



October 16, 2017

The Honorable Tammy Baney, Chair  
Oregon Transportation Commission  
355 Capitol Street  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) development**

Dear Chair Baney and Commissioners:

The recently passed Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project funding via HB2017 will allow many cities and towns in Oregon to start to make streets safer for children in the area around schools, and we greatly appreciate your support in this work. We are pleased to see communities across the state seeking to develop safe, convenient, and well-supported opportunities for all children to walk and roll to and from school.

Creating safe routes to schools to benefit all students includes more than just fixing sidewalks: Successful SRTS initiatives are comprehensive programs that follow the Six E's: Encouragement, Education, Enforcement, Engineering, Equity, and Evaluation. For greatest effect, a comprehensive program provides a coordinated approach to engineering improvements combined with education and encouragement programs.

The *Oregon Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan*, *Oregon Transportation Options Plan*, and OTC's *Strategic Investment in Transportation* reports recommend State support of increased and reliable SRTS Programmatic funding, which would support the comprehensive nature of SRTS that makes it so successful when paired with engineering improvements. Currently only a handful of communities in the state receive ODOT grant funding to support these programs and staff to coordinate them. The OTC's 2016 *Strategic Investment in Transportation* report recommended an additional investment of \$6 million per year, which would provide traffic safety education and SRTS encouragement programs for all graduating elementary school students, complementing engineering investments. Unfortunately, HB2017 did not address this need.

In order to take the next step in ensuring more youth in Oregon can walk or roll to school, we request that you move forward the proposal before you to increase funding for Safe Route to School Educational grants by \$1.5 million, via the staff recommendation for non-highway discretionary funding. This proposal would double the amount of funding available to local communities to develop School Travel Plans, support SRTS coordinators to work in school districts, and facilitate work between schools, community, and the local jurisdictions that are currently taking a closer look at street safety needs around schools.

Thank you again for your service, your consideration, and the opportunity to provide comment on the 2021-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) development.

Regards,

Kari Schlosshauer