



FACT SHEET: GOAL 18 EXCEPTIONS (G18E)

Safety and Reliability Concerns



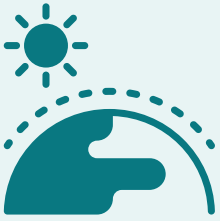
Safety and reliability concerns to the travelling public along US 101 are increasing, with particular concern being ocean-fronting road failures and landslides. These hazards have posed ongoing safety and reliability problems along US 101 for decades. Extreme precipitation and flooding, increasing average wave height and intensity, extreme high tide events, extreme damage from winter storms and storm surges are increasing in frequency and intensity along the Oregon coast and will continue into the future. What's more, sea level rise will continue to increase associated risk and damages. High-risk ocean fronting erosion, landslide and flood hazard locations need to be addressed before catastrophic failure and closure of US 101.

What is Goal 18?

Statewide Planning Goal 18 provides rules on conserving and protecting Oregon's beach and dune resources as well as reducing hazards to human life and property from natural or man-made hazards. (OAR 660-015-0010(3)). Goal 18 limits structural protections along certain areas of beachfront. Until September 2022, ODOT has been restricted in the types of erosion control improvements along areas of Highway 101. Through a multi-year/multi-agency effort, the Ocean-fronting Public Road Protection Rulemaking created a path for public roads and highways along the oceanfront (such as US 101) to seek structural protection from coastal erosion through a local government goal exception process.

Coastal Hazard State of the Art Data

ODOT, in partnership with Oregon State University, developed a coastal hazard prioritization tool and study that includes vulnerability, risk assessment and mitigation options. The report shows that shoreline armoring, and protective structures are needed as part of the framework to ensure a safe US 101. The state-of-the-art data and information provided in the report indicate that a Goal 18 Exception permit is a required step to enable ODOT to maintain safety and reliability.



Why Does ODOT Need An Exception?

The pace and severity of changing coastal conditions require the State of Oregon and ODOT to shift from a reactive to a proactive approach to preserve US 101 before it becomes an emergency that closes the highway. In an effort to be proactive, ODOT needs to have pre-approved Goal 18 exceptions in place to apply for critically needed funding and design repair projects. Funding is contingent on having Goal 18 exceptions. Without the Goal 18 exceptions in hand, ODOT is unable to intervene and avoid failures along the highly vulnerable ocean fronting segments of US 101.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Permit Required

A Goal 18 Exception is simply the first step in the process. In essence, the Goal 18 Exception approval provides the needed zoning and sets the stage for moving into the second phase, applying for an Ocean Shores Permit through the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD).

ODOT is required by law to apply for the Ocean Shores Permit. The Ocean Shores Permit is where specific design solutions are provided in detail and coordinated with OPRD and the local jurisdiction. Public written comments are welcome during the public review period. ODOT needs the Goal 18 Exception first, then identifies and obtains funding commitments, and then finally obtains the OPRD Ocean Shores Permit.

For more information please contact:

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Rerouting or Relocating US 101

ODOT looks at ways to avoid hazards by rerouting or relocating US 101 as the primary option. Due to numerous barriers, this approach is not anticipated to be viable in the foreseeable future. The reasons are numerous and include:

Coastal Geology Limitations

Improved safety and reliability are not expected to result from rerouting or relocating. The geology of the Coast Range poses the same challenging conditions with significant earthwork in areas of high risk of landslides from steep slopes, weak soils and rock, historic landslides, and very heavy rainfall. These risks are exacerbated by increases in the frequency and intensity of flooding and very recent precipitation events. A recent example is the massive landslide on OR229 which has the potential to close this section of the highway for years.

Environmental Impacts

Rerouting US 101 inland requires a longer highway footprint that risks environmental damage. Inland coastal areas contain sensitive wildlife corridors, fish-bearing streams, and archaeological sites, meaning any new alignment would require extensive earthwork and disturbances to these areas and likely trigger other Statewide Planning Goal exceptions.

Local and Economic Impacts

US 101 is an essential part of coastal communities, enabling economic activity (tourism, commerce, jobs, access to markets) and social life (schools, services, beach recreation). Relocating the highway could eliminate direct access to coastal businesses dependent on highway traffic and be a detriment to the local and regional economy.

Cost

Relocating US 101 is similar to building new facilities. The average cost to build new roadway was computed by ODOT based on the Pioneer Mountain – Eddyville project(s) and was estimated at \$34.5 million per mile in 2024 dollars. The extreme economic costs of relocating the highway further inland, including not only loss of tourism and scenic value but also the actual costs of moving the highway, would be prohibitively expensive. Currently ODOT does not have the funding necessary to simply preserve and maintain the state highway system, let alone cover the cost of moving US 101 in the area of these most hazardous locations.