



BendNeighborhoodCoalition@gmail.com | 320 SW Century Dr, Ste 405 #210, Bend, OR 97702 | 458-206-6777

Public Comments on Transportation Needs in Bend

September 7, 2016

To: Joint Committee on Transportation Preservation and Modernization

I am writing on behalf of the Bend Neighborhood Coalition, Inc., an independent non-profit organized by community volunteers concerned with maintaining the quality of life in our residential neighborhoods. Please add these comments to the public record of the Joint Committee, which heard testimony in Bend recently.

The Neighborhood Coalition believes that Bend can grow and remain livable, but doing so requires improving both the physical and policy infrastructure of the city. Many of the practices that worked when Bend had 40,000 residents aren't working with 80,000 — and certainly won't work with 120,000.

Bend's transportation system is one of the areas that desperately needs attention as the city grows and becomes more densely populated. It's unlikely that our many two-lane roads and single-lane roundabouts will ever be widened, which means that continuing to rely on vehicles as the sole means of transport will only produce more congestion, contributing to pollution, stress, and routine delays.

As a city with actual winter weather, efforts to encourage walking and biking have to be supported with increased availability of public transit if people are really going to use their cars less often for local trips. This is especially true for students at OSU-Cascades, who will be encouraged and incentivized to use alternate means to get to campus.

With this in mind, it is important to prioritize funding for a Westside Transit Center on or near the OSU-Cascades' campus, and to support efforts to expand bus service and decrease the time it takes to travel across town by bus. A park and ride lot near Hwy. 97, with quick service into town, would also encourage regional commuters, including those going to the OSU campus.

Investing in infrastructure now will help shape the transportation culture of Bend going forward, especially for OSU students and those who will occupy future higher-density areas in the city.

Sincerely,

Bill Bernardy
Chair, BNC Steering Committee

About the Bend Neighborhood Coalition:

Our members have been active in Bend's civic life, participating in advisory groups, task forces, neighborhood associations, HOAs, and ad hoc committees. We have joined together because we believe that healthy, cohesive, vibrant residential neighborhoods form the backbone of a strong city, and that public policies should preserve and improve upon this great asset.

We also believe that livable residential neighborhoods encourage small businesses to locate here, creating a more diverse and sustainable economy. People are happier, more productive, and more civil when they are able to enjoy peace and quiet at home, safe streets, and the residential character of their neighborhoods. So, we embrace both smart growth and policies that protect and improve the quality of life for residents.