

Dear Chair Gorsek, Chair McLain and Committee Members,

My name is Sarah Vowell and I am a Redmond, OR resident. I attended your Joint Committee on Transportation Thursday evening in Bend. I was saddened and defeated to see the lack of representation for the Redmond community and I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you a little bit about this wonderful place and its needs. Redmond calls itself "The Hub" connecting a myriad of other Central Oregon cities to a vital airport, fantastic job opportunities, and a thriving city with an, as of late, dramatically increasing population. Redmond feels often forgotten, not as big as Bend, not as charming as Sisters, yet it is the second largest populus area in Central Oregon, and the seventeenth largest city in the state.

However, like Bend, Highway 97 runs to and through Redmond. In 2014, the City of Redmond passed resolution #2014-02 which proclaimed, among many things, ..."the South Redmond corridor requires major pavement resurfacing and rehabilitation with the next seven years...". Seven years from the date of that resolution was 2021. It is now three years past expiration and South Highway 97 in that corridor has one of the worst pavement ratings in the entire state.

We are told repeatedly that the fix is coming, but ODOT has no money, so too bad. There's a plan, though, the South Redmond Corridor Plan, listed as ODOT project number: "SouthRedmond97". The study for that work began in 2010, 14 years ago. Fourteen years ago, ODOT knew there was an issue and yet nothing has been done to remedy this dangerous area. Because there's no money, not for Redmond anyway.

The fact that this project involves a long stretch of road, requires the entire replacement of pavement because it is so far gone that there's no fixing it, and necessitates a domino effect of pedestrian improvements like multi-use paths is not lost on me. I urge you as you look at upcoming budgets and restructurings that you consider putting better effort into rehabilitating areas, into making existing infrastructure safe for all users that encounter it. Redmond deserves better than being told that there's no money because the project is too daunting. We deserve to have safe spaces for vehicles and pedestrians alike, and it should start with the South Highway 97 corridor.

Thank you,

Sarah Vowell