

# Memorandum

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Project# 27358

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RE: US 26 Rhododendron Design Refinement Plan

## CORRIDOR VISION STATEMENT

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### Purpose

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The purpose of this document is to articulate the US 26 Rhododendron Corridor Vision Statement, reflective of the community's values and desired outcomes. The corridor vision statement is crafted based on a review of the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan and Rhody Rising planning documents. The Corridor Vision Statement has informed the selection of an urban context as identified within the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD). Establishing the context early is an essential first step in the performance-based design decision framework, a framework that will be carried out as part of the US 26 Rhododendron Refinement Plan (Refinement Plan).

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### Refinement Plan Intended Outcomes

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The Refinement Plan will develop a preferred option to pursue; either a 3-lane site plan or revisit the 5-lane with median site plan, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities in order to maintain or improve safety and operations on the highway for all modes. The Refinement Plan will clarify the most appropriate cross-section for the Study Area and the location of enhanced pedestrian crossings (e.g., mid-block) as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities to be implemented in conjunction with a future pavement preservation project and future development as it occurs.

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### Refinement Plan Study Area

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Rhododendron is an unincorporated community located on US 26, approximately 21 miles east of Sandy, Oregon. Roughly 365 households and a dozen businesses are located in Rhododendron. US 26 runs through Rhododendron (east-west orientation) with a mix of residential buildings and businesses located on either side of the highway. The Refinement Plan study area focuses on US 26 between mile point (MP) 44.0 and MP 44.4. US 26 transitions from a two-lane highway with a posted speed of 55 mph to a five-lane highway with a posted speed of 40 mph when entering Rhododendron from the east. The five-lane cross section is present through the community, with an increased posted speed of 45 mph just west of the community's core area. Figure 1 illustrates the Refinement Plan study area; Figure 2 illustrates the posted speed.

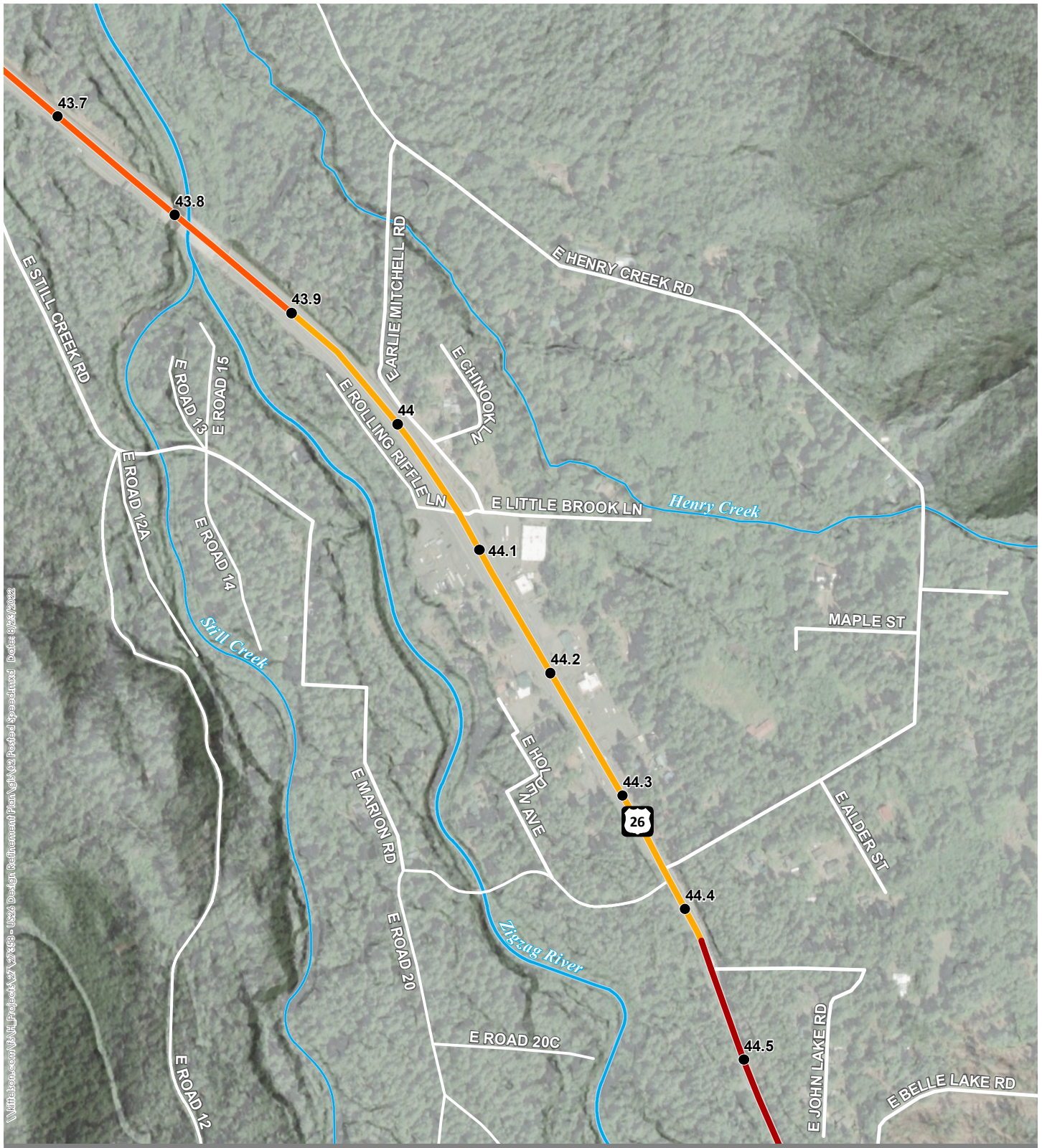


H:\27\27338 - US26 Design Refinement Plan\01 Project Study Area.mxd Date: 6/23/2021

- Mile Points
- Study Corridor



Figure 1



\\kittelson.com\A\Projects\27489 - US26 Design Refinement\Plan\Map\26 Posted Speed.mxd, Date: 8/28/2022

● Mile Points

— 40 MPH

— 45 MPH

— 55 MPH

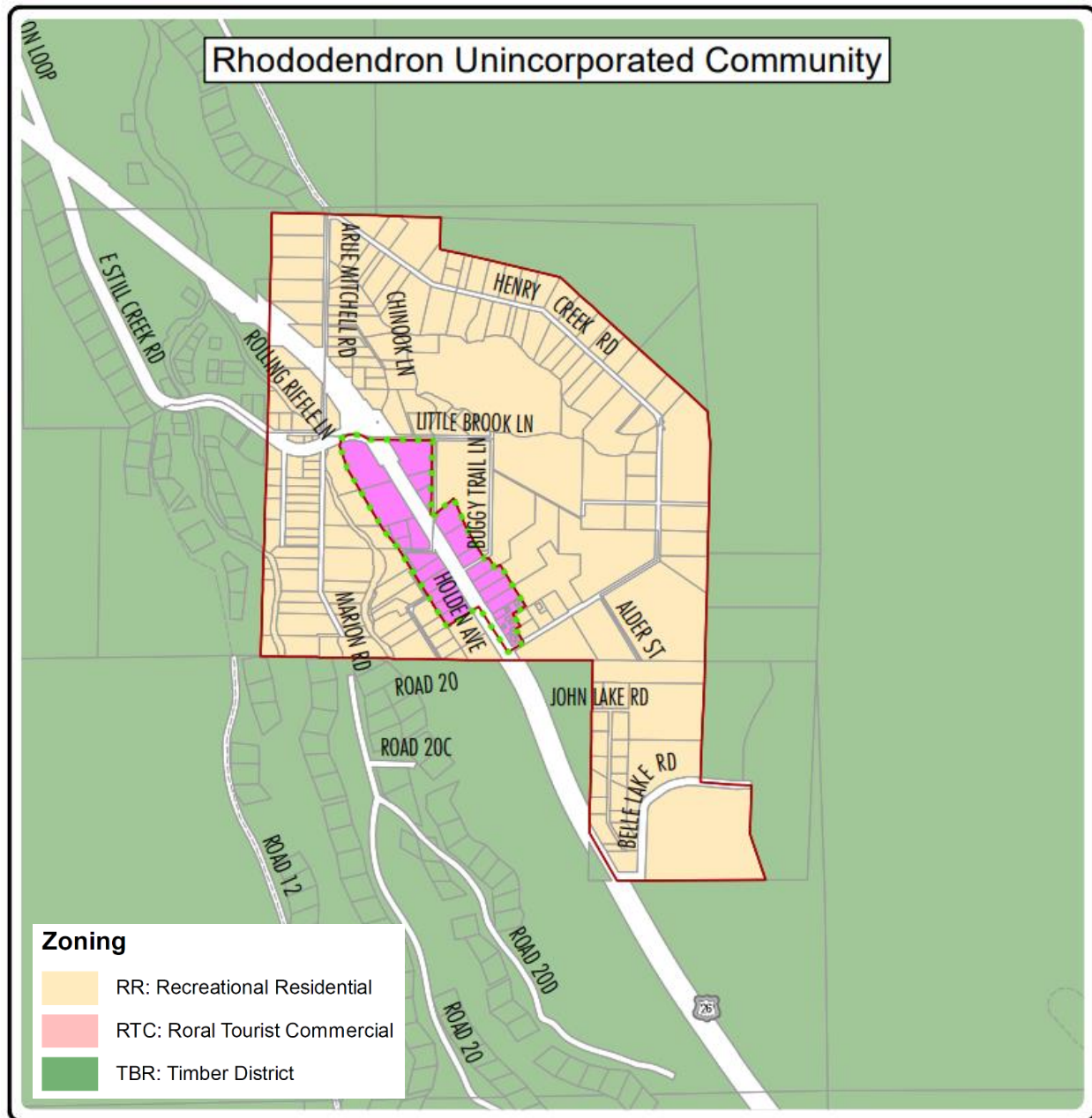


Figure 2

## RHODODENDRON LAND USE

There are three primary land-use designations within Rhododendron. At the core of the community and adjacent to the highway, the land use primarily consists of community commercial with variable setbacks. Some buildings are no further than 25 feet from the highway while other buildings have large parking areas located between the building and the highway. The rural residential areas sit between the highway and forested area. Outside of the residential zone, Mt. Hood Forest surrounds the entire community with the Zigzag River bordering the west side of the community. Figure 3 illustrates the existing zoning as identified within the Clackamas County Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 3: Refinement Plan Study Area Zoning



## Establishing the Urban Context

The Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD)'s approach to context sensitive design should be considered when planning and designing a state roadway, as well as modifications to existing roadways as is the case with US 26 through Rhododendron. Identifying a project area's urban context and roadway characteristics provide key information on the typical roadway users, travel demand expectations and outlooks, and additional opportunities or concerns along the roadway. Table 1 summarizes the six types of land use contexts as described in the BUD. The last row provides the consolidated results applied to the Refinement Plan study area.

**Table 1: ODOT Urban Context Matrix**

<b>Land Use Context</b>	<b>Setbacks</b> <i>Distance from the building to the property line</i>	<b>Building Orientation</b> <i>Buildings with front doors that can be accessed from the sidewalks along a pedestrian path</i>	<b>Land Use</b> <i>Existing or future mix of land uses</i>	<b>Building Coverage</b> <i>Percent of area adjacent to right-of-way with buildings, as opposed to parking, landscape or other uses</i>	<b>Parking</b> <i>Location of parking in relation to the building along the right-of-way</i>	<b>Block Size</b> <i>Average size of blocks adjacent to the right-of-way</i>
<b>Traditional Downtown/CBD</b>	Shallow/None	Yes	Mixed (residential Commercial, Park /Recreation)	High	On-street/ garage/ shared in back	Small, consistent block structure
<b>Urban Mix</b>	Shallow	Some	Commercial fronting, residential behind or above	Medium	Mostly off-street/Single row in front/In back/ On side	Small to medium blocks
<b>Commercial Corridor</b>	Medium to Large	Sparse	Commercial, Institutional, Industrial	Low	Off-street/In front	Large blocks, not well defined
<b>Residential Corridor</b>	Shallow	Some	Residential	Medium	Varies	Small to medium blocks
<b>Suburban Fringe</b>	Varies	Varies	Varied, interspersed development	Low	Varies	Large blocks, not well defined
<b>Rural Community</b>	Shallow/None	Some	Mixed (Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Park/Recreation)	Medium	Single row in front/In back/ On side	Small to medium blocks
<b>Refinement Plan Study Area</b>	Varies (Shallow, Large)	None	Mixed (Residential, Commercial)	Varies (Low, Medium)	Off Street (In front/ On side)	Medium – large blocks, not well defined

## RECOMMENDED URBAN CONTEXT

The following section provides the urban context recommendations for the Refinement Plan study area that runs through the Community of Rhododendron. Identifying an urban context that is reflective of a desired outcome rather than an existing condition will help decision-makers and practitioners achieve the overall corridor vision. The following supporting documents were referenced to support existing and future desired contexts of the Refinement Plan study area and surrounding land uses.

- Rhody Rising Vision
- Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan
- Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway implementation Plan
- Clackamas County Transportation System Plan, and
- Clackamas County Active Transportation Plan

## Refinement Plan Study Area and Adjacent Land Use

As illustrated in Figure 1, the Refinement Plan study area extends from MP 44.0 (west end of Rhododendron) to MP 44.4 (east end of Rhododendron). Prior to 44.0, the area surrounding roadway is forested with limited visibility of residential or commercial units. Approaching MP 44.1 from the east, the forested area begins to clear and residential units become visible from the roadway.

A frontage road (with no immediate access) appears on the north side with shallow setback distances from the residential units. At MP 44.1, community commercial zoning becomes apparent with the appearance of roadway-facing businesses, driveways, and open frontages. Local, off system circulation is limited. Most residential access to US 26 is funneled to the Little Brook Lane/Road 10 and E Henry Creek Road/Road 20 intersections. Although many of the buildings face the roadway, there are limited sidewalks that provide front door access to the businesses. Most of the buildings have a shallow 15-to-25-foot setback from the roadway.

The few businesses that have larger setbacks (between 60-130 feet) have parking lot areas buffering the roadway. The location of the parking in relation to buildings also varies with some parking spots in the front and some on the side. Building coverage adjacent to the right-of-way varies between medium to low with large to medium block sizes that are not well defined. . Most large lots have parking areas that make up the majority of the lot.

Based on existing land use, future desired context, community vision and desired outcomes identified in the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan and Rhody Rising, as well as the envisioned modal priorities for Rhododendron, **Rural Community** is recommended as the BUD context that is most appropriate and best aligns with the community vision.

# Corridor Vision Statement

As previously stated, the Corridor Vision Statement is crafted based on the goals, objectives, and desired outcomes identified within the Rhododendron Main Street Redevelopment Concept Plan and Rhody Rising planning documents. The Corridor Vision Statement pertains to the segment of US26 within the project study area.

*Mt. Hood Highway (US26) connects the Portland Metro Area to Central Oregon and serves as Rhododendron's primary thoroughfare. It provides access to basic necessities and local services such as the post office, groceries, and restaurants. The Highway within the community promotes safe walking, biking, rolling, and driving. This includes features that promote traffic calming and reduce travel speeds. The Highway offers safe and convenient options to access businesses, trails, and transit stops. Rhododendron is also a base camp for those taking transit up the mountain where they can ski, hike and mountain bike in the Mt Hood National Forest. Rhododendron is vibrant, with unique history, natural beauty, diversity of businesses and transportation facilities that serve all ages and abilities.*

## MODAL CONSIDERATIONS

Table 2 identifies the relative importance of the user type with respect to varying land use contexts. Reviewing the users' needs will influence the recommendations as part of the performance-based design decision framework. Based on the recommended land use context of **Rural Community**, high prioritized modes include bicyclists and pedestrians which align with the corridor vision statement.

**Table 2: General Modal Considerations in Different Urban Contexts**

Land Use Context	Motorist	Freight	Transit	Bicyclist	Pedestrian
Traditional Downtown/CBD	Low	Low	High	High	High
Urban Mix	Medium	Low	High	High	High
Commercial Corridor	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
Residential Corridor	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
Suburban Fringe	High	High	Varies	Low	Low
<b>Rural Community</b>	Medium	Medium	Varies	High	High

**High:** Highest level of facility should be considered and prioritized over other modal treatments.

**Medium:** Design elements should be considered; trade-offs may exist based on desired outcomes and user needs.

**Low:** Incorporate design elements as space permits.

## DESIGNING BASED ON CONTEXT AND CLASSIFICATION

The following section describes the guiding principles and design considerations as provided in the BUD. The guiding principles and design considerations align with the Refinement Plan purpose, goals, and vision.

**“Rural Community:** *In this context, streets are likely to see use from a variety of modes, with most uses related to either vehicular traffic moving through the town or local community members moving throughout the community via walking, bicycling, or driving. To best serve this mix of users, vehicle speeds should be lowered to a range of 25 to 35 mph entering the town, potentially through use of speed transition zones. Other design features can help inform drivers that they are entering a town, such as “gateway” intersections, street trees lining the street, or other local icons/art/signs visible from the street. Pedestrian crossings of the roadway in rural towns should be relatively frequent to reduce the roadway’s impact as a barrier. Designs related to sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and curbside uses should reflect the need of the local community.”*

Table 3 compares the consistencies and inconsistencies between the urban context guiding principles and modal integration for a **Rural Community** as described in the BUD. Understanding the discrepancies helps to identify existing gaps and deficiencies, guiding the development of conceptual design alternatives.

**Table 3: Designing Based on the Rural Community**

Urban Context	Target Speed (MPH)	Median	Bicycle Facility	Sidewalk	Target Pedestrian Crossing Spacing Range (feet)	On-street Parking
Refinement Plan Study Area (Existing)	40	None – Two Way Left Turn Lane	Shoulder	None	None	None
Rural Community (Recommended)	25-35	Optional, use pedestrian crossing refuge	Start with separated bicycle facility, consider roadway characteristics	Continuous and buffered sidewalks, sized for desired use	250-750	Consider on-street parking if space allows

## Next Steps

The Corridor Vision Statement has been reviewed by the project management team (PMT) and updated to produce the Final Corridor Vision Statement. The urban context established within this document will be used to inform the performance-based design decision framework and ultimate conceptual design alternative development.