

## US 97 Wickiup Junction (La Pine)

Last updated: August 25, 2010

### Project Components:

- Realign US 97 to the east of its current location and build a railroad overpass to the south of the existing at-grade crossing.
- Connect Burgess Road to the realigned US 97.
- Current funding covers project development but no construction funding has been identified.

### Why this Project is needed

US 97 is a critical part of the State's transportation system, and is classified as an expressway in the project area. Keeping roads in good condition and providing for safe travel are critical parts of the mission of the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The at-grade railway/highway crossing on US 97 at Wickiup Junction is the only at-grade crossing on US 97 in the entire state. Drivers on US 97 who are not familiar with the area do not anticipate having to stop for trains. Nor are they anticipating having to stop for school buses and vehicles carrying hazardous materials that are required to stop at railroad crossings regardless of whether a train is approaching or not. These create an extremely unsafe situation on the highway. This safety problem has forced local school buses to avoid this section of the highway and to have to travel out-of-direction to complete their routes.



**The at-grade railway crossing on US 97 at Wickiup Junction, La Pine, Oregon.**

Currently there are on average 8-12 trains per day passing through Wickiup Junction. This is expected to increase by 8 percent per year.

The traffic volume on US 97 through the project area is currently at 9,000 vehicles per day, and is projected to increase to 13,800 by the year 2024. The traffic volume on Burgess Road at its intersection with US 97, immediately south of the railroad crossing, is currently at 4,615 vehicles per day and projected to be more than 6,000 per day by 2024. Traffic volumes are increasing as more development occurs in the La Pine area. The increase in traffic intensifies the need to improve safety at the railroad crossing.

### How ODOT proposes to solve these problems

ODOT is partnering with Deschutes County and the City of La Pine to develop a solution for the safety problem at the BNSF/US 97 railroad crossing at Wickiup Junction. A number of alternatives were explored but the selected near term solution is to realign US 97 to the east of its current location and build a railroad overpass just south of the at-grade crossing. New connections will be built for Burgess Road to the realigned US 97 (see the selected alternative map attached).

In developing this solution, there were a number of goals and objectives identified by the agencies and the public that were considered. These included:

- Provide a transportation solution that safely accommodates projected travel demands for all users and modes 20 years into the future.
- Maintain mobility and minimize traffic delays for US 97.
- Minimize costs and maximize project value (cost-effective solution).
- Provide safe and reasonable access to area communities, Wickiup Junction businesses, and recreational destinations while minimizing out-of-direction travel.
- Maintain reasonable access between US 97 and Burgess Road.
- Consider options that improve bicycle and pedestrian movements in the Wickiup Junction area.
- Maintain the viability of the current Park & Ride and consider the ability to expand the lot in the future.
- Support Wickiup Junction's role as a part of the City of La Pine's commercial center for highway, recreational, and local traffic.
- Minimize US 97 traffic delays during construction, and address other construction related impacts to BNSF, the local transportation system and surrounding land uses.
- Achieve consistency and compatibility with the Oregon Highway Plan, applicable objectives of the ODOT's US 97 Highway Strategy, and the Oregon Highway Plan expressway designation for US 97.

**Project Cost Estimate**

\$35 million

**Project Timeline**

Complete environmental work Summer 2009

Design and final plans (construction ready) Summer 2012

Secure construction funding 2012 to future

**Project Contacts**

Name	Title	Office Phone	Email Address
Amy Pfeiffer	Project Manager	(541) 388-6052	<a href="mailto:Amy.L.Pfeiffer@ODOT.state.or.us">Amy.L.Pfeiffer@ODOT.state.or.us</a>
Gary Farnsworth	Area Manager	(541) 388-6071	<a href="mailto:Gary.C.Farnsworth@odot.state.or.us">Gary.C.Farnsworth@odot.state.or.us</a>
Rex Holloway	Community Liaison Rep.	(541) 388-6178	<a href="mailto:Rex.A.Holloway@odot.state.or.us">Rex.A.Holloway@odot.state.or.us</a>

For more information, visit the project website at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION4/US97\\_Wickiup\\_Jct/US97\\_Wickiup\\_Jct.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION4/US97_Wickiup_Jct/US97_Wickiup_Jct.shtml)

For more information about the City of La Pine visit:

<http://www.ci.la-pine.or.us/>