

Chair Van Brocklin & Commissioners -

Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm Paul Thompson, Manager of the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO. Today I'm representing the Central Lane MPO Policy Board, which asked me to testify on their behalf.

The Central Lane MPO represents the second largest City, second largest MPO, and second largest Transit provider in Oregon. I'm testifying today to reaffirm the MPO's commitment to funding the Non-Highway category as the number one priority.

The Central Lane MPO was pleased in September to see the original Non-Highway scenario #2 receive a significant boost in proposed Non-Highway funding compared to the Baseline scenario. Additional information presented in October supported investing in the Non-Highway scenario and realizing significant improvements in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, social equity, and multimodal mobility.

Moving forward into the two December OTC meetings, and the narrowing of the possible funding scenarios to Hybrids 2A, 2B, and 3B, the Central Lane MPO would first like to ask you to continue considering, and prioritize, the original Scenario 2. Scenario 2 provides by far the most funding for Non-Highway projects and programs, and will result in the most improvements in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, improving social equity, and expanding and improving multimodal mobility. As just one example, Scenario 2, which provided \$321 million for Non-Highway, was projected to allow for completion of the state's bicycle-pedestrian network in 50 years, as compared to 150 years under the Baseline scenario. Now, the proposed Non-Highway funding in Scenarios 2A, 2B, and 3B would complete that network in some 60-100 years. Do we really want to wait beyond our lifetimes, up to a full century, to accomplish that?

If Scenario 2 has truly been removed from further consideration, the Central Lane MPO supports Hybrid scenario 3B, as it provides the most funding among the three Hybrid scenarios for Non-Highway investments. However, scenario 3B provides \$51 million less in Non-Highway funding than Scenario 2, and the MPO is disappointed to see the scenarios remaining under consideration move in that direction. It is our belief that, on the margin, \$51 million will accomplish a LOT more in the Non-Highway funding category than it could possibly accomplish in the Enhance category.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, slide #8 in tonight's PowerPoint presentation illustrates not only how Non-Highway funding has been reduced compared to Scenario 2, but how the outcomes have shifted as a result. We understand that one goal of the OTC, as stated in earlier meetings, may be to "eliminate the red" in the outcome analysis . . . but that is essentially the peanut butter approach, and does little to make truly significant, or "Notable," improvements in any of the outcomes. Unfortunately, Scenario 3B accomplishes exactly zero "Notable" outcomes, according to the staff analysis. And across all three of the Hybrid scenarios still under consideration, only one "Notable Improvement" outcome is achieved – under Scenario 2A for Congestion Relief outcomes. Congestion Relief is far from the priority of the Central Lane MPO, and many others who have testified. In fact, all three of Hybrid Scenarios 2A, 2B, and 3B completely remove the "Notable" improvements that could be achieved under the original Scenario 2. This seems to be moving in the wrong direction. We ask that you reach for Notable Improvements by selecting Scenario 2.

Thank you for your time.