

## Commuting by bicycle in Portland: Benefits and Risks

February 3, 2010

My name is Bruce Wolfe. I am professor of surgery at OHSU specializing in the treatment of obesity. I lead a NIH national obesity research project which includes detailed study of physical activity and obesity. The research is ongoing and indicates that activity as a part of daily living has more impact for most people than occasional workouts at a gym. Commuting by walking or bicycle is an excellent way to increase activity and improve health but must be safe. Red Hoffman of our OHSU trauma team lead a yearlong research study of 962 bicycle commuters in Portland and recently reported the results at a National Trauma meeting where she won an award for Injury Prevention. Unfortunately the study shows that bicycle commuting in Portland is not safe. Specifically, in one year 5% of bicycle commuters reported an event that required formal medical evaluation; a significant number of these commuters were not wearing a helmet, suggesting that there continues to be a need for bicycle safety education. Further, 20% of all injuries involved poor roadway surface conditions, including gravel in bike lanes, steel plates on the road and street car tracks, suggesting the importance of maintenance of existing infrastructure as well as the importance of considering cyclists when planning updates to the city's transportation system. We must improve bicycle safety in Portland if we are to realize the many benefits to all of our citizens that follow increasing bicycle commuting. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

Bruce M. Wolfe, MD  
Professor of Surgery  
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503-494-1299

**Moore-Love, Karla**

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**From:** Chelsea Cassady [cassady@ohsu.edu] on behalf of Bruce Wolfe [wolfeb@ohsu.edu]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 20, 2010 9:22 AM  
**To:** Moore-Love, Karla  
**Cc:** katja.dillman@ci.portland.or.us; Michelle Poyourow  
**Subject:** January 27

Dear Ms. Moore-Love,

I am writing to request an opportunity to address the Portland City Council at the meeting January 27, 2010 at 9:30am. I wish to speak to council about bicycling in Portland and the Portland bicycle plan drawing on my experience as professor of surgery at OHSU, with special interests in obesity, physical activity and bicycle commuting.

Thank you very much,

Bruce M. Wolfe, MD

Professor of Surgery

OHSU

Request of Bruce M. Wolfe, MD to address Council regarding bicycling in  
Portland and the Portland Bicycle Plan (Communication)

FEB 03 2010

PLACED ON FILE

Filed JAN 29 2010

**LaVonne Griffin-Valade**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 

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1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Leonard		
Adams		