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**Subject: Testimony to the Portland City Council related to a City Club report,
January 6, 2016**

The City Club's report on the need for Portland to address street repairs is correct in articulating that no single source of revenue will raise the full amount needed. That advice however is followed by the submission of unjustly piling various types of taxes onto motorists rather than equitably and proportionally distributing some of the burden of payment to the users of alternative modes.

Portland's TSP has over 800 million dollars of proposed bicycle infrastructure projects along with other transportation infrastructure projects that include a bicycle component as the underlying reason for the project. Capacity improvements for motorists are for the most part nonexistent. 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 and roads, 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. A tax on transit fares - maybe a nickel or dime a ride - needs to be part of the revenue source mix.

Likewise, it is completely outdated and obsolete to expect the user taxes and fees assessed on motorists to be siphoned off to pay for bike lanes, and the huge I want, I want, I want list of specialized bicycle infrastructure that bicyclists continually lobby for. As an example, bicyclists alone should be paying for all the anti-automobile/car hater traffic diverters and signage being installed on SE Clinton Street.

Instead of raiding motorist paid gas tax revenues and continuing to allow the bicycling community to freeload, equity must be more than comp plan lip service and require that any increase in the gas tax be coupled with some sort of a bicyclist paid user fee.

Finally, in the spirit sharing the road, PBOT needs to have an open and transparent conversation with the entire community on the subject of sharing the financial responsibility. The attached proposal developed over a year ago can be used as one starting point concept whereby bicyclists can share in those costs.

Respectively submitted,

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* Figures gathered by the Portland Business Alliance.

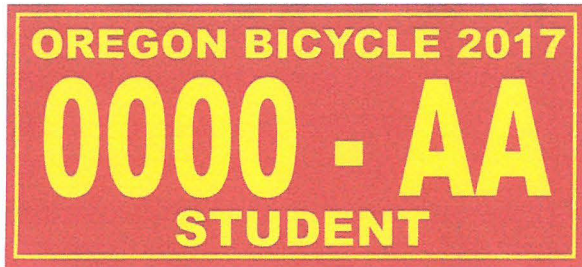
Proposal: The Oregon Bicycling Safety and Infrastructure Funding Action Plan

Purpose: To add new safety requirements and make bicycle infrastructure more financially self sustainable with a user provided revenue stream.

- 1)** Require that bike helmets be mandatory for all ages throughout Oregon when riding a bicycle on public property and infrastructure.
- 2)** Initiate new safety standards and regulations (more than just a helmet) for infants, toddlers and very young children riding in a trailer behind a bicycle. This should include requiring trailers to provide better crash protection, and when and where they can be used such as not on the busiest motor vehicle streets and thoroughfares. Signage needs to identify these streets.
- 3)** Establish a \$60.00 per year (\$5.00 per month paid annually or bi-annually) bicyclist paid user fee for bicyclists 16 years of age and over (or possibly 18 and over) to be administered through the DMV.
- 4)** The DMV will issue a numbered sticker that must be affixed to the left side of a bicyclist's helmet that will be similar to a mini license plate. The sticker allows the bicyclist to ride any bicycle within any of the urban areas where a sticker is required.
- 5)** After administration costs are covered, all additional revenue will be dedicated for bicycle infrastructure within the urban area or city in which the bicyclist paid for the sticker.
- 6)** The requirement to have a sticker would only apply within urban areas that spend a significant amount of taxpayer revenue on bicycle infrastructure. They include the Portland-Metro area, Salem, Eugene, Springfield, Corvallis, Albany, Medford, Ashland, Bend and any other city that wants to join the program and generate revenue for bicycle infrastructure.
- 7)** Stickers for bicyclists under 16 years of age (or possibly under 18) would be different color and be distributed through schools either free of charge or at the cost of administering the program.
- 8)** In the urban areas where the sticker is mandatory, bicyclists that meet the age requirement and are riding on public property or infrastructure without a sticker on their helmet would be subject to a mandatory fine - the amount equal to driving without a license. Under age bicyclists riding without displaying a sticker would receive a warning for the first offence and a fine of half the normal amount for additional offences, or be required to perform a community service.
- 9)** A non-residence sticker must also be made available at a discounted rate for bicyclists that live outside of Oregon, but regularly ride in Portland or other locations where the sticker will be mandatory. Non-residents would be subject to the same age related fines for not displaying a sticker.

Sample Bicycle Sticker Tags

(Actual size)



Logic for the proposal: Primarily, it is an equitable way to help balance transportation taxes and user fees. When people replace driving with riding a bicycle, they also replace being a user fee taxpayer that financially supports transportation infrastructure - becoming a non-taxpayer-freeloader that does not financially contribute to or support the costs of the specialized infrastructure being utilized. It is completely outdated and obsolete to expect that somebody else and/or user taxes and fees assessed on other transport modes pay the costs for all the specialized infrastructure bicyclists want. Affixing the sticker to a bicyclist's helmet allows the bicyclist to use multiple bikes rather than purchasing and paying for a sticker for each bike they may own or ride. Establishing standards statewide avoids a city by city piecemeal approach, and with a motor vehicle licensing process in place, having the DMV issue the bicycle tags saves administrative costs. Finally, requiring all bicyclists to wear helmets is a safety measure similar to motor vehicle seatbelt requirements; and plopping an infant or small child in an unprotected flimsy trailer with just a helmet and then proceed to bicycle down a busy street is simply ignoring any common sense of safety, but it takes place every day.