



Press Release

Contact:

Scott Bricker

Executive Director

w: (503) 226-0676 x14

c: (503) 757-8342

scott@bta4bikes.org

BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE FORMALIZES OPPOSITION TO COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING

Monday, March 23, 2009 – The Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) announced today its opposition to the massive freeway expansion, known as the Columbia River Crossing, that is being planned between Portland and Vancouver.

Widening the freeway to move more cars will generate more traffic in Portland and in Clark County, will speed up climate change by releasing more greenhouse gases, and will spew pollutants into the air around N Portland and Vancouver neighborhoods.

Building bigger freeways is not the solution to the congestion or environmental problems the region is facing. Improving transportation between Vancouver and Portland doesn't require expanding the freeway. Expanding the freeway and constructing six new massive interchanges will do tremendous damage to the bike friendliness of communities around the project.

Over the past 18 months, the BTA focused its advocacy efforts on the quality of the bike facility and relied on local elected officials to come up with a good plan for the entire project. They failed to do that, so now the BTA will engage its 5,000 members and other organizations in opposition to the Columbia River Crossing and in support of alternatives.

To expand the I-5 freeway, the Columbia River Crossing will have to raise \$3 – \$4 billion dollars. That would make this the most expensive highway project ever undertaken in Oregon, and project backers will be challenged to secure the funds, especially when so many Portland and Oregon residents think the freeway expansion is short-sighted, self-defeating and a poor use of scarce transportation dollars. The BTA will join and support a broad coalition of elected officials, community leaders, non-profit



organizations, neighborhood groups and concerned citizens to present alternatives that are far better for Portland and Oregon, and far less expensive. It is not too late.

Residents who want an alternative to this freeway expansion should join the BTA and other groups at the Build Less Bridge Rally at 12:00 pm on April 5th, in Waterfront Park just north of the Hawthorne Bridge. Confirmed speakers so far include Former Oregon Secretary of State (and possible 2010 gubernatorial candidate) Bill Bradbury, Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz and Metro Councilor Robert Liberty.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance is a statewide non-profit organization that works to open minds and roads to bicycling. We represent bicyclists and bike-friendly businesses with over 5,000 members in Oregon and SW Washington, and have seventeen years of experience in bicycle planning, education and advocacy.

###