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Oakland, CA 94612
wobo.org

February 28, 2015

May 25, 2015

To: Oakland City Council
From: Walk Oakland Bike Oakland (WOBO)

RE: Proposal for an Oakland Department of Transportation (DOT)

Dear City Council Members -

The Mayor's proposal to establish a new Department of Transportation (DOT) with the next City budget is a smart, sustainable step towards a safer and more livable Oakland. WOBO believes this organizational fix will make better use of existing resources - streamlining the current patchwork system - and could help lead to planning, design, and delivery of more thoughtful transportation projects that meet the needs of all Oaklanders, including our most vulnerable users. **We urge your support for this essential change, as well as for an ongoing commitment to champion healthier, safer streets across all regions of Oakland in the months and years ahead.**

A successful Oakland DOT would be transformational: it would be more strategic in maintaining and enhancing the City's largest public asset - its network of streets, paths and bridges - and more transparent and inclusive with its decision-making. It would expand and promote opportunities for 'Complete Street' projects that ensure safer routes to schools, jobs, and errands for all users, and better position the City to compete for large grant opportunities and leverage private development. As a focused and accessible agency, Oakland DOT would also be a more natural partner in local and regional planning efforts (with BART and AC Transit) and help unleash the potential of our downtown and neighborhood commercial districts with better customer service and responsiveness to local needs.

Neither the detangling of Oakland's bureaucracy nor the solving of all transportation issues will occur overnight with this proposal - many questions will remain even if a new agency is established. But with more funding on the way from Measure BB, important projects ready to break ground (including the city's first protected bikeway on Telegraph Avenue), and a new Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission ready to shepherd progress on people-friendly streets, the timing makes sense to support a new Oakland Department of Transportation.

WOBO is not only working hard to support this proposal, but will continue to play a role in building community awareness and support for better, bolder, quicker ideas that improve our streets. Our 'Better Grand Avenue' campaign set to launch this summer, monitoring of development in Fruitvale and other East Oakland neighborhoods and three Open Streets events (oaklavia.org) will provide multiple forums for these ideas to percolate and to test for the City.

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Walk Oakland Bike Oakland (WOBO) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving neighborhood livability, vitality and sustainability by making walking and bicycling safe, easy, accessible and fun. Since 2007, we have actively worked with and influenced City efforts to redesign streets for better serving self-propelled travel and created people-oriented spaces. Our over 10,000 members and supporters are Oakland residents, employees, and businesses - along with policy advocates and transportation professionals - who believe that safer, more 'complete' streets will result in a more vibrant, healthier city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Hwang".

Chris Hwang
WOBO Board President
chris@wobo.org 510-282-0302

Walk Oakland Bike Oakland is a 501(c)3 member supported, non-profit organization. EIN: 20-8652475. Find us at wobo.org, [@walkoakbikeoak](https://www.instagram.com/walkoakbikeoak)