



# Environmental Assessment Comments

First Name Begins with U or V

*Ordered by first name*

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## 2019 0325 Ulysses Duckler

**Comment:** Stop investing in fossil fuel infrastructure!

This kills our planet, and it will kill our future, the children of Harriet Tubman Middle School.

But hey, you probably don't care about black children or climate change, ya <<...>>

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0305 Unpopular Opinion

*Common Sense*

**Comment:** Maybe if people could actually zipper merge, we wouldn't need to consider expansion. The right lane is ending like sign 3/4 a mile back said. Zooming to the end and forcing your way to merge fucks up everybody else behind you for miles across every lane.

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0329 Vana O'Brien

**Comment:** Dear ODOT, I am extremely worried that the stated reasons for expanding the freeway are deceptive, and we should not spend hundreds of millions on a project that has used such flawed, even dishonest, assumptions. The benefits claimed for the project probably will not be achieved. I urge you to stop the project, and start again, looking at more practical ideas, like congestion pricing and more travel options besides cars.

Overlook neighborhood resident

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0227 Vanessa McClelland

**Comment:** Getting cars through the bottleneck and decreasing crash possibilities are all great plans. This, more than any tolling, will allow for smoother traffic flow. More and more people are moving into the area, adding more stress to our limited roadways. Most people can't choose when to work at home and when they have to go in. As a commuter who supports a family on my single income, tolls would hurt me but also won't stop me from driving when I have to. But that's a tangent. I don't want to take forever to get to where I have to go to earn a living. Removing the roadblock will help me have less road rage, less stress, more time with my family, fewer carbon emissions and a happier lifestyle.

This project will decrease pollution. Cars emit more carbon per mile while idling and in stop and go traffic than they do when cruising at 30 to 45 miles per hour.

The city of Portland has already implemented many projects that reduce traffic flow for increased bike lanes and pedestrian safety and I find the claim the surface level improvements



are somehow negative for pedestrian safety a bit confusing. Ruts in a freeway aren't good for anyone. I get that some people want to ban cars, but until a teleporter is invented and put in every person's house, that is not feasible.

Please keep the cars rolling.

Vannessa McClelland

Portland, OR

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0327 Vern Gunderson

*Paramount Apts., LLC*

**Comment:** SUBJECT: I-5/Rose Quarter Project Environmental Assessment Public Comment

The purpose of this communication is to dispute the methodology and findings of the Environmental Assessment.

In Section 7.2.5 of the Noise Study technical Report, Paramount Apartments is characterized as an obstruction that shields I-5 traffic noise from Receivers 18a and 18b located in Compass Oncology. There is no references to the effect of I-5 traffic noise on residents of Paramount Apartments nor any reference to the effects of traffic noise on Paramount residents from the proposed Hancock-Dixon Crossing.

It seems inconsistent to study noise from an existing source approximately 500 feet away and not address noise pollution and air pollution from a proposed new street carrying loaded freight trucks that is less than 100 feet from Paramount Apartments.

The Assessment should acknowledge that increases in air pollution and noise pollution have a significantly greater effect on full time local residents than on populations that experience short term exposure, and therefore should warrant lower thresholds for implementation of mitigation measures.

The Assessment should include collection of base line noise levels within Paramount Apartments and a commitment to collect comparative noise readings subsequent to completion of the I-5/Rose Quarter project. Paramount Apartments does not have interior air cooling and therefore the main exterior doors are opened to cool the building in early morning hours during summer months. Noise monitoring should be scheduled for when exterior doors are open. Similarly, base line exterior air quality readings should be collected at the north face of the Paramount prior to construction of the new Hancock-Dixon street.

Some proposed changes, such as closure of Flint Street to through traffic, will be a benefit to Paramount tenants, as will be the overall I-5/Rose Quarter project.



**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0401 Veronica Felts

**Comment:** Oregon Department of Transportation,

I hope you'll reconsider your plans to expand the I-5. Our state has been influential in our efforts to move towards sustainable and environmentally friendly practices. While 40% of Oregon's carbon emissions comes from transportation, it is abhorrent that during a climate crisis we would even consider this project. I would hope that we could use these funds to promote safe, clean, and widely accessible public transportation services.

Along with reconsidering this project, I'd also urge you to invest in a full Environmental Impact Statement regarding this expansion and its impact on public health, safety, and environment.

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0329 Veronica Ledoux

**Comment:** As a high school science teacher, I believe that we have to model responsible action for young people. That includes stewardship of the environment and long-term planning that focus on how to create the kind of community in which we want our kids to grow up. A wider freeway will not help the climate, will not improve future air quality or improve the health of our community, and will not solve our city's transportation challenges. My students demand that my generation do a better job of making decisions now that will impact their future. Please create a full Environmental Impact Statement and seriously investigate alternatives that will not cause the climate and health collateral damage that result from widening the highway. We must hold ourselves to a higher standard, our youth are depending on us.

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0331 Veronica Poklemba

**Comment:** This money would be better spent on rapid transit lines, improved transit from broader areas of Portland... measures that would encourage people to drive less and take advantage of good transit options. I lived in the Metropolitan DC area and more lanes, highways... consistently resulted in more people clogging the roads. Sounds like research has shown the same thing.

It's time for an approach that will really contribute to getting cars off the roads and decreasing air pollution for residents - health costs continue to rise related to bad choices that are made.

**Attachments:** N/A



## 2019 0326 Vicky Medley

**Comment:** Please do NOT expand I 5. I live in that neighborhood (Elliot) and worry that more lanes =

more traffic. We need to discourage, not encourage more driving.

I also worry about the air quality of Tubman middle school. As a child I attended school in that building- I remember peeking through the fence and down onto the freeway lanes. In hindsight, what a terrible place for a school!

Please do the right thing and do not add lanes to I 5.

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0331 Victoria Clark

**Comment:** Hello,

I am a citizen concerned about the proposed I-5 expansion. I'm 17 years old, and the threat of climate change dominates my thoughts and everyday life. I constantly worry about my future and whether our governments will take the right course of action to ensure a stable, sustainable, and just future for all. While the environmental cost of the expansion is what worries me the most, I'm also worried about how effective this project would be.

It's been shown again and again how freeway expansions fail to reduce traffic. The costs of this expansion far outweigh the imaginary benefits. We should be looking into bold, innovative strategies to reduce the traffic in Portland in a just way.

We, as a supposed beacon of progressivism and environmentalism should be leading the way in showing other cities how to decrease congestion justly. This includes ideas like building a subway network and decommissioning freeways, among others.

The impact that this expansion would have on Harriet Tubman Middle School alone should be enough to sack this idea. When every school district across the state is facing massive budget cuts, I don't believe we should be investing half a billion dollars into a pointless freeway expansion that would have an extremely negative impact on the environment and the neighborhoods it would flow through. This project is misguided and we, as Portlanders, can do better.

Thank you,

Victoria Clark

**Attachments:** N/A



## 2019 0401 Victoria Frey

*Portland Institute for Contemporary Art*

**Comment:** Our non profit organization is located in the Rose Quarter on Hancock and Williams Avenue. We are very concerned about the impact of the proposed plan on an already struggling and absolutely important non-profit. We are not just concerned about the extended period of construction and the plan to make Hancock a through street, but also the poor air quality we will all suffer for years. This will impact us dramatically and likely put our organization at risk as no one will be able to reach us and our staff will suffer health effects.

The other concerns are really around the environmental impact. Although I understand the study discusses the decreased emissions from less idle time, it does not address the social and political impact of more cars on the road in a time when everyone in every state is trying to decrease carbon emissions and our dependence on fossil fuels. A freeway widening project seems to be a very digressive strategy. Why not a rail project or another more progressive solution?

Finally, from the political and social perspective this project seems to benefit the mostly white and more affluent at the expense of the already affected black community and diverse school populations here in NE. After so much discussion about how the freeway, the Memorial Coliseum and Legacy Hospital builds displaced the legacy families and the the black community here, it seems like another poor decision that continues this pattern of institutional racism and displacement. There are efforts here to bring back the communities of color - this will not help with that effort.

If safety is one of the arguments for doing this project I would argue that this is needed more in areas like the 82ns Street Corridor than here.

Please reconsider this enormously expensive and poorly positioned project.

Victoria Frey

Executive Director

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0401 Victoria Gilbert

**Comment:** > Expanding freeways is not an effective strategy for reducing congestion. ODOT has failed to make the case for why this project should move forward.

> ODOT should fully evaluate proven strategies such as congestion pricing and investment in public transportation before spending a half billion dollars to expand a short stretch of highway.



> The project is entirely at odds with the City's Climate Agenda. 40% of Oregon' emissions are from the transportation sector. We need to focus on strategies that reduce dependency on cars, not perpetuate 1950s style highway projects.

> At the same time that ODOT is proposing to spend nearly half a billion dollars on expanding I-5, the region continues to neglect serious road safety problems in East Portland.

> 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.

For a project with an estimated cost of over \$500 million, we feel the projected community benefits are just not there - while the opportunity cost of using these funds shelves other deserving projects with tangible safety improvements or opportunities to decarbonize our transportation system.

Money better spent on reducing harm to our city.

Victoria Gilbert

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0329 Viliija Jozaitis

*Oregon Trucking Associations, Inc.*

**Comment:** The Oregon Trucking Associations is a statewide trade association representing Oregon's trucking industry. Currently, the Oregon Trucking Associations has approximately 600 members comprised of trucking companies and suppliers to the industry. The members of the Oregon Trucking Associations would like to provide the following comments on the Environmental Assessment for the 1-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project.

One of the stated goals of the Environmental Assessment is to "improve freight reliability." Yet, the Environmental Assessment falls short on details regarding how this might be accomplished. This section of 1-5 is the gateway to the state's largest industrial areas including Swan Island, Rivergate and the Port of Portland. If this economic engine is to be maintained, much less expanded, reliable efficient truck freight service is essential.

Today, the Junction of 1-5 and 1-84, which is included in the 1-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, has been designated by the American Trucking Research Institute, as the 28th worst freight bottleneck in the country. For a state with a relatively modest population, to have one of the worst bottlenecks in the nation is an embarrassment. To propose a project that does very little to address this situation is unconscionable.

So, what's the problem here? The project as currently designed does not include any additional through travel lanes. Today, the segment of 1-5 between the Marquam and Freemont bridges is limited to two through travel lanes. This project is in the middle of this two lane section. If Oregon desires to have its major industrial areas prosper and eliminate the embarrassment of having one of the worst freight bottlenecks in the county, then the 1-5 Rose Quarter



Improvement Project should be redesigned to include an additional through travel lane in each direction.

This is not an outrageous request. A number of years ago when Oregon and Washington were working on a project to replace the I-5 bridges over the Columbia River, critics of that project noted that if the bridges were expanded to three travel lanes in each direction, the problem of congestion would simply move south to the Rose Quarter. Washington legislators have recently initiated new discussions to resurrect the Columbia River bridge project. Failure to add a third through lane to the Rose Quarter project could further jeopardize the Columbia River bridge project as a major argument against it would remain unaddressed. The only remedy is to add a third travel lane in each direction as part of the I-5 Rose quarter project.

The Oregon Trucking Associations supported HB 2017 enacted during the 2017 session of the Oregon Legislature. This bill was the largest and most comprehensive transportation package ever passed by the Oregon Legislature. The centerpiece of this bill is three projects designed to address congestion on Portland area freeways.

The three named projects are the Rose Quarter, I-205 and Highway 217. The most important to the trucking industry was and continues to be the Rose Quarter project because of its proximity to the state's major industrial areas. The Legislature concurred and provided funding for the Rose Quarter project but not the other two.

At that time, we believed that the Rose Quarter project would include an additional through lane in each direction. If we had known that no additional through capacity was going to be provided, we would not have supported the legislation. This project is that important to Oregon's trucking industry and we believe, the state's economy.

There is the following statement in the Environmental Assessment regarding the project's impact on air quality, "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. 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." We suspect that an additional through lane would reduce emissions more than slightly as it would have an even larger impact on vehicle speed and idling. However, the option of adding a third through lane in each direction was not an alternative that was considered as part of the Environmental Assessment.

The lack of participation in the Environmental Assessment is startling. All participants were government entities of one sort or another. A number of entities declined to participate at all. These included the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Multnomah County and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. No private sector entities were included. Certainly, the Oregon Trucking Associations was not included nor were any representatives of the businesses we serve including those that ship through the Port of Portland and customers located on Swan Island and in the Rivergate Industrial Area.

This approach may meet the specific requirements for an environmental assessment established by the Federal Highway Administration but it certainly does not comport with



common practice in the State of Oregon. It also makes no sense that the constituencies that our highway system is designed to serve were totally excluded from this process.

For the reasons enumerated above, the members of the Oregon Trucking Associations respectfully request that the Oregon Department of Transportation reopen the Environmental Assessment for the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, expand participation to those that will be served by the project and consider adding an additional through travel lane in each direction. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this extremely important project. It is essential that we get this one right, as it will set the stage for future prosperity in the Portland region. Sincerely Jana Jarvis

**Attachments:** [2019 0329 Vilija Jozaitis ATT](#)

## 2019 0227 Vincent Griffith

**Comment:** Expanding I-5 will just encourage more people to move to Vancouver, draining the cities tax base, increasing pollution, and eventually worsening traffic. Induced demand means freeway expansion will never solve traffic. We need more density, more transit, and less cars; this project undermines all 3!

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0401 Vinci Daro

**Comment:** Dear trusted leaders, I am writing to suggest a perspective of 20 years from now, looking back on this process and resulting decisions: Was this process informed and guided by a shared goal of reducing carbon emissions from transportation? Was this process informed and guided by a commitment to equitable access to clean air for the impacted children who are now in their 20s and 30s? Did the resulting decisions yield more affordable, more efficient, and more extensive transit and bike/ped infrastructure? Please consider building on commitments to - and investments in - cleaner air for those most directly impacted by carbon emissions, and better and more affordable transit for all. With a broadly shared, and growing, recognition of the limited viability of car-based transportation, the proposed I-5 "improvements" make little sense outside of an extremely narrow and short-sighted perspective. Thank you for your leadership on this important set of decisions

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0326 Virginia Macrae

**Comment:** ODOT - As a lower Eliot neighborhood resident/homeowner for 36 years I have many changes including increased congestion everywhere, however, this expansion is not the answer. I strongly object to this plan and ask that it be stopped for all the reasons below



- why has ODOT not come up with an Environmental Impact Statement? Isn't this required by law? I and many others demand that ODOT more fully study alternatives (including decongestion pricing!) to this expansion with a full Environmental Impact Statement
- It will not reduce congestion-it's proven that the more freeway you build, it just fills up
- it will INCREASE carbon emission for Tubman Middle School - not decrease them - researcher's recommendations that outdoor recess be eliminated is wrong on so many levels. The miniscule amount of pollution you claim will be reduced as a result of increased lanes will have already been negated by the congestion resulting in a monster construction project with major delays for how many months/years?
- the money is needed for much more urgent safety corridors where people are getting hit and killed all the time. Also how about fixing potholes? - eliminating the Flint street overpass would result in an extremely congested and dangerous intersection at Vancouver and Broadway as people try to go from Vancouver to downtown. What's the plan for that?
- ODOT's track record of cost overruns does not bode well for this project - how many more millions would be required?
- your claim of somehow knitting the Albina neighborhood back together is ludicrous - after condemning and stealing their homes and economically forcing them out, the African American neighborhood has been decimated. Building truly affordable housing in this area is what's needed - not more freeway lanes.
- This is a slap in the face of climate change - a terrifying situation looming on the very near horizon and you are doing the opposite of what's needed. Any expansion will just fill up as there's no incentive for people not to drive on an expanded freeway and with the reported 300 people per day moving to the Portland area, this will do nothing to relieve traffic congestion. Having congestion on a freeway is what makes people think of alternatives - I will not drive on the freeway in this area unless I absolutely must - I'll take any other viable route as I know that sitting in traffic is not faster.
- One has to wonder who would benefit from this project as it certainly is not the public who is being robbed of money that is so urgently needed elsewhere. Who in ODOT stands to make money and be glorified somehow?

**Attachments:** N/A

## 2019 0329 Vivek Shandas

**Comment:** I strongly oppose the widening of the I-5 corridor. As a planning professional, I've seen first hand the scholarship and real world experience about how a road-widening project can further degrade community health and well being. The scholarship and studies are unequivocal that road-widening projects generate more traffic congestion a short time after their completion. Personally, I've lived in two cities where local decision makers have agreed to

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widen roads, and have witnessed first hand no change in the congestion. By generating more traffic, and not addressing congestion, ODOT proposal will also generate additional air pollution, which are already harming those most vulnerable populations in the region. Please reconsider this project, and rather put the money into finding alternative that address the root of the problem -- insufficient options for professional commuting.

**Attachments:** N/A

## **2019 0000 Vladlen Belogradov**

**Comment:** No Comment Included

**Attachments:** N/A