

To: Sam Haffner, Governor's Transportation Vision Panel Project Manager

From: Transportation for Oregon's Future Steering Committee

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Mary Kyle McCurdy, 1000 Friends of Oregon

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Oregon Walks

Re: Comments on Preliminary Findings, Roadways & Bridges Subcommittee

Date: March 9, 2016

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the work of the Roadways & Bridges Subcommittee of the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel. We appreciate the time that has gone into helping the state think through these important issues and make recommendations for the future.

Our overarching recommendation is to re-write the Vision Statements so they reflect the *substantive* state of Oregon's Roadways and Bridges, and the role of those elements in Oregon's overall transportation system, that the Panel believes Oregon should strive for. The current statements are about process rather than vision. Statements such as "coordinate and facilitate appropriate investments in the state multimodal transportation system" do not describe how a functioning multi-modal system would operate in the future or what constitutes "appropriate." Similarly, "Coordinating efforts to improve components of the multimodal system will help leverage local, state and federal investments resulting in a more efficient system with increased capacity in all modes" emphasizes coordination to obtain funding, but it does not describe what the components should be or how they should relate to and are integrated with one another. The apparent goal is to "increase capacity in all modes," which is why increased funding is needed, but it is not clear how increasing capacity achieves any particular substantive functional outcome.

In addition, the draft Vision Statements do not describe how the state's roadways and bridges will be integrated into a system that overall reduces greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector – a sector responsible for almost 40% of Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions and which is expected to substantially contribute to meeting the state's climate targets.

We recommend revising the Vision Statements. For example, a Vision Statement could be:

"Oregon's network of roads and bridges serves as part of an integrated transportation and land use system that enables Oregonians to get to jobs and services affordably and safely, provides

for movement of goods to market, enhances quality of life helping to attract and retain a talented workforce, and protects the environment while meeting Oregon's greenhouse gas reduction goals. Transportation should prioritize low-cost and healthy options, and locate homes, businesses, and services in close proximity."

The Priority Recommendations that follow should be as concrete as possible, and it should be clear how each Recommendation follows from the Vision Statements. For example, the Draft Priority Recommendation "Enact a Jurisdictional Transfer Pilot Program" is a concrete recommendation and one that we support. A corresponding goal in the Vision Statement would reflect the benefit and goal of having single jurisdiction management of all parts of a road as it traverses a city or county and plays a more local function, and the seismic and safety benefits of having bridges in cities and the roads that connect to them under one management system.

However, other Priority Recommendations are less clear and could be read in many ways. Recommendations such as "Prioritize increasing capacity and throughput of roadway bottlenecks through new investments," "Modify Transportation Planning Rule to prioritize roadway system Throughput," "prioritize system throughput," and "allow enhancement actions on mobility corridors in rural areas" contain many undefined words and actions. For example, what types of investments to increase capacity are meant – is this a recommendation to build more lane miles or to get more out of the existing lane miles through investments in other modes of transportation, land uses, and transportation demand management? Does "prioritize system throughput" refer to vehicles, people, or goods?

The land use component of the Long-term actions reflects a step backwards in the state's previous ground-breaking actions to integrate land use and transportation. The wording subordinates land use and the communities reflected by those land use decisions and policies to "transportation infrastructure," "mobility corridors," and "throughput."

Finally, the draft document seems to treat each mode independently; we see little that discusses a vision for how the different modes operate in an integrated manner.