

Dear Co-chairs McLain and Gorsek and members of the committee,
I am reaching out with an interest in having my voice heard in the statewide conversations about transportation funding. First, I value our transportation system and the important part it plays in the lives of Oregonians. However, I believe in, and support, healthy vibrant communities and I advocate for a regional system of parks, trails and natural areas across the Portland metro region.

As our legislators work to address the challenges of funding the statewide transportation challenges, I ask you prioritize active transportation and specifically off-street paths. These types of trails prove to create safe, effective and efficient modes of travel and improve the quality of life of our residents. Off-street trails create car separated, safe, comfortable places for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike, skate and roll; providing a safe alternative to walking or riding on high-speed streets. The trails also allow for families and commuters to access nature and all of its health and wellness benefits.

Unfortunately, the Portland metropolitan regional trails system is currently filled with large gaps that prevent it from serving as the strong backbone our communities deserve. Metro, the regions metropolitan planning organization, request for trail investment needs in our region had the local agencies submit a list of over 20 trail projects that total more than \$390 million dollars. This is for trails in the metropolitan area alone and yet the last two rounds of Oregon Community Paths funding dedicated \$52 million total for the entire state. If we are going to start to align our budgets with our needs to improve quality of life, we need to prioritize our investments in alternative modes of transportation. For the State to encourage active lifestyles, address climate change and child obesity, I encourage you to dedicate more funding to off-street trails so that we get safely out of our cars and on to our trails with friends and family.

Thanks,
Rod Wojtanik
Portland, Oregon