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Agenda Item 96

TESTIMONY

2:00 PM TIME CERTAIN

GAS TAX

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, PRINT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE (Optional)	Email (Optional)
✓ Terry Parker	P.O. Box 13503	
✓ Andy Shaw		
✓ Chris Smith	2393 NW Polk St	
✓ Krist Finney Dunn		
✓ Matthew Meetic	← Leah Benson	
✓ Hau Hagedorn		
✓ Rebecca Hamilton		
✓ Bob S. Kransky	(Gerik Kransky) 614 NW Glisan	gerik@btaoregon.org
✓ Ophelia Miracle		
✓ Amy Subach		
✓ Steve Gutmann		

GAS TAX

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, **PRINT** YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)

ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE (Optional)

Email (Optional)

✓ Lightning		
✓ JOE WALSH		
✓ VIVIAN SATTERFIELD		
✓ Charles JOHNSON		
NO Soren Imprey	2440 SE PDX	

Testimony: Raising Local Revenue for Transportation

Transportation for America is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country, united to ensure that states and the federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions – because these are the investments that hold the key to our future economic prosperity.

Congress has passed a transportation bill that locks us into 5 more years of mediocre federal transportation funding, and the state of Oregon failed to pass a transportation package in 2015 to address road and bridge maintenance and other transportation challenges.

When the roof of your house is leaking, you don't wait around for someone else to come fix it for you. Streets are like houses in that preventative maintenance protects the investment and saves taxpayer money. Maintaining a road in good condition over time costs less than half the cost of making major repairs after letting the same road deteriorate to poor condition. Our children and grandchildren have a better shot at prospering in this city if we leave them safe streets in good repair, rather than unsafe streets and a heavy burden of deferred maintenance.

The user-fee proposal under discussion today could help the City of Portland get a handle on its street maintenance challenges, and address safety issues. Other cities are moving to fund transportation locally. For example, Seattle recently passed a \$930 million measure to fix streets and bridges, improve safety and invest in transportation options. Portland's relatively modest proposal deserves strong consideration, and we look forward to supporting the discussion with information and ideas from our national network of leaders and experts.



January 27, 2016

Commissioners and Mayor Hales,

My name is Kari Schlosshauer and I represent the Safe Routes to School National Partnership in the Pacific Northwest. I am also a mom to two young boys who unfortunately could not be here today, but wanted me to let you know the only thing they love more than pointing out the potholes and cracks in our streets — is watching the paving and construction equipment that comes to fix our streets.

I would like to thank Commissioner Novick and the Portland Bureau of Transportation for their work to identify, highlight, and begin to prioritize the investments needed in our transportation system, especially in historically under-invested parts of the city. As with nearly every other city in the country, unfortunately, Portland has significant disparities in the geographic allocation of safe infrastructure for getting around. People who walk in the city's poorer neighborhoods are three times more likely to be killed in traffic compared to those in wealthier parts of the city. This simply cannot continue to be our MO, especially in a city that has adopted a Vision Zero strategy. We support and are pleased to see essential safety projects in diverse, low income communities where the needs are greatest.

Portland has an exemplary program of education and encouragement programs that promote Safe Routes to Schools — arguably one of the best in the nation — but many of Portland's schools sit on or near busy and unsafe streets, and that puts our children at risk on a daily basis.

Safety is an essential priority, and this proposal allocates \$8 million for Safe Routes to School improvements, approximately \$500,000 for each High School cluster, which will fund projects that have been identified and asked for, for years.

- These safety projects will positively affect students at more than 35 elementary schools in David Douglas, Parkrose, Reynolds, Centennial, and Portland Public School Districts.
- Improvements will include school crossings, paths and missing connections, sidewalks, traffic calming, and bicycle route connections for youth in all corners of the city who need these safe routes to get to and from school, and in their community.

Our kids are our future, and they need safe routes to get there. I thank you again for considering this proposal, and for the opportunity to speak today in support of sending it to the voters.

Sincerely,

Kari Schlosshauer
Pacific Northwest Regional Policy Manager
Safe Routes to School National Partnership

January 27, 2016

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Dear Mayor Hales and Portland City Commissioners,

For the record my name is Gerik Kransky, Advocacy Director with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance. We are a nonprofit organization that creates healthy, sustainable communities by making bicycling safe, convenient and accessible in our work over the last 25 years. Today I'm asking you to vote yes on the resolution to refer a temporary gas tax to Portland voters to help fix our streets.

We are convinced that safe streets for all Portlanders should be our top priority, and a majority of residents want to see more money dedicated to making this happen. This is especially true where conditions are the worst and individuals are the most at risk.

This funding proposal, with the current project list, is a good start. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance supports this effort, especially because a significant portion of the revenue will be dedicated to making our streets safer. We also need to balance our interests with the reality that flat taxes, by definition, are regressive. In the case of this proposal many of the safety projects are in neighborhoods that need the investment the most, which can help ease the burden of increased transportation costs.

Anything the City of Portland can do to help Portlanders shift their transportation choices from driving to walking, biking, and transit should receive serious consideration.

Some highlights in this proposal from BTA's perspective include; over \$8M for safe routes to school, over \$6M for new sidewalks, almost \$4M for safety improvements on high crash corridors, \$3.2M for new protected bike lanes and \$2.4M for neighborhood greenways. These are fantastic priorities and we hope to see them fully funded. Taxing behavior we want to reduce, driving, to fund behavior we want to encourage, biking and walking, is a step in the right direction.

Invest in Vision Zero

City Council's adoption of Vision Zero in June 2015 was a critical step forward to make our transportation system the safest possible and to achieve the goal of zero traffic-related injuries and fatalities in the next 10 years. We appreciate the continued work of Director Treat, bureau staff, Commissioner Novick and Mayor Hales. The adoption of vision zero policy isn't enough to get us to our goal; we need to invest the funds to improve the safety of our streets. The gas tax will fund crucial safety improvements.

Prioritize safety over speed

The sooner our sidewalk and bikeway networks are complete, the more it will save the City on road projects, maintenance, health care costs, congestion, and crashes. Sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and safe streets provide people with affordable transportation choices, which also contributes to the long-term financial health of the city.



Our neighborhood greenways are low-traffic, low-speed streets that provide people, especially those who are not comfortable riding on busy streets, a safer and more relaxing place to ride. They utilize existing infrastructure with low-cost improvements such as way-finding signage. Neighborhood greenways take traffic off the arterial system and are a much cheaper way to accommodate trips than by expanding arterials. Increasing investment in completing this network is money well spent.

We should use our limited dollars to build places to ride that feel comfortable for ninety percent of the population, not an elite ten percent of riders. The BTA is pleased to see that this proposal includes projects to construct *physically protected*, not painted, bike lanes on major streets. For a little extra cost we can build bike lanes that are orders of magnitude more appealing, safe, and useful by making them protected bike lanes.

Thank you for your consideration of our perspective on this important issue. We look forward to continuing to work together to make our streets safe for everyone, regardless of how they choose to get around.

Sincerely,



Gerik Kransky
Advocacy Director



TERRY PARKER
P.O. BOX 13503
PORTLAND, OREGON 97213-0503

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Subject: Testimony to the Portland City Council on the proposed ten cents a gallon gas tax, January 27, 2016

With nearly half of the proposed gas tax revenues going to non-maintenance projects; and with over 800 million dollars of proposed infrastructure to accommodate bicycles in Portland's TSP that are often referred to and masqueraded as safety improvements; any increased capacity for motorists is virtually nonexistent and even being reduced with road diets. Bicycle infrastructure is not an entitlement program.

There is also an enormous mass transit project list that will require an immense amount of taxpayer subsidies for operations even though car trips are expected to increase by 49 percent over the next 20 years regardless of how much mass transit service is added.* Not only do TriMet's busses do the heaviest damage to Portland streets,** but public transit on average uses more energy per passenger mile as measured in BTUs, and creates more emissions per passenger mile as measured in Co2 than driving a modern fuel efficient car.*** Transit riders on average are taxpayer subsidized at more than 60 cents per passenger mile.***

It is unjust to pile more taxes onto motorists rather than equitably and proportionally distributing some of the burden of payment to the users of the alternative modes.

Without a tax on transit fares and bicyclist paid user fees to pay for super-sized bike lane space and their huge I want list such as barricading off Clinton Street for a bicycle freeway; a stand alone increase in the gas tax is both tax discrimination and bias social engineering. Furthermore, the City Club concept of charging higher registration fees related to the weight of a car or light truck is an attack on middle class households that have a need for family sized cars or cargo capacity vehicles.

Instead of continuing to unjustly profile and extort Portland motorists, the City Council needs to start providing more than just lip-service equity. This includes proportionally adding motorist specific representatives to ALL of PBOT's advisory and oversight committees. Stacking the deck with alternative mode users to advise how the dollars are spent and not including the primary financial providers that pay for the majority of TSP projects is yet another outright form of motorist directed discrimination.

The public process is clearly broken. Is this hearing just window dressing for a decision already made? When one user mode is taxed and the special interest modes are not, trust in government becomes lost. Taxes are rarely temporary. This gas tax increase measure needs to be opposed if it is not coupled with a tax or fees on transit riders and freeloading adult bicyclists.

Respectively submitted,

Terry Parker
Northeast Portland

* Figures gathered by the Portland Business Alliance. ** Sam Adams. *** From the book Gridlock.

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Bob Clark <elvsy3k@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2016 7:39 AM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Subject: Agenda 96 written testimony opposing gasoline tax
Attachments: PutTestJan2016.pdf

Dear Council Clerk:

Please find attached my written testimony concerning this Wednesday's Agenda number 96.

Thank you,
Bob Clark
503-233-2073

Written Public Testimony for Agenda 96: Proposed Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax

Bob Clark, SE Portland

Volunteer for the Taxpayer Association of Oregon

January 27, 2016

Dear Mayor, Commissioners and City Auditor:

I oppose the proposed ten cent per gallon gasoline/vehicle fuel tax.

Those who depend on getting around by car are getting an unfair bargain in this proposal. It continues and accentuates the shifting of road capacity for them to others who do not pay for the capacity shifted to them. Car drivers are seeing narrower roads, with number of lanes reduced; while the closer-in government class (in large measure) is given its own system of dedicated bike lanes. To add insult to injury, this same government class enjoys a new bridge across the Willamette while car drivers are banned from using it.

The City is making it harder with this new tax and other actions for many longtime residents to continue living in the City. The City lavishes its employees with cost of living increases greater than those received by those on social security and other pensions (there was no increase in the cost of living for these folks this year.) The City is even planning to redo the Portland building to give its government employees a plusher working environment, at taxpayer expense. The City spends tens of millions of dollars each year on local real estate, driving up demand for real estate even as its residents compete vigorously for housing. (For instance, the City sits on vacant lots in the Lents area, adding to the shortage of buildable lots.)

In Summary, the City has the means to maintain a good road system but chooses to spend public resources elsewhere in ways far short of fully benefitting its taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Bob Clark

(503) 233-2073