



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

To: Sen. Rob Wagner; Rep. Julie Fahey; Sen. Daniel Bonham; Rep. Christine Drazen; Sen. Wlinsvey Campos; Sen. Khanh Pham; Sen. Bruce Starr; Rep. Shelly Boshart-Davis; Rep. Ben Bowman; Rep. Vikki Breese-Iverson; Rep. Susan McLain; Rep. Tawna Sanchez
Re: Legislative Concept 2
Date: August 26, 2025

Members of the Joint Interim Committee on Transportation Funding:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association is calling for support of LC 2, while also acknowledging that this bill leaves more work to do to meaningfully prioritize and address community safety, meet the realities of climate change, and serve the entire community equitably.

We appreciate that LC 2 will:

- Help communities thrive by investing in local projects and programs through continuing to distribute revenue to local governments.
- Continue investment in transit, stemming potential cuts at a time when investment is greatly needed to address Oregon's climate and housing goals.
- Make inroads toward the creation of more modern ways to fund public services and infrastructure.
- Retain existing professional staff capacity and expertise statewide by stemming immediate layoffs.

More is still needed however, if not now, then in the next session:

- We need to invest in the growth of transit service and complete streets, consistent with Oregon's goals to create a greater range of accessible and

well-served housing and support our economy through access to jobs. Investments in complete streets and transit is a necessary pairing with existing efforts like Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities.

- Invest in safe and thriving neighborhoods through programs such as the transformative Great Streets and Safe Routes to School initiatives.

Who We Are

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is a nonprofit professional membership organization of over 800 planners and those who work with planning. Our members formulate and implement development and conservation policies and projects at the state and local levels. OAPA works to create sustainable and vibrant Oregon communities through professional development, advocacy for sound planning, providing resources to meet the challenges of growth and change, and embracing and promoting diversity, inclusion and equity.

Bill Priorities

While we support a bill that avoids many of the worst consequences of not passing HB 2025, a package that does not support Great Streets and Safe Routes to School, and that does not deliver the funding transit agencies are clamoring for, can only be seen as a stop-gap measure. Putting off this issue means we will have to address it again in the next legislative session, possibly from a more difficult position.

The number of Oregonians killed in transportation crashes increased 95% between 2013 and 2022. Additionally, thousands of residents are seriously injured every year. These impacts are unacceptable, and more funding is needed to allow cities, counties and ODOT to implement proven safety projects and programs.

While we strongly support the updated payroll tax rate increase, it's clear that additional funding is urgently needed to meet the transit needs of Oregonians. For example, the population over 65 is forecast to increase by almost 60% over the next 25 years. Enhanced transit services will be needed to meet the transportation needs of this population. Additional investment in efforts such as electrification and off-street trails can also help us better integrate our housing investments with our climate goals.

Alignment with Climate and Land Use Goals

Although the modest payroll tax rate increase proposed helps stave off cuts, it does not go far enough to meet new transit needs.

The state's metropolitan areas are working to implement the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) rules. Cities throughout the state are also working to increase housing production and implement new housing regulations. These efforts will result in increased housing density and a greater mix of land uses. If done correctly, these efforts will allow Oregonians to meet more of their transportation needs by walking, rolling and using transit. However, under current conditions, many of our planners are working in communities with a history of substantial past disinvestment, a need for greater transit service, and a lack of complete streets. The changes called for under CFEC will require more significant investments for accessible, reliable, and affordable public transit services and infrastructure that keep people walking and biking safe from fast-moving motor vehicles.

Support for Broad Revenue Sources with an Equity Lens

Without bold action now, Oregonians will face increasing transportation costs related to crumbling infrastructure and a lack of transportation options, as well as cascading financial impacts of unmet housing needs and the ability of people to travel to jobs. These costs will disproportionately impact rural communities, people with disabilities, low-income residents, and communities of color.

We support efforts to ensure that funding streams are thoroughly evaluated, involving the underserved populations most affected by transportation decisions. Our focus is on transparent, community-led engagement and equitable participation methods, adjusted as necessary to account for equity impacts and protect low-income travelers, while discouraging single-occupancy vehicular trips. This includes an equity impact analysis of all proposed revenue streams (including RUC) with clear mitigation strategies for low-income and rural travelers. It also includes action on the spending side: prioritizing projects that serve communities most impacted by climate change, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color, rural, and underserved populations.

Great Streets and Safe Routes to School Programs

When choosing projects to invest in, the Legislature should also direct ODOT and communities to prioritize projects that explicitly promote greenhouse gas emission reduction through integrated planning of housing, land use, and transportation.

The pared-back bill concept overlooks necessary safety investments where state highways double as local main streets, the focus of the **Great Streets** program. With your decision to take leadership today, these projects can save lives and catalyze thriving neighborhoods and business districts. Projects under the **Safe Routes to School initiative** can also help build stronger and safer communities.

Our state transportation funding can do much more to support statewide goals of protecting lives and building a more resilient future. We, the Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association, rely on your leadership in this special session to provide the communities where we live and serve with the tools and resources to build a better future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tabitha Boschetti', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tabitha Boschetti, AICP

Chair, Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee

Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association

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