

OREGON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION CONSORTIUM (OMPOC)

Messaging for OR Joint Committee on Transportation Roadshow May, 2024

At its May 24, 2024 meeting, OMPOC prioritized the following fundamental elements to be messaged by OMPOC members to the JCT and local legislators throughout their transportation roadshow:

- 1) **Core Operations and Maintenance.** Oregon's transportation system is underfunded. If this continues, existing local and state infrastructure will fail, requiring more expensive repairs or even more expensive rebuilds. We must invest in the system we have to ensure it is safe, resilient, and reliable. A stable, significant investment in state and local transportation facilities will help address this situation.
- 2) **Transportation Safety.** Traffic fatalities and serious injuries have continued to rise in the last few years. Increasing investments in safety improvements that minimize conflicts between transportation modes, such as ADA compliant pedestrian crossings and adequate bike infrastructure, are necessary to make Oregon communities safer.

Over the last five years, some areas in Oregon have been facing significant increases in the loss of life along roadways. These include fatal vehicular crashes, bike crashes, and those involving pedestrians. From our view, more funding available for investment in safety projects will make a difference.

- 3) **Diversify and index a full range of transportation revenue sources.** The gas tax buying power has been significantly reduced. We must stop this continued erosion and stabilize revenue for transportation investments.

This should include establishing a fee structure based on the true impact of vehicles on Oregon's transportation infrastructure. We support a discussion of both state and local revenue sources including, but not limited to, those listed below. All must be indexed to inflation:

- a. Transition to road user fee
- b. Electric Vehicle registration fee
- c. Studded tire fee
- d. City gas tax
- e. County registration fee at the cap
- f. Maintain current funding distribution allocations

- 4) **Finish Projects in HB 2017.** There are 43 projects across Oregon that were part of the commitments made in 2017. The scale of these investments was historic in scope and resulted from a significant bipartisan effort, but not all have been completed. These projects must be completed because they remain critical for all communities in Oregon; particularly the Interstate Bridge, and I-5 Rose Quarter.

If these projects are not completed, bottlenecks and economic impacts will only worsen. We also risk losing the public's confidence in the legislature's ability to deliver on commitments.

Now is not the time to go back. It's time to press on and deliver a funding package that can complete these long-term investments.

- 5) **Additional Transit Funding.** Transit is critical to connecting communities. One of the most significant investments made in HB 2017 was an annual infusion of transit funding to build capacity and create inter-community connections. We must continue this investment with a focus on underserved communities, and inter-community transit investment. Funding to support core transit operations and maintenance is critical to maintaining a complete and safe system that is compelling and efficient for people to use.