



“Regardless of geography, political affiliation, or mode of travel, Oregonians said that safety is their biggest transportation need.” Oregon Trails Coalition

June 6, 2025

Joint Committee on Transportation

State Capitol, Salem, Oregon

Co-Chairs McLain & Gorsek, Vice Chairs Boshart-Davis & Starr, Committee Members:

As a resident of Eugene, Oregon, I care about the health, safety, and connectivity of our communities statewide. Therefore, **I urge you to fully fund the Oregon Community Paths (OCP) Program in the upcoming Oregon Department of Transportation budget.** This program is vital to creating safe, accessible, and equitable active transportation routes that serve both local and regional needs.

The OCP Program supports multiuse paths that connect community centers, schools, employment, and essential services, emphasizing transportation rather than recreation⁴. In Eugene and Lane County, these paths are critical for safe walking and biking options, especially for students and families. For example, the City of Eugene’s Safe Routes to School (SRTS) initiatives, including the Echo Hollow Road corridor improvements, demonstrate how community-driven planning and infrastructure investments increase safety and encourage active transportation to schools². These efforts align with OCP’s goals by improving connections to existing shared-use paths and supporting equity-focused transportation access. *(Note: Image is conceptual only, and does not represent actual on-the-ground projects.)*

Lane County’s broader resilience and transportation planning, such as the Resilient Lane project, highlights the importance of a robust, multimodal surface transportation network that includes active transportation pathways³. This project focuses on equity, safety, and environmental sustainability—principles that are embodied in the OCP Program’s funding criteria and project goals. Supporting OCP will complement these regional efforts by providing critical links and regional paths that connect communities within 15 miles, facilitating commuting, reducing congestion, and promoting healthier, more sustainable travel options⁴.



The OCP Program requires projects to serve a clear transportation purpose, enabling walking, biking, and rolling access to jobs, schools, healthcare, and other services¹. The program's inclusive approach ensures that historically excluded communities are considered, with outreach and benefits explicitly addressed in project applications⁴. This focus on equity and accessibility is essential for Lane County and Eugene, where diverse populations rely on safe, affordable transportation options.

Fully funding the Oregon Community Paths Program will:

- **Enhance safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists,** particularly children and vulnerable populations in Eugene and across Oregon²⁴.
- **Support regional connectivity that strengthens economic and social ties** between communities in Lane County and beyond³⁴.
- **Promote environmental health** by reducing vehicle congestion and emissions, aligning with local climate action plans³.
- **Empower communities through inclusive planning processes** that reflect local needs and priorities²⁴.

I respectfully urge the legislature to recognize the critical role of the Oregon Community Paths Program in building a safer, healthier, and more connected Oregon.

Your full funding commitment will enable communities like Eugene and Lane County to continue advancing these vital transportation projects that **benefit all Oregonians.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Albert LePage
Eugene, Oregon

References

¹ Oregon Department of Transportation, "Oregon Community Paths (OCP) FAQ," accessed 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Programs/TDD%20Documents/Community%20Paths_FAQ.pdf

² City of Eugene and Oregon Department of Transportation, "A Plan to Make Walking and Biking to School a Safe, Fun Activity," Winter 2022/Spring 2023, https://www.oregonsaferoutes.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ODOT-SRTS-Plan_Eugene-Final.pdf

³ Lane Council of Governments, "Resilient Lane PROTECT Grant Application," 2023, <https://www.lcog.org/media/10316>

⁴ Oregon Department of Transportation, "Oregon Community Paths 2022 Grant Solicitation and Program Guidelines," July 2022, <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/RPTD/RPTD%20Document%20Library/2023-OCP-Program-Guidelines.pdf>