



I-5 Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion Project
C/o Megan Channell
Oregon Department of Transportation
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April 1, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

The Community Cycling Center would like to add ours to the chorus of voices *opposing* the proposed I-5 Rose Quarter freeway widening project.

The Community Cycling Center is a 25-year old transportation justice organization. Our mission is to broaden access to bicycling and its benefits. Our vision is to help build a vibrant community where people of all backgrounds use bicycles to stay healthy and connected. We believe that all Portlanders – regardless of income or background— should have the opportunity to experience the joy, freedom, and health benefits of bicycling.

Our office is right in the middle of the project area, at 1805 NE 2nd Avenue, so we have a direct stake in the project as a local business. Additionally, here is a short list of our major concerns about the project:

1. Low income individuals and communities of color who live or work near the freeway will be impacted by the vehicle emissions associated with higher traffic volumes. Asthma and autism are just two of the many diseases associated with exposure to the exhaust and particulate matter from freeways. We do not think it is worth it to impose those burdens on people so that (a) a few people have faster trips, or (b) more people can commute from Oregon jobs to Washington homes.
2. Low income youth and youth of color who attend school near the freeway will also be impacted by the increased vehicle emissions. This is most notable for the students at Tubman Middle School.
3. Low income individuals and communities of color throughout Portland, Oregon, the country and the world will bear the primary impact of the climate change that is exacerbated by every freeway expansion project.
4. The African American community of Portland, historically based in the Albina neighborhood, is working to create their own vision of an Albina neighborhood revitalization project, and this proposal does not take that into account.
5. Cyclists moving through the Rose Quarter will be affected by massive multi-year disruptions, which will *not* be justified by the actual eventual bicycle facility improvements in the project.



Instead of repeating the mistakes of the 20th century and exacerbating pollution and climate change, our preferred alternative is for you to scrap this project as currently conceived, and instead do the following:

1. In keeping with your claim that safety is your #1 goal:
Reallocate ODOT funding to prioritize safety improvements for vulnerable road users on ODOT's many high-fatality corridors, instead of trying to justify this freeway expansion with claims of reducing fender-benders.
2. In keeping with your claim that reducing congestion is your #2 goal:
Implement a strategy that will actually work – decongestion pricing. Freeway widening projects never actually decrease congestion for more than a trivial amount of time. The concept of triple convergence means that people's choices of mode, time, and destination will *always* converge to fill up available space on a road. Decongestion pricing, on the other hand, can incentivize people to make different decisions, and subsidy programs for people living on low incomes can maintain or even improve equity as compared to the status quo.

What serves the people of Oregon best is a transportation system that prioritizes safety, especially for vulnerable road users, and that is actively working to minimize and mitigate the disastrous impacts of climate change. Freeway widening projects do the opposite.

If you are unwilling to take that bold step (yet,) we urge at least the following:

1. A full environmental impact assessment
2. Inclusion of a robust congestion pricing system as one of the alternatives
3. Complete project forecasting that does not rely on any currently unfunded projects being completed

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kasandra Griffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kasandra Griffin
Executive Director