



June 11, 2024

Chair Julie Brown
Oregon Transportation Commission
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capital Street NE, MS11
Salem OR 97301-3971

Dear OTC Chair Brown and Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to voice concerns about the Urban Mobility Strategy (UMS) finance plan update presented at the May 9 Oregon Transportation Commission meeting and discussed at the June 3 Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation (R1ACT) meeting.

We know you are in an untenable situation now that ODOT (UMS) has shared that they are facing a budget shortfall of \$300-\$550 million, primarily to deliver the I-205 Abernethy Bridge and I-5 Rose Quarter Projects. These are both projects of statewide significance from HB2017 that we support & want to see funded and completed.

ODOT staff presented two alternatives to the OTC to fund these projects, including bonding and/or cutting the 2024-27 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). We have questions about the impacts to future STIP cycles as well as the implication for bonding against the bridge program.

All of us care deeply about transportation and about the wellbeing of everyone in our state. We believe that the only way through this crisis is to work together. The funding decisions you make will have lasting impacts and repercussions for every agency involved in transportation operations and maintenance and the delivery of transportation improvements around the state.

We respectfully request that you direct ODOT to meaningfully engage with the ACTs to provide additional information about their preferred funding scenarios(s), the statewide funding implications and the funding timeline prior to you making a decision.

Years ago, the ACTs were created to help bring regional perspective to the work of the OTC. Per ODOT's policy document, https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Get-Involved/ACT/OTC_ACTpolicy.pdf, the role is to "Provide recommendations to the OTC regarding program funding allocations for various investment programs." And to, "Make recommendations to ODOT regarding special funding opportunities and programs." We ask you to fully enable the ACTs to serve in their advisory role on this matter.

We know this will be a tough decision and that insufficient funding for transportation is a shared problem that we must work together to resolve. We ask you to empower the ACTs to help OTC and ODOT make this decision and to work together to solve the broader statewide funding issues through development of a 2025 transportation funding package.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Chair Tootie Smith
On behalf of Clackamas County Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Paul Savas

CC: ODOT Director Kris Strickler

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