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# Bethel School District #52

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*Together we will reach, teach,  
and inspire each student to  
excellence.*

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Metropolitan Policy Committee  
c/o Andrea Riner  
Lane Council of Governments  
859 Willamette, Suite 500  
Eugene, OR 97401

May 10, 2011

This letter is in support of Lane County's financing request to maintain the original design of Lane County's Hyacinth Sidewalk project. The project addresses a critical and dangerous risk for Irving Elementary School students who currently walk to school and those who do not because of pedestrian safety concerns.

The area around Irving Elementary, built in 1964, reflects the land use patterns of the time with surrounding streets rural in character. Other than a few minor bike path connectors and one that weaves through Arrowhead Park, no bike lanes or paths exist surrounding the school site. With no sidewalks, bike lanes, or paths, children walking or bicycling must be in the street with parked cars on either side, interfacing with traffic.

The Complete Streets Assessment, conducted as part of the Oregon Research Institute's Community and Schools Together (CAST) Project and the Bethel School District's Safe Routes to School planning effort, concluded that 95% of streets directly surrounding the school were unsafe or neutral in terms of safety. The Hyacinth Street Sidewalk relieves these hazardous conditions with the installation of a 6-foot wide sidewalk on the west side of Hyacinth Street between Calla Street and Irvington Drive.

Additionally, the project enhances the Bethel School District Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program's educational and encouragement activities by increasing opportunities for safe walking and bicycling to school.

The Central Lane Metropolitan Policy Committee [MPC] recognized the value and necessity of this project. However, due to unforeseen design issues, the allocated project funding is not sufficient and requires an additional funding of \$200,000 to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the original design.

The Bethel School District strongly supports Lane County's request to MPC for additional funding to provide our community's children an environment to safely walk and bike to their school.

Sincerely,

Drew Braun, Ph.D.  
Director of Instruction