

June 9, 2025

To: Representative Hudson and Senator Gorsek, Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Transportation

Re: Amend HB 2025 to increase funding for Oregon shared use trails and pathways.

Dear Representative Hudson, Senator Gorsek and Committee Members,

I want to express strong support for amending HB 2025 to increase funding for Oregon shared use trails and pathways. This proposal aligns with our state mission to improve safety, accessibility, and sustainability in connecting our shared path and community trail networks, safe systems approach and safe routes to school programs.

**Oregon Community Paths Details:**

Oregon Community Paths funds grants for project development, construction, reconstruction, major resurfacing or other improvements of multi-use paths that improve access and safety for people walking and bicycling. This program is used to fund the off-street portions of Safe Routes to School projects as well as access to parks, transit centers, and alternatives to high-speed roadways. It is especially critical in rural communities, where off-street paths are frequently the only alternative to walking, running, or biking on the state highway system. **The program was oversubscribed by more than 4:1 in its first two funding cycles. I am asking if a very small portion of the new funding identified in the transportation package can be allocated to this program through the Multimodal Active Transportation Fund which exclusively funds the Oregon Community Paths program.** I celebrate the proposed investments already identified in the package for on-street safety through Safe Routes to School and Great Streets.

**Why Funding Trails Matters:**

- **More than 80% of Oregonians report using local trails or off-street paths, and there is broad public support for investing in trails.**
- **Safety:** Off-street paths provide the safest alternatives to walking or riding on high-speed and high-traffic roadways, and ODOT's Oregon Community Paths program is a critical tool alongside Great Streets and Safe Routes to School, in addressing the epidemic of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways.
- **Economic Impact:** In addition to saving lives and healthcare system costs, off-street paths are extremely valuable visitor amenities and support Oregon's outdoor recreation and tourism economies and the economic vitality of Oregon communities. While we lack Oregon-specific data on trails Return On

Investment, the ROI of significant trail investments nationwide is well-documented.

- **Leverage Federal Funds:** Oregon Community Paths program provides one of the only sources of matching funds for the state and for local governments to leverage federal funding for trail projects in Oregon.

The purpose of transportation is to connect people and goods to places. Our system must support **all** Oregonians regardless of travel mode or zip code and must include everyone regardless of age, ability, race, gender, or income. Transportation is the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon, so our investments must include broad access to public and active transportation. Please support amending HB 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Stevens', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Frank Stevens  
Troutdale Resident