

## Office of Mayor Charlie Hales City of Portland

## PRESS RELEASE

HED: Mayor, Commissioner Push Back Council Vote on 2015 Street Fee

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PORTLAND, OR – The proposal by Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioner Steve Novick to launch a street fee in 2015 remains on schedule. However, the council vote on how to structure the fee will be pushed back until November.

"We have not taken care of our largest asset: our streets. We have to change that," Mayor Hales said. "We've been talking about this for 13 years, and we held several town halls this winter and spring to hear from people. Despite that, many constituents still haven't been heard yet. We get that. Postponing the Council vote will give people time to weigh in on whether this is the best solution to this dire need, and to consider changes to make it work better."

"The last street free proposal in 2008 was derailed by a lobbyist filing a referendum petition," said Commissioner Novick. "This one has been temporarily delayed due to concerns voiced by small business owners and low-income people and advocates. We are in a hurry to get to work, but if we're going to be delayed, it's for the right reasons."

The City Council on Wednesday will still vote on referring a charter change that would lock in the use of any street fee for transportation purposes. "Voters need to be assured that we will spend this money the way we say we will," Hales said. "A charter change will ensure that we stay true to that commitment, administration after administration."

However, the council vote on both the residential fee, and the non-residential fee, will be pushed back to November..

Further public forums will be scheduled to hear from residents and the business community.

And two work groups will be formed. Their charges:

- To analyze city policy regarding low-income residents and fees. The work group will look at the street fee as well as fees for other city utilities, including water and sewer, to see how well low-income residents are being served and how widely discounts can be applied.
- To further engage with small business, nonprofit and government partners on design and implementation of the fee.

"Think of this as a track race," Hales said. "We haven't moved the finish line, which is July 2015. But we're moving the starting blocks. We heard from the community: We are taking our time to hear a more robust debate on the details of this fee. But we have not wavered in our resolve. It is our intention to finally address our deteriorating streets."