

September 30, 2024

**Subject: Addressing Equity in Transportation for the Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor**

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Gorsek, committee members,

My name is Piyawee Ruenjinda, and I have been a resident of Washington County since 2016. As a community organizer, I advocate for and work alongside Immigrants, Refugees, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (IR BIPOC) in the Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony, which emphasizes the importance of prioritizing IR BIPOC voices and concerns in transportation planning, particularly along the Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor.

For our diverse communities, the corridor is not merely a thoroughfare but a vital lifeline that provides access to essential services, employment opportunities, and resources. However, these communities have historically faced significant negative impacts from transportation projects, including increased pollution, displacement, and diminished safety.

As you embark on transportation improvements, we urge the committee to consider the following recommendations:

1. **Engage in Meaningful Consultation:** Actively involve IR BIPOC residents and community leaders in the consultation process to ensure that their voices shape project design and implementation. Furthermore, invest in capacity-building initiatives, such as leadership development programs, educational workshops, and storytelling events, to empower IR BIPOC communities to actively participate in transportation planning processes.
2. **Develop Displacement Mitigation Strategies:** Create strategies to mitigate the potential displacement of IR BIPOC residents and businesses due to rising property values and rents associated with transportation improvements. As construction progresses along the Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor, it is crucial to establish safety nets and support systems for businesses and residents that may be affected by ongoing and future development projects.

- 3. Invest in Multimodal Transportation Options:** Enhance multimodal transportation options, including improved bus services, safer sidewalks, and dedicated bike lanes, to better serve IR BIPOC communities and promote climate leadership.

By addressing these critical issues and prioritizing equity, we can ensure that transportation investments along the Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor uplift and benefit the diverse communities that call this region home.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Piyawee Ruenjinda