

Chair Hudson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) at the University of Oregon. As a former and current student participant in multiple projects, I have found my experience with SCYP transformative and instrumental in shaping my passion for public service.

During my time in the program, I had the valuable opportunity to work on real-world projects that addressed pressing challenges faced by local communities. In collaboration with the City of Salem, I worked on a bicycle transportation project that proposed the redesign of bike, bus, and car circulation, including protective elements for cyclists and pedestrians, in a neighborhood with an elementary school. In an SCYP class this term, I am working on a project for the City of Oakridge where we are visualizing the health, water, and wildlife impacts of a proposed quarry.

SCYP provided meaningful hands-on experience and gave me practical insights into how fresh thinking, new perspectives, and evidence-based ideas can be customized to the unique contexts of local Oregon communities to improve the quality of life for residents. Collaborating with city officials, faculty, and fellow students further enhanced my technical and analytical skills, as well as allowed me to hone my 'soft' skills like collaborative teamwork, time and project management, presenting ideas to the public, and of course writing effectively – all which are extremely important in the professional workplace. I am grateful to have had this type of training in college so that I could enter the workforce ready to contribute on day one.

In talking with friends that attended universities in other states, it is clear that SCYP really is a unique and effective program that serves as a bridge between academic learning and practical application, fostering a new generation of leaders who are prepared to address the multifaceted challenges of our time. I feel that SCYP really helped equip me and the hundreds of other students SCYP serves each year with the knowledge, skills, and motivation to contribute meaningfully to society.

I wholeheartedly support sustainable and on-going support of the Sustainable City Year Program and the profound benefits it offers to students, communities, and to Oregon as a whole. SCYP truly is a model of integrating the 'public' into public higher education and the state's investment in SCYP will help create a new generation workforce and leaders who are ready to tackle the economic, environmental, and social challenges Oregon faces.

Sincerely,

Dora Schmidt, Eugene, Oregon