

TO: Joint Committee on Transportation

FROM: Elizabeth Graser-Lindsey
21341 S. Ferguson Rd.
Beavercreek, OR 97004

DATE: March 4, 2021

SUBJECT: **Supplemental Testimony** in Support of SB 395 (bike/foot facilities)

The opposition of some local government organizations (Association of Oregon Counties, Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors and the League of Oregon Cities) **to SB 395** is disappointing, but it **is exactly the reason why SB 395 is needed**. These organizations state support for multi-modal transportation and counties and cities put alternative modes into their plans, BUT, when it comes to actually funding projects, many don't actually make progress (over decades) accommodating pedestrians and bicycling and developing facilities for them even in the most dangerous situations where life and limb are being lost. **The mindset of many of these road engineers and transportation departments remains decidedly auto-centric** (and completely neglectful of pedestrians and bicyclist) in the projects they fund. **SB 395 is needed to slightly re-adjust the funding balance between active transportation and motor vehicle needs.**

Mike Bezner, who submitted testimony to you as President of Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors and who is Assistant Director of Transportation in Clackamas County, has resisted this slight rebalancing in Clackamas County and my community of Beavercreek for years despite death and danger that has resulted from the status quo.

An illustrative example is the two miles of Beavercreek Road, a major arterial, which connects the Portland Metro Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) with rural areas and leads to rural cities. The rural center of Beavercreek is 1 mile from the UGB and Beavercreek Elementary School is two miles in. Beavercreek Rd. lacks a paved or gravel shoulder, has long stretches of drop offs and ditches immediately adjacent to the lane of travel and totally fails to conform with Clackamas County's own Roadway Standard (which includes a paved shoulder – see diagram in my previous testimony). Two-lane Beavercreek Rd. handles steady heavy high speed traffic; bicyclists and pedestrians have no alternative to sharing the lane of travel with motor vehicles including even logging trucks, dump trucks, etc. There have been multiple harmful incidents and deaths affecting bicyclists and motorists all along this two mile stretch that includes blind hills and curves, an intersection without adequate sight distance (which the county's own on-duty engineer measured with me) where a death occurred, another intersection

where a cyclist was brain damaged. My previous testimony shows a cross where someone was killed along a drop off.

Over 25 years I have observed Beaver Creek Rd. become increasingly more dangerous as traffic volumes have gone up. In about 2014 the Hamlet of Beaver Creek formally contacted the county about the problems of Beaver Creek Rd. The following email exchange with Mike Bezner concerns the most recent 2019 re-paving of Beaver Creek Rd.:

Elizabeth Graser-Lindsey <egraserlindsey@gmail.com>

Jun 20, 2019, 4:05 PM

Hi Mike,

I was noticing that the Beaver Creek Rd. paving is coming up soon. Who is leading that effort? The community had asked that the road be brought up to standard so we have safety in our downtown area with higher traffic density. Is that the intent?

Elizabeth

Bezner, Mike <MikeBez@clackamas.us> Jun 20, 2019, 4:08 PM

Elizabeth.

No, we are just resurfacing as part of a preservation project. We don't have the \$ for a capital project to bring the roadway up to standard. Maybe there will be a project out of the new Community Road Fund process, but we won't know that for a few months yet.

Thanks,

Mike Bezner | **Assistant Director of Transportation**

[The Community Road Fund process lead to no action]

Clackamas County prioritizes paving roads— any and all roads, even low volume roads with few residents along them -- **above fixing the most serious road problems including the complete lack of any accommodation of actual, measured bicycle and pedestrian use** (and more potential use if pedestrians and bicyclists actually had a space to be).

It is often forgotten that **our transportation system** does not just belong to motorists. It **belongs to all people** moving from place to place. **ORS 811 and DMV Driver's Manual explain cars are to yield to pedestrians** in the roadway (ORS 811.028), to **bicyclists** (ORS 811.060 and 065), **and to equestrians and livestock** (ORS 811.510). Many (possibly most) motorists are in the habit of not fully complying with these laws when they speed by pedestrians and bicyclists at close range. Since motorists like to move along at efficient speeds and get where they are going quickly, rather than slowing or stopping to yield to pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians and livestock, **it is in the interest of motorists that roads are constructed in a safe manner** as reflected in Roadway Standards. **These laws and standards have existed for decades and they create the mandate that governs our transportation system. That is, the**

safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and their legitimate ability to use roads IS part of the funded mandate. Road authorities need to stop ignoring the needs and safety all legal roadway users as they have done for decades and they need to stop directing nearly all roadway funds toward a narrow concept of motor vehicle interest -- personally I don't want to hurt or kill walkers or bikers when I am driving. SB 395 is needed so that transportation professional finally properly implement Oregon's law that makes our transportation system for all people.