

November 20, 2020

Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capitol Street, NE MS 11
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Van Brocklin and members of the Oregon Transportation Commission:

It is time to think differently about transportation investments, and take a new approach that is more efficient, centers health and equity as non-negotiable outcomes, and is more sustainable for future generations. You have an opportunity to choose this path with the 2024-2027 STIP package. **We urge you to invest in the 2024-2027 STIP money in alignment with the “Non-Highway” scenario.**

The “Non-Highway” scenario provides the most investment in the parts of our transportation system that provide the most positive effects on equity, air quality and climate pollution. The more people who are able to bike, walk and take transit, the more efficiently we can use our right-of-way while also reducing air toxics and greenhouse gas pollution and providing more freedom and access for people who do not or cannot drive. Also, non-highway projects provide [more jobs per dollar spent](#) than road-building projects.

Non-highway projects are essential for a system that allows Oregonians of all ages, abilities and income levels to get safely, affordably and conveniently where we need to go, and that does not burden communities with air pollution, traffic injuries and deaths, or the impacts of climate change. Non-highway projects are also the most effective investments to meet the Governor’s Executive Order 20-04’s requirements for ODOT to prioritize activities and investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This investment choice is bold, and would be unprecedented for OTC. It is, however, necessary to meet the call of the unprecedented times in which we live. Of the extraordinary and urgent crises we are facing now - climate, economic, racial justice, and pandemic - only the pandemic is likely to become less urgent before 2024. Invest in the “Non-Highway” scenario that will most effectively address all these urgent needs.

Sincerely,

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