



PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE

September 14, 2017

Portland City Council  
1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97204

Re: Central City 2035: I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project

Dear Mayor Wheeler and City Council Members,

On behalf of the Portland Freight Committee (PFC) we are submitting the following testimony in support of the multi-modal safety improvements identified in the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project that was adopted by City Council as part of the 2012 N/NE Quadrant Plan. We want to stress the overall importance of implementing these transportation safety improvements as a complete package to maximize their full benefits at this major freeway interchange area.

The PFC has served as an advisory group on freight mobility issues to the Portland Bureau of Transportation and City Council since 2003. The PFC is comprised of over 30 members (membership roster is attached) that include both public and private sector representatives including logistic service providers, shippers, trade associations and various businesses related to multi-modal freight activities in the Portland region. The mission of the PFC is to support and enhance the economy of the City of Portland by advancing a balanced and well-managed multi-modal freight network.

Several members of the PFC also served on the N/NE Quadrant Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) which resulted in the currently proposed transportation system improvements based on the consensus reached during that two-year long process that include:

- The addition of one auxiliary lane in each direction on I-5 to minimize the need for vehicles to merge resulting in reduced crashes and improved traffic operational efficiency and safety.
- The addition of shoulders on I-5 in conjunction with the auxiliary lanes to allow disabled vehicles to pull over and provide better access for emergency response vehicles for reducing system-wide bottlenecks.
- Improved local access and connectivity by constructing a seismically upgraded lid over I-5 with new local access for pedestrians, bicycles and local vehicle circulation.
- The addition of a new bicycle and pedestrian-only bridge between Lloyd District and the Rose Quarter.

The I-5/I-84 interchange at the Rose Quarter has been identified as one of the most congested freeway interchanges in the state with the highest incidence of vehicle crashes and one of many pivotal transportation improvements in the recently approved House Bill 2017 transportation package. Removing the auxiliary lanes and shoulders from the I-5 Rose Quarter Project would undermine the delicate state-wide consensus that was reached which enabled House Bill 2017 to pass. This project,

along with many others, was part of the grand bargain which allowed the Oregon Legislature to successfully pass the needed transportation funding package this session.

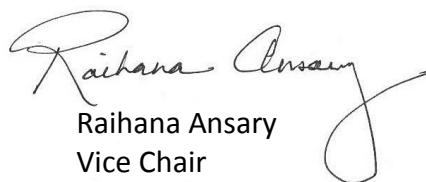
Calling this a freeway widening project as being proposed by some is both misleading and short sighted in respect to the full package of safety improvements agreed upon and recommended in the N/NE Quadrant Plan. Since the \$450 million project is being funded by a dedicated statewide gas tax approved under HB2017, eliminating the auxiliary lane and shoulder improvements would further undermine the credibility and spirit of this legislative action.

The PFC urges Portland City Council to reject the calls to remove the needed auxiliary lane and shoulder improvements from the I-5 Rose Quarter Project and respect the adopted recommendations from the N/NE Quadrant Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee and House Bill 2017 approved by the Oregon Legislature and signed by Governor Brown.

Respectfully yours,



Pia Welch  
Chair



Raihana Ansary  
Vice Chair

CC Leah Treat, Portland Bureau of Transportation  
Matt Garrett, Oregon Department of Transportation