

Hello,

I was unable to make the meeting Friday night and wanted to submit written public comment. Thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts regarding our states transportation issues. I'll keep this succinct as I am sure you have a high volume of comments to consider.

My main concerns/ priorities:

1. Increase funding for public transportation. This should be my top transportation funding priority. We need substantially more investment in our public transportation system including the expansion of light rail, regional heavy rail on existing rail lines, and improved bus service. In addition, transit should be made more frequent and faster to create options that are comparable to car trips.
2. Create sustainable funding sources that account for transportation impacts on people and the environment, cover actual costs of roadway use, and are reasonable for low income folks. Change our revenue streams for vehicles to ensure they cover the true cost of services used by those vehicles, both direct and indirect. Indexing the gas tax, implementing a mileage/ weight based fee, and basing registration fees on vehicle weight and value are worthy options to consider.
3. Build safe streets. Require all roads to be built in a manner that allows for safe bike and pedestrian use including wider sidewalks with shade, protected and separated bike lanes, and lower vehicle speeds.
4. Empower cities to take action. Find ways to fund cities efforts to take local control of and improve state roadways that create unsafe conditions within those communities (e.g. Hall in Tigard). While the state should be addressing these issues, if cities are willing the state should do what they can to empower that work and get out of the way. Creating money to give to cities with these roads is an excellent one time buy out option for ODOT to get out of the local road business when opportunities arise.

Cheers,

Nic Westendorf