



July 3, 2018

**OREGON STATE SENATE**

Dear Bend City Council,

I am writing to you to provide my input on the City's new Transportation System Plan. As you know, this summer provides a unique opportunity for improving transit in Bend: The City is updating its transportation plan, COIC is updating its transportation plan, and the new state transportation package has made additional funding available. We have an opportunity to improve public transit in Bend to adequately reflect the needs of our growing city.

While there are numerous issues related to transportation in Bend that I could address, I want to express a specific concern that the current configuration and operations at the Hawthorne Transit Center present a safety risk and are limiting opportunities for economic growth and development within the Bend Central District (BCD).

The Hawthorne Transit Center currently serves as the central hub for Bend's public transit system, but it lacks many of the basic amenities necessary to serve those who take the bus in our community. Riders have no access to restrooms at the transit center after 5pm, forcing them to seek out services at nearby businesses. The transit center also lacks basic modern technologies such as real-time reader boards with rider information to make transit accessible to all Bend residents.

I have serious safety concerns with the existing transit hub on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Hawthorne. One evening some weeks ago I was driving on Hawthorne and a woman who was clearly under the influence tried to accost my vehicle with me and my family inside. We were able to safely leave the area but I would never want my family or anyone else to have their safety threatened. Neighbors to the transit center have voiced to me, personally, concerns about safety for riders, with bus drivers, freight vehicles and cars competing for space and access to the busy street. As bus and freight traffic clogs the same, narrow street, pedestrians are forced to navigate around large vehicles with limited visibility. The chaos and confusion in such a tight space makes it dangerous for everyone.

I ask that Bend carefully consider and identify a proper location and configuration for its central transit center, with a focus on rider mobility, safety, housing and impacts to adjacent businesses and neighborhoods. I also ask that you support meaningful connections between the transit system and bicycle routes along 3<sup>rd</sup> street, to ensure a robust transportation network within the BCD.

I urge the city to develop a more appropriate, thoughtful solution that will support our residents, economic growth and redevelopment of the BCD.

Thank you for incorporating my concerns into the public input process for the development of the City's Transportation System Plan.

Sincerely,

State Senator Tim Knopp