

Testimony in Support of HB3113, Great Streets

Committee: Transportation

Submitter: Megan Ramey, Safe Routes to School Manager for Hood River County School District, Board Member for Columbia Area Transit, Active Transportation Rep-at large for ODOT Region 1 ACT

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain and members of the House Committee on Transportation,

My name is Megan Ramey, I write to you from Hood River County as the Safe Routes to School Manager for 8 schools. I am in full support of HB3113 to create more funding for the Great Streets program to transition rural Oregon's orphan highways to city streets that 1) increase safety and health for local residents, 2) re-knit our neighborhoods, 2) serve as safe routes for children to walk or bike to school, and 4) increase local business.

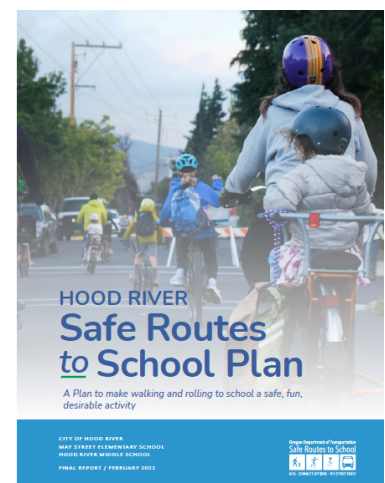
Hood River's Heights business district is a poster child project for Great Streets funding. The Heights neighborhood is considered the heart of the City by locals, but bisecting it is Highway 281, a couplet of 2 one-way streets, 12th and 13th, that have 4 lanes dedicated to vehicle travel and vehicle parking, respectively. On either side of the streets are housing, the Middle School and an Elementary School, the hospital and a main grocery store, as well as numerous businesses.

Through numerous public engagement processes, residents have noted their fear for walking or biking and their concerns when driving.

Specifically, through the [ODOT Safe Routes to School Planning process](#) (page 11), parents were surveyed with an interactive map tool. Out of top 8 intersections, 5 of them involved Highway 281. Simply doing a search of the 49-page Safe Routes to School plan for mention of "12th" "13th" generates 150 results.

The Safe Routes to School Plan has 31 infrastructure improvement recommendations and 4 of the 5 top priorities (page 35) are 12th, 13th and two intersections along those streets.

The great news is that because of the Safe Routes to School Plan and years of public engagement, the City of Hood River Urban Renewal Agency has a vision for The Heights. The bad news is that it



would require a jurisdictional transfer and more than \$30 million, which the city cannot afford. We need help from the original owner of the roads, ODOT.

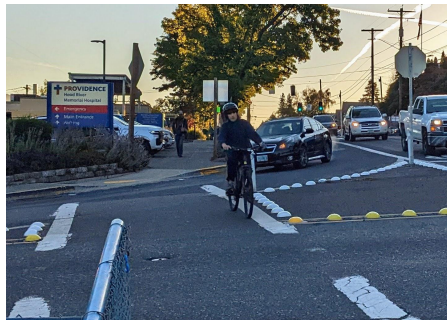


Oct 2022 Hood River Urban Renewal Agency voted on a new design with a protected bikeway on 12th Street and safer crossings over 12th and 13th because of the support for child friendly streets.

I know that Hood River is one of many cities competing for the Great Streets funding and the need is real. I do not envy the advisory committee's job in choosing who gets funding and who does not.

But you could help make their job a little easier in 2023 and by investing more in Great Streets in the future.

Here is our story in photos:



Sincerely,
Megan Ramey

