

ANALYSIS

Department of Transportation OR 47 Carlton

Analyst: Michelle Deister

Request: Approve the request from the Department of Transportation to apply for a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program in the amount of \$12 million for realignment of OR 47 around downtown Carlton, Oregon.

Analysis: The Department of Transportation (ODOT) seeks permission to apply for a federal grant from the RAISE program in the amount of \$12,000,000 to remove OR 47 highway traffic from several blocks in the downtown Carlton area, thereby improving traffic flow and bike/pedestrian safety. In addition, the grant would add sidewalks and make other mandated accessibility improvements to curbs and sidewalks in the project area. A project is currently underway in the area, with a scope valued at \$9.6 million. A successful grant application would expand the scope of the existing project and leverage funds already dedicated.

Matching funds in the amount of \$3,000,000 would come from State Highway Fund dollars (fuels taxes, fees, and weight/mile assessments). Applications are due February 28, 2023. If awarded, the agency will amend the scope of the project in the State Transportation Improvement Plan and return to the Legislature to seek additional expenditure limitation if necessary. Obligation of funds is necessary by September 30, 2027 and funds must be expended no later than September 30, 2032. No additional agency positions are anticipated to be necessary to meet obligations under the terms of this grant.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends approval.

Oregon Department of Transportation

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Request: Authorization to apply for a \$12.0 million federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity grant, under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, from the U.S. Department of Transportation for additional funding to expand the current scope of the Oregon Route 47 within the downtown area of Carlton, Oregon.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), Delivery and Operations Division has a current project underway to realign and divert the size and volume of traffic on Oregon Route 47 within the downtown area of Carlton. This grant would allow ODOT to address safety concerns by installing new sidewalks, improve existing sidewalks and adapt sidewalk ramps to meet American Disability Act specifications. This particular route is utilized by children going to school and the community pool.

The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant is a federally funded competitive grant opportunity included within the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) program. The current Carlton project is within the State Transportation Improvement Program previously approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission to repair this section of road. If awarded, the RAISE grant would allow the project to expand the current scope of work to address the additional sidewalk expansion and repairs for safe vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The table below shows the current project scope funding and the potential funding from the new grant.

	Current Project	Potential Grant	Total
Federal Funds	\$ 8,246,435	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 20,246,435
State Highway Funds	\$ 1,279,387	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 4,279,387
Local Funds	\$ 114,454		\$ 114,454
Total Funds	\$ 9,640,276	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 24,640,276

The grant notification was published on November, 30, 2022, announcing the availability of up to \$1.5 billion in federal RAISE grant funding. The grant application is due on February 28, 2023, with an award announcement date of June 28, 2023. If awarded, the funds must be obligated by September 30, 2027, and must be fully spent by September 30, 3032. The grant would require a state match of \$3.0 million, which would come from the State Highway Fund account. If awarded, ODOT may need to return and request additional Other Funds expenditure limitation during the 2023-25 biennium.



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Department of Transportation

Director's Office

355 Capitol St. NE, MS 11

Salem, OR 97301

January 25, 2023

Senator Elizabeth Steiner, Co-Chair
Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Delivery and Operations Division in Region 2 requests permission to apply for a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) for \$12 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

AGENCY ACTION

RAISE grants are for capital investments in surface transportation that will have a significant local or regional impact. USDOT seeks to fund projects that:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are designed with specific elements to address climate change impacts.
- address environmental justice, particularly for communities that disproportionately experience climate change-related consequences.
- proactively address racial equity and barriers to opportunity, including automobile dependence as a form of barrier, or redress prior inequities and barriers to opportunity.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity was published on November 30, 2022, and the grant application is due February 28, 2023. Awards will be announced by June 28, 2023. A total of \$1.5 billion is available in the FY 2023 RAISE Grant Program. ODOT has identified the OR47: Realignment project in Carlton as an excellent candidate that aligns with program criteria by improving the infrastructure, which will increase safety for bikers, riders, and pedestrians in an economically distressed area.

Project: OR47: Realignment in Carlton, Oregon

OR47 cuts through Carlton's downtown area, where the streets were not built to accommodate the size and volume of today's traffic. The state highway has a high percentage of truck traffic, with semi-trucks that often "jump the curb" in order to make the turns on OR47. This leads to congestion and safety issues for pedestrians. Children currently have to walk on the side of the road, in close proximity to traffic, to get to school and to the community swimming pool.

ODOT has developed a plan to re-align OR47 a few blocks north and east from the downtown area to remove highway traffic from the downtown area. The project will increase the width of the highway through town, improving the flow of traffic. The project will install new sidewalks and improve existing sidewalks and ramps to meet current ADA requirements and help children walk safely through the community. Additionally, the project will install enhanced pedestrian crosswalks and bulb outs to improve pedestrian safety while crossing the highway.

The community of Carlton along with the city council support the improvements proposed in this application.

	Current Scope	Phase Funded by Grant	Total Project Cost
Federal Funds	\$ 8,246,435	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 20,246,435
State Highway Funds	\$ 1,279,387	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 4,279,387
Local Funds	\$ 114,454	--	\$ 114,454
Total	\$ 9,640,276	\$ 15,000,000	\$ 24,640,276

Matching funds will be paid for by the Oregon State Highway Fund (SHF). The SHF is dedicated revenue received by ODOT through a gas tax charged per gallon of fuel purchased, driver and motor vehicle fees, and a tax on heavy trucks. These funds are used to fund ODOT state maintenance and operations, projects, and are also utilized to match federal formula funding received from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). RAISE grant funds are available for obligation through September 30, 2027, and all funds must be expended by September 30, 2032. If awarded, this RAISE grant will expand the scope of an existing STIP project to leverage funds already dedicated to OR47: Realignment. If grant funds are awarded, the agency will amend the STIP and will return to the legislature to request additional expenditure limitation if needed.

If this grant is not awarded, either the scope of work must be reduced or ODOT will have to take funding from another project.

ACTION REQUESTED

ODOT requests approval to apply for a RAISE grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for \$12 million in IJA funds.

LEGISLATION AFFECTED

None.

Sincerely,

Kristopher W. Strickler
Director