

Memorandum

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Project# 27358

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Oregon Department of Transportation
123 NW Flanders St. Portland, OR 97209

Cc: Scott Hoelscher

From: Nick Gross, Alice Root, Ashleigh Ludwig PE, AICP, Hermanus Steyn, PE

RE: US 26 Rhododendron Design Refinement Plan

TM#3 PLAN, POLICY, AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the existing plans, policies, and literature that are relevant to the US 26 Rhododendron Design Refinement Plan (Refinement Plan), as well as ongoing and previous planning efforts within the Rhododendron community. This memorandum explains the relationship between each document reviewed and its relevance to the Refinement Plan, identifying potential issues and considerations that may factor into the planning process.

This memorandum is also intended to guide the development of the design refinement alternatives, as well as potential amendments to pertinent documents and regulations needed to implement a preferred alternative to be identified as part of the Refinement Plan. This memorandum is oriented as a literature review of state, county, and local documents.

A summary of the documents reviewed and their application to this effort are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Relevant Plan, Policy, and Literature Documents Reviewed

	Document	Key Applications for Refinement Plan
State	ODOT Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD), 2020	Provides guidance and framework for determining the appropriate alternatives for a facility design based on the urban context and corridor vision.
	Oregon Administrative Rule for Access Management (OAR 734-051), 2022	Provides guidance on access spacing standards for driveways and approaches for US 26.
	Mt. Hood Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), 1998	Informs travel demand management recommendations along US 26 and locations of future lane widening adjacent to the project study area.

State	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), 2021-2024	Identifies ODOT's state and federal funded improvements for the 2021 – 2024 fiscal years. The current 2021-2024 STIP does not include any projects within the US 26 project area.
County	Mt. Hood Community Plan – Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan, 2018	Provides overarching land-use, public facility, transportation, and planning process policies and guidance for the US 26 project study area.
	Clackamas County Transportation System Plan (TSP) – Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan, 2018 Last amended 2022	Provides transportation designations, design guidance, and planned projects for rural areas along the US 26 project study area.
	Clackamas County Zoning and Development Ordinance, 2018	Provides land-use designations for the Rhododendron Unincorporated Community.
	Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan (ATP), 2015	Provides design guidance and designations for active transportation facilities in Clackamas County.
	Clackamas County Roadway Standards, 2020	Provides design guidance for roadway cross section and considerations for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
	Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan, 2016	Provides guidance on pedestrian and bicycle policies and improvements for the Mt. Hood Village Communities ¹ and serves as a reference for identifying priority bicycle and pedestrian projects.
Local	Rhody Rising Visioning Plan, 2018	Identifies existing challenges and desire for future improvements in transportation, economic and community growth; informs the Corridor Vision Statement.
	Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan, 2021	Informs the Corridor Vision Statement and provides design guidance for street improvements and redevelopment for two underutilized parcels on the south side of U.S. 26.

STATE PLANS

ODOT Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD)

The Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD) revises ODOT's urban design criteria and acts as a “bridging document” to ODOT's highway Design Manual (HDM) to incorporate a context-based design approach for ODOT roadways. The BUD also includes existing land uses and functional classification categories to

¹ Brightwood, Welches/Wemme, Zig Zag, and Rhododendron

better align with varying types of urban contexts. The BUD emphasizes the integration of all modes of transportation in urban areas so that more users can be served.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The Refinement Plan will follow the guidance and framework outlined in the BUD and determine the most appropriate cross-section based on the urban context and supporting corridor vision. The Refinement Plan will develop and seek initial acceptance of Urban Design Concurrence (UDC) documentation based on a performance-based design decision framework used to ultimately select a preferred alternative.

Oregon Administrative Rule for Access Management (OAR 734-051)

Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 734-051 defines the State's role in managing access to highway facilities to maintain functional use, safety, and to preserve public investment. Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) Policy 3A and OAR 734-051 set access spacing standards for driveways and approaches to the state highway system. The most recent amendments presume that existing driveways with access to state highways have written permission from ODOT as required by OAR 734. The standards are based on state highway classification and differ depending on posted speed and average daily traffic (ADT) volume.

PROJECT RELEVANCE:

The Refinement Plan will consider opportunities for access delineation and consolidation. However, no formal recommendations for access closures or consolidations will be included in the Refinement Plan.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program 2021-2024

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) capital improvement program for state and federally funded projects. The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and ODOT develop the STIP in coordination with a wide range of stakeholders and the general public. The STIP is divided into two broad categories: "Fix-It" and "Enhance." The "Enhance" category will fund activities that enhance, expand, or improve the transportation system. The "Fix-It" category will fund activities that fix or preserve the transportation system. The STIP identifies funding for, and scheduling of, transportation improvement projects and programs. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements receiving federal funds must be identified in the STIP.

PROJECT RELEVANCE:

The current 2021-2024 STIP does not include any projects within the project study area. A repaving "preservation" project along US 26 within the project study area is proposed for the 2024-2027 STIP cycle but has not yet been selected for funding. This pavement resurfacing project will repair cracking, improve smoothness, and reduce long-term maintenance costs.

COUNTY PLANS

Mt. Hood Corridor Final Environment Impact Statement (FEIS)

The Mt. Hood Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) describes the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of potential projects to address the capacity, operational, safety,

and maintenance concerns of the US 26 corridor between Rhododendron and the OR 35 junction over the next 20 years. The FEIS identifies different "Alternatives" or combination of projects that were analyzed together to determine which one has the most positive impacts. Among five alternatives, the "Preferred Alternative" identifies the top eight projects that would provide the most improvements to the US 26 corridor. The "Preferred Alternative" includes a range of projects such as roadway widening, a transit feasibility study, travel demand modeling, safety improvements, and maintenance strategies such as anti-icing and de-icing technologies and additional signage.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

Of the eight prioritized projects in the "Preferred Alternative", the two that could impact the Refinement Plan are:

- A project to widen US 26 to three lanes between MP 44.5 and 46.2 (east of Rhododendron to Laurel Hill). This project would be located just east of the Refinement Plan project area where the existing speed limit increases from 40 mph to 55 mph.
- Travel Demand Management including regularly scheduled transit services, alternate route incentives, carpool incentives, parking management programs at winter destination areas, and/ or other feasible options that could intersect with the Rhododendron community.

Mt. Hood Community Plan – Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan

The Mt. Hood Community Plan provides guidance for responsible development growth regarding the unique environmental context of the Mt. Hood forested area. The guidelines provided in the Mt. Hood Community plan contain policies that identify the need for environmental conservation due to its impacts on the local economy. Although this plan works in conjunction with the Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan, the Mt. Hood Community Plan takes precedence where conflicts occur. Four policy areas described in the Mt Hood Community plan that differ from or are supplementary to the rest of the Comprehensive Plan are:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Public Facilities
- Planning Process

PROJECT RELEVANCE

Three unincorporated towns make up the Three Villages: Rhododendron, Government Camp, and Wemme/Welches. Each town is recognized for its separate characteristics and individual environment. Per Rhododendron's unique environmental setting, the anticipated land use includes low intensity developments. In conjunction with low intensity developments, a variety of housing types and individual unit sizes are encouraged based on the floor area per unit. The identified land use type aligns with the development project mentioned in the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan. The Mt. Hood Community Plan recognizes the Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation plan as the guiding document for the development of multimodal facilities in the area.

Clackamas County Transportation System Plan – Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan

The Clackamas County Transportation System Plan (TSP) is a document nested in the Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan that guides the County's transportation goals and objectives, looking to the future to

identify any additional needs within a 20-year period (2013-2033). The County's goals focus on its unique environmental, urban, and rural context. The County's goals take into consideration the vast extents of transportation networks across a largely rural region of Oregon. The County's transportation system is also intended to support sustainable land use patterns and policies to serve a multitude of public needs without sacrificing air and water quality or creating noise pollution. The TSP's ultimate objective is for people to travel safely and efficiently while also allowing for the easy movement of goods. The prioritized goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: Provide a transportation system that optimizes benefits to the environment, the economy, and the community
- Goal 2: Plan the transportation system to create a prosperous and adaptable economy and further the economic well-being of businesses and residents of the County
- Goal 3: Tailor transportation solutions to suit the diversity of local communities
- Goal 4: Promote a transportation system that maintains or improves our safety, health, and security
- Goal 5: Provide an equitable transportation system
- Goal 6: Promote a fiscally responsible approach to protect and improve the existing transportation system and implement a cost-effective system to meet future needs

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The goals and policy guidance referring to rural areas align with the goals described in the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan and Rhody Rising Vision Plan. One relevant construction policy is:

- In unincorporated communities, construct walkways adjacent to or within areas of development (such as schools, business, or employment centers) and at rural transit stops

Mt. Hood Corridor Land Use Plan – Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan

The Mt. Hood Corridor Land Use Plan identifies the designated land uses for the communities located in the Mt. Hood corridor including Government Camp, Wildwood, Welches, Wemme, Zig Zag, and Rhododendron. The relevant zoning designations in this area natural resource, residential, commercial, and open space land uses.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The designated land uses for the community of Rhododendron are rural residential and community commercial. The designated land use will guide the ODOT Blueprint for Urban Design's (BUD) context-based design approach for evaluating the US 26 project area.

Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan (ATP)

The Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan identifies active transportation routes that connect both rural and urban destinations and communities in Clackamas County. The purpose of this plan is to provide an interconnected, safe, equitable, and accessible active transportation network for all the people that live, work, and recreate within Clackamas County. The Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan

provides a list of *Principal Active Transportation (PAT) Routes* or priority route infrastructure projects that particularly offer important connections between key destinations.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan lists project details and the approximate cost for six PAT routes along the US 26 corridor. Project number 9.05 is the most relevant PAT route and would consider adding a multiuse path connecting the communities of Sandy and Government Camp. The community of Rhododendron is located between these two communities and would benefit with the new multiuse path facilities. The new facility and connection to surrounding communities aligns with the community of Rhododendron's vision as identified in the Rhody Rising Vision Plan and the Rhododendron Mainstreet Redevelopment Concept Plan.

Clackamas County Roadway Standards

The Clackamas County Roadway Standards provide the design criteria for the construction of roadways, accesses, site development and integrated drainage facilities under the Clackamas County Jurisdiction.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The following sections would provide design guidance for the roadway when developing the Refinement Plan's concept design alternative:

- Section 250.3 Pedestrian Improvements
- Section 250.4 Bicycle Improvements
- Section 250.5 Transit Improvement
- Section 255 Landscaping

Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan

The Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan provides a long-term prioritized set of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements to increase transportation choices across the Village communities, including Brightwood, Welches/Wemme, Zig Zag, and Rhododendron. The network of county roads and US 26 which link the Villages are currently not well connected and conditions are uncomfortable for residents, visitors, and workers alike. The Plan's primary objectives are to:

- Identify bicycle and pedestrian needs
- Develop a Safe Routes to School Plan for Welches Elementary and Middle School
- Identify potential locations for additional or enhanced US 26 pedestrian crossings including at-grade, and grade-separated
- Evaluate the feasibility of a multiuse path in the area

The Village at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan groups the projects into the five following categories and prioritizes the improvements as low, medium, or high: multiuse path, crossing treatment, shoulder expansion, safe routes to school, and streetscape amenities.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The Village at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Implementation Plan identifies the following projects and priority level relevant to the community of Rhododendron. For each project, the plan describes the existing problems, improvement descriptions, considered recommendations, benefits, approximate range of cost, and if existing, public feedback.

- High Priority Projects
 - Driver Speed Feedback Signs (within the vicinity of Rhododendron)
 - Pedestrian Integration along US 26 in Rhododendron
 - Consolidate and Define Driveways in Rhododendron
 - Enhanced Crossing(s) of US 26 in Rhododendron
 - Rhododendron Gateway Sign
 - Bicycle Facility for Trail Connection
 - Directional Signage and Bike Hub in Rhododendron
- Low Priority
 - Multiuse Path between Lolo Pass Road and Rhododendron

LOCAL PLANS

Rhody Rising Visioning Plan

The Rhody Rising Visioning Plan describes the Rhododendron community's intention and next steps to improve its residential, commercial, and transportation conditions for the benefit of its community members, visitors, and workers in the area. Based on this vision, this document highlights the most immediate needs and potential future challenges facing the community with respect to the following categories: transportation of all modes, community vitality, and economic development. The Rhododendron Community Planning Organization (RCPO), a committee consisting of residents and community stakeholders, documents the steps taken and future actions needed to address the identified transportation challenges.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The challenges and goals identified in the Visioning Plan are the community's first action steps toward achieving significant planning and design changes. The Visioning Plan lays out the groundwork for the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan which begins to identify transportation and redevelopment improvements. Both supporting documents contribute to the subsequent design and planning efforts of the Refinement Plan.

Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan

Building off the Rhody Rising Visioning Plan, the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Plan identifies specific street improvements and the conceptual redevelopment of two privately held properties on the southwest side of US 26. The planning process was more extensive than the Rhody Rising Visioning Plan, incorporating public engagement that involved hundreds of community members, RCPO, project site

property owners, and public agency representatives. The plan walks through the development process that the community went through to get to a final preferred design; this includes an existing conditions review, an alternatives analysis, preferred land use, and US 26 frontage concepts. With the thorough public engagement process, a preferred concept roadway design and redevelopment project was developed in a way that reflects the needs and vision of the community.

PROJECT RELEVANCE

The Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan reinforces the Community's Vision Statement by building off the Rhody Rising Visioning Plan and Mt. Hood Pedestrian Bicycle Implementation Plan. The Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan's preferred roadway design concept will be considered as an alternative for evaluation in the Refinement Plan, in addition to new roadway cross-sections. These cross-sections will be further evaluated based on safety, multimodal, and operational needs.

The primary objectives from the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan that carry over into the Refinement Plan are:

- Supporting the community's vision by building on key planning efforts, including the Rhody Rising Visioning Plan and Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Plan
- Integrating transportation planning by outlining site circulation with the preferred future design of the site's US 26 frontage
- Recommending transportation improvements to encourage efficient land uses through transit, pedestrian, and bicyclist facilities
- Developing a preferred concept built on community and stakeholder preferences that provides direction for future transit operations and improvements to US 26

Next Steps

This document will guide the development of the preferred US 26 Rhododendron cross-section design concept alternatives and help identify potential amendments to pertinent documents and regulations needed to implement these alternatives.