

January 2017

# Oregon Safety Corridor Program Guidelines



ODOT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DIVISION



# Oregon Safety Corridor Guidelines

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## Preface

The Transportation Safety Division in the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) manages the Safety Corridor Program on the State Highway System. These guidelines provide the framework to make a lifesaving difference in the short-term on a stretch of roadway that has a high incidence of fatal and serious injury crashes. The program is locally coordinated in each community. To ensure success, the Safety Corridor Program requires local involvement including city or county agency

governments, interested citizens, businesses, schools, and any other agencies that have a vested interest in the safety of their roadways. All roadway users are asked to pay extra attention and carefully obey all traffic laws when driving in these areas.

These guidelines were produced in cooperation with the ODOT Traffic Operations Leadership Team (TOLT) and adopted by TOLT on February 4, 2016.



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## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to encourage uniformity in the establishment, management, and coordination of safety corridors in Oregon and provides selection criteria, stakeholder involvement, implementation, administration, and decommissioning criteria based on best practices research.

The goal of the Safety Corridor Program is to identify corridors with high rates of serious and fatal injury crashes and reduce these crashes in the short-term through the use of partnerships with engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency service. Each component contributes to the mutual goal of reducing serious injury crashes by encouraging drivers to change poor behaviors within safety corridors and drive safely.

## Scope

These guidelines apply to safety corridors on the State Highway System. While the ODOT Safety Corridor Program grant funding may be available to qualifying corridors on the State Highway System, these principles, procedures, and practices may be applied to both state and local highways with equal potential for success.

Additionally, the Oregon Revised Statute (ORS 811.483) permits double fine zones on the State Highway System. Local jurisdictions may or may not have an ordinance in place allowing increased fine zones to be designated on city or county roads.

There are four key elements to a successful safety corridor designation:

- 1) A fatal and serious injury crash problem that has been demonstrated over a defined period of time
- 2) Dedicated enforcement resources available
- 3) A segment of roadway that has a reasonable length
- 4) An active multi-disciplinary stakeholder group

## Requesting a Safety Corridor

Safety Corridor designation is a significant investment of limited resources. All requests are taken seriously. Requests for designation of a stretch of state highway as a safety corridor may come from many sources. Examples include:

- Concerned citizens
- Legislators
- Neighborhood groups
- Local traffic safety committees
- School safety groups

Interested parties should first discuss their requests with the local city or county public works engineering staff, the City Manager's Office or Board of County Commissioners, and police department to obtain support for the request locally. Oregon crash data will be required to identify problem areas and to substantiate the need for a safety corridor designation. Once local agency and enforcement support is obtained and problem areas are identified, a written request for a safety corridor may be sent to the ODOT Safety Corridor Program Manager (contact information identified within the Appendix).

## **Safety Corridor Selection**

### **Designation Team Review & Approval**

All requests for safety corridor designation are forwarded to the Safety Corridor Program Manager at the ODOT Transportation Safety Division. Traffic crash data is requested from the ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit. ODOT Region staff use the data to help determine the most applicable start and end mile points for the potential new safety corridor. The Safety Corridor Program Manager will establish a Designation Team that will complete a review and analysis of the data to determine if the road segment meets the Safety Corridor Designation Criteria. The Designation Team is responsible to officially agree or disagree that the corridor in consideration meets the designation criteria and to designate it as a safety corridor.

The ODOT Designation Team is typically comprised of these individuals:

- Safety Corridor Program Manager
- Traffic-Roadway Section representative
- Region Transportation Safety Coordinator
- Region Traffic Manager/Engineer
- Area Manager
- District Manager or designee
- Region Public Information Officer

### **Safety Corridor Designation Criteria**

- 1) The five year average of the local fatal and serious injury crash rate is at or above 150 percent of the latest statewide five year average for a similar type of roadway (as determined by the ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit).
- 2) The initial Designation Team agrees that the corridor length is manageable from an enforcement and education (media coverage) standpoint. The segment of highway must be similar in nature. Two to 10 miles in length is preferable. Rural sections may be substantially longer than urban sections.
- 3) State and/or local law enforcement agencies commit to making the corridor a patrol priority.
- 4) There is a multi-disciplinary stakeholder group that meets on a regular basis (at least annually, as defined in the charter). Stakeholders are defined as those individuals,

groups, and agencies that have expressed a current interest in the safety corridor and are considered to have valuable input in the process.

There is no fixed limit to the number of safety corridors that can be designated simultaneously in each ODOT Region. However, each ODOT Region may limit the number of safety corridors that can be effectively managed based on the resources available.

If a Designation Team or a Stakeholder Group seeks an exception to the Designation Criteria they must provide justification for the request and it will then be elevated within ODOT for the final decision.

## Stakeholder Involvement

The ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator maintains the current multi-disciplinary stakeholder group list, which includes contact information for all members.

An active multi-disciplinary stakeholder group develops priorities and goals for traffic safety improvements in the safety corridor, serves as a liaison to county and state traffic safety programs, conducts public information campaigns, and monitors progress toward goals

Stakeholders will vary by Region and safety corridor. Typical participants include:

- ODOT Region Traffic Manager/Engineer
- ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator
- ODOT District Manager or designee
- State and/or local law enforcement
- Local businesses
- Local traffic safety committee
- Emergency service representatives
- School or school district staff
- Local Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) chapter
- City/county public works representatives
- Interested citizens
- Civic groups
- Tribes
- Neighborhood associations

## Implementation

The degree of complexity of the implementation process is largely at the discretion of the ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator, Region Traffic Manager/Engineer, and respective District Manager or designee.

## Problem Identification

Once a corridor is designated as a Safety Corridor, the ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator is responsible for conducting a detailed review of available data and for presenting information to stakeholders in order to identify problems and potential countermeasures.

Implementation of the Safety Corridor is a short term effort that focuses on partnerships from engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency services using a coordinated approach to improve driver behaviors and traffic safety. The Safety Corridor designation is not a pathway to advocate for future funding for large safety or modernization projects. Nor should the Safety Corridor Program be looked at as a long-term solution to safety. A safety corridor should only be implemented if there is a reasonable expectation for success through short term implementation of partnerships and low cost improvements.

The multi-disciplinary stakeholder group must develop a mutually agreed upon charter at the onset of the Safety Corridor that outlines roles and responsibilities, defines roles and authority of members, lists safety objectives, agrees to a minimum number of meetings (at least annually), and sets a clearly defined lifespan (2-4 years duration recommended before decommissioning). The stakeholder group may request an extension to this lifespan if the Safety Corridor continues to meet the Designation Criteria.

In addition, potential traffic safety improvements are identified and may include or involve:

- Short-term and/or low-cost countermeasures
- Data analysis and mapping tools
- Roadway Safety Audit or similar safety evaluation
- Minor engineering repairs or upgrades
- Planned enforcement efforts
- Timed educational events or campaigns
- Emergency service enhancements.



Figure 1 OR 99E near Belle Passi Road Northeast

## Enforcement

ODOT Transportation Safety Division provides limited grant funds annually to selected safety corridors on the State Highway System with the highest incidence of fatal and serious injury crashes. Grant funding may be used for eligible enforcement or education efforts.



## Annual Safety Corridor Plan

An Annual Safety Corridor Plan is developed by the multi-disciplined stakeholder group in coordination with the ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator. Methods may vary slightly on how the four elements (engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency services) are addressed for each safety corridor; however, consensus is sought among the stakeholders as to an acceptable investment of enhancements and at a minimum the plan would contain the following:

- A current stakeholder list with contact information for all members
- Any traffic crash data elements to be tracked that represent priority performance measures identified through problem identification
- Accomplishments and activities completed to date
- Activities planned for the year
- Any action items, stakeholders responsible for each action item, and due dates
- Funding sources and amounts (if any)
- Identification of any projects, infrastructure or otherwise, scheduled in the safety corridor.

The following four elements are the core of the Annual Safety Corridor Plan:

### *Engineering*

Annual review of traffic control devices (signing, striping, pavement markings, and delineation) on the corridor for compliance with current standards and assuring proper visibility and legibility.

### *Education*

A minimum of four quarterly traffic safety public information campaigns planned and accomplished through paid or volunteer efforts for the corridor. This may be a combination of print, radio, TV, cable, billboards, theater ads, presentations to local schools, civic groups, etc.

### *Enforcement*

Annual commitment from the enforcement agencies noting the corridor remains an active patrol priority for their jurisdiction(s).

### *Emergency Services*

Identification should be made of all medical service providers and their contact staff name and telephone numbers within the corridor area including ODOT, OSP, local agencies, ambulance services, fire, hospitals, etc. Specific EMS communication or vehicle access issues should be identified and documented.

Once fully developed and signed by stakeholder committee and Region Transportation Safety Coordinator, a copy of the Annual Safety Corridor Plan and stakeholder list is forwarded to the ODOT Safety Corridor Program Manager.



## Monitoring Progress in the Annual Plan

The intent of the Annual Safety Corridor Plan is to ensure at least a minimum investment of resources in the corridor. The plan is not binding. However, a continued lack of activity and involvement in the corridor by state and local stakeholders may result in loss of funds or a recommendation to decommission the corridor.

One year after the Annual Safety Corridor Plan is developed; the ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator conducts a review of the plan and reports on the status of each item, including a list of all updated accomplishments or problems identified for the corridor. The report should be sent to the ODOT Safety Corridor Program Manager with an updated stakeholder list.

The purpose of the annual safety corridor plans is to assure that the program remains active and provides a framework for revitalization of those corridors that are not showing progress as expected, or removal of corridors that have shown sufficient success in reducing fatal and serious injury crashes. The goal for existing corridors remaining on the designation list is to refocus efforts and identify progress on at least an annual basis.

## New Safety Corridor Signs

The ODOT Region is responsible for installing Safety Corridor signs on the State Highway System, per ODOT Traffic Engineering Unit, typically at District and/or Region expense. The ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator notifies local courts and law enforcement of the change in fines.

## News Release & Public Information

The ODOT Region is responsible for sending out a press release announcing the designation of the new safety corridor or showcasing the event in which they reveal the corridor signs. Interested stakeholders, including enforcement representatives, may wish to participate in any press events. Other press releases should be coordinated during corridor events or at decommissioning.



Figure 2 OR 34 East of Corvallis

Our goal is to encourage people to drive more carefully on our highways, particularly in safety corridors. In media releases, drivers are asked to pay extra attention and carefully obey all traffic laws when driving in these areas. To drive safely – avoid these common errors:

- Failure to avoid stopped or parked vehicle ahead
- Failure to yield right of way
- Ran off road
- Failure to maintain lane
- Driving too fast for conditions
- Inattention
- Following too close
- Improper change of traffic lanes
- Left turn in front of on-coming traffic
- Failure to decrease speed for slow moving vehicle

## Decommission Guidelines

### Successful Safety Corridors

When the safety corridor has proven to be successful in reducing serious traffic crashes and the roadway no longer qualifies under the Safety Corridor Designation Criteria, it is time to decommission that corridor and remove any Safety Corridor signs. A safety corridor will be recommended for decommissioning if any one of the Safety Corridor Designation Criteria is not met.

Construction projects, enforcement, or public information and education campaigns may still be in progress after the corridor is decommissioned. Although the Safety Corridor signs are removed, partners may be asked to continue to monitor crashes, patrol the highway, provide important education, and work with the community on other ways to further improve safety in the area.

### Final Decommissioning Decision

When a safety corridor no longer qualifies under the designation criteria the “Traffic Fines Double” signs shall be removed.

A recommendation to decommission a safety corridor will be initiated from the Designation Team in the Annual Safety Corridor Plan. Recommendations for decommissioning are just that – recommendations. Agreement for decommissioning must be reached among members of the Safety Corridor Designation Team and a stakeholder group representative.

If agreement cannot be reached, the ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinator, Region Traffic Manager/Engineer, Traffic Roadway Section representative, and Safety Corridor Program Manager will make a final decision.

## Appendix

### History

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) held a national workshop in June 1990 to create a list of the five most promising short-term traffic crash countermeasures. The safety corridor concept was one of those five countermeasures. Oregon's first safety corridor was designated in 1989 on Oregon Route 62 in Medford. In the late 1980s, the 10-mile stretch from Interstate 5 to the town of Eagle Point experienced 13 traffic deaths in a 16-month period. The local roadway planning council asked ODOT for help. The safety corridor concept with its focused, multi-disciplinary approach was deemed to have the most potential for impacting this serious crash problem.

### The Four E's of Safety

Typical actions taken in safety corridors to increase safety include:

#### *Engineering*

Low-cost engineering improvements, such as pavement striping, raised pavement markers, delineators, rumble strips, and signing. Assuring proper visibility and legibility of all traffic control devices, including removing unnecessary devices.

#### *Education*

Safe and courteous driving awareness efforts, including media and educational events, brochures, billboards, and poster distributions.

#### *Enforcement*

More frequent enforcement is the single most effective short-term way to reduce traffic crashes in safety corridors. Some state highway safety corridors are signed as "Traffic Fines Double." The "fines double" signing must be present within the state highway safety corridor in order for traffic infraction fines to be higher.

#### *Emergency Services*

Coordination of emergency services in the corridor to enhance quick response.

## Options without Safety Corridor Designation

There are many services available to any high priority segments that may be completed without designating the segment as an official Safety Corridor. Below are some of the services that may be available from the ODOT Region office:

- Enforcement where special enforcement funds are available
- Traffic safety education and outreach materials
- Set priorities for corridor wide countermeasures
- Road safety audits or similar types of safety investigations (using a 4-E safety approach)
- Review of hot spot or existing safety planning efforts
- Corridor based crash analysis
- Education to local traffic safety committees or similar groups
- Review of existing traffic control devices: striping, signing, speed zones on state highways, etc.

## Program Manager Roles

Staffs within various divisions of ODOT are responsible for managing different aspects of the Safety Corridor Program. Below are some of the various essential job functions within the program.

### *ODOT Safety Corridor Program Manager*

- Manages the statewide program including drafting of program guidelines that are approved by the Traffic Operations Leadership Team (TOLT) including the State Traffic Engineer
- Encourages compliance with guidelines
- Analyzes traffic crash data and makes safety corridor recommendations
- Participates on designation team
- Provides guidance on countermeasures, annual plans, etc.
- Provides grant funding (as available) for enforcement, education, and minor engineering projects, including management of statewide grants
- Reviews and maintains completed annual safety corridor plans, stakeholder lists, and end-of-year Annual Plan reports

### *ODOT Traffic-Roadway Section Designee*

- Analyzes traffic crash data
- Makes safety corridor recommendations to the Safety Corridor Program Manager
- Participates on designation team
- Provides engineering expertise and analysis

### *ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit Research Analyst*

- Provides annual safety corridor traffic crash data for use in the Annual Data Summary and Recommendations report
- Provides special data requests as requested

### *ODOT Region Transportation Safety Coordinators*

- Administer the safety corridors within each region jurisdiction
- Lead regional safety corridor program designation, implementation of guidelines, initial stakeholder group coordination, and attend meetings
- Coordinate and develop the Annual Safety Corridor Plan for each corridor and end-of-year Annual Plan review, including stakeholder contact lists
- Analyze traffic crash data and make safety corridor recommendations
- Participate on designation team
- Responsible for coordinating engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency service improvements to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes within Region safety corridors
- Provide ODOT grant funding, as possible, for additional enforcement, education, minor engineering, and emergency service enhancements
- Provide annual review and upgrade of traffic control devices and safety corridor signs at Region/District cost as funds are available

### *ODOT Region Traffic Manager/Engineer*

- Provide engineering expertise and analysis
- Participate in the initial designation and decommissioning
- Analyze traffic crash data and make safety corridor recommendations

### **Statutory References**

**811.483 Safety corridors; penalty.** (1) The Department of Transportation shall post signs in safety corridors chosen by the department indicating that fines for traffic offenses committed in those safety corridors will be doubled.

(2)(a) The presumptive fine for a person charged with an offense that is listed in subsection (3) (a) or (b) of this section and that is committed in a safety corridor chosen by the department under subsection (1) of this section shall be the amount established under ORS 153.020.

(b) The minimum fine for a person convicted of a misdemeanor offense that is listed in subsection (3) (c) to (g) of this section and that is committed in a safety corridor is 20 percent of the maximum fine established for the offense.

(c) The minimum fine for a person convicted of a felony offense that is listed in subsection (3) (c) to (g) of this section and that is committed in a safety corridor is two percent of the maximum fine established for the offense.

(3) This section applies to the following offenses if committed in the designated safety corridors:

- (a) Class A or Class B traffic violations.
- (b) Class C or Class D traffic violations related to exceeding a legal speed.
- (c) Reckless driving, as defined in ORS 811.140.
- (d) Driving while under the influence of intoxicants, as defined in ORS 813.010.

(e) Failure to perform the duties of a driver involved in an accident or collision, as described in ORS 811.700 or 811.705.

(f) Criminal driving while suspended or revoked, as defined in ORS 811.182.

(g) Fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, as defined in ORS 811.540. [1999 c.1071 §5; 1999 c.1071 §5a; 2001 c.421 §1; 2003 c.100 §3; 2007 c.124 §1; 2011 c.597 §116]

## Contact Information

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Website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS>



## Forms

Examples of the Stakeholder Participation Form and Annual Safety Corridor Plan are on the following pages.

## Region Transportation Safety Coordinators

ODOT Region 1	Kristie Gladhill	Portland, Oregon	503 731-8477
ODOT Region 2	Nicole Charlson	Salem, Oregon	503 986-2763
ODOT Region 3	Rosalee Senger	Roseburg, Oregon	541 957-3657
ODOT Region 4	Chris Cheng	Bend, Oregon	541 388-6429
ODOT Region 5	Billie Jo Deal	Ontario, Oregon	541 963-1387

EXAMPLE

## Stakeholder Participation Form

### OR Route 34 – Corvallis to Tangent Highway Safety Corridor

Completion of this form signifies your interest, support, and commitment to this safety corridor effort and desire to be included in future mailings or updates.

#### Category 1: Enforcement

Annual commitment from enforcement agencies noting that the corridor remains an active patrol priority for the jurisdiction is important for the success of the safety corridor. All police agencies are encouraged to participate and please also consider participating in Category 2: Education.

Police Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Category 2: Education

Public information and education may be deployed in various forms and by any transportation safety advocate, public or private agency. Examples are safety fairs, county fair presentations, newspaper articles, traffic safety presentations, public service announcements, billboards, theater slides, flyers, social media campaigns, school presentations, brochures, and other outreach. Please complete this section if you are willing to lead or participate in a public information and education effort.

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Category 3: Engineering

Traffic control device reviews will be addressed by the local ODOT Region office. Coordination with cities or counties will be conducted if necessary.

ODOT Staff Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Category 4: Emergency Medical Services

Emergency Medical Service providers willing to participate in discussions and projects to enhance response time and coordinated patient care in the safety corridor.

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



EXAMPLE

## Annual Safety Corridor Plan

### OR Route 34 – Corvallis to Tangent Highway Safety Corridor

*Planning Period:* October 2013 to September 2014

*Designated:* November 1993

*Limits:* I-5 to Corvallis

*Length:* 9.78 miles

*Mile points:* 0.34 to 10.12

#### Problem Identification

Data: The corridor consists of three functional classification segments. All three functional classification segments have a fatal and serious injury crash rate that is below the statewide average. The weighted average fatal and serious injury crash rate for the entire corridor is 48 percent below the statewide average which meets the data requirement portion of the decommissioning criteria.

#### Activities

##### 1) Enforcement

There is no overtime enforcement funding planned for this corridor at this time, as it does not meet the data requirements. OSP and Benton County will be patrolling this corridor on regular time enforcement.

Police Agency:	<u>Oregon State Police</u>
Number of hours committed:	<u>Regular hours</u>
Number of hours committed:	<u>No OT hours</u>
Contact:	<u>Lt. Cotter</u>

Police Agency:	<u>Benton County Sheriff's Office</u>
Number of hours committed:	<u>Regular hours</u>
Number of hours committed:	<u>No OT hours</u>
Contact:	<u>Sheriff Scott Jackson</u>

##### *End of Year Accomplishments:*

The safety corridor was successfully decommissioned. This location no longer qualifies for the safety corridor designation. The fatal and serious injury crash rate for the last five years has been reduced to less than the statewide average for similar roadways and traffic safety has been improved in this area. As of July 25, 2014 the double fine signs and safety corridor signs will be taken down and doubling of fines or any other penalties based on the safety corridor designation will no longer be in effect.



<b>Projects</b>	
Project Name:	<u>Shoulder rumble strips installed</u>
ODOT Key #:	<u></u>
Construction Dates:	<u>2013</u>
Cost:	<u></u>
Completion Date:	<u>2013</u>
Description:	<u>Rumble strips installed between mile points 3.0-6.4.</u>

**4) EMS**

Coordination of emergency services is not planned during this year.

Activity:	<u></u>
Timeframe:	<u></u>
Lead Contact:	<u></u>
Completion Date:	<u></u>

**Work Plan**

Activity	Lead Contact	Date of Completion
Contact key stakeholders about decommissioning	Area Manager	June 2014
Inform law enforcement & courts of double fine removal	RTSC	June 2014
Press release	RTSC/PIO	June 2014
Remove Double Fine signs	Area Manager/District Manager	July 2014