



June 10, 2025

Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment  
Oregon State Legislature | 900 Court St. NE, Salem, Oregon 97301

***RE: HB 2025 Transportation Reinvestment Package: Support with amendments***

Chairs Gorsek, Chair McLain, Vice Chair Starr, Vice Chair Boshart Davis, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation Reinvestment,

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Transportation Reinvestment Package (HB 2025). We urge you to pass a transportation package this session that moves Oregon forward.**

For nearly 40 years, LandWatch has been working to ensure Central Oregon's livable future—one where our region grows well and with intention by creating well-planned and well-built cities with Complete Communities, preserving farmland, and protecting wild, open spaces.

Delivering a safe, multimodal, and sustainable transportation system to Oregonians has been a key focus this legislative session. The Transportation Reinvestment Package (HB 2025) is an excellent start and a strong foundation to keep building on.

**We strongly support many elements of this bill, including the proposed funding for Wildlife Crossings, Great Streets, and Safe Routes to School programs.**

**We're also supportive of these elements remaining in HB 2025:** Increased funding from diversified sources for the operation and maintenance of our existing infrastructure, indexing a fuel tax, implementing a road usage charge, and increased oversight and accountability for ODOT. These are smart, necessary parts of funding, operating, and maintaining a modern, multimodal transportation system for Oregonians.

**We would also like to request the following amendments** to ensure this bill fully meets the needs of Central Oregon's communities. These include:

- **Increase funding for the Oregon Community Paths program and electrification programs, and fully fund transit**
- **Increase geographic equity in transportation investments.** Tolling and increased local matches for large Metro-area projects would allow for the redirection of monies currently allocated to the Anchor Project Account, thereby ensuring critical transportation investments stretch further and reach every corner of Oregon.





## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

### **Strong support for proposed funding levels for \$50M/bi for Safe Routes to School and \$250M/bi for Great Streets programs**

How we increase revenue is critical - and so is what we spend that revenue on. We need to take care of the existing system we have. And here in the fastest growing region in Oregon, we also need to plan and build a more balanced transportation system that meets our community's current and future needs.<sup>1</sup> That's why HB 2025's initial proposed funding mechanisms and amounts for safety, mobility and multimodal programs are such a solid place to start from.

The safety and mobility programs established in 2017 moved Oregon's communities towards a more multimodal, equitable, safe, and sustainable transportation future. However, these essential programs are oversubscribed and underfunded, while the need in Oregon's communities for safer streets and more diverse modal choice is significant and urgent. From 2013-2022, 8,554 people were hit by motor vehicles in Oregon—leading to 8,444 people injured and 746 people killed by motor vehicles.<sup>2</sup>

Increased, long-term, and sustainable funding sources are needed for safety and mobility programs and projects to protect lives and livelihoods - and on this front HB 2025 is well poised to deliver. The bill prioritizes investments in and substantially increases funding for essential, oversubscribed multimodal safety and mobility programs including Safe Routes to School (\$50M/biannually) and Great Streets (\$250M/biannually), which we strongly support.

### **Strong support for proposed funding of \$10M/bi for Wildlife Crossings**

Each year in Oregon, an average of four people die and 521 people are seriously injured in vehicle-wildlife collisions.<sup>3</sup> In addition, more than 14,500,000 animals are killed on Oregon's roadways each year.<sup>4</sup> Based on this high rate of collisions, Oregon's wildlife-vehicle collision problem costs Oregonians more than \$132 million every year.<sup>5</sup> Fortunately, wildlife crossing structures such as overpasses, underpasses, and fencing are a proven solution to improving motorist safety and wildlife passage.

With only five crossing structures and no dedicated funding, Oregon lags far behind our western state counterparts in implementing solutions to address the state's wildlife-vehicle collision problem. The funding needed to address this problem is immense. For example, the anticipated total funding needed for projects

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<sup>1</sup> [Coordinated Population Forecast: Deschutes County 2022-2072](#), Portland State University Population Research Center (pg. 13)

<sup>2</sup> ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting: [Crash Summaries By Year By Collision Type](#) 2013-2022

<sup>3</sup> ODOT slides for House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water (2/5/2025).

<sup>4</sup> ODOT slides for House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water (2/5/2025).

<sup>5</sup> West-Wide Study to Identify Important Highway Locations for Wildlife Crossings, Center for Large Landscape Conservation (2023); see also CPI Inflation Calculator.





currently in development across the state is over \$200,000,000, with other project areas in the process of coming online. On Highway 20 in Central Oregon, the Bend to Suttle Lake Wildlife Passage Initiative's 2024 Corridor Feasibility Study identified a funding need of \$107,384,400 to build 11 under- and overcrossings along one of the most dangerous roads in Oregon.

\$10 million per biennium would provide an important and consistent funding mechanism to address our state's wildlife-vehicle collision problem and improve the safety of Oregon's roadways.

**Requested amendments to increase funding for transit, trails, and electrification programs**

The initial funding proposed for transit via STIF is a good start and prevents service cuts. However to improve and expand better transit service in more communities, particularly in Central Oregon, an additional phased increase in the STIF is needed. We support an increase of 0.1% for each of the next four biennia, reaching a payroll tax rate of 0.5% by 2032, as outlined by the Oregon Transit Association.

Also, fully funding the Oregon Community Paths program (\$100M/biannually) is needed to deliver the balanced multimodal transportation system Oregonians need and want. More than 80% of Oregonians report using local trails or off-street paths, and there is broad public support for investing in trails. Off-street paths provide the safest alternatives to walking or riding on high-speed and high-traffic roadways, and the Oregon Community Paths program is a critical tool alongside Great Streets and Safe Routes to School, in addressing traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways.

Currently, TRIP lacks some needed investments that directly address climate change and air pollution. Making electric vehicles (EVs) more affordable for people with low to moderate incomes, investing in public charging, and electrifying more vehicles on our roads are important parts of our transportation system that need to be included in this bill. This includes funding critical electrification programs like the Community Charging Rebates and Zero Emission Fueling Program to increase access to charging and lower barriers to decarbonization.

To thrive, Oregon communities need access to safe, reliable, and sustainable transportation options. The transportation package's revenues and investments must reflect these values to support all Oregonians, now and into the future - and HB 2025 has provided a solid roadmap to help get us there. With a few additional adjustments, this bill will deliver the balanced transportation system Oregonians need and want.

We look forward to continuing to work with this Committee, our legislators, Governor Kotek, and myriad people, communities, and stakeholders on the path ahead to help deliver a more safe, equitable and sustainable transportation future for all. Thank you for your service and your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,





2843 NW Lolo Drive., Ste. 200 | Bend, OR 97703  
Phone (541) 647-2930  
[www.colw.org](http://www.colw.org)

Corie Harlan  
Cities & Towns Program Director

Jeremy Austin  
Wildland & Waters Program Director

CC: Senator Broadman, Representative Levy, Representative Kropf



**We defend and plan for Central Oregon's livable future**