

From:

Diane Meisenhelter

What do you want to tell legislators about the proposed \$1.9 Billion Rose Quarter Freeway Expansion and Oregon's transportation system?

Thanks for the opportunity to give testimony to the Joint Special Subcommittee on Transportation Planning!

I'm testifying today on behalf of Extinction Rebellion PDX—a 1500 member climate justice organization in Portland. In the midst of a climate emergency, leaders need to be doing everything in their power to significantly reduce emissions. For this reason and many others, the Roseway Quarter Freeway expansion needs a full Environmental Impact Statement and should be reconsidered to eliminate expansion in size proposed to be twice today's width with additional lanes.

1) It is outrageously expensive already ballooning to almost \$2 billion. It squanders resources that could instead be utilized for the more pressing regional transportation needs of safety given rising fatalities, road maintenance, and reaching climate goals by making transit more efficient, dependable, affordable, and attractive; and supporting alternative and active transportation modes.

2) Congestion pricing and additional transit should be utilized prior to building to determine true capacity needs, reduce emissions, and be less expensive than tolling for roadway expansion.

3) Lane widening will induce demand and add air pollution to the North/Northeast corridor already reported to be one of the worst in the nation.

4) It will disrupt Harriet Tubman Middle School and add to the noise, pollution impact, and historical division of the neighborhood that Albina Vision has documented. We applaud their plan for capping lanes (although CURRENT, not expanded lanes) if it reduces the impact of noise and pollution to the surrounding neighborhood and adds beauty and economic opportunity to local BIPOC businesses given the historic damage of this freeway.

Pivoting now towards tolling:

1) As already stated, congestion pricing and additional transit should be utilized prior to building additional roadways to determine true capacity needs, reduce emissions, and be less expensive than tolling for freeway expansion.

2) The critical decades in terms of climate emergency should ensure that tolling is not utilized for freeway expansions, but directed towards safety; improving and expanding transit and multimodal, non-auto-centric travel options; and critical road and bridge maintenance.

3) We support EMAC's recommendations for benefitting low-income families with toll discounts or credits. In addition, it is critical to encourage alternative and active transportation options, and improve transit as previously described. One out of four families can't or don't drive. Transportation planning needs to move away from the car-centric models from the past and towards sustainable plans for the future.

THANKS for listening....