

## U.S. 26: Wildwood-Wemme Environmental Assessment

### PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

September 13, 2005

The second public meeting for the U.S. 26: Wildwood-Wemme Environmental Assessment project was held on Tuesday, September 13, 2005 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Mount Hood Village – Evergreen Room. 33 people signed in for the meeting. The open house was publicized through a postcard mailing that was distributed to a list of 564 nearby landowners, key community stakeholders, and interested parties. This outreach was supplemented by a U.S. Postal Service carrier route mailing as well as a media release distribution.

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain participant feedback on the “No Build” option and 4 proposed design alternatives to solve the current safety problems of the section of roadway between Wildwood and Wemme. The open house featured large maps showing each of the four design alternatives as well the “No Build” option.

Participants were asked to place a dot on a map showing where they live, talk to staff, review the maps, and then fill out a comment form and provide their input about the alternatives. 16 comment forms were submitted. An additional 5 comment forms were mailed to ODOT following the meeting. The comments are listed below.

In addition to the comment forms, the project received 14 signed copies of a letter in favor of making safety improvements to the highway. Copies of this letter were distributed independently of the Project Team by a community advocate. An example is attached at the end of this summary.

#### Overview

Overall, the “*No Build*” alternative was not viewed very favorably by the meeting participants, with 12 out of 15 people ranking it between “Least Preferable” to “Neutral”. Of the four “Build” alternatives, *Alternative 1: Widen North*, strongly received the most favorable response, with 15 out of 19 people scoring it a 6 or a 7 (Most Preferable). The other three “Build” alternatives largely received neutral to negative responses.

Meeting participants were consistent in their message that this section of US 26 is unsafe and requires safety improvements sooner rather than later. “People’s lives ahead of trees” was a common theme. Issues of concern also included bike/pedestrian access, respect for private property, water quality, screening from the roadway (plantings), and maintaining access to side streets.







**Please rank the alternatives (1 thru 5) in order of your preference (1 being most preferable and 5 being least preferable). (15 out of 21 responded to this question)**

**No Build:**

11 of 15 marked least preferable “5”  
2 of 15 marked “3”

**Alt. 1: Widen North**

11 of 15 marked most preferable “1”  
2 of 15 marked “2”  
2 of 15 marked “4”

**Alt. 2: Widen and Realign North**

2 of 14 marked most preferable “1”  
6 of 14 marked “2”  
5 of 14 marked “3”  
1 of 14 marked “4”

**Alt. 3: Widen South**

1 of 13 marked “1”  
2 of 13 marked “2”  
7 of 13 marked “4”  
3 of 13 marked least preferable “5”

**Alt. 4: Widen North and South**

1 of 13 marked most preferable “1”  
3 of 13 marked “2”  
5 of 13 marked “3”  
3 of 13 marked “4”  
1 of 13 marked least preferable “5”

**Additional Comments:**

- “I was in an accident 4-20-95. I was rear ended while trying to turn across Hwy 26- the person behind me thought there was a turn lane, and came upon my car too fast to avoid hitting me. It took 3 years for me to recover.”
- “Please make all comments visible to the community along with your responses.”
- “Alternatives 5 and 6 are the very worst plans. It would make driving miserable, plus wastes gas, which has high cost.”
- “Don’t let the voice of 10 people rule over the needs of 5000 people”
- “It is my belief that you have unintentionally built into this comment form a factor which makes it difficult to know how reliable the accumulated rankings actually reflect. What people included? That factor is that for the individual rankings with each alternative they go from #1”least” to #7 “most,” but on pg 3 you reverse the numbers and #1 becomes “most” and #5 becomes “least.” I found this aspect because

I found the collective ranking on pg 2 first and then couldn't transfer the rankings to the individual alternatives. Hence, this grumbling.”

- “Lots of us up here heat with wood. All the trees to be cut should be used, either as lumber (preferably) or as firewood. Please use our resources wisely. Consider putting in a traffic light for an interim slowing mechanism. One of your staff who lives on Mountain Air kept referring to Hwy. 26 as an interstate. Someone might want to let him know otherwise.”