



Environmental Assessment Comments

First Name Begins with I

Ordered by first name

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Environmental Assessment Comments
First Name Begins with I



2019 0331 Ivy Buddenhagen21



2019 0215 Iain MacKenzie

Comment: Can you please forward or publish the full and current engineering drawings for the I5 Rose Quarter Project? The diagrams included in the Environmental Assessment are not sufficient to make it clear to the public what is being proposed, and therefore provide informed comments. As an example, the aerial perspective on the first page of the report is inconsistent with the technical drawings shown in Appendix C of the Section 106 report.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0219 Iain MacKenzie

Comment: Thank you for your reply, however preliminary civil engineering drawings clearly do exist, given that they're used as the base layer for the property acquisition drawings in the Section 106 report. I understand that these are only at a concept level, and that the project will undergo further design development, but it would be helpful to the public to understand that what has been done to date. This project is a major reconfiguration of the street network in a critical part of Portland's Central City. As an example, which streets will have sidewalks on both sides and which will have sidewalks on only one side? Which streets will have bike lanes on them? How much room is being allocated for the bicycle facilities (however they are ultimately designed)? It is not possible to discern answers to these questions for the information that has been published to date, but it will be very hard to change later in the process, during design development, given that these all affect the amount of right-of-way required. Given these concerns, it seems appropriate to publish the drawings that have already been done. I would prefer not to have to go through the freedom of information process, but am willing to do so if necessary.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0312 Iain MacKenzie

Comment: I have not yet received a reply to this email, dated February 19th. At the presentation to the Portland Design Commission on March 7th it was mentioned that the project is currently at 5% design, which contradicts the earlier statement that no drawings exist. Can you please publish the 5% design drawings so that the public has a better understanding of what is being proposed as part of this project?

Attachments: N/A

2019 0331 Iain MacKenzie

Comment: Please find attached comments on the Environmental Assessment for the I5 Rose Quarter Project, concerning a lack of transparency in the public comment process and the difficulty in obtaining drawings.



I believe that the public comment process for the 15 Rose Quarter Project has been inadequate. On the first day of the public comment period I requested that the engineering drawings for the project be provided. I was informed that they "do not yet exist", a statement that was not true. It took over a month to obtain drawings that could have easily been published when they were first requested.

The timeline of my efforts to obtain drawings of the project is as follows:

- On February 12th, the first day of the public comment period, I sent an email to info@iSrosequarter.org to request the current engineering drawings for project. Project manager Megan Channell was copied in to this email.
- On February 19th Douglas Siu of ODOT replied to the above email, stating that the "design phase of this project has not started and as such, engineering drawings do not yet exist" (emphasis mine).
- I replied on the same day, stating my belief that preliminary civil engineering drawings must exist and that while "I understand that these are only at a concept level, and that the project will undergo further design development ... it would be helpful to the public to understand that what has been done to date." I never received a reply to this email.
- Having not received any reply, I work with Attorney Alan Kessler to file a series of public records requests. These were submitted to ODOT on February 25th .
- On March 1st, 2019 Megan Channell of ODOT gave a briefing to the Portland Design Commission. In response to a question about how far the project is in the design process, she stated that the project is at 5% design.
- On March 12th, 2019 I emailed Douglas Siu and Megan Channell, asking for the 5% design drawings. I never received a reply to this email.
- On March 12th, 2019 I submitted a public records request to the City of Portland, asking for copies of the drawings that have been submitted to the City of Portland by ODOT.
- On March 13th, 2019, Laura Rojas of ODOT emailed Alan Kessler, stating that she was still working on the estimates for the public records requests.
- At 12:55 PM on March 20th, 2019, Alan Kessler filed petitions to the Oregon Department of Justice, given that ODOT had not met its statutory deadlines under Oregon law for responding to the public records requests.
- At 2:10 on March 20th, 2019 Laura Rojas of ODOT responded with estimates for the public records request. These estimates acknowledged that ODOT was the custodian of

at least of some of the requested information. This demonstrated that the statement of February 19th was not true. Estimates for the time it would take to provide the information ranged from 4 to 25 business days, and at a cost of between \$600 and



\$6,000.

- On March 22nd, 2019 Chair of the Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee Rithy Khut emailed Portland Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and ODOT Region 1 Manager Rian Windsheimer, asking for drawings to be provided, and for the public comment window to be extended to allow for the review of these documents.
- On March 26th, Alan Kessler was able to meet in person with ODOT project engineer Mark Johnson, following conversations with Laura Rojas about how it would be possible to obtain the records at a lower price. Later that day, drawings in native format were uploaded to ODOT's ftp server, fulfilling the request submitted on February 25th .
- On March 27th, 2019 the City of Portland responded to my public records request, and released the drawings that were in their possession.
- On March 27th, 2019 Megan Channell of ODOT replied to the Rithy Khut's email, stating that that "the preliminary engineering drawing for the Project is [now] available on the project website".

Copies of the correspondence described above is appended to this letter.

In summary, it required a significant amount of effort to obtain basic information about the project. The initial request for drawings was made on the first day of the public period.

Drawings were not obtained until day 39 of a 45 comment period. Obtaining these drawings required numerous emails; the filing of multiple public records requests; and petitions to the Oregon Department of Justice.

The drawings published by ODOT on March 27th (figure 1) were difficult to read, and at a noticeably lower resolution than those obtained from the City of Portland through the public records process (figure 2):

<<Figure 1 and 2 contained in letter attachment>>

In her March 27th email Ms Channell states that "the 45-day public comment period for the Environmental Assessment (ending on April 1, 2019 at 5pm) will not be extended, as the information in the posted drawings is described and illustrated in the Environmental Assessment" (emphasis mine). This is not the case. The Environmental Assessment as published does not include project drawings overlaid on the existing aerials, as the engineering drawings do. This makes it extremely difficult for the public to make a before and after comparison.

The March 27th email states that additional time for public comment is not necessary, as a project map has been made available:

"A project map illustrating the project features and their locations also has been on the project website for the duration of the environmental study process, beginning in Fall 2017. This map is available at the same website noted above, under 'Project Information/ Project Area Map.' "

This map may have been provided, however it was lacking in crucial information. As an example, there is no indicative lane striping provided on the Project Area Map. Areas in light



blue are keyed as "Local Street Modifications" and areas in yellow are keyed as "Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities" (fig 3). From the project it is not possible to determine that a) the number of vehicular lanes is being increased from 3 to 4 on N Weidler, (figure 4) or b) that as a consequence the existing sidewalks on both sides of the street will be narrowed from approximately 12' to 8', and with a reduction to the amount of public space in front of the Madrona Studios building (figure 4).

<<Figure 3, 4 and 5 contained in letter attachment>>

This just one street segment, however the impacts could there be significant. As noted in the Environmental Justice Technical Report, "occupants of at least 146 units [at the Madrona Studios] are low-income" and "more than half of the residents are racial minorities".

The report states that "private motor vehicle and loading access to the facilities at Madrona Studios would be maintained" but does not consider the impact of widening the street in front of the building. The widening of the street will reduce the amount of plaza space in front of the building. This space is currently well used by the building's residents, as captured in Google Streetview (figure 6). The narrower 8' wide sidewalks would also lack sufficient room to plant street trees to replace the trees that would be cut down (figure 7), creating less of a buffer between the four lane street and the plaza at the Madrona Studios.

These are not problems that can be solved with design; providing wider sidewalks would require further reductions in the amount of plaza space in front of the Madrona Studios. The impact to the low income residents of this building has not been discussed as part of the Environmental Justice Report.

<<Figure 6 and 7 contained in letter attachment>>

The impacts described to the Madrona Studios are not intended be exhaustive; they are an illustration of the impacts that were not apparent until the drawings were released on day 39 day of a 45 day public comment period. With more time to review the drawings the public would have had a chance to discover whether there were any other similar impacts that have also not been described in the analysis.

Given the lack of information provided to the public, and the fact that when information was provided it was late in the process and under duress, I would recommend that the project proceed to an Environmental Impact Statement. Where the project creates adverse impacts the public should have an opportunity to understand what they are, and weigh in on potential mitigation strategies.

<<Copies of Correspondence contained in letter attachment>>

Attachments: [2019 0331 Iain MacKenzie ATT](#)

2019 0331 Iain MacKenzie 2

Comment: Please find attached comments on the Environmental Assessment for the I5 Rose Quarter Project, relating to the impacts to the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade.



I am concerned about the impacts to the Eastbank Esplanade from 15 Rose Quarter Project. In particular, I am worried that widening the freeway adjacent to the Willamette River and the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade will create an adverse impact to a Section 4(f) resource, that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. I also believe that these impacts are not sufficiently described in the Section 4(f) Technical Report.

The Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade is described as follow in the technical report:

“The Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade is a 1.5-mile-long publicly owned park that extends north from the Hawthorne Bridge, past the Morrison and Burnside Bridges, to the Steel Bridge, with connections to eastside neighborhoods as well as across the river to Governor Tom McCall Waterfront Park. The Esplanade is also a part of the Willamette River Greenway Trail, which connects the Esplanade to a broader trail network that includes the Springwater Corridor Trail and crosses the Willamette River along the side of the Steel Bridge (Figure 12; City of Portland 2018). The City of Portland developed the Esplanade after its completion of the Eastbank Riverfront Park Master Plan in 1994 (City of Portland 1994). Construction of the Esplanade began in October 1998, after the city acquired the park, and was completed in May 2001. PPR used federal funds for transportation enhancements from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, overseen by the FHWA, for discrete sections of the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade Project, which included the segment from the Burnside Bridge to the Steel Bridge (which is within the API) (City of Portland 1995). These various improved segments of the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade have now become interconnected with and form a part of the larger Willamette River Greenway Trail (City of Portland 2014).”

As part of the project the viaduct structure south of NE Lloyd Blvd will be widened, in order to provide an additional lane and wider shoulders (figure 1). At this location the freeway is already located extremely close to the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade. This is not adequately illustrated by figures 12 and 13 in the Section 4(f) Technical Report, but is clear from the Google Streetview images of the path (figure 2).

<<Figure 1 and 2 contained in letter attachment>>

The Environmental Assessment does not contain any representative images of what the impact of widening the viaduct will be, however an attempt at this has been made by Cupola Media (figure 3). Note that this image does not include any support structures, which may need to be placed on the west side of the multiuse path.

<<Figure 3 contained in letter attachment>>

The impacts of the widened viaduct will be significant. At the east side of the path in particular there will be less light and rain reaching the ground, compromising the ability of any vegetation to grow. People walking, rolling and biking on the path will be very aware that they are passing underneath a freeway structure.

Surprisingly, this is described a de minimis impact in the Section 4(f) Technical Report:

“The Build Alternative requires the acquisition of a permanent surface easement across a segment of the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade (Figure 19). Periodic closures may be required



during facility operation, but they are expected to be short in duration. This would constitute a Section 4(f) use of the property as it would be permanently incorporated into the transportation facility. Measures to minimize impacts include the preparation of an intergovernmental agreement between ODOT and the City of Portland (the Official with Jurisdiction) that limits the duration of closures and creates a temporary detour for users that would allow for the continued use of the trail during closure periods associated with construction and operation. The implementation of the agreement would reduce impacts such that the features, attributes, and activities that qualify the property for protection under Section (4) would not be adversely affected consistent with 23 CFR 774.17 and thus support a de minimis impact determination by the FHWA.”

It is difficult to see how widening a freeway viaduct directly adjacent to a park facility, or perhaps even over it, cannot be an adverse affect. It is also hard to understand how this can be mitigated to a less than significant level. For this reason, I believe it is appropriate for the project to proceed to an Environmental Impact Statement, where these adverse impacts can be further studied.

Attachments: [2019 0331 Iain MacKenzie 2 ATT](#)

2019 0314 Ian Burt

Comment: My name is Ian and I've lived in the Portland area my whole life. I just wanted to say that I support the ODOT plan to expand lanes on major freeways around the city. I think it would go a long way in reducing air pollution if we weren't all sitting in these horrible traffic jams for so long everyday. Please don't listen to the No More Freeways group. We need these lane expansions.

Also, I think that the congestion pricing freeway tolls are just flat wrong unless the money will go to adding more lanes and maybe another interstate bridge.

To charge a toll like that for the sole purpose of trying to price people off the roads that we have already paid for with our tax dollars just seems wrong. The only people who will possibly be priced off the roads are the poorest among us who can least afford yet another government fee!

Attachments: N/A

2019 0311 Ian Connelly

Comment: An expansion to the freeway is only going to temporarily solve an issue of congestion. In terms of traffic, there will for a few years likely be a reduction due to an increased freeway size. However, with the rate of Portland's expansion this will only last for a short amount of time before congestion is an issue again.



In terms of air quality, freeway construction is going to increase the amount of pollution (especially PM) until the project is completed. Once it is completed, the increased amount of cars will give off an increased amount of pollution overall. While this may dissipate within the first few years due to less congestion, this issue will eventually be proliferated into a worse issue when congestion becomes an issue again with a higher volume of cars. This will create more air pollution and we will again be faced with the issue of how to solve this issue.

Overall, I believe that expanding the freeway is a lazy temporary fix to a larger issue that needs to be addressed right now and not be addressed in the future when the traffic builds up once again. What we need is an overall reduction of cars on the road, not a larger incentive to drive due to less traffic temporarily on a highway.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0402 Ian Curtis

Comment: My name is Ian Curtis and I am a student at South Eugene High School. I would like to voice my opinion in opposition to the \$500 million dollar Interstate-5 expansion being proposed in Northeast Portland. We must invest more efficient modes of transportation in our effort to stop climate change, and this project is exactly the opposite of what we need.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Ian Fisher

Comment: As a longtime resident of Portland, I take pride in our city's ability to thoughtfully tackle challenges with care for the environment. I'm proud of Biketown, of our light rail system, and of our heavily used bus network. This is a place that reflects the core values I have with respect to responsible transportation and that purports to protect our more vulnerable citizens (walkers and bikers, for example).

The I5 widening project in the Rose Quarter is counter to these ideals and flies in the face of current science on climate change and current research on traffic flow and congestion. There's no good reason for us to widen a freeway without first attempting to limit traffic with congestion pricing, and the kind of induced demand for use of I5 that would be created by this expansion is a threat to our ideals as a city that cares about progressive values in a sustainable world.

One of the things I'm least proud of about Portland is its lack of diversity and the way that it pushes marginalized groups more deeply into the margins. Tubman Middle School is an example of a school that has successfully supported underrepresented students for a very long time, and it's being forced to directly confront the increased toxins and pollution that would come from this construction project and from increased use of the I5 corridor in close proximity to their campus. Oregon has a chance to show that it cares about all of its citizens by abandoning these plans, and I think that it ought to consider whether it has historically supported black/Latinx groups and how it might improve its support for those groups going forward.



We have an opportunity to put our money where our values are here, and I can think of countless opportunities for Portland to improve our roadways and make the city safer for pedestrians and bikers. We need to start to make choices to embrace the future rather than relegating ourselves to the decisions of the past. Be a model for the world rather than an also-ran that follows the unsuccessful solutions of other cities.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0331 Ian Krogh

Comment: I oppose the ODOT plan to expand I-5 in Portland. This plan is wastefully subsidizing the most polluting, most destructive, most expensive mode of transportation we have, to the detriment of all other modes.

The modifications to Weidler between Vancouver and Williams are particularly egregious and seem utterly divorced from modern best practices. I've seen enough of ODOT's embarrassingly bad, pedestrian-hating designs on SE 82nd, with crossing signals that skip cycles and favor blinky yellow turn-lane lights instead of allowing pedestrians to cross with traffic, and those shiny new ADA settlement ramps with "CROSSWALK CLOSED" bars across them. We don't need that kind of design here.

We don't need any more of ODOT's expensive, destructive meddling in Portland. We don't need the presence of an agency that doesn't even understand the proven concept of induced demand. We don't need more freeway lanes. We don't need more car lanes on streets. We need fewer freeways, less automobile use, and less interference from out-of-touch state bureaucrats in Salem.

End this project, and give the money back. Or use it to do something useful, like decommissioning I-5 and returning this wretched, noisy, toxic abomination to the city, where we might actually do something useful with it. It'd be nice to have our riverfront back.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0328 Ian Lindsay

Comment: I own a home in the Eliot neighborhood, and I grew up in the Overlook neighborhood. My young children may someday attend Harriet Tubman Middle School. I am writing to express my great discomfort with the proposed Rose Quarter I-5 expansion plan. My request is that the plan be stopped. Please consider the many other ways the considerable resources could be spent improving how people move around and through our city.

The location of the Rose Quarter is particularly central to the city of Portland. So many parts of our city come together just there. It is the nexus of the Eliot Neighborhood, Overlook Neighborhood, Irvington Neighborhood, Convention Center, Broadway Bridge, Amtrak Station, Lloyd District, Pearl District, Chinese Garden District, and Steel Bridge. One would struggle to find another spot that is so geographically significant in our region, especially if one also



includes I-5 and I-84. A strong case can be made that this is one of the "hearts" of the city of Portland. This is a place where many come together, move from one part of the city to another, live, work, and recreate. In such a place, I hope for infrastructure that fosters the movement of people in sustainable, livable, and future oriented modes. Increasing freeway capacity seems diametrically opposed to those goals.

While it is true that freeways connect distant areas, they also greatly divide neighborhoods and the people who live nearby those freeways. Those rushing by may get to their destinations faster, but those living nearby deal with a monolith of concrete and unbroken traffic that changes how people move about their neighborhood and their city in subtle and not so subtle ways. Once built, freeways tend to stay in place for a very long time and become defining geographic features of a city. Creating a long term bull-work of more concrete directly in the heart of a city just does not seem like a future oriented plan.

Most agree that property near the water is the most desirable. Along the Willamette River we have valuable homes and businesses, and a park and walkway for everyone to enjoy. I ask you to consider the Alaskan Way Viaduct in Seattle. Another freeway that was situated in prime real estate territory near the water. Consider the time and expense recently spent to remove all of that concrete that was blocking access in a central part of our neighbor city to the north. The proposed addition to I-5 seems antithetical to fostering the movement of people right in the heart of our city; right where it matters most. I wonder how soon we might be spending considerable time and expense to reduce/remove or mitigate a larger I-5.

In just the past 5 years transportation has been radically changed by the advent of ride sharing. Cities around the world have struggled to adjust to this new reality. I assume that more changes are coming. I do not know exactly what they will be, but I assume they will come more quickly than most imagine. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a short stretch of freeway seems unwise when the future of transportation is so uncertain. What if we spend all that money, disrupting the heart of our city in the process, and then it is not really needed?

Thank you for your time and attention to my concerns. Please know that I value the many experts at ODOT who have spent considerable time and energy preparing this plan. However, I ask those same experts to listen with open minds and to truly consider what underlying assumptions may have been made in proposing to widen I-5. I hope for the future that people all over Portland, all over Oregon, and beyond, find ways to spend less time in cars, and more time doing those things they love.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0402 Ian Lomax

Comment: I strongly oppose expanding the I-5 freeway near Harriet Tubman middle school for many reasons.



The primary reason is that it will increase air pollution for the students that have to spend their days right next to the freeway. Nobody should have to work or study that close to a freeway, let alone kids who need to run around to burn off energy. It's bad enough that the I-5 took a slice out of the school ground already, if you take much more the school will literally be sitting above the freeway.

These are my neighbors kids. Smart kids with ambitions. They deserve better.

Second ODOT should consider and test congestion pricing before any further freeway expansions. Portland will never be able to expand freeways enough to keep up with the current metro area growth rates, so it's time to do the right thing, the hard thing, the brave thing and start encouraging people to use alternative forms of transportation.

Third, there is no mention of induced demand. In every case of freeway expansion demand has increased to quickly make traffic just as bad if not worse than before.

There are many more reasons why this project should be scrapped, but these alone should be enough to look for better ways to spend a half a billion dollars.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Ian Torkelson

Comment: Please do not widen I-5 in Portland. Please do not spend \$500M on roads that will significantly degrade public transit and public spaces. Expanding a freeway in 2019 is climate denialism.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0331 Ilan Gerould

Comment: My name is Ilan G. I'm a a resident of the Boise-Elliot neighborhood, a student/community member/activist who regularly travels through the Rose Quarter region for work and school. I travel through here by bicycle and bus primarily, and occasionally by car. I know how challenging it is to get through this area by -all- modes, because of the high level of private auto congestion, but this project isn't the way to address any it.

Selling this project with inflated numbers from a cancelled bridge project is pretty low. There is very little support within the community this affects the most. I find it disgusting that I've heard from ODOT about what was once a thriving community of black Portlanders, this project will help bring it back together. ODOT played a major part in decimating the neighborhood in the original construction of the freeway, and will further do so now. You continue to degrade the lives of the people in the neighborhood by funneling more auto traffic through the area while neglecting YOUR streets like Lombart, 82nd, and Powell Blvd which regularly see serious injuries and deaths because of outdated car-centric designs. Fix those if you genuinely care about the safety of Oregonians.



Attachments: N/A

2019 0327 Ineke Deruyter

Comment: We don't need more air pollution. More freeways would increase this already serious Public Health issue here in Portland . Instead spend the money on a widely improved public transportation system which should run on clean energy. Use incentives for people who use it, and keep it affordable! Thanks!

Attachments: N/A

2019 0330 Ineke Deruyter

Comment: If even ODOT's own consultants admit that this project will not solve traffic congestion I say stop and check out other options, such as Decongestion Pricing which is the only policy actually proven to reduce traffic congestion; it's also proven to improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions as well. !! Freeway expansion has never solved traffic congestion, in any North American city, ever. Please put this expansion on hold and study alternatives (including decongestion pricing!) to this expansion, and release a full environmental impact study. Thank you

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Ingrid Nysten

Comment: I would like to express my opposition to the I-5 Rose Quarter project.

With reduction of congestion as a stated goal of the project, studies at-large and experience in the Seattle area have shown that congestion pricing could provide a greater reduction in traffic congestion in the I-5 Rose Quarter area at significantly lower cost than the proposed project. As a result, the expense of the I-5 Rose Quarter project would be a waste of resources at a time when those transportation dollars could be used for other projects.

Environmental benefits touted in the ODOT planning documents are disputed and are not supported by the rigorous analysis of a complete Environmental Impact Statement. In the absence of a complete Environmental Impact Statement (which should be done!) the supposed environmental benefits touted in the ODOT planning documents are conjectural at best and, at worst, amount to a "greenwashing" of the project that purposely overstates the environmental benefits of the project to tamp down opposition to it.

The original construction of I-5 caused severe damage to several neighborhoods in Northeast and North Portland. Although the I-5 Rose Quarter project as proposed includes features to address existing neighborhood transportation issues, the Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the Bicycle Advisory Committee in Portland have concluded that the proposed features do not



significantly improve existing neighborhood transportation issues, and in fact will make it worse for the duration of the construction period, and recommend that the project not be built.

The project is not justified even on the face of ODOT planning documents. Justifications for the project, built into ODOT planning documents, are based upon southbound I-5 traffic volumes that presume the Columbia River Crossing bridge project had been built. It was not. There are no existing plans to build that project. The existing and foreseeable southbound I-5 traffic volumes do not justify the I-5 Rose Quarter project.

In sum, freeway expansion will never solve the traffic congestion issues in Portland, we simply can't build our way out of congestion and maintain the livability of our city. Therefore, I oppose the I-5 Rose Quarter project in its entirety.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0326 Inna Levin

Oregon Walks

Comment: 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.

Attachments: N/A



2019 0401 Inna Levin

Comment: How can we justify spending this much money on a project that is completely out of line with all the major jurisdictional plans outlining the values of our region? This project is counter to the City of Portland's Vision Zero Strategy and City of Portland and Multnomah County's Climate Action Plan; Metro's Climate Smart Strategy, RTO Strategy, and Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion -just to name a few. How can we justify spending public dollars on a project that completely ignores the negative impact on CHILDREN at an adjacent school or the needs and history of the community of color that this highway tears through? How can we justify spending this much money when the little data we DO have proves that this project won't even solve the one problem it's claiming to: congestion - meanwhile, there is much more data that we DON'T have - ODOT hasn't made public the data that proves assertions that this project would lower carbon emissions or improve air quality -which are ridiculous statements to make given that this project would lead to increased traffic and it really doesn't take a scientists to understand that more traffic = MORE carbon emissions and WORSE air quality. All this is to say, that I am completely against this project and demand a full Environmental Impact Statement. Thank you.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0312 Io Dennerlien

Comment: My name is Io. I'm a student at Harriet Tubman Middle School. I am testifying tonight on behalf of Harriet Tubman Middle School and the health and safety of the students, teachers, and staff. The definition of environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to development implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. The definition of social justice is the concept of fair and just relations between individual and society. This is measured b explicit and tacit terms for the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity, and social privileges. The way the highways and roads are built in the communities rarely reflect either of these values and definitions. The history of I-5 in the Albina community is a large example of that. Harriet Tubman sat empty or underused for most of the decade. And then after long meetings and tests, it was finally reopened. But soon after we reopened, we got news that ODOT was trying to expand the freeway. When I sit in my classrooms and look out the window, I see freeway right outside my building and not just a freeway, but you can also see the thick gray exhaust. That's scary to think that every day my fellow students and I are out there in that air, not just standing, but running, and that air is not good when you're outside running at recess. There is dust on the floors from the air, and if you look close, you can see it drifting down. If ODOT were to expand that would be much worse. Students, teachers, and parents already had concerns and still do about the health of the students and the inhabitants of the building because of the current freeway being so close to the school grounds. If dilution is the solution to pollution, expansion is a recipe for disaster. If ODOT were to expand the freeway, it could only made existing air quality worse. Not only that, but this expansion will only help dilute traffic for a decade before it needs more work. So it's not



going to only harm our communities, but it's also not going to benefit drivers and ODOT's hope for long.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Irakli Gozalishvili

Comment: Hi,

My name is Irakli Gozalishvili and I live with my wife and two toddlers on NE 7th Ave in Portland, I would like our voices and concerns regarding I-5 expansion be heard and considered.

We admire the intent to solve the congestion, however there is no real evidence to support the hypothesis that I-5 expansion will do it, on the contrary there is plenty of evidence that it would not instead it would add more cars polluting our environment and making our planet survival even less likely without actually solving congestion problem, unless that is solving by making our planet uninhabitable. There is also plenty of evidence from Europe suggesting that congestion could be addressed by making car transportation impractical in comparison to other alternatives.

Not only we have reasons to believe that expansion would not solve problem it would be at the expense of air pollution and at the expense of the health of our community members and again reducing our chances to address existential threat of the planet posed by climate change, we should be actively thinking how to reduce number of cars and decarbonize ones that can't be removed from road instead of spending money on making it more convenient to contribute to the crisis.

ODOT is hiding the data and demanding blind trust in their assertions of the project impact, however again evidence supports the contrary. If there is a data that supports made claims they should be happy to provide as an evidence, fact that they do make it inaccessible only suggests that their claims are dubious.

500 million could be used to improve transportation in Portland and tackle existential threat, it can be used to make our city more liveable instead of making it faster to escape. There is widespread community opposition debunking "reconnects the community" claim made by ODOT, myself and my family also oppose as it does not improve our neighborhoods, quite the contrary.

Road pricing is the only policy actually proven to reduce traffic congestion, that also happens to be a lot cheaper project to try in attempt to address the congestion. Not only that would have chance to address congestion but also make progress towards decarbonization. It would be absolutely ridiculous to not try this option before considering an expansion. ODOT's truncated Environmental Assessment document simply isn't focused enough on the significant impacts to health and public safety this project represents. ODOT should for the very least fully study alternatives (including decongestion pricing) to this expansion with a full Environmental Impact Statement.

Regards



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Irakli Gozalishvili

Web: <https://gozala.io/>

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Irene T

Comment: As a parent, a taxpayer, a filmmaker, and an environmentalist, I am wholeheartedly opposed to the proposed freeway expansion in Portland, Oregon. ODOT has failed to make a decent case for why this project should move forward. As research and statistics show, expanding freeways is not an effective strategy for reducing congestion.

ODOT needs to research and consider proven strategies - such as congestion pricing and investment in public transportation before spending a half billion dollars to expand a short stretch of highway. We don't have this kind of money to spend on "maybes", pollution, and congestion.

As you know, our city has a Climate Agenda, and the proposed freeway is completely at odds with it. 40% of Oregon's emissions are from the transportation sector. We need to focus on strategies that reduce dependency on cars, not perpetuate 1950s style highway projects.

Sadly, while all this talk is going on about spending billions on poorly researched projects, ODOT and our city government continues to neglect serious road safety problems in East Portland.

Lastly, and equally important - the project will increase air pollution in the backyard of Harriet Tubman Middle School, which already has some of the worse air quality in the state.

Enough with the decadence, and pandering to big money interests, let's start taking care of our community, air quality, and alternatives to more and more dystopian highways.

Thanks,

Attachments: N/A

2019 0326 Iris Williamson

Comment: So, I live in the NE, off Williams, and commute down to my small business in the Pearl either by bus or by foot. It resonated with me when reports came out last year about current air quality Harriet Tubman Middle School, that was upsetting as I walk by the school regularly. Also, because so many black families in my neighborhood being displaced in decades past (and continually) due to the highway initially being built, Legacy Hospital, the Rose Center, etc., it's especially upsetting to see a school that serves the black community being inundated by poor-quality air. For this to be even worse with this expansion seems like a very short-sited



bandaid that foregoes the well-being of those who need it most. Weren't we all just outraged about these types of problems, even last year? Not only the air quality at Tubman, but water quality at other Public Schools, and chemicals in the soil (i.e. Bluesky Glass)? Isn't this a super important topic to our community? I just know that Portland aims to be (or "brands" itself to be?) progressive in a world that isn't. I wish it would be brave. Let's continue to stand with our values.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0329 Isolbel Veen

Comment: I am opposed to the Rose Quarter freeway expansion because of its proximity to Tubman School (increasing already poor air quality for those in the building) and because expanding this area to reduce congestion is such a short-term approach. Has a tunnel been considered?

Thanks for the opportunity to be heard.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0401 Italia V Pacentine

Comment: I am a denizen of the Portland Metro area and recently learned of the proposal to expand the I-5 freeway through the rose quarter. As a scientist, I am not convinced that there is enough data to support the notion that this expansion would be of long-term benefit to the city. This lack of confidence in outcomes, paired with the cost of the endeavor, leads me to conclude that the I-5 should not be expanded. Before a serious consideration of this expansion, I would like to see other cheaper options explored and trialed, such as implementing Road Pricing or bolstering public transport. From what I have researched, Road Pricing has been an effective way to reduce carbon emissions and congestion by forcing people to find alternative means of transport, such as carpooling or public transport.

Another concern I have about the proposal is the lack of data available to the public. The people who will actually be impacted by this change still do not have a full Environmental Impact Statement, or a comparison of the effects of Road Pricing vs Freeway Expansion on congestion and carbon emissions. I really cannot support making such a huge and costly change without more data to show that it will be effective in improving city life.

There is also the large concern of the expansion encroaching on Harriet Tubman Middle School. The children there already suffer from severe air pollution, enough that researchers at PSU have recommended they do not go outside for recess. Expanding the freeway will ultimately lead to more cars passing through the corridor, and a corresponding increase in harmful emissions that will be breathed in by school children.



I hope you will consider the feelings and wishes of the people who will be most impacted by this change, and add my name to the list of those citizens opposed to the project.

Attachments: N/A

2019 0331 Ivy Buddenhagen

Comment: I am disappointed to see how nearsighted the ambitions of this project have become. There will always be congestion on I-5 as it passes through the city, adding lanes will not solve this problem. I fear the repercussions of making this stretch, and its on and off ramps, move faster. The favoring of commercial interests and those passing through our city over the residents and constituents comes as no surprise. I am disappointed.

Attachments: N/A