



Grants Pass, OR July 2020

# Reopening Communities, Re-envisioning Spaces

## Reopening Communities

As communities across the state reopen, the Oregon Department of Transportation is seeking creative and innovative ways to support local communities and local businesses. As the owner of many public roads, we're working with communities to re-envision how to safely use available space during these unprecedented times. With the need for social distancing due to COVID-19, ODOT is partnering with cities to temporarily expand businesses onto sidewalks while keeping pedestrians safe and ensuring responsible stewardship of public funds. ODOT recognizes the diverse needs of communities and businesses across the state — but also recognizes a shared goal to keep the transportation system moving, reopen communities, maintain social distance, and re-envision our public spaces. Under ODOT's Operational Notice MG 14-04, cities may apply for a permit under the Reopening Communities, Re-envisioning Spaces Program.

## City-owned Sidewalks Expansion

When a city expands restaurant seating or other business use onto a city owned sidewalk, a permit may be issued to allow sidewalk users to divert onto protected areas of the roadway. Restaurant seating and other private business use cannot occur on a state highway, either in the parking lane or on a state-owned sidewalk. If a city closes a city owned sidewalk to allow for social distancing, temporary closure of parking areas on the state roadway may be used for sidewalk users. Ongoing ADA accessibility and other requirements remain intact, and under a permit issued pursuant to this program are the responsibility of the city.

## Re-envisioning Spaces

Knowing that not every city owns the sidewalks where businesses seek expansion or other barriers may exist for using this new process, ODOT also urges cities to think creatively in the use of their existing roadways and public spaces. Using city streets and detouring traffic onto the state highway, using alleys or empty lots near the businesses for additional seating, rerouting pedestrian traffic to the other side of the street, or even changing ownership of sidewalks or streets to a city are all options that may be available.

Together we can reopen our communities, re-envision our spaces, and support a strong and safe Oregon.

**Contact:** For more information on how this might work in a specific community, city staff are asked to reach out directly to the local ODOT District Manager.