



November 20, 2014

Dear Commissioner Novick and Members of City Council,

We, the undersigned, thank you again for your leadership to address longstanding maintenance and safety needs for our city's streets by advancing a proposal to bring new resources to the Bureau of Transportation.

We support the current proposal because it is good public policy. It addresses existing regressive transportation fees and taxes and the inequitable distribution of public resources by exempting our lowest income households, dividing the revenue burden equally between residents and businesses, and steering a majority of the revenue to the areas of the city that have for too long been neglected and are unsafe. We also strongly support the exclusion of a sunset clause, so that this endeavor can continue into the future as we work to improve our transportation system.

It bears mentioning that this proposal is a product of substantial efforts by your office, PBOT staff and a broad range of stakeholders. As with most collaborative efforts, compromise is often required, and we believe the city has made substantial concessions to the business community in order to bring this policy framework forward. We are disappointed that the business community continues to publicly oppose this proposal despite these concessions, and as the public conversation continues, we anticipate further complaints from wealthy residents and business interests, including threats of referral.

Should a proposal eventually be referred to voters, our willingness to join the "Yes" campaign and invest resources in upholding this proposal will likely depend on whether the City Council passes a truly progressive package, one that is fairer for the middle class and places a stronger emphasis on safety.

Given our support, and given that the concessions afforded to the business community have not secured the level of support intended, we recommend that City Council amend the proposal to ensure that working families and middle-class households are not burdened at the expense of the wealthiest among us, who can clearly afford to pay more. We remain convinced that safe streets should be our top priority, and a majority of Portlanders want to see more money dedicated to making our streets safer, especially where conditions are the worst.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and PBOT to ensure the city can make the promise of safe and well-maintained streets a reality for everyone.

Sincerely,

Jason Miner
Executive Director
1000 Friends of Oregon

Rob Sadowsky
Executive Director
Bicycle Transportation Alliance

Mara Gross
Executive Director
Coalition for a Livable Future

Jonathan Ostar
Executive Director
OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon

Noel Mickelberry
Executive Director
Oregon Walks

Chris Hagerbaumer
Deputy Director
Oregon Environmental Council

Karianne Schlosshauer
Pacific Northwest Regional Policy Manager
Safe Routes to Schools National Partnership

Heidi Guenin
Policy Manager, Transportation & Land Use
Upstream Public Health

Cc: Mayor Charlie Hales
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Dan Saltzman
PBOT Director Leah Treat
Josh Alpert
Chris Warner
Tom Bizeau
Mark Lear
Jamie Waltz