

March 26, 2018

Metro Council
600 NE Grant Ave,
Portland, OR 97232

Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capitol Street NE, MS #11
Salem, OR 97301-3871

Dear Metro Council and the Oregon Transportation Commission,

The purpose of this letter is to express our serious concern that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has not included a transformational project for 82nd Avenue in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). It is essential that a project that envisions and funds a full upgrade to City standards and facilitates a transfer of ownership be added to the RTP to ensure that 82nd Avenue meets current needs, meets our Vision Zero goals, and supports a jurisdictional transfer of 82nd Avenue to the City of Portland.

Every five years, the region creates a vision for our transportation system for the next twenty years with our highest priorities. A failure to include this project in the RTP, and follow-up with immediate funding for planning and design, could result in this critical improvement being delayed for decades. For people walking in Portland, 82nd Avenue is the most dangerous street, with 140 pedestrian collisions in a ten-year period, including seven pedestrian deaths and 25 serious injuries. In addition, 82nd Avenue is the sixth most dangerous street for bicyclists and twelfth most dangerous street for people in motor vehicles.

The City of Portland wrote to the Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) to request that this project be included in the constrained RTP. It is our understanding that ODOT has not responded to this request and has not included 82nd Avenue in the 2018 RTP.

The lack of stewardship and prioritization of state highways routed as urban arterials are why they are often called “orphaned highways.” These roads, including 82nd Avenue, are some of our most important and dangerous streets. 82nd Avenue is a critical transit route, with Line 72 having the fifth highest ridership in the TriMet system, more than either the MAX Yellow Line and MAX Orange Line. Many of these riders get on and off along 82nd Avenue. We urge the Department to add 82nd Avenue to years 1-10 of the constrained 2018 RTP and prioritize funding for planning and project development to ensure the project can be delivered as soon as possible.

As we better understand how historically marginalized communities are unfairly impacted by the dangerous streets in East Portland, this is one of the biggest equity issues facing the region. East Portland is home to roughly 20 percent of the City of Portland, including 13 neighborhoods and more than 150,000 Portlanders. East Portland is more racially and ethnically diverse compared to the city as a whole, with over a third of the population identifying as something other than “white.” Due to a larger stock of affordable housing, among other factors, this part of the City has seen

significant population increase as compared to Portland overall. Between the 2000 and 2010 U.S. censuses, 44 percent of citywide population increase can be attributed to growth in East Portland. The need to serve this vibrant, diverse and expanding community in a better, smarter and safer way is urgent.

We understand that the 2018 RTP is quickly moving toward completion. Therefore, we request that you respond back to this letter as soon as possible and add this project. In addition, we would like to offer our assistance in making sure that there is significant funding for the required planning and project development to ensure that this project can move forward as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Ted Wheeler
Mayor, City of Portland



Sen. Michael Dembrow
Senate District 23



Rep. Barbara Smith Warner
House District 45



Amanda Fritz
Commissioner,
City of Portland



Sen. Rod Monroe
Senate District 24



Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer
House District 46



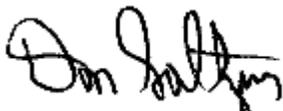
Nick Fish
Commissioner,
City of Portland



Jessica Vega Pederson
Commissioner,
Multnomah County



Rep. Jeff Reardon
House District 48



Dan Saltzman
Commissioner,
City of Portland



Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner,
City of Portland