

February 7, 2019

Oregon Transportation Commission
ODOT Headquarters
355 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97301-3871

Dear members of the Oregon Transportation Commission and Governor Brown,

As advocates for an equitable, sustainable, and safe multimodal transportation system, we respectfully offer our recommendations to assist in the search for a new director of the Oregon Department of Transportation.

As you understand, our state's transportation system—like a road—should not be an end in itself but a means to multiple ends. Especially in an era of limited funding, Oregonians expect transportation investments to not merely help move people, goods and services, but to also advance economic, social, health and environmental goals. Investments in transportation must create construction jobs, but also offer people better ways to get to work, retraining or shopping, and support the development of vibrant and livable communities. Investments in transportation must enable all Oregonians—regardless of age, ability or income level—to get where they want to go safely, conveniently and affordably. Finally, investments in transportation must be aligned with Oregon achieving our critical climate change goals and other environmental and public health objectives.

Our transportation system is at a time of transformation not unlike that in the early part of the 20th century. ODOT's new director must be able to steer that transformation in the right direction, meeting the aforementioned needs of a highly diverse and growing population. We know that you understand this imperative and will utilize this opportunity to conduct a thorough search to ensure that you select the most qualified and capable candidate for this important position at this important time.

Our recommendations are as follows:

- Clarify Oregon's vision for transportation before developing the job description and advertising for the position. The vision statement in the 2006 Oregon Transportation Plan is a good place to start¹.

¹ *Oregon Transportation Plan Vision*: By 2030, Oregon's transportation system supports people, places and the economy. We travel easily, safely and securely, and so do goods, services and information. Efficient vehicles powered by renewable fuels move all transportation modes. Community design supports walking, bicycling, travel by car and

Oregonians and visitors have real transportation choices and transfer easily between air, rail, motor vehicles, bicycles and public transportation while goods flow just in time through interconnected highway, rail, marine, pipeline and air networks. Our communities and economies – large and small, urban and rural, coastal and mountain, industrial and agricultural – are connected to the rest of Oregon, the Pacific Northwest and the world. Land use, economic activities and transportation support each other in environmentally responsible ways.

Oregon Transportation Plan Vision continued: We excel in using new technologies to improve safety and mobility. We maximize the use of existing facilities across traditional jurisdictions and add capacity strategically. Public/private

- Conduct a national search to identify the best possible candidates using best practices (including the Rooney Rule) to attract diverse candidates.
- Seek guidance from a variety of stakeholder communities throughout the selection process, not merely those who are considered traditional transportation stakeholders. Your outreach for guidance should include historically marginalized communities for whom affordable transportation options are critical to economic and educational attainment, and accessing medical and cultural resources and other important destinations.
- Establish clear priorities for the new director in the job description. We have developed a description of skills, attributes and interests we believe the new director should possess. They are organized into the following seven major categories and are described in greater detail following our signatures.
 1. A strong transportation knowledge base.
 2. A track record of responsible management of the transportation system, with a focus on maintaining our transportation assets and prioritizing safe and efficient use of transportation infrastructure.
 3. A track record of solving access and mobility needs with holistic, equitable, multimodal investments.
 4. Demonstrated ability to align transportation investments with environmental, environmental justice, and public health objectives, e.g., meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals.
 5. Demonstrated ability to create robust, two-way relationships with external partners and stakeholders.
 6. A commitment to addressing the issues raised in the most recent audit of ODOT, to taking a fresh look at ODOT's functions, and to making decisions independently from stakeholders with a financial interest in such decisions.
 7. Experience leading a diverse staff and encouraging innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity to achieve equity in outcomes as core business objectives.

We hope our suggestions are helpful and would be happy to expand upon or clarify any details.

Respectfully yours,

partnerships respond to Oregonians' needs across all transportation modes. Transportation system benefits and burdens are distributed fairly, and Oregonians are confident transportation dollars are being spent wisely. By 2030, Oregonians fully appreciate the role transportation plays in their daily lives and in the region's economy. Because of this public confidence, Oregonians support innovative, adequate and reliable funding for transportation.

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See next page for a description of skills, attributes and interests we believe the new director should possess.

The signatories of this letter ask that the Oregon Transportation Commission consider whether the candidates for ODOT Director demonstrate the following skills, attributes and interests.

1. **A strong transportation knowledge base.** The new director must be fluent not only with all of the ways to move people and goods, but also understand how transportation investments intersect with other goals, such as managing urban growth so that farms and forests are preserved, reducing climate pollution and air pollution from transportation, helping elderly Oregonians age in place, and otherwise providing everyone with equitable access to the places they need and want to go. The new director must be able to apply enduring values to new and emerging transportation technologies and business models and be proactive in managing them to the benefit of Oregonians.
2. **A track record of commitment to responsible management of our transportation system,** with a focus on maintaining and preserving our current transportation assets while prioritizing and meeting efficient use of transportation infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Agreement with the Oregon Highway Plan investment hierarchy which prioritizes maintaining highway performance and improving safety by improving system efficiency and management before adding capacity.
 - An understanding that induced demand rapidly cancels out the near-term benefits of new highway infrastructure, and willingness to utilize transportation demand management tools, such as congestion pricing, to avoid astronomically expensive freeway expansion.
 - Willingness to communicate to regions, cities and counties that Oregon can't afford—financially, environmentally or equitably—to add lane capacity the way the state has in the past.
 - Embracing tools to analyze outcomes at all stages of the process: planning, project development, design, construction, operation, and maintenance. Using modern data and analytics so the DOT can tell if it is investing wisely to most effectively improve lives of Oregonians. The candidate should be familiar with advancements in this state of practice at innovative agencies such as WSDOT, HIDOT, VDOT, TDOT, Association of Bay Area Governments, and with “Oregon Mosaic: Value and Cost Informed Planning”—the transportation planning model that was developed by ODOT, but remains underutilized.
3. **A track record of solving access and mobility needs with holistic, equitable, multimodal investments.** This includes experience:
 - Expanding safety and connectivity for walking, biking and transit, prioritizing these healthy active transportation modes as solutions to our transportation challenges.

- Pursuing solutions that consider the negative and positive impacts of transportation investment on environmental justice communities,² which include people of color and low-income households.
 - Making the transportation system accessible to those with disabilities.
4. **Demonstrated ability to align transportation investments with environmental, environmental justice³, and public health objectives, e.g., meeting the state’s greenhouse gas reduction goals.** This includes:
- Accelerating the strategies outlined in the Statewide Transportation Strategy, working closely with sister agencies to do so. The transportation sector represents nearly 40% of Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions, and, as ODOT staff reported in April of 2018, under the current trajectory, transportation emissions will be reduced by only 20% by 2080, far short of the needed 80%. Oregon will be successful only if multiple strategies are applied, including clean vehicles and fuels; reducing vehicle miles traveled; integrating transportation and land use planning; and helping people and goods move more efficiently.
 - Ability to embrace and communicate to every ODOT employee the department’s commitment to sustainability, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, doing context-sensitive design, implementing environmental performance standards, and working to reduce the use of herbicides along right-of-ways.
5. **Demonstrated ability to create robust, two-way relationships with external partners and stakeholders.** This includes:
- Building strong relationships with agencies whose missions overlap with ODOT’s mission, i.e., Department of Land Conservation and Development, Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Health Authority, Business Oregon, and the new agency (likely to be called Oregon Climate Authority) that will replace the Oregon Department of Energy.
 - Close collaboration with local agencies, which generally have a closer relationship with local residents. ODOT should find ways to address local priorities where projects impact local communities.
 - An interest in involving new stakeholders in department decision-making, and ensuring that the makeup of the Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) is truly representative of the communities the ACTs represent.
 - Recognition that ODOT’s responsibility is primarily not to its own assets, but to the communities that those assets serve or impact.

² “Environmental Justice Communities” means communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, tribal communities, and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes including but not limited to seniors, youth and persons with disabilities.

³ As defined by the Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force, “Environmental Justice” means equal protection from environmental and health hazards, and meaningful public regard regardless of race, color, income and other from participation in decisions that affect the environment in which people live, work, learn, practice spirituality, and play.

6. **A commitment to addressing the issues raised in the most recent audit of ODOT, to taking a fresh look at ODOT's functions, and to making decisions independently from stakeholders with a financial interest in such decisions.** As examples:
 - Reevaluate whether it is in ODOT's best interest to house the Motor Carrier Transportation Division.
 - Consider splitting the duties of the Motor Carrier Division and DMV apart from ODOT into a separate Department of Motor and Commercial Vehicles as other states do and moving Motor Carrier Safety to State Police.

7. **Experience leading a diverse staff and encouraging innovation, collaboration, and inclusivity to achieve equity in outcomes as core business objectives.** For example, the new director could:
 - Develop an incentive program for staff members who formulate the most creative, cost-effective solutions to transportation needs.
 - Provide training and pathways to promote women and people of color into management and decision-making roles.
 - Revise job descriptions and organization in order to build expertise in emerging fields and practices, including innovations in multimodal design, data analytics, performance-based decision-making, and public engagement in order to guide hiring and employee development.
 - Provide training so that the rank-and-file workforce can adapt to new ways of doing business.