am	Individual	N/A	Bill Crawford	Opposition based on cost and bad for the community
13	3/27/2020 8:43 am	Individual	N/A	Ingri Benson	Opposition based on excessive costs
14	3/27/2020 8:40 am	Individual*	N/A	Patrick Halley	Opposition based on costs, waste of funds, and climate goals
15	3/27/2020 8:36 am	Individual*	N/A	Philip Cooper	Opposition based on climate goals, costs, and safety
16	3/27/2020 8:28 am	Individual	N/A	Scott Clyburn	Opposition based on improper environmental review
17	3/27/2020 8:04 am	Individual	N/A	Caitlin Clark	Opposition based on climate goals and values not consistent
18	3/27/2020 7:18 am	Individual	N/A	Bobby Hunter	Opposition based on climate goal violations and not improve safety

#	Date	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
19	3/27/2020 10:37 am	Individual*	N/A	Ben Birdsall	Opposition based on climate goals violations, costs and add traffic
20	3/27/2020 11:21 am	Individual*	N/A	Rob McRae	Opposition to the Rose Quarter Improvement Project
21	3/27/2020 11:24 am	Individual*	N/A	Yehudah Winter	Opposition based on costs and climate goals
22	3/27/2020 11:24 am	Individual*	N/A	Rebecca Canright	Opposition based on climate goals violations and need for more transit
23	3/27/2020 11:40 am	Individual*	N/A	James Shelstad	Opposition to the Rose Quarter Improvement Project
24	3/27/2020 11:43 am	Individual*	N/A	Daniel Wilson	Opposition based on the project will add congestion
25	3/27/2020	Individual	N/A	Kala Leslie	Opposition based on climate goals and add congestion
26	3/27/2020 12:53 pm	Individual*	N/A	Charles Townsend	Opposition based on EA vs. EIS and majority opposition to the project
27	3/27/2020 1:07 pm	Individual*	N/A	Jan Wulling	Opposition based on quality of life degraded and excessive costs
28	3/27/2020 1:28 pm	Individual*	N/A	Sean Cearley	Opposition is based on existing opposition in place and will not solve congestion
29	3/27/2020 1:08 pm	Individual*	N/A	Karalie Adams	Opposition based on that congestion will increase and more transit is the solution
30	3/27/2020 1:32 pm	Individual*	N/A	Emee Pumarega	Opposition based on cost and no environmental document exists
31	3/27/2020 1:31 pm	Individual*	N/A	Christopher Eykamp	Opposition based on cost and not pursuing other possible congestion management options first.
32	3/27/2020 1:34 pm	Individual*	N/A	Kevin Burke	Opposition based on violation of climate change goals
33	3/27/2020 1:39 pm	Individual*	N/A	Nate Hildebrand	Opposition based on climate change goals violations and the project will add to congestion
34	3/27/2020 1:53 pm	Individual*	N/A	Maia Hixon	Opposition to the project based on safety will diminish as a result
35	3/27/2020 1:59 pm	Individual*	N/A	Claire Vlach	Opposition based on project will add to congestion and climate goals violations

Metro March 2020 Formal MTIP Amendment Resolution 20-5088 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Summary of Email Comments Log (#36-#78)					
#	Date & Time	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
36	4/1/2019	Group	Audobon Society of Portland	Bob Sallinger Conservation Director	Copy of comments directed towards the draft EA at that time in 2019 to select no-build alternative.
37	3/30/2019	Group	350PDX	Kay Kolker Interim Executive Director	Copy of opposition to the EA based on climate change goal violations
38	3/26/2019	Group	Oregon Walks	Jess Thompson	Copy of opposition comments to the EA based on climate goal violations, costs, and safety
39	3/30/2019	Group	Safe Routes to School Nation Partnership	Kari Schosshauer Senior Policy Manager	Copy of opposition comments to EA on environmental justice remediation and climate goal; violations
40	4/1/2019	Group	Business for a Better Portland	Not Stated	Opposition to EA based on additional analysis of impacts required
41	4/1/2019	Group	Irvington Community Association	Bob Dobrich President	Opposition to the EA based on climate goal violations, decreased safety and degrade quality of life in the area
42	4/1/2019	Group	No More Freeways Traffic Technical Advisory Committee	Buff Brown Joseph Cortright Brian Davis Jesse Lopez	Opposition to the EA based on an opinion that the EA's Rose Quarter modeling is flawed
43	4/1/2019	Group	Parents of Harriet Tubman Middle School Students	Brooke Herout PTSA Vice President Joan Petit Parent Lee Ann Moyer Parent Rayna Geer Parent Taylor Geer Parent Jim Herout Parent	Opposition to the project EA due to climate goal violations and need to complete a full EIS

#	Date	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
44	4/1/2019	Group	Multiple	Rhett Lawrence, Conservation Director, Oregon Chapter, Sierra Club Doug Moore, Executive Director, Oregon League of Conservation Voters Nicholas Caleb, J.D., LL.M. Staff Attorney - Climate Justice Program, Center for Sustainable Economy Meredith Connolly, Oregon Director, Climate Solutions	Opposition to the project EA based on the opinion that a Congestion Pricing Study is first required and the Rose Quarter traffic modeling does not include significant impacts value pricing implementation will have on traffic based on costs
45	4/1/2019	Group	No More Freeway Expansions Coalition	None identified	Opposition to the project and EA because the EA lacks public engagement commitment, freeway expansion does not solve traffic congestion
46	3/27/2020 2:12 pm	Individual*	N/A	Sarah Deumling	Opposition based on climate change goal violation and costs
47	3/27/2020 3:57 pm	Individual*	N/A	Antonella Mancini	Opposition based on an EIS is called for
48	3/27/2020 3:57 pm	Individual*	N/A	Benjamin Thomas	Opposition based on climate goal violations
49	3/27/2020 4:32 pm	Group	Bike Loud PDX	Not Stated	Opposition based on MTIP funds not to be used this way and should reserve MTIP funds for projects that save lives and address climate goals
50	3/27/2020 8:36 am	Individual	N/A	Bob Gantz	Opposition based on climate goal violations
51	3/27/2020 4:40 pm	Individual	N/A	Brett Morgan	Assumed opposition to the project which was actually directed to OTC
52	3/27/2020 10:59 pm	Individual*	N/A	Chris Chaplin	Note: Submitted after the March 27, 2020, 5:00 pm deadline Opposition based on climate goal violations
53	3/27/2020 3:12 pm	Individual*	N/A	Doug Allen	Opposition based on a flawed EA and a full EIS is required and full review of transit alternatives is required
54	3/27/2020 2:08 pm	Individual	N/A	Eric Lindsay	Opposition based on the need for an EIS to be completed and costs
55	3/27/2020 3:04 pm	Individual	N/A	Eric Mandel	Opposition based on ODOT refusal to complete an EIS and an opinion that the far majority of the public are against the project

#	Date	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
56	3/29/2020 8:27 am	Individual*	N/A	Gabrielle Karras	Comments submitted after the 3/27/2020, 5:00 pm deadline Opposition to MTIP funding for the project based on climate goal violations (building an infrastructure that is carbon intensive)
57	3/29/2020 1:26 pm	Individual*	N/A	Holly Hagerman	Comments submitted after the 3/27/2020, 5: 00 pm deadline Opposition based on the project will add congestion, cost and climate goal violations
58	3/27/2020 12:51	Individual*	N/A	Jean Miller	Opposition based on climate goals violations and that the project will not reduce traffic but generate more traffic
59	3/27/2020 3:26 pm	Individual*	N/A	Jesse Maran	Opposition to the project based on capacity increases to the freeways result in climate goal violations
60	3/27/2020 4:16 pm	Individual	N/A	Joseph Cortright	Opposition based inadequate concerns given to traffic, environmental, social and economic concerns and climate goal violations
61	3/27/2020 7:43 am	Individual*	N/A	Judith Arcana	Opposes the Rose Quarter Improvement Project. No specific reason cited other than does not support freeway expansion
62	3/27/2020 8:30 am	Individual*	N/A	Kat West	Opposition based on climate goal violations
63	3/28/2020 9:00 pm	Individual*	N/A	Katharine Ballash	Opposition based on the expectation that the project will generate more traffic, pollution and noise while a better investment exist in active transportation areas.
64	3/27/2020 2:37 pm	Individual	N/A	Lenny Anderson Executive Director (Retired) Swan Island Business Association	Opposition is based on an opinion that urban freeways should be de-commissioned. Adding capacity will only add congestion and more traffic.
65	3/27/2020 6:08 pm	Individual*	N/A	Linda Wysong	Opposition based on climate goal violations and added congestion from the project
66	4/1/2019	Group	N/A	Sean T Malone Attorney at Law	Opposition to EA submitted last year

#	Date	Individual or Group	Name of Group	Person Submitting Comment	Summary Comment
67	3/27/2020 3:02 pm	Individual	N/A	Maria Opie	Opposition based the need for a full environmental review can occur and the need to fund more transit
68	3/27/2020 2:19 pm	Individual*	N/A	Matt Ferris-Smith	Opposition based on that the megaproject fails to address any of the major challenges facing Oregon
69	3/27/2020 3:43 pm	Individual*	N/A	Trish Claffey (My Mac) (hesptrc@msn.com)	Opposition based on the opinion the project will create pollution and that the funds should be used for the Corona Virus recovery effort
70	3/27/2020 4:58 pm	Individual*	N/A	Naomi Fast	Opposition based on the opinion that a full EIS is required and the EA is not sufficient
71	3/27/2020 3:45 pm	Group	No More Freeways PDX	No Stated	Submitting multiple attachments providing summary of EA opposition last year to also oppose MTIP amendment
72	4/1/2019	Group	Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC)	Katherine Schultz Chair	Opposition to the EA based on street improvements are inconsistent with TSP, incorporating the project into the N/NE Quadrant Plan is not accomplished, and climate goal violations
73	3/27/2020 3:00 pm	Individual	N/A	Rob Hemphill	Opposition based on climate goal violations and the need to complete an EIS, plus metro providing funding support
74	3/27/2020 3:11 pm	Individual*	N/A	Robert Edwards	Opposition based on climate goal violations and the need for more active transportation options
75	3/27/2020 8:18 pm	Individual*	N/A	Sarah New	Opposes funding for Rose Quarter Improvement project
76	3/20/2020 9:35 am	Individual*	N/A	Sdb42009@hotmail.com	Opposes Rose Quarter project because it will ruin Portland
77	3/28/2020 8:14 am	Individual*	N/A	Seth Alford	Opposition based on the current uncertainty from the Corona virus which should delay spending funds on the Rose Quarter project
78	3/27/2020 2:52 pm	Individual	N/A	Steve Bozzone	Opposes project based on the opinion that no public comment opportunity occurred before the JPACT approval and a full EIA is required.

Summary Notes and Observations:

- It appears the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the I-5 Rose Quarter Project, the EA was approved as of 2-15-2019.
- The project is included in the current approved constrained Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- The project as included in the RTP remains consistent in scope, limits and location as described in the RTP.
- The project is an approved and named project in HB2017 which was approved by the Oregon Legislature.
- The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) through their approval to commit additional Preliminary Engineering (PE) and Right-Of Way funding has addressed the two phases funding shortfalls with ODOT administered funding.
- ODOT has submitted a proper amendment request to increase the project funding for the PE phase and establish funding for the ROW phase based on OTC action. The added funding originates from OTC and not Metro or the MTIP.
- Comments that the project is inconsistent with climate goal strategies and result in decreased safety is not supported by the approved EA and the project's inclusion in the approved RTP.
- As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Portland metropolitan area, Metro is processing ODOT's MTIP amendment request for the Rose Quarter Project under Resolution 20-5088.
- Per federal regulations, MTIP staff reviews and evaluates amendment requests for:
 - Proof of funding commitment
 - Funding eligibility verification
 - Validation of fiscal constraint demonstration
 - Possible impacts to approved policies, strategies or outcomes identified in the RTP, including air quality impacts if the amendment proposes significant scope changes to a project as defined and modeled in the RTP
 - Offers and completes the required 30-day public notification and opportunity to comment



I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Environmental Assessment



Federal Highway Administration
Oregon Department of Transportation

February 15, 2019



I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Multnomah County, Oregon Key Number 19071

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Submitted pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 4332(d)(2)(G) and 49 U.S.C. Section 303
U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

and
Oregon Department of Transportation

2-8-2019
Date

Rita Windheimer
Rita Windheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager

2/10/2019
Date

Phillip Ditzler
Phillip Ditzler, FHWA Oregon Division Administrator

The following persons may be contacted for further information. Additional Project information is available at ODOT's website:

Megan Channell
Major Projects Manager
Oregon Dept. of Transportation
123 NW Flanders Street
Portland, OR 97209
(503) 731-3087

Emily Cline
Acting Environmental Manager
Federal Highway Administration
530 Center Street NE
Salem, OR 97301
(503) 316-2559

Abstract: The Oregon Department of Transportation is proposing improvements to Interstate 5 (I-5) through the Rose Quarter district in downtown Portland. The proposed improvements would extend existing auxiliary lanes in the northbound and southbound directions to improve safety and operations on I-5 between Interstate 84 and Interstate 405. Improvements to local streets include two new highway covers to improve multimodal connections over I-5 and a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the highway at NE Clackamas Street. This Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluates the benefits and impacts of two alternatives: one in which the Project would move forward as planned (the Build Alternative), and one in which the Project would not be built (the No Build Alternative). The EA provides the public, businesses, interest groups, and agencies at all levels of government an opportunity to understand the Project's benefits and impacts. The EA also provides transportation officials with information that will allow them to make informed decisions about the Project that balance engineering and transportation needs with social, economic, and natural environmental factors, such as noise, air quality, and traffic patterns.

Summary:

The amendment request for the I-5 Rose Quarter is to add funding to a project that remains consistent with the approved Regional Transportation Plan. As additional funding capacity has been identified and approved for use on this project by the OTC, the request has adequately addressed the proof of funding commitment to qualify as eligible to be included in the TIP. Metro staff finds the submitted funding change to the I-5 Rose Quarter Project has been properly submitted and meets requirements necessary for amendment into the 2018-2021 MTIP.



April 1, 2019

Megan Channell
Oregon Dept. of Transportation
megan.channell@odot.state.or.us

Emily Cline
Federal Highway Administration
emily.cline@dot.gov

Re: I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Environmental Assessment Comments

Dear Ms. Channell and Ms. Cline:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project's Environmental Assessment. We congratulate ODOT and FHWA on completion of this well-organized document that strikes a balance between accessibility and thoroughness.

This memo summarizes Metro staff's technical review of the EA and project documents. Rather than document all positive and critical comments, this memo focuses on major questions and concerns in the interest of brevity. In particular, Metro staff believes the EA is inadequate in its evaluation of serious crashes, including documentation of existing conditions and an analysis of how the alternatives compare on reducing serious crashes. This inadequacy means that project designs that can reduce deaths and life changing injuries are not being evaluated, despite direction from federal, state and regional policies.

Metro staff also recommends development and evaluation of new design concepts for the highway caps and a segment of Broadway, and has requests and recommendations related to transportation including clarification of analysis, evaluation of different design concepts, and consideration of additional mitigation measures.

Agency Coordination

- The process for releasing the full documentation and analysis within a 45-day review period without any prior review opportunities of technical work did not allow for a full review of the analysis by Metro staff. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland region and the administrator of the region's urban growth boundary, Metro staff believes our agency should have been afforded the same opportunity as the City of Portland for prior review of technical reports on land use and transportation. Metro staff's comments are therefore based on a high level review rather than a complete understanding of the work.

Project Alternatives

- There are reasonably foreseeable options to the proposed highway caps that were not explored in the design concept screening process, such as reinforced caps or a tunnel-type structure that could support some forms of development. With more robust construction, capped areas could potentially support low-density construction that could activate what might otherwise be vacant, underutilized spaces; a tunnel-style treatment could potentially support more intensive development that would have a more transformative effect on the district. Further exploration of these design concepts in the environmental process is recommended.

- If more robust cap designs are evaluated as recommended, mixed-use development above the highway would be consistent with goals of the City of Portland's N/NE Quadrant Plan, which specifies zoning the capped areas for "mixed commercial, employment, (or) residential; scale varies" with building heights ranging from 2-10 stories. There is no discussion of the potential for structures on the highway caps in the EA, either in the preferred Build Alternative or the other explored alternatives. Metro staff recommends the project's environmental documentation either evaluate such development under NEPA or state that development of these air rights is not a federal action and therefore not subject to NEPA.

Environmental Justice

- The analysis fails to address whether the properties displaced by the project are facilities that serve or employ low-income or minority populations.
- The analysis should clearly define any changes in emissions including diesel and greenhouse gases to neighborhoods along the I-5 corridor from North Portland to the South Waterfront/Lair Hill area.

Land Use

- There is insufficient information about how well the proposed highway caps will functionally meet the City of Portland's adopted land use plans. Metro staff believes ODOT and FHWA should better document how the proposed design will provide public open space that offers genuine opportunities for "recreation, relaxation and respite" including details on management and maintenance of these spaces and air quality and noise levels on the caps.

Safety

- The EA analysis does not adequately address serious crashes, which is inconsistent with federal, state and regional policies to eliminate serious crashes. Oregon has adopted a safety target of achieving zero fatal and serious injury (Injury A) crashes by 2035 (Oregon Transportation Safety Action Plan, 2016). The Portland region also has an adopted Vision Zero target for 2035 (Regional Transportation Safety Strategy, 2018). Federal safety performance targets track crash rates for fatal and serious crashes. Focusing on comparing crash rates for all crashes to statewide averages for freeway segments - the majority of which are property damage only and minor injury - is not consistent with a focus on reducing fatal and serious injuries.
- While the EA states that the "segment of I-5 between Interstate 405 (I-405) and Interstate 84 (I-84) experiences some of the highest vehicle crash rates in Oregon" it does not provide information on how the project area compares for serious crashes. Metro staff is not aware that the project area is an area of concern for serious crashes when compared to statewide averages.
- The EA does not include information on how the Build Alternative will reduce the number and severity of serious crashes occurring
- As indicated in Safety Technical Appendix B, the one fatal crash between 2011 and 2015 involved a pedestrian on the freeway. There were two similar crashes involving pedestrians in 2009 and 2010, outside of the study time frame, indicating a pattern rather than a random occurrence. The EA does not address this fatality or describe how the alternatives would address preventing fatalities of this type in the future.

- The information in Safety Technical Appendix C is inadequate to determining if the Build Alternative would address serious crashes at intersections.
- EA Page 6 states that, “it is estimated that there would be approximately 10 percent more highway crashes under the No-Build Alternative as compared to existing conditions (ODOT 2019a).” This analysis lumps together all crashes and does not clarify whether the Build Alternative would improve serious crashes.
- The EA does not investigate the relationship of time of day with crashes, especially serious crashes, which could impact design decisions. Not evaluating the relationship of congestion to overall crash rates and serious crash rates raises questions about the design solutions identified to address crashes, which are described as addressing congestion and safety simultaneously.
- Behavior is cited as a primary factor in all of the serious crashes – following too close, not paying attention, aggressive driving, speeding and alcohol. It is not clear how the design solutions in the Build Alternative will address behavior.
- EA Page 73 notes that “lower crash rates on I-5 would occur under the Build vs. the No Build Alternative due to less stop and-go traffic and emergency braking, new auxiliary lanes providing drivers more time and space to merge, and new shoulders providing more room for disabled vehicles.” While rear-end crashes occurring under congested conditions could benefit from the Build Alternative, it is not clear how serious crashes occurring in less congested conditions or serious crashes with behavior as a primary factor in the crash will be addressed.

Transportation/Design

- The EA states (section 3.2.2) that the project does not create new capacity or add substantial capacity to I-5. This statement is not objectively true and is potentially misleading; auxiliary lanes clearly add capacity, which can be calculated using Highway Capacity Manual procedures and other traffic analysis tools. Further environmental documentation could state the estimated change in link capacity if there is a need to document the scale of the change.
- The width of Broadway between Williams and 1st is shown as five (5) one-way motor vehicle lanes, which is incompatible with a multimodal, mixed-use environment, and may increase in poor driver behavior. Metro staff requests alternatives to this configuration be developed and further evaluated.
- The angular nature of the lid design relative to the street grid results in sidewalk segments with a very large buffer from the freeway below, and sidewalk segments that may lack any buffer. Metro staff recommends consideration of new lid designs that include landscaped buffer for all sidewalk segments in order to create effective pedestrian environments.
- The EA does not document whether the project considered the feasibility and cost of retaining both Hancock and Flint as overcrossings. Metro staff requests this scenario be evaluated for consideration.
- Since the full four-step travel demand model was not used for the project analysis, it is not clear whether the projected increases in VMT capture all the impacts of the project, including changes due to mode shift to motor vehicles. The limited subarea provided for review does not make it clear if the VMT analysis includes consideration of the regional system or simply reflects re-routing of vehicles within the limited subarea.

Metro staff requests clarification on the assumptions used in forecasting the project's impacts on regional tripmaking and the resulting effect on overall trip patterns including mode share.

- The evaluation of construction impacts does not include consideration of access for walking, bicycling, transit, and driving during construction of the project. Metro staff requests the project document how construction-period access will be addressed.
- Metro staff recommends the final Clackamas and Hancock bridge designs include direct connections without switchbacks on both sides, as well as consideration of stairway connecting Clackamas to Wheeler to allow more direct non-ADA pedestrian access.
- Metro staff recommends the project include a southbound bike lane on Williams between Broadway and Wheeler, to best connect with the Rose Quarter Transit Center and Moda Center.
- Metro staff requests clarification on how the signalization at Williams and Hancock would move bike riders from the right side to the left side, and how bike riders on Vancouver would transition from the right side of the street to the left side prior to Hancock.
- The project appears to remove a sidewalk on the west side of Vancouver north of Broadway, which would degrade the pedestrian environment on Vancouver. Metro staff requests the project retain that sidewalk and connect it directly to the crosswalk on the north side of Broadway.
- The EA indicates that bus and streetcar performance will be slowed due to signal phasing changes. Metro staff requests FHWA and ODOT consider additional ways to mitigate this impact, including the consideration of BAT lanes, transit only lanes, and signal modifications (including TSP) on Broadway and Weidler.

Economy

- The Executive Summary and Cumulative Impact Analysis of the Socioeconomics Technical Report indicates that community engagement events were held that discussed government services, economic opportunity, gentrification, historical injustice with past developments, agency distrust, and broken promises with development initiatives. Metro staff requests the project document how it plans to address these concerns; that effort could be jointly developed with the City of Portland.
- Relevant economic information from Metro's Economic Value Atlas is included on an attached page. FHWA and ODOT may find this information helpful.



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General

- Future environmental review and project documentation should reference the recently adopted 2018 RTP. The EA's references to the 2014 RTP are appropriate because that is what the NEPA analysis is based on.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these in more detail, please contact me at elissa.gertler@oregonmetro.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elissa Gertler".

Elissa Gertler
Director of Planning

I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project EA – Economic information from EVA

Metro's [Economic Value Atlas](#) provides an indication of tract-level conditions when it comes to these economic values. An assessment is provided below regarding the primary census tract for the API (Lloyd District tract). This information may be helpful for the project and its environmental review.

- **Job Activity + Target Industries:** Existing jobs in the census tract of the project area (18,600) are significantly higher than the average tract in the region (2,300). Area job growth over the last ten years (31%) is slightly lower than the average tract in the region (34%). The project area has a large number of goods-producing jobs (500) relative to the regional average (270) and there is a balance between both other tradable industry jobs (9,500) and local service/government jobs (8,600) with more than six times as many of these jobs than other areas of the region. The average size of business establishments (23 employees) is more than two times higher than other areas (10 employees). The project area also has high concentrations of jobs in three out of the six industries that Greater Portland Inc. targets for growth in the region. More than fifteen times as many clean tech jobs, four times as many software and media jobs, and two times as many athletic and outdoor industry jobs than the average tract. The area has few-to-none computer and electronics industry jobs and health science and technology jobs, but there are a fair number in metals and machinery (31 jobs) relative to the average (36 jobs).
- **Market Connectivity:** Average travel times to exit and entry points of the highway system in the project area (40 minutes) are less than the average tract (47 minutes) and the area's access to PDX airport (18 minutes) is much better than most areas of the region (28 minutes). To the extent that the project increases commute-time speeds and reduces travel times on I-5 without inducing additional demand, the improved access to exit/entry points of the highway system and PDX could offer some minor benefit to market connectivity for goods and people for those areas of the region that rely on this stretch of highway as a pass through connection or local connection to outside clients and customers.
- **Labor Access:** Workers with a BA make up a large share of area workforce (48%) relative to the average (37%), but the number of highly educated workers living in the immediate area (900) is less than the average (1,200) and there are almost half as many workers with some college and four times less entry-level workers than the average.
- **Job Access:** There are almost two times as many jobs within a 30 minute commute (940,000) relative to the average tract (570,000 accessible jobs).
- **Economic Inclusivity:** The I-5 Rose Quarter Improvements Project falls in a project area with a long history of economic injustice. The poverty level is 28%, more than double the 13% average. Area median income growth (11.6%) is slightly higher than the average tract (10.7%), but the gap between high and low-income earners (0.47 GINI coefficient) is also higher than the average tract (0.41 GINI coefficient).
- **Racial Diversity:** The project area is slightly more diverse (17.4% that are people of color) than the average tract (13.6%), but the area is getting less diverse (2% decline in % people of color) relative to a slight increase (0.8% growth) in other areas of the region.

- **Developability:** The existing base of industrial and commercial square footage in the census tract for the project area (9,615 SF) is close to four times the average tract in the region (2421 SF). The Buildable Lands Inventory indicates that there are 28.5 acres of buildable industrial or commercial land. This is around 8 acres more than adjacent, centralized tracts despite being well below the average tract in the region (37 acres). Additionally, zoned unit capacity and market potential for housing (1,944 units) is more than double the average tract in the region (887 units). The same is true for existing density (FAR/acre).
- **Livability:** It takes 32 minutes to get to major job concentrations and major employers of the region by transit vs. 54 minutes for the average tract. The area is already much more walkable than most tracts in the region and a smaller share of households have access to a vehicle than the average tract.
- **Market Activity:** Area property values (\$5.4 million) and recent permit activity (923 housing units) are three times higher than the average tract (\$1.6 million, 327 permitted units).
- **Affordability:** There are a larger number of total rental units in the tract of the project area (1,200 units) relative to the average tract (740 units), but the share of households that are rent-burdened (53.81%) is higher than the average tract in the region (46.6%). For the limited number of homeowners, fewer are cost-burdened (7.34%) relative to the average tract (16.8%).

From: Alan Kessler <ak@alankesslerlaw.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 4:56 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Comments on March 2020 MTIP Rose Quarter Formal Amendment



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

These are my official public comments. I object to the proposed amendment to the funding of the Rose Quarter freeway widening project ("RQIP") and to any expenditures on engineering or beginning any efforts to acquire right of way ("ROW") for the project.

The cost of this project has doubled compared to the \$390M figure previously adopted in the RTP. Because the increase is more than 20%, Metro now has the responsibility to certify to the United States federal government that spending several hundred million more dollars on widening a freeway, next to a middle school, during climate collapse, will not deviate from our goals and strategies in the RTP. This is plainly false.

The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program ("MTIP") process is intended to be an accountability process:

"One of the primary purposes of the MTIP is to ensure scarce federal transportation investments are making progress towards the regional vision set out for our transportation system in the RTP. As a result, the greater Portland region's MTIP gives top priority to strategic transportation investments that leverage and reinforce the compact urban form and expanded travel options envisioned in the 2040 Growth Concept and RTP." - 2018 Regional Transportation Plan 8.3.2, incorporated by reference to this testimony in its entirety.

Metro Council should abide by its policy document. The RTP involved substantial public outreach and incorporated our region's long-term vision for the future. Substantial realignments of that vision and how we would prioritize our scarce funds deserve a similar public consideration.

This is not happening. I listened to the TPAC and JPACT hearings, which are each incorporated in this testimony by reference in their entirety. Even after TPAC members raised substantial concerns that RQIP does not meet our RTP goals, Metro staff pushed the MTIP process as merely procedural. The minimal discussion of this item at JPACT — a discussion, which only occurred at all because TPAC raised its severe concerns about the direction of this freeway boondoggle — did not treat this decision to authorize the expenditure of over one hundred million dollars with any of the seriousness to which it was entitled. It looks like the MTIP is being treated as a mere formality to be quickly approved and ignored.

The findings ODOT is asking Metro to make are contrary to fact. This is a doubling of a project budget on one of the largest projects in the entire RTP. It will deprive countless other projects, which the RTP would prioritize, of funding. The amendment is absolutely inconsistent with the RTP; it would be indefensible to make these changes in this technocratic way.



An amendment to the RTP of this scale should not be happening without substantial public engagement — let alone at three wonky meetings held during a global plague.

The draft resolution that ODOT has handed to Metro to rubber-stamp includes the following language:

"WHEREAS, the a [sic] review of the proposed project changes has been completed against the current approved Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to **ensure the projects remain consistent with the goals and strategies** identified in the RTP with the results confirming that ****no RTP inconsistencies exist as a result of the project changes from the March 2020 MTIP Formal Rose Quarter Amendment"**

and

"WHEREAS, the RTP consistency check areas included **financial/fiscal constraint verification**, eligibility and proper use of committed funds, an **assessment of possible air quality impacts**, a **deviation assessment from approved regional RTP goals and strategies**, a **validation that the required changes have little or no impact upon regionally significant projects**, and a reconfirmation that the MTIP's financial constraint finding is maintained a result of the March 2020 Formal Amendment;...." Draft Resolution (emphasis added)

Metro staff has already complained about ODOT's lack of candor exhibited in ODOT's efforts to push the RQIP along. April 1, 2019 Letter from Metro to ODOT ("Metro Letter"). The Metro Letter is attached and incorporated by reference to this public comment as though fully printed herein.

Last April, at the end of the public comment period for the RQIP EA, Metro noted a multitude of failures in ODOT's analysis including skepticism that ODOT's analysis shows that it will provide any safety benefit. It notes that the most severe crashes, relating to driver behavior and pedestrians walking on the freeway, are not addressed at all by ODOT's proposal.

Even so, and without addressing its overwhelming concerns from last year, Metro staff has tried to prod this along making it sound as though the RQIP — at any price — is a foregone conclusion.

In Metro's March 12, 2020 memorandum to JPACT ("JPACT Memo"), it wrote:

“The Rose Quarter Improvement project is a federalized project and was required to complete the NEPA process. The Environmental Assessment (EA) was approved as of February 15, 2019 and is 118 pages long.” JPACT Memo pg. 4.



“Was approved” is a bizarre characterization of a draft document so flawed it resulted in:

- the Metro Letter;
- thousands of items of public testimony that were overwhelmingly negative and that pointed out myriad inconsistencies, falsehoods, errors, and omissions in the EA, which have not been resolved;
- widespread calls from the public and many leaders for a complete EIS, including:
 - members of the Oregon Legislature,
 - the Mayor of Portland,
 - the Transportation Commissioner for Portland,
 - many community organizations focused on environmental justice and transportation,
- an instruction to OTC from the Governor to postpone approving ODOT’s completion of the EA to allow for public discussion about whether an EIS is appropriate; and
- an upcoming meeting of the OTC (which is accepting public comment contemporaneous with this MTIP), to consider whether ODOT will even be allowed to proceed with its flawed study.

It is also a bizarre characterization, given the now-public admissions of ODOT staff and statements by the Portland Parks and Recreation department that the public process surrounding at least certain aspects of the EA were legally insufficient. (see, e.g., <https://www.wweek.com/news/2020/03/05/portland-city-hall-objects-to-widening-highway-above-eastbank-esplanade/>).

Metro staff also wrote in the JPACT Memo that the “EA examined and evaluated environmental impacts...” including air quality, climate change, environmental justice, section 4(f) impacts to parks, socioeconomic impacts, transportation impacts, cumulative impacts, and “Public Involvement and Agency Coordination requirements.” JPACT Memo page 3.

The Metro Letter included substantial, well-reasoned, objections to many aspects of the EA, including most of the categories listed above. If Metro staff no longer stands by its letter and now believes that the EA was adequate to account for all of those impacts to the current project as amended, it needs to explain more clearly how the Metro Letter was mistaken.

It is important that Metro Council understands it is approving the as-amended design at the as-amended cost in this formal amendment process. Metro staff’s focus on the analyses performed for the EA (ignoring whether it can justify its complete reversal on the validity of that analysis) discounts substantial changes that have occurred since the EA was published.

ODOT released a cost-to-complete report earlier this year that mentioned items that would be ratified in this amendment:

"The current cost estimate reflects newly enacted regulations since 2017 and ongoing design development related to the information and feedback gathered during the EA process as well as ongoing partner input. Updated engineering analysis since 2017 includes newly gathered technical information." January 2020 Cost To Complete Report ("CTC")."



The CTC (attached and incorporated by reference) also mentioned that I-5 will be lowered substantially, and that concrete would replace some use of asphalt, and that various realignments and grade changes would be made. In public hearings including the January OTC meeting and ODOT's presentation of the OTC to Legislature, ODOT officials have noted that lowering the mainline of I-5 will require the excavation and removal of many truckloads of contaminated soil, which will be hazardous waste, below the current freeway.

Nothing in the analysis performed by Metro staff suggests that any study of the environmental effects of these changes has been performed. Nevertheless, Metro is being asked to sign a document holding that the EA was sufficient.

Before it certifies to the federal government that (for example) cracking open a freeway with diesel excavators; digging out the toxic dirt and dust below; and trucking the hazmat debris away from where it sits, next to Harriet Tubman Middle School, are consistent with the RTP and won't affect air quality, and meet our environmental justice goals, it should first have some updated reports.

Nothing in the analysis justifies prioritizing this use of STIP funds or other funds over other projects in the RTP. The sole justification for this project under the RTP offered by Metro staff is: "RTP Goal #5 – Safety and Security, Objective 5.1 Transportation Safety – Eliminate fatal and severe injury crashes for all modes of travel." JPACT Memo pg. 8. As analyzed in the Metro Letter, there is simply no credible evidence that this freeway widening project will prevent a single death, in the original design or with the proposed amendments. Certainly not a shred of evidence has been offered that this additional expenditure will advance transportation safety to allow the prioritization of these funds to double the level called for in the RTP.

The adopted Regional Transportation Plan, went through a formal review process with public comment, and was adopted by Metro. This MTIP process requires that any and all changes must result in the project still being consistent with the original approved project in the RTP.

To the extent that the original project was justifiable under the RTP goals, the dubious benefit of reducing fender benders does not justify the doubled cost or even the \$100M outlay asked of Metro now. The changes do not result in a project that still supports the goals and strategies of the RTP.

Metro is in no position to certify that the impact of the changes in these amendments do not result in higher emissions or negatively impact air conformity, all of the realignments, road-material changes, grade changes, traffic pattern changes, and other modifications since the EA need to be analyzed and cannot simply be assumed to correspond to that.

This process was technocratic and mostly occurred outside of public view; individuals who engaged in the RTP process and people interested in the transportation and climate impacts were not invited to participate, two major hearings happened and recommendations were made before public testimony even closed, and the bulk of the comment period coincided with ODOT's continued process on the EA and a global pandemic. TPAC members complained formally that they did not understand their role in this process. Metro staff described this process as non-political, and made no indication that the topic for discussion was Metro's acquiescence to a major change of priorities in the RTP.

Purportedly the proposed changes are being made to "ensure the MTIP and the draft environmental document match" however, the OTC is still soliciting public comment on and considering whether it will even allow ODOT proceed with the EA or will require a different document. In this context, adding \$100M and letting ODOT start buying land is wholly inappropriate.

Metro now has more information about the RTP that it should incorporate into its analysis. After the 2018 RTP was adopted, the 2018 Oregon Global Warming Report was released (incorporated by reference in its entirety), which made it clear that the assumptions incorporated in the RTP about the adoption of cleaner vehicles are false, and that ODOT's share of greenhouse gas emissions is going the wrong direction. Doubling down on the current plan will not meet our critical climate goals. Other strategies in the RTP, including tolling should be used and the RQIP funds should be reallocated to green projects.

The MTIP process is Metro's opportunity to hold itself and the various transportation departments accountable to the people of the Metro area and the RTP we adopted. Please do not abdicate this responsibility. Please do not approve the RQIP MTIP amendment.

Sincerely yours,
Alan Kessler
2725 SE 36th Ave
Portland OR 97202
503 860 1020

From: No More Freeways PDX <info@nomorefreewayspx.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 7:49 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to Project #1 Key 19071: Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion in MTIP funds



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

The No More Freeways Coalition is formally writing in to oppose the allocation of \$129 million to Oregon Department of Transportation's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. (Listed as Project #1 Key 19071")

Our coalition has been loudly opposed to this exorbitantly expensive freeway expansion since 2017. There have been literally thousands of comments submitted to the city of Portland, Metro, ODOT, and the Oregon Legislature in the past four years from community members concerned about this project's impacts to the surrounding neighborhood, the inability for the widened freeway to address traffic congestion, the potential for this project to impact the atrocious air pollution currently at Harriet Tubman Middle School, and the carbon implications of widening a central freeway when 40% of Oregon's carbon emissions come from transportation. We also find it concerning that the Metro briefing on this project cited "safety concerns" as a reason to support this project; there hasn't been a single traffic fatality on this stretch of freeway in over a decade, while ODOT continues to avoid significant investment in their numerous orphan highways around the region that frequently claim Portlanders' lives.

We are also concerned that JPACT is continuing to approve funding for this project given Governor Kate Brown's recent Executive Order on Climate; there's absolutely no way to continue to allocate billions on freeway widenings around the region and pretend that we are doing anything to tackle carbon emissions. A Green New Deal for Oregon's transportation system requires divesting from infrastructure for single occupancy vehicle trips and instead investing heavily in high speed rail, frequent bus and MAX, and dense, walkable neighborhoods that allow more people living in the Portland region to access their daily needs without the use of an automobile. This allocation, approved by JPACT, is a blatant slap in the face to anyone counting on local government leadership to tackle the pressing climate emergency with the urgency this challenge requires. We encourage JPACT members who wish to learn more about our campaign, and our efforts to expose ODOT's deliberate malfeasance and obfuscation to the public about their skewed traffic projections, to check out the No More Freeways PDX website: www.nomorefreewayspx.com

Climate leaders don't widen freeways.

- Aaron Brown
No More Freeways PDX

From: Doug K <dougurb@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 9:05 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Do not fund Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion in MTIP project #1 Key 19071



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To Metro Council and JPACT:

The Rose Quarter Expansion project (#1 Key 19081) will lead to more traffic flowing on I-5 through the Rose Quarter area, increasing Greenhouse Gas production, and flying the face of the Governor's recent statement calling for reductions in GHG.

The Governor's statement directs reductions in Green House Gases from all sectors of Oregon government. It is clear that increasing lanes on I-5 in the Rose Quarter will lead to increases in GHG, as well as negative impacts on Harriet Tubman Middle School and the neighborhoods along I-5.

As a co-founder of Oregon Walks and 20-year member of Portland's Pedestrian Advisory Committee, I know that the planned pedestrian facilities in this project will make walking more dangerous within this project area, by using giant truck turning radii that cause auto-pedestrian crashes. These are just some of the reasons that this project should not be funded.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Klotz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Doug Klotz
1908 SE 35th Pl.
Portland, OR 97214

From: Allan Rudwick <arudwick@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2020 9:40 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Comment: Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To Whom it may concern-

We are very disappointed and frustrated that Metro would even consider voting to approve hundreds of millions for the I-5 Rose Quarter Project. This project is a huge waste of money, why would you not do everything you can to stop it?

It takes us backward on climate, doesn't improve safety and won't have a measurable impact on community or traffic as currently proposed. This thing must be stopped. I thought metro was an ally to neighborhoods, but perhaps that is wrong. We have sent many pieces of communication opposing the project at every step of the way and this is no exception.

Allan Rudwick
228 NE Morris St, Portland, Or 97212
Co-Chair, Eliot NA

--

Allan Rudwick
(503) 703-3910

From: Stephen Bachhuber <srbachhuber1@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 10:11 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To our decision makers:

The Rose Quarter freeway expansion is a boondoggle that must be stopped. Until the least expensive means have been shown to be inadequate, we must not throw money into a construction pit. The least expensive alternative is, of course, congestion pricing. When that is put into place the need for expansion will disappear. This needs to be done before we waste taxpayer money.

Sincerely,

Stephen Bachhuber

3428 SE 9th Ave.

Portland Oregon 97202

Sent from my iPhone

From: Heather Buletti <heatherbuletti@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 10:07 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Please do not fund the rose quarter freeway expansion!!!

It has always been clear that expanding freeways and accommodating an increase in car traffic is regressive and the wrong choice for the Portland community, but the recent corona virus crises has made this even more clear. The social distancing measures that have taken effect have pushed many people off of public transport, leaving them with only personal vehicles for safe transportation. We should ensure that people can safely choose sustainable transportation options by increasing the infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists. We should build our city around people and we owe it to future generations to create a transportation system that will not exacerbate emissions and global warming for generations to come.

This is a pivotal decision and will it will play a huge roll in how Portland is viewed as a progressive city that cares for the people living within it. The freeway expansion will rip apart communities and set us back decades. This amount of money could be reallocated for projects that would transform the city in such positive ways, it is crushing to see it spent on one mile of road that will benefit very few citizens.

From: Neil Heller <neilheller.pdx@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 10:06 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello -

I am writing in opposition to MTIP funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion and want to echo the words of Chris Smith:

"It's abhorrent that elected officials claiming to be leaders on climate continue to approve hundreds of millions of dollars of funding for ODOT's climate-destroying freeway slush-fund, paving the way for acquisition of more right-of-way in a neighborhood already devastated by the I-5 freeway."

Thanks,

Neil Heller

Neighborhood Workshop
Incremental Development Alliance
Portland, Oregon | 503.915.4616

neighborhoodworkshop.org
incrementaldevelopment.org

From: Mark Wheeler <mark@rootsrealty.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 10:01 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Please oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. Thank you.

Mark Wheeler
628 SE 58th Avenue
Portland, OR 97215

From: Chris Smith <chris@chris-smith.us>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 9:09 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I'm writing to oppose the MTIP amendment for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project, which is "Project #1 Key 19071"

It is inappropriate to move forward with more than \$100M of funding for right-of-way and preliminary engineering while more than two thousand negative comments on the EA remain unaddressed.

It's particularly inappropriate to enable purchase of additional right-of-way without a design that enjoys broad community support in a neighborhood that has been devastated by the exiting I-5 freeway and series of other public projects that destroyed a vibrant Black neighborhood.

Thank you.

Chris Smith
Candidate for Metro District 5
<https://chrisformetro.com>
503 223-3688

From: Tom McTighe <mctighe.tom@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 9:01 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I strongly object to JPACT giving any money to ODOT for the Rose Quarter freeway expansion project, the project's future impact is still being studied and it looks like it will be overwhelmingly negative.

Tom

From: William Crawford <williamcrawford@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 9:01 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Don't spend any money on this project.

It is bad for the community and bad for the planet.

I oppose this project and the funds to move it forward.

Bill Crawford

3015 SE 25th ave
Portland, OR 97202

From: Ingri Benson <ingri.b33@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:43 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

i oppose the allocation of money's to the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. it's quite obvious the problem is too many cars not to small a freeway. close one of the many many onramps in that small area, perhaps the greeley one, and spend the money on better public transportation!! with the stay home, stay safe we have all learned the freeway runs with fewer cars. make THAT happen.

-ingri benson
love fiercely and freely
503-758-6566

From: patrick halley <pmhalley@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:40 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello, I am writing to urge you to oppose funding for the Rose Quarter freeway expansion. This project only increase traffic volume and prove to be an enormous waste of funds. If you don't believe this, check the outcomes of every single other Freeway Expansion project completed in this country!

Thank you,
Patrick Halley
Foster-Powell, 97206

From: Philip Cooper <philip@londonfields.org>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:36 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

It's unconscionable that Metro and ODOT can move forward with the \$800 million I5/Rose Quarter expansion, given our state and citywide climate goals. We do not want ODOT redesigning any of our Northeast Portland streets, and we don't want to increase tailpipe emissions near our schools and playgrounds. I vigorously oppose throwing away this amount of taxpayer dollars in the name of *safety*, when so many of our other ODOT controlled streets are in need of active transportation enhancements. This project is throwing nearly a billion dollars at single occupant drivers who are unwilling to make changes to their commuting habits during this time of climate crisis - and if it were to decrease any bottleneck - would only induce demand as we know happens when capacity is increased.

Philip Cooper
NE Portland

From: Scott Clyburn <scott.a.clyburn@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:28 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter
Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

As a resident of SE Portland and a small business owner with locations throughout the city, I vehemently oppose the Rose Quarter expansion project and vow to do all in my power to end the careers of every appointee and elected official who pushes it through without a proper and thorough environmental review.

Do the right thing, folks!

Scott Clyburn

From: Caitlin Clark <caitlinhclark@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 8:04 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Good morning,

I'm writing to express my extreme disappointment that JPACT and others continue to support and give funding to the I-5 expansion project. This project is not in alignment with the values of our area regarding addressing climate change and respecting the communities that have already been impacted by I-5. JPACT should deny funding to the expansion project at least until an EIS has been completed and there are answers to looming questions (how will the expansion impact students at Harriet Tubman? How will it impact pollution during construction and after its completion? etc).

Please do not support any more funding for this project at this time. I will not continue to support elected officials who blindly approve money for this project.

Best,
Caitlin Clark

From: Bobby Hunter <rshunter88@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 7:18 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I am against expanding the I-5 freeway in the Rose Quarter. This neighborhood has been my home for years and expanding the freeway will not improve it. It will worsen air quality; it will not alleviate congestion. And frankly, if we are to reduce our usage of fossil fuels then how does expanding a freeway help that in any way?

Thank you,

Robert Hunter
5826 N Interstate Ave
Portland OR 97217

From: Ben Birdsall <bwbirdsall@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 10:37 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I would like to register my strong opposition to the MTIP funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. The Expansion project is at odds with Portland and Oregon's climate goals, is shaping up to be an ever-more-expensive boondoggle, and won't even have the effect it is touted as having, given what we know about induced traffic demand. This is a bad idea at its initial cost and has skyrocketed in pricetag since.

The way the agencies in charge of this project have rammed its progress through in the face of reasonable calls for an Environmental Impact Statement and widespread public disapproval is both antidemocratic and alarming. As a resident and taxpayer, I would like to request in the strongest possible terms that JPACT oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. It is a 20th century solution to our 21st century situation, and should not go forward, least of all without a more open, democratic decisionmaking process.

Thank you,
Ben Birdsall

From: Rob McRae <rob.d.mcrae@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:21 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Dear JPACT,

I am writing to oppose the funding on the \$800 million Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. The reason I oppose funding for this project is that scale and scope of this project has far exceeded the pitiful Environmental Assessment that ODOT has provided thus far. The people of Portland and Oregon and the climate of the Earth deserve a lot better than the continued push for this project to be completed without ALL OTHER OPTIONS being fully explored.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has immediately shown, the reduction of demand would be the most effective tool to curb the current congestion. The original EA was supposed to be the tool that would inform the public of all options available. Instead, the models used to measure potential future traffic volumes assumed that the \$3 billion CRC was built over 4 years ago and considered no other traffic volume scenarios. In what reality is that remotely thorough enough to provide an effective analysis? I have no experience in traffic engineering, but can quickly come up with other potential scenarios to explore: (1) not having the CRC built, (2) tolls, at different parts of the I-5 corridor, (3) encouraging, incentivizing other modes of transportation like taking transit, carpooling, biking, etc, (4) incentivize companies to encourage work-from-home options (which is working great for traffic volumes right now!), (5) changes to the Portland area gas tax. I have no doubt there are a myriad of more options. Why have the use of any of these options (and others) not been explored?

Additionally, there is the issue of pollution. Not only is this project expanding the freeway deeper into the backyard of a middle school, further endangering the lives and lungs of the students at this school, but it also cuts against Governor Brown's own climate goals! More freeway lanes (including "auxiliary lanes") = more auto traffic = more pollution = a dead planet. We have a duty to our future as a species to explore every available avenue to NOT proceed with funding this project.

I have also written to an email to Governor Brown and the OTC to demand an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Thanks for taking the time to read my comment,
Rob McRae

From: Yehudah Winter <alanyehudah@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:24 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



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oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

Blessings for health and safety,
Yehudah (Alan) Winter
(503) 287-8737 (cell)
www.yourpersonalceremony.com
like Compassionate Listening Oregon on FaceBook

And the People Stayed Home

And the people stayed home. And read books & listened & rested & exercised, & made art & played games & learned new ways of being & were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed & the people joined together again, they grieved their losses & made new choices & dreamed new images & created new ways to live & heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

— Kitty O'Meara

From: Rebecca Canright <rebeccagroovypeace@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:24 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Greetings!

As a college student who cares about safeguarding our ecosystems, mitigating climate change and supporting mass transit (rather than individual vehicle travel), I ask you to please not expand the Freeway. Let's instead expand mass transit options like buses, local trains, etc.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Have a great day,

Rebecca Canright

--



Compassion for all creatures great and small.

Did you know that Crested Auklets, birds living in the Bering Sea region, bark like dogs and smell like oranges (they naturally produce a tick-repelling substance)?

From: James Shelstad <jamesashelstad@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:40 AM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

As a Portland resident, I want to register my opposition to the JPACT vote for allocating funding to the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. The project is widely opposed by community members, doesn't have the official endorsement needed to begin, and is asking for funds that would be a colossal waste of money on exactly the wrong priorities for transportation in the region.

In the midst of our ongoing climate crisis, we need to look long, hard, and honestly at the long-term results of any action we take now to benefit and encourage private car use above other forms of transportation. Widening freeways induces demand; there will never be a point where we'll have made enough space for cars by providing incentives for people to use them more often, and encouraging car use in one arena has ripple effects through entire areas encouraging car dependence, congestion, and subsequent car-focused policies. With the role that transportation plays in emissions, that freeways play in worsening the air quality and health of the neighborhoods that have had freeways forced on them, these can't be the policies that our governments are focused on funding at the expense of a robust network of public and other low-emissions transportation. Our stated climate needs and goals, and the opposition the freeway expansion project is seeing in the communities who would most be affected, make it clear that we can't just sidestep the numerous concerns experts and officials have brought up with the project.

Thank you,

James Shelstad

From: Daniel Wilson <daniel.gregory.wilson@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 11:43 AM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter
Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Freeway expansion will almost certainly mean more cars on the road, more congestion, and worse outcomes for everyone. We cannot in good conscience support such a project. Do not fund the I-5 Rose Quarter expansion.

Daniel Wilson

From: Kala Leslie <kalaylajayla@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 12:20 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Metro/JPACT,

This project should not be getting ANY funding without an EIS. I find it disgusting that it is even being considered in the wake of the climate crisis. This entire project is misguided. It will not alleviate traffic in the long-run and will further divide communities and worsen the climate issues we are already facing.

I VERY STRONGLY OPPOSE funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. Please listen to the members of your community on this matter - we don't want this!!

Sincerely,

Kála Leslie

From: Charles Townsend <charlesntownsend@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 12:53 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I vehemently oppose the funding that was granted by JPACT to ODOT to continue the I5 Rose Quarter freeway expansion.

With a decision on the EA v. EIS coming on April 2nd this funding seems premature and is giving ODOT the green light on a project that is opposed by many government agencies, neighborhood associations, and residents.

Please reverse course and strip the funding approved by JPACT. It is the moral and honorable thing to do, thank you.

From: Jan Wulling <homeharmonynow@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:07 PM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter
Freeway Expansion:



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it is too impractical to even itemize. It does NOT represent my views, it will lessen my quality of life, and the invisible despair of it will be a cost, even if unmeasurable

thank you

From: S Cearley <writer.sean@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:28 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

The funding for the Rose Quarter expansion is wrong.

The ODT intentionally used bad data on the I5 bridge replacement to justify this expansion.

The community is OVERWHELMINGLY opposed to this expansion. There is no reason for government officials, who do NOT know better than the people they serve, to buffalo this through. It smacks of kickbacks to the highway construction industry more than a respect for the views of the people.

This plan will NOT fix congestion, which is proven by the study the ODT paid for and is ignoring. Thank you for spending our money on a report you ignore.

The science is bad. The actions are bad.

NO FUNDING.

Thank you
Sean Cearley

From: Karalie Adams <kadesign4@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:08 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I opposes this freeway expansion because the real issue is to get people out of their cars. Car pool and mass transit are the best answer to today's vehicle congestion. More freeways produce more cars.

You are spending our money for the wrong solution.
Karialie G. Adams

From: Emee Pumarega <emee@ejpevents.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:32 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewaysdpdx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Dear Ms. Blackhorse and the JPACT Committee:

I'm writing to voice my opposition to funding the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. How millions of dollars can be earmarked for a project that is extremely controversial and still under public comment is beyond me. While the world suffers in a pandemic, JPACT would do well to put the brakes on any plans to fund this project which has no Environmental Impact Study as of yet.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emee Pumarega
Mother, Business Owner, Property Owner
NE Portland

From: Christopher Eykamp <chris@eykamp.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:31 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse

Subject: [External sender]Please, no MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am writing to express opposition to giving ODOT MTIP funding for their Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. Before we commit to building this project, we should try less costly solutions such as congestion pricing and demand reduction.

It is premature to provide funding now.

Thank you,

Chris Eykamp

From: Kevin Burke <kevin@burke.dev>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:34 PM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com
Subject: [External sender]Oppose MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Expanding freeways pollutes our air and contributes to climate change.

Today we're seeing the cost of delaying on implementing measures that will save hundreds of thousands of lives. Climate change is no different - we need to start acting now to make a difference.

Kevin

From: Nate Hildebrand <innategraphix@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:39 PM
To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com
Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an External source. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Freeway Expansion denies that Climate Change is our biggest problem. 40% of Oregon's carbon emissions come from transportation. It's the only sector of our economy where emissions are growing. Every dollar we spend on freeway widening is a dollar Oregon should instead be spending on improving and prioritizing frequent, accessible, reliable transit throughout walkable neighborhoods across the region. The fires, floods, droughts, and storms are only going to get worse. The oceans are rising, so are we – it's imperative we act on climate now and divest in urban freeways for the sake of current and future generations.

And even if it does get built, the freeway expansion won't fix congestion. Freeway expansion has never solved traffic congestion, in any North American city, anywhere. Ever! ODOT's own hired consultants admit that this project won't address recurring traffic congestion on this corridor. There are numerous examples of induced demand across the country, including most recently in Los Angeles, who spent \$1.6 BILLION on a "freeway bottleneck" widening project only to find it made traffic *worse.* Thanks to the concept known as "induced demand," widening freeways only encourages more people choose to drive, creating even more congestion.

We simply can't trust ODOT with our future. This agency is not accountable to the public interest. This agency has proven itself completely disinterested in community engagement around their megaprojects, holding meetings over 80 miles away from the site of the expansion, preventing public testimony at a legislative hearing, and now moving forward with a massive vote on the proposed expansion in the middle of the coronavirus epidemic.

Thank you for hearing me out,
Nate

From: Maia Hixon <maiapaia@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:53 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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To Whom it May Concern

I forcefully oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway!!

This project is dangerous for the local neighborhood, the greater city, and the health and well being of our struggling planetary environment. Stop the funding and the project now.

--

Maia Hixon

pronouns: she/her

From: Claire Vlach <clvlach@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 1:59 PM

To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewaysdpx.com

Subject: [External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:



CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To JPACT and the Metro Council:

The I5 Rose Quarter CAC met two days ago for the first time. We spend a lot of time talking about what was lost when highways were first plowed through the Albina neighborhood: housing, the sense of community, a walkable and bikeable neighborhood. Expanding the highway will not fix or bring back any of those things. Other negative effects of widening the highway will include increased greenhouse gases and worse air quality.

Please do not fund the Rose Quarter Expansion Project. If you want to make a meaningful difference in the congestion levels in this corridor, implement congestion pricing (using an equity lens for low-income commuters), and increase transit options.

Sincerely,

Claire Vlach
97214



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April 1, 2019

Oregon Department of Transportation

info@i5RoseQuarter.org

Attention: Megan Channell

123 NW Flanders St.

Portland, OR 97209

Dear Ms. Channell,

Please accept the following comments from Audubon Society of Portland (Audubon) regarding the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for proposed widening of Interstate 5 (I-5) at the Rose Quarter.

Audubon is a 501(c)(3) public interest conservation organization with 17,000 members in the Portland Metropolitan Region. Audubon has been tracking the I-5 Rose Quarter Freeway Widening Project since it was first proposed as part of the Portland Central City NE Quadrant Planning Process nearly a decade ago. Audubon is also a member of the No More Freeway Expansions Coalition and we incorporate their comments by reference. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this project.

Based on the information provided in the EA, we urge ODOT to select the “no-build” alternative. If the project does proceed forward, we believe that ODOT would be required to do a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in order to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

As currently proposed, the I-5 widening project is not consistent with local climate, equity or environmental objectives. ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration (“ODOT”) have not made a compelling case that this project would substantially improve congestion on I-5 or that it should rank as a priority project in terms of addressing road safety issues. The freeway lids will offer little in terms of either providing openspace or reconnecting neighborhoods that were historically fractured by the construction of I-5 and will undermine, rather than improve, connectivity for pedestrians and bikers. A transportation project estimated to cost in the range of \$500 million should offer a compelling vision for addressing the most pressing issues of the 21st Century including climate change and equity, but as proposed, the I-5 widening appears designed primarily to perpetuate what should be a bygone era in which freeways and automobiles dominated our urban landscapes.

We would note up front that the EA raises far more questions than it answers. For a project of this cost and magnitude, the EA is remarkably superficial and sparse on details. Many of the EA's sections read more like thumbnail sketches than the detailed analysis we would expect for a project of this cost and magnitude. The challenges in assessing this project were also unnecessarily exacerbated by the fact that ODOT failed to include many important documents, data sets, figures, and appendices necessary for a complete review of the EA when it was first released on February 15, 2019. Ultimately the complete set

of information was not posted until March 13th, effectively narrowing the forty-five day comment period to just nineteen days (just thirteen business days). This project will have major impacts on our community and our environment during both the construction phase and once it is completed. It is important that ODOT strive for maximum transparency and meaningful public engagement.

We would also note that a very broad spectrum of community organizations and subject matter experts have weighed-in on this project with significant and substantive concerns. Virtually every element of this project including its congestion and safety benefits, environmental impacts, ability to redress historic inequities, and the efficacy of its surface improvements (connectivity for bikers and pedestrians and openspace) has raised red flags from groups and individuals with significant expertise in these subject areas. Too often with these types of mega projects, the NEPA process serves more as an exercise to convince the public, or at least key decision-makers, to allow the project to proceed forward rather than as a true exploration of alternatives that will result in the least damage to the environment. The stated purpose of NEPA is as follows:

To declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation... [42 USC § 4321]

We strongly urge ODOT to heed the concerns being raised by the community now as well as the hard lessons of the Columbia River Crossing where more than \$175 million of public funds was wasted¹ before the project ultimately collapsed in a process that chose to ignore rather than address concerns being raised by community stakeholders. The I-5 widening project raised very significant concerns back when it was first proposed as part of the NE Quadrant Planning Process² in 2010. Many of these questions and issues raised then loom even larger nearly a decade later and issues that had only limited visibility in 2010 such as climate change and equity are of paramount importance today. It is critical that ODOT use the NEPA process to take the requisite “hard look” at this project and truly consider whether it should proceed forward.

The following are our specific concerns:

1. A full Environmental Impact Statement is required.

An environmental assessment may either result in a finding of no significant impacts (FONSI) or a determination to proceed to a full environmental impact statement. An agency must prepare an EIS if it is proposing a major action with a federal nexus which will “significantly affect the human environment.” In determining whether an action will significantly affect the human environment, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) advises that an agency must look at both the context and intensity of the proposed action. We incorporate by reference NEPA analysis submitted by attorney, Sean Malone on behalf the No More Freeway Expansions Coalition. Portland Audubon Conservation

¹ https://www.oregonlive.com/business/2013/07/columbia_river_crossing_spends.html

² <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/52841>

Director, Bob Sallinger is a signatory to these comments. Mr. Malone has done an outstanding job delineating the basis for why a FONSI would be inconsistent with NEPA and contrary to the law and a full EIS must be developed if the project is to advance.

We will not repeat the entirety of Mr. Malone's comments in this letter, but would note that we are surprised the ODOT did not proceed directly to a full EIS. The context for the I-5 Rose Quarter is a publicly funded project that will cost approximately \$500 million, likely take multiple years to complete, focused on the most active transportation corridor on the West Coast. This project will have impacts at the neighborhood, municipal, regional and national scales. It represents one of the most complex and expensive projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) which prioritized 882 projects for funding over the next 25 years.³ The project will have significant impacts on our river environment including impacts on federally listed salmonid species and federally designated critical habitat for listed salmonids, and will potentially trigger review for compliance with other environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act and CERCLA. Further, the baseline for this project includes the Columbia River Crossing (CRC), a \$3 billion dollar project which was abandoned in 2013, but which even standing alone required an EIS. If ODOT is going to include the CRC, which currently is not constructed and for which there are no plans for construction, in the baseline, then it must also consider the CRC as part of the cumulative impacts analysis of this project. By any measure the I-5 expansion meets the criteria for an EIS based on the scope, scale, complexity, controversy and cumulative impacts of the project.

2. The EA inappropriately includes the Columbia River Crossing in the baseline for this project rendering all of the traffic and pollution analysis meaningless.

ODOT has included the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) in the baseline for this project. The \$3 billion CRC project was abandoned in 2013 after nearly a decade of public process. There are no concrete plans at this time to revive the CRC. It is unclear on what basis ODOT would include the CRC in the baseline for the I-5 Rose Quarter Widening Project. Its inclusion creates a very significant, perhaps fatal, flaw in the EA.

If the CRC is included as part of the baseline, then ODOT must analyze the CRC as part of the cumulative effects analysis as a reasonably foreseeable action in conjunction with this project. Since the CRC standing alone required a full EIS, then the cumulative effects of the I-5 Expansion and CRC would surely require an EIS. If ODOT chooses to decouple the CRC from the I-5 Rose Quarter Expansion Project then all of the analysis included in the EA must be revised with the CRC removed from the baseline. Removal of the CRC from the baseline would render all of the currently included traffic calculations meaningless. We would assert that even with decoupling of the CRC and I-5 Rose Quarter Projects, that the I-5 Rose Quarter Project would still require a full EIS. We strongly question why ODOT would include a project of the magnitude of the CRC in the baseline for this EA when so many factors including timing, design, location and even whether it will happen at all remain purely speculative. We are also concerned that it is not readily apparent and transparent that the CRC is in the baseline for this EA—it took a remarkable amount of digging through the initially withheld data sets in order to determine that there was an Interstate Bridge hidden in the EA.

³ <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/news/regional-transportation-plan-numbers>

3. The EA fails to consider a reasonable range of alternatives including congestion pricing.

NEPA requires that agencies “rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives.” 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(a) However, the EA analyzes only two alternatives: Build and No-Build. This falls far short of the agencies obligation under NEPA. In particular, we believe that the EA should have analyzed the potential of congestion pricing to address transportation concerns on this stretch of I-5.

We find ODOT’s assertion that congestion pricing was not considered in the EA because it was “not among the existing strategies for use in the study area” at the time that the NE Quadrant Plan was developed (2010-2012) and that congestion pricing will be considered separately “in the future” (EA at 23) entirely unconvincing. In fact, congestion pricing is currently being evaluated for the I-5 Rose Quarter study area, in part with funding from the very same legislative package that is propelling forward the I-5 Rose Quarter Project. Basing the decision not to include an alternative analyzing congestion pricing on the fact that congestion pricing was not being evaluated nearly a decade ago when this project was first conceived, locks ODOT into a bizarre time warp. The EA should be based on present day factors, not the circumstances that existed when the project was first conceived.

Further, it is impossible to reconcile ODOT’s dismissal of congestion pricing as “not a reasonable and foreseeable action” based on the fact that it is not included in the RTP fiscally restrained list (EA at 23) when it has included a far more speculative project, the Columbia River Crossing, which also is not included in the RTP fiscally restrained list, as part of the baseline for the I-5 Rose Quarter Project.

HB 2017 made congestion pricing available to ODOT as a tool to address congestion and reduce traffic emissions associated with climate change and air pollution. It specifically instructed ODOT to evaluate congestion pricing along I-5 and I-205, including the entirety of the I-5 Rose Quarter Project area. While freeway widening has repeatedly been demonstrated to be an ineffective long-term strategy for reducing congestion due to induced demand, congestion pricing has been demonstrated to be a cost effective strategy for addressing both of these concerns. We would refer ODOT to the work of Dr. Alex Bigazzi, a professor at the University of British Columbia, who concluded after a review of sixty different peer-reviewed studies, that congestion pricing is the most effective strategy to reduce emissions (both air pollution and carbon pollution) and traffic.⁴ An ODOT stakeholder advisory committee in 2018 and studies commissioned by ODOT have reaffirmed the efficacy of congestion pricing to address traffic, air pollution and carbon emissions.

It is troubling that ODOT so blithely dismisses the need to evaluate congestion pricing as an alternative to freeway widening. Congestion pricing offers real potential to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and carbon emissions far beyond the best case scenario for freeway expansion. It also presents the opportunity to save half a billion dollars in public funding for this project and actually create revenue streams to address other community needs. It needs to be evaluated in a way that engages and addresses the concerns of underserved communities that could be in-equitably impacted. If this project moves forward at all, ODOT should produce a full EIS that includes multiple alternatives for

⁴ “Can traffic management strategies improve urban air quality? A review of the evidence”
AY Bigazzi, M Rouleau Journal of Transport & Health 7, 111-124

consideration including the use of congestion pricing as an alternative to address transportation issues on this stretch of I-5.

4. There are significant problems with ODOT’s modelling of the transportation impacts of this project in the EA.

The No More Freeways Traffic Technical Advisory Committee comprised of Buff Brown, Joseph Cortright, Brian Davis and Jesse Lopez have done an excellent job of analyzing flaws in ODOT modelling of the transportation impacts of this project in the “Technical Memorandum” that they have submitted into the record. We will not repeat those concerns here, but incorporate their “Technical Memorandum” by reference.

5. The EA fails to adequately describe or analyze the impacts of the construction phase of this project.

One of the most surprising omissions in the EA is the degree to which the EA fails to disclose or analyze the impacts of construction on the community. The EA provides tidbits of information scattered throughout the EA, for example that ODOT will work with the Moda Center to deal with traffic during major events. However, nowhere in the EA is there a comprehensive or coherent discussion about what construction activities will look like or how they will affect the community. In fact, we were unable to find anywhere in the EA even a mention about how long construction activities are likely to occur. Given the \$500 million cost and the complexity of the landscape on which ODOT will be operating, it is reasonable to assume that this project will likely last many months and potentially years, but there is no way to know based on a reading of the EA. ODOT should provide a detailed description of how long construction activities are likely to occur, how they will be phased, expected impacts on traffic on I-5 including congestion, emissions and economic impacts from delays associated with construction related congestion, expected emissions and air quality issues related to the actual construction activities, impacts on pedestrians and bikers utilizing the construction area, impacts on businesses in the construction area, etc. Without a detailed description and analysis of the actual construction, the public cannot make a fully informed assessment of this project.

6. The EA fails to consider or incorporate City of Portland environmental codes.

Although ODOT lists the City of Portland as a partner on this project, the EA fails entirely to incorporate and analyze compliance with City of Portland Environmental Codes, specifically Title 11 Tree Code and Title 33 Planning and Zoning Code. It is important to note that the City of Portland has environmental codes that go beyond what is required by state and federal environmental laws and that compliance with state and federal laws is not necessarily sufficient to meet City requirements.

City of Portland **Title 11 Tree Code**⁵ provides regulations protecting trees in the City of Portland and mitigation requirements when trees meeting certain specifications are removed. It is clear from multiple figures within the EA that substantial tree removal will need to occur in order to accomplish this project. However, the EA provides no information regarding the number, species and diameter of trees proposed for removal or what mitigation will occur in order to compensate for this loss and meet city

⁵ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/citycode/66002>

requirements. ODOT should include a full description of the trees that will be removed or impacted and how it will mitigate for the loss to comply with city code.

City of Portland **Title 33 Planning and Zoning Code**⁶ addresses impacts to habitat as well as the Willamette River Greenway. Title 33 was recently updated to include the Portland Central City Plan including a new River Environmental (River E) Zone the will be directly impacted by in-water and riparian work associated with the I-5 Rose Quarter Widening Project. The code includes mitigation ratios and mitigation locational restrictions that go beyond what is required under state and federal law. For example Portland City Code would require 1.5:1 mitigation ratios for habitat impacts in the River E Zone (which can increase through the river review process) and that mitigation must occur within the Central Reach of the Willamette. However the EA makes no mention of Title 33, how the project will comply with Title 33, or where mitigation may be required. The EA's assertion that mitigation is likely to occur outside the Central Reach in the Multnomah Channel (EA at 31) is in direct conflict with city code. ODOT should not assume that mitigation proposed to meet state and federal obligations will also be sufficient to meet local requirements. Specifically ODOT should describe how it will comply with City of Portland habitat mitigation requirements associated with in-water and riparian habitat, Willamette River Greenway requirements, and balance cut and fill requirements.

7. The EA provides an inadequate discussion of how stormwater impacts will be addressed.

The EA acknowledges that 30 acres of new impervious surface associated with the freeway widening and 11 acres of new impervious surface associated with the freeway lids will be created. The EA proposes to address these increased stormwater impacts at three water quality treatment facilities located at N. Mississippi Avenue, adjacent to N. Knott Street and at the Eastbank Viaduct/ Esplanade (EA at 82). Portland is a recognized national leader in green infrastructure strategies for addressing stormwater runoff. ODOT should provide a much more detailed analysis of how green infrastructure can be directly incorporated into this project to provide stormwater benefits as well as other benefits associated with green infrastructure such as wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, reduction in urban heat island effects, reduction in air pollution, community livability and public health. We urge ODOT to carefully consider how this project can complement City of Portland grey and green infrastructure strategies.

If stormwater cannot be treated entirely on site as indicated in the EA, we also urge ODOT to consider utilizing green infrastructure on ODOT property located between the east ends of the Marquam and Hawthorn Bridges to treat other I-5 runoff as mitigation for these impacts. Stormwater from I-5 is currently released into the Willamette in this area via an outfall near the Hawthorn Bridge. This area is a priority for the City and conservation groups for restoration to increase both recreation opportunities and habitat value.⁷ Replacing the outfall with green stormwater infrastructure would help support this effort.

⁶ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/citycode/28197>

⁷ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/634577>

8. The EA fails to adequately analyze how this project will comply with state and federal environmental laws.

The EA provides only cursory analysis of how the project will comply with state and federal environmental laws. We are particularly concerned with the in-water and riparian work associated with this project. The EA downplays the potential impacts of the work on the river but in fact the in-water work is quite substantial including the installation of up to seventeen columns to support ramps associated with this project. Given the complexity of the river environment in this area including the presence of salmonid species and critical habitat protected under the Endangered Species Act, high levels of contamination in both the sediment, riparian areas and uplands, and other complex environmental factors, we believe that an EIS would likely be required for this aspect of the project alone. The City and its partners have spent billions of dollars working to restore health to the river, restoring salmonid habitat, reducing Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) events and cleaning up contaminated sites. This project will occur in an area that represents some of the best restoration potential in the Central Reach. It is critical that ODOT fully discuss and access how this project will comply with state and federal environmental laws including, but not limited to the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, CERCLA, Marine Mammal Protection Act and the 2016 National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion addressing floodplain development in listed salmonid habitat in Oregon.⁸

We would highlight the following specific concerns:

a. The EA fails to adequately characterize listed salmonid use of the project area.

The EA lists critical habitat for five ESA-listed salmonid populations: Upper Willamette River (UWR) Chinook salmon, UWR steelhead trout, Lower Columbia River (LCR) Chinook salmon, LCR steelhead trout, and LCR Coho salmon. (EA at 28) However, it is important to note that this area is also used by several out-of-basin Chinook populations. These populations may have unique habitat needs relative to those listed in the EA. Additionally, the EA statement that “Temporary effects to ESA fish would be minimized by conducting work during times when fish are not present in work areas” (EA at 28) is inaccurate. Listed salmonids can be found in the area at all times of the year including during the in-water work window.

b. The EA may mischaracterize certain in-water activities as temporary rather than permanent.

The Army Corps of Engineers and Oregon Department of State Lands categorized in-water construction activity that impacts habitat for 24 months or longer as “permanent.” The EA should clearly describe the duration of its “temporary” in-water structures including concrete pour molds around drilled shafts, piles for temporary work bridges, and sheet piling all of which will impact shallow water habitat. Use of barges year-round may also qualify as permanent impacts. If in fact the duration of these structure would exceed 24 months, they may not qualify as temporary and would require different mitigation calculations.

⁸ https://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/publications/habitat/2016_04-14_fema_nfip_nwr-2011-3197reducedsize.pdf

c. It is not clear why ODOT characterizes turbidity of sheet pile installation and drilled shaft construction as “minor”.

ODOT characterizes the turbidity impacts of sheet pile installation and drilled shaft construction as “minor.” (EA at 29) It is unclear as to how ODOT defines the term “minor.” These activities will cause significant turbidity. ODOT should fully describe and analyze the turbidity impacts and how they will be mitigated.

9. The Project will not achieve pedestrian, bicycle, openspace or equity benefits as described in the EA or in ODOT’s outreach efforts.

ODOT has aggressively promoted this project based on the surface benefits for pedestrians, bikers and openspace users that it projects will be provided by the “lids.” In fact in section 1.4 ODOT lists as the first project goal “enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility in the vicinity of the Broadway Weidler interchange.” (EA at 4). It is safe to say that if in fact this were the primary goal there are far better and less expensive ways to accomplish this objective. It is somewhat stunning the degree to which the project goals emphasize surface improvements rather than impacts directly to the functionality of I-5 to justify this half billion dollar project. We would characterize the surface improvements more as window dressing designed to increase public support for a project that does not appear to be able to pass muster on its own merits.

As an organization with a long history of working to create public openspace, we find the openspace associated with the lids to be highly un compelling. This openspace as characterized in the EA appears to be a random assortment of odd parcels that will be located in a highly unappealing, highly polluted environment interspersed among, above and below high traffic corridors. ODOT has provided no information as to how these openspaces might be used or programmed or the potential health impacts of drawing recreational users to openspaces located within a vortex of automobile activity. We would note that the Rose Quarter Area was originally marketed as a vibrant outdoor area as well as an event center---an ambition that it has never come close to achieving. Except when events are occurring in the Rose Quarter, it is mostly a ghost town and we see nothing in the freeway lids that suggests that this project will change that situation.

We would also note that similar concerns have been raised by the Portland Parks Board. ODOT described the City of Portland as a partner in this project. However, it is not clear that ODOT has coordinated in any meaningful way with Portland Parks and Recreation on the openspace aspects of this project.

It is not even clear that the openspace depicted on ODOT renderings will occur—ODOT made conflicting statements in recent months regarding the potential to place buildings on the lids, asserting in some forums that no building construction is possible and in other forums that up to two stories could be constructed on the lids.

Perhaps the most notable openspace impact is not the lids but rather the fact that an access ramp will be extended out over the Eastbank Esplanade. The Eastbank Esplanade is one of the most popular elements of our regional system of parks, trails and natural areas. A portion of it will now be covered by the expanded freeway, increasing noise and pollution and reducing aesthetic values of this trail. ODOT should more clearly described and assess the impacts on the Eastbank Esplanade.

We would defer to groups such as the City of Portland Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee, Oregon Walks, and The Street Trust with regards to the implications of this project for bikers and pedestrians, but we would note that the growing chorus of concern raised by groups dedicated to improving bike and pedestrian infrastructure seriously undermines ODOT's assertions that this project will provide net benefits for these modes of transportation. Instead it appears based on the analysis of multiple stakeholders that the project will actually reduce connectivity once the project is completed and will certainly disrupt pedestrian and bike connectivity while the project is under construction.

ODOT also asserts that this project will help at least in part remediate inequities that were created by the construction of I-5 by reconnecting communities that were bifurcated. We see no analysis in the EA that supports this assertion and comments submitted by the Lower Albina Vision Project which is explicitly focused on addressing these historic inequities seriously undermines this assertion.

The most significant impacts in terms of equity are the likely increased air pollution over time due to increased traffic caused by induced demand in the general project area, direct impacts to Harriet Tubman School articulated in concerns raised by the Portland School Board,⁹ and delay of high priority transportation safety projects in East Portland and elsewhere due to the expenditure of half a billion dollars on this project.

It is critical if this project continues forward that ODOT actively work with openspace, conservation, bike, pedestrian and environmental justice groups, neighborhood associations and frontline communities to develop a vision for capping I-5 that is truly visionary and meets community needs. An EIS should include alternatives that provide much more robust choices for the public to weigh-in on regarding the lids. As currently proposed, the lids are more of an afterthought than a central goal of the project as ODOT asserts.

Conclusion:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the I-5 Rose Quarter Widening Project. The congestion that increasingly plagues our communities increases carbon emissions and other forms of air pollution, reduces quality of life and undermines our economy. However, ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration simply have not made the case in this EA for advancing this half billion dollar project. The EA is highly deficient in multiple areas, is based on inaccurate modelling, and fails to consider alternatives that could better achieve the desired outcomes in terms of I-5 traffic and surface improvements. We urge ODOT and the Federal Highway Administration to select the no-build alternative. If the project is to advance further, NEPA requires that full EIS be developed which will allow agencies and the community to fully explore potential alternatives and impacts that more fully meet the objectives of this project and the needs of our community. However, we would caution the agencies that the concerns being raised by the community are profound and serious consideration should be given as to the efficacy of continuing to spend large sums of public dollars to advance this project. We will end by asserting that a half billion dollar transportation project needs to fully embrace the most

⁹ <https://www.oregonlive.com/education/2019/03/portland-schools-officials-arent-buying-states-environmental-assessment-of-rose-quarter-freeway-expansion.html>

pressing challenges of the 21st Century including climate change and equity. It should offer a compelling vision for how it will make our communities healthier, fairer and more sustainable.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

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Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Bob Sallinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Bob Sallinger
Conservation Director

Audubon Society of Portland
5151 NW Cornell Road
Portland, Oregon 97210
Email: bsallinger@audubonportland.org
Phone: 503-380-9728

March 30, 2019

I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project
Oregon Department of Transportation
% Megan Channell
123 NW Flanders Street
Portland, OR 97209

350PDX would like to thank the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the opportunity to provide public comment on the I-5 Rose Quarter freeway widening project.

350PDX works to build a diverse grassroots movement to address the causes of climate disruption through justice-based solutions. We understand that the climate crisis is upon us and that climate change is a threat to every Oregonian. Its effects are being felt immediately and severely by the most vulnerable Oregonians -- children, people of color, people with low-incomes, and people with disabilities. Immediate impacts in Oregon range from extended and intensified wildfire seasons to diminishing and uncertain water supplies to inhospitable marine ecosystems and rising sea levels. Changes in weather patterns and increases in extreme weather events are a costly threat to essential infrastructure and are forecasted to cost Oregon businesses billions of dollars in lost revenue.

The source of this climate damage is not some faraway event -- climate change is the sum result of every-day actions and our responsibility is to immediately and collectively cease contributing actions. We must make immediate and significant steps to eliminate existing sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including eliminating the use of fossil-fuel vehicles.

"If we ended GHG emissions tomorrow, climate change effects would persist and worsen for decades to come. ... Our children, and theirs, will be living for decades with the worsening consequences of our failure to take timely action when we knew we should. Bad as that is, further delay only makes it worse." ---**2018 Biennial Report to the Legislature for the 2019 Legislative Session, Oregon Global Warming Commission**

Transportation emissions already comprise 40% of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. Despite increasingly rigorous GHG emissions requirements for cars and light trucks, the transportation-related GHGs contribution to the State's GHG emissions rose from 35% in 2014 due to increased vehicle-miles travelled. The region's population is forecasted to increase by 390,000 people by 2050, and it is imperative that we develop a transportation network that accommodates these new residents without any additional vehicle miles traveled and any increase in associated emissions. Incredibly, the environmental assessment (EA) of the project claims that the project will not increase vehicle miles traveled and will result in decreased GHG emissions! Such bold claims require exceptional evidence and ODOT's description of methods, results, and data in the EA to justify these findings is inadequate. To decarbonize our transportation sector, we must fully redirect our resources towards investments in walkable communities connected by frequent, reliable public transportation. As many local transportation advocacy organizations have pointed out, this project actually worsens commute times for the transit lines that pass through the neighborhood. It's simply disingenuous to invest half a billion dollars in a transportation project in the center of Oregon's densest city and claim that this project has any benefits to carbon reduction.

Building the climate movement.

When the I-5 corridor was constructed six decades ago, the Lower Albina neighborhood was destroyed and the predominantly African-American neighborhoods centered in North Portland were savagely split. The opening of I-5 initiated a cycle of decreased air quality, suburban sprawl, increased traffic and emissions, and demand for additional vehicles lanes, in turn inducing additional demand and restarting the cycle. This proposed I-5 Rose Quarter freeway widening project amplifies the same core cycle of destroying the fabric of the city for the convenience of suburban motorists travelling through the city. But now, the project cynically uses the co-opted language of environmental sustainability, active transportation, and environmental justice to describe a freeway expansion project as a boon to pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists while “repairing” the historical neighborhood with construction leftovers.

Given the large and growing role of transportation in the State’s GHG emissions, the mandate to decrease emissions to 10% below 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, the inadequacy of the EA, and the history of damage to the adjacent communities inflicted by the freeway, it is the position of 350PDX that:

1. ODOT should not move forward with the I-5 Rose Quarter freeway widening project based on the Environmental Assessment and should instead complete a full Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate the effects of the project.
2. ODOT must include analysis of congestion pricing as both an alternative to reduce congestion and as a complicating factor to the build/no-build analysis. As of January 2019, ODOT has funding and permission from the Federal Highway Administration to study congestion pricing along the I-5 corridor as mandated by Section 120 of Oregon House Bill 2017. ODOT should also conduct the build/no-build analysis with the underlying assumption that a twelve-lane Columbia River Crossing is **not** built.
3. ODOT should partner with the City of Portland, Metro, and TriMet to facilitate the development of a network of dedicated and priority transit and biking facilities on all facilities under its jurisdiction.

350PDX appreciates this opportunity to provide public comment on the I-5 Rose Quarter freeway widening project. We urge you to recognize that the community is urging you to stop prioritizing the allocation of space and right-of-way to automobiles to the detriment of people walking, biking, or taking public transportation. Take this opportunity to build a positive legacy that contributes to the health, safety, and welfare of the Portland Metro Region, the State of Oregon, and the whole of the I-5 Corridor.

Sincerely,

Katy Kolker, 350PDX Interim Executive Director

Chris Palmer, 350PDX Volunteer & Communications Coordinator

Jessie Maran, 350PDX Volunteer

Jesse Lopez, 350PDX Volunteer



PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM

To: Oregon Department of Transportation,
I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team
Subject: I-5 Rose Quarter Environmental Assessment

March 26, 2019
ODOT
attention Megan Channell
123 NW Flanders St.
Portland, OR 97209

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Oregon Walks has been fighting to improve conditions for pedestrians in our state for over two decades; we've learned to play the long game and the value of looking at a situation through a multitude of lenses. Our lives, like our roads, are intersectional, and we believe in surfacing multiple perspectives when addressing the question of how we invest public funds for public good.

In drafting our statement in opposition of ODOT's proposed expansion to I-5 in Portland through the Rose Quarter, we have listened to and learned from many: the dedicated members on the Oregon Walks Plans and Projects committee who have been tracking this project since day one, the volunteers of the City of Portland's Pedestrian Advisory Committee who give their time and expertise to ensure safe pedestrian conditions in all city projects, the team at No More Freeways galvanizing active transportation activists organizing a passionate resistance to I-5 freeway expansion, and the leaders of Albina Vision Trust who are offering a beautiful vision and process for what could be done to rebuild what was once a thriving neighborhood and the heart of the black community in Portland.

In its current form, we oppose ODOT's proposed expansion to I-5 in Portland through the Rose Quarter. Instead, we encourage ODOT to slow down the process to ensure that any I-5 plan and changes in the Rose Quarter:

Center the vision and voices of current and past residents and honor the history of the community that was forced out.

As an organization, we are learning to center racial equity in our policies and practices. We hold the belief that any discussion of urban design in this neighborhood should center the perspectives of communities most impacted by forced displacement -- removal -- from the predominantly black neighborhood of Albina. We believe ODOT has the opportunity to recognize the full adverse and disproportionate impact the building of I-5 has had on this community -and generally, highway projects have historically had on communities of color - by working with the Albina Vision Trust to create a cohesive, connected neighborhood over I-5. Any I-5 investment must answer Albina Vision's call for truly buildable space above the freeway, connect 94 acres in inner NE Portland and be used to provide ample mixed-income housing, public parks and gathering areas and safe and attractive conditions for walking, rolling and other multimodal options.

Addresses the dire realities of climate change and the dangers of carbon emissions and what that means for our children -now and in the future.

Given that we know transportation emissions account for 40% of our total carbon emissions, a fact outlined in the City of Portland's Climate Action Plan, we cannot support any plan that proposes to add to those staggering numbers. Widening highways is an outdated idea, one that we now know doesn't result in vehicle traffic congestion relief. In fact, in a phenomenon known as induced demand, the opposite occurs: wider roads mean more space for more single-occupancy vehicles and drivers of those vehicles are more than happy to take up that space,

creating more traffic, and more carbon emissions. Doing anything that will degrade our planet for future generations is simply irresponsible.

Furthermore, children are already suffering the negative impacts of our freeway dependency; Harriet Tubman Middle School, where 68% are students of color, sits directly adjacent to the stretch of I-5 in question. There is concern that the air quality is causing kids to get sick. A PSU study found that the carbon emission levels are so dangerous that students shouldn't be allowed to play outside. The current plans for the I-5 expansion call for an additional lane which would bring traffic just yards away from the school, ensuring that outdoor recess will never be something the students of Harriet Tubman Middle School can enjoy.

Prioritizes truly improving safety on our roads -and supporting Vision Zero goals- as the leading rationale for this project.

As proponents of creating communities where folks can get to and from where they need to go by walking or rolling, we are deeply committed to a world where the single occupancy vehicle is not the primary mode of transportation and therefore, is not the primary recipient of our scarce transportation dollars. This has been touted as a transportation safety project, but it does nothing to address the major source of Portland's epidemic of traffic violence —our "High Crash Corridors," where 51% of Portland's traffic deaths and serious injuries occur. We cannot in good conscience justify spending this kind of money on "easing congestion", if there were even any guarantee that it would- when it could instead be used to literally save pedestrian lives on roads like SE 82nd Avenue, SE Powell Boulevard, NE Lombard Street, and the other high crash corridors that ODOT operates within Portland. In contrast, this stretch of I-5 that ODOT is proposing to widen hasn't had a single vehicle-to-vehicle fatality in the past decade.

We cannot support a design for surface streets through the Rose Quarter that accommodates large vehicles at the expense of pedestrian safety. For example, the current preliminary design shows many intersections with large corner radii with excessively wide pedestrian crossings, higher potential turning speeds and less space for queueing pedestrians. These new design elements conspire to create a space unsafe and unwelcoming to pedestrians. We urge ODOT to include the Pedestrian Advisory Committee's recommendations, such as better mitigation measures for the steep grade of the Hancock/Dixon connection, phasing at signalized crossings to separate pedestrian crossing phases at proposed ramp locations, and retain the heavily-used Flint bridge. We encourage ODOT to present a design that is in line with current urban street design best practices and ensures safe and accessible multimodal mobility.

Lastly, Oregon Walks supports the Pedestrian Advisory Committee's, 'No More Freeways' and Portland Public School's demand for a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Rather than spend millions on a project that is detrimental to our pedestrian safety, climate justice, and community building goals, we look forward to collaborating on a future Rose Quarter project that creates an equitable and sustainable Oregon for generations to come.

Thank you,



Jess Thompson,
Executive Director,
Oregon Walks



March 30, 2019

Oregon Department of Transportation
Attention: Megan Channell
123 NW Flanders St.
Portland, OR 97209

Dear Ms. Channell:

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership, working in Oregon via the Pacific Northwest Regional Network, is a national non-profit that works to advance safe walking and bicycling to and from schools, to improve the health and wellbeing of kids of all races, income levels, and abilities, and to foster the creation of healthy communities for everyone.

Our charge is to build policies and secure funding in the region to support students and families to be able to walk and roll to and from school and in their communities, and we work to ensure that those in our community who have the fewest options for transportation are given the most opportunities for better ways to get around. We are ever mindful that new or improved transportation opportunities must not negatively impact the health and wellbeing of the people in our communities, but rather seek ways to improve lives through transportation. For us and those we fight for, the fundamental questions we ask in 2019 of the I-5 Rose Quarter Project: what transportation approach best relieves congestion *while not ignoring the social and environmental impacts of past and current transportation projects?* What transportation approach best supports our economy *while also supporting the health and community of those living, working, playing, and praying nearby?*

HB 2017 directed ODOT to invest in congestion relief and freight mobility in the Rose Quarter in order to benefit the economy as measured by congestion and reliability. Past planning processes at ODOT took that directive and brought forward the proposed I-5 Rose Quarter Project as we see it today through the lens of this Environmental Assessment (EA). In our view, the past planning, needs, and intentions of this project have not been brought up-to-date with current and future considerations, including not only congestion and economic needs, but also co-benefits to climate emissions reductions; air quality, health, and safety improvements; and other local, regional, and state goals such as reducing vehicle miles traveled.

In its current iteration, the I-5 Rose Quarter Project utterly fails on environmental justice remediation, air quality, health, and safety, and appears to not even achieve the outcomes it is charged to address, namely congestion relief. Urban congestion relief has never been achieved by freeway expansion, auxiliary lanes or otherwise, because of induced demand – the EA itself indicates the congestion relief sought will not be realized.

Specifically, we are deeply concerned by the lack of depth of analysis on environmental justice, air quality, and environmental/climate emissions impacts:

- Harriet Tubman Middle School, with more than two-thirds students of color, sits directly adjacent to the stretch of I-5 in question. Students, their families, the nearby community, and Portland Public School Board have raised grave and relevant concerns about their ability to *be outside* near their school, which would naturally include walking or bicycling to and from school, something encouraged for students living within 1.5 miles of a school. A PSU study found that the carbon emission levels are *currently* so dangerous that students shouldn't be allowed to play outside. The concern is that increased vehicle emissions and closer proximity of the interstate's footprint widening will decrease the air quality to the point that it will be even more unsafe for youth to breathe or be outside at all. African American children are nearly twice as likely to have asthma than White children, and seven times as likely to die from asthma related causes than the White population (Source: US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health). People of color have a higher rate of asthma than White people in part because their communities are historically impacted by transportation emissions of high-volume roadways in their communities. The EA does not demonstrate the full impact on this school, and warrants further and deeper investigation.
- There is a long and dirty history of environmental and social injustice to the historically Black community in the neighborhood that was once Lower Albina before it was torn apart by the construction of I-5. The community displaced will not ever have their neighborhood back, and no level of congestion relief nor freight mobility will allow this community to realize their needs, because this project doesn't allow them to build what they need – including the creation of infill development that bridges I-5 and connects Albina to existing active eastside neighborhoods, not to mention breathable air. The EA does not demonstrate the full impact on this environmental injustice, nor how it will be mitigated, and warrants further and deeper investigation.
- We were shocked by the audacity of the claim that this project will be better for the environment. It is well established that transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States and accounts for half of the total increase in U.S. emissions since 1990. The ways in which transportation can make improvements to the climate and environment include transit service, frequency, and reliability improvements, reduction in vehicle miles traveled, safe facilities that enable high uptake of walking and bicycling, and vehicle electrification including rapid shifting of diesel trucks and fleet vehicles. Adding lanes and allowing for induced demand on I-5 will only increase climate emissions directly along this corridor, adding to environmental and air quality concerns. The EA does not demonstrate the full impact on the environment, and warrants further and deeper investigation.

After review of the EA, we are left with the questions unanswered: What transportation approach best relieves congestion *while not ignoring the social and environmental impacts of past and current transportation projects*? What transportation approach best supports our economy *while also supporting the health and community of those living, working, playing, and praying nearby*?

Seeking solutions for congestion relief in this corridor must include serious discussion about the fact that there is more than one way to relieve congestion. It must include serious consideration of the climate, health, and environmental justice impacts of transportation. The corridor is congested today not because there are not enough travel or auxiliary lanes, but because those who seek to travel through it don't have enough reliable options to do so: Options such as congestion pricing have not been fully explored in the context of this project, and worse, have been set aside as not relevant to this project; opportunities such as advisory speed limits and transit- and freight-only lanes, which could meaningfully provide positive solutions for freight and the regional economy, are not meaningfully considered; ODOT facilities within the City of Portland with far greater safety needs go unfunded, as do nearly \$250m in Safe Routes to School infrastructure needs around Portland schools. We recognize that funding was allocated to make improvements on I-5, but congestion and this project do not exist in a vacuum—it must be recognized that the reason so many people must rely on a private vehicle to get around, and why so many low-income families spend a majority of their income on owning and operating a car, is because the options available to them are not safe, not convenient, and not sufficient.

Just as businesses are reliant on government agencies to invest in infrastructure to support a healthy economy, families across the city and region are counting on government agencies to invest in crucial infrastructure that will make their communities safe to live and travel in. We urge ODOT to lead the region in a sincere and comprehensive conversation about how to spend limited transportation dollars in a way that will fundamentally benefit our transportation system, our climate, and our communities; provide options that truly work for all; and tackle, not repeat, the many societal issues we face today because of past transportation decisions.

There are too many uncertainties about whether this project meets its intended goals, and far too many questions about health and environmental justice impacts left unanswered. We join with others in requesting ODOT conduct a full Environmental Impact Statement that fully investigates and addresses the numerous air quality, climate, and environmental justice concerns.

Sincerely,

Kari Schlosshauer

Senior Policy Manager, Safe Routes Partnership
Portland, Oregon



Comments to Oregon Department of Transportation

I-5 Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

April 1, 2019

BBPDX advocates for a transportation system that is a liberating force for everyone in the community. In collaboration with community organizations and government agencies, we are working to support a spectrum of sustainable transportation options that will aid in creating the thriving, equitable community we collectively strive for.

We believe we need a transportation system that mobilizes its citizens, makes streets safer for all, and gets our community closer to its climate change mitigation goals. We want our leaders to make brave transportation decisions that benefit the entirety of the Portland region, serving business and commerce in addition to everyone who lives here. Given the legacy of institutional racism in Portland and how it has manifested in the location of this project, it is imperative that our leaders act with respect, courage and integrity.

Today, our leaders have the opportunity to stand for sane, compassionate policy and prove that Portland will lead the nation in our commitment to a sustainable and equitable future. We support the detailed comments and issues raised by our colleagues at Albina Vision Trust, The Street Trust, and Oregon Environmental Council regarding the I -5 Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion.

We must act with conviction: Portland, and the next generation of Portlanders who will have to live with the consequences of today's actions, deserve better. We are calling on leaders to tap the brakes on this project and ensure \$500 million in taxpayer funds are thoughtfully invested in projects that deliver community benefit while paying more than lip service to equity. Proceeding without further analysis regarding the project's community and environmental impacts ignores irrefutable facts that question many faulty assumptions made by the Environmental Assessment. A more prudent approach would be to conduct a full Environmental Impact Statement while also giving congestion pricing an opportunity to ameliorate congestion problems and provide data that can better inform our policy and infrastructure decisions.

April 1, 2019

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Oregon Department of Transportation
Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler
City Commissioner Nick Fish
City Commissioner Amanda Fritz
City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
City Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty

I am writing to you on behalf of the Irvington Community Association (ICA) in regard to the Oregon Department of Transportation's proposed I-5 widening project through the Rose Quarter. The ICA passed a resolution at its March 14th meeting affirming its opposition to the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) proposed highway expansion plan.

The ICA opposes spending \$500 million on expanding I-5 through the Rose Quarter through the addition of lanes and the altering of the on-ramps.

Contrary to ODOT's unsupported claims, the proposed alteration of I-5 will increase greenhouse emissions at a time when every level of government should be taking steps to curb such emissions. It is also problematic that ODOT based certain claims on an I-5 bridge expansion which has not been approved and thus does not exist and may never exist.

The project will further erode the condition of the Broadway-Weidler corridor at a time when the city should be looking at making the corridor a more neighborhood and business-friendly corridor.

The project will increase dangerous interactions between vehicles and cyclists/pedestrians as a result of the wide on-ramps which will encourage increasing vehicle speeds and will result in intersections which are too wide for pedestrians to safely cross.

The project will reduce the likelihood of improving the Rose Quarter by adding housing and other businesses.

The project will not reconnect the neighborhoods with the Rose Quarter as the proposed lids will be too small and will not be built in such a way as to allow for structures which could actually help in reconnecting the Rose Quarter to its neighbors. The plan to have the lids be "parks" is contradicted by the fact that there is no proposed entity to engage in upkeep. Even if there were upkeep, it is unlikely that people would want to hang out in an area surrounded by heavy traffic directly over a highway spewing noxious fumes.

Instead of spending money on a project that will increase global warming and result in a deterioration of the pedestrian environment, ODOT should first toll I-5 for a sufficient period to gather data about the reduction of congestion which results from tolling, as has been shown, repeatedly, in other projects throughout the United States and other countries. Instead of encouraging highway expansions, the city should request that ODOT instead spend the \$500 million on other constitutionally allowed projects involving bike and pedestrian infrastructure and modifications to the roadway that make roads safer for all road users.

ODOT should be spending money on traffic calming, safety improvements and pedestrian infrastructure, targeting the arterial streets that have been shown to cause the most serious injuries and fatalities.

Instead of supporting a highway expansion through the Rose Quarter, the city should be encouraging the use of modes of transportation other than driving through the Broadway/Weidler corridor by spending on improving mass transit through the corridor and electrifying the bus fleet. The city should be adding bike and pedestrian infrastructure which will not only reduce emissions but will increase livability in the central city and create a more thriving business environment along a corridor which has languished for decades.

Finally, ODOT could utilize that money to offset the damage it has already done to N/NE Portland by paying to help build housing to replace the over 300 units of housing it demolished and never replaced when it originally built I-5. In addition, ODOT should reimburse Portland Public Schools for the \$12 million plus that PPS had to spend to make the air inside Tubman School clean enough to breathe.

Respectfully,

Bob Dobrich

President, Irvington Community Association

Steven Cole

Vice-president, Irvington Community Association

Technical Memorandum

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April 1, 2019

TO: Megan Channell, Oregon Department of Transportation

FROM: No More Freeways Traffic Technical Advisory Committee

Buff Brown

Joseph Cortright

Brian Davis

Jesse Lopez

RE: Problems with the Rose Quarter Modeling

Please consider this a comment on the Rose Quarter Freeway Widening Project. Members of the No More Freeways Traffic Technical Advisory Committee include traffic engineers and modelers, and economists with extensive experience in constructing and operating traffic models and analyzing model accuracy. The Committee was also advised in its work by Mr. Norm Marshall, a nationally recognized expert in transportation modeling.

The following document describes the most glaring shortcomings of the Environmental Assessment (EA) in providing accurate environmental impacts and in disclosing the scientific data and analyses methods such that the public -- and even those of us in the transportation and pollution profession -- can grasp the methods, and reproduce the results.

NEPA's twin goals are: (1) to foster informed decision making by "ensur[ing] that the agency, in reaching its decision, will have available, and will carefully consider, detailed information concerning significant environmental impacts," and (2) to promote informed public participation by requiring full disclosure of and opportunities for the public to participate in governmental decisions affecting environmental quality.¹¹ To that end, agencies must disclose the scientific information and analyses on which they rely in their environmental effects analyses and decision-making processes.

This document is a product of professionals in the field of transportation. We conclude that the methods are highly flawed and inaccurate, the methods of analysis are hidden and undeterminable from the given information, and the environmental impacts are negative and substantial, and continue our practices of GHG emissions and transportation injustice. At the least, an EIS should be required. At the very least, an extension for public input should be granted and methodologies and data disclosed to be able to understand and reproduce the results.

1. There are no Average Daily Traffic (ADT) data

Average daily traffic (ADT) is the most common measure of levels of traffic. The Rose Quarter Freeway Widening Project's "Traffic Analysis Technical Report" which purports to discuss how the traffic will affect the flow of vehicles on the freeway—which after all, is the project's purpose—conspicuously omits the most common and widely used metric of traffic volume: average daily traffic or ADT.

How common is ADT? It's basically the standard yardstick of describing traffic. ODOT uses it to decide how wide roads should be. It's the denominator in calculating road safety. Average daily traffic is also, not incidentally, the single most important variable in calculating how much carbon and other air pollutants cars will emit when they drive on this section of road. ODOT maintains a complicated system of recording stations and estimation, tracking traffic for thousands of road segments on highways. ODOT's annual report, Traffic Volume Trends details average daily traffic for about 3,800 road segments statewide. It also turns out that predicted future ADT is an essential input into the crash modeling software that ODOT used to predict crash rates on the freeway ("ADT" appears 141 times in the model's user manual). ODOT uses ADT numbers throughout the agency: Google reports that the Oregon DOT website has about 1,300 documents with the term "ADT" and nearly 1,000 with the term "average daily traffic." Chapter 5 of ODOT's Analysis Procedure Manual, last updated in July 2018, contains 124 references to the term "ADT" in just 55 pages. "Average daily traffic" is as fundamental to describing traffic as degrees fahrenheit is to a weather report.

But there's one place you'll find absolutely no references to ADT: The Rose Quarter I-5 Traffic Analysis Technical Report. We conducted an electronic search of the Adobe acrobat file containing the document; no instances of "ADT" appear in that document.

Without ADT figures, it is impossible for the public or independent third parties to check the accuracy of claims made about traffic levels, noise levels, pollution levels or carbon emission levels from the project.

2. The nature of the 2015 and 2045 transportation networks are not specified

An essential element in transportation modeling is defining the transportation network, the set of roads and intersection and estimates of their capacity that will form the basis of model computations. The material contained in the EA and subsequent disclosures does not describe specifically what transportation facilities will be included in the travel model. Project staff

confirmed only on March 26 that their modeling included the Columbia River Crossing--a widening of I-5 to 12 lanes. Yet the EA makes no mention of the CRC, nor does the EA provide information on when it would be built, and the modeled 2015 volumes appear to be based on the presence of a non-existent CRC project.

3. Volumes inexplicably inflated from current levels

The ODOT March 13 delayed disclosure contains information on peak AM and peak PM hour traffic volumes on various segments of Interstate 5. The report contains data labeled “existing conditions,” and two sets of modeled values from the VISUM model, one for 2015 and a second labeled 2045. In general, the VISUM 2015 model values for I-5 are much higher than the reported “existing” values. To summarize these differences, the following table displays modeled 2015 values and existing 2016 values for the area immediately north of the Rose Quarter Project Area (i.e. North of Going Street). These data are taken from the documents contained in the March 13 delayed disclosure, and are for the No Build Scenario.

These data show that the modeled values from VISUM for 2015 are 11 to 26 percent higher than those reported in the existing volumes field.

The material contained in the EA does not explain why traffic volumes are so much higher in the model than actually observed. This exaggeration of base value will exaggerate initial congestion and future congestion benefits, and is consistent with the critique of static assignment models described below.

I-5 North Volumes Modeled v. Existing					
		Northbound	Southbound	Total	Difference
<u>Time Period</u>		RQ VISUM Model (2015)			
AM Peak	8AM-9AM	3,945	6,204	10,149	54%
PM Peak	5PM-6PM	5,052	5,175	10,227	33%
		RQ Existing Conditions (2016)			
AM Peak	8AM-9AM	3,848	4,225	8,073	

PM Peak	5PM-6PM	3,584	3,807	7,391	
RQ VISUM Model, "Mainline North of Going, 2015 No Build"					
RQ Existing, "2016 Existing Conditions" "Mainline North of Going"					

4. Rose Quarter I-5 projections are inconsistent with other ODOT projections developed contemporaneously for analyzing congestion pricing forecasts

In May 2018, at the same time it was preparing I-5 forecasts for the Rose Quarter project, ODOT also contracted for modeling of I-5 traffic for the legislatively adopted congestion pricing plan. These are contained in a report from ODOT:

https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Value%20Pricing%20PAC/VP_TM3-Final-InitialConceptEvaluation.pdf

These data include baseline estimates of traffic on Interstate 5 in the Portland metropolitan area for the year 2027. The study has baseline estimates, that project future traffic conditions in the absence of congestion pricing. This study uses an I-5 cordon line North of the project area corresponds to N. Skidmore Street, which is just two blocks from the I-5 cordon line used for the Rose Quarter projections. The following table compares the projected 2027 volumes in the congestion pricing study at this cordon line with the VISUM Rose Quarter 2015 volumes. This shows that the volumes used in the VISUM model for 2015 are 21 to 37 percent higher than the expected volumes in 2027, according to the congestion pricing baseline model.

I-5 North Volumes from two ODOT models					
		Northbound	Southbound	Total	Difference
<u>Time Period</u>		RQ VISUM Model (2015)			
AM Peak	8AM-9AM	4,370	4,631	9,001	37%
PM Peak	5PM-6PM	4,424	4,855	9,279	21%

		Congestion Pricing Study (2027)			
AM Peak	8AM-9AM	3,255	3,337	6,592	
PM Peak	5PM-6PM	3,803	3,860	7,663	
RQ VISUM Model, "Mainline North of Going, 2015 No Build"					
Congestion Pricing Study, "Interstate Br.-Skidmore" Baseline Traffic Performance					

This analysis suggests that the traffic numbers, particularly north of the Rose Quarter project area are much higher than would be expected in another arguably reasonable forecast of traffic conditions. Given the expectation of growing traffic levels in the ODOT rose quarter modelling, one would expect that 2027 I-5 traffic levels would be considerably higher, not lower than 2015 levels. The fact that two models, prepared for the same agency, in the same month, produce two such different pictures of traffic levels suggests that the model results are highly sensitive to the assumptions and input values used by the modelers. These key values and assumptions have generally not been provided to the public for review, making it impossible for independent, third parties to understand, replicate, and analyze the summary results presented in the EA.

5. Static Trip Assignment Modeling produces exaggerated no build traffic, which overstates congestion benefits and emission savings from the build scenario.

5.1 Static Trip Assignment Produces Biased Future Estimates

Transportation modeling experts have long recognized the limitations inherent in static trip assignment. Here is a summary of the problems with static models and induced travel (Marshall, 2018):

- the static models show unrealistic future traffic volumes (i.e. induced travel is baked in even if there isn't additional capacity)
- the unrealistic traffic volumes translate into unrealistic congestion, emissions, and safety issues
- as the traffic growth is baked into the no-build alternative, there is little additional traffic growth with road expansion
- the static model shows false expansion benefits in congestion, emissions and safety

ODOT concedes the limitations of static trip assignment even with modeled peak spreading (documented below).

5.2 Modeling for the Rose Quarter estimates rely on STA

From the Traffic Analysis Technical Report it appears that traffic forecasts are based on Metro's 2014 RTP model and projects (rather than the recently-adopted 2018 RTP). In either case, it appears that this is the trip-based model rather than the tour-based model that is under development (by Metro). The static assignment used in the trip-based model is described briefly on p. 49 of

https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2015/04/16/trip-based_travel_demand_model_methodology.pdf

6. ODOT has not revealed the assumptions or inputs used to generate its forecasts.

In response to No More Freeways request for the methodology it used to prepare its forecasts, ODOT submitted a copy of a National Cooperative Highway Research Project Report (NCHRP Report #765), which is essentially an encyclopedic description of all the different methods used to forecast traffic volumes. ODOT provided neither the exact methodology or assumptions it used in constructing its model. Asked what ingredients were in their dish, and how it was prepared, ODOT has essentially just handed us a cookbook.

The Traffic Operations Analysis Study (TOAS) from Jan 21, 2015 contains two impact analyses that begin with the assumption that the build scenario will generate no additional traffic. Both the travel time and the crash analyses use traffic speeds based on the same traffic volumes for the build and no-build scenarios. This assumption has no credibility. Freeing up space on a congested roadway will prompt more drivers to use this route.

It is noted that the TOAS from 2015 was originally released in "Draft" form, with several figures and all appendices missing. Following the No More Freeways data request, a finalized version that was dated January 21, 2015 (the same date as the originally-released draft) was released on March 14, 2019. This report claims that future volumes were derived using NCHRP Report #255 (A document from 1982 that including methodologies for forecasting future traffic volumes that was superseded in 2014 by NCHRP Report #765). No information was provided regarding the differences between the volumes and assumptions within these, though the modeling described by the TOAS appears to form the basis for the results described within the Traffic Analysis Technical Report.

It has been impossible, from a lack of data and methodology, to determine what assumptions are used to create Table 6, p 53, of the Transportation Safety Technical Report, and the lane-by-lane traffic speeds claimed in chapter 5 of the Traffic Analysis Technical Report. The summaries of both of appear very similar to the TOAS results, suggesting that these analyses likely use similar unreasonable assumptions.

Unlike the simulation models used for these analyses, four-step travel models assign more trips to a road that is modified for higher speeds, although they generally are poor at correctly estimating mode shifts or induced travel. Appendix A of the Air Quality Technical Report indicates that the regional travel model was used, and runs from the 2040 regional model show a regionwide 4,750,000 increase in Annual VMT (2.4%), and a 5,770,000 increase (2.9%) in 2045 caused by building this project. Is it reasonable to suggest that adding 5 million miles of travel to our region is going to lower our crashes and lower our carbon emissions? It is not. The crash and speed analyses should be using these VMT assumptions.

7. ODOT has improperly extrapolated 2040 data to 2045 levels

The VISUM model runs were done for a target year of 2040, the project linearly extrapolated these levels, as well as estimates of congestion for five additional years. Rather than running the model separately for this later time period (and adjusting all outputs) this simply increases the levels for 2045 without meaningfully analyzing what would be likely to happen in that five year period.

The 2040 traffic volumes are extrapolated to 2045, a fact revealed in the Traffic Technical Report:

"The volume growth from the 2015 base year and 2040 future financially constrained regional travel demand models was used to identify an annual growth rate using a straight-line growth method. This growth rate was applied to the 5-year increment between 2040 and 2045 to define the demand model for the Project's horizon year." (p. 29)

This is poor modeling practice even for static models as it takes over-capacity volumes and makes them even larger without any feedback from congestion. The model does a certain amount of "peak spreading" that is intended to reduce the over-capacity problem. This already is somewhat defeated by the 2040-2045 extrapolation. But peak spreading doesn't solve the problem anyway. ODOT's own planning documents identify the limitations in this approach.

"Using the peak spread trips tables with a static assignment cannot be considered a substitute for micro- or meso-simulations Dynamic Traffic Assignment (DTA). Both of these simulations restrict volume through links and intersections to saturated flow rates, and reflect congested conditions through queuing, while static assignments cannot accurately reflect this particular result of congested networks."

"Using the static assignment with the peak spread trip tables will provide more realistic assignment results on a very saturated network compared to a static assignment with

non-peak spread tables. However, even with the peak spread trip tables, the path results are still subject to the nuances of the static assignment, resulting in V/C ratios on links and intersections that can still exceed 1.0 in many locations."

https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Documents/APMv2_App8A.pdf

Any V/C greater than 1 is a model error that also affects other road segments and intersections throughout the network. The problem with traffic volumes with V/C greater than 1 is amplified when the static model outputs are transferred to microsimulation model as is done in the Rose Quarter study. Unrealistically high VISSIM microsimulation model inputs produce unrealistically large VISSIM model delays.

8. Apparently manually added trips to model; inconsistencies with modeling for noise and pollution

The ODOT modeling spreadsheet "NB Mainline Volume Forecasts.xlsx" (not publicly disclosed by ODOT but obtained by No More Freeways from a separate source) contains a notation that was suppressed from the PDF version of the same sheet included in the March 13 delayed disclosure. That suppressed information indicates that ODOT modelers manually adjusted highway volumes North of Going Avenue, by adding 976 vehicles in the Northbound direction in the morning peak hour (8AM to 9AM). Cell B44 of this spreadsheet (suppressed from the PDF included in the delayed disclosure by ODOT) reads (colored font in original):

"Demand vol added to I-5 Mainline south of Going St to equal or exceed Segment Check"

It also appears from the notations in this "NB Mainline Volume Forecasts.xlsx" spreadsheet (again, suppressed from the publicly released PDF created from this file) that the figures in this spreadsheet were adjusted because they were not consistent with the data used in the project's noise and pollution analyses. Cell G44 of this spreadsheet (suppressed from the PDF included in the delayed disclosure by ODOT) reads:

"- Didn't use this as HDR wanted to be consistent with Air/Noise analysis"

9. Unrealistic headways used in traffic analysis.

For modeling purposes, ODOT assumed an unreasonably high volume of traffic moving into the Rose Quarter area by unrealistically shortening the headways (following distance) for vehicles coming into the area from I-84. Standard headways are 1.5 seconds per vehicle, these were shorted to 1.0 seconds per vehicle, a level unsupportable in calibrated VISSUM models (Dong, 2015).

To illustrate the unrealism of this assumption, it is noted that the assumed speeds where headways are 1.0 seconds is 13-20 mph. A vehicle will thus travel between 19.07 feet and approximately 30 feet in one second. Typically, a passenger car is assumed to be 19 feet in length (aka the “P” Design Vehicle from AASHTO’s *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*). Thus, following distances between cars are assumed to average as little as *half an inch* for an hour. For trucks and other large vehicles, these headways aren’t even possible. It is entirely unrealistic to assume headways could average as little as 1.0 seconds over an entire hour.

10. Indications that Columbia River Crossing is assumed

The document “Vissim Modeling Notes.docx” (not publicly disclosed by ODOT but obtained by No More Freeways from a separate source) and not disclosed either in the EA or in the March 13 delayed disclosure alludes to assumptions used in the model which are consistent with the construction of the Columbia River Crossing (CRC). The assumptions show forced congestion in the AM peak occurring in the Rose Quarter, but not to the North (the location of CRC), and that force congestion was removed from the model “to reflect future improvements north of the study area”.

4. C. No “forced” congestion was used in the AM peak period model as the congestion is either contained within the study area or starts in the study area and extends outside, i.e. SB I-5 approaching the I-405 split.

5. B. The forced congestion on I-5 NB was removed from the model to reflect future improvements on I-5 north of the study area.”

11. Issues with Synchro Modeling

The Traffic Analysis Technical Report includes a capacity analysis for a number of surface street intersections that are expected to be impacted by the proposed project, conducted with the modeling software *Synchro*. However the initial release failed to include any of the data from the model runs. Invariably, these data are included in appendices of reports where *Synchro*

results are reported; the output sheets are well-known for the comprehensive information they include, much of which is essential for verifying the veracity of claims.

Following the No More Freeways data request, Synchro output data were released publicly on March 14, 2019. This release failed to include data for the morning peak hour under existing conditions. Notably, the output sheets for the evening peak hour analysis scenario were dated March 12, 2019, while other sheets were undated; it is unclear why output sheets from the original model runs used to generate the reported results were not provided per standard practice. A cursory evaluation of the Synchro results revealed a number of issues where input volumes were inconsistent with volumes from the counts and/or VISUM model, odd or unclear assumptions regarding traffic signal phasing, or inaccurate/unclear lane configurations. The timing of the release late in the public comment period precluded a comprehensive review of these data; there are a number of other questions or inaccuracies that the team would have liked to explore. Ideally, the release of these data along with current plan drawings (released March 26th) would have allowed sufficient time for the public to cross-reference these documents to fully appreciate the proposed changes to traffic patterns and their projected impacts. The late release of these crucial documents leaves many important questions about the impacts of this project unexplored or unresolved.

Biographies

Buff Brown has degrees in engineering, environmental science, and law. Buff has been in transportation planning for 17 years beginning in the field of transportation-related emissions, then as the senior travel demand modeler for the Indiana DOT, as the Director of an Indiana MPO, and most recently as the Senior Transportation Planner for municipalities in Oregon and Washington.

Joseph Cortright is Director of City Observatory, an urban policy think tank, and an Economist with Impresa. He has researched and written extensively on transportation policy and urban development and is author of “Measuring Urban Transportation Performance” (CEOs for Cities, 2010), a detailed examination of methodologies used for characterizing congestion, delay and performance of transportation systems in urban settings. Cortright is chair of the Oregon Governor’s Council of Economic Advisers and a former Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution.

Brian Davis is Project Manager at Lancaster Engineering, where he has worked for the last eight years in a hybrid planning/engineering role advising public and private sector clients on transportation and urban design issues. He has written and reviewed countless transportation studies for developments and infrastructure projects, and has significant experience developing Synchro and VISSIM models and conducting related analyses. He is an alumnus of Portland

State University's Transportation Engineering program and an adjunct instructor at PSU's College of Urban and Regional Planning, with research interests in urban freight, parking management, and performance metrics.

Jesse Lopez has a PhD in Environmental Science & Engineering. He works as a Computational Scientist managing and analyzing diverse and large-scale environmental datasets for non-profit, for-profit, and governmental organizations. Lopez has acted as an expert reviewer of environmental impact statements on behalf of numerous organizations.

Norman Marshall, President of Smart Mobility, Inc., has a B.S. in Mathematics from Worcester Polytechnic Institute and an M.S. in Engineering Sciences from Dartmouth College. He has over 30 years of transportation modeling experience and has completed projects in more than 30 U.S. states. He has many peer-reviewed publications and presentations. Mr. Marshall is co-leader of the Congress for the New Urbanism project for Transportation Modeling Reform.

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Oregon Department of Transportation, (2018), VOLUME TABLES, pages 333-340, <https://i5rosequarter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Volume-Tables.pdf> [Part of the March 13 Delayed Disclosure: These documents were not publicly disclosed by ODOT until March 13, 2018, pursuant to a public records request from No More Freeways,]

File: Volume-Tables.pdf

Oregon Department of Transportation, (2018), Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis, Final Round 1 Concept Evaluation and Recommendations Technical Memorandum #3.

https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Value%20Pricing%20PAC/VP_TM3-Final-InitialConceptEvaluation.pdf

File: Tolling_TechnicalMemo4_Evaluation.pdf

OTHER ODOT DOCUMENTS (NOT PUBLICLY RELEASED BY ODOT)

ODOT Excel Worksheet: Folder: "Final Balanced Volumes with road diet"

File: "NB Mainline Volume Forecasts.XLSX"

ODOT, Word Document:

File: "I5 RQ_Vissim Modeling Notes.docx."

Date: Monday, April 1, 2019

To: Oregon Department of Transportation

From: Parents of Harriet Tubman Middle School Students

Subject: Tubman Community Members Voice Opposition to Oregon Department of Transportation's Proposed Rose Quarter Freeway Widening Project, Call for Environmental Impact Statement

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The undersigned parents of Harriet Tubman Middle School students wish to formally voice our opposition to the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT)'s plans to widen the Rose Quarter Freeway into the backyard of the Harriet Tubman campus. Many Tubman community members believe this freeway widening proposal is a direct affront to the immediate health and safety of our students, a potentially destabilizing blow to the decades-long community effort to restore a thriving and diverse Middle School community at the historic Tubman campus, and an unacceptable investment in fossil-fuel infrastructure that imperils future generations to the potentially catastrophic horrors of climate change. Alternatives should be more rigorously explored that don't involve threatening the health, well-being, and safety of our students, teachers, and community, and ODOT should heed the calls of PPS Board Members and numerous other elected officials to conduct a full Environmental Impact Statement before moving forward with this proposed freeway expansion.

History and present of Harriet Tubman Middle School

The history of disinvestment and subsequent gentrification and displacement of our inner North Portland neighborhood is well documented but necessary context to frame the ongoing challenges the Tubman community is facing today.¹ The Harriet Tubman Campus (then known as Eliot Elementary) was built in 1953 before the I-5 project was constructed. Despite opposition from PPS and the local community, the construction of I-5 in the 1970s bulldozed 330 homes in Portland's historically black Albina neighborhood. Construction of this freeway, coupled with the construction of Memorial Coliseum and the Legacy Emanuel hospital, had a significant destabilizing impact on the local black community, bulldozing many homes and businesses and pushing the African American community farther North and Northeast. PPS nearly

¹ Karen Gibson, "Bleeding Albina: A History of Community Disinvestment, 1940-2000."

closed Tubman in 1982, but a march of over 500 community members organized by the Black United Front demanded PPS listen to the existing African-American community who wanted to retain Tubman as a middle school and keep Boise Elementary open as a nearby neighborhood school.² Low enrollment led to the building being shuttered in 2012, despite community protests. Portland Public Schools (PPS)' efforts to address redistricting school boundaries and provide adequate middle-level education to students in our neighborhood led to the decision to reopen Harriet Tubman as a Middle School in 2018.

Harriet Tubman students and teachers have an uncompromised right to clean air. Freeway expansion inevitably leads to air pollution that directly threatens our community.

Air quality researchers at Portland State University released a report in April 2018 expressing their concerns about the high levels of air pollution at Harriet Tubman Middle School. The first recommendation of the report stated that “student outdoor activities be limited at Harriet Tubman Middle School, especially during high traffic periods.”³ The report found levels of acrolein, benzene, and naphthalene higher than Oregon’s Ambient Benchmark Concentrations. Nearly 18,000 diesel-powered trucks pass by Tubman on a daily basis - as of March 2019, Oregon has by far the weakest diesel regulations on the West Coast. The report was clear: “the primary risks to future occupants of Tubman MS related to ambient air quality are due to freeway emissions.”

Willamette Week reported on this finding, and quoted PSU’s Dr. Linda George saying that “It’s very reasonable to expect concentrations would be higher and extend further into the property” if the freeway was widened into the backyard of the campus.⁴

This report is bolstered by other findings. Late last year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published their most recent iteration of the National Air Toxics Assessment, which reflected conditions in 2014. EPA ranked census tract 23.03 (the tract at Tubman) as the seventh highest of risk for cancer of any in Oregon (census

² More on the history of the 1982 protests can be found here: “The Harriet Tubman Middle Schools Protests: Black United Front vs The Portland School Board” <http://publichistorypdx.org/2017/03/26/harriet-tubman-middle-school-protests-black-united-front-vs-portland-school-board/>

³ “Indoor and outdoor air quality at Harriet Tubman Middle School and the design of mitigation measures: Phase I report” was published on April 18, 2018; the document is available here: https://s3.amazonaws.com/arc-wordpress-client-uploads/wwweek/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/05143206/Tubman-PS_U_HTMSReport_Phase1-Outdoor-Monitoring_Final.pdf

⁴ “A Middle School Prized by Portland’s Black Community Would See Its Poor Air Quality Worsen With a Rose Quarter Highway Expansion” *Willamette Week*, July 4, 2018: <https://www.wwweek.com/news/2018/07/04/a-middle-school-prized-by-portlands-black-community-would-see-its-poor-air-quality-worsen-with-a-rose-quarter-highway-expansion/>

tracts 22.03 and 21 are similarly high). All three rank among the top ten in the state, and this is almost certainly an underestimate - the EPA doesn't recognize diesel particulate as a carcinogen, so it's not fully included in the estimate.

Given these statistics about the dirty air pollution in our neighborhood, we find it insulting that ODOT's freeway expansion proposal involves widening I-5 (and the tens of thousands of emitting automobiles and trucks) farther east and even closer to the Tubman building and students inside it. As parents of children who breathe the polluted air, we are the ones forced to live with the repercussions of these decisions. It's our material and physical loss when we are forced to buy inhalers for our children when they are diagnosed with asthma, and it's our children who suffer these very real health consequences. It's our teachers and administrators who are always wondering if a headache is just an occasional migraine or a symptom of something more nefarious, due to the particulates in the air from the nearby freeway. It's our right and responsibility to fiercely demand a rational, empirical, and thorough to ensuring this Middle School is a safe and healthy learning environment and workplace.

The overwhelming academic literature on air pollution from transportation suggests that decongestion pricing, and not freeway expansion, is the best policy to improve local air pollutants and mitigate the impacts of freeways on their surrounding communities.⁵ According to *The Washington Post*, childhood asthma rates in Stockholm, Sweden were reduced by nearly fifty percent after the implementation of decongestion pricing.⁶

For some reason, ODOT's Environmental Assessment of the impacts of this project does not study the impact that decongestion pricing would have on the traffic on the I-5 corridor nor its impact on the necessity of this project. Our community is

⁵ University of British Columbia Professor Dr. Alex Bigazzi, in an interview regarding his article "Can traffic management strategies improve urban air quality? A review of the evidence" published in the *Journal of Transport and Health*:

"We looked at the entire body of literature, including hundreds of published papers, and identified 65 studies documenting the real-world effects of 22 types of traffic management strategies including speed enforcement programs, lane management such as HOV lanes, road and congestion pricing, and trip reduction strategies like incentives for telecommuting or ride sharing. The strategies with the best evidence of air quality improvements are area road/congestion pricing and low-emission zones. Other strategies have potential benefits, but there is less empirical evidence, either because the benefits are very small or because the benefits are offset by some other effect."

Dr. Bigazzi's article can be read here: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214140517301330>

Dr. Bigazzi's quote is from this interview on the University of British Columbia's website: <https://news.ubc.ca/2017/10/05/road-pricing-most-effective-in-reducing-vehicle-emissions/>

⁶ "Congestion pricing also clears the lungs, researchers say" *Washington Post*. March 27, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/tripping/wp/2018/03/27/congestion-pricing-clears-the-lungs-too-researchers-say/?utm_term=.fe445a2efa58

outraged that ODOT is not pursuing the easiest, most cost-effective policy to address traffic congestion that the scientific consensus also recognizes is the most likely to improve air quality in our community. ODOT's projections of improved air quality in the area under the "build" scenario are also based on assumptions about improvements in technology and local air quality regulations - assumptions the agency is unable to promise will happen.

Tubman parents take the existential threat of climate change seriously - does ODOT?

As parents of Harriet Tubman students, it's our responsibility to work to help every student at Tubman succeed, both here at this institution and into the future as the next generation of Portlanders, Oregonians, and Americans. Given this perspective, as community members we feel it is important to note that this proposed freeway expansion flies directly in the face of local, state-level, and international findings about the grim necessity of decarbonization. The notion that a sixth grader entering Harriet Tubman Middle School next autumn would be wrapping up their senior year of college in 2030, the year that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently stated was the deadline for a complete decarbonization to avoid the absolute worst impacts of climate change, is grounds for significant concern. Freeway expansion is climate denialism - American cities simply cannot decarbonize through electrification of existing vehicles alone.⁷ Fossil fuel infrastructure like freeway expansion has no place in our current transportation system if we are to fully meet our goals. Investments in public transportation and dense, walkable urban communities help build low-carbon communities that will help future generations avoid the worst of climate change's excesses. Meanwhile, the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project actually *slows* bus speeds through the neighborhood.

Harriet Tubman is a frontline community

⁷ "There is a persistent belief, among both state officials and the public, that clean cars and clean fuels alone can achieve California's climate goals, but this is fundamentally untrue," [Matthew Baker, policy director for California's the Planning and Conservation League] says. "Even if we have 100 percent zero-emission vehicles and 75 percent renewable energy production by 2050—both ambitious goals—we still need a 15 percent reduction of VMT beyond what current regional plans project to achieve."

Plus EVs are not a public health panacea. "EVs don't relieve congestion, and the dust from brakes and tires are a major source of particulate matter air pollution, which causes respiratory illness," says Bryn Lindblad, associate director of Climate Resolve. "That last fact doesn't really seem to be on people's radar as they look to EVs to be the solution."

"When electric isn't good enough: Sacramento is the staging ground for a fight to make drivers spend less time on the road" *Curbed*. <https://www.curbed.com/a/texas-california/electric-cars-climate-change-sacramento-california>

According to PPS' data, just under half of Harriet Tubman's students qualify for free and reduced price meals. Only 31.4% of Harriet Tubman students identify as white - this is the 2nd lowest percentage of a middle school campus out of the thirteen in the district. 40% of Harriet Tubman's students identify as black - the third highest of any PPS campus across all grade levels.

	% Non-White ⁸	% Black	% Underserved ⁹	% on Free /Reduced Lunch ¹⁰
Harriet Tubman Students	68.6	40.5	73.5	48.9%
All PPS Middle Schools	44.3	9.5	47.5	33.3%
All PPS students	43.7	8.9	49	36.0%

- *2018-2019 PPS Demographics*

After years of organizing on PPS' expedited timeline to open the school, Tubman parents from four demographically different elementary schools across inner North/Northeast Portland have spent the past two years collaboratively attempting to match PPS' ambitious timeline for opening by building the network of parents, teachers and students who can provide the best support for our children's education.

As parents who want this school to succeed, we are tasked with solving problems big and small - we are spending enormous amounts of our own volunteer time and resources finding answers to questions as big as "what middle-level programming will best meet the needs of a student body with wildly different needs" and as small as "how do we find enough parent volunteers to chaperone our school's first Middle School dance." We are acutely aware of the reality that building these relationships across our

⁸ Data on the % Non-White and % Black demography of PPS schools can be found here:

<https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/207/Enrollment%20by%20Race%20and%20School%202018-19.pdf>

⁹ According to PPS, "the Combined Underserved category was originally established by the Oregon Department of Education as part of the requirements of the ESEA Waiver. PPS' current definition of Combined Underserved includes the following: Students eligible for Special Education, Students with Limited English Proficiency, Students eligible to receive free meals by Direct Certification, Students identifying as Black, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, and/or Pacific Islander." This data can be found here:

<https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/207/Enrollment%20of%20Underserved%20Groups%202018-19.pdf>

¹⁰ Data on PPS's free/reduced lunch demography is available here:

https://www.pps.net/cms/lib/OR01913224/Centricity/Domain/207/Enrollment%20by%20Meal%20Eligibility_Free%202018-19.pdf

community is especially difficult given the grave demographic and material disparities between our four feeder elementary schools. Building a social institution that can marshal the resources of the Tubman community and the city at large to stick up for and support all 491 students enrolled at the school is a difficult task, and our community continues to grapple with questions of how to serve our students equitably.

Tubman Community needs stability and support - not construction headaches, relocation, and pollution

This project does an enormous disservice to the North/Northeast Portland families who are putting in the elbow grease to build a thriving, integrated, restored community at Harriet Tubman Middle School. While our community's capacity to oppose this freeway expansion is relatively low, given the numerous other daunting challenges our community face, we remain steadfastly opposed to this project and ask ODOT to explore other alternatives less disruptive to our community. We're grateful for PPS's support in asking for an Environmental Impact Statement.

This freeway expansion (and the disruptive impact of years of construction leading up to it) directly threatens the work our neighborhoods have put into turning this empty school campus into a thriving, integrated community. How will these hard-won gains respond to a potential disruptive school-relocation during ODOT's construction? Will legitimate concerns about increased air pollution force neighborhood parents to reconsider sending their student to Tubman, or to more strongly consider charter/alternative/private schools? How will this school retain teachers when there's already considerable evidence that this community's air quality is a direct threat to the health and well-being of anyone who lives or works here? Has ODOT meaningfully engaged with PPS to ensure their proposal doesn't disrupt the already destabilized hillside on which Tubman rests? What assurances does the Tubman community have that ODOT won't "value-engineer" out the crucial sound walls or other remediation features of their plan when the costs of the project inevitably overrun? ODOT currently plans on routing significant bus/automobile traffic on N Flint during the proposed reconstruction of the N Williams/Vancouver bridges - two Tubman students have already been hit on N Flint while walking to school, and bringing this additional traffic to the western front of the school will make for chaotic pick-up/drop-off routines.

We find it unjust to ask current and future Tubman students to pay decades of bonding debt to pay for this project, as well as pay for the enormous costs of the additional carbon in the atmosphere and air pollutants in the neighborhood. As parents, citizens, community members, students, and Portlanders, we state our firm opposition

to ODOT's Rose Quarter freeway widening proposal, and demand that if this project does move forward, the agency conduct an Environmental Impact Statement to address the significant impacts this project would cause to the health and safety of our students and community.

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Signed,

Brooke Herout, Harriet Tubman Middle School PTSA Vice President

Joan Petit, Harriet Tubman Parent

Lee Ann Moyer, Harriet Tubman Parent

Rayna Geer, Harriet Tubman Parent

Taylor Geer, Harriet Tubman Parent

Jim Herout, Harriet Tubman Parent

Date: Monday, April 1, 2019

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To: Megan Channell
I-5 Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion Project
Oregon Department of Transportation

From: Rhett Lawrence, Conservation Director, Oregon Chapter, Sierra Club
Doug Moore, Executive Director, Oregon League of Conservation Voters
Nicholas Caleb, J.D., LL.M. Staff Attorney - Climate Justice Program,
Center for Sustainable Economy
Meredith Connolly, Oregon Director, Climate Solutions

Subject: Public Comment on I-5 Rose Quarter Freeway Project: Request for
Congestion Pricing Study and Implementation on I-5 Rose Quarter before
Proceeding with Freeway Expansion

Our organizations wish to thank the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the opportunity to provide public comment on the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. Our organizations worked diligently with state legislators and advocates to pass House Bill 2017, which allocated funding for this proposed project. HB 2017 was a transformative, bipartisan legislative victory for investment in transportation infrastructure across the state, directing over \$5.3 billion in funding. Our organizations are proud of our role in the passage of this bill - HB 2017 is directing hundreds of millions of dollars to fund a substantial increase in the provision of public transportation across the state, new revenue to build safe routes to school, incentives for electric vehicles, and bike/pedestrian infrastructure in cities across Oregon. These investments are crucial to Oregon's commitment to providing congestion relief to commuters stuck in traffic, decarbonizing our state's economy, fulfilling our statewide land use planning goals, and reducing air pollution. We find it gratifying to watch the numerous components of the Keep Oregon Moving legislation move forward, and our organizations share a sense of ownership and obligation in ensuring these projects and proposals are thoughtfully implemented through meaningful public engagement to ensure the intent of the transportation bill is realized in our community.

Value Pricing a Core Component of the HB 2017 Legislation

Among the key components of the HB 2017 bill that our organizations prioritized in our advocacy was the inclusion of policy language asking ODOT to move forward with the study and implementation of value pricing the Portland Metro Region. Value Pricing, (also known as Congestion Pricing or Decongestion Pricing), is a cost-effective, innovative, and demonstrably powerful policy mechanism that is now available at our disposal to manage traffic on our state's busy roads. Dr. Alex Bigazzi, a professor at the University of British Columbia, recently concluded after an exhaustive review of sixty different peer-reviewed studies on the subject that road pricing is the most effective strategy to reduce emissions (both air pollution and carbon pollution) and traffic.¹

With HB 2017, the Oregon Legislature directed ODOT to move forward with a study to determine the efficacy and value of establishing Value Pricing on stretches of I-5 and I-205 through the Portland Metropolitan Area. ODOT's Value Pricing Stakeholder Advisory Committee concluded in the Spring of 2018, and the agency received federal approval this past December to move forward with implementation of value pricing on stretches of I-205 and I-5, including the entire stretch of the Rose Quarter Freeway on which ODOT is proposing this \$500 million expansion. Studies commissioned by ODOT during the Value Pricing process affirmed what we already knew; congestion pricing is very effective at reducing carbon emissions, reducing traffic congestion, and reducing local air pollution, and it would have a substantial positive impact on traffic if implemented on any stretch of I-5 (all scenarios that included value pricing implemented on I-5 included this stretch of the Rose Quarter Freeway from I-84 to I-405).² Our organizations also recognize the potential regressive impacts of value

¹ "Can traffic management strategies improve urban air quality? A review of the evidence" AY Bigazzi, M Rouleau Journal of Transport & Health 7, 111-124

² "Baseline, significant congestion will exist in 2027 on the I-5 and I-205 study corridors, even with all the improvements...This congestion impacts not only speed, but also the number of vehicles that the facility can accommodate, with consequential impacts upon quality of life, economic vitality, and vehicle emissions in the region." This quote is from the Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis:

pricing if implemented poorly; we encourage ODOT to continue to reach out to frontline populations to ensure value pricing provides mobility and public health benefits for working class and marginalized communities across the Portland region.

Concern that Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion Traffic Modeling Does not Include Significant Impacts Value Pricing Implementation will have on Traffic

Given the bipartisan support for value pricing, the overwhelming academic literature suggesting its efficacy as a policy mechanism and ODOT's own research suggesting the applicability of this policy initiative to this specific stretch of freeway, we were surprised to learn that ODOT's traffic modeling for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion were conducted without any consideration as to how congestion pricing would impact these projections. ODOT appears to be moving forward with the next steps of value pricing implementation in foreseeable future. We therefore question the validity of the traffic projections that ODOT is using to justify the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion, given that the EA document projects traffic volumes out to 2045 and does not consider the substantial impacts that value pricing is likely to have on this project. It's difficult to understand how ODOT can be certain about the accuracy of these traffic projections and this proposed expansion's impact on travel times over the next 25 years without factoring in a forthcoming policy initiative likely to dramatically impact travel patterns.

Our organizations would also ask ODOT why the Environmental Assessment project didn't study the impact that value pricing would have on traffic through this corridor if implemented first, without any freeway expansion or "auxiliary lanes."

Efficacy of Value Pricing to Reduce Transportation Related Carbon Emissions

Meanwhile, in the nearly two years since House Bill 2017 was signed, the international consensus has coalesced around a finding that our planet must lower greenhouse gas emissions to 45% of the 2010 levels in the next eleven years to limit warming to 1.5C. This urgent warning stems from the IPCC report released last October, and this call to action to expedite decarbonization initiatives are growing in strength locally, nationally, and internationally.

Our communities across the state of Oregon have experienced first hand a mere taste of what this new normal might mean - more wildfires, floods, heat waves, water shortages. To quote *The Oregonian*, “The effects of climate change are no longer predicted. They are here today, they are serious, and they are costing Oregonians money and affecting their lifestyles and health. The state is suffering through drought, reduced snowpack, increased wildfire and impacts to fisheries. Larger forest and grassland fires are now more frequent, a consequence of warmer, drier summers. The fire season begins earlier and ends later.” That article goes on to acknowledge that “The main culprit is transportation emissions, primarily from trucks and passenger vehicles. This sector is the largest source of emissions in Oregon, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the total....There are three main ways to lower those emissions: Boost the conversion rate to electric vehicles; substantially increase public transit; and modify urban design over time to support electric vehicles, bikes, walking and public transport.”³ Even with passage of pending Clean Energy Jobs legislation in Salem, Oregon simply won’t hit carbon reduction targets without fundamentally reducing emissions from private automobiles.

Value Pricing Implementation Must Be Studied Before Freeway Expansion

Given ODOT’s own findings that Value Pricing was likely to be more effective in both reducing traffic congestion and traffic-related carbon emissions, it seems self-evident that this policy should be implemented before freeway expansion is

³ “With emissions on the rise, Oregon falls well short of greenhouse gas reduction goals” *The Oregonian*, December 15 2018. https://www.oregonlive.com/politics/2018/12/with_emissions_on_the_rise_ore.html

undertaken. We believe that the current Environmental Assessment is inadequate in its lack of analysis of this cost-effective, climate-friendly, demonstrably proven policy alternative included in the bipartisan statewide transportation package. We ask that ODOT undertake a more rigorous Environmental Impact Statement to study the impact that implementation of value pricing could have on carbon emissions, air pollution and traffic congestion before moving forward with plans to expand the Rose Quarter Freeway. This position is wholly consistent with our years of advocacy and engagement with the state legislature to pass HB 2017 - implementation of value pricing should inform how ODOT moves forward with the Rose Quarter. There are simply too many significant impacts to the local community to not prioritize studying value pricing and understanding its impacts to traffic patterns before moving forward with a \$500 million freeway expansion.



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Date: Monday, April 1, 2019

To: Megan Channell, Project Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation

CC: Portland City Council
Metro Council
Multnomah County Commission
Chris Warner, Interim Director, Portland Bureau of Transportation
Joe Zehnder, Interim Director, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Oregon Transportation Commission

From: No More Freeway Expansions Coalition

Subject: Official No More Freeways Statement in Opposition to the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion for the Public Comment Period

The No More Freeway Expansions Coalition is writing to submit our organization's official public comment in opposition to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. The freeway expansion project proposed in ODOT's Environmental Assessment (EA) document (and the agency's subsequent lackluster commitment to public engagement) are simply inadequate to address the numerous mobility, public health, and climate-related challenges that Oregonians are counting on government institutions to tackle through courageous leadership.

Given the numerous inadequacies with the EA, the No More Freeway Expansions Coalition joins the numerous educators, public health specialists, environmentalists, neighborhood leaders, transportation advocates, frontline communities, climate-hawks and elected officials demanding that ODOT conduct an Environmental Impact Statement that more appropriately studies the concerns raised by a plethora of community organizations before proceeding with this proposal. What follows is an overarching summary of the numerous failures of this project to address the Portland region's mobility needs, public health concerns or moral responsibility to shift investments away from fossil fuel infrastructure that greatly imperil current and future generations of Oregonians.



Freeway Expansion Has Never Solved Traffic Congestion (and ODOT's claims this project is any difference is based on questionable traffic modeling)

Among urban planners and traffic engineers, the concept of “induced demand,” that suggests that widening roads and freeways simply encourages more driving that inevitably fills the additional lanes with new traffic congestion, is accepted as a well-known and commonly understood phenomenon. The validity of this concept is backed by a nearly unanimous body of academic literature spanning decades of research on transportation planning and urban economics. In only the most recent prominent example, a \$1.6 billion freeway widening project to address what was described as a “bottleneck” on Los Angeles’ I-405 actually made traffic congestion worse when the project was completed.

Traffic congestion in our region is undeniably miserable, and poses a significant threat to the public health, economic vitality, and livability of our region. It is therefore imperative that we pursue transportation policies and investments that meaningfully tackle the problem. ODOT’s claims that this proposed freeway expansion would somehow improve traffic congestion - lined throughout their promotional materials of the EA document - implies that somehow the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion would be the first expansion in recent history to improve congestion. Therefore, when the No More Freeway Expansions coalition was finally granted access to enough traffic modeling data to meaningfully conduct an independent assessment of ODOT’s findings (more on our frustrations with ODOT’s public process and community engagement later), we rigorously studied the projections to understand how ODOT came to the conclusion this project was uniquely capable of solving traffic gridlock.

Turns out, ODOT’s project staff arrived at this conclusion by putting their fingers on the scales and hoping no one would notice. There are numerous questionable assumptions baked into ODOT’s traffic modeling, but the two most significant are the inclusion of the Columbia River Crossing and the exclusion of congestion pricing.

- **Inclusion of Columbia River Crossing:** The inclusion of the Columbia River Crossing Project (CRC) in ODOT’s traffic projections artificially inflate the agency’s traffic projections, making the need for the Rose Quarter Expansion more viable than it would otherwise. This proposed 12 lane freeway bridge was pronounced dead by legislators in 2014 after continued disagreement between Washington and Oregon state legislators about cost and design, notably about the project’s inclusion of tolling and light rail. Despite recent murmurs from Washington legislators hoping to revive the project, it’s difficult to conceive of any realistic timeline in which a new effort to build a similarly-designed CRC would be



approved and constructed within the next decade at minimum. By including this failed, \$3 billion project in the assumptions used for ODOT's traffic modeling on this corridor over the next 25 years, ODOT directed a firehose of expected automobile traffic at the Rose Quarter, essentially modeling a "problem" in which an expansion of the Rose Quarter freeway would be necessary to "solve."

- **Exclusion of Congestion Pricing** - House Bill 2017, the transportation package passed by the Oregon Legislature back in 2017, included both funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion and explicit policy language directing ODOT to move forward with feasibility studies to implement value pricing (also known as congestion pricing or decongestion pricing) on major freeways in the Portland Metropolitan area. In the past year, ODOT studied Value Pricing and received approval to proceed with the policy from a Value Pricing Stakeholder Advisory Committee assembled to review the literature and from the federal government, which granted approval for ODOT to move to the next steps of implementation this past January. Elected officials across the region have signaled their strong support for implementation of value pricing. The academic literature (and the studies that ODOT commissioned for the Value Pricing Stakeholder Advisory Committee) overwhelmingly suggests that implementation of the policy has an enormous impact on traffic congestion.¹

Given the bipartisan support for value pricing, the overwhelming academic literature suggesting its efficacy as a policy mechanism and ODOT's own research suggesting the applicability of this policy initiative to this specific stretch of freeway, it is baffling that that ODOT's traffic modeling for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion were conducted without any consideration as to how congestion pricing would impact these projections. ODOT appears to be moving forward with the next steps of value pricing implementation in foreseeable future. We therefore question the validity of the traffic projections that ODOT is using to justify the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion, given that the EA document projects traffic volumes out to 2045 and does not consider the substantial impacts that value pricing is likely to have on this project. It's difficult to understand how ODOT can be certain about the accuracy of these traffic

¹ We also wish to acknowledge that there are legitimate regressivity concerns with the potential implementation of congestion pricing, as with any policy proposal that raises revenue. The No More Freeways Coalition has written letters to the Oregon Transportation Commission, the Value Pricing Advisory Committee, and the City of Portland outlining how congestion pricing can be implemented fairly, and they are included in the public record. (In short, it involves including low-income exemptions for working class commuters and directing revenue raised from pricing into transit investments and not further freeway expansion). We believe that ODOT should work closely with frontline communities and anti-poverty advocates to ensure this policy is implemented in a manner that provides meaningful benefits to working class Oregonians and SW Washingtonians.



projections and this proposed expansion's impact on travel times over the next 25 years without factoring in a forthcoming policy initiative likely to dramatically impact travel patterns.

Whether due to incompetence, negligence, or outright deliberate malfeasance, it is difficult to avoid skepticism that the traffic modeling (on which ODOT's entire case for this \$500 million project rests) was conducted by the agency accurately or in objective good faith. The claims based on these faulty projections deceive the public and obfuscate crucial details that challenge ODOT's assertion this freeway expansion is justified and would provide any benefit to motorists frustrated with traffic gridlock. Our independent team reviewing the data made available found it near impossible to replicate ODOT's findings and trace their work to come to their conclusions.

The above is our best attempts at describing in layman's terms the impact that assumptions baked into ODOT's traffic modeling. The No More Freeways Traffic Modeling Team produced a technical memo that provides more specific detail as to the numerous flaws in these projections that should disqualify these findings. This document has also been submitted for public comment, and is available on the No More Freeways website.²

40% of Oregon's Carbon Emissions are from the Transportation Sector. This Freeway Expansion is Climate Change Denial.

ODOT's demonstrably questionable traffic projections suggesting that this freeway expansion will improve traffic congestion have also been extrapolated by the agency to suggest that the freeway widening will also lower carbon emissions because of fewer cars idling while stuck in traffic. Unfortunately, this claim by the agency is similarly disingenuous. Squandering half a billion dollars widening a mile of freeway is an egregious form of reckless climate denialism.

Last month's reporting by The Oregonian suggests that even with passage of pending carbon legislation, Oregon won't hit carbon reduction targets without fundamentally reducing emissions from private automobiles. Transportation emissions already comprise 40% of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions, and it's the only sector of Oregon's economy where emissions are increasing. Despite increasingly rigorous GHG emissions requirements for cars and light trucks, the transportation-related GHGs contribution to the State's GHG emissions rose from 35% in 2014 due to increased vehicle-miles travelled. The region's population is forecasted to increase by 390,000

² The Technical Memo is posted on our website here:
https://nomorefreewayspx.files.wordpress.com/2019/04/nmf_technical_memo.pdf



people by 2050, and it is imperative that we develop a transportation network that accommodates these new residents without any additional vehicle miles traveled and any increase in associated emissions. It's simply disingenuous to invest half a billion dollars in a freeway expansion project in the center of Oregon's densest city and claim that this project has any benefits to carbon reduction, especially given the project's abysmal contributions to walking, biking, and transit options in the neighborhood (see below). It is frustrating to watch ODOT champion freeway expansion when 40% of Oregon's carbon emissions come from transportation. Expansion of this freeway represents a complicit willingness to ignore Oregon's responsibility to future generations and the planet.

We've all felt the unease that permeates our communities when our neighborhoods are cloaked with the wildfire smoke that has draped itself through the Willamette Valley three of the past four summers. Last October's IPCC report warned that phasing out fossil fuels in eleven years was essential to avoiding the destruction of society as we know it. It's unconscionable to imagine that this freeway expansion is the best transportation investment we can make to honor the need to protect Oregon for current and future generations when the impacts of climate change are already here, and will almost certainly only get worse.

Oregon-based environmental stewards and advocates including Portland Audubon Society, Oregon Environmental Council, 350 PDX, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Center for Sustainable Economy, OPAL - Environmental Justice Oregon, and the Urban Greenspaces Institute have all asked ODOT to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement and stated their concern about this project's impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.³

ODOT's claims to traffic safety, "surface level" improvements are disingenuous

Please do not be fooled by ODOT's claims that the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion is an "Improvement Project" with "multimodal investments" and benefits for people biking, walking, or taking transit. Unanimous opposition to and concern about this project has been voiced by transportation advocates across the Portland region, including Oregon Walks, The Street Trust, Community Cycling Center, Oregon Families for Safe Streets, BikeLoudPDX, the City of Portland's Bicycle Advisory Committee and

³ Letters from these organizations submitted for public comment will be available on the No More Freeways website within the next week.



Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Portland Bus Lane Project, Safe Routes to School - Pacific Northwest Chapter, and AORTA.⁴

These organizations and citizen advisory committees have written long, detailed, thoughtful letters for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion public comment highlighting the surface street-level flaws within ODOT's proposal. The Bicycle Advisory Committee wrote that "the Build Alternative would fail to achieve the stated project goals and objectives, especially in critical areas related to bicycling, but also including the resulting conditions for walking and transit, local connectivity, safety, equity, and climate outcomes. This is in direct conflict with city and state planning goals." We will be posting many of these letters in full on the No More Freeways website in the next few days; a brief summary of the most frequently-cited concerns is listed below:

- ODOT claims that this project is a "safety improvement" for the freeway. However, there hasn't been a traffic fatality on this stretch of freeway in over a decade. Meanwhile, ODOT has numerous other arterials and orphan highways across the region that are very dangerous to people walking, biking, and driving. Just this past month, during the public comment period, a sixteen year old student at Madison High School was hit by a car while crossing 82nd Avenue. It's disingenuous to sell this freeway widening project as a traffic safety project when there are numerous other arterials that have much more demonstrable need for traffic safety investments. Doing so is directly antithetical to the City of Portland's Vision Zero initiative, passed in 2015, that uses a data-driven approach to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2025.
- TriMet's 4 and 44 bus lanes actually experience slower travel times through the corridor under the "Build" alternative. We simply cannot spend half a billion dollars on a transportation investment in the center of the biggest city in Oregon that actually makes public transit less efficient and viable an option, given the overwhelming relevance of excellent provision of public transit to air quality, anti-poverty, and decarbonization goals. Many groups requested ODOT to implement more transit-priority lanes through the corridor.
- The Rose Quarter plan calls for the removal of the Flint Avenue Bridge, a popular route for bike commuters, with one of the highest volumes of weekday morning bicycle traffic. Meanwhile, the proposed "replacement," a east-west connection on Hancock, is too steep to be ADA compliant (10%), and the proposed crossing has abysmal bike/pedestrian amenities. The proposed crossing on Clackamas is also largely panned as largely irrelevant to existing and expected future bike/ped

⁴ Letters from these organizations submitted for public comment will be available on the No More Freeways website within the next week.



patterns. Other groups cited national standards including the AASHTO bikeway design manual, the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and Oregon Highway Design Manual noting the inadequacies of the bicycle and pedestrian plans.

- Significant concerns that ODOT's EA doesn't address how expected construction detours will significantly impact biking and walking throughout the numerous years of construction. The Street Trust writes in their letter that they are "alarmed by the likely impact on walking, biking and transit during the construction period and the lack of information in the EA about how this will be mitigated..."

Extraordinary efforts will need to be taken to mitigate the huge disruption that will be caused by the construction of the project in an area that sees 8,000 cyclists per day and is the primary portal between downtown and North and Northeast Portland. A five-year setback is not an acceptable outcome for our climate change and growth management goals nor is it acceptable to the individuals who will be impacted."

- An overall level of disgust with the opportunity cost of this project, and what \$500 million could buy for other investments that would meaningfully provide safe places to walk, bike, and take transit across the city. \$250 million would build safe routes to school for every public school in the city of Portland. The May 2016 Fixing Our Streets Gas Tax was estimated to raise \$64 million for crucially needed investments in backlogged road maintenance and traffic safety improvements. \$500 million is roughly analogous to what TriMet receives from commuters over four years on farebox revenue, and is comparable to the cost of TriMet purchasing an entirely new, all-electric bus fleet.

As BikeLoudPDX wrote in their letter opposing this project, "Future study and proposals for this freeway expansion must significantly improve the proposed active transportation infrastructure plans, demonstrate a more rigorous active transportation design standards methodology, be able to show that delays during the estimated five year construction period not significantly impact active transportation and transit in the project area."

Similarly, ODOT's claims that they are working closely with local community partners are countered by letters submitted to public comment by the Albina Vision Trust, Eliot Neighborhood Association and Irvington Community Association. The No More Freeway Expansions Coalition stands in firm solidarity with the efforts of the Albina Vision to build a vibrant, dense, walkable neighborhood in the wake of the twentieth-century urban renewal that decimated Oregon's largest black neighborhood. The Albina Vision point out that the "lids" over the freeway are not strong enough to



build multiple stories of housing and office space, as their organization intends for the neighborhood. The Albina Vision Trust has asked ODOT for an Environmental Impact Statement, and both the Irvington CA and Eliot NA have written strongly worded letters opposing this project on numerous grounds and also asking ODOT for an Environmental Impact Statement.⁵

Freeways make children sick. ODOT is widening I-5 into the backyard of Harriet Tubman Middle School. Yikes.

ODOT's proposed Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion involves widening Interstate 5 farther East into to Portland Public Schools' (PPS') Harriet Tubman Middle School campus. Harriet Tubman reopened to students in September 2018; both Portland Public Schools as an entity and parents, students, teachers, and staff from the Tubman community have come out in opposition to this project and asking ODOT for a full Environmental Impact Statement to more appropriately understand the impacts this project would have on their neighborhood school.

According to PPS' data, just under half of Harriet Tubman's students qualify for free and reduced price meals. Only 31.4% of Harriet Tubman students identify as white - this is the 2nd lowest percentage of a middle school campus out of the thirteen in the district. 40% of Harriet Tubman's students identify as black - the third highest of any PPS campus across all grade levels. Youth are particularly susceptible to lung diseases.

⁵ Letters from these organizations submitted for public comment will be available on the No More Freeways website within the next week.



	% Non-White	% Black	% Underserved	% on Free /Reduced Lunch
Harriet Tubman Students	68.6	40.5	73.5	48.9%
All PPS Middle Schools	44.3	9.5	47.5	33.3%
All PPS students	43.7	8.9	49	36.0%

- 2018-2019 PPS Demographics⁶

Air quality researchers at Portland State University released a report in April 2018 expressing their concerns about the high levels of air pollution at Harriet Tubman Middle School. The first recommendation of the report stated that “student outdoor activities be limited at Harriet Tubman Middle School, especially during high traffic periods.” The report found levels of acrolein, benzene, and naphtalene higher than Oregon’s Ambient Benchmark Concentrations. Nearly 18,000 diesel-powered trucks pass by Tubman on a daily basis - as of March 2019, Oregon has by far the weakest diesel regulations on the West Coast. The report was clear: “the primary risks to future occupants of Tubman MS related to ambient air quality are due to freeway emissions.”⁷

Willamette Week reported on this finding, and quoted PSU’s Dr. Linda George saying that “It’s very reasonable to expect concentrations would be higher and extend further into the property” if the freeway was widened into the backyard of the campus.

This report is bolstered by other findings. Late last year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published their most recent iteration of the National Air Toxics Assessment, which reflected conditions in 2014. EPA ranked census tract 23.03 (the tract at Tubman) as the seventh highest of risk for cancer of any in Oregon (census tracts 22.03 and 21 are similarly high). All three rank among the top ten in the state, and this is almost certainly an underestimate - the EPA doesn’t recognize diesel particulate as a carcinogen, so it’s not fully included in the estimate.

As Harriet Tubman parents write in a letter submitted to ODOT’s Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion public comment, “As parents of students who breathe the polluted

⁶ These data are taken from the Tubman parents community letter, which cites specific PPS demographic tables available online, and is submitted for ODOT’s public comment on the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. We will provide a link to the Tubman community letter on the No More Freeways website in the next week.

⁷ This report, and numerous others about the impacts that air pollution have on student health and academic performance, is included in the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion Public Comment Record.



air, we are the ones forced to live with the repercussions of these decisions. It's our material and physical loss when we are forced to buy inhalers for our children when they are diagnosed with asthma, and it's our children who suffer these very real health consequences. It's our faculty and staff who are always wondering if a headache is just an occasional migraine or a symptom of something more nefarious, due to the particulates in the air from the nearby freeway. It's our right and responsibility to demands a fierce, rational approach to ensuring this Middle School is a safe and healthy learning environment." Their letter also notes the difficulty the school community is already facing at recruiting families to attend the school, and worry that the expansion will further deter families from sending their students to the facility when the campus needs sustained population growth for it to succeed.

The overwhelming academic literature on air pollution from transportation suggests that decongestion pricing, and not freeway expansion, is the best policy to improve local air pollutants and mitigate the impacts of freeways on their surrounding communities. According to *The Washington Post*, childhood asthma rates in Stockholm, Sweden were reduced by nearly fifty percent after the implementation of decongestion pricing. Dr. Alex Bigazzi's research, the body of which has been submitted to ODOT's public record for this project, highlights the numerous studies that suggest the best way to improve the air quality at Tubman Middle School is to institute congestion pricing instead of widening the freeway.

By not studying congestion pricing, ODOT is not considering the easiest, most cost-effective policy to address traffic congestion that the scientific consensus also recognizes is the most likely to improve air quality in the Tubman community. ODOT's projections of improved air quality in the area under the "build" scenario are also based on assumptions about improvements in technology and local air quality regulations - assumptions the agency is unable to promise will happen.

The full letter from the Portland Public School board detailing their concerns about this project explains how the district was unable, on ODOT's shortened time-frame, to study the other impacts this proposed expansion might have on the campus, including not only air quality but traffic impacts, soil stability, noise, and other factors. As the resolution passed unanimously by PPS Board Members states, "it is PPS's position that the depth, complexity and severity of potential significant short and long term negative impacts to PPS facilities, staff, students, families, and stakeholders warrants a full environmental impact statement (EIS). An EIS will provide a better understanding of the impacts of the proposal and development of potential mitigation options."⁸

⁸ This memo has been submitted to ODOT's Public Comment, and will be available on the No More Freeways website within the next week.



There are significant environmental justice implications with ODOT rushing through this freeway expansion into the backyard of Harriet Tubman in direct opposition to the local community's wishes. Further poisoning the air so that low income students of color are unable to enjoy outdoor recess is the diametric opposite to the Albina Vision Trust's aim to undertake a restorative initiative to rebuild a prosperous community, and is enormously detrimental to Portland Public Schools' efforts to provide a safe learning environment for every student.

ODOT's Community Engagement Plans Were, Frankly, Abysmal

The No More Freeways Coalition, along with dozens of organizations and small business owners, requested an extension of the public comment period November 30th. This request was denied by ODOT in mid January; we only got a public hearing out of the event due to pressure from Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office, and ODOT didn't provide video recording of the event despite having done so for numerous other recent public hearings for Value Pricing and Oregon Transportation Commission hearings. When the Environmental Assessment document was released on February 15th, it was missing numerous technical documents central to ODOT's claims about the efficacy of this project to address congestion, air pollution or carbon emissions. We sent ODOT a letter asking for these data on February 23rd, and only received part of what we asked for on March 13th, the day after the public hearing. We then sent ODOT a letter asking ODOT to honor their original commitment to a 45 day public comment period, and we were once again denied.

Numerous letters from advocacy organizations, including that from Portland Public Schools, noted the abbreviated public comment time made it difficult to evaluate the project, especially given the enormous consequences this project represents to the community, region, and state. ODOT ignored all of these requests. Separately, community member Iain MacKenzie sent ODOT an email on February 15th asking for access to relevant engineering drawings for this project. ODOT responded that "they do not yet exist," a statement that was demonstrably untrue. It took over a month to obtain the drawings that could have easily been published when they were first requested. These schematics were enormously valuable in allowing community members to understand the specific impacts the proposed project would have on treasured community resources, including the expansion of the freeway over the Vera Katz



Eastbank Esplanade.⁹ Mr. MacKenzie submitted public testimony providing a detail and copy of email records of his correspondence with the agency.¹⁰

Given the agency's general recalcitrance to share information about the project, unwillingness to hold meaningful public forums about the project, denial of repeated requests for extension of the public comment period, and numerous deceptions included in the traffic analysis, the No More Freeways Coalition wishes to state our loud disapproval and concern with the way a public agency ostensibly serving constituents engaged with concerned community members. Especially here in Oregon, where we celebrate our regional livability we've earned through rigorous community engagement, public process and commitment to environmental stewardship, it's remarkably disheartening to watch the Oregon Department of Transportation brazenly push this project through public process with disingenuous data, Orwellian language, and disinterest in meaningful partnership with community partners. The ability for current and future generations to enjoy Tom McCall's Eden is dependant on community leaders, elected officials and government bodies collaboratively working together to decarbonize our economy, prioritize investments that safeguard frontline communities, and double down on public health initiatives.

The Oregon Department of Transportation's Environmental Assessment proposal of this Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion fundamentally fails our local neighborhood, our city, our region, our state, and our planet on every single one of these fronts, as the approximately 800 letters from angry community members attests. We urge this project be scrapped, that ODOT be forced to undertake an Environmental Impact Statement, and that our regional elected officials take notice: The Oregon Department of Transportation is an emperor wearing no clothes. If we have any meaningful commitment to alleviating gridlock and congestion, eradicating the senseless violence of traffic fatalities, improving air quality so school doesn't make kids sick, restoring a neighborhood scarred by the worst racist impulses of our forefathers, or tackling climate change for current and future generations, this project must be abandoned. The Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion mega-project has no place in our community.

⁹ The Portland Audubon Society's letter, in particular, explores the significant lack of information in the EA about the necessary construction mitigation plans, particularly for the plans to build in the Willamette River along the southern edge of the project. This letter has been submitted to the Public Comment record, and will be available on the No More Freeways website in the next week.

¹⁰ His letter is available here:

<https://nomorefreewayspx.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/i5-rose-quarter-letter-1-1.pdf>

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Sarah Deumling <sdeumling@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:12 PM

Mark as unread

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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The very last thing we should be spending scarce funds on in 2020 is more automobile infrastructure. Please, please do not drop the freeway expansion project in Portland, focus on maintaining the infrastructure we have and finding all possible creative ways to incentivize a reduction in automobile use. We ccann (perhaps) save the world from climate change, we just seem to lack the will to actually do it - for 50 years now.

Please reject the Portland freeway expansion project - no more \$ as of today!

Thank you.

Very Sincerely,
Sarah Deumling

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Antonella Mancini <amancini@pdx.edu>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:57 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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DEAR MS. BLACKHORSE,

PLEASE DO NOT ALLOCATE \$160,000.00 MTIP FUNDING TO EXPAND THE I-5 FREEWAY AT THE ROSE QUARTER. ALLOCATING THOSE FUNDS CAN BE INTERPRETED AS A GREENLIGHT TO THE PROJECT, EVEN THOUGH AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY IS STRONGLY CALLED FOR.

THANK YOU,
ANTONELLA MANCINI
SENIOR, CUPA, PSU

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

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Benjamin Thomas <ben@bentomas.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:57 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Now is not the time to be widening our freeways. It will make it impossible to hit our carbon reduction goals. It will not make our streets safer. And it is way over budget and it hasn't even started.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

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BikeLoud PDX <bikeloudpdx@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 4:32 PM

49

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To: Commissioner Eudaly <chloe@portlandoregon.gov>; district3@multco.us; PBOTDirector@portlandoregon.gov; Bob Stacey;

Cc: Pamela Blackhorse;

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📎 1 attachment



BikeLoudPDX
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To: Chloe Eudaly, Portland Commissioner
Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County Commissioner
Chris Warner, Director Bureau of Transportation
Bob Stacey, Metro Councilor 6

Dear Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation Members:

Bike Loud PDX strongly opposes using \$129M funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) to finance consultants and the purchase of property for the I-5 Rose Quarter expansion, especially when ODOT continues to ignore their most deadly roadways. We must reserve MTIP funds for projects that will save lives and address the climate crisis.

Nearly 50 people have died on Portland's roadways last year. None of them were at the I-5 Rose Quarter. \$129M could fund a significant amount of Portland's 2030 Bike Master Plan, which would dramatically reduce our region's carbon emissions and create safe, biking infrastructure for people of all ages and abilities.

The largest source of emissions in Portland are from transportation:nearly 42% in Multnomah County. The climate crisis is an existential crisis, one which will displace millions of people and create water and food shortages throughout the world. Portland must lead by example. We cannot fund a highway expansion and say that our city is tackling the climate crisis. We must use MTIP funds for

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

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bob <bob.gantz@gmx.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:55 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

[Bing Maps](#)[Action Items](#)[+ Get more apps](#)

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Chris said it better than I can:

"It's abhorrent that elected officials claiming to be leaders on climate continue to approve hundreds of millions of dollars of funding for ODOT's climate-destroying freeway slush-fund, paving the way for acquisition of more right-of-way in a neighborhood already devastated by the I-5 freeway."

Can we have some real leadership please?

Bob Gantz

115 NW 22nd Pl
Portland, OR

[External sender]re: MTIP: Public Comment Letter to OTC, I5 Rose Quarter Project

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Brett Morgan <brett@friends.org>

Fri 3/27/2020 4:40 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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Hello,

This letter also serves as comment to MTIP regarding Project #1 Key 19071- the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion.

Thank you,
Brett

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Brett Morgan** <brett@friends.org>

Date: Fri, Mar 27, 2020 at 4:32 PM

Subject: Public Comment Letter to OTC, I5 Rose Quarter Project

To: <OTCAdmin@odot.state.or.us>Cc: Sara Wright <saraw@oeconline.org>

Hello Members of the Oregon Transportation Commission,

Attached you will find a letter signed by several environmental and transportation advocacy groups regarding the I5 Rose Quarter Project.

Please reach out to myself or Sara Wright with Oregon Environmental Council if you have any questions.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Chris Chaplin <chaplin.chris@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 10:59 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

Cc: info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Hello,

I am writing as a concerned citizen asking that you oppose MTIP funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. I understand the desire to facilitate commerce and travel and to eliminate bottlenecks. However, as I'm sure you are aware, we are in the middle of a global climate crisis, and as such we need to act swiftly and boldly, both at the federal and state/local level, to rebuild our energy infrastructure in order to stave off the worst impacts of this crisis. This includes, in part, funding projects that reduce, offset, or replace carbon emissions, and certainly it does NOT include funding projects that *increase* carbon emissions. To do so is to drive another nail into the coffin of our crumbling global ecology and doom future generations to an increasingly bleak reality.

I pray that you will do what is best for people and planet, and not what is most expedient in the very near-term.

Sincerely,
Chris Chaplin
Portland, OR

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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...



Doug Allen <DougAllen@centurylink.net>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:12 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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With regard to "Project #1 Key 19071" in the set of current MTIP amendments, please pass along to the Metro Council my request that any MTIP approval should be conditioned on ODOT and FHWA doing an adequate Environmental Impact Statement prior to moving forward with further engineering, construction, or right-of-way acquisition.

The flawed "Environmental Assessment" was totally inadequate for a project of this magnitude and scope, and did not address the issues that have been brought up repeatedly, not only back in 2012, but actually going back to the "East Marquam Interstate Ramps Project" which failed to examine cumulative impacts on I-5 from continued expansion of capacity. Under NEPA, ODOT's Rose Quarter environmental study should have included past and future cumulative impacts from related projects on I-5, I-84, and I-405, but once again chose not to do so.

The EA shows that ODOT failed to look at a reasonable range of alternatives, including transit and demand management. Of particular note is the fact that the 2017 Oregon Legislature directed the Oregon Transportation Commission to seek FHWA permission, and, to quote from section 120 of HB 2017: "The commission shall implement value pricing... [o]n Interstate 5, beginning at the Washington state line and ending where it intersects with Interstate 205." Yet the EA deliberately chose not to consider "value pricing."

It also appears that ODOT did not even consider any transit alternatives.

As Metro President Lynn Peterson told the OTC in January, it does not pay for ODOT to take the shortcut of attempting to avoid an EIS. I also testified to the OTC in January of the need for an EIS.

Please note that I brought these concerns forward once again on March 6, 2020, this time in public comments to TPAC. During discussion of the MTIP amendment, much further concern was expressed by TPAC members.

Sincerely,
Douglas R. Allen
734 SE 47th Ave.
Portland, OR 97215

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Rose Quarter Funding

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Eric Lindsay <lindsay.eric@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:08 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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Hello,

I write to oppose the approval of any further funds for the I5 Expansion at the Rose Quarter.

It is completely inappropriate to spend funds on this project before an EIS has been commissioned and the community has had time to review same. The response from the community has been overwhelming in its support for an EIS for this project. Metro should head this clear public sentiment. Moreover, moving forward on a huge controversial project while the public is reasonably distracted by the worst public health disaster in many generations feels more than a bit gross. While it may not be the intent or sentiment of our regional leaders, moving forward at this time looks a lot like intentional avoidance of public scrutiny.

Please stop moving forward on this insanely expensive freeway expansion! Perform an EIS, work towards implementing decongestion pricing (tolls) across our regional freeway system, and work towards expanding mass transit.

Thank you,
Eric Lindsay
503-901-9339
4600 SE 33rd Pl, Portland, OR 97202

[External sender]Opposition to rose quarter funding

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eric mandel <ericwrightmandel@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:04 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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Respectfully,

I cannot believe that I have to write another e-mail regarding the rose quarter, but this is what happens when ODOT refuses to conduct an environmental impact statement so that the collective concern about the negative impacts of the rose quarter project, and lack of mitigatants can be addressed. It should be extremely concerning that the majority of the public comments regarding the project are negative and that the the area's citizens feel that they must continuing to send emails to point out ODOT's gross negligence in analysis and seemingly intentional misleading of the public and elected officials. We urge you not to fund any aspect of the rose quarter project until a full EIS has been completed and the mitigants to negative impacts fully incorporated into the project. - Eric Mandel

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Gabrielle Karras <gk2829@hotmail.com>

Sun 3/29/2020 8:27 AM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

 MTIP/STIP

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I have written countless messages to tell Metro as a city - we need to oppose the MTIP Funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion for a couple of significant reasons. Firstly we need to reduce our reliance on cars and invest in alternative transportation instead of building up infrastructure that is carbon intensive. This project will only increase traffic congestion (increasing road capacity does not reduce traffic - this is common knowledge among city planners) and instead of reducing our carbon production, we will increase our carbon footprint and increase pollution in the metro area. This isn't a progressive solution to the climate crisis but it is a denial of it. Shame on you.

Sincerely yours,

Gabrielle

[External sender]Re: Do not fund Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion in MTIP project #1 Key 19071

57

Holly Hagerman <holly@greenrisingmarketing.com>

Sun 3/29/2020 1:26 PM

To: no-more-freeway-expansions@googlegroups.com <no-more-freeway-expansions@googlegroups.com>;

Cc: Pamela Blackhorse <Pamela.Blackhorse@oregonmetro.gov>;

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To Metro Council and JPACT:

I do not believe that **the Rose Quarter Expansion should be funded because we are smarter than that**. Portland can and should find better ways to move people than spending millions on breaking ground and laying concrete.

Please look to Houston, Tx, my hometown as an example of what NOT to do. That city is constantly expanding a highway somewhere, by the time the project goes from a necessity to completion, another expansion is needed. There is no smart infrastructure.

The Rose quarter is a lively connection in our city, it already has mass-transit...build on this. Build on our mass transit options and make polluting, quality-of-life-draining traffic options less desirable. Support green jobs and construction.

Support the governor's plans to reduce greenhouse gasses, and continue the intelligent and innovative spirit that Portland is known for.

HOLLY E. HAGERMAN

Brand Alchemist | Green Rising Marketing
GREENRISINGMARKETING.COM | [FACEBOOK](https://www.facebook.com/greenrisingmarketing)

"Green Rising is deserving of the highest recommendations we at The Sheldon can offer." Carolyn & Bing Sheldon

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Jean Miller <jeanfmiller46@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 12:51 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

MTIP/STIP

Flag for follow up. Start by Friday, March 27, 2020. Due by Friday, March 27, 2020.

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As a decades-long resident of Portland, I oppose the proposed Rose Quarter Expansion Freeway Expansion.because it will surely encourage more traffic, and thus produce more harmful greenhouse gases. I call on JPACT to oppose funding for this project. Our children and grandchildren deserve clean air, and a livable environment.

[External sender]Comment: Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter

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Jessie Maran <jessielucidamaran@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:26 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello Ms Blackhorse,

As our community stays at home, facing illness and financial devastation--and our local and national society faces unprecedented levels of uncertainty and certain change--the need for the Rose Quarter Freeway expansion is an even more uncertain question.

You know that the groundswell of community opposition to this project has been building--we recognize that adding capacity to freeways is climate denial, unjust, and fiscally irresponsible. Take a breath while you still can, conserve our dollars, and lead us to a rational and sustainable future-- do not allocate any funding to Oregon Department of Transportation's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project. (Project #1 Key 19071)

Thank you,
Jessie Maran

[External sender]Comment on proposed funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

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Joseph Cortright <jcortright@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 4:16 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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To Metro Council:

I am submitting this comment on the MTIP. I strongly oppose providing MTIP funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway expansion project (Comment: Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Widening "Project #1 Key 19071")

This project is being pushed forward with inadequate consideration given to traffic, environmental, social and economic concerns. It flies in the face of everything we know about transportation to suggest that a wider freeway is in anyway consistent with the region's (and the state's) stated goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Metro has utterly failed to meet its own targets for reducing greenhouse gases from transportation; Portland area greenhouse gas emissions have increased by 1,000 pounds per person annually in the last four years. This project will only make that worse.

It is farcical to suggest that this project has anything to do with safety. Metro's "State of Safety" report shows that the big killer among ODOT facilities is not this stretch of freeway, but mile after mile of ODOT maintained multi-lane arterials that regularly kill and maim Portland residents. The Metro RTP officially classifies the Rose Quarter Freeway widening as a "minor safety improvement." There's utterly no rationale for spending \$800 million (and likely more) on a road that has no safety problems.

The myriad objections and concerns that I and other citizens have raised about this project have been simply ignored. It is essential that Metro forebear any further action on this project at this time until these objections are fully and fairly answer, with a minimum first step being the completion of a full environmental impact statement.

I've written extensively about the problems of the Rose Quarter Freeway widening project and the errors, misrepresentations and deceptions that have been forwarded to advance it. Please consider the links to the articles presented below as integral parts of my testimony.

Traffic congestion

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Judith Arcana <ja@juditharcana.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 7:43 AM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com; MTIP/STIP

Flag for follow up. Start by Friday, March 27, 2020. Due by Friday, March 27, 2020.

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I'm writing to be counted as one more Portland citizen who is OPPOSED to the Rose Quarter Freeway expansion plan.

I hope you folks are healthy — be well, and help our city, state, and region be well too.

Judith Arcana

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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kat West <katwestpdx@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 8:37 AM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Flag for follow up. Start by Friday, March 27, 2020. Due by Friday, March 27, 2020.

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Please add my voice in opposition to MTIP funding for a project that will increase GHG emissions and negatively impact our community. Thank you for your consideration.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Katharine Ballash <kebcello@gmail.com>

Sat 3/28/2020 9:00 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Please oppose funding the Rose Quarter expansion. We don't need more traffic with the pollution and noise it brings. Instead we could use that money to expand bike lanes and walking paths, to increase light rail, encourage car pooling and work from home options, etc. We could address the issue of moving freight along I-5 by using our rail system again. I am deeply concerned that we are moving backwards in our fight against global warming and air pollution by relying on a project that is very last century. Thanks for reading my comments. Please do not fund this short-sighted and inequitable plan.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter

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Lenny Anderson <lenny@hevanet.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:37 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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Ms. Blackhorse and members of MTIP,

These are dire times and hardly the moment to be investing in last century technology...urban freeways. Please defund the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion project, #1 Key 19071.

Metro should be leading a discussion on the decommissioning of urban freeways and their replacement with high density housing and employment. This is long overdue.

For over a dozen years on Swan Island I led the Swan Island TMA. We successfully moved freight on and off the Island by expanding transportation options for employees...more transit service, better bike and walk connections and vanpools. It works, and it worked in 1997 during the Interstate Bridge closure. Give commuters good options to driving alone, and many will take them!

The obstacle to moving freight is reducing single occupancy vehicles in the peak hours...the solution is not adding roadway capacity which just makes things worse at a huge cost.

Oh yes, we are like happy frogs in rapidly warming water, though it appears we are taking a break right now, though not voluntarily.

Public policy must not only recognized the science of global warming, but must direct funds accordingly. Sadly ODOT and even PBOT are saying one thing and doing another.

Metro must hold up the STOP sign, and MTIP is a good place to start.

Sincerely,

Lenny Anderson

Executive Director (Retired), Swan Island Business Assoc.

Member, Governors' I-5 Task Force, 1999-2002

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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Linda Wysong <lindabluehouse@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 6:09 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Hello,

As a member of the Metro government I am writing asking you to reconsider the funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion. This will only bring more diesel fumes, poor air quality in a city which is already one of the worst. How can we be a livable community if we do not have clean air!

There is a public school nearby. It is entirely unrealistic to ask the students to stay inside at all times - besides how are they goin to travel to school and back?

I lived in the arae for 20 years and the residential population is increasing every day with more housing being added to create housing and density. We should be creating incentives for alternative local travel and consider relocating the interstate freight routes.

Building more lanes will only bring more traffic and more pollution - this has been proven again and again. Why does anyone think it will be different now?

Please stop this ill conceived plan and put our transportation money in a more affection and environmentally pro-active place.

Sincerely,

Linda Wysong

--

Linda M. Wysong

lindabluehouse@gmail.com

7616 N Denver Avenue

Portland, OR 97217

Sean T. Malone
Attorney at Law

66

259 E. Fifth Ave.,
Suite 200-C
Eugene, OR 97401

Tel. (303) 859-0403
Fax (650) 471-7366
seanmalone8@hotmail.com

April 1, 2019

Via Email

I-5 rose Quarter Project
Megan Channell
Major Projects Manager
Oregon Dept. of Transportation
123 NW Flanders Street
Portland OR 97209
(503) 731-3087
info@i5rosequarter.org

Emily Cline
Acting Environmental Manager
Federal Highway Administration
530 Center Street NE
Salem OR 97301
(503) 316-2559
info@i5rosequarter.org

Re: Testimony for I-5 Rose Quarter Project, Environmental Assessment

Please accept this testimony on behalf of No More Freeway Expansions, Aaron Brown, Chris Smith, Joe Cortright, Bob Sallinger, and Sarah Iannarone, regarding the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) (collectively agencies). For roughly one-half of a billion dollars (and likely more when all is said and done), the agencies propose business as usual, by adding lanes to increase capacity¹, under the guise of increasing safety and reliability.

By increasing capacity that will simply be met by additional motorists, the agencies are failing to address the underlying problems of congestion, and this frustrates the intended purpose and need of the project, which include improving safety and reliability. Alternatives exist that address congestion without expanding the highway,

¹ These additional lanes are referred to as “auxiliary lanes” and the project includes new retaining walls, retaining wall tieback anchors, widened roadway prisms, and stormwater and utilities installations; removal of existing local street overcrossings, including demolition activities and new grading; surface street modifications, including new traffic signals and street lighting; and new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

including pricing congestion schemes, which the agencies concede is the single most viable and sustainable approach to reducing traffic congestion. Here, however, the agencies simply refused to consider such an alternative.

The EA is also deeply flawed because the agencies admit that the Columbia River Crossing is part of the EA's baseline (despite the fact that the Columbia River Crossing was terminated in 2014). The obvious problem is that the agency has never accounted for the cumulatively significant effects of the Columbia River Crossing in conjunction with this project. Either the Columbia River Crossing's impacts must be considered in conjunction with this project, or the agencies must remove the Columbia River Crossing from the baseline. In the former scenario, the two projects are cumulatively significant, thus requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); and in the second scenario, the agencies will have to significantly amend their impacts analysis because the transportation data is the basis for the impacts to air quality, climate, noise, and so forth. The agencies cannot have their cake and eat it too by including the Columbia River Crossing into the baseline but never accounting for the significant impacts of the project (as confirmed by the preparation of an EIS for the Columbia River Crossing).²

As demonstrated below the agencies have failed to consider a reasonable range of alternatives, failed to take a hard look at a host of environmental impacts, failed to disclose all relevant data supporting the agencies' conclusions, and failed to disclose the significant impacts of the project (including in addition to other projects), thereby necessitating the preparation of an EIS.

I. The agencies failed to prepare a reasonable range of alternatives

The agencies failed to consider a reasonable range of alternatives. Agencies are required to "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives." 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14(a). The alternatives section is the "heart" of the NEPA document. *Id.* § 1502.14; *see also Kootenai Tribe of Idaho v. Veneman*, 313 F.3d 1094, 1120 (9th Cir. 2002) (agency must "sharply defin[e] the issues and provid[e] a clear basis for choice among options by the decisionmaker and the public."). "NEPA requires that alternatives ... be given full and meaningful consideration,' whether the agency prepares an EA or an EIS." *Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. Nat'l Hwy Traffic Safety Admin.*, 538 F.3d 1172, 1217 (9th Cir. 2008) (quoting *Native Ecosystems Council*, 428 F.3d at 1245). The "touchstone" for the Court's inquiry is whether the "selection and discussion of

² See Environmental Impact Statement, *Interstate 5 Columbia River Crossing Project*.

alternatives fosters informed decision-making and informed public participation.” *Californai v. Block*, 690 F.2d 753, 767 (9th Cir. 1982). Reasonable alternatives are those that are viable, feasible, meet the stated goals of the project, or are reasonably related to the purposes of the project. *Idaho Conservation League v. Mumma*, 956 F.2d 1508, 1519 (9th Cir. 1992). “The existence of a viable but unexamined alternative renders an [EIS] inadequate.” *Citizens for a Better Henderson v. Hodel*, 768 F.2d 1051, 1057 (9th Cir. 1985); *Southeast Alaska Conservation Council v. Federal Highway Administration*, 649 F.3d 1050 (9th Cir. 2011).

Specifically, the agencies failed to consider, in detail, an alternative that would not require an expenditure of funding at the levels proposed here, but the agency limited its analysis to two alternatives – build and no-build. Other fiscally conservative alternatives are also available, and at least one alternative could actually generate revenue.

For example, congestion pricing (also known as value pricing) uses the power of the market to reduce the waste associated with traffic congestion. Congestion pricing recognizes that trips have different values at different times and places and for different individuals. Premium charges during periods of peak demand would encourage road users to eliminate lower-valued trips, take them at a different time, or choose alternative routes or modes of transportation. According to the FHWA, “[t]here is a consensus among economists that congestion pricing represents the single most viable and sustainable approach to reducing traffic congestion.” *Welcome to the FHWA Congestion Pricing Web Site*.³ Moreover, in *Synthesis of Congestion Pricing-Related Environmental Impact Analyses*, FHWA analyzed an Oregon Mileage Fee Concept, and the “[a]nalysts concluded that the premium charged in the peak periods motivated participants to change

³ In *The Efficacy of Congestion Pricing*, Zachary J. Riddler, University of Tennessee, the author lends support to the viability of a successful congestion pricing plan:

“The idea of road pricing is not a new one, but its successful implementation in major metropolitan areas across the world in the last forty years has given considerable support to its application as a useful urban transport policy. From the seminal example of Singapore to the recent developments in London, Milan, Stockholm, and dozens of other cities and towns the trend has been slowly moving towards forcing motorists to internalize the full cost of their decision to drive, and to do so in an equitable manner. The basis of the policy, marginal cost pricing and a congestion charge to move commuters back along the demand line until they reach their willingness to pay, has been more and more rigorously applied, first with area licensing, then with vehicle type, and finally with sophisticated electronic pricing that varies by time and place.”

See also *Congestion Pricing: Examples Around the U.S.*, *Value Pricing by the Numbers*,

the timing of their trips, seek alternate routes outside the congested zone, or use transit more.”⁴

Congestion pricing would not require a costly expansion, and it could also generate revenue. The amount of potential revenue gained in addition to the amount saved by not expending roughly one-half of a billion dollars is unknown because a congestion pricing alternative was never considered. The EA dismisses analysis of a congestion pricing alternative on the basis that it will be considered at a future time. Such an excuse is antithetical to NEPA, which requires reasonable forecasting and consideration of all reasonable alternatives.⁵

Congestion pricing falls squarely within the purpose of the need of the project because a congestion pricing plan is capable of reducing congestion.⁶ Congestion pricing is an effective means to improve the safety and operations on I-5 between I-405 and I-84, of the Broadway/Weidler interchange, and on adjacent streets in the vicinity of the Broadway/Weidler interchange. A congestion pricing plan is also fully capable of enhancing multi-modal facilities in the project area. Congestion is the source of the project needs for safety, reliability, and high traffic operations. Despite the ability to

⁴ This is simply the result of one example of a congestion pricing study in Oregon, and indicates that a congestion pricing plan can be effective.

⁵ In *Scientists' Institute for Public Inf. v. Atomic Energy Comm.*, 481 F.2d 1079 (1973), the Court explained that:

“The agency need not foresee the unforeseeable, but by the same token neither can it avoid drafting an impact statement simply because describing the environmental effects of and alternatives to particular agency action involves some degree of forecasting. And one of the functions of a NEPA statement is to indicate the extent to which environmental effects are essentially unknown. It must be remembered that the basic thrust of an agency's responsibilities under NEPA is to predict the environmental effects of proposed action before the action is taken and those effects fully known. Reasonable forecasting and speculation is thus implicit in NEPA, and we must reject any attempt by agencies to shirk their responsibilities under NEPA by labeling any and all discussion of future environmental effects as ‘crystal ball inquiry.’ ‘The statute must be construed in the light of reason if it is not to demand what is, fairly speaking, not meaningfully possible * * *.’ But implicit in this rule of reason is the overriding statutory duty of compliance with impact statement procedures to ‘the fullest extent possible.’”

⁶ A congestion pricing alternative can be paired with local street improvements, as well as improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

satisfy the purpose and need of the project, the agencies failed to consider such an alternative in detail in violation of NEPA.

The agencies also erred in failing to consider an alternative to close ramps at certain times of the day, allowing traffic to flow without interruption from incoming motorists. Ramp closures have been used to reduce congestion in other cities. Reducing congestion can increase reliability and safety of the of the transportation system. Again, however, the agencies failed to consider an alternative for ramp closures, and, therefore, there is no analysis of how effective closures could be at addressing congestion.

II. The project will not satisfy the project's purpose and need

The agencies' proposal is short-sighted because the capacity created by the project will, in the short- and long-term, be filled by additional motorists, thereby creating even greater congestion. This undermines the purpose and need for the project. Specifically, if congestion becomes worse as a result of the project, then safety and reliability will not improve. Because the effect of the project will undermine the project's purpose and need, the project violates NEPA.

III. The agencies misconstrued the baseline by including projects that are not part of the baseline and are not past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions

The EA fails to take a hard look at the environmental baseline. "Without establishing the baseline conditions ..., there is simply no way to determine what effect the [project] will have on the environment and, consequently, no way to comply with NEPA." *Half Moon Bay Fisherman's Mktg v. Carlucci*, 857 F.2d 505 (9th Cir. 1988); *Am. Rivers v. FERC*, 201 F.3d 1186, 1195 n. 15 (9th Cir. 1999) (the establishment of a "baseline is not an independent legal requirement, but rather, a practical requirement in environmental analysis often employed to identify the environmental consequences of a proposed agency action."); *N. Plains Res. Council v. Surface Transp. Bd.*, 668 F.3d 1067, 1084 (9th Cir. 2011). The failure to accurately represent the baseline skews the alternatives and the impacts analysis.

The agencies arbitrarily included a host of projects in the baseline that contain no analysis as to whether they are, in fact, past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects. More surprisingly, the agencies included one project that was terminated and may never be proposed again. For example, the Columbia River Crossing – a controversial \$ 3 billion project – was assumed as part of the baseline. The Columbia River Crossing, however, was scrapped in 2014 and there is currently no plan moving forward for the Columbia River Crossing. The agencies cannot simply assume that the Columbia River

Crossing is part of the baseline when it has not yet been constructed or even approved. If the agencies consider the Columbia River Crossing as a reasonably foreseeable project (because it cannot be a past or present project and therefore should not be part of the baseline), then the agencies must account for the cumulative effects of the Columbia River Crossing project and the I-5 Rose Quarter project. The agencies cannot have their cake and eat it too – the agencies must either remove the Columbia River Crossing from the baseline (and redo the analysis of the project) or include it as a reasonably foreseeable action, in which case the effects to the human environment will unequivocally be significant, thereby requiring an EIS.⁷ Either way, the current EA is inadequate and violates NEPA.

Finally, it appears that one reason the Columbia River Crossing was included in the baseline is that the Columbia River Crossing is irrevocably bound up with the current project. That is, the project lacks “independent utility,” and, therefore, the two projects are connected actions, cumulatively significant actions, or similar actions that must be considered in a single NEPA document. *See* 40 C.F.R. 1508.25(a).

IV. The agencies failed to take a hard look at, disclose, and consider the cumulative impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions

The agencies failed to take a hard look at the cumulative effects of the project. NEPA requires federal agencies to analyze and disclose the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts, including cumulative impacts, of “major federal actions,” 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C), regardless of “what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other action.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.7. “Cumulative impacts” result from the “incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions” and can “result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.” *Id.* The Ninth Circuit has opined that an agency must assess cumulative effects of actions outside of the agency’s control in the context of climate change impacts. *Ctr. for Biol. Diversity v. Nat’l Highway Traffic Safety Admin.*, 538 F.3d 1172, 1217 (9th Cir. 2008).

⁷ Because an EIS was prepared for the Columbia River Crossing, there should be no dispute that adding the significant effects of the Columbia River Crossing to this project will result in a significant effect, which means that the agencies should have prepared an EIS for this project.

An EA must “provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether” a project will have a significant impact on the environment. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.9(a)(1). “The analysis ‘must be more than perfunctory; it must provide a useful analysis of the cumulative impacts of past, present, and future projects.’ *Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Ctr. v. BLM*, 387 F.3d 989, 994 (9th Cir. 2004) (citations omitted). Furthermore, “[g]eneral statements about ‘possible’ effects and ‘some risk’ do not constitute a ‘hard look’ absent a justification regarding why more definitive information could not be provided.” *Neighbors of Cuddy Mountain v. U.S. Forest Serv.*, 137 F.3d 1372, 1380 (9th Cir. 1998). Importantly, “some quantified or detailed information is required. Without such information, neither the courts nor the public, in reviewing [the agency’s] decisions, can be assured that the [agency] provided the hard look that it is required to provide.” *Id.* at 1379. “Given that so many more EAs are prepared than EISs, *adequate consideration of cumulative effects requires that EAs address them fully.*” *Kern v. BLM*, 284 F.3d 1062, 1076 (9th Cir. 2002) (emphasis in original).

As noted above, the agencies included the Columbia River Crossing in the baseline for the project. The agencies, however, have never accounted for the admittedly significant effects of the Columbia River Crossing.⁸ Because the Columbia River Crossing was terminated in 2014, there is simply no reason to include it in the baseline – and similarly no reason to include it as a past or present action under the cumulative impacts analysis. The Columbia River Crossing should have been assessed under the cumulative impacts section of the EA to determine whether it is a reasonably foreseeable action.⁹ Once the agencies establish that a future project is reasonably foreseeable, then the agencies must disclose the cumulative impacts of the project and the Columbia River Crossing. The agencies attempt to include the Columbia River Crossing in the baseline without ever appropriately accounting for the admittedly significant environmental impacts.

V. The agencies failed to take a hard look at the direct and indirect effects of the construction phase of the project

NEPA’s procedural requirements require agencies to take a hard look at the environmental consequences of their actions. A hard look includes “considering all foreseeable direct and indirect impacts.” *Idaho Sporting Congress v. Rittenhouse*, 305 F.3d 957, 973 (9th Cir. 2002). A hard look requires agencies to “undertake a thorough environmental analysis before concluding that no significant impact exists.” *Native*

⁸ See Environmental Impact Statement, *Interstate 5 Columbia River Crossing Project*

⁹ The same is true of the host of impacts included in the baseline.

Ecosystems Council v. U.S. Forest Serv., 428 F.3d 1233, 1239 (9th Cir. 2005). An adequate EA must consider both direct and indirect environmental impacts of the proposed action. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place as the proposed project. *Id.* § 1508.8(a). Indirect effects are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. *Id.* § 1508.8(a).

The agencies repeatedly dismiss construction impacts based on the allegation that such impacts will be “short-term.” Other than that vague disclosure, the agencies have not disclosed the estimated amount of time – whether months or years – that it would take to implement the project. Because this project is one-half of a billion dollars, it is not unreasonable to expect construction to take years. There are also a host of construction-related impacts, including air and noise pollution from construction equipment, that have not been disclosed or analyzed. This is important because the construction would be occurring immediately adjacent to parks and schools. It also important to understanding what type of impacts construction would have on existing congestion. In all likelihood, a lengthy construction project, such as this, will exacerbate congestion. The agencies, however, have not taken the requisite hard look at the environmental impacts of the construction-related activities.

Moreover, the Bicycle Master Plan and Climate Action Plan for the city call for increasing bicycle mode share to 25% by 2030, which means that the city will have to double bicycle mode share in the corridor at issue here and triple bicycle ride share city-wide within the next decade. Depending on the length of the construction (as well as their impacts), which remain undisclosed, it is possible that the construction could frustrate the Bicycle Master Plan and Climate Action Plan. Exacerbating the problem is that the project area is home to the most bicycle-friendly neighborhoods in the City, allowing access to the center of the city.

VI. The agencies failed to take a hard look at induced demand/travel and increased capacity

The agencies largely ignore the simple fact that the project would add capacity to the existing highway, and that the capacity would soon be filled by “induced demand,” the notion that increasing roadway capacity encourages more people to drive, thus failing to improve congestion¹⁰. Indeed, despite proposing to spend one-half of a billion dollars

¹⁰ “Nearly all freeway expansions and new highways are sold to the public as a means of reducing traffic congestion.... But that’s not what always happens once these projects

to widen the highway, the agencies have denied the possibility that the project will increase capacity: “the Build Alternative would not create new capacity or add substantial capacity to the existing highway.” EA at 26. Regardless of whether the project purports to focus on safety and reliability, the effect of the project is to increase capacity of the highway. Ironically and in apparent contradiction to numerous allegations in the EA and supporting documents, the agencies concede that the highway is operating at or near capacity. As history has demonstrated time and time again with attempts to widen highways in an effort to reduce congestion, increased capacity will soon be filled with additional cars. *See Los Angeles v. FAA*, 138 F.3d 806 (9th Cir. 1998) (“Other cases involve highways and bridges, where increases in capacity more directly affect usage.”).¹¹ Here, the agencies have not explained – much less addressed – whether induced demand will occur as a result of the project, and, if so, then the agencies must reconcile that with the purpose and need of the project because congestion is the source for the issues surrounding safety and reliability. If the agencies do not anticipate induced demand, then the agencies must explain how this project is different than the many projects where induced demand did occur. As of yet, there is no explanation supporting the agencies’ rationale.

Apart from increasing capacity on the highway itself, the EA also increases the capacity of the built-environment by converting 2.5 miles of land and creating 81,626 square feet to be dedicated to commercial uses. Whether the “lids” will allow commercial or residential uses is a significant consideration that has gone unanalyzed. Creating new urban land has a host of impacts that accompany such development, and would be, in and of itself, a prime example of increased capacity for the urban environment. It can only be assumed that such capacity would be filled by commercial or residential uses, likely increasing congestion even more. Most recently, representatives for ODOT considered placing two-story buildings on the lids, but the EA contains no analysis of the effects of such a proposal. Not only must the agencies provide a clear understanding of whether the “lids” will be buildable but the agencies must also provide a coherent street-level vision for what is proposed. NEPA is not a piecemeal exercise where the agencies can present a moving target. If the agencies are going to include

are completed.” *CityLab University: Induced Demand*. Indeed, the “Law of Peak Hour Traffic Congestion” states that “on urban commuter expressways, peak-hour traffic congestion rises to meet maximum capacity.”

¹¹ *See What’s Up With That: Building Bigger Roads Actually Makes Traffic Worse, Wired; The Science is Clear: More Freeways Equals More Traffic; CityLab University: Induced Demand*.

urban development atop the “lids,” then that is a significant consideration that must be addressed, not just in an EA, but a full EIS.

VII. The agencies failed to take a hard look at visual resources

The agencies failed to take a hard look at visual resources because the agencies failed to analyze visual resources at all. The project will expand a portion of a I-5, but fails to account for the visual impacts – both short- and long-term – from construction and the permanency of a widened highway. There is no consensus that the public believes the project will only provide beneficial effects to visual resources. Not only is that not the case, but even if it were, NEPA requires that the agency disclose the beneficial effects of the project, as well as the adverse effects. Regardless, a widened highway in an area that has historically suffered from urban renewal projects affects the visual aesthetics and resources of the area in a meaningful manner that is simply being ignored. NEPA requires more.

VIII. The agencies failed to take a hard look at the transportation data relied on as the basis for impacts to air quality, noise impacts, carbon emissions, and traffic volumes

The transportation data provided to the public for comment on the project fails to provide the public with the information necessary to challenge the agency’s conclusions regarding transportation impacts, air quality impacts, impacts to climate, and so forth. This serves to undermine the accuracy of the baseline and the impacts analysis. For example, one of the most fundamental components to any traffic-related analysis is the “average daily traffic.” Without this data, the agencies have not provided the public with enough data to challenge the agency’s conclusions and determine the accuracy of the agency’s conclusions for traffic, noise, pollution and carbon emission levels, contrary to NEPA’s basic requirements.

The agencies also failed to adequately disclose the transportation networks, and, therefore, the set of road and intersections and estimates of their capacity that will form the basis for modeled computations remains a mystery. Obscuring this information is contrary to NEPA’s basic disclosure requirements, and the inflated data serves only to skew the actual environmental impacts.

As noted in other comments, the agencies have taken an anomalous approach to projections than for other similarly situated and contemporaneously prepared projects. Furthermore, static trip assignment modeling produces exaggerated “no-build” traffic. This serves to overstate congestion benefits and emission savings under the “build”

alternative. The agencies have also not revealed the methodology, assumptions, or inputs used to generate its forecasts. Again, this basic information is necessary to gain a reasonably clear understanding of the effects to the project. Other errors, as provided in other comments, indicate that the agencies engaged in improper extrapolation, the manual addition of trips, inconsistencies with modeling for noise and pollution.

These failures are not insignificant under NEPA, and the failure to include enough sufficient information, explain the agency methodology, and then follow that methodology is a necessary component of informed decision-making. *See 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc. v. US DOT*, case no. 11-C-0545 (May 22, 2015) (“the defendants have not explained how they applied their methodology to Highway 23 in a way that is sufficient for either the court or the plaintiff to understand how they arrived at their specific projections of traffic volumes through the year 2035”); *1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc. v. US DOT*, case no. 11-C-0545 (April 29, 2016) (“the traffic projections used in the impact statement’s evaluation of reasonable alternatives were not produced through a reasoned application of WisDOT’s stated methodology”). The agencies have, accordingly, violated NEPA.

IX. The agencies failed to take a hard look at environmental justice issues surrounding the project

In the section regarding Environmental Justice, the EA claims that the project would restore connectivity between neighborhoods separated with I-5 was originally constructed. The agency also states that the project would provide economic opportunities for local, and minority-owned businesses, in the historically Black neighborhoods impacted in the past. The agencies state in the assessment that “[w]hile EJ populations in the API may experience some small adverse impacts during construction and operation of the Build Alternative, none of these impacts are expected to rise to the level of “disproportionately high and adverse effects” as defined in Executive Order 12898.”

Case law, however, notes that:

“All projects involving a federal action—funding, permit issuance, or land development—must comply with Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (Feb. 11, 1994), which directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse

effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations.”

*Bitters v. Fed. Highway Admin.*¹² The EA, however, ignores the environmental health impacts on the communities impacted by the project. The population within the project area is predominantly white; however, a substantial number of Black residents live within the area. The percentage of Black residents within the project area is higher than the percentage of Black residents living in the City of Portland and the Portland metropolitan area. The Albina community was home to nearly half of Portland’s people of color and held “only 13 percent of the county’s population, yet receives 55 percent of its hazardous air emissions.”¹³ Hazardous air emissions could increase in the area if more cars were to use the freeway after the project is completed. Those emissions could disproportionately affect a community in Portland that is home to a large percentage of the city’s Black residents. Moreover, while the agencies allege that the impacts will be small, the agencies have not disclosed the degree or length of those impacts.

X. The agencies must prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

NEPA requires agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) when a major federal action is proposed that may significantly affect the quality of the environment. 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C), 40 C.F.R. § 1501.4(a)(1). An EIS is a “detailed written statement” that “provide[s] full and fair discussion of significant environmental impacts and shall inform decisionmakers and the public of the reasonable alternatives which would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the quality of the human environment.” 40 C.F.R. §§ 1508.11 and 1502.1. To determine whether an action will significantly affect the environment (and thus require the preparation of an EIS), the regulations direct agencies to prepare an EA. 40 C.F.R. §§ 1501.4(b), 1508.9.

An EIS must be prepared if an agency action may significantly affect the human environment.¹⁴ Significance is measured according to a project’s context and intensity, including ten (10) separate criteria, and any single criterion or combination of criteria can

¹² *Bitters v. Fed. Highway Admin.*, No. 114CV01646KJMSMS, 2016 WL 159216, at *8 (E.D. Cal. Jan. 13, 2016)

¹³ Oregon Environmental Council, *Drop by Drop: Voluntary Reductions in Diesel Emissions from Stationary Sources* (2007), page 2.

¹⁴ An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared if “substantial questions are raised as to whether a project . . . may cause significant degradation of some human environmental factor. *Ocean Advocates v. U.S. Army Corps of Egn’rs*, 402 F.3d 846, 864 (9th Cir. 2005).

render a project significant, under NEPA. Apart from the factors set forth below, the project's price tag is indicative of its significance, and it is simply not possible for the agencies to conclude this process with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

A. The project is significant because it cause significant adverse environmental impacts

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(1) because the project may result in significant adverse environmental impacts. As explained throughout this comment letter, the project will have a significant adverse effect on the human environment. Much of the necessary information has been withheld and therefore restricts the public's ability to challenge the agencies' decisions. However, there is no dispute that air pollution studies show that living close to high traffic areas and the associated emissions may lead to adverse health effects beyond those associated with regional air pollution in urban areas.¹⁵ Many of these epidemiological studies focus on children, and some studies identify an association between living or attending school near heavily traveled roadways and adverse non-cancer health effects. These studies have reported associations between residential proximity to high traffic roadways and a variety of respiratory symptoms, asthma exacerbations, and decreases in lung function in children.¹⁶

The agencies acknowledge that short-term release of small particulate emissions and exhaust emissions during construction would impact air quality. The demolition of existing concrete structures would also impact air quality, but the agency states that these impacts on air quality would be temporary. This could be months or even years, and the agency may not obscure the significance of the project with such vague terms.

The agencies claim that air quality in the Project Area is expected to improve over the next 25 years as a result of tighter emissions standards and regional efforts to control emissions. Other than generalities, the agencies are not candid about the certainty of tighter emissions, and, for that reason, the agency must also present an analysis of anticipated impacts in the event tighter emissions standards and regional efforts are not successful. The EA concludes that air quality would be slightly improved under the Build Alternative due to higher speeds, less stop-and-go traffic, and less idling on I-5. The agency does not, however, take into consideration the potential effect of more cars

¹⁵ California Air Resources Board, *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (2005), page 8.

¹⁶ *Id.*

using the freeway (which is historically the case) and that subsequent impact on the environment. The agency is simply assuming that the expansion project would improve air quality due to an assumed decrease in congestion, instead of analyzing the potential for congestion to continue or worsen. That analysis would have been relevant and significant because of the effects that air pollutants from freeway use have on the surrounding environment.

As mentioned by the agencies in their EA, the transportation sector is a leading contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Because GHG emissions have been identified as a primary cause of climate change effects, any potential decrease in these emissions would be expected to support emission–reduction efforts intended to reduce future climate–related impacts.

The agencies conclude that the indirect GHG emissions effects of the proposed project would be minor and reduce the amount of GHG emissions due to higher speeds, less stop-and-go traffic, and less idling on I-5. Again, the agencies make these assumptions based on their belief that the project would be successful at reducing congestion and speeding up traffic. Should the project achieve its goals of having cars go faster, there could still be high levels of GHG emissions. “When vehicles travel at much higher speeds, they demand very high engine loads, which require more fuel, and which therefore lead to high CO₂ emission rates.”¹⁷ Should the project not achieve its goals, more cars using and stalling on the freeway would add to the GHG emissions that are contributing to man-made climate change.

Large reductions in GHG emissions are required to mitigate global climate change. The agencies proposed no other mitigation efforts other than reiterating the state’s continued emphasis on stringent fuel economy standards, vehicle inspection and maintenance programs. It is timely that the agencies rely on emissions standards when the federal government has actually decided to rollback vehicle emissions standards. When time is of the essence, as it is now with climate change, it is arbitrary and irresponsible to allow a project that could further GHG emissions to move forward with no concrete mitigation efforts.

Finally, the agencies’ assumption that the project will decrease congestion, and thereby decrease pollutants stemming from the widened freeway, is unsupported by

¹⁷ Barth, M. & Boriboonsomsin, K. (2004). Traffic Congestion and Greenhouse Gases, *ACCESS Magazine*, 1(35), 6.

research and examples in Houston and Los Angeles. As capacity increases, congestion increases to fill the newly created capacity.

All other comments are incorporated herein as they relate to the significant adverse environmental impacts of the project.

B. The project is significant because it will increase environmental impacts associated with public health and safety

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(2) because the project will increase the adverse environmental impacts associated with public health and safety. While the project proposes to increase safety, the project will jeopardize the safety of children and staff at the Harriet Tubman middle school by widening the highway immediately adjacent to the school and increasing the capacity of the highway to accommodate greater traffic loads. That traffic will, in turn, create more of the same air pollution complained of now. There is no dispute that proximity to highways will inform the degree of pollution¹⁸, and it is also undisputed that the highway will be expanded closer to the middle school and parks.

As stated above, epidemiological studies focusing on children have identified an association between living or attending school near heavily traveled roadways and adverse non-cancer health effects. The agencies do not discuss the project's effect on public health or safety as it relates to air quality in the EA. The agency acknowledges that Harriet Tubman Middle School is within the area that may be impacted by air quality changes, but concludes that "trends indicate that current concentrations of these pollutants, including in the vicinity of Harriet Tubman Middle School, will continue to decline over time as more restrictive tailpipe emission standards are implemented. Because direct impacts on air quality from the Build Alternative are expected to be low and to continue to decline in the future, long-term indirect air pollution effects from implementation of the Build Alternative are not anticipated." Here, the agency does not take into consideration the impact of more cars using the highway and their emissions on

¹⁸ "What people are exposed to is influenced by their proximity to the sources, the presence of other ambient or microenvironmental sources, and time-activity patterns. If, as the evidence suggests, groups of lower socioeconomic status experience higher exposures than groups of higher socioeconomic status, this merits consideration in the interpretation of epidemiologic findings and in future regulatory." *Traffic-Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects: A Special Report of the HEI Panel on the Health Effects of Traffic-Related Air Pollution.*

the health of the communities near the highway, instead relying on the promise that restrictive tailpipe emissions will be enough to impact air quality, during a time when the federal government has promised to rollback car emissions standards. Indeed, the agencies are relying on a tighter emissions standard in the future when such a determination is largely a political issue. As such, it is arbitrary to rely upon mitigation measures that are not certain to occur.

Moreover, as stated elsewhere, the percentage of Black residents within the project area is higher than the percentage of Black residents living in the City of Portland and the Portland metropolitan area. The concentration of Black Americans living along freeways is higher than low-income and any other minority with a concentration 2-3 times higher than the general population within the Urban Growth Boundary.¹⁹ The increased risk of exposure to toxic pollutants for communities of color in Albina is also supported by a 2011 report by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) that found elevated levels of air toxins in census groups with higher densities of black, Asian, and Hispanic families.²⁰ The project may exacerbate the amount of toxic pollutants in the air from freeway emissions, and further affect minority communities in the area.

The agencies acknowledge that in Oregon, climate change is expected to cause extreme heat and precipitation events to occur more frequently. Expected climate change effects identified for the Willamette Valley include declining snowpack, earlier snowmelt, and greater summer water demand. These effects are anticipated to create potential issues from water scarcity and wildfires. Oregonians must handle increased public health effects including smoke-associated asthma and the arrival of formerly tropical diseases along with their insect carriers. Local governments are anticipating more frequent flooding of country roads and city streets. All of these climate change impacts can affect public health and safety. Because the transportation sector is a leading contributor to GHG emissions, the agency should be taking serious efforts to mitigate the effect that their proposed project would have on climate change. However, the agency does not do so in their environmental assessment. Instead, the agency relies on the assumption that their project will achieve its goal of reducing congestion. This assumption could be detrimental to an environment already suffering from the impacts of climate change.

¹⁹ McCord, Lindsay E., "Parting the Green Curtain: Tracing Environmental Inequality in Portland, Oregon" (2016). *Pitzer Senior Theses*. Paper 72. Page 27.

²⁰ *Id.*

C. The project is significant because the project will significantly affect unique characteristics of the geographic area

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(3) because the project will significantly affect unique characteristics of the geographic area. Not only is Harriet Tubman middle school located immediately adjacent to the Project but the project will increase the proximity of the highway to the middle school. The agencies concede – as they must – that the Harriet Tubman Middle School has “important historical significance to the Black community in Portland, and its current enrollment includes a substantial number of students with color.” The school lies in close proximity to I-5, only a little over 50 feet from the freeway. In an air quality monitoring report, scientists from Portland State University identified the school’s proximity to the heavily trafficked highway as an air pollution risk. The study conducted by the scientists at PSU states that “While EPA School Air Toxics Project measured numerous chemicals associated with vehicle exhaust and concluded that none of the measured vehicular air toxins were above the level of concern, this approach to assessing risk from freeway emissions is problematic.”²¹ ODOT takes a similar approach as the EPA by stating that “Emissions of NAAQS criteria pollutants under the Build Alternative would also be low and are not expected to exceed NAAQS ambient air quality standards.”²²

The study concludes that the school is heavily impacted by highway emissions. Even though the criteria pollutants are below National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), the air pollutants are elevated compared to other areas in Portland. In the end, the study recommends that student outdoor activities be limited at the school, especially during high traffic periods. The study claims that methods for reducing local outdoor urban air pollution levels are unlikely to reduce levels of air pollutants to values below urban background levels or Ambient Benchmark Concentrations. As stated above, the agency acknowledges that Harriet Tubman Middle School is within the area that may be impacted by air quality changes, but fails to consider the impact that air pollution has on this cultural institution.

The proposed project area is also home to a number of notable Black-owned businesses and civic organizations. Billy Webb Elks Lodge, a property associated with Black history in NE Portland, is in the project area and is pending nomination for the National Register of Historic Places. The Urban League of Portland, one of the Portland

²¹ Gall, Elliott T., et al., Indoor and outdoor air quality at Harriet Tubman Middle School and the design of mitigation measures: Phase 1 report (2018), page 7.

²² I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, Environmental Assessment (2019), page 27.

Black community's principal advocacy and service organizations, is located in the project area.

The agencies have acknowledged the presence of these properties in the project area, and has even conducted outreach to the community in those areas, but the agency does not consider how those populations frequenting these culturally significant places will be impacted by the environmental harms that could be caused by the increased emissions, noise, and so forth from the project.

Oregon is already seeing the effects of climate change – from wildfires to drought to rising ocean temperatures. As stated above, expected climate change effects identified for the Willamette Valley include declining snowpack, earlier snowmelt, and greater summer water demand. These effects are anticipated to create potential issues from water scarcity and wildfires. Oregon's Mt. Hood could see declining snowpack due to climate change and GHG emissions. Wildfires and water scarcity could impact some of Oregon's park lands, farmlands, and rivers. This project's investment in transportation, which has already been identified as a leading contributor to GHG emissions, shows that the agencies would rather risk the possibility worsening GHG emissions rather than making proven efforts to reduce emissions and lessen the impact of climate change on the Willamette Valley. Research has shown that congestion mitigation through ramp metering, incident management, and congestion pricing are more likely to reduce GHG emissions.²³ The agency does not consider any of these alternatives in their environmental assessment.

D. The project is significant because the effects to the project are highly controversial

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(4) because the effects to the project are highly controversial. As shown in other comments, the agencies' analysis of air quality, transportation impacts, noise impacts, climate emissions, and so forth are contingent upon the transportation modeling, much of which has been kept from the public's scrutiny. The project implicates significant scientific controversies as it relates to the agencies' modeling. Because the impacts of the project are contingent upon an accurate baseline, the scientific controversy here requires more analysis and vetting in the form of an EIS.

²³ Barth, M. & Boriboonsomsin, K. (2004). Traffic Congestion and Greenhouse Gases, ACCESS Magazine, 1(35), 9.

The agencies base their assumption that air quality will improve in the area of the project on decreased congestion and reduction in automobile emissions. However, the agency has not shown that the project will definitively reduce congestion. In contrast, studies have shown that expansion projects across the country have failed to reduce congestion and could actually make it worse.²⁴ In other words, the agencies have not squarely addressed the scientific controversy over induced demand. Because much of the project is premised on an assumption that the congestion will be remedied, despite the many examples to the contrary, the controversial issue of induced demand must be analyzed and vetted in a full EIS. The agency failed to adequately consider alternatives other than not building the expansion that could reduce air pollution, such as congestion pricing.²⁵

E. The project is significant because the effects on the human environment are highly uncertain.

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(5) because the effects on the human environment are highly uncertain. For the same reasons set forth in 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(4). The project's actual effects, as well as the baseline are shrouded in uncertainty because the agencies have either failed to provide pertinent data, information, assumptions, etc., or the agencies have simply misconstrued – whether intentionally or not – pertinent information that allows the public to understand the effects of the project.

It is highly uncertain whether the project will have disproportionate environmental impacts on the Black community because the agency did not consider those impacts in its analysis. The agency states on page 39 of the EA that “[w]hile EJ populations in the API may experience some small adverse impacts during construction and operation of the Build Alternative, none of these impacts are expected to rise to the level of ‘disproportionately high and adverse effects’ as defined in Executive Order 12898.” However, the agency does not disclose their reasoning for concluding that the impacts are not expected to rise to that level, stating only that “the Project would provide notable beneficial effects” for the community living and working in the proposed project area. Instead, the agency focused on connectivity in the community, not taking into

²⁴ Duranton, Gilles, and Matthew A. Turner. 2011. "The Fundamental Law of Road Congestion: Evidence from US Cities." *American Economic Review*, 101 (6): 2616-52.

²⁵ “As vehicle exhaust represents a huge share of urban pollution, congestion charging offers a method of reducing total travel miles, increasing travel speed and reducing pollution.” Green, Colin P. et al., “Did the London Congestion Charge Reduce Pollution?” *Lancaster University Management School, Economics Working Paper Series 2018/007*, page 19.

consideration the effects that the emissions from the vehicles on the freeway could have on members of the community. Moreover, the transportation data is obscured and incomplete, and fails to provide the public the opportunity to challenge, vet, and understand the agencies' conclusions. Without that data, the agencies' conclusions are unsupported, baseless conclusions.

The agencies assume that the expansion project will cause congestion to decrease. Their assumption led them to conclude that air quality would improve. However, the agencies have not definitively shown that the project will cause automobiles to go faster, that the emissions regulations will achieve their goals, or that there will be less stalling on the freeway. Indeed, there is a great deal of information that suggests the widened highway will operate at capacity in only a short amount of time after construction is complete.

Because of these assumptions, the environmental effects of the project are uncertain. The students of Harriet Tubman have already been instructed not to play outside during high traffic times. The increased use of the highway following an expansion could cause the students even more exposure to air pollutants. The project would also expand closer to the Lillis-Albina Park, where children use the playground, baseball, and soccer fields. That increased exposure to air pollutants could cause a variety of respiratory symptoms, asthma exacerbations, and decreases in lung function, given their close proximity to the freeway.

It is uncertain how climate change will continue to impact the Willamette Valley. It is also uncertain that the proposed project will reduce GHG emissions. What is certain is that transportation is a large source of GHG emissions and therefore a leading contributor to global climate change.²⁶

In the EA, the agencies acknowledge transportation's contribution to climate change, and assumes that the project would contribute to a reduction in emissions. However, it is uncertain that their method of tackling congestion will achieve its goals and therefore reduce emissions.

Reports have stated that the planet has until about 2030 to reduce GHG emissions before climate change wrecks irreversible havoc. The proposed project would start in 2023 and last about 4-5 years. By 2028, there would only be two years left to combat climate change. The numbers included in a chart by the agencies show only a slight

²⁶ Barth, M. & Boriboonsomsin, K. (2004). Traffic Congestion and Greenhouse Gases, ACCESS Magazine, 1(35), 2.

decrease in annual GHG emissions. That estimated slight decrease does not justify the cost of the project and its uncertain effects on the environment. Moreover, the alleged decrease is uncertain in and of itself given the effect of induced demand to fill the increased capacity created by the project.

- F. The project is significant because the project may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects.

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(6) because the project may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects. As demonstrated in these comments, the agencies have inexplicably included the \$ 3 billion Columbia River Crossing Project²⁷, and, if this project is approved as an EA and assumes the existence of the Columbia River Cross Project, then the Columbia River Crossing, if it is ever actually re-initiated, may be considered as insignificant under NEPA. The effect of such a determination now would allow the relevant agencies to advocate for an EA, as opposed to an EIS. The problem here, however, is that the agencies have not accounted for the environmental impacts associated with the Columbia River Crossing in conjunction with the current project.

Moreover, if the agencies are allowed to expand a highway in an area that has already been negatively impacted by the construction of the freeway, the agencies might also propose to develop this same type of project in other communities suffering from the detrimental effects of past public infrastructure projects. The project could also allow the agencies to build or expand freeways close to more schools like Harriet Tubman Middle School. “Enrollment at Tubman has traditionally been more diverse than other schools in the District. The current enrollment of 491 students is 40.5 percent African American and 14.9 percent Latinx, and 73.5 percent of the students are considered historically underserved. The District-wide averages by comparison are 16.3 percent and 8.9 percent for Latinx and African American enrollment with 49 percent considered historically underserved.”²⁸ Children are particularly vulnerable to air pollutants given their size and development, and can develop a number of health issues resulting from exposure to air pollutants. To essentially treat the students of Harriet Tubman Middle School as guinea pigs in their quest to reduce traffic, the agencies would be setting an unfair and unjust precedent that could put hundreds of children at risk. By imposing these impacts upon

²⁷ ODOT Used Long Dead I-5 Bridge Replacement Plan Rose Quarter Upgrade, March 26, 2019, Oregon Public Broadcasting.

²⁸ Portland Public Schools, Comments Submitted by Portland Public Schools on the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Environmental Assessment (2019).

students of color at Harriet Tubman Middle School, the agencies would be setting an unfair and unjust precedent that could put hundreds of children at risk.

If the agencies are allowed to expand a freeway, knowing that transportation is already a leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, the agency might propose similar expansions in other areas of the state. Relying on the assumption that adding lanes to increase car and truck mobility will reduce GHG emissions may establish a precedent for future project proposals. To construct large transportation projects that could further increase GHG emissions would be setting an unfair and unjust precedent that could put the entire region and planet at risk.

G. The project is significant because the project will result in cumulatively significant impacts in relation to other actions

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(7) because the agencies have irrevocably misconstrued the project's cumulative impacts²⁹. As noted above, a significant problem with the project is that it assumes that a speculative project, the Columbia River Crossing, is a part of the baseline. Because the Columbia River Crossing has not yet been approved, the agencies are essentially alleging – without disclosing the impacts – that the Columbia River Crossing is a reasonably foreseeable action. The obvious shortcoming is that the agencies have not yet disclosed the effects of the Columbia River Crossing in conjunction with the project. For the Columbia River Crossing, an EIS was prepared and if the agencies are to assume that a significant project such as the Columbia River Crossing is a reasonably foreseeable action in conjunction with this project, then there can be no dispute that the cumulative effects of this project are also significant. In other words, when the Columbia River Crossing, in which it was conceded that the project had significant environmental impacts, is combined with the impacts of the present project, there can only be a significant environmental impact.

As discussed above, the proposed project could worsen environmental health hazards in the project area. North and Northeast Portland residents concerned with industrial odors and air quality account for nearly one-third of ODEQ's complaints.³⁰ According to a community survey conducted by the Environmental Justice Action Group

²⁹ 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(7) also counsels that “[s]ignificance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.”

³⁰ McCord, Lindsay E., "Parting the Green Curtain: Tracing Environmental Inequality in Portland, Oregon" (2016). *Pitzer Senior Theses*. Paper 72. Page 27-28.

and the Oregon Environmental Council in Albina, the highest reported health concern in the community is asthma caused by diesel pollution.³¹ These concerns rise out of disproportionate air pollution affecting the Albina neighborhoods.³² Vehicle exhaust ranks highest in North Portland, followed by smoke from outdated wood stoves, industrial activity and construction. Motorized lawn and garden care is also a big contributor to air pollution in the area.³³ These combined factors contribute to the discrepancies faced by the community in the proposed project area. A 2011 report by the ODEQ found elevated levels of air toxins in census groups with higher densities of black, Asian, and Hispanic families.³⁴ The current project proposed by ODOT could exacerbate the amount of toxic pollutants in the air from freeway emissions, and further affect minority communities in the area.

The Project also has the potential to marginally accelerate the ongoing displacement of Black and low-income residents from the neighborhood north of Broadway and east of I-5 as a result of gentrification. The agency states this potential for gentrification acceleration in their technical report. The agency states that “this effect would be small compared to other factors that are driving gentrification in the area, including rapid growth in the City of Portland, the neighborhood’s central location, and its high level of transportation access,” but does not show how the project’s effects would be “small” compared to the other factors. The cumulative effect of this project along with other ongoing factors in the city could further displace the Environmental Justice community in the project area.

An important consideration for the cumulative impacts of the project combined with the Columbia River Crossing are the impacts to climate change. Given that the transportation sector’s significant contribution to GHG emissions, the combined effect of these two projects renders the project significant.

³¹ Oregon Environmental Council, *Drop by Drop: Voluntary Reductions in Diesel Emissions from Stationary Sources* (2007), page 2.

³² McCord, Lindsay E., "Parting the Green Curtain: Tracing Environmental Inequality in Portland, Oregon" (2016). *Pitzer Senior Theses*. Paper 72. Page 27-28.

³³ House, Kelly. (2015, February 24). How is Portland doing on air pollution? It depends where you look. *The Oregonian*.

³⁴ McCord, Lindsay E., "Parting the Green Curtain: Tracing Environmental Inequality in Portland, Oregon" (2016). *Pitzer Senior Theses*. Paper 72. Page 27.

H. The project is significant because it may adversely affect highways and culturally historic areas

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(8) because the action may adversely affect highways and culturally historic areas. This criterion specifically invokes “highways,” and the effect of the project will be adverse by increasing capacity of the highway, which will be filled by induced demand. This will result in greater impacts, which have been discussed throughout this letter.

As discussed above, the project area is home a number of notable pillars of Portland’s Black community. Billy Webb Elks Lodge, a property associated with Black history in NE Portland, is in the project area and is pending nomination for the National Register of Historic Places. The Urban League of Portland, one of the Portland Black community’s principal advocacy and service organizations, is located in the project area. The Harriet Tubman Middle School is also in the proposed project area and has an important historical significance to the Black community in Portland, and its current enrollment includes a substantial number of students of color. The project’s stated acceleration of gentrification may cause the community loss of cultural and historic resources.

I. The project is significant because the project adversely affects endangered or threatened species and their critical habitat

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(9) because the project may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its critical habitat. Here, the project will adversely affect chinook salmon, coho, steelhead, the California sea lion, and stellar sea lion. The agencies’ analysis of this provision leaves much to be desired. The actions are not insignificant given the number of threatened and endangered species, as well as the degree of the in-water work.

J. The project is significant because it threatens to violate other laws

The project is significant under 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(10). As noted above, the project threatens to violate the ESA, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, Section 4(f) of the National Transportation Act, the Clean Water Act, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, and Executive Order 12898.

The Environmental Protection Agency states that “Environmental justice is achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and

health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, work, learn and play.” However, the Albina community is home to nearly half of Portland’s people of color and held “only 13 percent of the county’s population, yet receives 55 percent of its hazardous air emissions.”³⁵ This project would not give the community in the proposed project area the same degree of protection from environmental health hazards because of the risk that the project could increase air emissions due to the potential that more cars might use the expanded highway.

Executive Order 12898 states that “Environmental human health analyses, whenever practicable and appropriate, shall identify multiple and cumulative exposures.”³⁶ However, ODOT does not discuss air pollution from vehicle exhaust, smoke from outdated wood stoves, industrial activity and construction, or motorized lawn and garden care in its environmental assessment for this project. These exposures already contribute to air quality issues in the area that affect the community and were not factored into the project’s environmental justice analysis.

The Department of Environmental Quality website states that Oregon is “[w]orking with local environmental justice groups and others to reduce diesel emissions and improve air quality to protect those most at risk from air pollution.” This project would go against that goal. As much as the agency has made efforts to involve community members in this project, the agency has done little to address the long-term issues of air quality and displacement through continued gentrification.

The State of Oregon, Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and Metro have developed policies and strategies to aggressively reduce GHG emissions from motor vehicles. Portland’s comprehensive plan states that “Although carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions are a project concern, these pollutants are important primarily because they contribute to global climate change...”³⁷ Portland has a binding city policy which aims to reduce idle time in order to support the city’s climate change goals.³⁸ The proposed project aims to reduce idle time by expanding the freeway, however, it is

³⁵ Oregon Environmental Council, *Drop by Drop: Voluntary Reductions in Diesel Emissions from Stationary Sources* (2007), page 2.

³⁶ Executive Order 12898 (1994, February 11), Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, *Federal Register* Vol. 59, No. 32. Page 3

³⁷ Portland Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 7

³⁸ BCP-TRN-11.01

possible that the expansion achieves the opposite effect and rather than reducing idle time, adds more space for more cars to idle. The agencies fail to consider this possibility in their EA.

XI. The project violates Section 4(f) of the National Transportation Act.

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1996, 49 USC § 303(c), protects historic properties, park and recreational facilities, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges. There are 14 individual historic properties and 8 historic resources. The EA acknowledges that four parks (including the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade, Willamette River Greenway Trail, Lillis-Albina Park, and Portland Peace Memorial Park) are located within the area of potential impact. As shown above, as proximity to a highway increases, so do environmental impacts associated with air quality, noise, and so forth. Moreover, the capacity created by the project will be filled during the very peak hour congestion the agencies propose to reduce. This inevitably leads to a greater impact on those living in close proximity to the impacts, as well as visitors to the parks. Furthermore, the impacts do not account for the construction-related impacts (including the length of time that construction will occur) that will also disproportionately affect those in close proximity to the construction, including those using the above-referenced parks. The parks will no doubt suffer a greater impact under the build alternative.

The EA refers to “temporary occupation of segments of Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade” but the agencies have not been forthcoming about what is “temporary” as it relates to construction. It is reasonable to believe that a one-half billion dollar project will take months or even years, but there is little certainty given the lack of disclosures in the EA.

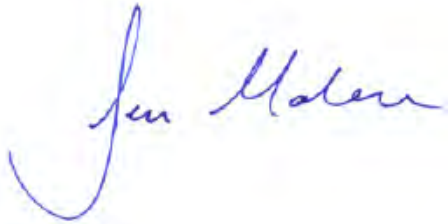
For all of the 4(f) resources addressed, the agencies do not address the impacts in terms of air quality, despite the well-understood notion that capacity created by widening freeways typically results in the capacity being filled within a short time after completion of the project. For example, in Houston, after a 2008-2011 project costing \$2.8 billion to make the widest freeway in North America, the travel times increased by 30 percent during the morning commute and 55 percent during the evening commute. The project here is simply doing more of the same. Despite the intention to reduce congestion (and thereby increase safety and reliability), the opposite is likely to occur, and yet the agencies have not even accounted for that possibility. In other words, what the agencies assume as a certainty rests on tenuous ground, and example after example demonstrates that the agencies have not accounted for expected impacts of increased congestion, noise, air pollution, and so forth.

XII. Conclusion

66

For the reasons provided above, the agencies have prepared a deeply flawed EA. Instead of engaging in business as usual, which does not resolve issues surrounding congestion (and therefore will not resolve issues surrounding safety and reliability), the agencies should promote an alternative that *will* reduce congestion (and thereby address safety and reliability). However, even that consideration would not resolve the fundamental error committed by including the Columbia River Crossing in the baseline, a project that has not occurred and has no current plans of occurring. By doing so, the agencies have presented a scenario that does not reflect the reality on-the-ground, and there is little expectation that the impacts analysis will ever reflect reality because the Columbia River Crossing will ever be constructed.

Sincerely,



Sean T. Malone
Attorney at Law

cc: clients

Ka'sha Bernard, Legal Fellow, Crag Law Center

Enclosures

[External sender]Rose Quarter project funding.

✖ DELETE

← REPLY

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→ FORWARD

...



maria opie <maria.ruth.opie@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:02 PM

Mark as unread

67

To: Pamela Blackhorse;

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Hello Pamela,

I'm writing you today to register my opposition to the funding of the Rose Quarter Expansion Project, Project #1 key 19071.

I honestly don't know if you are an elected official. I'm sorry. But I do know you hold some power over this project / funding.

If you are an elected official I hope you take the time to read this. If not, I hope you are working from home, getting well-paid, staying healthy and will still take the time to read this.

This letter is a plea for you to help slow to the highway expansion project so that a full environmental review can be completed. Given our current health crisis and our environmental crisis it behooves all of us to slow down and "do the right thing".

It sickens me to know that you might be partly responsible for reducing the quality of life of the residents in the Boise-Eliot community if this project is initiated and completed. It actually breaks my heart even though I do not know you personally. You are in a position to take be responsible for the health and welfare of a community. Please do the right thing. As a healthcare professional this is what it comes down to. Doing the right thing.

Please support mass transit fully. This will reduce congestion and move us into a successful future as opposed to a future of continued climate change and greed.

We are in a health crisis and an environmental crisis.
Please "do the right thing".

Sincerely Maria Opie, Registered Nurse and 25 year member of the Boise-Eliot community.
503-422-3275

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

...




Matt Ferris-Smith <matt.ferrissmith@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:19 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Members of JPACT, I respectfully ask that you remove funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion from the MTIP.

At a time when Oregon is facing monumental challenges--a pandemic, economic recession, seasonal record-setting wildfires, the likelihood of a major earthquake, and climate change, to name a few--it is imperative that we invest our public dollars wisely.

The misguided Rose Quarter highway megaproject fails to address any of the major challenges facing Oregon, and it should not received funding through MTIP.

Thank you.

Matt

--

Matt Kelly
517.438.0187

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

...



My Mac <hesptrc@msn.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:43 PM

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69

To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Hello,

Please oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion!

Please join in the fight against highway pollution affecting schools & neighborhoods where normal folks live!

Please use the funds for Covid-19 recovery.

Thanks,

Trish Claffey

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion

✖ DELETE

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...



Naomi Fast <naomifast@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 4:58 PM

70

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; Sen Steiner Hayward <Sen.ElizabethSteinerHayward@oregonlegislature.gov>;
Rep.KenHelm@oregonlegislature.gov; Juan Carlos Gonzalez;

Cc: info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

[Suggested Meetings](#)[+ Get more apps](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

Dear Pamela Blackhorse, Senator Steiner Hayward, Representative Helm, & Councilor González,

Today I submitted the following to Oregon Transportation Commission & ODOT Director Kris Strickler, and also ask for your support in this matter:

Hello, again. I've collected more data to show you as you consider directing ODOT to do a full EIS on the I-5 Rose Quarter Project, which I hope you do.

But first, I invite you & any elected officials reading this to consider some Oregon poetry. By law, ORS 186.040, our state motto is "Alis Volat Propriis," Latin for "She Flies With Her Own Wings." But Oregon's motto has been a dance between two phrases.

In 1957 — which happens to be the year I-5 was designated — the motto was briefly changed to 'The Union.' Then in 1987, lawmakers decided to change it back. Senate historian Cecil Edwards co-sponsored the return to 'She Flies,' reportedly saying 'The Union' reflected an earlier era when Oregonians "were torn over the issue of slavery."

"'She Flies With Her Own Wings' fits Oregon's independent spirit," legislators argued. Oregon's been first to do great things, they said, like the Bottle Bill. And the bipartisan Beach Bill, which is why today, Oregonians can access public beaches. Landowners abutting beaches may not privatize sand & waves.

An attempt was made in 1999 to go back to 'The Union,' but failed. At the hearing Rep Kevin Mannix argued, "'The Union' is a guiding principle for Oregon." A couple legislators argued that a two-word, short motto can be powerful. And that is true. But the long one held power too. And it stuck.

Neither of our state mottos, though, entitle ODOT to "fly with her own wings."

[External sender]Fwd: OTC Public Comment on Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion - Letters received by ODOT in Spring 2019

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

No More Freeways PDX <info@nomorefreewayspx.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:45 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

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No More Freeways would also like to submit these letters into the public record for the MTIP.

Please find attached the following letters, originally submitted last spring during ODOT's Public Comment Period, requesting that the agency consider a full Environmental Impact Statement for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion proposal.

- No More Freeways' testimony
- No More Freeways' legal memo
- No More Freeways' Technical Analysis of ODOT's (flawed) traffic modeling for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion
- Letter cosigned by Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Oregon Chapter - Sierra Club, Center for Sustainable Economy, Climate Solutions
- Letter on behalf of 350 PDX
- Letter on behalf of Audubon Society of Portland
- Letter signed by parents of the Harriet Tubman Middle School PTSA
- Letter on behalf of the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission
- Letter on behalf of Business for Better Portland
- Letter on behalf of Safe Routes to School National Partnership - Pacific Northwest
- Letter on behalf of the Irvington Community Association
- Letter on behalf of Oregon Walks
- Letter signed by Oregon Metro



Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

Katherine Schultz, Chair

Chris Smith, Vice Chair
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André Baugh
Ben Bortolazzo
Mike Houck

Eli Spevak, Vice Chair
Katie Larsell
Daisy Quiñonez
Teresa St Martin

April 1, 2019

72

Oregon Department of Transportation
Attn: Megan Channell, Major Projects Manager
123 NW Flanders St.
Portland, OR 97209

Dear Ms. Channell,

The Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment of the I-5 Rose Quarter project.

After hearing your presentation at the March 26, 2019 PSC meeting and reviewing the comments of the City's Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetcar Advisory Committees, as well as those of the Portland Parks Board, we have the following significant concerns:

- The surface street improvements are inconsistent with our Transportation System Plan (TSP) that prioritizes pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users. Instead the project appears to impede these modes while it supports the flow of vehicular traffic. The final design should give priority to walking, biking and transit in accordance with Policy 9.6 of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan.
- The key land use objective of incorporating this project into the N/NE Quadrant Plan, relinking Albina in general and the Blanchard site in particular with the other parts the Rose Quarter, does not appear to be accomplished, with a single, auto-oriented (10 percent grade) street added as an East/West connection.
- We are skeptical of the project claims that proposed freeway travel improvements will not induce new demand, which would effectively erase or reverse claimed reductions in air toxins and greenhouse gas emissions.



City of Portland, Oregon | Bureau of Planning and Sustainability | www.portlandoregon.gov/bps
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 7100, Portland, OR 97201 | phone: 503-823-7700 | fax: 503-823-7800 | tty: 503-823-6868

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper.

We join the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees in calling for a full EIS and would specifically request consideration of a congestion pricing alternative.

Sincerely,



Katherine Schultz
Chair

72

cc: Portland City Council
Metro Council



City of Portland, Oregon | Bureau of Planning and Sustainability | www.portlandoregon.gov/bps
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 7100, Portland, OR 97201 | phone: 503-823-7700 | fax: 503-823-7800 | tty: 503-823-6868

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter

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Rob Hemphill <hemphill.robertm@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:00 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

[Bing Maps](#)

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CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

To Metro Council and JPACT:

I write in opposition to any funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter project (*Project #1 Key 19071*). ODOT has proven to obfuscate and cut corners in its rush to pave over neighborhoods and explode Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions. Until ODOT can provide a thorough Environmental Impact Statement that addresses all of the impacts of the project and demonstrates that they can be a real partner in sustainable transportation and improving the built environment for all users, they should not be provided funding or support from Metro.

Rob Hemphill
80 NE 14th Ave Apt 336
Portland, OR 97232

Rob Hemphill
hemphill.robertm@gmail.com
971-706-3306

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

...



Robert Edwards <redwards@berkeley.edu>

Fri 3/27/2020 3:11 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I'm opposed to this project because we need to be prioritizing expanding public transit, walking and biking. Expanding infrastructure for single occupancy vehicles won't reduce GHG emissions, and it won't help improve the quality of our air.

Furthermore, if the goal is to reduce congestion, then making a freeway makes no sense. The only way to reduce congestion is to give people more, and better options. Please focus on making more of Portland accessible by bus, bike and rail.

-Robert Edwards

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

Sarah Newsum <sarahnewsum@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 8:18 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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Please oppose funding for ODOT's Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion!

Thank you,
Sarah Newsum

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

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sdb42009@hotmail.com

Mon 3/30/2020 9:35 AM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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please think of beautiful Portland, don't ruin it for Californians who have transplanted their car habits here. Visualize: Tom McCall.

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP Funding for Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion:

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

...



Seth Alford <setha45@gmail.com>

Sat 3/28/2020 8:14 AM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse; +info@nomorefreewayspx.com;

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CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

We don't know what things will be like in a post COVID-19 world. Hold off on spending any money on RQ freeway expansion until we have a better idea.

--Seth Alford

8915 SW Rosewood Way, Portland, OR 97225

[External sender]Opposition to MTIP funding for Rose Quarter "Project #1 Key 19071"

 DELETE REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD

...



Steve B <coffeeisnice@gmail.com>

Fri 3/27/2020 2:52 PM

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To: Pamela Blackhorse;

CAUTION: This email originated from an **External source**. Do not open links or attachments unless you know the content is safe.

I strongly oppose MTIP funding for the Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion, especially considering there was no opportunity for public comment before this \$129 million was allocated by JPACT.

We also need a full EIS before we can justifiably invest over a hundred million in this mega project that will not solve congestion or safety issues in Albina.

There must be no allocation of MTIP funding until we conduct the appropriate public and environmental processes as has been concluded by regional leaders and community groups.

Sincerely,
Steve Bozzone
NE Portland

ODOT should be spending money on traffic calming, safety improvements and pedestrian infrastructure, targeting the arterial streets that have been shown to cause the most serious injuries and fatalities.

Instead of supporting a highway expansion through the Rose Quarter, the city should be encouraging the use of modes of transportation other than driving through the Broadway/Weidler corridor by spending on improving mass transit through the corridor and electrifying the bus fleet. The city should be adding bike and pedestrian infrastructure which will not only reduce emissions but will increase livability in the central city and create a more thriving business environment along a corridor which has languished for decades.

Finally, ODOT could utilize that money to offset the damage it has already done to N/NE Portland by paying to help build housing to replace the over 300 units of housing it demolished and never replaced when it originally built I-5. In addition, ODOT should reimburse Portland Public Schools for the \$12 million plus that PPS had to spend to make the air inside Tubman School clean enough to breathe.

Respectfully,

Bob Dobrich

President, Irvington Community Association

Steven Cole

Vice-president, Irvington Community Association