

Ryan Howard For Senate District 13

1. General Approach. The City of Portland is often named the best bicycling city in the country. At the same time, car vehicle miles traveled are increasing while traffic congestion grows. Why do you think more Portlanders don't walk, bicycle, or take transit for transportation, and what will you do to help Portland (especially your legislative district) become an even better city to bike in, as well as a great city to walk and take transit?

I don't live in Portland but have spent an extensive amount of time riding in and around Portland. I also ride around my district and community. The barriers to walking and biking are the same: a poorly connected infrastructure system compounded by the hazards associated with automobiles and commercial vehicles, and a complete absence of education relating to walking and biking safety.

Actions directed at these two barriers will improve the rates of walking and biking. Allocating a portion of funding currently used for building new roads and highways to infrastructure and education will go a long way toward supporting active transportation.

2. Choices and Public Perception. Critics of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects often contend cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users don't pay their fair share in road taxes and other user fees. How would you make the case for allocating funds for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects?

Active transportation and public transit reduce the damage caused by single occupancy vehicles while reducing congestion. Demonstrating this is the best way to sell these modes to skeptical audiences. I believe that if people knew the unsubsidized costs of their transportation choices they would be less critical of active transportation and public transit. Additionally, comparing the costs of increasing capacity by promoting other modes against the costs of building new roads and highways makes a compelling case for reallocating resources.

3. State Funding for Active Transportation. HB 1700 from 1971 (ORS 366.514) requires the state set aside at least 1% of the highway fund to build bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Meanwhile, one-quarter of Oregonians (roughly a million people) are too poor, young, old or infirm to drive. Do you feel that the 1% is an adequate allotment to fulfill the safety and transportation needs of the ever-increasing bicycling and pedestrian community? If not, what would you do to change it?

1% is clearly inadequate. We need to discuss reserving funds for walking, biking, and public transit within the greater discussion on replacing the gas tax.

4. Traffic Safety. Traffic-related crashes are the top cause of death and injury for Oregonians aged 1 to 34. Pedestrian injuries and deaths are a serious problem in Oregon, with one serious injury a day and one death a week, encompassing 14% of traffic deaths in Oregon and 30% of deaths in Portland. Not surprisingly, most walkers and cyclists are injured or killed on busy streets. How will you improve traffic safety for walkers and bicyclists, especially for youth?

I am a big supporter of the recent trends of neighborhood greenways and protected cycletracks. Greenway designations accompanied by reduced speeds and traffic calming are my preferred bikeways due to the relatively low cost and ease of implementation. New arterials and highways should have cycle tracks rather than narrow and unsafe bike lanes. Increasing funding for these projects as well as new sidewalks will make walking and biking safer and more comfortable for all ages. I am also a proponent of including bike and pedestrian safety in the driver's education curriculum and testing.

◦ Traffic speed is the leading factor in crashes (even above alcohol), and one of the largest contributors to whether a crash is fatal. Is safety the highest priority of the transportation system? If so (or if not) what policy and implications does that have, especially when it comes to slowing cars and protecting vulnerable roadway users? Will you commit to a Vision Zero strategy calling for zero tolerance for road fatalities and commit to developing standards and policies to reach those goals?

I believe in the principals of Vision Zero. Traffic speeds should be reduced in areas where pedestrian conflicts may occur; but more importantly, I believe we need to improve compliance with current speed limits through enforcement. I support the use of photo radar to enforce traffic speeds.

5. Sensible Traffic Laws. For over 30 years, Idaho has had a law allowing cyclists to treat stop signs as yield signs, and come to a rolling stop instead of a complete stop (out of understanding of the laws of physics and the excessive use of stop signs on neighborhood streets). Over those last 30 years, Idaho police departments have seen no increase in safety problems, and have provided testimony in favor of the law. The Oregon legislature has considered passing a similar law in Oregon, but has failed to. What are your views on such a proposal?

I recognize the benefits of the Idaho Stop law. I support such a law in Oregon.

6. CRC Highway Mega-project. There has been a lot of pressure to build the most expensive public works project in the region's history, the five-mile long highway project known as the Columbia River Crossing. Despite being a multi-billion dollar project, bicycle and pedestrian facilities involved are substandard, including an under-highway mile-long path, a five-block corkscrew detour into Vancouver, and a mostly minimum width-allowed 16-foot path width, all for a facility designed to serve the next 100 years. The project is diverting billions of dollars from other regional priorities to

build an expansion that won't solve congestion. What are your views on the mega-project and what would you do about its funding as a senator?

I am opposed to the CRC. It is a generally unneeded highway expansion project with an unrealistic financing scheme and partners who would love for us to build them a bridge. I would support a third bridge alternative with pedestrian, transit, and local access together with seismic improvements on the current bridges. The project should be financed with tolling on the main spans if federal laws allow.

7. Cleaner Transportation, Better Choices through Land Use. Smart land use planning has a huge effect on how many people use transportation choices. In 2010, legislators passed Senate Bill 1059, which requires Metro to make its land use planning decisions lead to specific reductions in global warming pollution. It also requires Eugene-Springfield to plan on how it would accomplish such reductions. Would you support an effort to provide \$300,000 for a grant to do scenario planning for one of Oregon's other four Metro areas, which would be designed as a competitive pilot effort to model how Salem/Keizer, Corvallis, the Rogue Valley, or Bend could reduce their transportation pollution? If so, how would you go about finding that funding?

I think all communities should be required to acknowledge and minimize environmental impacts, including transportation related GHG emissions in planning for future growth. I won't commit to any particular funding source but recognize the need to secure funding for reducing transportation related emissions.

8. Transit funding. Transit systems throughout the state continue to struggle to make ends meet, especially in their quest for operating funds. In response, often service is cut while fares are increased. While the payroll tax cap was increased in 2009, it only increased for some cities. If you think public transit funding is inadequate, what sources of funds would you work increase or create as a legislator?

Transit funding should come, in part, from transportation dollars generated by a program to replace the outdated gas-tax. Costs of infrastructure maintenance need to be calculated and then charged to road users based on their impacts. The funds generated should be allocated first to maintain roads, then to support transit and active transportation to increase capacity.

9. Transportation Equity. Recent census data show nearly 10,000 people of color, mostly African Americans, have moved from Portland's city core to the city's eastern edges over the past ten years. East Portland has much sparser sidewalks and bikeways, grocery stores and parks, and less access to transit. How would you ensure these increasingly diverse and historically under invested neighborhoods are revitalized for their current residents? How would you improve transportation choices for low income communities and communities of color?

This sounds like an issue that the City of Portland needs to deal with. I am uncertain of what state actions would or should be taken to resolve this problem apart from generally increasing funds for walking, biking, and transit.

10. Health. How will you make sure that transportation priorities support Oregon's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals?

As I stated above, I believe that Oregon's land use planning process should be used to require that environmental impacts be accounted for during the planning process. Additionally, I believe that the environmental costs of carbon emissions should be calculated and accounted for.

11. Personal Example and Understanding. How do you currently travel around town, and how do you commute to work?

I live and work in Newberg. I commute most days by bike to my office a mile and a half from where I live. Most of my errands are run by walking and biking. When I attended law school at Lewis and Clark in Portland I commuted by bike 42 miles round trip as often as I could. I do own a car but, should I be elected to the legislature, will be buying an electric vehicle to use for transportation to and from the capital.

12. Past active transportation accomplishments. What are your specific accomplishments in helping improve conditions for bicycling, walking and accessing transit in Portland region, or other places?

My political involvement began as an effort to improve walking and biking conditions in Newberg. As a Newberg City Councilor, I have led the city in many efforts towards this goal. I developed a program called Bike Newberg. Through this program, the city, under my direction, has created a bike map, developed a bike-rack cost share program, began implementing our bicycle and pedestrian master-plan starting with our first greenways with sharrows and wayfinding signs, hosted many bike rodeo events for children, given away hundreds of helmets, and started a citywide walk and bike challenge we now hold every May. I have also worked with our school district to fund, prepare, and implement safe routes to school programs.

In Portland I have participated as a high level volunteer with Portland Sunday Parkways since 2009 and volunteer as a ride-along mechanic and event support rider for many organized bike rides throughout the region.

At the state level, I am a member of the Oregon Safe Routes to School steering committee and am currently planning the 2014 Oregon Safe Routes to School Conference to be held right here in Newberg!

I am also a member of the Willamette Water Trail Partnership, working to improve conditions for kayakers and canoers on the Willamette. Because who wouldn't love a kayak commute!?

13. Vision. Five years from now, what will you say when asked, "Over the past five years, what has the State accomplished with regard to transportation and what was your influence on that?"

I hope the state will take the lead in reforming how we fund transportation. The gas tax is outdated. With increasing fuel efficiency and the growth of electric vehicles, these revenues are declining just when we need the funding most. We need to modernize this system and reassess how we spend these dollars to promote walking, biking, and transit over building new highways and roads.

I would also like to see the state of Oregon on the forefront of determining and allocating the costs of climate change based on impacts.

14. Campaign Viability. What makes you a viable candidate for state Representative? How do you differentiate yourself from your opponent?

I am a progressive candidate in a district with a modest conservative edge. Nevertheless, my opponent has a long record of obstructing progress and voting against the interests of most Oregonians in her prior position as one of the most extreme and obstructionist State Representatives in the legislature. My background in local, non-partisan politics gives me a good basis to build a strong coalition. Combine that with my enthusiasm and willingness to work harder and you've got a recipe for a win in November.