

Andrea Giddings
Scarborough
LD 1020

I am writing to express opposition to the Gorham Connector.

As a resident of North Scarborough, I commute daily along Rt 22 and Rt 114 to my job as a teacher at the Scarborough Middle School. Contrary to claims, the traffic congestion on these routes is not excessively severe. While congestion may occur during specific times, such as rush hours, it is typically brief and does not warrant the drastic measure of constructing a new 4-lane toll highway.

Instead of rushing into such a costly and destructive massive infrastructure project like the Gorham Connector, we should first prioritize exploring and implementing alternative solutions to address the traffic issues, like improving our existing roads. More efficient intersections like roundabouts in the current areas of congestion would go a long way to relieving backed up traffic on Rt 114 and Rt 22. Perhaps most importantly, building paved shoulders on Rt 114, Rt 22, and other local roads like Running Hill, would finally give us North Scarborough residents the ability to safely bike and run and walk along these roads and not have to take our cars everywhere.

In the long term, developing public transit and complimentary land use changes, as outlined in the 2012 Gorham East-West Corridor study, will further aid in reducing traffic. The lack of implementation of the 2012 study recommendations is concerning. Before committing to such a large-scale and destructive infrastructure project as the Gorham Connector, it is essential that we explore and implement the other recommendations laid out in the study to address traffic issues effectively.

I really want to see this community thrive and would love the option of biking or running to work, or hopping on a bus to downtown Portland. I urge the state to reconsider its support for the Gorham Connector turnpike project that will destroy our community instead. Let's concentrate on prioritizing investments in alternative transportation methods that truly benefit our community. Investing in road shoulders for bike and pedestrian use, bus services, and other sustainable transit options will not only reduce congestion and improve mobility but also enhance the overall livability and sustainability of our community.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter.