

Chair Hudson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) at the University of Oregon. As a former student participant, my experiences with SCYP were instrumental in shaping my understanding of urban planning and sustainability, as well as inspiring my passion for creating positive changes in Oregon communities.

During my time on the projects, I had the privilege of working on two impactful projects. In June 2023, I collaborated with a team to design a proposal for Sisters, Oregon, aimed at improving transportation for bicyclists and pedestrians. By working closely with city officials, conducting research, and touring the area, we developed a comprehensive design proposal tailored to the city's unique needs. Similarly, in March 2024, I contributed to a proposal for Salem, Oregon, as part of the University of Oregon's Green Cities class. This project focused on integrating solar panel installations into the future design of Geer Park. Both opportunities allowed me to engage directly with local officials, citizens, and my peers to address real-world challenges and propose meaningful solutions.

These experiences provided invaluable hands-on learning. Collaborating with diverse stakeholders enhanced my technical skills in data analysis and proposal design while honing essential soft skills such as teamwork, project management, and effective communication. SCYP's emphasis on bridging academic knowledge with practical applications equipped me with the confidence and readiness to contribute meaningfully to the professional world.

The Sustainable City Year Program is a unique and transformative initiative that not only enriches students' education but also empowers local Oregon communities to address pressing challenges. The program exemplifies the powerful constructive collaboration between public higher education and community impact, fostering the next generation of leaders prepared to tackle environmental, economic, and social challenges.

I wholeheartedly support continued investment in SCYP and the remarkable benefits it provides to students, communities, and the state of Oregon. By sustaining and expanding

this program, Oregon can continue to cultivate innovative solutions and future leaders who are passionate about creating a more sustainable and equitable future.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Kerr

McMinnville, Oregon