



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Transportation

Office of the Director

Room 135

355 Capitol St NE

Salem, OR 97301

DATE: April 9, 2010
TO: Oregon Transportation Commission

FROM: Matthew L. Garrett
Director

SUBJECT: Agenda G – Urban Trail Fund (UTF)

Requested Action:

Approve the program structure and project identification process for the first funding cycle of the UTF.

Background:

Governor Kulongoski signed House Bill 2001, the Oregon Jobs and Transportation Act, into law July 2009. Section 31 of this bill created the UTF, and appropriated \$1 million to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to fund this program. The purpose of the UTF is to develop and maintain multi-use trails for non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians—within urban growth boundaries—to supplement or provide links to roads, highways, footpaths, bike trails and public transit.

Within ODOT, the UTF will be managed by the Local Government Section, with technical assistance from the Pedestrian and Bicycle Program. The TE Program Manager is serving as the UTF manager.

Discussion:

The UTF manager analyzed existing state and federal trail funded programs in addition to speaking with ODOT and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department program staff to identify areas for which the UTF will serve needs typically not being met by current programs. In January 2010, the initial proposal was presented to the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Oregon Local Program Committee, and Metro “Active Transportation Partnership” staff. In February, the UTF manager met with the Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Committee and the TE Advisory Committee.

The comparison of existing trail programs is shown in Attachment 1. The proposed schedule and process for the first round of UTF funding is in Attachments 1 and 2. Initial discussion with advisory committees and program staff considered small grants to assist many locations throughout the state. With \$1 million in currently budgeted, and future funds uncertain, the strategy proposed here for the 2010 funding cycle is to award funds in two to four locations with high-impact projects that will clearly demonstrate the value of trails as part of the transportation system. The priority will go to communities that have shown commitment through prior investment in their trail network, and recent or on-going planning and public outreach efforts supporting trails as part of the transportation system.



Oregon Transportation Commission

April 9, 2010

Page 2

The priority this year is to get UTF projects under way before the 2011 Legislative Session. This is in an effort to demonstrate the statewide interest and benefits of the program, and to guide funding decisions for future budget cycles.

The requested action is a critical step in implementing Section 31 of HB 2001. Approval will allow ODOT to begin the UTF project identification process in May 2010 that leads to grant awards in October 2010, and projects under way by January 2011.

Copies (w/attachments) to:

Doug Tindall

Joan Plank

Patrick Cooney

Clyde Saiki

Pat Fisher

URBAN TRAILS FUND Project Identification Process for 2010

For the first year of the Urban Trails Fund (UTF) there is approximately \$970,000 available for grants to projects. ODOT will use the following process to quickly identify communities to receive Urban Trails grants for 2010. Since funds are very limited, there will be no more than four grants, with a minimum award of \$200,000 and a maximum of \$750,000.

- (1) ***Announce and Solicit – MAY 2010***
Urban Trails Fund (UTF) Manager informs prospective applicants through notice to the League of Oregon Cities, Area Commissions on Transportation, and Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Notice will include the timeline and information for submitting proposals.
- (2) ***Application Period – JUNE to JULY***
Application period will be open June 1 and close July 9. Public agencies submit a proposal describing their existing trail network, trail planning and community involvement efforts, the requested project, and local contribution through matching funds or prior investment.
- (3) ***Initial Review – JULY***
UTF Manager checks each proposal for UTF eligibility and adherence to the submittal requirements. Disqualified applicants will have ten days to request reconsideration. UTF Manager makes a determination based on recommendation from the Advisory Committee.
- (4) ***Technical Review – JULY***
UTF Manager coordinates inquiry and field review to assess project feasibility, readiness, and technical merit. Reviewers include staff from ODOT Local Government Section and region offices, and the Pedestrian and Bicycle Program. Projects not passing the technical review will not advance for funding. If there are too many projects to review quickly, the technical review will occur in August, after the Advisory Committee assists in screening to a smaller group of finalists.
- (5) ***Scoring and Selection – JULY 29 by Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee***
Advisory Committee evaluates proposals using the adopted selection criteria for this cycle. They select projects for the available funds or may select a group of finalists and defer final decision pending results of the technical review and further details on specific proposals.
- (6) ***Review of Finalists – AUGUST & SEPTEMBER***
If needed due to the volume of proposals, ODOT technical review will occur during this time along with other inquiry or clarification needed for final decision on grant awards.
- (7) ***Confirm Project Selection – SEPTEMBER***
If not completed in July: Advisory Committee finalizes project selection, including at least one alternate project. UTF Manager sends the proposed grant list to the ODOT Director and prepares a request for Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) approval.
- (8) ***Approval and Notification – SEPTEMBER or OCTOBER 2010***
ODOT Director submits the proposed grant list for OTC approval. Following approval, the UTF Manager notifies all affected applicants and initiates a statewide news release.

URBAN TRAILS FUND Selection Criteria for 2010

Points

20	<p>SYSTEM BENEFIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Benefit to the transportation system: closing critical gaps, extending or completing a network, connecting to key destinations, or addressing safety concerns. ▪ Effective use of funds for activities that promote the intent of the Urban Trails Fund (providing links to roads, highways, footpaths, bike trails, and public transit). ▪ Overall benefit in relation to project cost.
20	<p>TECHNICAL MERIT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feasible and appropriate solution for the situation. Provides a complete, useable facility or product—not a temporary or partial solution. ▪ Realistic scope, schedule and cost estimate. ▪ Adherence to applicable standards and methods for the type of project.
20	<p>READINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Status of planning, coordination, and public involvement efforts ▪ Potential need for property acquisition, easements or inter-agency agreements ▪ Progress on project development including surveying, engineering design, permits, and environmental coordination ▪ Demonstrated ability to deliver the project on time, within budget.
20	<p>SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial commitment, including investment to date and the source, amount, and reliability of matching funds and other contributions. ▪ Expressed approval by government agencies, the public and local interest groups. Documented priority within the applicant agency or in a defined geographic area. ▪ Relationship to adopted plans or policies or other investments in the area.
20	<p>IMPACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urgency of the project (based on problems or lost opportunities if not funded soon). ▪ Lack of opportunity for other funds. ▪ Potential to improve public awareness of trails as transportation facilities or to reduce motor vehicle use and increase walking or bicycling for short trips. ▪ Benefit to a large segment of the population or to a “transportation disadvantaged” segment (children, elderly, low-income, disabled).

100 points possible