



News from: the City of Oakland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2, 2017

City of Oakland Names Ryan Russo Permanent Head of Recently Established Department of Transportation *Russo seasoned leader with strong track record of making streets safer, improving transit, increasing pedestrian and biking space, and leading transformative projects*

Oakland, CA — Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and City Administrator Sabrina Landreth today announced the appointment of Ryan Russo as the first director of Oakland's recently-established Oakland Department of Transportation (OakDOT). He will start with the City of Oakland on Monday, May 8, 2017.

Media Contacts:

Erica Terry Derryck
(510) 238-7072
ederryck@oaklandnet.com

Harry Hamilton
(510) 238-2107
hhamilton@oaklandnet.com

Russo comes to his new role in Oakland from New York City, where he served as deputy commissioner for transportation planning and management with the New York City Department of Transportation. Russo held senior positions under New York City Mayors Michael Bloomberg and Bill de Blasio, overseeing some of the nation's most innovative and transformative safety, pedestrian, cycling and transit projects over the last decade. He led a division staff of about 500 employees in planning and operational offices with an annual budget exceeding \$100 million.

"Oakland's streets need transformation and they also need a champion to fight for them," said Mayor Schaaf. "Transportation is as much about social mobility as it is about getting from place to place, and Ryan will be Oaklanders' voice on the street and in the wider transportation network."

"Our City staff in Public Works and the new Department of Transportation has done a fantastic job of working together to get OakDOT established, while continuing to provide invaluable service to our residents," said City Administrator Sabrina Landreth. "I know that Ryan will build on this strong foundation, by bringing innovation and enhancing our effectiveness in delivering service."

Russo joins OakDOT, which was formed in June 2016 under Mayor Schaaf's leadership and her vision of transportation infrastructure as an investment strategy to make Oakland safer, more equitable, and increase access to housing, jobs, schools and services for its residents. Russo will take over the agency as \$350 million in transportation funds are made available following Oakland voters' passage of Measure KK in 2016, bringing the city's roads into a state of good repair and updating their designs to meet current standards.

"Great streets are equitable streets," said Russo, who completed a Master's in City Planning from the University of California at Berkeley, and who will relocate to the area with his wife and two children. "Streets must work for everyone and be safe no matter where in Oakland they live or how they get around. I'm humbled by this appointment, excited by Mayor Schaaf's vision for the city, and am looking forward to working with Oakland to bring that vision to every neighborhood."

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Working under New York City transportation commissioners Janette Sadik-Khan and, Polly Trottenberg, Russo oversaw the designing and building of more than 600 miles of bike lanes and implemented projects that reclaimed hundreds of acres of former road space for walking, transit and bike riding—taming some of the city’s most dangerous roads and yielding the fewest fatalities in more than 100 years of record-keeping.

Mayor Schaaf and the City Administrator Landreth appointed Russo following a nationwide candidate recruitment supported by Bloomberg Associates, which also assisted with the creation of the City’s first-ever transportation department.

“The job of transportation leader is about more than just engineering, it’s about knowing how to knit together a vision for mobility with a city’s larger goals for safety and the economy,” said Janette Sadik-Khan of Bloomberg Associates, which led the search and assisted with the recruitment of Russo. “Ryan brings to Oakland a tested skill of working with communities and across diverse city neighborhoods to create streets that work better for everyone.”

OakDOT will plan, design and maintain the city’s 2,000 miles of roads and 1,100 miles of sidewalks, reflecting a key promise by Mayor Schaaf to focus the City’s efforts on making transportation better serve Oakland’s residents. Russo will take over from OakDOT’s interim director, Jeff Tumlin, and also represent Oakland with the region’s transportation partners, such as BART, AC Transit and Caltrans.

The infusion of Measure KK funding will help the City address the critical deterioration of roads, 61% of which are in Poor or Fair condition. The funding will enable OakDOT not simply to resurface them but to redesign them in the process, providing new opportunities for walking, biking, increasing access to transit stops and stations. These efforts will build on recent projects, such as Oakland’s first parking-protected bike path on Telegraph Avenue, and a pedestrian plaza built atop former road space at Latham Square.

Prior to joining NYCDOT, Russo worked in the San Francisco office of the transportation consulting firm Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, and opened its New York City office in 2002. Ryan has conducted research in transportation finance for U.C. Berkeley’s Institute of Transportation Studies and performed groundbreaking work on the linkage between parking requirements and affordable housing in the Bay Area.

He is a graduate of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California at Berkeley with a Master’s degree in City Planning; and also of the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia, with a Bachelor of Science concentrating in Finance.

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