



March 25, 2016

RE: GTVP Key Preliminary Findings; GTVP Bike, Pedestrian, Transit, and Passenger Rail Vision and Recommendations

(a) Nobody wants to sit in traffic. We live in a world where more and more people want to have a choice for how to get around - because they can't afford the cost of a car, because they are too old or too young to drive, because they want to work on a train or bus while they travel, or because they want to build health into their daily travel. Smarter vehicles are right around the corner, and will fundamentally change how our roadways function.

It's essential to ensure we do not attempt to build our way out of congestion by looking only at the bottlenecks that exist today. I would urge the panel to take a hard and serious look at Oregon's sharp new Transportation Options Plan, and prioritize looking first at providing Oregonians with a range of travel options that would reduce congestion by reducing the number of non-freight single occupant vehicles, prior to and as part of any and every transportation project pursued.

(b) When looking at investments in freight, we should be careful to ensure they are not also facilitating the use of our roadways by other vehicles that cause freight delays through congestion. We support piloting tools such as tolling, freight-only lanes (and freight/transit lanes where needed), and encouraging freight to travel during non-peak schedules, including rail where it crosses at-grade.

(c) It is past due for the state to take a role in investing in transit, including enhancing, expanding, and connecting rubber-tire systems and passenger rail. Coordination at the state level would help reduce system gaps and allow Oregonians to use bus and rail for mid-length



trips within the state, relieving congestion, allowing for greater freight mobility, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

(d) We fully support investing in bicycle and pedestrian improvements in order to reduce road congestion. By providing a truly multi-modal system statewide, we provide all Oregonians with a range of options that allows them to remove themselves from road congestion problems and bottlenecks by making informed and viable decisions on how to travel – by transit, foot, bicycle, car-sharing, or other – depending on where and what they are doing.

(e) We support integrating seismic updates and upgrades with roadway maintenance and bridge preservation efforts, and in supporting local jurisdictions to participate in the development of community-based needs assessments. We caution that this essential and enormous task does not overwhelm budgetary requests to make improvements in transit, bicycle, pedestrian, destination-access, and freight needs.

(f) Smarter, autonomous vehicles are right around the corner, and will fundamentally change how our roadways function. As Oregon creates this vision for our transportation future, we need to ensure we do not leave the future out of it, especially as it pertains to the future efficiency of our existing roadways. We support taking a closer look at allocating resources to this need.

(g) We strongly support increasing the flexibility of K-12 student transportation funding and spending across the state. There is a need and a demand for an increase in investment in Safe Routes to School, and we support the state doing the right thing by delivering proper traffic safety education (pedestrian and bicycle safety) to 100% of students graduating from elementary schools within four years. Oregon's Transportation and Education agencies should



work more closely together to ensure our kids are brought up as well-educated roadway users who have safe walking and bicycling routes to get around.

Over the past 10 years, Oregon has demonstrated the effectiveness of Safe Routes to School programs for K-8 students, and the role of public transit is important to middle and high school youth. Looking at our school transportation funding and finding funding and safety efficiencies for yellow school buses and crossing guards, as well as including transit and walking and bicycling as school transportation, will help the state achieve congestion, greenhouse gas, and health goals, while allowing our students more independence, responsibility, and the potential to be better learners in the classroom

(<http://activelivingresearch.org/blog/2015/01/infographic-active-kids-learn-better>).

The most effective Safe Routes to School programs, which can significantly reduce the 15-20% of morning traffic congestion that is due to school drop off, combine education and encouragement programs in schools with engineering investments in safe routes for Oregon's youth to walk, bike, and access transit. We would strongly support dedicated funding to infrastructure projects focused on the 1-2-mile radius of Oregon schools.

(h) There are too many places in Oregon where the function of a state highway through a community is inappropriate because of safety concerns, and transit, walking, and bicycling needs. We support fast-tracking jurisdictional transfers through dedicated resources that would ensure the state brings these roads to current safety standards, or provides the funds for local jurisdictions to do so themselves.

(transportation finance) We suggest considering changing the constitutional restriction of gas tax revenue. There is a great need for non-federal funding that is more cost efficient to ensure smaller projects can compete.



In order to build low-cost systems for people who walk and bicycle, we suggest consideration of bonding funds for comprehensive statewide investment in sidewalks and connected bicycle networks.

(additional comments)

In all recommendations, we commend your focus on and vision for the future of transportation, and applaud the focus on ensuring multi-mobility is a key component of addressing current concerns as well as an essential way that the state moves forward.

While we recognize the focus of this work has been on seismic and congestion needs, we recommend ensuring inclusion of other important state goals, and how transportation's focus could help attain them -- including eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes for all roadway users (Vision Zero), greenhouse gas reductions, health outcome improvements, and educational achievement.