



March 22, 2022

sent via OTCAdmin@odot.oregon.gov

Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capitol Street NE, MS 11
Salem, OR 97301-3871

RE: Deep, broad community support in Central Oregon for prioritizing Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding for Bend's Midtown Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings

Dear Oregon Transportation Commissioners:

Thank you for seeking public input on how to best allocate federal funds available to Oregon via the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). We strongly encourage OTC to direct these critical IIJA resources to projects in Oregon's communities that:

- Catalyze more affordable housing and mixed-use development in our communities;
- Provide more equitable housing and transportation options to marginalized and underserved community members;
- Tackle climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation;
- Support a vibrant, diversified economy where businesses and their employees thrive; and
- Provide more safe, accessible ways to get around town that don't always require a car.

Here in Central Oregon, this means prioritizing IIJA funding support for Bend's Midtown Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings. The three Midtown Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings - individually known as Hawthorne Crossing, Greenwood Avenue, and Franklin Avenue - are central to providing accessible, safe, and essential multimodal connections in the heart of Bend. The Midtown Crossings are also vital to helping catalyze equitable redevelopment of the Bend Central District and Core Area, key areas designated to accommodate more of Bend's rapid growth and deliver complete communities with more affordable housing options close to essential services. In funding these critical and transformative projects, OTC's leadership will help ensure Bend is a more equitable, healthy, and climate-resilient place, for all.

Over 200 community organizations, local businesses, and Central Oregonians strongly support the City of Bend's request to allocate \$15 million in IIJA funds to Bend's Midtown Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossings. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,