



1201 Court Street NE, Suite 200 • Salem, Oregon 97301
(503) 588-6550 • (800) 452-0338 • Fax: (503) 399-4863
www.orcities.org

HB 2017: Section 72 – Small City Program

On behalf of Oregon's 166 small cities (population less than 5,000) the League wishes to call out Section 72 of HB 2017, and express its gratitude for the inclusion of this long overdue program enhancement in the transportation package. Funded at \$1 million since the program's inception in the early 1990s, the Special City Allotment, as it is referred to in statute, provides small cities with the opportunity to supplement their population-based state highway trust fund allocation through additional grants.

The bill proposes to increase the program total to \$5 million annually and maintain the 50-50 funding split between the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the city share of the state highway trust fund. The League wishes to acknowledge Oregon's larger cities who will be forgoing their per capita share of the cities \$2.5 million contribution to the program.

HB 2017 goes on to stipulate the creation of a small city advisory committee to review grant applications and make recommendations on award decisions to be made by ODOT. Each of ODOT's five regions are to be represented on the advisory committee and the League will be happy to consult with ODOT on that selection process.

The existing program has excellent sideboards concerning project type, grant funding eligibility and accountability standards for participating small cities. It is assumed that those "rules of the road" will be carried forward under the revised and expanded small city program.

Finally, the current agreement between ODOT and the League establishes a grant cap of \$50,000. Given the higher level of program funding, the League will also look forward to discussing with ODOT an increase in that cap. Because of the funding increase proposed in HB 2017, along with more substantial grants, small cities, many of which have roads and streets returning to gravel, will be able to get on top of maintaining and preserving these important infrastructure assets, as well as even begin to contemplate transportation enhancements.

**From the Desk of
Senator Brian Boquist**