



Hood River County Board of Commissioners

Allison Williams, County Administrator

601 State Street · Hood River, OR 97031 · (541) 386-3970 · FAX (541) 386-9392

COMMISSIONERS

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RE: 2025 Joint Committee on Transportation Funding – LC2 Public Hearing Testimony

To: Co-Chairs Wagner and Fahey, Co-Vice Chairs Bonham and Drazan, and Members of the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation

On behalf of Hood River County, we ask for your support on the Special Session Transportation Funding, LC2 as a short-term funding source to maintain the current level of service on our transportation system. This short-term funding will not be sufficient to fund any planning or capital projects. This will not address our roads and bridges that are listed in poor condition. Further funding will need to be top of mind even if this special session funding is passed.

As a reminder, Hood River County showed up in large numbers during the September 13, 2024, Transportation Road Show in The Dalles and have continued to support State Transportation Funding through the 2025 Legislative Session and 2025 Special Session. Then and now, the need has only been exacerbated as we have faced difficult budgets due to increasing costs and federal claw backs. As a rule, Hood River County has had to defer needed safety improvement, routine maintenance work, and capital projects. Roadway construction cost inflation has more than doubled and revenue has not been able to keep up since the last statewide transportation package was passed in 2017.

Hood River County would expect over \$800,000 annually from the Special Session transportation funding to maintain our 210 road miles, 27 bridges, and over 3,500 culverts. Of the 27 bridges Hood River County has on the transportation system, two are load restricted and four are in a state where needed repairs will not meet current standards and need to be replaced. This funding will only maintain current service levels and will not be able to fund the replacement of these bridges.

Hood River County's transportation system is a vibrant network that supports access to homes, businesses, our County's multi-million-dollar agriculture industry and our County, State and Federal Lands. Additionally, these roadways are one portion of the Statewide Transportation Network, often acting as a detour route when State Highways are closed due to safety concerns. During the Rowena Fire when ODOT shut down Interstate 84 and WSDOT closed State Route 14, the gridlock throughout the City and County of Hood River was immense, requiring your constituents to detour using local roadways.

Once again, on behalf of Hood River County, we ask for your support in the short-term package proposed during the Special Session and ask to continue the work to pass a complete and sustainable transportation revenue stream that supports a safe, functional, and efficient transportation system for the state and local agencies.

Testimony provided by Hood River County Board of Commissioners Chair Jennifer Euwer.