



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene

Public Involvement & Communications

Phase 2: 2020 – 2022

FINAL REPORT



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INTRODUCTION

Highway 126 (OR126) between Veneta and Eugene connects these communities and links the Willamette Valley with the Oregon Coast in the larger transportation system. In 2012 the Oregon Department of Transportation completed the Highway 126 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, concluding Phase 1 in the planning for this project. Phase 1 identified the roadway issues between Huston Road and Green Hill Road, considered a range of alternatives for safety and mobility improvements, and selected a recommended alternative. In April 2013 the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) adopted the Plan. The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for engineering refinements and completion of the necessary environmental documentation consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), referred to as Phase 2 in the graphic below.

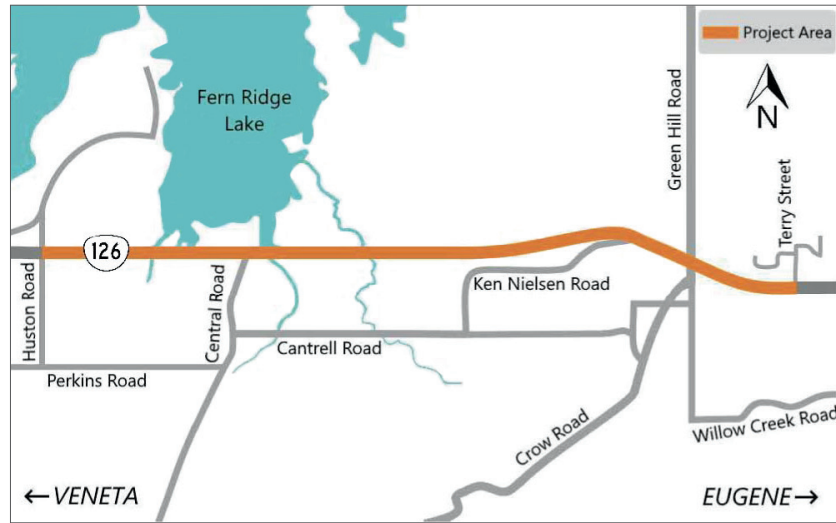
Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a recommended alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the recommended alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct recommended alternative.

**Future phases depend on securing additional funding.*

We describe the public involvement goals, approach, outreach methods, and input received during Phase 2. Outlined are the specifics on how the public was involved in this NEPA process to establish the project footprint and study the potential impacts to the environment, public health, and communities. The NEPA process included outreach to Title VI and Environmental Justice (EJ) populations to understand any potential impacts and attain the widest range of benefits for the population and environmental resources.

We were able to build upon the Phase 1 outreach and routinely share information with affected and potentially affected community members, businesses, and organizations. We consulted with stakeholders through group consultations and open houses at two important times during the process, were transparent with information and decisions, and reported back to those with interest to reflect how their input was considered. This project took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and two active wildfire seasons and adapted to support public health instructions. We are grateful to the many excellent, community-rooted organizations that partnered with us to create a successful and inclusive process.

PROJECT AREA OVERVIEW



OR126 between Veneta and Eugene is a State Highway, a freight route, and an important connector for people and goods traveling between the two cities, and the Oregon Coast. The seven-mile corridor is heavily traveled at commute times, has a posted speed of 55 miles per hour, and is intersected by numerous driveways and side streets. There are limited passing opportunities, limited bicycle and pedestrian-only facilities, narrow to no shoulders in many places, and passes through environmentally sensitive wetlands.

See Appendix A for study-area demographic information.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS & DECISION-MAKING

Successful processes define the role community members can play and explain how to influence decision-making.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is committed to an approach that:

- Provides an open and transparent decision-making process conducted through equitable and constructive two-way communication between the project team and the public.
- Provides early and ongoing opportunities for stakeholders to raise issues and concerns that can be considered by the project team.
- Explains key terms in plain language.
- Meets Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) laws, regulations, policies, and procedures, and NEPA requirements.
- Proactively informs and encourages the participation of all stakeholders regardless of race, ethnicity, age, disability, income, or primary language.
- Seeks the involvement of typically disenfranchised demographic and cultural groups in the project's public information and decision-making processes.
- Builds widespread community understanding of the purpose and phases for the OR126: Veneta to Eugene project.

To successfully meet these goals, stakeholders must have a shared understanding of decisions made to date and how they can influence future decisions. Answers to questions often asked by stakeholders about decision-making include:

► ***"What decisions were made during this process?"***

We confirmed the findings of the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan adopted April 2013, assessed, and sought to minimize or mitigate adverse impacts, developed a construction cost estimate and the potential for phasing. This will be reported to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and result in a NEPA determination for next steps.

► ***"Who made the decisions?"***

Phase 2 includes limited decision milestones. The project Steering Committee reviewed input from the project team and public and concurred by consensus with continuing the project design and environmental documentation consistent with the Corridor Plan. Going forward, ODOT is responsible for project implementation and will work collaboratively with the regional local government partners to pursue funding. The local agencies will have decision-making responsibility to pursue funding and/or support

regional funding priorities. Lane County and the City of Eugene have land use authority to consider a refinement plan amendment to the West Eugene Wetland Plan, a necessary step in aligning their respective land use plans with their transportation system plans.

► *“How did the community influence decision-making?”*

Community members from specific perspectives and experiences were recruited to consult directly with the project team. The area’s population was encouraged, using multiple techniques outlined later, to sign up as an interested party for information and opportunities for influence. Input was received via six interest-focused stakeholder meetings, two online open houses, phone outreach to adjacent business and property owners, the project web page, and email. The project formed partnerships with trusted organizations that serve demographic and cultural populations, often not involved in decision-making for similar transportation projects, to assist with communications. This was especially needed due to pandemic-related restrictions.

► *“Who considered public input?”*

ODOT’s Project Management Team and Steering Committee considered all public input received. Steering Committee summaries are included in the appendix. Relevant public comments and concerns were also forwarded to other project partners, such as the cities of Eugene, Veneta and Lane County for their consideration.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT KEY ACTIVITIES

We focused our outreach using six key activities and a broad range of communication tools and tactics.

The following schedule notes the activity, its timing, and relationship to project milestones.

Key Activities	2020				2021	
	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
● Project Steering Committee						
● Stakeholder Interviews						
● Constituent Consultations 1 Naturalists/Environmentalists/Hunters/Fishers 2 Bicyclists/Pedestrians/Boaters 3 Highway users/EMS/Freight/Business/Tourism		1 2 3			1 2 3	
● Equity Approach: Targeted Outreach						
● Open Houses						

DESIGN
DRAFT
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

DESIGN
FINAL
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

STEERING COMMITTEE

Continuing the process from the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, the Steering Committee was comprised of senior staff and elected leaders with responsibilities related to this section of highway. The committee met four times online for ninety minutes to receive updates on the NEPA process and provide a forum for discussion, feedback, and collaboration. Meeting reports include the presentation, a summary of discussion, and all recommendations. See Appendix B for summaries of the four meetings.

Members:

- **Frannie Brindle**, ODOT Area 5 Manager
- **Naomi Zwerdling**, ODOT Region 2 Planning and Development Manager
- **Jay Bozievich**, Lane County District 1 Commissioner
- **Sasha Vartanian**, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor
- **Matt Michel**, Veneta City Administrator
- **Rob Inerfeld**, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager
- **Rich Lopez**, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager
- **Kelly Clarke**, Lane Council of Governments Sr. Transportation Planner
- **Tom Schwetz**, Lane Transit District Planning and Development Director
- **Randy Groves**, City of Eugene Ward 8 Councilor
- **Mike Miller**, City of Florence Public Works Director

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

We increased outreach success by expanding ownership of the Public Involvement Plan to those with whom we hoped to collaborate. In May 2020, we interviewed the individuals listed below. We introduced the project with graphics, discussed strategies and opportunities to include specific constituencies, including Title VI and EJ populations, and confirmed roles, tactics, and requirements to support project communication goals. These collaborations, and others formed later, were even more important than usual, due to the public health conditions restricting in-person outreach. The trusted role these people and organizations have earned over time was invaluable in helping us to reach area residents and road users.

- **Kari Westlund**, Travel Lane County President
- **Megan Messmer**, City of Florence PIO
- **Mike Miller**, City of Florence Public Works Director
- **Matt Michel**, City of Veneta City Administrator
- **Evan MacKenzie**, City of Veneta Economic Development Director
- **DeAnna Townsend**, Mid Lane Cares (Food for Lane County, Disabled and Senior Services) Executive Director
- **Gary Carpenter**, Fern Ridge School District Superintendent
- **Ryan Collay**, Willamette Resource & Education Network (wetlands) Board President
- **Mike Ripley**, Mudslinger Events (biking) Coordinator
- **Shane Harvey**, Oregon Country Fair Site & Facilities Manager

Stakeholder questions (specifics varied by interview):

- *What's your experience with this stretch of roadway?*
- *Do you see critical pieces missing in this public involvement plan?*
- *Are these the right topics for Constituent Consultations, and who do you recommend including?*
- *Do you reach underrepresented populations? May we use your access point?*
- *Do you have a newsletter, Facebook, website, changeable sign? May we send brief occasional information to you for dissemination?*
- *Do you host events that would be good for outreach?*
- *What other suggestions do you have for us?*

See Appendix C for summaries of these interviews.

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan (FRCP) identified and evaluated a range of alternatives and resulted in the identification of a Preferred Alternative (PA) in April 2013. During the outreach efforts that supported adoption of the FRCP and identification of the PA, it became clear that there were specific interest groups that wanted to be involved. The Stakeholder Interviews regarding the Public Involvement Plan confirmed that those remained the right topics to capture stakeholder interests. ODOT and Cogito staff developed three targeted stakeholder lists, including those Title VI and EJ populations not traditionally involved in transportation projects, for the identified interest groups and invited up to 20 participants per topic area to dive deeper into the concerns and hopes.

The Constituent Consultations were for:

- **Highway users:** emergency vehicles, freight, businesses, commuters
- **Adjacent users:** pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters
- **Wetlands users:** naturalists, ecology educators, fishers, hunters

August 11 & 12, 2020, we first met online for ninety minutes with these representatives to confirm the direction established by the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan and to enlist organizations to spread the word about how to connect with the project. **Our meeting goals were to:**

- Review the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan.
- Share interim studies and roadway improvements done since 2013.
- Explain current NEPA effort.
- Listen for concerns and document them.
- Adjust upcoming public open house based on input.

On April 14 & 15, 2021, we again met virtually with these groups to review study progress. **The goals of the second round of stakeholder consultations were to:**

- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Review the engineering and environmental studies before finalized.
- Listen and respond to concerns and document them.
- Gather wetland mitigation strategy suggestions.
- Explain the schedule of the current NEPA effort, and future phases.
- Discuss phased implementation strategy.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.
- Adjust upcoming public open house based on input.

See Appendix D for summaries of the six stakeholder group consultations.

OPEN HOUSES

Thousands of people care about the safety and mobility of this stretch of highway, and we worked to make sure there were opportunities for them to share their personal experiences and concerns, and to report back results. We created two virtual open house to gather input from the surrounding communities in fall of 2020 and in spring of 2021. The virtual open houses were designed to be similar to in-person open houses and to meet ADA accessibility requirements. The content encompassed safety data, environmental studies, a new multiuse path, access to area recreation, how the process works and implementation possibilities.

These open houses provided the public with accessible information about the project, the graphic schedule, and illustrated synthesized study findings. It provided the project with affirmation of direction and a chance to listen to users and stakeholders. Comment forms were in the electronic open houses, but input was also taken “by whatever works best for you,” including by hard copy, phone calls or email conversations. We received 323 responses during our first open house and 69 responses during our second open house. An email summary that answered frequently asked questions and linked to the open house summary was sent to interested parties following each open house.

See Appendix E for the presentations and summaries of the two Open Houses.

Methods of notification of the open houses included:

- Project website with link to open houses.
- Press releases, including the Fern Ridge Review and Siuslaw News.
- E-invite with link sent to 1,700 Interested Parties.
- Social media (ODOT’s Facebook).
- Reader Board announcements at Fern Ridge School District and Fire Station #101.
- A-Frames with QR link to open house at Ray’s Food Place, Bi-Mart, Dari Mart, and Veneta’s Farmers’ Market.
- A-frames with open house link information at key roadway intersections and parks.
- Postcards mailed to 4,828 households surrounding the project.
- Postcards and hard copies delivered through Meals on Wheels and Café 60.
- Postcards and hard copies delivered through Project Love Food Pantry.
- Postcard delivery to St. Vincent DePaul and Homes for Good subsidized housing.
- Promotion through ten collaborating organizations.

- Phone calls to 25 adjacent properties and businesses.
- Recorded phone message sent by Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noti reaching 3,000–5,000 people.

EQUITY APPROACH: TARGETED OUTREACH

The public involvement program included specific steps to provide opportunities for participation by federal Title VI communities and EJ populations. The project team used the ODOT Title VI (1964 Civil Rights Act) Plan guidance to identify Title VI populations, formulate public involvement strategies, report outreach efforts and participation by Title VI and EJ communities.

Appendix A presents an overview of area demographics and identifies concentrations of low-income and minority residents. Our interview process included organizations that advised and assisted us to engage these traditionally underrepresented residents. With their assistance, the project team employed the following strategies:

- **Partnered with Fern Ridge School District** serving Veneta, Elmira, Noti, and Walton. The superintendent sent a recorded phone message to 1,500 households, posted on Facebook, and put announcements on the district's reader board.
- **Partnered with Mid Lane Cares** serving 475-mile service area including Crow, Applegate, Lorraine, Elmira, Noti and Mapleton. The executive Director gave us access to place information and surveys in more than 200 food boxes through Food for Lane County's Love Project (low-income), Meals on Wheels (people with disabilities), and Café 60 (elders). We worked with food pantry staff to explain the project and refer questions to us, which enabled us to also provide hard copies of the open house through these community-based food programs.
- **Partnered with subsidized housing providers** in the Veneta area. St. Vincent DePaul and Homes for Good resident services coordinators helped get information to residents. These neighborhoods also received postcards in the mail.
- **Information at stores frequented by low-income residents.** Through interviews we learned that the Dari Mart at Ellmaker Rd. serves people who are low-income and unhoused for basic needs, as does the Bi-Mart. We placed information in those stores and placed A-frames with easily scanned QR at the entrances to alert about the project.
- **Articles in local papers, e-newsletters, and social media, such as Facebook** are important in this rural area. Efforts to garner media coverage focused on the Fern Ridge Review and Siuslaw News. The City of Veneta and the Fern Ridge School District placed the information on their websites and Facebook to help blanket the area.
- **Materials available through the website** included alt text for screen readers.
- **Plain language and team contact information** were used in all public material. Jargon was removed or fully explained, and graphics

conveyed information. The project manager's phone number and email appeared on all material, resulting in over 75 direct contacts. This is an important aspect of accessibility; the ability to communicate with the project with a comfortable method.

- **Accommodations** were offered in all public materials, such as open house advertisements:

Access for pedestrians, including those with disabilities, will be available and identified through or around work zones. This information can be made available in alternate format on request by calling 503-373-7093, or via the Oregon Telecommunications Relay System: 7-1-1, or e-mail ODOTeeo@ODOT.state.or.us.

AUDIENCES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders for this project include institutions, public agencies, advocacy groups, business groups and residents from Eugene to Florence who use this highway daily. In addition, local transportation interest groups and individuals, including bicycle, freight, pedestrians, mobility impaired, transit, recreational, local environmental and naturalist organizations, adjacent businesses and property owners, media, emergency service providers, and the public have an interest in the project. Title VI/EJ organizations were reached with specific strategies and through institutional partnerships. The following table outlines our thinking to identify the audiences and stakeholders to whom we reached out.

AUDIENCE CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
<i>Government agencies, elected officials, and public institutions</i>	Lane Transit District, Lane Council of Governments, City of Eugene, Lane County, City of Veneta, City of Florence, Lane Area Commission on Transportation, Fern Ridge School District
<i>Tribal Nations</i>	Confederated Tribes of Siletz Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
<i>Trip Generators</i>	Oregon Coast Visitors Association, Three Rivers Casino, Oregon Country Fair, Travel Lane County
<i>Transportation stakeholders</i>	Port of Coos Bay Rail Line, Oregon Trucking Association, GEARS, AAA, Mudslinger Events
<i>Emergency service providers</i>	Western Lane Ambulance District, Oregon State Police, Lane County Sheriff's Department, Fire Station #101, Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend, McKenzie Willamette Hospital
<i>Businesses</i>	Veneta-Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce, Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, Eugene Chamber of Commerce, adjacent businesses, Rosen, West Eugene Business Park, Logging companies
<i>Residents</i>	Daily commuters, adjacent housing
<i>Community Groups</i>	Willamette Resource and Education Network, North American Butterfly Association, Long Tom Watershed Council, The Nature Conservancy, McKenzie River Trust, Lane County Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, OR Hunters Society, Native Plants Society, boating groups
<i>Title VI & Environmental Justice</i>	Mid Lane Cares, Food for Lane County, Elmira High School, Fern Ridge School District, Veneta Public Library, Centro Latino Americano, Senior and Disabled Services, Meals on Wheels, Integration Network for Immigrants in Lane County, St Vincent DePaul, Homes for Good, Mobility International, Lane Independent Living Alliance
<i>Media</i>	Fern Ridge Review, Siuslaw News

ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Lane Fire Authority	Ecosystems Transfer and Recycling
Western Lane Ambulance District	Eugene VELO Cycle Club
Travel Lane County	Lane Transit District
Oregon Country Fair	Lane Veterans' Services
City of Veneta	Coos Bay Rail Lines
Mid Lane Cares	Mobility International
Veneta Downtown Farmers' Market	Hilyard Center Adaptive Recreation
Three Rivers Casino	Lane Education Service District
Oregon Coast Visitors Association	Fern Ridge School District
City of Florence	Greater Eugene Area Riders
Lane County Sheriff's Department	Churchill High School
RR King Logging	Ducks Unlimited
Siuslaw Vision	Bethel School District
Y Cook Food Stop	Lane County Audubon Society
City of Eugene	Fern Ridge area Chamber of Commerce
Dari Mart	Florence Chamber of Commerce
Dixie's Café	Long Tom Watershed Council
Ecosystems Transfer and Recycling	McKenzie River Trust
Port of Siuslaw	Native Plant Society
Napa Auto Parts	North American Butterfly Association
PeaceHealth, Florence	Willamette Resource & Education Network
Mapleton School District	Emerald Empire Bass Club
United Parcel Service	Lane Council of Governments
Friends of Florence Van	Lane County
Cycle Oregon	Lane Area Commission on Transportation
Perkins Peninsula Park	Friends of Florence Van
Co-Motion	Food for Lane County
Mudslinger Events	The Love Project
Oregon Paddle Club	Meals on Wheels
Orchard Point Marina	Café 60
City of Springfield	
City of Eugene	
AARP	

INTERESTED PARTIES LIST (IPL) AND COMMENT TRACKING

The IPL includes community organizations, elected officials, and institutions concerned with the study area, as well as businesses, property owners, and residents in the study area. The list began with contacts developed through public involvement in the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan and expanded to 365 individuals and organizations during this NEPA phase. Members of this list received project updates and notices of open houses.

Over 75 individuals' comments were directly answered by the project by phone and email.

UPDATES TO ELECTED/APPOINTED OFFICIALS/KEY ORGANIZATIONS

Decision-makers prefer to hear how things are going along the way, not simply for a vote at the conclusion. At the start of the project in April 2020, ODOT Area Manager sent informative letters to state legislators Senator Prozanski and Representative Holvey, and local elected officials, such as Mayor Weiss of Veneta and Lane County Commissioner Bozievich. Communications and invitations went to these leaders prior to constituent consultations, and open houses. Additionally, residents appointed to committees, like Parks/Open Space and Economic Development, were recruited to participate in the constituent consultations.

The project Steering Committee included elected officials and staff from area cities and county, and directly involved agencies, such as the Coos Bay Rail Line and Lane Council of Governments, to communicate within their organizations throughout the project. The Steering Committee representatives and the project's leadership were in touch with one another as needed, in addition to regular meetings.

Decision-makers at the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (Lane ACT) were briefed by ODOT's Area Manager in March 2021 and January 2022.

See Appendix F for the two Lane ACT meeting minutes and presentations.

In addition to the public outreach efforts conducted for this project, coordination efforts with local, state and federal resource and regulatory agencies has occurred throughout the completion of the environmental documentation efforts.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

STEERING COMMITTEE

11 representatives

- 1 July 15, 2020
- 2 November 18, 2020
- 3 March 18, 2021
- 4 October 28, 2021

CONSTITUENTS CONSULTATIONS #1

43 representatives

- 1 August 11, 2020
HIGHWAY USERS
Emergency vehicles | Freight Business | Commuters
- 2 August 11, 2020
ADJACENT USERS
Pedestrians | Bicyclists
Boaters
- 3 August 12, 2020
WETLANDS USERS
Naturalists | Ecology Educators
Fishers | Hunters

CONSTITUENTS CONSULTATIONS #2

35 representatives

- 1 April 14, 2021
HIGHWAY USERS
Emergency vehicles | Freight Business | Commuters
- 2 April 14, 2021
ADJACENT USERS
Pedestrians | Bicyclists
Boaters
- 3 April 15, 2021
WETLANDS USERS
Naturalists | Ecology Educators
Fishers | Hunters

INTERVIEWS

8 organizations
May 2020

OPEN HOUSES

#1 Sept. 8–25, 2020

748 unique visitors
294 responses via online open house
29 responses via hard copy/ phone/email
15 staff follow-up responses via phone and email

#2 April 26–May 9, 2021

756 unique visitors
61 responses via online open house
8 responses via phone/ email
18 staff follow-up responses via phone and email

TITLE VI & EJ TARGETED OUTREACH

- Inclusion in interviews to establish partnerships
- Inclusion in Constituent Conversations
- Open House outreach through:
 - » School districts: Mapleton, Fern Ridge and Bethel
 - » Subsidized housing: Homes for Good, St Vincent DePaul
 - » Food pantries: The Love Project, Meals on Wheels, Café 60
 - » Specific stores: Dari Mart, Bi-Mart Discount Store, Dixie's Café
 - » Specific locations: Veneta Skate Park, Perkins Peninsula Park
 - » Accessibility organizations: Mobility International, Eugene Adaptive Recreation Program, Friends of Florence Van, Lane County Senior & Disabled Services
 - » Postcards to 4,828 households surrounding the project

PHONE

CALLS
to adjacent business and properties

25 calls, twice

- 1 September 2020
- 2 April 2021

EMAIL UPDATES

4 project updates to
345 addresses on Interested Parties List

- 1 September 2020 Invitation
- 2 December 2020 Report
- 3 April 2021 Invitation
- 4 July 2021 Report

MEDIA OUTREACH TO LOCAL PAPERS

- 1 Fern Ridge Review
- 2 Siuslaw News

COMMENTS & RESPONSES VIA EMAIL & PHONE

Interactions with **77** people

COMMUNICATIONS WITH DECISION-MAKERS

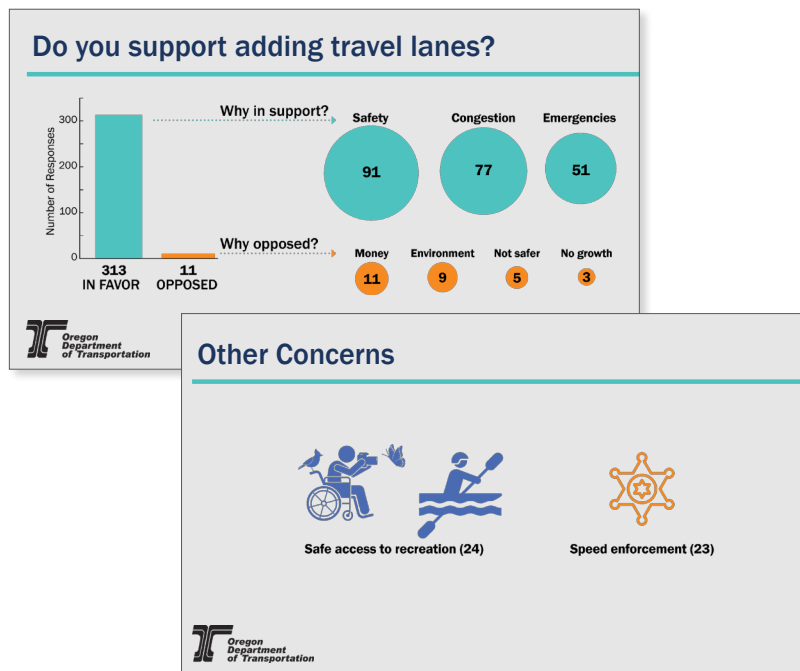
- Letters to local and state legislators in project area: Throughout
- Briefing of Lane Area Commission on Transportation

- 1 March 2021
- 2 January 2022

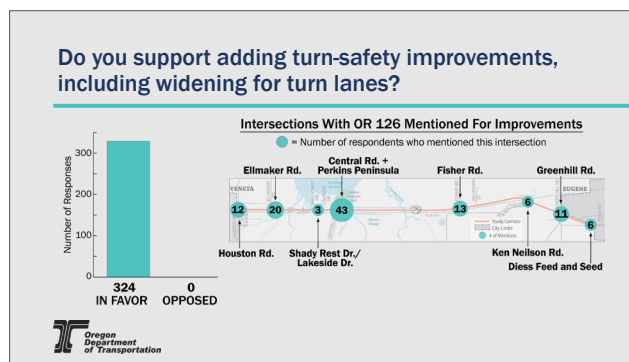
CONCLUSION

Public involvement requires thoughtful strategies and determined efforts to reach out to those who will be impacted by projects and to others who have unique knowledge to contribute. Then the project leaders must listen carefully, incorporate the input and report back to the engaged communities.

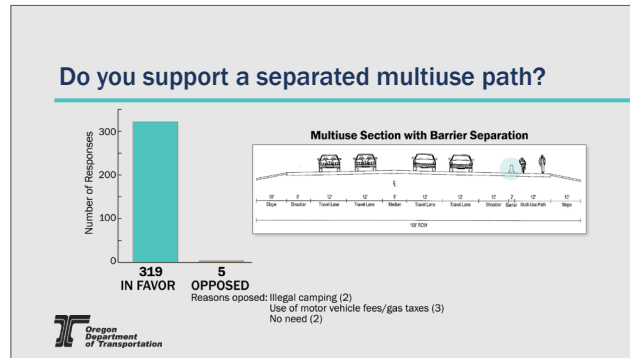
This happened. We heard close to unanimous support for widening OR 126 between Veneta and Eugene, with expectation that negative impacts to nature and recreational opportunities will be thoughtfully mitigated.



We heard an urgent need for safer intersections with side streets, as well as a majority skeptical of using roundabouts.



We heard almost universal welcome for a multiuse path, near but separated from the highway traffic.



The communities at the west end of the project area and beyond to the Oregon coast told us again that this project impacts their daily lives and local economic survival. We heard frustration with the length of time it takes to plan, fund and construct improvements, and promised to accurately report their thoughts and concerns to those with decision-making authority.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A **Demographics**

APPENDIX B **Steering Committee: Roster, Meeting Summaries and PowerPoint Presentations**

- #1 July 15, 2020
 - #2 November 18, 2020
 - #3 March 18, 2021
 - #4 October 28, 2021
-

APPENDIX C **Interviews: Summary and notes from eight interviews about Public Involvement Plan**

- May 2020
-

APPENDIX D **Constituent Consultations: Summaries from small-group meetings**

- **August 11, 2020**
Highway Users: emergency vehicles, freight, businesses, commuters
 - **August 11, 2020**
Adjacent Users: pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters
 - **August 12, 2020**
Wetlands Users: naturalists, ecology educators, fishers, hunters
 - **April 14, 2021**
Highway Users: emergency vehicles, freight, businesses, commuters
 - **April 14, 2021**
Adjacent Users: pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters
 - **April 15, 2021**
Wetlands Users: naturalists, ecology educators, fishers, hunters
-

APPENDIX E **Open Houses: Summaries of two open houses**

- September 8–25, 2020
 - April 26–May 9, 2021
-

APPENDIX F **Lane ACT Meetings: Minutes and presentations**

- March 2021
 - January 2022
-

APPENDIX A DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic Data

Demographic Category	Project Area (0.5-mile Buffer)	City of Eugene	City of Veneta	Eugene Metro Area	State of Oregon
Population	2382*	160,278	4,881	368,882	4,081,943
Age 65 and Over	18%**	16%	15%	18%	17%
Age 17 and Under	21%**	18%	27%	19%	21%
Male	53%*	49%	49%	49%	50%
Female	47%*	51%	51%	51%	50%
White	80%*	83%	83%	87%	84%
African American	4%*	2%	<1%	1%	2%
American Indian	<1%*	<1%	0	1%	1%
Asian American	<1%*	4%	2%	3%	4%
Pacific Islander	<1%*	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Hispanic or Latino	14%*	10%	14%	9%	13%
Median Household Income	\$59,584**	\$49,029	\$44,858	\$49,958	\$59,393
Households with incomes less than \$25,000	17%**	27%	24%	24%	20%
Population – Poverty Status Determined					
People Below Poverty Level	16%**	22%	23%	19%	14%
Under 18	18%**	19%	23%	21%	18%
Over 65	8%**	10%	13%	9%	8%

* Calculated from Census Block Group data from ACS 5-Yr Estimates (2018)

** Calculated from Census Tract data from ACS 5-Yr Estimates (2018)

All data compiled/ calculated from ACS 5-Yr Estimates (2018)

APPENDIX B

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARIES



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene STEERING COMMITTEE

Frannie Brindle, ODOT Area 5 Manager
Sasha Vartanian, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor
Mike Miller, City of Florence Public Works Director
Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner
Matt Michel, City of Veneta Administrator
Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District Director of Planning and Development
Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT Region 2 Planning & Development Review Manager
Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager
Randy Groves, Eugene City Councilor
Kelly Clarke, Lane Council of Governments Senior Transportation Planner
Rich Lopez, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager

STAFF

Molly Carey, ODOT Project Manager
Bob Goodrich, DOWL Project Manager
Dave Simmons, DOWL NEPA Coordinator
Ellen Teninty, Cogito Public Involvement Lead

MEETING SUMMARY

OR 126 Veneta to Eugene

Steering Committee Meeting #1

MEETING	Wednesday, July 15, 2020
LOCATION	Online
ATTENDANCE	Members present: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner• Frannie Brindle, ODOT Area 5 Manager• Kelly Clarke, LCOG Senior Transportation Planner• Randy Groves, City of Eugene Councilor Elect• Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager• Rich Lopez, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager• Matt Michel, City of Veneta City Administrator• Mike Miller, City of Florence Public Works Director• Lisa Nell, ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager• Sasha Vartanian, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor
ABSENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District Planning and Development Director
STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Molly Cary, ODOT Project Manager• Bob Goodrich, DOWL Project Manager• Dave Simmons, DOWL NEPA Coordinator• Ellen Teninty, Cogito Public Involvement Lead• Chris Watchie, Cogito Public Involvement Support

Purpose:

- Review project background, scope, and schedule for current phase (outreach, design and environmental documentation)
- Receive Steering Committee input

Welcome and Introductions - Teninty

Ellen Teninty welcomed the Steering Committee, reviewed the agenda, and asked members and staff to introduce themselves.

Project Background and Overview – Brindle and Cary

Frannie Brindle thanked and reinforced the importance of Steering Committee input and support throughout the process. She shared how this section of Highway 126 between Eugene and Veneta is a critical regional lifeline connector for communities between the Willamette Valley and Oregon Coast. It serves as an important route for goods, services, transit, freight, commuters, residents, and tourists.

She provided a brief overview of the planning phases to date including:

- **Phase 1: Corridor Plan: Identification of needs, provide a range of alternatives, recommend an alternative**
 - The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan evaluated a series of alternatives for the OR126 corridor to

address congestion and safety needs.

- After a two-year robust stakeholder outreach effort, which many of the Steering Committee members participated in, an alternative was recommended in late 2012.
 - The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan recommended alternative included these elements:
 - Four-Lane cross section, with a paved median or turn lane
 - Multi-use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route
 - Spot Improvements - since 2013, ODOT has repaved (Terry to Cornerstone), striped, provided bus turn outs, installed flashing illumination, and most recently built a turn lane at Ellmaker Road.
 - The Oregon Transportation Commission formally adopted the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan in April 2013.
- **Phase 2 (our current project): NEPA Study and Proof of Concept Phase: Confirm public preference for the recommended alternative in the Corridor Study,** refine conceptual design and complete comprehensive environmental studies to meet NEPA requirements.
 - Frannie noted the funding for this phase comes from *Keep Oregon Moving* (HB 2017) and thanked Representative Paul Holvey as the champion and a supporter for this work.
 - She recognized the synchronicity between Phase 1 and Phase 2 with members of the Steering Committee and Cogito as the same public involvement firm.

Two additional phases will happen once funding is secure:

- **Phase 3: Preliminary and Final Design and Preparation of Construction Plans**
- **Phase 4: Construct Recommended Alternative**

Frannie clarified that no funding has been secured for Phase 3 and 4.

- Molly Cary highlighted the current two-lane highway has dangerous operational conditions with safety and capacity issues. She shared the key objectives for the current NEPA Study and Proof of Concept phase including:
 - Confirmation of the Corridor Plan's recommended alternative by the public and provide more detail
 - Refinement of the design
 - Completion of the environmental documentation required to advance the project (Phases 3 and 4) once funding is secured
 - Potential phasing of project with cost estimates
- The recommended alternative's cross-sections include:
 - Widening of two to four lanes with separated multi-use path with a separating swale
 - Widening of two to four lanes with separated multi-use path with a separating barrier
- Dave Simmons added one significant change since adoption of the Corridor Plan. The project now extends one-mile further east to Terry Street rather than ending at Greenhill Road. It reflects a project (Project No. MM-14) in the City of Eugene's Transportation System Plan (TSP). This change links the two plans together.
- The Steering Committee is tasked with reviewing input from the public to inform their recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission. However, certain pieces of the final recommendations may need to go before other jurisdictions' decision-makers. Dave used the City of Eugene's TSP as an example that may require an amendment to be consistent with the project.

Public Involvement Plan - Teninty

Steering Committee:

- The Committee would use a consensus based decision-making process. Ellen asked members to indicate if they were in agreement with that structure. All agreed.
- A draft Committee Charter outlining its roles and responsibilities will be sent to the group. If there are any comments or concerns, email Ellen.

Ellen provided an overview of the Public Involvement Plan:

- Cogito did outreach for the 2013 Corridor Plan and ODOT 2018 Paving Project and has a stakeholder base to begin and expand communications.
- The Committee will receive all public outreach effort results including the general public, key constituent groups, open houses input and staff recommendations to help them develop informed recommendations.
- Key public outreach efforts include:
 - Preliminary stakeholder interviews to review the draft Public Involvement Plan to confirm and enhance the outreach approach
 - Online constituent meetings (up to 20 per group) comprised of various interest groups, property owners, and business owners. They will meet twice in the process, once before Draft Design Proof of Concept and again before the Final Design Proof of Concept. Committee members are invited to add to lists and attend any or all meetings.
 - Targeted groups are:
 - Bicyclists/Pedestrians/Boaters
 - Highway users/EMS/Freight/Business/Tourism
 - Naturalists/Environmentalists/Hunters/Fishers
 - Two Open Houses
 - 1) September 15, 2020
In person in Veneta with online option
 - 2) Summer 2021

Committee Discussion:

- Frannie noted how she really appreciates how the public involvement approach allows for all input to be a part of the design process.
- Matt asked about equity outreach specifics. Ellen shared a few examples including:
Working in Spanish and English, via the Senior Meals on Wheels Program, Mid Lane Cares, Fern Ridge School District, and food bank sites.
- Commissioner Bozievich commented that the traffic shed continued all the way to the Oregon Coast and to be sure to include the Siuslaw News and Fern Ridge Review.
- Ellen noted that they were on the Interested Stakeholder List as well as key coastal through-users such as Florence based logging and trucking companies.
- Rob Inerfeld asked about what questions will you ask the community and how it differs from the Corridor Plan? Dave responded that there are two elements to public input:
 - Confirmation of recommended alternative
 - Understanding how people use the corridor, e.g., potential impacts for recreational users and how impacts can be avoided, reduced or mitigated

Design Refinement - Goodrich

Bob Goodrich reviewed the five corridor segments over the seven-mile segment and noted the Areas of Potential Impact (API) and reasons. The blue line denotes the APIs. These are the conservative estimates of areas to study potential impacts, not right-of-way (ROW) acquisition limits.

Segment 1: West end – Huston Road

- Lots of business access directly onto the highway. Team is working with ODOT Access Management and the City prior to speaking with businesses.

- Project here is constrained by railroad tracks on south side. Any widening will generally be to the north side.
- DKS will review and update traffic analysis including traffic signal and left/right lane needs.
 - Rob asked why Huston Road was chosen as western boundary. Molly responded that Huston Road serves as the urban growth boundary for the City of Veneta and was the western limit for the Corridor Plan.
 - Sasha Vartanian asked if the OR126/Territorial Road intersection had capacity issues. Molly could not speak to that, but indicated this intersection was outside the project limits.

Segment 2

- The wider roadway cross section with swale will be used where there is land on both sides of the road. Along the reservoir, the narrower cross section will be used to reduce impacts to the reservoir/environment.
- There is one bridge in this segment. For estimating purposes, most of the bridges in the project limits will be assumed to be replaced.
- The Fern Ridge Wildlife Area South Marsh parking lot has a lot of recreational use.
- Project will study wildlife impacts and potential mitigation measures.
- Drilling within the reservoir is planned for this section to inform the design and cost estimates.

Segment 3

- Similar to Segment 2, the cross section will vary based on the adjacent constraints (e.g., reservoir), the need for turn lanes, etc.
- There are two bridges in this segment. There are five bridges and one culvert in the project limits.

Segment 4

- Highway bends to the north and crosses over the railroad. This bridge will be widened, rather than replaced (less than 20 years old).
- Road to north (Goble Lane) may need to be realigned, as reflected by the widening of the API.
- The Green Hill Road intersection and traffic signal will be modified as part of project.

Segment 5: East end to Terry Street

- Last mile to Terry Street will match four to five lanes.
- Bob indicated that the design needs to support the NEPA process to satisfy Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements. The consultant will develop cost estimates for the corridor as well as segments that can be funded individually, as securing funding to construct the entire corridor in one phase is unlikely. Environmental impacts including ROW needs will be evaluated as part of this phase.
- Bob noted that the project team will consult with the City of Veneta, City of Eugene, and Lane Transit District on access management and the draft design criteria. The purpose is to understand current and future needs.

Committee Discussion:

- Councilor Elect Groves wanted to confirm that all bridges would be replaced, addressing seismic needs, with the exception of the eastern bridge over railroad tracks, which will be widened and seismically retrofitted. Bob indicated that was correct. If replacing or widening, all bridges will be seismically resilient.
- Rich Lopez said that since the majority of the widening will be to the north, there are no questions or concerns at this time from the Coos Bay Rail Line.
- Kelly Clarke noted a new Florence to Eugene transit route, Link Lane, began in February with stops in Veneta and Mapleton and is a lifeline service for users to reach services in Eugene. Supported by Three Rivers Casino, any impacts will be important to consider protecting the route. She suggested additional entities for Title VI and Environmental Justice outreach:

- Siuslaw Outreach Center
- Mapleton School District – Sends students to Eugene for work opportunities
- Rob asked what the shelf life is for a NEPA study? Molly responded that the project needs to be looked at as a whole. Conducting the NEPA Phase puts the project in a very good position to apply for federal funding for the final design including ROW acquisition. It is a big milestone to get NEPA approval from the FHWA. The typical shelf life for a NEPA study is three years. When funding is secured, a re-evaluation is required to account for any changes such as a new species listing under Endangered Species Act (ESA). Re-evaluating a NEPA document is typically a lesser effort than writing the original.
- Rob asked if the project could be phased if funding doesn't come in all at once? Molly answered that construction phases can happen after NEPA is complete. DOWL will determine logical construction segments and associated cost estimates.

Environmental Documentation - Simmons

This phase will take the design from a high-level corridor plan to a more detailed design that establishes the footprint and any potential impacts. The environmental team will then evaluate the impacts of that design and work with the design team to avoid or reduce the impacts.

From a NEPA context, any impacts to natural and human built environments within designated APIs will have technical studies including the following disciplines:

- Air Quality
- Archaeological
 - With the history of tribal activity in the area, an archeological study will be conducted and reviewed with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.
- Biological Resources
 - There are three ESA listed plant species
 - There is habitat for the ESA listed Fenders Blue Butterfly
- Community/Environmental Justice
 - Both Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice studies will be completed. These studies are closely coordinated with the Public Involvement Plan.
- Hazardous Materials
- Historic Resources
 - Collecting Rights of Entry to review structures along the corridor.
- Land Use
 - There must be consistency with local transportation plans such as the cities of Veneta and Eugene's TSPs and Lane County's TSP.
- Noise
 - Noise data will be collected along the corridor.
- Parks and Recreation
 - Understanding any impacts on usage.
- Water Quality/Hydrology
 - Treatment of stormwater will be addressed with the design efforts.
- Wetlands
 - Impacts will be unavoidable, so efforts will focus on how best to minimize impacts.

Committee Discussion:

- Ellen reminded the Steering Committee that the API lines (in light blue) denote the study area not the highway footprint. She emphasized that it is important to note that should a business owner

review the PowerPoint and worry about the project's impact to property.

- Frannie noted that ODOT had an early coordination meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers to determine if there were any red flags. ODOT will continue to coordinate with them on the project and partner on bicycle and pedestrian facilities. She also noted that prior to the Army Corps Fern Ridge Project [1942], a road existed, i.e. the road was there before the reservoir was built. ODOT has done much work on wetlands mitigation and banking in the area dating back to work on the never-constructed West Eugene Parkway. This presents opportunities for the project.
- Matt Michel asked if the environmental studies would include the impacts associated with the multi-use path. Bob answered the multi-use path following along the north side of OR126 will be included in the studies. Molly provided additional information about the multi-use path alternative to the south (AKA, the southern alternative from the Corridor Plan that would follow Ken Neilsen, Cantrell and Perkins Roads) and noted it could be a separate project from this study. ODOT studied the southern alternative multi-use path and determined it was very expensive.
- The last mile section of the multi-use path into Eugene's city limits will need to be discussed with the City on how best to transition into the existing bicycle and pedestrian network.
- Rob noted that the city would want a more urban section with a multi-use path rather than street bike lanes as called for in the TSP. He also noted he advocated for a roundabout at Greenhill Road years ago. He asked if it could be considered in the design. Dave responded that the project team would review that idea with the traffic engineer, DKS.
- Councilor-elect Groves said he was happy to hear there will be a separation of bicycles and cars.
- Commissioner Bozievich noted that the Babe Ruth League plans to expand the baseball diamonds at Perkins Peninsula and is required to do an archeology analysis. It is important to reach out to the tribes. Ellen clarified that the tribes will be involved in the technical studies and not through outreach by Cogito.
- Kelly noted to include the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians as they own Three Rivers Casino.

Project Schedule - Goodrich

Bob reviewed the Project Schedule

- Spring 2020 – Summer 2021 Proof of Concept
- Summer 2021 – Spring 2022 Environmental Documentation (NEPA)
- Spring – Fall 2022 – Phases 3 & 4 Preliminary/final design and construction (subject to funding)

Next Steering Committee Meeting – Teninty

- Ellen polled Committee members if the proposed date for the next meeting worked for all. The Committee agreed to meeting on: **Wednesday, October 7, 2020, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Next Steps and Final Comments – Teninty

- Ellen noted she would send out to the committee:
 - Steering Committee Charter
 - Steering Committee contacts
 - Meeting Notes
 - Public Involvement Plan
 - Constituent Consultations invitee lists
- Molly appreciated everyone attending and thanked them for the good questions. She noted having the Steering Committee's support is very important.
- Frannie echoed Molly's comments and noted her gratitude and restated how important to the community this corridor is. She highlighted how hard Commissioner Bozievich and she had worked

OR126: Veneta to Eugene: Steering Committee (SC) Meeting #1

July 15, 2020



Welcome and Introduction

Self Introduction

- In this virtual meeting setting, Ellen will do a roll call style start to the meeting. When called, please provide a brief introduction including:

- Name
- Agency you represent
- Title and role with the agency

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



SC Meeting #1

Agenda

2:00 – 2:15 Welcome and Introduction

2:15 – 2:25 Project Background and Overview

2:25 – 2:45 Public Involvement Plan

2:45 – 3:00 Design Refinement

3:00 – 3:15 Environmental Documentation

3:15 – 3:20 Project Schedule

3:20 – 3:25 Set Date for Next Steering Committee Meeting

3:25 – 3:30 Next Steps

OR126: Veneta to Eugene

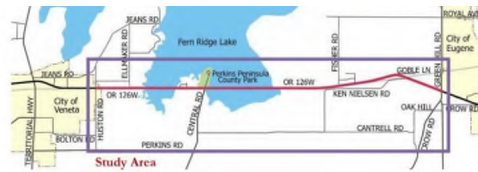


Project Background and Overview



Background

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** evaluated a series of alternatives for the OR126 corridor to address congestion and safety needs. Following an extensive stakeholder outreach effort, a preferred alternative was selected in late 2012. The corridor plan was formally adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission - April 17, 2013



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Background

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** preferred alternative included these elements:

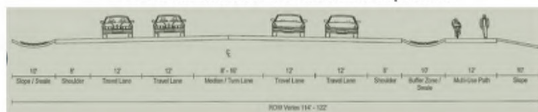
- Four-Lane cross section
- Multi-use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route
- Short-term Spot Improvements



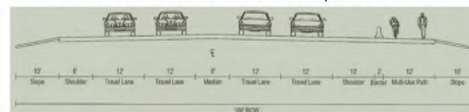
Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission - April 17, 2013



A - Multi-Use Section with Swale Separation



B - Multi-Use Section with Barrier Separation



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.

*Future phases depend on securing additional funding.

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview



Building on the **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**, the Oregon Department of Transportation will confirm the outcome of the plan, refine the design and complete the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

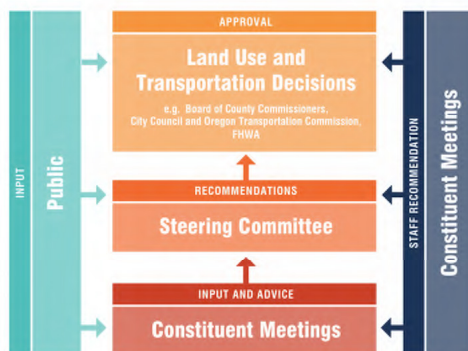
OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Public Involvement Plan



Role of Steering Committee



Steering Committee: Elected officials and partner agency staff

Constituent Meetings: Various interest groups and business owners

Project Management Team: ODOT and consultant project leadership

Public: Input from open houses, door-to-door outreach, tabling events and other stakeholders

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Outreach Plan and Schedule

Key Activities	2020				2021	
	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
● Project Steering Committee						
● Stakeholder Interviews						
● Constituent Consultations 1 Naturalists/Environmentalists/Hunters/Fishers 2 Bicyclists/Pedestrians/Boaters 3 Highway users/EMS/Freight/Business/Tourism		1 2 3			1 2 3	
● Equity Approach: Targeted Outreach						
● Open Houses						

DESIGN
DRAFT
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

DESIGN
FINAL
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Design Refinement



Design Refinement

Segment 1 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Design Refinement

Segment 2 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Design Refinement

Segment 3 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Design Refinement

Segment 4 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Design Refinement

Segment 5 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Environmental Documentation



Environmental Documentation



Purpose: define *affected environment*, including resources in *Area of Potential Impact (API)* to inform design and Federal environmental classification.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Environmental Summary

Discipline	Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis will be performed to determine if project conforms with air quality goals
Archaeological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural resources have been previously identified near the corridor - a review of the corridor will be conducted
Biological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endangered Species Act (ESA) plants and critical habitat present in the corridor No ESA listed fish present
Community/Env. Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused stakeholder engagement is planned
Hazardous Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated report has been prepared summarizing current records
Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A field review is scheduled to review residential and business properties

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Environmental Summary

Discipline	Summary
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project in adopted STIP and City of Eugene TSP (Project No. MM-14)
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noise analysis in accordance with FHWA and ODOT will be conducted to determine if mitigation is required or practical
Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design will avoid and/or minimize impacts to these resources:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perkins Peninsula Park• Fern Ridge Wildlife Area - South Marsh Parking Area• Fern Ridge Wildlife Area - Fisher Butte Parking Lot
Water Quality/Hydrology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stormwater treatment will be planned consistent with state and federal standards
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design will avoid/minimize/mitigate impacts to important water bodies

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Project Schedule



Phase 2 Project Schedule



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING



Next Steering Committee Meeting

Proposed Date:

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Next Steps

- Project team to continue field data collection efforts and begin design refinements

Upcoming Meetings

- Constituent meetings – August 11, 12, 2020
- Open House #1 – September 15, 2020
- Steering Team #2 – October 7, 2020

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Thank you!

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



MEETING SUMMARY

OR 126 Veneta to Eugene

Steering Committee Meeting #2

MEETING	Wednesday, November 18, 2020
LOCATION	Online
ATTENDANCE	<p>Members present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sasha Vartanian, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor• Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager• Lisa Nell, ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager• Kelly Clarke, LCOG Senior Transportation Planner• Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner• Randy Groves, City of Eugene Councilor Elect• Mike Miller, City of Florence Public Works Director• Rich Lopez, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager• Margaret Barber, Port of Coos Bay Director of External Affairs• Frannie Brindle, ODOT Area 5 Manager• Matt Michel, City of Veneta City Administrator• Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District Planning and Development Director <p>Staff present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dave Simmons, DOWL NEPA Coordinator• Ellen Teninty, Cogito Public Involvement Lead• Molly Cary, ODOT Project Manager• Bob Goodrich, DOWL Project Manager• Alex Renirie, Cogito Public Involvement Support
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide updates on public involvement, environmental documentation and engineering efforts since the committee first met in July.

Welcome – Teninty

Ellen Teninty welcomed the Steering Committee, reviewed the agenda, and asked members and staff to introduce themselves.

Public Involvement Update – Teninty

Ellen Teninty announced that the first of two rounds of public involvement is complete. The project team conducted stakeholder interviews, three constituency consultations, and an online open house. All three of these generated meaningful input from a variety of stakeholders. Equity outreach has been more difficult due to public safety concern; partner organizations developed through interviews helped to reach underserved people.

Three constituency meetings were held from August 11-12:

- The three constituent groups were: Highways users; Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Boaters; and Environmentalists, Hunters, and Fishers.
- A detailed report on these meetings was emailed to the committee previously.
- The consultations gathered people with in-depth background knowledge. They asked rich questions and then were then able to liaise with their constituents. Feedback was consistent with comments heard in other public involvement venues:
 - Very consistent support for the 4-lane alternative and multi-use path.
 - General concerns about access and turning for businesses, trucks, and emergency vehicles.
 - Provide a complete design (encompasses many design feature requests, including safe connections and road crossings).
 - Concerns with project impacts to fish, wildlife and plants. Access to recreation opportunities is also very important.

An online Open House was held from September 8 – 25:

- Received a high response rate – 748 individuals viewed the Open House and 324 responded to the survey – despite fires and a pandemic.
- Balance of voices is as important as numbers. New partners developed through the stakeholder interviews were crucial to generating comments (especially Fern Ridge School District and Mid Lane Cares). Also outreached to every business adjacent to project. Dixie's Café resulted in many direct comments.
- Summary of input:
 - Support for 4-lane and multi-use path (for usage and safety benefits).
 - Intersection safety concerns were consistent with other input received.
 - Desire to maintain access to nature and recreational opportunities.
 - Requests to extend project limits west to Territorial Road.
 - Sense of urgency.

Discussion on public involvement update:

- Frannie shared that there is a disconnect between Lane ACT partners, this project, and the Beltline project. There is overlap in a desire for the separated bike lanes, but not necessarily about a 4-lane highway. There is tension about expanding infrastructure used by motor vehicles; it will be important to circle back with the ACT in the future.

Environmental Documentation Update – Simmons

Dave Simmons updated the committee on environmental monitoring and documentation efforts along the corridor. Primary environmental concerns in the project area include endangered and critical plants; noise impacts; wetlands; archaeological resources; and historic buildings. The project team is still working on these and the technical drafts, so this was a glimpse into the project midstream.

- Fieldwork was completed over the summer on endangered species and critical plants.
 - There are no Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed fish present in the adjacent reservoir. That simplifies the forthcoming environmental documentation work that will happen next spring.
- Dave shared photos of existing endangered plants. Habitat for Fender's Blue Butterfly is

particularly important in this area. The rare plants have been mapped along the corridor and are being rolled into the project map. The goal is to avoid them.

- Noise meters were used to gather data for noise analysis.
- Fieldwork to determine wetlands has been performed.
- Project team is advancing work on cultural resources. A plan to look at archaeological sites is being reviewed by ODOT and approved presently.
- Archaeological field assessments and historic review of buildings along the corridor will be completed in 1-2 months.

Engineering Update – Simmons

Dave Simmons gave an update on the traffic analysis, safety performance studies, intersection operations, and preliminary designs for several roadway sections.

A traffic analysis was performed by DKS Associates and submitted to ODOT:

- Slide 18 shows current and projected traffic volumes on the corridor. The numbers in grey bars indicate trips per day by direction (e.g., 9,165 trips enter corridor on Eugene end in a westbound direction, less traffic enters Veneta).
- Relatively modest growth is projected over the next 20-year period.
- Frannie asked: What time of day or year were these volumes taken?
 - Dave: New data at nine intersections was gathered this summer. The analysis looked at weekday trips at morning and evening peak periods. Using data from permanently installed traffic recorders along OR126, the traffic volumes used in the analysis are adjusted for seasonal traffic variations. Following ODOT guidelines, the analysis is performed using volumes that have been adjusted to reflect the 30th highest hour, with the intent being to evaluate the capacity requirements based on higher traffic volume conditions, but not on the highest volumes recorded within the project area.
- Mike asked: How have COVID and travel restrictions impacted current traffic volumes?
 - Dave: The project team delayed collecting traffic data due to reduced volumes initially, but eventually chose to gather traffic data this summer while traffic volumes remained lower than normal. DKS worked with ODOT's traffic section to apply an adjustment factor using historical data from the permanent traffic recorders along OR126.
- Frannie asked: Can you make any conclusions about how much current travel is between Eugene and Veneta versus trips that continue to the coast?
 - Dave: That isn't part of the scope of this project. Based on previous studies, about 50-60% of trips that start in Eugene end in/or around Veneta.
- Matt asked: How would new development in Veneta affect future numbers? How can internal land use be factored into future volume calculation?
 - Dave: That has been factored in. Traffic engineers have looked at the city's transportation plans, so growth patterns within city and regional tools have been used. The details on how the traffic forecasts were developed can be shared if desired.
- Randy asked: Many people are looking outside the Eugene area due to the lack of

affordability of housing in Eugene. That might sway these numbers. Is it possible to factor that in?

- Dave: Traffic forecasting is far from an exact science, so traffic engineers do the best they can with existing data that includes population studies, but the traffic forecast element should be refreshed at each planning step, as funding comes in. Adapting to changing conditions is crucial, since there are so many unknown factors.
- Rob asked: From a traffic flow perspective, at what point is there enough traffic that it make sense to have multiple travel lanes in each direction? How does having turn lanes and wider shoulders contribute to how well the street functions (from both a capacity and safety perspective)?
 - Dave did not have an answer to that but agreed to research it and follow up.
 - Rob added: Given that some public comments were about not needing multiple lanes, it is important to have clear messaging about why or why not this project is needed from a traffic capacity and safety perspective.

Safety performance studies indicated the prevalence, type, and location of collisions:

- Slide 19 shows where six fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes occurred between 2014-2018.
- Slide 20 shows where crashes are occurring with a heat map. Most of the crashes are rear end accidents and most occur at major intersections or side roads (e.g., dark red colors at Green Hill Road and Fisher Road).
 - Jay adds: This is a great demonstration of why multiple lanes are needed. There are big problems with emergency response access and the accordion effects of people slowing down to wait for left turning traffic.
 - Randy supported what Commissioner Bozievich said. As a firefighter, this is one of the most dangerous strips of corridor. Having extra space for response personnel and to prevent traffic from backing up is very important.

Existing and future operations were evaluated at nine intersections:

- Green Hill Road and Central Road do not currently meet the state's mobility (volume to capacity ratio) targets.
- Lakeside Drive, Ellmaker Road, and Huston Road currently have long delays to access 126 due to a lack of gaps in traffic on OR126.
- After adding a lane in both directions, future conditions indicate that:
 - Five of the intersections will still need additional improvements to meet mobility targets.
 - Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended for Green Hill Road, Central Road, and Huston Road.
 - Roundabouts or turn lane improvements are recommended for Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road.
- Jay added: The County and City adopted urban reserves, much of which is focused in the Fisher Road area. He recommended taking a look at those potential thousands of future residents when calculating volume projections at the Fisher Road intersection.
- Rich added: Remember there are railroad crossings near the intersections at Central Road and Huston Road. There is potential of people bolting through or making abrupt

stops as the trains come through. Faster and longer trains will come through that area in the future.

- Dave: All of this is preliminary information. There are many factors still to consider in the design including environmental impacts, traffic operations with consideration of the close proximity of the railroad crossings, cost, etc.

Road design considerations and example roadway section graphics were presented:

- Based on survey information looking at constraints (e.g., reservoir, houses, railroad), conversations are underway about how to balance impacts along the corridor.
- Initial conversations have begun with Coos Bay Railroad and the USACE.
- While the design is a work in progress, three roadway section images demonstrated these constraints and considerations (Slides 24-26):
 - Reservoir section: Coyote Creek bridge and the informal kayak launch is on the right. Shows change from existing embankment to fill needed to accommodate new wider shoulders, additional lanes and multi-use path. Given the goal is to minimize impact from additional fill, conversations have begun to explore shifting towards the railroad (requiring easements or right-of-way).
 - Shady Rest section: Depicts homes on north, railroad on south. Some of the homes are close to the existing right-of-way. Image shows right turn lane for Lakeside Drive and Shady Rest side streets and multi-use path with swale between roadway. Considering shifting slightly towards the railroad to reduce impact to homes.
 - Rob asked: Does the existing berm depicted serve a function? Dave doesn't know the purpose of that berm.
 - Rob asked: Could median be narrowed and replaced by a cable barrier to provide more separation from existing houses? He advocates for cable barriers as much as possible and doesn't see need for left turn pocket here. Dave clarified that this section is located between Lake Side Drive and Shady Rest Drive where left turn lanes will be provided, so the wider median is needed.
 - West end section: Located at the Veneta CrossFit. Shown with raised median, but the exact design is TBD. Roadway along north side is more of an urban design with a curb separating the road from the multi-use path. South side shows potential for transit pull-outs, similar to those installed recently.
 - Matt asked: Are you contemplating business access points that cross the multi-use path? Dave answered that they are. The wall depicted in the cross section replaces an existing wall at this particular location.
 - Ellen passed along the public's thank you for the improvements to bus pull-outs that have happened since 2013.

General questions and discussion:

- Matt asked: Is it an option to consider continuing the project onto Territorial Road at this point?
 - Dave: Funding was defined to advance the corridor study forward consistent with the original project limits. The study of the range of potential solutions and defining a preferred alternative for OR126 between Huston Road and Territorial

Road is a few steps back in the process from where this project stands. The city's TSP recognizes it needs to be done as a separate project, so it's a matter of gathering the funding to advance that process to where the corridor plan is today.

- Frannie added: Making sure it aligns with the city's TSP is important, as they likely have other ideas for land use. Moving the project along incrementally and mainly addressing safety concerns in phased improvements might help get federal dollars.
- Sasha added: The Territorial intersection is an area they continue to see development around. They are happy to continue to monitor this and be partners on future projects.

Project Schedule Review – Simmons

Dave Simmons described where we are in the project schedule. The Proof of Concept (POC) Design draft will be completed next spring, with the final POC released next summer. Steering committee meetings 3 and 4 will be held in late March 2021 and sometime next summer. Additional public outreach will occur in the spring to solicit feedback on the draft POC.

- The project team is currently in development of the engineering POC design. This will allow the team to develop a cost estimate.
- After the draft POC is done around March 2021, there will be another steering committee meeting, followed by more constituent outreach and a second open house.
- The project team will aim to finalize its POC in the summer and move forward with environmental documentation process to be finalized in early 2022.
- The Steering Committee will meet for a fourth time next summer. Will need to follow up with the group about when to meet and how best to share a phasing plan and environmental documentation updates.
- When funding is secured, there will be future phases of design, acquisition and construction.

General Discussion:

- Frannie thanked everyone for participating with their valuable input. Mayor Weiss from Veneta will now be on Lane ACT, so she will circle back to fill him in. Ellen noted that he attended the highway users constituent meeting.
- Randy thanked the project team for all their work. It's very well organized and community outreach is especially crucial.
- Molly added that things are going pretty smoothly with this project. She appreciates the steering team and outreach behind the scenes. She looks forward to getting together again and hopefully talk about phasing, costs of upgrades, and soliciting funds.
- Dave added: In the next month they will have a pre-application conference with County Planning staff to understand the County permitting requirements. Also beginning conversations with City about the West Eugene Wetlands.
- Ellen asked: Given comments on cultural resources, what is the status of those studies?
 - Dave: There are quite a few more sites than anticipated, so they are working through the archaeological and historic work plan with ODOT. There will be field work coming up soon, so that update will come next time we meet.

Next Meeting: Ellen will get in touch to schedule a meeting in late March 2021.

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING #2

November 18, 2020



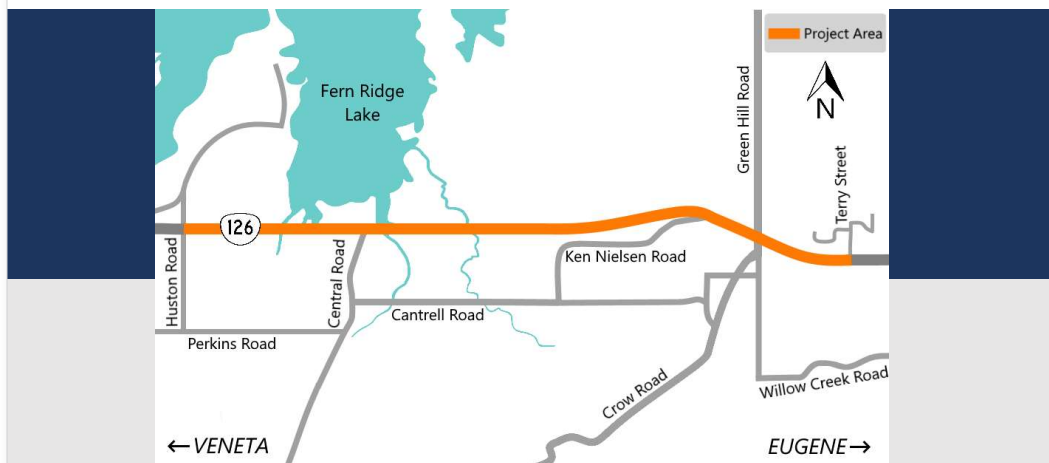
WELCOME

In this virtual setting, we will do a roll call to start the meeting.



SC MEETING #2 AGENDA

- 10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Agenda Review
- 10:15 – 10:30 Public Involvement Update
- 10:30 – 10:40 Environmental Documentation Update
- 10:40 – 11:15 Engineering Update
- 11:15 – 11:20 Project Schedule Review
- 11:20 – 11:25 Next Steps



Building on the **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**, we will confirm the outcome of the plan, refine the design and complete the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT UPDATE

OUTREACH PLAN & SCHEDULE

Key Activities	2020				2021	
	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
• Project Steering Committee						
• Stakeholder Interviews						
• Constituent Consultations						
1 Naturalists/Environmentalists/Hunters/Fishers		1			1	
2 Bicyclists/Pedestrians/Boaters		2			2	
3 Highway users/EMS/Freight/Business/Tourism		3			3	
• Equity Approach: Targeted Outreach						
• Open Houses						

DESIGN
DRAFT
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

DESIGN
FINAL
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Three meetings held August 11-12, 2020 with invited participants

1. Highway Users: commuters, businesses, freight, emergency vehicles. *(15 participants)*
2. Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Boaters. *(13 participants)*
3. Environmental, Hunter and Fisher. *(10 participants)*



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Meeting Goals

- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Review previous work in the corridor and explain current efforts.
- Document their input.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Some Key Messages from Participants

- Support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- Maintain access for businesses, trucks and emergency vehicles.
- Provide complete design for multi-use path with safe connections and crossings of roadway.
- Concern with project impacts to fish, wildlife and plants.



ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Statistics:

- Opened September 8 through September 25.
- Received 324 survey responses.
- Postcards garnered the highest number of participants (3x higher than any other outreach method).

OUTREACH DURING PANDEMIC AND WILDFIRES

Thousands of people care about the safety and mobility of this stretch of highway, and we worked to make sure there was an opportunity for them to share their personal experiences and concerns. Outreach efforts kept public safety in the forefront by providing electronic and phone methods to gather public input. Garnering over 300 survey responses, we achieved our communications goals using multiple methods.



Getting ready for Meals on Wheels with transportation to school in 10 hours.



"Do you travel between Veneta and Eugene on OR 126? The Oregon Department of Transportation is conducting a study about improving the road. If you want to learn more about the study and give ODOT your opinions and experiences, they are hosting an online open house that will be open through Sept. 26th. To find it you can type OR 126 Veneta in the search bar of your browser. They would appreciate any and all feedback."

Phone message to Fern Ridge School District families

- Website with the link to Open House.
- Email with link sent to 1,663 interested parties.
- Postcard mailed to 4,828 households.
- Postcard placed on store and organization customer counters and in food pantry boxes.
- Media Release to selected outlets.
- Facebook Open House posts for nine agencies and organizations.
- A-Frames placed at key intersections.

- A-Frames with QR code placed at local store entrances.
- Phone calls to 36 adjacent businesses.
- Phone announcement via Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elsie, Walton and Nott reaching 3,000-5,000 people.
- Reader Boards with Open House information at two prominent locations.
- Hand copies in food pantry boxes, at Veneta Farmer's Market, Meals on Wheels deliveries, Café 60 (senior and disabled services), Dave's Café.



Postcards were delivered along open house routes to 4,828 homes.



QR code for quick link to Open House



With the pandemic, the Lane Farm Authority is a great place to find more information about the Open House and postcards for online access were placed in 100 boxes.



Signs and QR codes at intersections of local businesses.

OR 126 Veneta to Eugene | Open House #1 | Sept. 2020 | Page 2

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Input Summary

- Support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- Requests for intersection changes to improve safety turning on and off the roadway.
- Desire to maintain access to nature and recreational opportunities.
- Requests to extend project limits west to Territorial Road.
- Sense of urgency.



ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION UPDATE

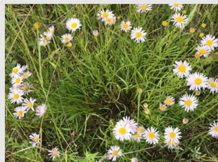
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Biological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field work completed - Endangered Species Act (ESA) plants and critical habitat present in the corridor. No ESA listed fish present.



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

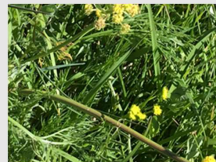
Biological Resources



Willamette Valley Daisy



Kincaid's Lupine



Bradshaw's Lomatium



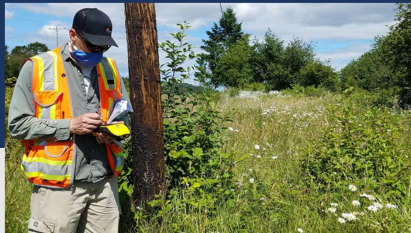
*Fender's Blue
Butterfly Habitat*

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Field measurements of existing noise collected.
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Field work completed to define wetland limits.



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



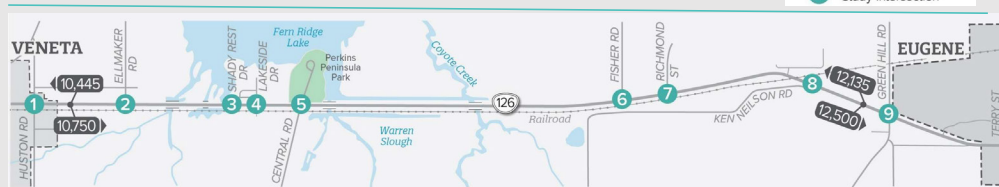
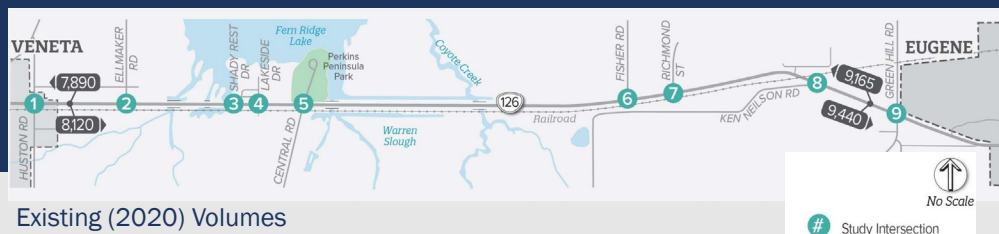
Project staff out on the project site taking notes.



Inspecting roadside areas for wetlands.

ENGINEERING UPDATE

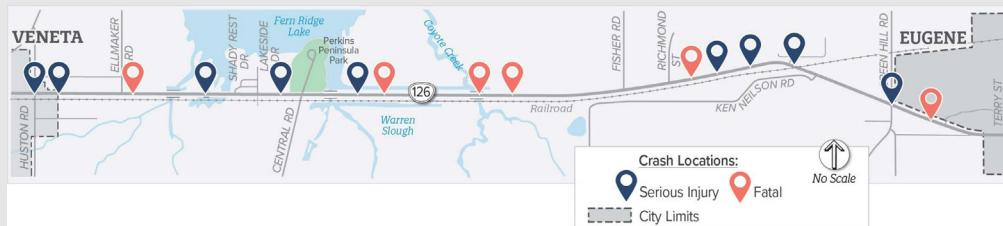
CORRIDOR TRAFFIC VOLUMES



Future (2044) Volumes

SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

- 6 fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes.



SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

- 209 total crashes.
- Primary crash type was rear-end
- Majority (70-75%) of crashes occurred during clear, dry daylight hours.



EXISTING (2020) INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

- Nine intersections evaluated (one signalized and eight two-way stop controlled).
- Green Hill Road and Central Road intersections fail mobility (volume to capacity) targets.
- Lake Side Drive, Ellmaker Road and Huston Road have long delays to access OR126.



FUTURE (2044) INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

- Five intersections require additional improvements to meet ODOT mobility targets with the widening of OR126 to four lanes.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended for the Green Hill Road, Central Road and Huston Road intersections.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements on OR126 are recommended for the Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road intersections.

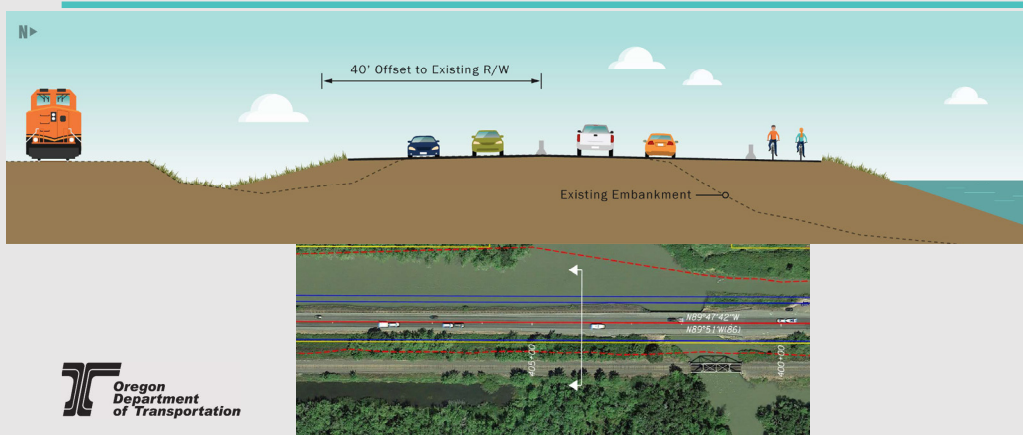


ROADWAY DESIGN UPDATE

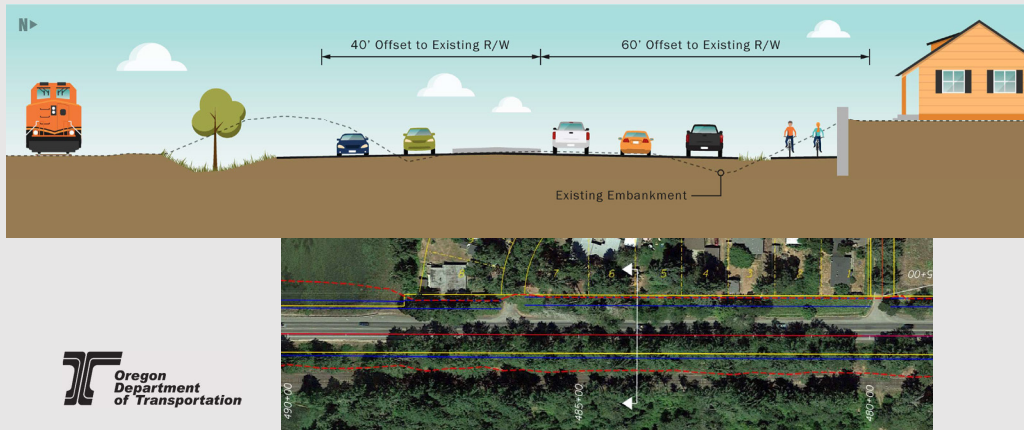
- Alignment shifts with consideration of corridor constraints
- Initial conversations with USACE and Coos Bay Railroad
- Many details yet to address – work in progress



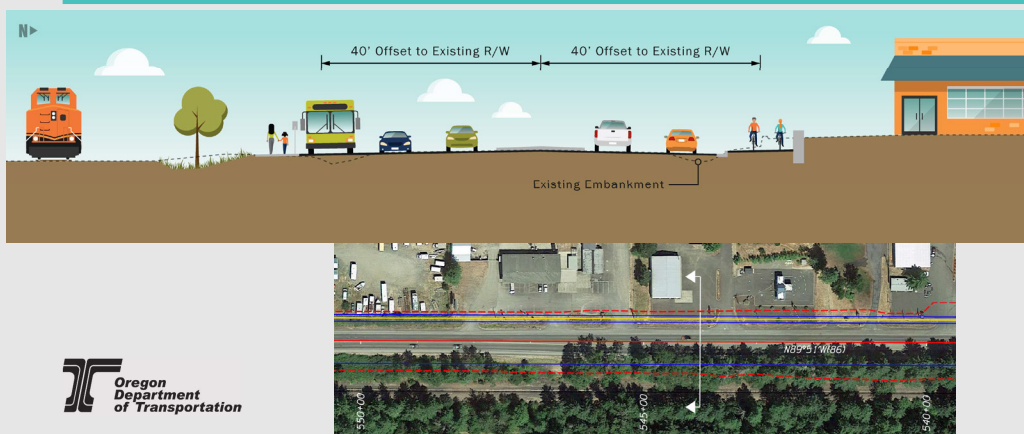
ROADWAY SECTION AT RESERVOIR



ROADWAY SECTION AT SHADY REST

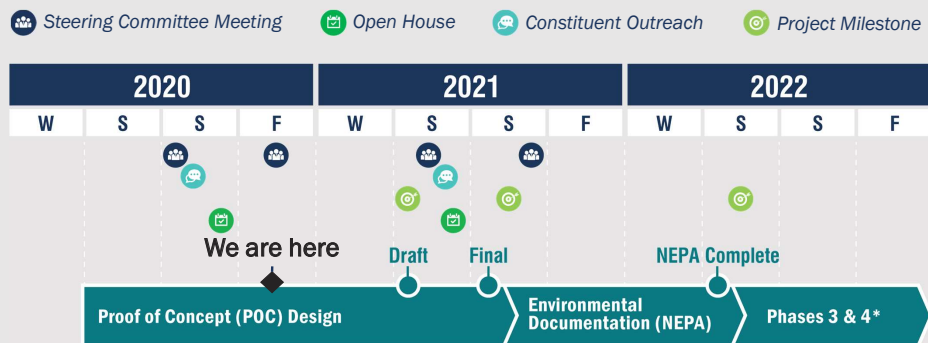


ROADWAY SECTION AT WEST END



PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT SCHEDULE



*Preliminary/final design and construction phases depend on funding

NEXT STEPS

Winter 2020

- Project team to continue design refinements through winter.

Spring 2021

- Draft Proof of Concept Design.
- Steering Team #3.
- Second round of constituent meetings.
- Online Open House #2.



THANK YOU!

MEETING SUMMARY

OR 126 Veneta to Eugene

Steering Committee Meeting #3

MEETING Thursday, March 18, 2021

LOCATION Online

ATTENDANCE Members present:

- Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager
- Kelly Clarke, LCOG Senior Transportation Planner
- Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner
- Randy Groves, City of Eugene Councilor
- Mike Miller, City of Florence Public Works Director
- Frannie Brindle, ODOT Area 5 Manager
- Matt Michel, City of Veneta City Administrator
- Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager
- Jeremy Card, Lane Transit District Service Planner (Substitute for Tom Schwetz)
- Peggy Keppler, Lane County Transportation Planner (Substitute for Sasha Vartanian)

Members absent:

- Sasha Vartanian, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor
- Rich Lopez, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager
- Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District Planning and Development Director

Staff present:

- Molly Cary, ODOT Project Manager
- Bob Goodrich, DOWL Project Manager
- Dave Simmons, DOWL NEPA Coordinator
- Ellen Teninty, Cogito Public Involvement Lead
- Alex Renirie, Cogito Public Involvement Support

PURPOSE

- Provide an update to the committee on the design and environmental documentation.
- Receive Steering Committee input and feedback for the project team to consider.

Welcome – Teninty

Ellen Teninty welcomed the Steering Committee, reviewed the agenda, and asked members and staff to introduce themselves.

Engineering Update – Goodrich

Bob Goodrich updated the committee on the engineering team's work over the last four months. The presentation reviewed the Proof of Concept, which is currently being reviewed by ODOT, the cities of Venta and Eugene, and Lane county, in general for the project length and specifically for intersections at Green Hill, Central, Huston, and Ellmaker. At each of these four intersections, the engineering team developed two design options.

- First slide recaps the results of the traffic analysis. Out of the nine study intersections within the corridor, five were shown to need additional modifications to meet ODOT's mobility targets.
- Corridor crash data demonstrates that crashes have gotten worse over the last 25 years.
- Roundabouts provide significant safety benefits – they reduce fatalities and injury crashes by 82% compared to rural stop-controlled intersections. Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 48%. They also cost more to construct and have a larger footprint. Converting a rural stop-controlled intersection to a signalized intersection can reduce angle crashes by 77%, but can also increase rear-end crashes by 58%. Rear-end crashes are the most common crash type within the project corridor.
- Q: Kelly: Have you been able to pinpoint the reasons behind the increase in accidents?
 - A: Dave: In general, this is due to an increase in traffic. Growing traffic numbers and density (particularly on the east end) largely causes this. See heat maps from last steering committee presentation. Most of these accidents are rear-ends because people are going fast, following too close and turning vehicles don't have shoulder room to pull over.

Draft Proof of Concept

- Each slide shows a section of the project area, beginning on the east end and moving west.
- Green Hill Road Intersection
 - Considering a roundabout or traffic signal.
 - Many constraints exist here – the Shell station, wetlands, rare plant habitat, and on south end there are two residences. In discussions with federal highway, they requested looking at moving the roundabout to avoid impacting the residences, but keeping in mind the other constraints.
 - Bioretention pond 1 – graphic demonstrates that stormwater facilities are being included where ever possible.
 - Q: Matt: How do cyclists and pedestrians navigate roundabouts?
 - A: Dave: there are a couple ways. For cyclists, the bike path would move up and around the roadway. For pedestrians, crossings are included at each of the entrances near the yield line.
- Roadway Cross Section (Terry St.– Green Hill Rd.)
 - This is a new urban cross section – Includes multi-use path (MUP) on the north side, sidewalk on south side; four traffic lanes including left-turn lane or raised median; curbs and landscape strips frame the roadway.
- Central Road Intersection
 - Considering a roundabout or traffic signal.
 - Central Road intersects the access to Perkins Peninsula Park. The park is a Section 4(f)

resource and includes sensitive cultural resources. From a safety perspective, the roundabout performs better, but requires more space to construct and would result in more impacts to natural and recreational resources.

- Roadway Section Along Reservoir
 - The cross section was updated from the last committee meeting. Embankment slopes on both sides of the road have been steepened to reduce the roadway footprint. The dashed line shows the existing embankment to visualize how much roadway will be widened into the reservoir.
 - There will be some encroachment into the railroad right-of-way requiring easements. The engineering team is working to balance impacts to the reservoir and the Coos Bay Rail Line.
 - Along the reservoir it is too constrained to provide stormwater facilities. The team is looking at opportunities beyond the immediate project area for treating this stormwater runoff. Overall, they've identified areas several possible areas which more than compensate for area needed.
 - Q: Frannie: Is a floatable section of roadway in the reservoir sections possible?
 - A: Bob: have not looked at that. Would be significantly more expensive.
 - Frannie: A floating section was brought up in the corridor plan. Could use it where the Multi-use Path (MUP) runs along reservoir instead of expanding roadway with fill. (Note – building the roadway along the reservoir on piers rather than embankment was evaluated in the Corridor Plan as a design option of the Four-Lane Alternative and found to increase the cost of the project by 50%.)
- Roadway Section at Shady Rest
 - This section was updated from the last committee meeting by shifting the roadway centerline slightly south.
 - A low retaining wall on the north is being considered to minimize property impacts. This reduces ROW needs.
 - Dotted line depicts a berm on the south side that will need to be partially or completely removed for highway widening (no impact to railroad functions).
- Ellmaker Road
 - Considering a roundabout or turn lanes with median acceleration lane for traffic southbound to eastbound.
 - This intersection (like Fisher Road) did not meet requirements for a traffic signal.
 - A roundabout here would impact the DariMart parking lot and one residence.
 - Roundabouts are offset from the existing highway, to minimize disruption to traffic during construction.
 - Includes another bioretention pond for stormwater treatment.
 - This area also has sensitive environmental resources.
 - Q: Commissioner Bozievich: Is the concept at Fisher Rd. also for an offset roundabout?
 - A: Yes
 - Commissioner Bozievich: Remember that the urban reserves plan will probably include a lot of land north of Fisher Road and Royal Ave. This intersection will be the most impacted if those areas get developed. If you are just under requirements for a signal at Fisher, make sure to consider a potential population increase.
 - Dave: At this early stage of planning, the team is trying to keep multiple options

- open for consideration. A decision regarding the type of intersection improvements will be made at a future point in time, when funding is secured. Re-evaluations of traffic needs will need to happen then.
- Q: Councilor Groves: What are the impacts of roundabouts on the trucking industry?
 - A: Dave: Acceptance by the trucking industry has improved. A few years ago, the trucking industry and ODOT completed test runs with their biggest trucks through new roundabout designs that were temporarily set up in large parking lots, resulting in three roundabouts built (Hwy 47 and Hwy 20) with industry approval.
 - Q: Councilor Groves: So there are designs that facilitate ease of travel for large vehicles, including RVs?
 - A: Yes
 - Ellen asks Councilor Groves about the fire and emergency response perspective.
 - Councilor Groves: Fire and emergency responders have gotten used to navigating them. We still see some drivers who are uncomfortable using a roundabout and they get in and don't know how to get out. He has heard differing opinions about overall support for roundabouts, since being elected. Given that Fisher Rd. is slated to be a more populous area, likes the idea of a mix of roundabouts and controlled intersections.
 - Rob: Really appreciates the team looking into roundabouts. It could make a big difference for safety. Nationally, there are so many crashes on four lane highways. Benefit of a roundabout instead of a stop sign – particularly for side street traffic – seems huge.
 - Councilor Groves: Agrees with Rob. From a safety standpoint, he supports barriers between traffic. While most accidents have been rear-ends, head-on collisions are worse for fatalities. Anything to increase safety between travel lanes is critical.
 - Bob: The road section along reservoir is shown with a concrete barrier to minimize widening. Cable barriers would require the roadway to be wider to allow for the cable to stretch when it is hit.
 - Roadway Section (Ellmaker Rd. – Huston Rd.)
 - This hasn't changed since the last meeting. Includes some small retaining walls between the road and northern businesses and some railroad encroachment along south side.
 - Huston Road Intersection
 - Similar to other intersections shown, both a roundabout and traffic signal are being considered here. A roundabout requires more space and impact on commercial properties (north side, west of Huston).
 - Q: Matt: The railroad crossing is a unique feature – are you adding extra protections there?
 - A: Yes. Central has a similar issue. Preliminary industry research within ODOT shows there are several ways to manage this. The team has not yet considered details.
 - Dave: The double lanes make it easier. Turning lanes can store cars while through lanes allow continuing east-west traffic to move through the intersection.

Environmental Documentation Update – Simmons

Dave updated the group on the status of several environmental studies. One is complete (Hazardous Materials), four are drafted (Air Quality, Historic Resources, Noise, and Water Quality/Hydrology), and four are currently underway (Archaeological, Biological Resources, Land Use, and Wetlands). Community/Environmental Justice and Parks & Recreation will follow later in the process.

- The first studies prioritized are meant to help aid the engineering team in their design by understanding where to minimize/avoid impacts. The environmental work will continue after the engineering phase.
- Commissioner Bozievich: For the archaeological study, can you check in with Lane County Parks and the Army Corps about the possibility to have them pay to extend the study boundary further into Perkins Peninsula Park? The Babe Ruth folks want to build more fields there, but there are possible concerns with the archaeological studies. Might find synergy to collaborate.

Air Quality and Noise

- Air quality follows a narrow review of certain pollutants. None need to be addressed with the project. Greenhouse gas analysis is not required by federal highway.
- Noise draft report is prepared. A number of noise monitors were placed near homes, businesses, and other users to verify the sound levels. Sound would increase at 23 places along corridor, but not dramatically. No significant noise impacts were found (10 dB or higher). Team considered building noise walls at two locations. Benefits were not significant enough to meet ODOT cost/benefit threshold.

Archaeological & Historic

- Archaeological: A number of sites are being investigated. Initial pedestrian survey and some shovel tests in High Probability Areas have been completed. Up to 300 additional shovel tests are planned. Phase II investigations (if a cluster of artifacts is found) doesn't need to be done in this NEPA phase but would need to be done before construction.
- Historic draft report is completed. Some resources found along the highway. These are included in roll map in proof of concept. Five or six have to go through Determinations of Eligibility process.

West Eugene Wetlands

- Map 3 from West Eugene Wetlands Plan adopted in 2004 includes the east end of the project corridor.
- This project impacts several wetlands designated "Protect" in the plan.
- A Type IV Land Use action is needed to move forward to put a transportation facility on a designated protected wetland. The city and county would jointly need to endorse that ordinance change.
- This process could take between 6-18 months, including preparing content and facilitating the political change. Consider this a call to action for city and county project partners. This will need to happen prior to construction, and could happen well before any funding for the project.
- Commissioner Bozievich: ODF&W purchased a significant amount of property in the Cantrell area to redevelop to wetlands. He suggested they set some aside as credits for this project.

The project team should ask them if they actually did.

- Q: Rob: Is the purple line the former West Eugene Parkway?
- A: Dave: Yes. (Note: Map 3 in the West Eugene Wetlands Plan includes a purple shaded corridor parallel to the existing railroad that is defined as a “Planned Transportation Corridor” in the map legend.)
- Frannie: The ordinance was passed in 2004, so this plan predated the demise of the West Eugene Parkway. Sounds like something that needs to be updated, since the West Eugene Parkway died. Could the purple section become Protect and allow designation to change just next to 126? This sounds like something we need to work out at the time of a funding request – sometimes there are Build grants available for planning and design.
- Dave: This is one of those loose ends we’ve seen kill other projects, if elected bodies don’t have enough support to pass an ordinance change from a land use perspective. Keep this in mind from a risk standpoint.
- Matt: The purple line looks like the railroad corridor.
 - Commissioner Bozievich: The old West Eugene Parkway ran parallel to the railroad.

Recreational Access Changes

- The informal kayak/canoe access came up repeatedly in the open house and the constituent meetings. This will be displaced by the widened highway. There are safety concerns with this informal pulloff. Since it’s an informal resource, there’s no requirement that ODOT mitigate for its removal. Still, since it’s a community resource, ODOT would like feedback from this group about alternatives that could be developed in partnerships.
 - Q: Rob: There’s a kayak/canoe put-in on Cantrell road. Could it be enhanced as part of an overall effort?
 - Dave: Yes – Cantrell is an alternative existing facility, about one mile upstream. Someone on this committee previously mentioned that what looks like a fairly nice put-in on Google street view isn’t actually maintained and may have some damage.
- Commissioner Bozievich: Not sure if it’s ODF&W or County ownership. He’s launched kayaks and canoes there multiple times. Prefers this location because it’s easier to launch from and more pleasant area to kayak than along OR126. Another place to enhance might be Perkins Peninsula’s launch - people have asked for kayak storage lockers there. Issue at Cantrell is the concern about your car being broken into. Parking isn’t great (parallel parking on gravel) so enhancing the parking lot might be a good option.
 - Dave: Maybe there are state and/or county grants to initiate a project in parallel with the corridor improvements.
- Q: Matt: Another option - perhaps extend the canal back to Fisher Butte parking lot and have that be the launch point?
 - A: Dave: The team looked at that, but the parking lot is 1200 feet from the water. Portage is a problem unless there is an extension of a canal that would hold water throughout the year.
- Frannie: Really good wayfinding signs along highway to direct people to nice kayak/canoe launch sites would be useful.
 - Ellen: Upcoming constituent meetings include a bicycle, pedestrians, and boater group. These access issues will be discussed in that meeting. The public involvement survey named this as an important issue for drivers not wanting to hit boaters, but also people wanting to expand access for recreational reasons.

Draft Implementation Plan – Simmons

Dave discussed a preliminary plan for how the project could be implemented in phases or segments. Traffic volumes and accident rates are higher on the east end, so starting with improvements there will ensure the highest benefit for initial phases. There may also be a need for earlier project phases that address non-roadway project needs.

- The preliminary plan is broken up into five components/segments. This proposal begins where the existing 4-lane roadway currently ends at Terry St.
- This is not to say that if Veneta got funding that segment 5 (Huston) couldn't be broken out and completed independently.
- Slide shows initial rough cost ranges. These are preliminary estimates to help inform what it would take to begin a segment. Funding usually comes in various forms and never quite in the right amount, so things can be adjusted.
- Segments are broken up by major intersections. The longest segment (along reservoir) is most expensive and will likely need to be permitted together. Could be built in a couple subphases.
- Q: Frannie: She appreciates how this is broken up. It would be nice to also know the exact benefit, i.e. safety, congestion, etc. to the system for doing one or more segment (if team goes for a \$50 million grant, for example). Also, there's a lot of interest in the MUP, especially given equity and climate change conversations. There might be a call for doing that as an earlier phase, but that's also a linear project that would require modernization/enhancement of the entire section. Have you thought about how to address a MUP given these phases?
 - Dave: That could be done. It might require looking at accident data by segment. Constructing the path would create quite a bit of impact that needs consideration. Because a number of impacts that are spread out throughout the corridor, there may need to be additional phases preceding construction that include more environmental considerations like mitigating wetlands, habitat, archaeological, offsite stormwater, etc. Based on feedback like this, phases might get repackaged in the final plan.
- Q: Matt: Segment 5 currently includes the most intense commercial activity. Concerned that if project moves east to west, businesses will start to feel like they are in decay. Also risks opportunistic actions in which people take action on that land, anticipating ROW buy-outs in several years. Could section 5 happen earlier (or bundle 5 with s1) to prevent speculative activity?
 - A: Dave: Yes – the timing for Segment 5 could be re-prioritized.. To clarify, the cost ranges noted include ROW, but the ROW costs will change. A ROW firm will be developing a property-by-property acquisition budget. Those numbers will be included in the final Proof of Concept estimate.
- Commissioner Bozievich: Could accelerate the bike-ped connection to Veneta with a railroad underpass to connect the bike path with Ken Neilsen Rd. (and maybe pave the section at Cantrell Rd.). That would connect the West Eugene bike path system from Terry St. all the way to Central Rd. Recreational cyclists would use that system quite a bit.
 - Dave: That's a good point.

- Q: Frannie: There is a draft plan to accommodate bikes on Cantrell Rd. – could incorporate some of that work on bike-ped connections into this. Regarding ROWs, if we get federal highway’s approval of this NEPA stage, could we proceed with ROW?
 - A: Dave: That’s right. The hope for this phase is to take the project to the next step. This will allow it to compete for federal funding – this could potentially include funding for ROW.
- Ellen checks in with Peggy, Jeremy, and Naomi.
 - Peggy: Doesn’t have anything but would like the slides to be available.
 - Proof of Concept designs were sent to Sasha last week.
 - Jeremy: LTD’s only concerns are being able to operate fully in the roundabout and have places to completely pull out of the travel lane.
 - Dave: The drawing shows bus pullouts in each section.
 - Naomi would love to see the slide deck.
 - Ellen will share slides with the group.

Project Schedule – Goodrich

Bob revisited the project timeline, showing the current draft Proof of Concept stage in spring 2021 followed by another open house and round of constituent meetings in April/May. A final draft Proof of Concept is expected by June. This committee will meet again later in the summer, and the NEPA process will last through next spring. The team is hoping for a documented categorical exclusion from FHWA.

Next Steps – Teninty

A second round of constituent meetings will be held on April 14th and 15th. This includes three groups: Highway Users (freight, emergency vehicles, businesses, truckers, commuters), Bike/Pedestrian/Boaters, and Ecologists (teachers, birders, hunters, fishers). Final open house will hopefully be opening on April 26th for two weeks. Final report on outreach will be available by June.

- If anyone on this committee knows a constituent that uses the area in those ways, let Ellen know and she can include them in the April invitations.

Staff provided final comments:

- Molly appreciates all the comments and suggestions This group’s deep consideration is really important to move onto phases 3 and 4 and secure funds.
- Frannie really appreciates the input of this team and the staff.
- Bob thanks everyone for participating.
- Frannie adds: She gave a presentation at Lane ACT that went very well. Hopes to go to MPC in May - they will hear a similar version to what this committee just heard. That will be helpful to get everyone aligned with what we’re doing here.

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING #3

March 18, 2020



WELCOME

In this virtual setting, we will do a roll call to start the meeting.



SC MEETING #3 AGENDA

- 10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Agenda Review
- 10:15 – 10:40 Engineering Update
- 10:40 – 11:00 Environmental Documentation Update
- 11:00 – 11:15 Draft Implementation Plan
- 11:15 – 11:20 Project Schedule
- 11:20 – 11:25 Next Steps



ENGINEERING UPDATE

FUTURE (2044) INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

- Five intersections require additional improvements to meet ODOT mobility targets with the widening of OR126 to four lanes.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended for the Green Hill Road, Central Road and Huston Road intersections.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements on OR126 are recommended for the Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road intersections.



OR126 CORRIDOR CRASH DATA

- 1998-2002: 13 crashes per year.
- 2005-2009: 25 crashes per year.
- 2014-2018: 37 crashes per year.



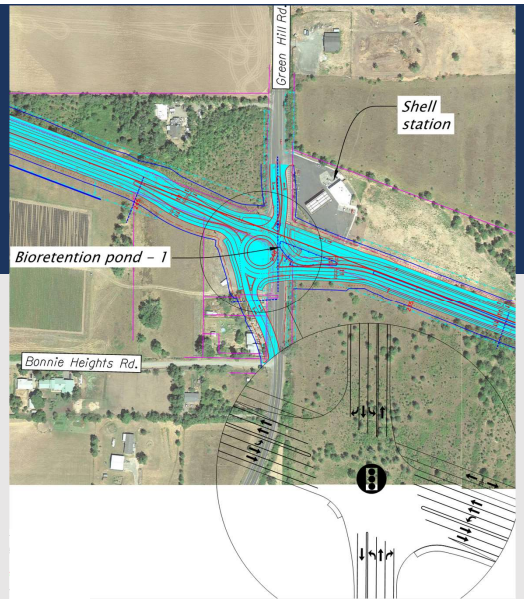
INTERSECTION SAFETY PERFORMANCE

- Roundabouts reduce fatal and injury accidents by 82% compared to rural stop-controlled intersections.
- Converting a rural stop-controlled intersection to a signalized intersection can reduce angle crashes by 77%, but can also increase rear-end crashes by 58%.
- Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 48%.

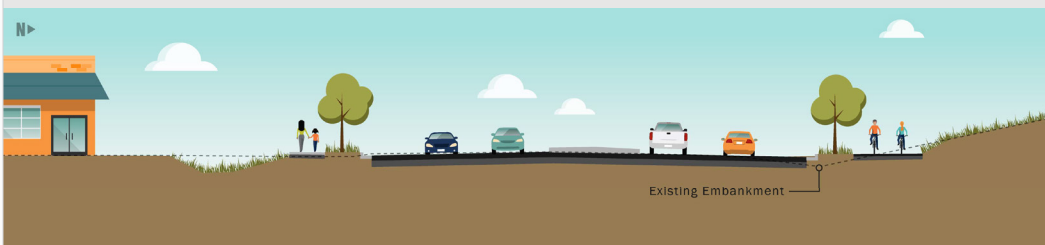


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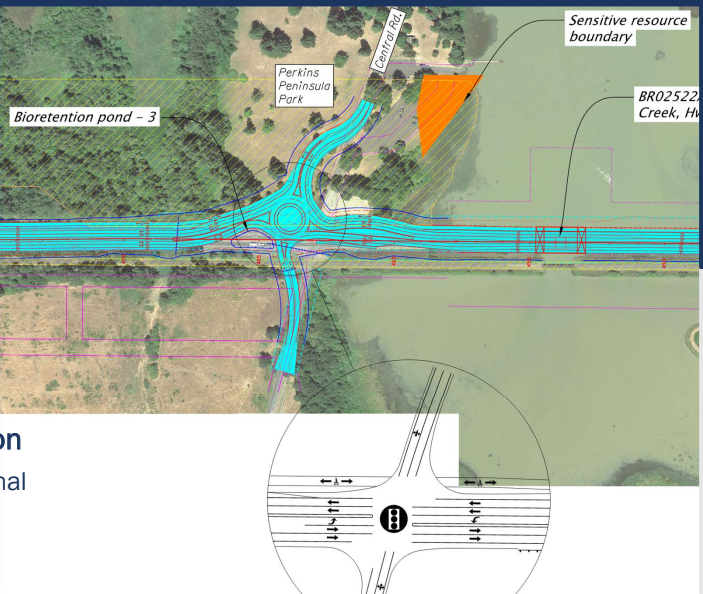
Green Hill Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal



ROADWAY SECTION (TERRY – GREEN HILL)

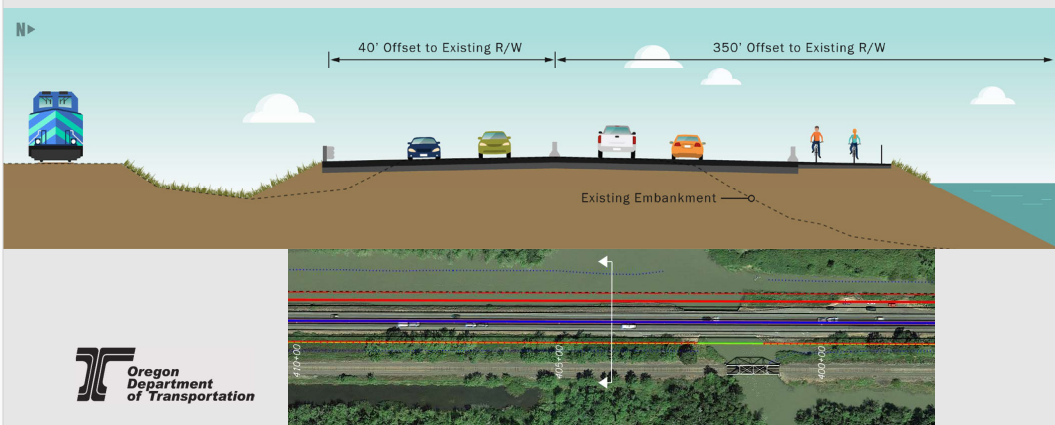


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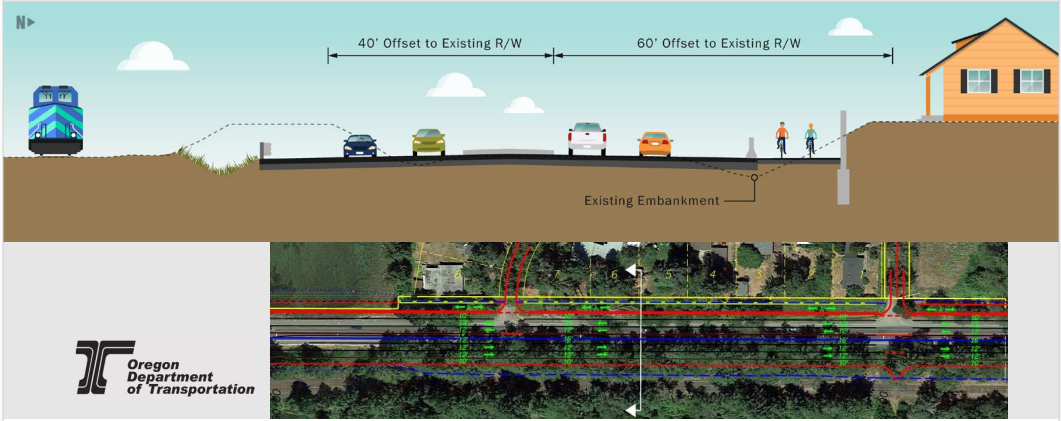


Central Road Intersection
- Roundabout or Traffic Signal

ROADWAY SECTION ALONG RESERVOIR



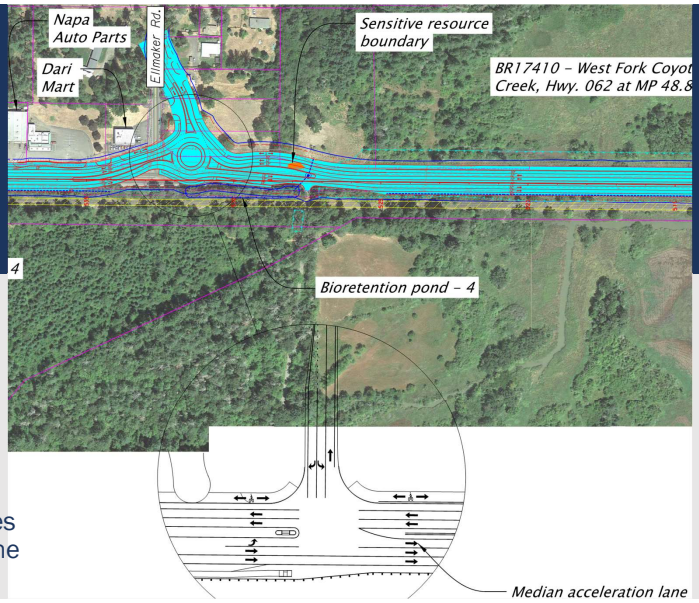
ROADWAY SECTION AT SHADY REST



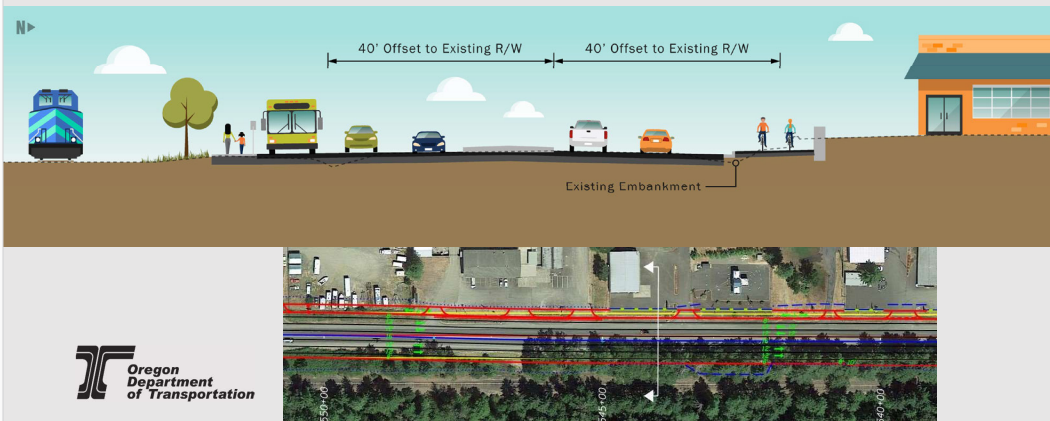
DRAFT PROOF OF CONCEPT

Ellmaker Road

- Roundabout or Turn Lanes
w/Median Acceleration Lane

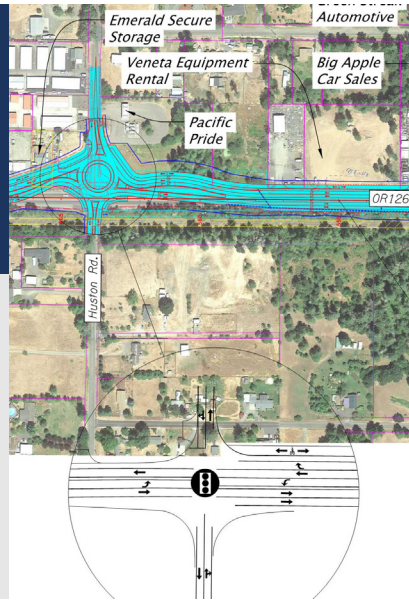


ROADWAY SECTION (ELLMAKER – HUSTON)



DRAFT PROOF OF CONCEPT

Huston Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal





ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION UPDATE

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline Areas

- Air Quality (Drafted).
- Archaeological (Underway).
- Biological Resources (Underway).
- Community/Envir. Justice.
- Hazardous Materials (Completed).
- Historic Resources. (Drafted)
- Land Use (Underway).
- Noise (Drafted).
- Parks & Recreation.
- Water Quality/Hydrology (Drafted).
- Wetlands (Underway).



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft memorandum prepared. Project impacts fall below thresholds triggering action/mitigation.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft report prepared. The project impacts 23 receptors with sound level increases from 1 to 7 dB. Walls were evaluated at two locations and found to not meet benefit/cost thresholds and are therefore not recommended



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Archaeological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian survey completed. Some shovel tests have been performed within High Probability Areas. Additional shovel testing is planned. One site so far has been recommended for Phase II testing/investigations. No Phase II work will need to be completed as part of NEPA process, but rather prior to construction.
Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline survey completed and the report has been drafted. One historic resource has recently been determined eligible and Determinations of Eligibility forms for four more resources will be prepared.

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN 17

Map 3 Wetlands Designations Map

Wetland Designation

- **Protect** Wetlands to be Protected (areas generally unsuitable for disposal of dredged or fill material).
- **Restore** Wetlands to be enhanced for Mitigation Credit.
- **Develop** Wetlands to be Developed (possible future disposal sites for dredged or fill material).
- **Planned Transportation Corridor**
- **Utility Corridor**

— OR 126 Project Area

Source: West Eugene Wetlands Plan, May 2004



RECREATIONAL ACCESS CHANGES

Informal kayak/canoe access will be displaced by the widened road.



RECREATIONAL ACCESS CHANGES



Alternative kayak/canoe access available on Cantrell Road.



DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

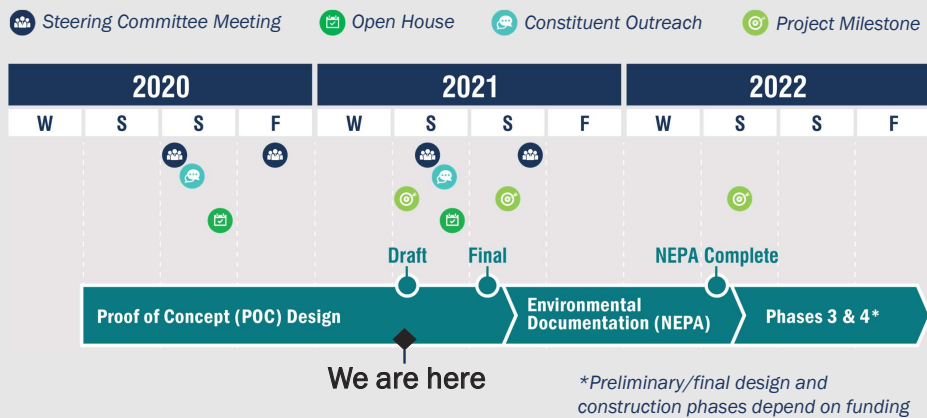


Preliminary

Color Legend	Priority	Phase Name	Phase Description	Length (miles)	Cost (\$M)
	1	Green Hill	Constructs project within Eugene from Terry Street to and including the Green Hill Road intersection.	1.1	\$19.5 to \$27.3
	2	CBR Overcrossing	Constructs project from Green Hill Road to approximately 0.3 miles west of Coos Bay Rail Line overcrossing.	1.0	\$21.6 to \$30.2
	3	Fisher Road	Constructs project from overcrossing to approximately 500 feet west of Fisher Butte Parking Lot.	1.5	\$17.2 to \$24.1
	4	Fern Ridge Reservoir	Constructs project from Fisher Butte Parking Lot to and including the Ellmaker Road intersection.	3.0	\$101.9 to \$142.8
	5	Huston Road	Constructs project from Ellmaker Road to and including the Huston Road intersection.	0.5	\$9.8 to \$13.7
Total Cost:					\$170.0 to \$238.1

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT SCHEDULE



NEXT STEPS

Spring/Summer 2021

- Second round of constituent meetings - April.
- Online Open House #2 – late April/early May.
- Final Proof of Concept – June.
- Steering Committee Meeting #4 – June.



THANK YOU!

MEETING SUMMARY

OR126: Veneta to Eugene

Steering Committee Meeting #4

MEETING	Thursday, October 28, 2021 2:00-3:30 pm
LOCATION	Online
ATTENDANCE	<p>Members present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner▪ Frannie Brindle, ODOT Area 5 Manager▪ Kelly Clarke, LCOG Senior Transportation Planner▪ Randy Groves, City of Eugene Councilor▪ Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene Transportation Planning Manager▪ Rich Lopez, Coos Bay Rail Line General Manager▪ Matt Michel, City of Veneta City Administrator▪ Mike Miller, City of Florence Public Works Director▪ Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager▪ Sasha Vartanian, Lane County Transportation Planning Supervisor <p>Absent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tom Schwetz, Lane Transit District Planning and Development Director <p>Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Molly Cary, ODOT Project Manager▪ Dave Simmons, DOWL NEPA Coordinator▪ Ellen Teninty, Cogito Public Involvement Lead▪ Chris Watchie, Cogito Public Involvement Support

Welcome and Introductions – Teninty and Simmons

Ellen Teninty welcomed the Steering Committee (SC) members and conducted a roll call for introductions. She requested SC members voice questions and use the virtual chat function only to add resources for the group.

Dave Simmons next reviewed the agenda and purpose of the last Steering Committee’s meeting to brief agency partners on public outreach results, progress on technical work and to review/discuss coordination aspects.

Public Involvement Update– Simmons and Teninty

Dave Simmons provided an overview of the April 2021 second round of constituent consultations to review the study’s progress. The first round occurred in August 2020 to confirm the direction established by the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan. Groups included:

- Highway Users: commuters, businesses, freight, emergency services vehicles
- Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and Boaters
- Environmental, Hunting, Fishing

The purpose of this second round of consultation with project-area stakeholders representing a wide cross-section of users was to:

- Discuss the engineering and environmental studies
- Learn from a wide range of user experiences
- Listen and respond in real time to concerns and document them
- Gather wetland mitigation strategy suggestions
- Explain schedule of the current NEPA effort and future project phases
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations
- Cascade information out to their communities about project and the pending online Open House #2
- Dave reviewed the key input from participants:
 - Continued support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path
 - Mixed support and some apprehension with roundabouts
 - Concern with project impacts to fish, wildlife, and plants

Ellen noted the consultations' intent was also to confirm if the corridor problems were well understood and defined and if the proposed solutions rationally addressed them. Groups were intended to be not large in size but comprised of diverse users who have used the corridor over time, and to hear a variety of perspectives. She reminded the Steering Committee they had received the summaries and seen the quality of the input from community consultation participants.

- Dave next reviewed the summary of input from the April-May 2021 online open house:
 - Continued support for the 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path (with four out of the 68 comments received opposed to road widening due to concerns over natural resource and climate impacts)
 - Two-thirds of comments indicated a preference for traffic signals over roundabouts

Ellen provided a brief summary of the public outreach. She noted the challenges of reaching stakeholders amid a pandemic and severe wildfire smoke prior to the project open houses. Establishing key community partnerships fostered creative methods to notify corridor users input opportunities including:

- E- updates to the interested parties list compiled through outreach and existing ODOT lists
- Corridor area postcard mailings
- A-frame signs at key intersections
- A-frames with QR codes to scan in front of stores
- Electronic reader boards (e.g., Veneta fire station, Fern Ridge School District)
- Fern Ridge School District's auto-call to over 1,500 households to further reach Title VI and Environmental Justice communities

She noted having "boots on the ground" and getting the word out about the online open houses and survey through leveraging the local community contacts proved very successful. In particular, she recognized some key community agencies/organizations and their critical role in reaching the broader community:

- Mid Lane Cares, The Love Project

- Meals on Wheels, Lane Council of Governments, Senior and Disabled Services
- Food for Lane County
- Saint Vincent de Paul
- Homes for Good
- Fern Ridge School District

In addition, project staff responded personally to over 70 comments via email or by phone reflecting a sincere and high level of respect for the public's time and input.

Regarding roundabouts, Dave reviewed the following key points:

- A decision on the intersection treatments (roundabouts, signals, etc.) will not be made until funding is secured for the project.
- Roundabout intersections take up more space and are therefore being used for the environmental evaluations to reflect the greatest potential level of impact.
- Apprehension of roundabouts is not uncommon in communities unfamiliar with them.

A graphic illustrating how roundabouts function with a leg crossing railroad tracks was presented. This was prepared by the project team and sent to the City of Veneta staff to support discussions within their community. Similar to other intersection types, cars would be directed to stop prior to entering the intersection when waiting for the train to pass.

Discussion:

- Councilor Groves: I appreciate the opinions shared. How do we slow down traffic as they enter Eugene where the speed transition occurs? Without heeding the speed change, traffic stopped in a congested area can have bad outcomes. Need to look for ways to enhance safety elements. If we don't go with a roundabout, how do we slow down traffic in the safest way?
 - Dave responded that it's not uncommon to have a sense of apprehension about roundabouts. Even though they are not new in the U.S., this reaction is very consistent with other communities. There are many examples of once communities become familiar with them, they see and experience the benefits.
- Rich Lopez noted when Coos Bay Rail Line met with ODOT project staff they talked about rail and roundabout configuration. The concern was people speeding up and trying beat the train across the tracks. The Port of Coos Bay has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NorthPoint Development to build a shipping container facility that will increase the volume of train traffic with faster and longer freight trains. Will there be center medians and extended warning lights with rail gates activated?
 - Dave responded that he anticipates treatment will include active signage to advise cars of signal activation in advance and raised "splitter islands" (medians) that prevent cars from driving around the crossing gates. Under this scenario, there will be better control than there is today at the railroad crossing.
- Dave also noted that faster trains will mean they will be passing through the railroad crossings faster.
- Rich replied that wasn't necessarily true since the trains will be longer (up to 200 cars and 1-2 miles long).
- Frannie and Rob Inerfeld requested Rich's contact info to know more about the MOU with Northpoint Development.

- Rob mentioned that the City of Eugene as part of their downtown “quiet zone” planning will build similar gates that cars cannot go around.
- Dave shared that the project team, ODOT, Coos Bay Rail and the City of Veneta completed a diagnostic review of the railroad crossings to outline the necessary improvements, expectations, easements, and features. A draft MOU between ODOT and Coos Bay Rail is in process.
- Councilor Groves asked about when is the start of long trains along the corridor.
- Rich answered at the end of 2023/2024 but other projects could affect rail traffic within 18-24 months.
- Councilor Groves noted his concern with trains and people trying to reach the airport using Green Hill Road.

Engineering Update– Simmons

Dave reviewed the final Proof of Concept (POC) with refinements for the corridor geographic sections:

GREEN HILL ROAD SECTION

- Changes to POC:
 - The roundabout designs throughout the project now include updated bicycle and pedestrian design elements, including warning signs for pedestrians and rectangular rapid flashing beacons.
 - Shifted the roundabout to the east to reduce impact to a Green Hill Road residence south of OR 126.

COYOTE CREEK SECTION

- The unofficial public recreational water access on OR 126 next to the Coyote Creek Bridge will be removed.
- Changes to POC:
 - Addition of a retaining wall east of the Coyote Creek Bridge to maintain the channel alongside the road because of user input and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) discussions.

CENTRAL ROAD INTERSECTION

- Project staff met with USACE and Lane County to discuss access into Perkins Peninsula Park.
- Changes to POC:
 - Refinements to park entrance with a revised gate location and connections to boat launch area and gravel parking lot. Revised gate location allows the USACE/County to close the park to vehicles during the winter and maintain access to a gravel lot outside the gate where users can park and enter on foot.
- Highlighted the presence of resource areas with sensitive cultural resources.

ELLMAKER ROAD

- The intersection did not meet traffic signal requirements.
- Recommendation is for a roundabout or turn lane improvements which include providing turn lanes on the side road and a median acceleration lane for vehicles entering onto OR 126.
- The roundabout concept would impact Dari Mart and one residence on the eastside of Ellmaker.

- Changes to POC:
 - Minor refinements and modifications to sidewalk areas to provide complete connections through the intersection.

Ellen noted during outreach she received concerned comments about property impacts from property owners near intersections.

HUSTON ROAD


- The roundabout concept would require more space and impact commercial properties on the north side of the roadway, particularly on the west side of Huston Road.
- Changes to POC:
 - Minor refinements and modifications to sidewalk areas to provide complete connections through the intersection.

Environmental Documentation Update: Simmons

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline Areas

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality (Completed). Archaeological (Underway). Biological Resources (Underway). Community/Envir. Justice. Hazardous Materials (Completed). Historic Resources. (Drafted) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Use (Underway). Noise (Underway - Revising). Parks & Recreation. Water Quality/Hydrology (Drafted). Wetlands (Underway).
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Dave reviewed the status of the project's environmental studies and provided updates on five discipline areas:

Air Quality: Completed. Project impacts fall below thresholds triggering action/mitigation.

Noise: Report being revised to address roundabout intersections. No material change expected. With earlier draft, walls were evaluated at two locations and found to not meet benefit/cost thresholds and are therefore not recommended.

Archeological: (Additional work planned) Some delay in getting rights of entry permissions. Pedestrian survey completed. Some shovel tests have been performed within High Probability Areas. Additional shovel testing is planned. One site so far has been recommended for Phase II testing/investigations. No Phase II work will need to be completed as part of NEPA process, but rather prior to construction. The corridor's POC establishes the overall footprint to direct further studies.

Historic: (Incremental progress) Four sites identified. Determination of Eligibility (DOE) process completed. Finding of effects process underway. Baseline survey and report completed. DOE forms for two sites have been prepared and reviewed by SHPO. Finding of Effect forms are now being prepared for these two sites.

Land Use: West Eugene Wetlands

Dave reviewed the West Eugene Wetlands map and highlighted key issues:

- Within the project limits there are three wetlands designated as “Protect” in the West Eugene Wetlands Plan (WEWP). The WEWP is a refinement to the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area General Plan (Metro Plan).
- Policy 3.22 of the WEWP limits how much can be affected or converted (up to one-acre) to a planned transportation corridor without amending the WEWP. The final OR 126 POC impacts exceed one-acre.
- Revisions to the WEWP are a Type IV land use action and require joint action by the City of Eugene and Lane County.
- Commissioner Bozievich indicated that there are additional revisions that need to be made to the Metro Plan to address other changes within Lane County that have occurred since the WEWP adoption in 2004.
- No revisions to the WEWP have occurred since adoption.
- The project team had two coordination meetings with ODOT, City of Eugene, and Lane County to discuss process, roles, and timing.

Dave highlighted the two options for lead applicant for the Type IV Land Use Action, associated potential benefits, and potential drawbacks:

Lead Applicant: City of Eugene and Lane County

Description: City and County self-initiate a process to revise the WEWP to align it with their respective Transportation System Plans (TSPs). Both TSPs include projects to modify OR 126. A revised WEWP could include this project and other revisions needed to update the plan for other changes within the plan boundary.

Potential Benefits:

- Demonstrates local agency support
- Allows local agencies to make other needed changes to the plan
- Separates the OR 126 project planning efforts from the local agency’s need to align their planning documents
- Reduces ODOT’s cost and staff time
- Builds on current public support for OR126 changes.

Potential Drawbacks:

- Timeline unknown
- Larger scope could increase the time required and/or the risk the process could stall

Lead Applicant: ODOT

Description: ODOT submitting applications to the City and County to request changes to the WEWP for the OR 126 project.

Potential Benefits:

- Clear and defined city and county procedures and timeline to process the application (minimum six months from time application is deemed complete).

Potential Drawbacks:

- ODOT responsible for cost and staff time to prepare and support applications through the process.
- Application focused on OR 126 project may draw additional attention.
- Not an opportunity for city to update the WEWP to include other desired projects within the plan area.

Dave continued the discussion of application timing highlighting the potential benefits and drawbacks of two scenarios:

Near-term: 3-6 months*Potential Benefits:*

- Maintains momentum while project constituents are engaged and informed.
- Demonstrates ongoing and incremental progress to the public, state and federal officials.
- Makes use of recent environmental studies.

Potential Drawbacks:

- Potential for controversy during land use process could jeopardize NEPA certification.
- May trigger adjustments to project scope, design and environmental documentation, leading to delay and need for additional resources.

Delay (until NEPA certification and/or funding secured)*Potential Benefits:*

- Separates NEPA process from local land use approvals.
- Delays potential for controversy to a later date when ODOT and or the local agencies are prepared to take the risk and expend the effort.

Potential Drawbacks:

- Loss of momentum could reduce advocate pool engaged and ready to testify in support.
- Potential for controversy remains and could delay project implementation if land use process is delayed until funding is secured.
- Delay may not serve any benefit, increasing delay with the result being a similar outcome.

Discussion

- Dave asked Frannie to make a statement from the internal ODOT perspective about these applicant options.
- Frannie shared she's had discussions with ODOT leadership including Sonny Chickering, Region 2 Manager, Erik Havig, PE ODOT Planning Section Manager, and Naomi Zwerdling, ODOT Region 2 Planning Manager. Key discussion points:
 - There are many needs in this area due to development, housing, utilities (natural gas), and others.
 - We extended the project boundaries to Green Hill Road because there was a project in Eugene's TSP and included in urban growth boundary.
 - We want to separate revising the wetland plan from with this project.

- A City and County led revision to the WEWP provides the opportunity to incorporate other needed updates to reflect current needs for housing and utilities with updated buffer areas.
- Councilor Groves asked if Northwest Natural Gas runs out to Veneta.
- Matt Michel responded, no. People use propane. There's a need for it. A company moved out of Veneta to Springfield to have access to natural gas. Getting gas extended out to Veneta is important to economic development.
- Councilor Groves asked if there was broadband in Veneta. The OR 126 Project offers an opportunity to put a 4-inch fiber highway beyond Fern Ridge and serve the north side of Hwy 126 and provide Veneta solid connection, important for economic development.
- Sasha Vartanian said there needs to be more staff conversation about direction for what is being presented. If there is interest in getting it done as quickly as possible, there may need more conversation about the path forward.
- Matt responded that the project has been underway for 10 years. Veneta has been striving, cheering, taking ownership, and participating every step of the way for this to happen for many, many years. It is of high value.
- Commissioner Bozievich added that it has been on Veneta's mind for much longer than 10 years. He'd like to do this sooner rather than later. It is the wise direction to take. It will require funds to pay County staff to work on the Type IV application if they are the applicant. The County does not have staff to do Metro Plan amendments because planning work is paid for by applications. ODOT should be prepared to pay.
- Commissioner Bozievich added that the City of Eugene and Lane County do have needed Metro Plan amendments. For the City, it's urban reserves and for the County, the Goshen Sanitary exception. Those could be held up timeline wise. Caution trying to tie this project with other projects since there is no guarantee that those amendments are going to move quickly. Negotiate with City/County to make the amendment but there may some necessity to fund staff. The County is supportive of the OR 126 project.
- Frannie stated she appreciated hearing that. ODOT Region 2 planning will look at contributing funding for the process. ODOT has to determine what's happening with the wetlands and that should not hold up the NEPA process. There is still a lot of corridor work while this application process is getting worked out.
- Rob noted that he felt similar to what Commissioner Bozievich said. He would look to ODOT to hire a firm to do the application. The City of Eugene could help shepherd the process, similar to the Beltline project. For the city, their priority is Beltline. The city is not likely to put money towards the Metro Plan amendments. He said he's concerned about political process. It could be an interesting discussion.
- Dave shared that the WEWP amendment does not need to be complete to move forward. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) needs to see documented support from local agencies to move forward and take care of the WEWP amendment.
- The FHWA wants to back a project that is viable and eventually built. One of their key tenets is local support. They do not need an amendment in place until the point of construction. Need to ensure in the NEPA process that discussions have occurred with Veneta, Lane County, Eugene and have their support for the project.
- Rob asked if Veneta had any concerns about the bicycle/pedestrian treatments closest to Veneta.

- Matt responded that they provided comments about number of driveways and potential for condensing. A southern side bike lane could avoid accidents between Veneta and Perkins Peninsula, because of concern of lack of good line of sight for bikes and pedestrians at driveways.
- Rob noted that he gets emails from Safe Lane Coalition and there were some concerns.
- Matt responded that those were comments that the city provided to Safe Lane. Veneta wanted to raise the safety issue on that commercial strip. It presents some unique development for right of way (ROW) impacts and development. The area is outside of Veneta Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) but we want Veneta to be a desirable bicycle destination. It is not insurmountable but to keep note of at this point of the process. Matt further stated that the City had submitted comments to ODOT during the POC review period and their comments were addressed satisfactorily.

Draft Implementation Plan: Simmons

Dave reviewed the Implementation Plan (see PPT presentation) based on the following considerations.

He began with the question:

If built as envisioned and what are reasonable incremental phases?

The project team suggests:

- Traffic volumes and accident rates are higher on the east end, so starting at east end with improvements will ensure the highest benefit to cost with the initial phases.
- The existing four-lane section ends at Terry Street.
- There are other phasing scenarios that could be explored, depending on funding levels, type of funding and community priorities.

Dave next provided an overview of the initial project cost estimates:

- Cost estimates have increased and numbers provided remain preliminary.
- \$250-350 million for entire corridor. The higher cost raises questions. If looking out 20 years, what solutions address congestion and safety needs? Studying the maximum footprint is a conservative approach.
- As funding becomes available and outlook becomes clear, there's an opportunity to determine where incremental spot improvements can happen.
- Improvements can be prioritized within the NEPA-cleared and approved footprint.
- If limited funding is available, could address safety needs using an incremental approach, adding turn lanes and wider shoulders where appropriate. Intersection improvements focused on safety at key locations could also be a component.
- Changes to POC: Design details include construction staging and traffic control, additional retaining walls, etc. all have increased cost estimates. A more detailed ROW estimate was prepared.

Discussion

- Frannie provided an historic perspective. OR 126 was not built to today's design standards; there are limited shoulders, no turning lanes, no median and there are high speeds. If built today, it would have a median, wider shoulders, rumble strips, etc., and be a much safer facility than exists. There is lots of room for improvement. We could choose to widen a section of the

roadway but that would require ROW acquisition, fill, safety improvements on a two-lane road. Wouldn't we want to make it wider? All of those possibilities exist.

- Commissioner Bozievich noted if limited funds are available and can't move ahead with the whole design, installing roundabouts at locations with high rate of crashes (Fisher, Central, Ellmaker and Huston) for traffic calming. Let's do all intersections first and then do widening later.
- Rob said he supports this. It's a safety-first approach. Seems so unsafe for those who have to make a left turn on the road. Is there a way to phase, but not lose the bigger vision?
- Councilor Groves concurred and asked what could we move forward for safety infrastructure given the population and congestion increases. Maybe move forward with roundabouts before widening.
- We need to move forward to get NEPA clearance for the entire concept. What gets built and when will be within our NEPA footprint and plan.
- People who have expressed opposition to 4-lanes may have no objections to safety measures. It may help to get people used to the idea.

Project Schedule Review: Simmons

Dave reviewed the project schedule and noted the following:

- Biological Assessment underway.
- Technical reports need to be completed.
- Once completed, ODOT will be able to get sign off from Federal Highway for the project, which is the final step to utilize future federal funding.

Discussion

- Councilor Groves thanked ODOT for letting him be a part of this process before he formally took office. This is such an important project with the safety improvements. He shared he'd seen a lot of tragedy.
- Rob echoed and appreciated the composition of staff and elected officials. He encouraged elected officials go and support the project to regional bodies, such as the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (ACT).
- Frannie noted she has been in discussion with Rob Zako from BEST, a Lane ACT member representing environment/land use. The timing is good for this project with the pending federal infrastructure bill. The Oregon Transportation Commission will want to hear suggestions where to invest.
- She added that it would be good to put together another slide or two if we were to do an interim safety step. What would that look like? Is it a Lane ACT issue? We want it to be discussed in a lengthy way and provide another opportunity to hear from rural communities, users, emergency management services, all of whom want to see this project as a priority on the state's system
- Councilor Groves offered to speak in front of the Lane ACT in support of the project.
- Frannie requested recognition of Representative Paul Hovey who secured HB 2017 funding for this project phase. She may call on some of the Steering Committee members to share their support for it and appreciation of his efforts to make it happen.

- Molly Cary provided an overview of the process. When a community does a NEPA project, it's important to show the biggest footprint as a worst-case scenario, that is, the maximum impact of the project. Once you get through NEPA, you can refine the design and build incrementally. The full project may not happen due to funding, but key elements of it can.
- Molly asked for the Steering Committee members that support the project to raise their hands. All meeting participants indicated support for the project.
- Frannie and Molly ended the meeting with sincere thanks and appreciation for the Steering Committee's time.

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING #4

October 28, 2021



WELCOME

In this virtual setting, we will do a roll call to start the meeting.

Meeting purpose: to brief agency partners on public outreach results, progress on the technical work and to review/discuss coordination aspects.

This is our last scheduled meeting.



SC MEETING #4 AGENDA

2:00 – 2:15	Welcome and Agenda Review
2:15 – 2:30	Public Involvement Update
2:30 – 2:40	Engineering Update
2:40 – 3:10	Environmental Documentation Update
3:10 – 3:15	Draft Implementation Plan
3:15 – 3:20	Project Schedule Review
3:20 – 3:25	Next Steps



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT UPDATE

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS – ROUND 2

Three meetings held April 14-15, 2021 with invited participants

1. Highway Users: commuters, businesses, freight, emergency vehicles. *(14 participants)*
2. Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Boaters. *(14 participants)*
3. Environmental, Hunter and Fisher. *(7 participants)*



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS – ROUND 2

Meeting Goals

- Review the engineering and environmental studies.
- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Listen and respond to concerns and document them.
- Gather wetland mitigation strategy suggestions.
- Explain the schedule of the current NEPA effort, and future phases.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.
- Apprise participants of the open house in April/May.



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS – ROUND 2

Some Key Messages from Participants

- Continued support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- A mix of support and apprehension with roundabouts.
- Concern with project impacts to fish, wildlife and plants.



ONLINE OPEN HOUSE #2

Statistics:

- Opened April 26 through May 9, 2021
- Received 61 survey responses.
- Email, postcards and signs/reader boards garnered a similar number of participants.

OUTREACH DURING A PANDEMIC



- Website with live link to Open House.
- Email with link sent to 1,700 Interested Parties.
- Postcard mailed to 4,828 households.
- Postcard placed on store counters, in food pantry and Meals on Wheels boxes.
- Facebook/Newsletters Open House promo used by ten agencies and organizations.
- A-Frames placed at key intersections.
- A-Frames with QR code placed at local store entrances.
- Phone calls to 25 adjacent businesses.
- Phone announcement via Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noel reaching 3,000-5,000 people.
- Reader Boards with Open House information at two prominent locations.



Postcards delivered along seven postal routes to 4,828 households



Fern Ridge School District reader board



ONLINE OPEN HOUSE #2

Input Summary

- Continued support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path (four of 68 comments opposed road widening due to concerns over natural resource and climate impacts).
- Two-thirds of comments indicated a preference for traffic signals over roundabouts.



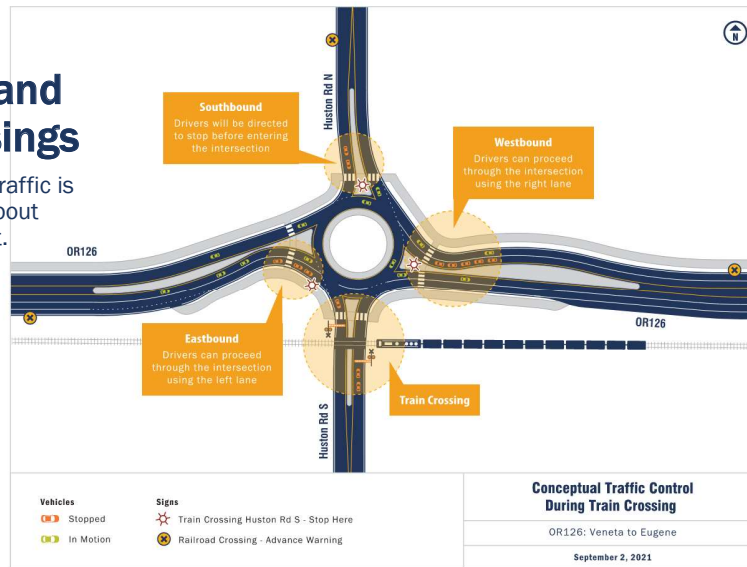
REGARDING ROUNDABOUTS

- A decision on the intersection treatment (roundabouts vs other alternatives) has not been made. Roundabout intersections take up more space and are therefore being used for the environmental evaluations. A decision on the intersection type will be made when funding is secured for the project.
- It is not uncommon for there to be apprehension with roundabouts in communities unfamiliar with them. Most come to appreciate them after they learn how to drive, walk and bike through them.



Roundabouts and Railroad Crossings

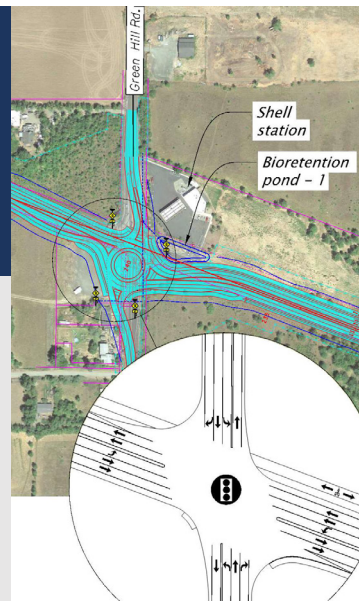
- Graphic explains how traffic is controlled at a roundabout when a train is present.



ENGINEERING UPDATE

FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Green Hill Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal



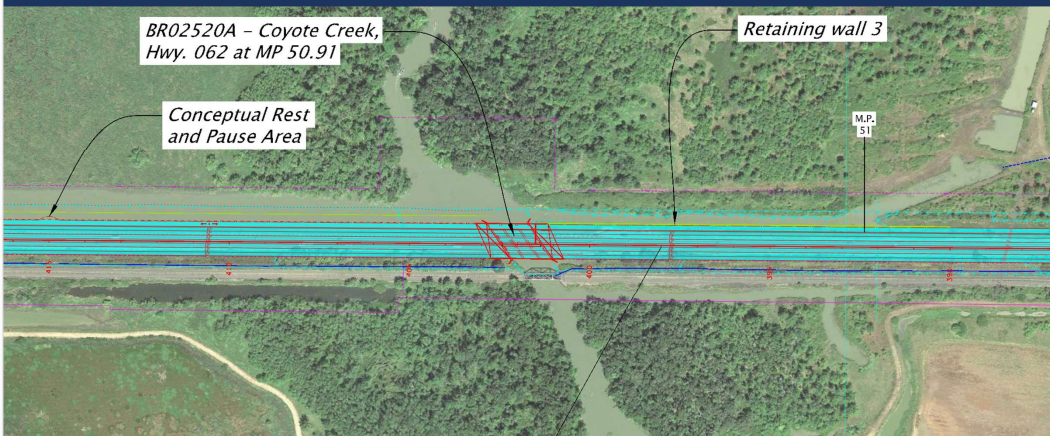
FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

BR02520A - Coyote Creek,
Hwy. 062 at MP 50.91

Conceptual Rest
and Pause Area

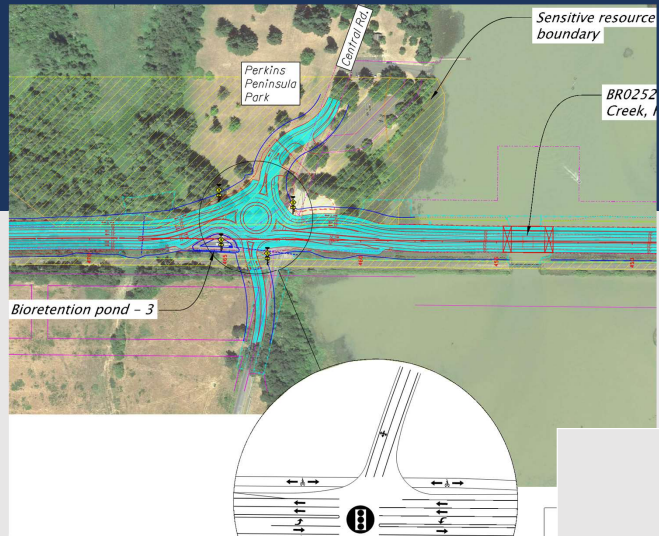
Retaining wall 3

M.P.
51



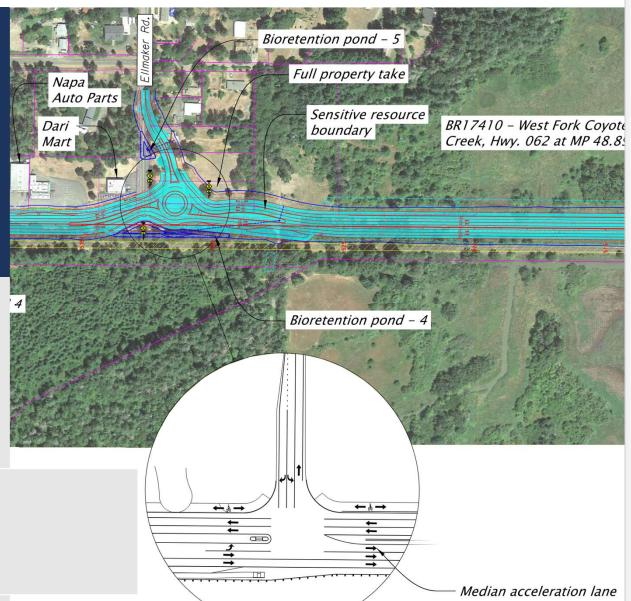
FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Central Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal



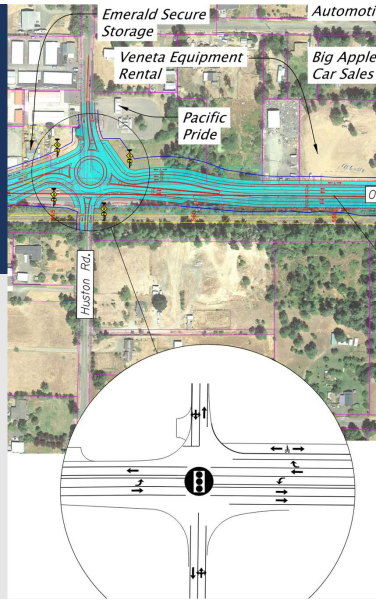
FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Ellmaker Road - Roundabout or Turn Lanes w/Median Acceleration Lane



FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Huston Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal



ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION UPDATE

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline Areas

- Air Quality (Completed).
- Archaeological (Underway).
- Biological Resources (Underway).
- Community/Envir. Justice.
- Hazardous Materials (Completed).
- Historic Resources. (Drafted)
- Land Use (Underway).
- Noise (Underway - Revising).
- Parks & Recreation.
- Water Quality/Hydrology (Drafted).
- Wetlands (Underway).



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. Project impacts fall below thresholds triggering action/mitigation.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report being revised to address roundabout intersections. No material change expected. With earlier draft, walls were evaluated at two locations and found to not meet benefit/cost thresholds and are therefore not recommended.



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

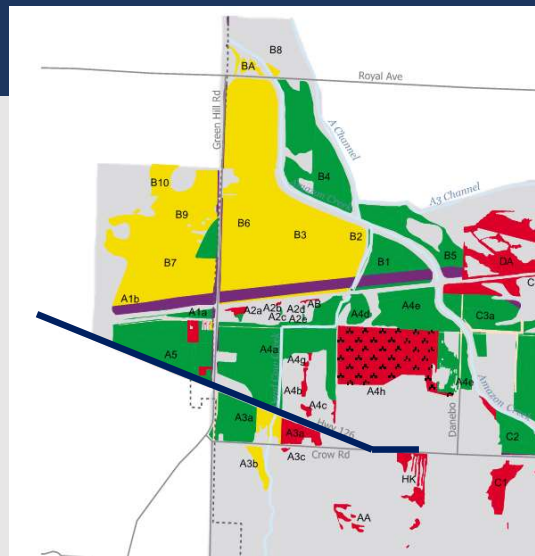
Discipline	Summary
Archaeological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian survey completed. Some shovel tests have been performed within High Probability Areas. Additional shovel testing is planned. One site so far has been recommended for Phase II testing/investigations. No Phase II work will need to be completed as part of NEPA process, but rather prior to construction.
Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline survey and report completed. Determinations of Eligibility forms for two sites have been prepared and reviewed by SHPO. Finding of Effect forms are now being prepared for these two sites.

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN 17
Map 3
Wetlands Designations Map



Source: West Eugene Wetlands Plan, May 2004



WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN REVISION

Discussions underway to revise the West Eugene Wetlands Plan

- Type IV land use action – refinement plan amendment.
- Joint action by City of Eugene and Lane County to amend Plan.
- Two coordination meetings held with staff from ODOT, City and County to discuss process, roles and timing.
- Options for applicant and timing.

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN REVISION – APPLICANT

Applicant	Potential Benefits	Potential Drawbacks
City and County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates local agency support. • Allows local agencies to make other needed changes to the plan. • Separates the OR 126 project planning efforts from the local agency's need to align their planning documents. • Reduces ODOT's cost and staff time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline unknown. • Larger scope could increase the time required and/or the risk the process could stall.
ODOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and defined procedures and timeline to process the application (Minimum six months from time application is deemed complete). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ODOT responsible for cost and staff time to prepare and support applications through the process. • Application focused on OR 126 project may draw additional attention.

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN REVISION – TIMING

Timing	Potential Benefits	Potential Drawbacks
Near-term (3-6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains momentum while project constituents are engaged and informed. • Demonstrates ongoing and incremental progress to the public, state and federal officials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for controversy during land use process could jeopardize NEPA certification. • May trigger adjustments to project scope, design and environmental documentation, leading to delay and need for additional resources.
Delay (until NEPA cert. and/or funding secured)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separates NEPA process from local land use approvals. • Delays potential for controversy to a later date when agency is prepared to take the risk and expend the effort. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of momentum could reduce advocate pool engaged and ready to testify in support. • Potential for controversy remains and could delay project implementation if land use process delayed until funding is secured. • Delay may not serve any benefit, increasing delay with the result being a similar outcome.



DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



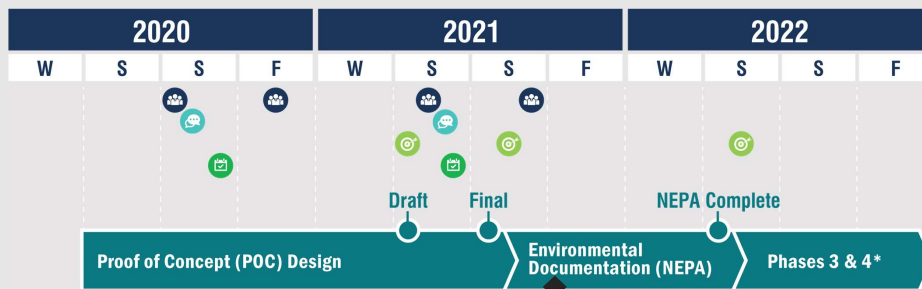
Preliminary

Phase	Phase Name	Phase Description	Length (miles)	Cost (\$M) 2027 Dollars
1	Green Hill	Widen OR126 within City of Eugene from Terry Street to and including Green Hill Road intersection. Extend improvements 0.1 miles west of Green Hill Road.	1.1	\$24.8 to \$34.7
2	CBR Overcrossing	Widen OR126 from west end of Phase 1 to 0.3 miles west of Coos Bay Rail Line (CBR) overcrossing. Construct a new westbound bridge over CBR.	1.0	\$28.1 to \$39.4
3	Fisher Road	Widen OR126 from west end of Phase 2 to 0.1 miles west of Fisher Butte Parking Lot, including intersection upgrades at Fisher Road.	1.5	\$20.7 to \$29.0
4	Fern Ridge Reservoir	Widen OR126 from west end of Phase 3 to and including Ellmaker Road intersection. This phase includes intersection upgrades at Central Road, several bridge replacements and highway widening into the reservoir.	3.0	\$161.0 to \$225.4
5	Huston Road	Widen OR126 from west end of Phase 4 to the project's west terminus, including intersection upgrades at Huston Road.	0.5	\$13.3 to \$18.6
Total Cost:				\$247.9 to \$347.1

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT SCHEDULE

 Steering Committee Meeting
  Open House
  Constituent Outreach
  Project Milestone



We are here

*Preliminary/final design and construction phases depend on funding

NEXT STEPS

Spring/Summer 2022

- Complete NEPA.



THANK YOU!

APPENDIX C STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Approval of public involvement plan.
- Lots of interest in multi-use path.
- Must have Florence leader on Steering Committee.
- Add LTD to Steering Committee for route #93.
- Offers of contact and communication assistance abound.

Please see reports from each interview for important detail.

City of Veneta will share committee lists for Planning & Economic Development Committees, and will put information in utility bills, post on Facebook and website.

Fern Ridge School District will let us record and send a phone message to all families, will send email, will post on Facebook, will invite to share info with Superintendent's Key Communicators Group (20 area leaders), let us use District and school reader boards, let us do outreach at registration in August, let us put info in elementary school newsletters, will let us use school facilities for meetings.

WREN people are environmental educators and want the road to tell a story about history and ecology. At minimum they don't want the design to preclude the opportunity.

Title VI/EJ outreach ideas include working with science classes at Kalapuya HS and the Rachel Carson Academy at Churchill HS. Suggested Dari Mart in Veneta for low income outreach. We may use their newsletter to share information, and hope we share interesting information about history and ecology in our project communications as well.

Travel Lane County will help us reach hospitality industry and also bike tourism interests. Said to add other coast cities to mailing list. Will help with all communications.

Mid Lane Cares will let us reach people with information in Food for Lane County boxes and Meals on Wheels senior delivery. They will include information in their newsletters. They recommend contacting two other utilities about including information in utility bills to reach rural, low-income people.

Mudslinger Events will help with communications to bicyclist individuals and organizations, including email, Facebook and website.

City of Florence will help with logging/freight contacts, share information with their Transportation and Community and Economic Development Committees, include information in city newsletter, on city website and Facebook, help us post on reader boards.

Oregon Country Fair (cancelled 2020) will share information through lists and social media.

City of Veneta Interview Report

Date: 5.14.20

Who: Matt Michel, City Administrator, Evan MacKenzie, Community Development Director

Tell me about your experience using the road?

How is this section important for Veneta? Who do you think cares the most? About what?

We are a bedroom community and do not have the land or economy to be self-sufficient. Our workforce must travel to Eugene. It is a solid line of cars at peak commute times.

Since the road fails completely in both directions with even a stall, much less a crash, it creates a great fragility for us. It damages the value of living in this community if we can't count on getting to the hospital in a timely way or to work on time due to "single point failure."

Also, in the state's emergency plans, OR 126 is a key route from the coast to Eugene.

In addition to the Chamber of Commerce, which specific economic development interests do you hope we can reach? e.g. Wineries? Freight? The industrial park owner? Swanson or other lumber interests? Are there specific people we should reach out to as through users?

We have no big employers. Those pass through here. There is a deputy sheriff who knows which freight companies use this regularly and will find his name for you. Are you talking to Port of Coos Bay?

Which committees within the city structure would be good to link into our communications? e.g. Parks Board? Planning Commission? Economic Development Committee? Bike/ped? May we get those lists or will you pass through?

Ask Darci Henneman, City Recorder, for contact lists for Planning Commission and Economic Development Committee. There is no active transportation committee. It would be good for it to come from you. Also please add the Mayor and City Councilors to your communications.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

Plan seems good. No need for a Community Advisory Committee too.

Please include LTD because of route #93 between Eugene and Veneta.

Are there specific EJ/Title VI popo they can identify? Contact?

The school district is the best idea to reach families. Mid Lane Cares is good also to reach low-income and senior and disabled people.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

Good topics.

- Naturalists/environmentalists/hunters
Be sure to include fishermen and birders. Include the Long Tom Watershed.
- Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters
- Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)
Include both LCOG, for the transit route to Florence, and LTD, for #93.

How do you feel about hosting meetings in Veneta—between Florence and Eugene?

It would be greatly appreciated to host in Veneta. Since the roadway is of greater importance to our residents and we are a smaller population, it seems more equitable to have any meetings in Veneta, as was done with the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan.

What ways can you help us with occasional communications?

Our newsletter goes in the utility bill to 1700 households. It is our most popular method to communicate and welcome including project information within this.

We will also post on our website and Facebook.

The Fern Ridge Review is the best way to communicate broadly. Glad you are calling Pam.

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

We are rescheduling our spring cleanup event tentatively to fall. That would be good since folks will come drop stuff at that location.

Farmers Market.

Elmira Grange hosts things. (PT Chamber staff, Heather Blake, runs Elmira Grange.)

Halloween at the mall (Ray's Food Place).

Grocery Outlet is opening June 25th.

Not sure if our pool will be open this summer, but the park next to it is a great place for hosting an outdoor open house or information session.

Other suggestions for communications?

The library.

Fern Ridge School District 28J Interview Report

Date: 5/18/20

Who: Gary Carpenter, Superintendent

Fern Ridge School District covers Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noti. They serve 1,500 students and communications reach around 5,000 people.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?
Sounds good. See no reason for also having a CAC.

Are there specific EJ/Title VI population they can identify? Contacts?

Example of demographic in district:

Elmira HS (418 students)

Minority 13%

Econ disadvantaged 50%

Grad rate 89%

College bound 22%

Our students all speak English well enough.

We will help communicate with our families in many ways:

We can send out a pre-recorded **phone message** to 3,000-5,000 people.

I will post on the **Superintendent's Facebook** page, reaching 3,000-5,000. It gets re-posted on many other community FB pages.

We would send an **email**.

We will put announcements on our **Reader Boards**. I have one here at the **District Office** and there is one to use at **Elmira HS**.

School registrations in August at each school.

Our **four elementary schools send a monthly newsletter**.

Kids are picking up or getting mailed a weekly package during virus closure. Can include in those.

Superintendent hosts a bi-monthly **Key Communicators Group** where he will share our info or invite our presentation. These are area leaders not necessarily related directly to education.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups? **Yes, good topics.**

- Naturalists/environmentalists/hunters/fishers
ODFW duck hunting is very popular Nov, Dec, Jan
- Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters
- Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)

How do you feel about our hosting meetings (if any in person) in Veneta—between Florence and Eugene?

I think it should be in Veneta. We would be happy to host at our downtown elementary school for convenience.

Willamette Resources and Education Network (WREN) Interview Report

Date: 5.18.20

Who: Ryan Collay, Board President

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

It sounds good. I prefer the broader reach you described than a CAC-type process.

Are there specific EJ/Title VI population they can identify? Contacts?

I spent a lot of my career figuring out how to reach underrepresented rural youth for science and math education through OSU. You cannot rely on internet-based communications! I can give you a lot of examples of how that will not work and how it exacerbates inequality.

You need to include the tribal interests. You know this was their land and that should be acknowledged and honored.

How about working with science teachers at schools with lower income populations, like Bethel District? Kalapuya High School would be a great connection, as would the Rachel Carson Academy at Churchill HS.

The Dari Mart in Veneta seems to have lots of low-income people hanging there and probably camping around there.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

Good topics. I would like the agenda to ask what stories should be told along this stretch of highway. Wetlands? Oak savannah? Fire ecology? Sisters view. At least the planning could then avoid precluding these identified opportunities. As an environmental education organization, we want to enhance people's experiences and teach appreciation of nature. Like "see the camas along the road and tell how its uses."

- Naturalists/environmentalists/hunters/fishers
We need to be able to get safely on and off the road to parking that allows access to these experiences.
ODFW will connect you to hunters and fishers.
Don't forget Ducks Unlimited.
BLM is a big landowner here and that is WREN's partner.
- Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters
Maybe it does not have to go all the way to Veneta if too constrained but could be done to access natural areas.
Coyote Creek canoe-way needs parking.
- Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)
You could do outreach at Diess Feed & Seed. They have been there 5 generations, I think. They could even be in the story told along the highway that I am talking about.

How do you feel about our hosting meetings (if any in person) in Veneta—between Florence and Eugene?

I like the idea of them being in Veneta. Environmentalists will not be underrepresented in this process nor will bicyclists. Those Eugene-based interests will surely get their say. It will be more balanced if you hold meetings more convenient to more rural residents.

What ways can you help us with occasional communications? Ask if any EJ/Title VI population they know about, relate with?

WREN can collaborate about this. We would like it if you could include a link in your information that connects to why the wetlands are important. Like want to know more about camas? [Click here](#). Or want to see how the reservoir was formed? [Click here](#). That information exists.

You might want to connect with Rick Ahrens, who runs something called Rick's Lists for Nearby Nature, in addition to being a Butterfly Association guy.

Anything else you would like to add?

There is a book that tells the history of the Long Tom Watershed, which becomes the Fern Ridge Reservoir too. It could be a good resource for you,

Travel Lane County Interview Report

Date: 5.18.20

Who: Kari Westlund, President

Tell me about your experience using the road?

Drive it at least once a day. Cars going both directions, not just eastbound.

Scared of bicyclists on the roadway, especially at night. Motorists want multi-use path, so they don't kill anyone.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

This plan looks great. I don't think we need a CAC.

Add coast leader to Steering Committee: Erin Reynolds (City Manager), Kelli Weiss (Ec Dev Director) or Jesse Dolan, Oregon Coast Visitors Association. OCVA includes Yachats too and between Travel Lane County and OCVA we will reach the hospitality industry well.

Add LTD to Steering Committee.

Add cities of Yachats, Gardner, Reedsport and City of Dunes City to communications lists.

Add LCOG Board to the communications list since it includes many small cities in that direction.

Are there specific EJ/Title VI population they can identify? Contacts?

The plan to talk with schools and Mid Lane Cares is good.

Maybe the marijuana dispensaries would be a good way to reach people.

Can you get signage on the bus on route #93?

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

- Naturalists/environmentalists/hunters/fishers
ODFW runs a parking lot that requires permits. They give the duck hunting permits.
- Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters
We have Connect Lane, for visitors. We are working on developing better signage and alternate routes in the county for visitors on bikes to get to trails. I'll connect you with our staff on that.
Connect with county folks working on Territorial Highway improvements. There is a list with that project.
The Coyote Creek area has changed some 2013. More boaters.
- Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)
There are big employers in West Eugene like Yogi Tea and Rosen. Check with Eugene Chamber.

How do you feel about our hosting meetings (if any in person) in Veneta—between Florence and Eugene?

Good idea. Makes sense.

What ways can you help us with occasional communications?

We are happy to use all of our communications methods since this is relevant for tourism and visitors.

Newsletter? Contact info and dates due?

Facebook? Contact info?

Website? Contact info?

Other, such as sign boards or enclosing info in another communication they send?

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

We keep track of events on our website. We can help with connection to hosts, if needed.

Anything else you would like to add?

Please tell ODOT to restripe in fall--not spring. It is not that helpful to restripe in spring and have it be gone by the dark time of year when most needed.

s

Mid Lane Cares Interview Report

Date: 5.20.20

Who: DeAnna Townsend, Executive Director

Tell me about your experience using the road?

I commute every day from west Eugene. I am born and raised in Veneta, so I've seen it all on 126. We need the multi-use path really badly. I would prioritize that. Folks are using the backroads since it is so unsafe along the highway, and really the backroads are also very unsafe. I had a friend killed by a car two weeks ago. Get us a bike facility please.

Most important for the roadway is a passing lane. People try to pass multiple cars at a time, and it is very dangerous. I'd love to see four lanes the whole way, but three lanes and wider shoulders would be a massive improvement.

The Fisher Rd area is a hairy turn. Include those folks.

Can you get us more patrol presence to slow people down and catch folks for the crazy passing?

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

I like the plan you described.

Are there specific EJ/Title VI population they can identify? Contacts?

We have a 475-mile service area including Crow, Applegate, Lorraine, Elmira, Noti, Walton, Veneta. Mapleton has a food sharing site of their own. You can see from school statistics that half the kids are on subsidized lunch, but we also have a large low-income elder population. We are a **Food for Lane County distributor** and have switched to drive through Monday, Wednesday, Friday between 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. **Yes, you may put a flier in the food boxes** and/or talk with folks through the car window from a distance.

We also are the **Senior Center** and serve meals to seniors two ways—in person is called Café 60 or home delivery with **Meals on Wheels**. LCOG provides the food Monday, Wednesday and Friday and Mid Lane Cares provides the food to seniors on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have stopped in person dining for now and made it all delivered to homes. **Yes, we will include information with meals we deliver.**

Another way to reach our low-income population is through the **electric bills**. The Veneta water bill is good, but also **Blachly-Lane Electric Co-op and Lane Electric Co-op**.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

- Naturalists/environmentalists/hunters
- Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters
- Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses) **I will be in this group as a commuter. My friend Tressa Miller is a Lieutenant in Fire Dept and she will be good in this too.**

How do you feel about our hosting meetings (if any in person) in Veneta—between Florence and Eugene? **They should be in Veneta since it is our problems to solve.**

What other ways can you help us with occasional communications?

We send a **quarterly mailing to our 350-person** list. We will send something in **June** before the end of our fiscal year and then again in **October**. **Yes, you may include info in our envelope**, and we don't need ODOT to contribute to the postage for that.

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

We have an annual Harvest Festival in mid-September. Yes, you may have a table there, if we can hold it. I'm guessing yes, because our Farmers Market opened.

Other suggestions communications?

Use USPS to reach residents in the Fischer Road area. You won't be able to use fliers or doorhangers "back there."

Mudslinger Events Interview Report

Date: 5.20.20

Who: Mike Ripley, Coordinator

Tell me about your experience using the road?

Only driven it. It's like a drag strip. I'd never bike it. It's not appealing for cyclists.

- If the final design is an unprotected multi-use path, ODOT should make sure the road has a double yellow (no passing).
- Need to plan for how bikes are changing. Need enough room for e-bikes to pass on the shoulder or within the multi-use path.
- Reduce the speed of the road to 45 MPH.

I know more about Benton County roads these days.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

No – it seems responsible and a progressive approach to make sure everyone is heard. No need for a CAC.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

EMS is the top priority to help people save lives. Number one reason to do this project. Everything else is secondary on that section of road.

2) Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters

Be sure to involve:

Dwan Sheppard, CoMotion (has biked on every road in Lane County)
Virginia Xing at Paul's Bicycle Way of Life
Justin Bezilj at Life Cycle
Richard Hughes (Velo)
Don Strahan (Cottage Grove)
Notify bike shops in Eugene to the Coast.

Keep in mind that fewer people are actually out there cycling. Virtual cycling is taking a hold. I could video that stretch of road and you could ride it at your home. Generally, road cyclists (as opposed to mountain bikers) generally expect more out of the system.

What ways can you help us with occasional communications?

Yes. I could help with some communications. I have 15 k on newsletter list, but they are from everywhere across the nation. I could send to sub lists for the area once we start up racing again.

Be sure to notify:

GEARS (Greater Eugene Area Rides)
Eugene Velo Cycling Club

Any EJ/Title VI populations they know about, relate with?

Only had 15-20 % women cycling. Wanted to invite others (nonwhite) to participate. I have a lack of time and resources to focus on this although I'd like to do so. Other than trying to reach more women, not much outreach to EJ/Title VI.

Newsletter? Contact info and dates due?

Yes. Send to Mike – by first of the month.

Facebook? Contact info?

Possible. Mike is contact.

Website? Contact info?

Possible. Mike is contact.

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

More than happy to have you do outreach at events. Best would be the Gran Fondo in Cottage Grove (currently scheduled for July 25).

Anything else you would like to add?

Think it's amazing. Thank you for including me

City of Florence Interview Report

Date: 5.21.20

Who: Megan Messmer, Florence Public Information Officer & Mike Miller, Public Works Director

Tell me about your experience using the road?

Mike: Don't use it too much but from a Public Works Director perspective the road is too narrow with a significant drop on one side and wetlands/railroad on the other. Not enough room to get around in an emergency. Noticed some recent safety improvements but it doesn't address the main issue for EMS. The choke point [on the causeway] still needs to be addressed.

Megan: Not much to add. It backs up and there are a lot of people who use the reservoir. It's nerve wracking to be a driver with boaters, pedestrians and bikers. Such a high volume of traffic.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

No – looks good for this phase. No need for CAC but make sure though the environmental community knows about the plans.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups?

- **1) Naturalists/environmentalists,**
Lane County Audubon Society
Long Tom Watershed Council
- **(2) Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters**
- **(3) Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)**
Logging industry: RR King Logging and Gary Foglio Trucking Inc.
EMS: Western Lane Ambulance District
Three Rivers Casino (Megan will send new Marketing Director's name and contact info.)
LCOG for new transit connector service

What ways can you help us with occasional communications?

Send info. to Megan and she'll help to post on Florence City Facebook, City Newsletter, etc.

Title VI /EJ

Florence Public Library (note – not part of City. (Special district)

Siuslaw Vision (Focus on supporting local workforce development and childcare programs, establishing safe and affordable housing options, and promoting public art)

In addition to the Chamber of Commerce, which specific economic development interests do you hope we can reach?

Lodging/tourist industry. Chamber of Commerce can assist with this.

Other committees within the city structure to link into our communications?

Transportation Committee (No bike/ped committee)

Community and Economic Development Committee

* Megan will forward info. to them.

Newsletter? Contact info and dates due?

Monthly newsletter – usually out 1st . Need info. by mid-month

Facebook? Contact info?

Will post - send to Megan anytime

Website? Contact info?

Send to Megan to post.

Other, such as sign boards or enclosing info in another communication they send?

Fire Station has reader board on Hwy 101 – it's big.

Events Center has huge community reader board.

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

No events are planned for the foreseeable future due to virus.

Other suggestions communications?

Use our local media: Two radio stations and the Siuslaw News.

Oregon Country Fair Interview Report

Date 5.26.20

Who: Shane Harvey, Site and Facilities Manager

Tell me about your experience using the road?

Try to avoid it at all times. Prefer to drive out of the way than use that stretch.

No shoulder. If a vehicle breaks down, you're in a bad situation. People are impatient on that stretch and that makes it so dangerous.

Lost some of our Fair Family from the Construction Crew in a very bad accident a few years back.

Do you see critical pieces missing from the PI plan?

No - sounds fine. No need for a CAC with this plan.

Constituent conversations—are these the right topics? People and/or organizations who should be in these three groups? Yes – these are the right groups.

- **Naturalists/environmentalists,**
Long Tom Watershed
Nature Conservancy
Local conservationist group working with OCF about plans to do prescribe burning on fair site. Shane will follow up with name. Asked to give him at least a week.
Be sure to connect with sovereign nations of the Siletz and Grand Ronde. Consider the archeology of that area. Lots of sites for sovereign nations. The Fair does not have strong relationships with Tribes and has made missteps in the past.
- **Bicyclists/pedestrians/boaters,**
Cycle Oregon: We've worked with them in the past because they were creating a bike routes on Hwy 126 during Fair. We worked with them to re-route given volume of traffic.
- **Highway users (EMS, freight, businesses)**
We don't work with freight other than that one month of the year and then it's usually at the booth and vendor level.

What ways can you help us with occasional communications? Ask if any EJ/Title VI pop they know about, relate with?

The Fair has a Diversity Committee that meets once or twice a month. They are working out how to diversify the Fair community.

Newsletter? Contact info and dates due?

Not sure when the next Fair Family News is coming out.

If you send e-updates, we can forward it along to our committee chairs. The Fair does not have a centralized database at this point. There were plans to develop one but with Covid-19 - no additional expenditures are allowed right now.

Facebook? Contact info?

We can post items on our social media pages. Send it to Crystalyn and Shane.

Website? Contact info?

Send it to Crystalyn and Shane. It's a possibility.

Other, such as sign boards or enclosing info in another communication they send?

No.

Do you host events that would be good for outreach?

Not anticipating any gatherings this year.

Other suggestions communications?

The Fair is looking at doing a potential virtual Fair but it's not clear yet if it'll work.

Might be opportunities to have some messaging if it happens.

Anything else you would like to add?

OCF staff is overwhelmed right now with employee layoffs. Could be that both Shane and Crystalyn get furloughed too.

APPENDIX D

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

OR 126: Veneta to Eugene Constituent Consultations Summary August 11 & 12, 2020

The project organized three groups for in-depth conversations:

- Highway Users: emergency vehicles, freight, businesses, commuters
- Adjacent Users: pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters
- Wetlands Users: naturalists, ecology educators, fishers, hunters

What follows are summaries of each consultation organized by the key themes discussed. There is an appendix for more detail about the conversation at the end of each meeting summary.

The goals of these meetings were to:

- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Review the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan.
- Share interim studies and improvements.
- Explain the current NEPA effort.
- Listen for concerns and document them.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.

We will invite these groups to review the project's work again in Spring 2021.

**Prepared for ODOT
By Cogito & DOWL
August 2020**

**OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Highway Users Consultation Summary**
August 11, 2020, 10:00 – 11:30 AM
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Tressa Miller (Lane Fire Authority), Matt House (Western Lane Ambulance District), Shane Harvey (Oregon Country Fair), Mayor Keith Weiss (City of Veneta), DeAnna Townsend (Mid Lane Cares), Richard Colton (Three Rivers Casino), Jesse Dolin (Oregon Coast Visitors Association), Bobby King (RR King Logging), Stephanie Sarles (Siuslaw Vision), Craig Soderberg (Veneta Resident), Kurt Straube (DariMart), Katy Pelroy (Ecosystems Transfer and Recycling), Bob Teter (Siuslaw Outreach Center), Jim Hagle (United Parcel Service), Bart Mealer (Friends of Florence Van), Molly Cary (ODOT), Stan Petroff (DOWL), David Simmons (DOWL), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Absent: Crystalyn Autuchovich (Oregon Country Fair), Lyndsie Leech (Veneta Downtown Farmers' Market), Rachel Bowden (Napa Auto Parts), Jodi O'Mara (Mapleton School District)

Follow up: We extended email and phone opportunities for input to any who accepted and did not attend, or experienced technical challenge to participation.

Meeting Summary

The first of three constituent meetings solicited feedback on the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan from a group of highway users. Participants introduced themselves by describing how they currently interact with the project area. David Simmons (DOWL) then gave an overview of the project, followed by a virtual tour of proposed updates to the corridor by Stan Petroff (DOWL). Participants had the opportunity to ask questions, share feedback, and make design recommendations to improve the corridor from three primary perspectives: emergency vehicle users, large rig vehicle users, and commuters. Frequently heard comments included:

- Continued support for the 4-lane alternative. Added lanes will increase safety and navigability, especially for large vehicle users and commuter traffic.
- Opportunities to make safe turns on and off the highway are extremely important. Turning lanes should be plentiful, long enough to accommodate multiple cars, and include ample shoulder room for large rigs.
- New barriers and medians must allow emergency vehicles plenty of access to provide roadside assistance.
- Large rig vehicles that service businesses along the corridor need unrestricted accesses and connectivity between businesses to maintain delivery and service flow.
- Vehicles and pedestrians stopped along shoulders create safety hazards.
- Continuing the 4-lane update into Veneta or Florence would be desirable.

Participant Introductions

- Tressa Miller: Responds to 911 calls and gets people to the hospital; Sees crashes on 126.
- Matt House: Coordinates 600 interfacility transfers to outlying hospitals; Responds to collisions throughout 126 corridor.
- DeAnna Townsend: Works for low-income serving nonprofit in Fern Ridge area with an office in Veneta; Drives to and from work as commuter; Works with other service providers that use corridor as lifeline.
- Richard Colton: Employee of large Florence business with 60% of guests coming from Eugene/Springfield area.
- Jesse Dolin: Oversees tourism activities for region, including Florence, and hopes to see Florence become a hub for the coast; Participates in birding, hiking, and kayaking along corridor.
- Bobby King: Runs Florence-based logging business with 20-30 log trucks that each make 2-3 trips per day, most traveling to a West Eugene sawmill; Has family that travels corridor to shop; Receives 90% of parts and large equipment from Eugene.
- Stephanie Sarles: Represents about 18,000 people in area surrounding Florence, who use the corridor for tourism, medical care, commuting, errand runs, etc.
- Keith Weiss: Mayor of Veneta.
- Shane Harvey: Oregon Country Fair site and facilities coordinator.
- Craig Soderberg: Commutes daily from Veneta to work in Eugene.
- Kurt Straube: Manages two stores in Veneta (one on OR 126, one on Territorial) – most customers, employees, distributors, & suppliers use corridor.
- Katy Pelroy: Oversees commercial & residential recycling services on corridor 5 days a week; Drives corridor to access transfer site; Employs staff who commute daily.
- Bob Teter: Transports victims of domestic abuse & human trafficking 4-5 times a month; Serves clients who are homeless and travel between Eugene to Florence by foot.
- Jim Hagle: Oversees package deliveries in Eugene, Springfield, Roseburg, Florence; Dispatches 8-12 drivers from Eugene to deliver over 1,000 pieces, using the corridor daily in and around Veneta, Walton, and Mapleton.
- Bart Mealer: Provide daily van transport to Eugene & Springfield for cancer patients to get radiation and chemotherapy treatments.

Questions & Comments by Category

EMERGENCY & MEDICAL VEHICLES:

- Medians and barriers increase road safety, but can also limit access for emergency vehicles. Ensure safe access for EMS vehicles and ability to turn around at an accident scene.

- Medical service vans are required to go speed limit, causing frustrated drivers behind them. More lanes will allow for safer passing.

LARGE RIGS:

- Service vehicle drivers need safe ways to access businesses and side streets, particularly between Ellmaker Road and Huston Road.
 - Crossing additional lanes of traffic will pose greater risks.
 - Unrestricted access points for large delivery trucks are essential near the businesses. Delivery trucks (tractors with 28–80-foot trailers) can't turn around within the business site. They need to enter on Ellmaker Road, navigate connected parking lots, and exit onto OR 126. Curb cuts onto OR 126 should be unrestricted for ingress & egress for both left and right turns.
 - Drivers sometimes wait 13 minutes to turn right onto OR 126 from businesses. An additional traffic light between Ellmaker Road & Huston Road might be useful.
 - Two driveways west of DariMart would be useful for delivery truck access.
- Motor home and “toy hauler” traffic increases significantly during summer months.

TURNING LANES:

- Need center turn lanes at Shady Rest Road and on west side.
- Turning lanes should be long enough to avoid back-ups into travel lanes.
- Having a second lane for trucks to slow down and speed up before/after right turns will be very helpful.
- Provide enough shoulder room for large vehicles to make safe right turns.

SPEED & SAFETY HAZARDS:

- People use shoulders to pass slower traffic near Terry Street. This is dangerous.
- The ditch near Diess Feed & Seed is a safety hazard. People pick up speed there and have to slam on the brakes, if the car ahead turns.
- Speed is a huge issue all the way to Florence. Lots of people are in a hurry, try to pass multiple cars, drive others off the road or cause them to slam on brakes.
- Lots of kids run around on the side of the road near the raft launch during summer, causing many people to slam on their brakes there.
- Lots of vehicles stop on shoulders to walk into the fast food restaurants.

CONGESTION & DEMAND:

- Logging trucks often go via Territorial Road, because congestion is too bad on OR 126.
- Package delivery services have experienced many delays due to accidents.
- New company, Stratacache moving into Hynix plant may increase commuters from Veneta.

ROUTE:

- Extending the 4-lane upgrade all the way to Florence would be even more amazing.
- Why does the project stop at Huston Road rather than continuing farther west?
Concerned about narrowing to 2 lanes before many Veneta residents turn off.

APPENDIX: Detailed Comments and Questions with Responses

EMERGENCY & MEDICAL VEHICLES:

- Q: Regarding barriers and medians, can you drill down where there will be medians and barriers? This adds to safety, but also limits access for emergency vehicles.
 - A: Barriers will only be used on long stretches across reservoir where there are no accesses. Need to weigh the dangers presented from people coming onto highways vs. benefits of having more accesses, but ultimately safe accesses will continue to exist everywhere where there is access today. Medians will be 8 feet throughout the corridor and widened to 16 feet in sections where there's a left turn lane off the highway.
- Increasing to 4 lanes will be great. Access for emergency vehicles is important.
- Medical service vans are required to drive the speed limit. Lots of people want to get around them, but can't safely pass.

LARGE RIGS:

- Q: The plan looks great. Concerned about spaces closer to Huston, Ellmaker, Shady Rest, and businesses along OR 126. Drivers will have to take left turns into those streets/driveways to provide service. What will it look like to cross additional lanes of traffic there?
 - A: There will be a turn lane the whole way. Closing or combining accesses might also be an option to increase safety.
- Service trucks regularly pull into Ellmaker Road, NAPA Auto Parts, Y Cook, CrossFit, Big Apple, etc. The lots are connected, so as long as one point of access is safe, they can navigate between businesses.
- Q: Truck drivers suggested a stoplight at Ellmaker Road and Huston Road. They sometimes wait 13 minutes to turn right into traffic back towards Veneta.
 - A: The traffic assessment will look at whether there's a need for a traffic signal at these two intersections.
- There should be center turn lanes at Shady Rest Drive and on the road to the west side.
 - A: A left turn lane will be provided at both Shady Rest Drive and Lake Side Drive.
- Q: In other areas, like Beltline onto W 11th, the turning lane is so short that waiting traffic blocks the travel lane. Will the left turn lanes be long enough so that 4-5 turning cars won't increase congestion along the road?
 - A: The turn lanes will be designed to provide space for cars to stack up in the turn lane without backing into the travel lane.
- Very excited to expand to four lanes for that one mile. This will probably encourage more people to go into Eugene. It was a big problem area before.
- Q: Delivery trucks that access businesses extend up to tractors with 53-foot trailers, even 80-foot with multiples. Trucks that large can't turn around within the business site. Will the access curb cut near DariMart (about 75 yards west of Ellmaker Road) onto OR 126 be unrestricted for ingress/regress for both left

and right turns? It's important that trucks can come in at Ellmaker, float through, and go out in either direction on 126. Contractors, landscapers, and utility crews, and all delivery trucks towing trailers need unlimited access on Ellmaker Road and on OR 126 to keep a steady flow.

- A: Project team hasn't yet gotten to that point of refining the designs.
- Ease of access to delivery points (via unrestricted curb cuts) is also a top priority for parcel delivery services and recycling services.
- Two driveways west of DariMart may help ease large vehicle access even more.
- UPS set up to make right turns going west. With two lanes, it will be great to use outside lane to get up to speed and slow down without blocking traffic. The Eugene UPS facility is moving into West Eugene in 2021, so they may end up using that area even more.

DAILY COMMUTERS:

- Coming from Eugene, lots of people use shoulder to try to pass others in area around Terry Street. Has seen lots of near misses over the years right there.
- Lots of people pick up speed around Diess Feed & Seed and when cars turn into that driveway, followers have ended up in a very deep ditch off the side of the road.
- Q: Growing up in Veneta, as a passenger & driver, appreciates improvements made so far. Consider that turning right in and right out is a concern for bigger vehicles.
 - A: There will be 8-10-foot shoulders at minimum to make a right turn into driveways. Some intersections will add right turn lanes so vehicles can get out of traffic.
- Q: From Veneta perspective, why is the project stopping at Huston Road rather than going further west?
 - A: Corridor plan stopped at Huston. This was decided in coordination with city staff. That's where it enters city jurisdiction and where the city's Transportation System Plan (TSP) picks up, so it made sense.
- Lots of vehicles stop on shoulders to walk into the fast food restaurants.
- Keep in mind that during the summer there's a huge influx of motor homes and "toy haulers" through that area. This is another type of large vehicle to consider.
- New company named Stratacache that bought Hynix plant is planning their first line during summer 2021. They plan to build up to 700 employees, and a few of those will likely come from Veneta.
- This area has always been concerning for foot traffic and bikes.
- Lots of kids run around on the side of the road near the raft launch during summer, and many people have to slam on their brakes right there. Fear that kids will be hit.
- Speed is a huge issue all the way to Florence. Lots of people in a hurry trying to pass multiple cars. Has been driven off the road and had to slam on brakes many times because people are impatient. Adding more lanes to handle that head on traffic will be great.

- When emergency vehicles have to deal with something that's roadside, will they have to loop around a barrier or travel back to the site? Concerned about the time it will take to get there.
 - A: At this time, a concrete barrier is planned to separate the multi-use path from the road in constrained areas where a buffer/swale cannot be provided between the road and the path. A concrete barrier is not planned for the median at this time. If a barrier were to be added in the median, accommodations to allow emergency vehicles to turn around would be necessary.
- Wish this could happen sooner. Extending it all the way to Florence would be even more amazing.
- Q: Who is not represented here? LCOG with Lane bus system, PeaceHealth Florence. PeaceHealth has providers who commute, Stephanie will share notes with them and encourage them to get in touch.
 - A: LCOG is on the Steering Committee.
- Q: Why does it stop at Huston Road? Could have a big impact on the bedroom community in Veneta. Doesn't make sense to take it down to two lanes before many are ready to turn off. Currently there's a huge impact as you come through Eugene and it narrows to two lanes, with some people trying to get by quickly. It would make a lot more sense to end at Territorial.
 - A: Chose to stop at Huston Road because that's where the Fern Ridge Corridor plan stops. The city Transportation System Plan identifies a future study to help define what happens within Veneta and how they want their city to look and function along OR 126. Need traffic to transition from highway function to more of a city/urban function in Veneta, and part of that is ensuring traffic is slowing down.

CONSTRUCTION:

- Q: Will you be doing any fill work in the reservoir area to build up on the north side of the highway? That will take a lot of material. How far away will that material be?
 - A: Yes, fill will need to be added to widen the road into the reservoir but the quantities have not been determined. There's currently a barge collecting data on the soil properties within the reservoir. Coordination with the US Army Corps of Engineers is part of this project.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene: Highway Users Meeting

August 11, 2020



Welcome and Introduction

Self Introduction

- In this virtual meeting setting, Ellen will do a roll call style start to the meeting. When called, please provide a brief introduction including:

-Name

-Organization you represent

-Brief description of how your organization utilizes the corridor

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Highway Users Meeting #1

Agenda

10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Introduction

10:15 – 10:25 Project Background and Overview

10:25 – 10:45 Corridor Tour

10:45 – 11:25 Questions and Comments

11:25 – 11:30 Next Steps

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Background and Overview



The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** evaluated a series of alternatives for the OR126 corridor to address congestion and safety needs. Following an extensive stakeholder outreach effort, a preferred alternative was selected in late 2012. The corridor plan was formally adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.

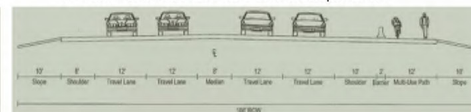
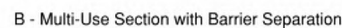


The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** recommended alternative included these elements:

-
- HIGHWAY 126/FURN RIDGE CORRIDOR PLAN**
 Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission - April 17, 2013
- Prepared for

- Prepared by

-



OR126: Veneta to Eugene

Project Overview

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.

**Future phases depend on securing additional funding.*

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview

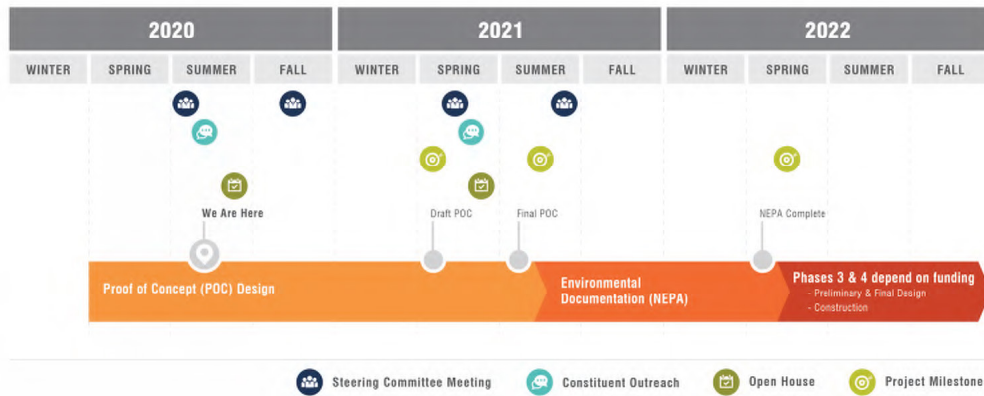


Building on the **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**, the Oregon Department of Transportation will confirm the outcome of the plan, refine the design and complete the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Schedule



OR126: Veneta to Eugene

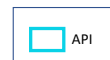


Corridor Tour



Corridor Tour

Segment 1 of 5



Area of Potential Impact (API) encompasses all reasonable potential design elements and environmental constraints.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 2 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 3 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 4 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 5 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Questions and Comments

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Next Steps

- Project team to continue field data collection efforts and begin design refinements

Upcoming Meetings

- Pedestrians, Bicyclists, Boaters meeting – August 11, 2020
- Naturalists, Environmentalists, Hunter, Fisher meeting – August 12, 2020
- Virtual Open House #1 – September 8-25, 2020

ODOT Project Website:

<http://ow.ly/1zGa50AHxUE>

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Thank you!

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



**OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Pedestrian, Bicyclist, & Boater Consultation Summary**

August 11, 2020, 3:00 – 4:30 PM
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Jeff Malik (Travel Lane County), Ken Rodgers (Oregon Paddle Sports), Richard Hughes (Eugene VELO Cycle Club), Emma Newman (City of Springfield), Reed Dunbar (City of Eugene), Cassidy Mills (Lane ESD), Jenna Berman (ODOT – Active Transportation Liaison), Larry Craig (Mobility International), Larry Diffie (GEARS), Karen Goodwin (GEARS), Todd Bowen (Perkins Peninsula), Dwan Sheppard (Co-Motion), Len Goodwin (City of Veneta Planning Commission), Stan Petroff (DOWL), David Simmons (DOWL), Molly Cary (ODOT), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Absent: Evan MacKenzie (City of Veneta), Steve Shulz (Cycle Oregon)

Meeting Summary

The second of three constituent meetings on the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan solicited feedback from cyclist, boater, and pedestrian users. Participants introduced themselves by describing how they currently interact with the project area. David Simmons (DOWL) then gave an overview of the project, followed by a virtual tour of proposed updates to the corridor by Stan Petroff (DOWL). Participants had the opportunity to ask questions, share feedback, and make design recommendations to improve the corridor for cyclists, paddlers, and pedestrians.

- Most cyclists are nervous to bike along the corridor now. A Multi-Use Path (MUP) would increase connectivity and access, especially if effectively linked to existing bike routes.
- MUP design should prioritize aesthetics, air quality, safety, lighting, visibility, amenities, clear access points, and educational and safety signage.
- Cyclists' needs should be integrated into the overall highway plan, including clear turning options, access to bus stops, consolidated vehicle accesses, and well-marked path crossings.
- Provide adequate boat launch accesses for small non-motorized watercraft, especially if existing ones are lost.

Participant Introductions

- Jeff Malik: Destination development manager for county tourism organization; Driven it multiple times for paddle boarding at Fern Ridge; Cyclist but wary of cycling there.
- Ken Rodgers: Owns paddling sports store and runs classes/demos at Fern Ridge often; Represents hundreds of customers who paddle at Fern Ridge and Coyote Creek – it's a favorite place for many; Drives corridor to the coast.
- Richard Hughes: Bike advocate but does not cycle most of OR 126; Uses Coyote Creek to launch a kayak; Drives the corridor.

- Emma Newman: Represents Springfield residents who use it as a key route to the coast; Uses area personally to paddle from Coyote Creek; Bikes through West Eugene.
- Reed Dunbar: Bikes and paddles in creeks and reservoir; Interested in making better connections to coast route with shared use paths and bike routes.
- Cassidy Mills: Coordinates Safe Routes to Schools program for rural Lane County; Uses area personally to walk dog but never cycles there.
- Jenna Berman: Works with ODOT Active Transportation Program; Drives it to travel for work and connect to Oregon coast bike route.
- Larry Craig: Retired from City of Eugene; Long time wheelchair and detachable hand cycle user; Commutes between Veneta and Eugene; Likes to use the Meadowlark Prairie bike path.
- Larry Diffie: Works with cycling advocacy and education organization; Cycles towards Veneta frequently but never on corridor; Does not include this route on cycling organization's maps due to safety concerns.
- Karen Goodwin: Cycles frequently in area and crosses OR 126 but wouldn't bike corridor.
- Todd Bowen: Works at Perkins Peninsula; Travels corridor several times per week between homes in Springfield and near Siuslaw River; Very familiar with the area, especially its parks.
- Swan Shepard: Biked corridor in 1978 from Coos bay to Eugene and back, learned then it's not bike-friendly; Bikes area now but doesn't use OR 126 any more than is necessary.
- Len Goodwin: Chairs Veneta Planning Commission; Vice chairs Veneta Economic Development Committee; Formerly with Springfield Public Works.

Questions & Comments by Category

CURRENT BIKING CONDITIONS:

- Has heard about potential bicycle accommodation for decades and is pleased it might be happening now.
- Crossing OR 126 on bike is currently a challenge.
- Would love to see more bike route connections in this area.
- Traveling the corridor can be scary especially during sunrise and sunset.
- Dark conditions have resulted in at least one cyclist death along the corridor. Include additional lighting.

MULTI-USE PATH:

- Alternate path designs should be considered.
 - Consider putting path at lower grade with guardrail separation from road.
 - Replacing concrete barriers with vegetation could improve aesthetics and air quality along path.
 - Consider using wire median dividers.
 - Happy that barriers will be 42 inches high to prevent large trucks from entering.

- Ensure connectivity with current bike routes.
 - Where will there be designated access points along the path?
 - Extending the connection to Ed Cone Boulevard to Terry Street would be more direct.
 - Need reasonable way for people to get from path to existing bike routes South of OR 126.
 - Veneta is designing and pursuing funding for Veneta–Elmira path. Consider a connection from this corridor to that path if it receives funding.
- Ensure good visibility and amenities along path.
 - Will there be access to bus stops from the path?
 - What level of pedestrian crossing amenities will be provided (beacons, lights, etc.)?
- Consider how encampments and peoples' stuff build up along bike paths that are isolated from roads and add access points that facilitate easier removal.
- Consider how air pollution from highway will affect the path.

TRAFFIC CONDITIONS:

- Design Crow Road to deter people from turning down a one-way road.
- Consider bikers' need to make turns on Huston Road and Central Road. Will there be traffic lights?
- Ensure access to bus stops near Coyote Creek.
- Take design ideas from similar path along Highway 34 between Corvallis and I-5.
- Concern about number of conflict points on far west side. Might need consolidation of entry points at some places.
- Green and white stripes in turning areas has helped increase safety in other projects. Highway 99 in South Corvallis could be a model.
- Vehicles turning off OR 126 across MUP crossings is a concern. Signage prior to turn would be helpful (e.g. "beware of cyclists").
- Consider using roundabouts at intersections.

BOATING:

- The boating channel is very popular for kayaks, canoes, and motorboats.
- Consider Native American camps along the park and lakebed. Make sure to involve the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Narrowing the boating channel to expand the roadway/path is a concern. There would probably be little environmental impact if the roadway/path was extended to the south and the boating channel moved to the north.
- Coyote Creek is a favorite access point for many paddlers. Losing that access will be a big loss for the community. Consider adding or improving other comparable access points for small watercraft. The existing bridge makes it very dark for paddlers going under the bridge and a new wider bridge will make this situation worse – consider adding lighting underneath the bridge.

- The access point to Coyote Creek off Cantrell Road isn't currently a good alternative for kayakers and canoers, but it could be if it was maintained better. It's not a good option for those who don't want to paddle so far to the reservoir.
- Could the irrigation canal east of Coyote Creek on OR 126 provide another launch alternative?
- Canoes and kayaks launch from Perkins Peninsula quite often.

APPENDIX: Detailed Comments & Questions with Responses

CYCLISTS & MUP:

- Q: In the causeway section, have you considered using a grade separation for the path to reduce the amount of fill that's needed? Path could be set lower than road grade with a guardrail, and perhaps make it more compact.
 - A: That hasn't been looked at but it's something to think about. Could reduce the amount of fill that goes into the reservoir. Might increase flooding concerns for path.
- Q: What's the height and width of the barrier between cars and bikes?
 - A: A taller concrete barrier, 42 inches high and 2 feet wide would be used. Taller barriers are better for safety, they prevent large trucks from tipping into path.
- Q: What access points will be available for cyclist/pedestrians to get onto the path? Are there designated public access points? How will people get in and out?
 - A: The barrier will be used along sections of the road where there are no access needs. Areas with accesses and intersections will typically have a swale with the path set back from roadway quite a bit – almost 20 ft from travel lane.
- How can we prevent having encampments of people who will haul their stuff in and not be able to get it out, given the path is fully isolated from the roadway? This is a problem already on bike paths. The longer the section is, the greater tendency for things to collect.
 - A: The path is wide enough for maintenance vehicles to use to access sites to keep the path clear.
- In favor of extending connection to Ed Cone Boulevard to Terry Street. Currently a lot of people cut through the property just southeast of Ed Cone. A connection from Terry would be more direct.
- Saw vehicle driving west on 126 that turned onto the one-way segment of Crow Road going the wrong way. Consider designing so that Crow Road comes in at a right angle to deter people from turning down a one-way road.
 - A: The City expressed interest in raising the median to close it off for only right turns. Can look at this with traffic analysis.
- Q: How is the path accounting for more visibility at access crossings?
 - A: Raised crossings and increasing signage for safety will be important to consider as the design progresses.
- Q: Will there be access to bus stops along the path? What level of pedestrian crossing amenities will be provided (beacons, lights, etc.)?
 - A: Those design details have not been determined yet.
- Q: How wide will the path be?
 - A: 12 feet.
- Q: Will there be traffic lights at Huston Road and Central Road for riders to make that turn?
 - A: Traffic analysis is looking at those intersections to understand if a signal is needed. Heard that it's hard to get out of the side street onto 126. If it's needed, signals will be incorporated into the project.

- Q: Heard that pollution from freeways is concentrated in a path alongside it more than on the freeway itself. Is that true?
 - A: Air quality analysis will be conducted to address pollution question.
- Q: For aesthetic value, could the barriers be vegetation rather than concrete? This could improve air quality and make the ride more pleasant.
 - A: A benefit of the concrete barrier is to reduce the corridor width and minimize environmental impacts to wetlands and surrounding areas. When we squeeze the path closer to a roadway, need something that can stop vehicles effectively. There are opportunities to plant things in a buffer swale, but that takes more space.
- There's a good chance that eventually Ed Cone Boulevard will go south all the way to Crow Road. Need reasonable way for people to get from MUP on the north back to the bike route south of OR 126. This is critical for reestablishing directionality as cyclists get back to the city. A lot of cyclists currently coming from the coast don't turn left at Ed Cone Boulevard or Terry Street to access the Fern Ridge path.
- MUP should extend to Terry Street to accommodate more commuters to Veneta/Elmira area. Need to make sure people can get from Terry Street towards Willow Creek Road.
- Q: Where using barrier section, could ODOT consider using wire median dividers for crash prevention? They're not terribly aesthetic but the wire is easier to see through than a traditional concrete barrier.
 - A: Have thought of that, but the cable barrier stretches quite a bit and requires more space behind it, which is counter to the goal of reducing the roadway width.
- Happy to see there's greater separation with the swales and that barriers will be 42 inches high to prevent large trucks from entering.
- A biker was hit and killed along the corridor within the last year under dark conditions. Additional lighting along the corridor would really help with safety.

BOATING:

- Q: Will adding fill for the road narrow the channel to the north?
 - A: Yes, it will.
- The boating channel is very popular not only for kayaks and canoes, but also motorboats.
- Q: Is anyone from US Army Corps of Engineers involved? There were quite a few Native American camps along the park and the lakebed. It's a highly restricted area, would be a good idea to get the Corps involved.
 - A: The Corps have been in ongoing conversation with ODOT. Will meet with them with basic design footprints. Regarding cultural resources, ODOT has reached out to tribes who have had historic activity there. There will be a cultural resource review of the corridor that will be shared with the tribes.
- Q: If the boating channel is going to receive fill, will it be widened in any way? Concerned about losing that as a boating path.
 - A: That detail has yet to be determined.

- The material on the north side of boating channel is all fill. There would probably be little environmental impact if fill was applied to south side to widen the roadway/path and the channel was moved to the north (to keep same width of boating channel).
- Paddle sports store owner has interacted with hundreds of customers whose favorite put-in is at Coyote Creek along 126. Owner has paddled there for 30 years. Losing that access will be a loss for many visitors and locals who want to boat somewhere close. Wants to consider how not to lose that access point.
- Q: Is there a recommendation for people who are currently using Coyote Creek to put in somewhere else, and where would that be?
 - A: This is a big question. From standpoint of kayaker or canoer, it's a great put-in. From safety perspective, it's a dangerous place for cars to pull off the road. Looking for input as to potential solutions to replace this location.
- Question from project team: Off Cantrell Road there's another access point to Coyote Creek. The bank conditions aren't necessarily as easy to use. How many people use that put-in to access this part of the waterway?
 - A: It seems abandoned. There are two downed cottonwood trees where you'd put a boat in, and a 4-5 foot drop off. Would need some sort of canoe launch. Right now, it's not a good alternative. If it were maintained, it could be.
 - A: Cantrell Road access is a far distance from the reservoir. Might need another option for those who don't want to go as far.
- Q: Could the irrigation canal east of Coyote Creek on OR 126 provide another launch alternative?
 - A: That question has been raised. Fern Ridge Wildlife parking area about a quarter mile east is one option, but having something closer to that canal has been suggested.
- Canoes and kayaks launch from Perkins Peninsula quite often as well.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- Could learn lessons and get design ideas from the MUP along Highway 34 between Corvallis and I-5. Question about crossings is an important consideration. They were careful not to overdesign it. Volume on side streets was low enough that with some signage it really did work just fine.
- Concern about number of conflict points on far west side. Might need consolidation of entry points in some places. Wants to be sure there's adequate attention to potential number of conflict points between Ellmaker Road and Territorial Highway.
 - A: Where someone has multiple access points, those are opportunities to consolidate. Those conversations are happening.
- Green and white stripes in turning areas has helped increase safety for bicyclists. Highway 99 in South Corvallis could be a model.
- Happy this project is being looked at. Turning off OR 126 with bikes crossing is still a small concern. Signage prior to turn would be helpful (e.g. "beware of cyclists").
- Q: At what point will questions get answered?

- A: This first meeting is to understand how people use the corridor. After design work happens, project team will hold another series of meetings in the Spring 2021 to get feedback on proof of concept.
- Q: Given widening and increased traffic volumes, are roundabouts being considered? This could be helpful as gateways to communities that want slower traffic.
 - A: Looking at what traffic control is feasible, including roundabouts, at Green Hill, Huston, and Ellmaker Roads.
- Veneta is designing and pursuing funding for Veneta–Elmira path – consider a connection from this corridor to that path if it receives funding in the future.
 - A: City of Veneta is involved in this process. Work sessions with city staff will ensure city/county/state plans are in alignment.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene: Pedestrian, Bicyclist and Boater Meeting

August 11, 2020



Welcome and Introduction

Self Introduction

- In this virtual meeting setting, Ellen will do a roll call style start to the meeting. When called, please provide a brief introduction including:

-Name

-Organization you represent

-Brief description of how your organization utilizes the corridor

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Pedestrian, Bicyclist, and Boater Meeting #1

Agenda

3:00 – 3:15 Welcome and Introduction

3:15 – 3:25 Project Background and Overview

3:25 – 3:45 Corridor Tour

3:45 – 4:25 Questions and Comments

4:25 – 4:30 Next Steps

OR126: Veneta to Eugene

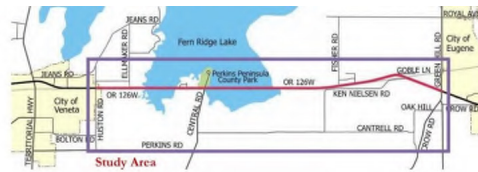


Project Background and Overview



Background

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** evaluated a series of alternatives for the OR126 corridor to address congestion and safety needs. Following an extensive stakeholder outreach effort, a preferred alternative was selected in late 2012. The corridor plan was formally adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission - April 17, 2013



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Background

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** recommended alternative included these elements:

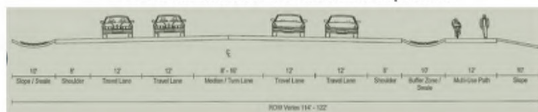
- Four-Lane cross section
- Multi-use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route
- Short-term Spot Improvements



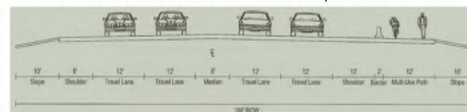
Adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission - April 17, 2013



A - Multi-Use Section with Swale Separation



B - Multi-Use Section with Barrier Separation



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.

*Future phases depend on securing additional funding.

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview

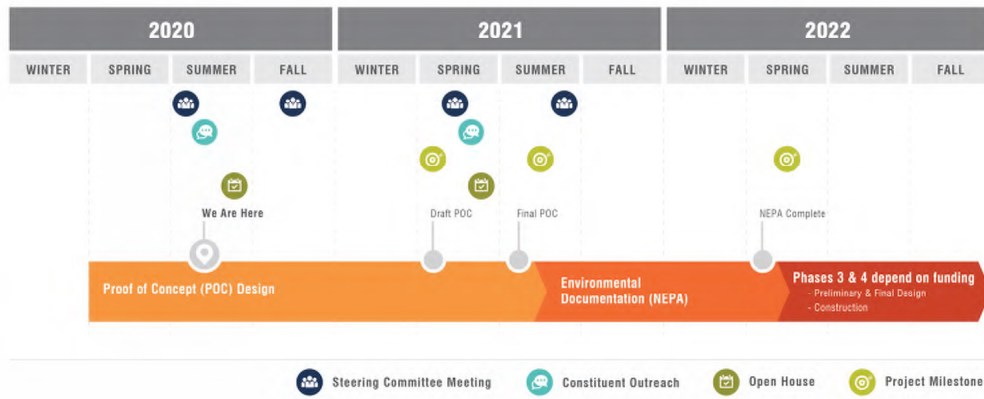


Building on the **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**, the Oregon Department of Transportation will confirm the outcome of the plan, refine the design and complete the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Schedule



OR126: Veneta to Eugene

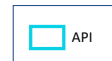


Corridor Tour



Corridor Tour

Segment 1 of 5



Area of Potential Impact (API) encompasses all reasonable potential design elements and environmental constraints.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 2 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 3 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 4 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

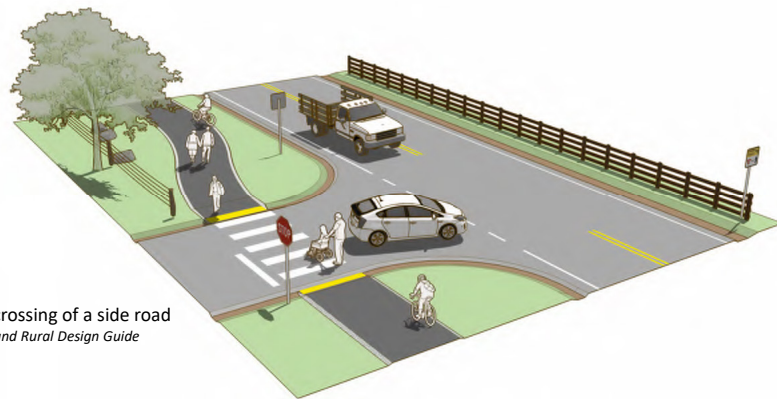
Segment 5 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour



Multi-use Path crossing of a side road
Source: *Small Town and Rural Design Guide*

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Questions and Comments

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Next Steps

- Project team to continue field data collection efforts and begin design refinements

Upcoming Meetings

- Naturalists, Environmentalists, Hunter, Fisher meeting – August 12, 2020
- Virtual Open House #1 – September 8-25, 2020

ODOT Project Website:

<http://ow.ly/1zGa50AHxUE>

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Thank you!

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



**OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Environmental, Hunter, & Fisher Users Consultation Summary**

August 12, 2020, 10:00 – 11:30am
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Alison Center (North American Butterfly Association), Laura Maloney (Willamette Resource & Education Network), Steven Stavros (Emerald Empire Bass Club), Dylan Rice (Duck Hunter/Resident), Sarah Ruggiero Kirby (Churchill High School), Maeve Sowles (Lane County Audubon Society), Debbie Schlenoff (Lane County Audubon Society), Jed Kaul (Long Tom Watershed Council), Clinton Begley (Long Tom Watershed Council), Holly McCrae (McKenzie River Trust), David Simmons (DOWL), Austin Bloom (DOWL), Molly Cary (ODOT), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Absent: Rick Ahrens (North American Butterfly Association)

Follow up: Attendance was impaired by a technical challenge, and input was received by email and incorporated.

Meeting Summary

The last of three constituent meetings on the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan solicited feedback from naturalists, environmentalists, fishers, and hunters. Participants introduced themselves by describing how they currently interact with the project area. David Simmons (DOWL) then gave an overview of the project, followed by a virtual tour of updates to the corridor and environmental considerations in the project area by Austin Bloom (DOWL). Participants had the opportunity to ask questions, share feedback, and make design recommendations to improve the corridor for conservation. Frequently heard comments included:

- Consider how bird habitat and behaviors will be impacted by construction, increased traffic, noise, and potential fuel spills.
- Prioritize safe highway passages for fish, amphibians, and terrestrial wildlife.
- Ensure conservation and mitigation plans are comprehensive, consider a holistic experiential value of the area, and in coordination with nearby land managers.
- Maintain fishing access points and fish populations.
- Consider impacts to sensitive butterfly species and their primary food sources.
- The project area is frequently used for environmental education, and this project has implications and opportunities for community education.

Participant Introductions

- Sarah Ruggiero Kirby: Coordinates habitat restoration projects and data collection/analysis in the area with Churchill High School students.
- Maeve Sowles: Represents Audubon's local members (1,300 households), who use the full span of Fern Ridge and surrounding wetlands for birding outings.

- Debbie Schlenoff: Conservation Chair for North American Butterfly Association chapter.
- Clinton Begley: Works on Long Tom Watershed Council projects along the South Marsh, Coyote Creek area, and others; Hunts waterfowl at Fisher Butte and Coyote Creek; Sails on Fern Ridge Reservoir.
- Jed Kaul: Fish biologist for Long Tom Watershed Council, who works with Army Corps and ODFW to restore habitat along southern edge of reservoir in vicinity of OR 126; Paddles in areas along Coyote Creek and Fern Ridge Reservoir.
- Holly McCrae: Works on McKenzie River Trust's conservation easements upstream and downstream along corridor; Recreates as a boater, birder, and bird tour leader along Fern Ridge area; Ecology educator; Drives corridor to the coast.
- Alison Center: Biologist with Forest Service; Represents North American Butterfly Association, whose members use wetlands and roads off OR 126 to survey butterflies; Leads educational trips.
- Laura Maloney: Leads educational programs around reservoir in partnership with Long Tom Watershed Council, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers; Hosts "Wetland Wander" events monthly; Conducts butterfly surveys and sensitive species monitoring on sites all around the area.
- Steven Stavros: Fishes in the area frequently; Holds fishing tournaments at Fern Ridge Reservoir.
- Dylan Rice: Commutes using OR 126; Uses Coyote Creek and Fern Ridge for duck hunting.

Questions & Comments by Category

BOATER ACCESS:

- Explore opportunities for boater access at stream crossings.
- Consider seasonal hydrologic fluctuations when designing access points.

BIRDING & WATERFOWL HUNTING:

- Birders consider this an important area for conserving birds and habitat.
- Increased speed and traffic will increase risk of collisions with large birds.
- Concern about fuel spills into adjacent waterways and wetlands.
- Birders use a wide variety of access points in the area. Some still bird along OR 126, but many prefer to use Cantrell Road, Coyote Creek, Perkins Peninsula, and Fisher Butte due to increased traffic and limited parking along the highway.
- Look at impacts to bird nesting grounds and migration patterns. What will the impacts of construction and increased noise be?

WILDLIFE:

- Plan for safe passage of terrestrial wildlife species across roadway.
- Pond turtles are another sensitive species to keep in mind.
- Consider all design options for fish, amphibians, and terrestrial wildlife passages (e.g. benches & stream simulation culverts).

CONSERVATION, GENERAL:

- Need to assess impacts and plan for mitigation in a holistic way that goes beyond a 1:1 mitigation model.
- Incorporate Green House Gas studies into NEPA process.
- Coordinate with all managers of small wetland parcels around segment 4 of corridor tour.

FISHING:

- Common area to fish for bass, bluegill, crappie, & catfish. Need to monitor impacts to those populations.
- Fishing boats often access at Perkins Peninsula and Orchard Point Boat Ramps. Primary concern for maintaining access is water levels during spring and summer months.

BUTTERFLIES & PLANTS:

- Butterfly species of primary concern are the Fender's blue (endangered) and great copper (sensitive, restored to this area).
- Concern for Kincaid's lupine, the primary food source for Fender's blue caterpillars.
- Monarch butterflies have been seen at milkweed patches along roadways near project area. Need to maintain or replace milkweed plants.
- Butterfly study trips usually access from Danebo Avenue or Stewart Parkway, not OR 126.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

- Many local organizations lead wildlife and project tours for community members, both within project area and in connected areas nearby. Their job is to tell the story of these places and the people who are responsible for them.
- This project presents a great learning opportunity for students.
- Tribal outreach is very important from an ecological and cultural history perspective. Please provide this group with updates on conversations with tribes.
- Consider opportunities for educational signage about cultural history and ecology along Multi-Use Path and roadway.

APPENDIX: Detailed Comments & Questions with Responses

BOATERS:

- Q: Are you exploring opportunities for boater access at stream crossings?
 - A: Yes, will be looking for both mitigation and enhancement opportunities that increase access.
- Make sure to think about how hydrologic fluctuations impact access points when reservoir is full vs. empty. Maintain access points similar to Coyote Creek that small watercraft can use in wintertime.
 - A: The project team is thinking that.

LAND MANAGERS:

- Q: Will ODOT conduct greenhouse gas impact studies as a part of the NEPA process? This would be an important component.
 - A: Great question, don't know the answer. Will follow up with a response.
- Q: There is some BLM land near the Shell gas station (segment 4 of the corridor tour presentation). Many smaller wetland parcels are managed by various entities for Fender's blue in that area. Whose wetlands conservation plans will you be working with?
 - A: Haven't started reaching out yet but will be coordinating with all wetland landowners, including the City of Eugene.
- Q: Many deer and other terrestrial wildlife species would be impacted by a wider roadway. Could the plan incorporate crossings that allow terrestrial wildlife to cross the highway?
 - A: Terrestrial passage is very important. Terrestrial species crossing was identified as a cause of crashes in the 2011 public involvement.

BIRDERS:

- Birders consider this an important area for conserving birds and habitat.
- Q: Speed and traffic in the area are already well-known issues. There have been collisions with flocks of larger birds. Is there a way to predict what the speed limit will be?
 - A: The current posted speed along the corridor is 55 mph. A review of the speed limit is often conducted after construction to determine if changes to the speed limit are appropriate.
- Concern about fuel spills into adjacent waterways and wetlands.
- Q: Noise from increased speed and traffic has impacts on nesting and anti-predator behavior for birds. Will this definitely become a 4-lane highway and we're now just planning mitigation for it?
 - A: The Corridor Plan recommends the 4-lane alternative, so that's what this effort is evaluating. Part of these outreach efforts is to confirm there is general support for moving in that direction.
- Birder access points vary widely. Some don't like to access expeditions from OR 126 and some do. A lot of people go up to the Royal Avenue platform and bird along the way. Used to park along OR 126 near railroad bridge and paddle north, but now go to Cantrell Road and paddle up to Coyote Creek due to increased traffic and limited parking on OR 126. Perkins Peninsula and Fern

Ridge/Fisher Butte parking areas are also great access points. Location depends on timing and water level. Birders are out there 12 months a year.

HUNTERS:

- What will the impact be on waterfowl population in the area?
- Q: Hunting in the unit on Cantrell Road and Ken Neilsen Road has already dwindled over last few years. Agree we need to widen highway from commuter perspective but need to closely look at the impacts to bird nesting grounds and migrations. Will they want to keep coming back there with construction going on?
 - A: Haven't yet looked at that specifically. Complying with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act will be required, but some open water habitat will undoubtedly be lost. Will have to rely on mitigation, if there's any impact to waterfowl. Want to address impacts that don't fall neatly under statutory requirements and explore all opportunities to reduce impacts, offset impacts, and create improvements as much as possible. This conceptual design phase is the most important for prioritizing conservation.
- Q: Need to account for impacts to entire experiential value rather than just geospatial impacts. Does a 1 for 1 mitigation plan truly compensate for the losses experienced by waterfowl, hunters, recreationists, etc.?
 - A: Great point. Trying not to have blinders on and look at far-reaching impacts.
- Q: How much input will you be soliciting on the conceptual design re: wildlife corridors, options for amphibian crossings, etc.?
 - A: This meeting is part of that effort, but project staff are also very interested in having offline conversations with those interested in helping develop plan details, especially where official information sources are lacking. Will also come back to this group and solicit feedback in Spring 2021 after an initial concept has been developed.
- Q: Is there a plan to have tribal representation on this committee?
 - A: ODOT has a tribal coordinator for the project. They've reached out and handled those initial conversations. Tribes will get a draft archaeological report and indicate the level of involvement they want.
- Appreciate efforts to understand impact on wildlife and acknowledgement that 1:1 mitigation model may not be adequate to compensate for changed wildlife behaviors.
- The Fern Ridge area is considered an IBA (Important Bird Area) designation by Bird Life International (program run by Audubon).

FISHERS:

- Common area to fish for bass, bluegill, crappie, and catfish. Usually boat from Perkins Peninsula. Need to determine whether project would decrease fish population.
- Concerned about lake water level during spring and summer months. Use the Orchard Point ramp 99% of the time for bass tournaments and recreational fishing.

BUTTERFLIES, PLANTS, & WILDLIFE:

- Butterfly species of primary concern are the Fender's Blue and great copper. Fender's blue Butterfly is endangered. The great copper butterfly had been gone but reappeared in this area after restoration.
- If there is any Kincaid's lupine (primary food source for Fender's blue caterpillars) near the construction site, that would be a big concern. Mitigation would be helpful.
- Monarch butterflies have also been seen at a big patch of milkweed along the railroad tracks. Need to maintain milkweed patches or put in new milkweed if it's lost.
- Butterfly trips access from Danebo Avenue (park at the Red House) or at Stewart Parkway. Usually don't access from corridor except at milkweed patch.
- Q: Pond turtles are also listed by the State of Oregon and Forest Service as sensitive species. Are you looking into pond turtles?
 - A: Yes, pond turtles are definitely another species of concern. Interested in speaking offline about known host plants & habitats.
- There are a number of state and federal regulations for fish passage when stream crossings are rebuilt. Benches have been used for amphibians and riparian focused terrestrial wildlife. Wildlife like raccoons, coyotes, and cougars also seem to use stream simulation culverts where there are banks along low flow channels.
- Katie MacKendrick (restoration@longtom.org) is a good person to consult. Has led two projects in/adjacent to the corridor at South Marsh, and Coyote Creek South, and on a forthcoming project at Coyote Creek Northeast. She is also project lead on the restoration activities happening on nearby private lands +/- 300 acres off Green Hill Road, lead on the City of Eugene Ridgeline properties at Murray Hill and Wild Iris Ridge, and on the McKenzie River Trust owned/managed properties at Coyote Oaks and Coyote Spencer Wetlands. All of these projects she has worked on, and continues to work on, are considered to be "connected" lands to this corridor depending on the species flight distances (+/-1 mile for Fenders blue, for example). She will have a wealth of contextual knowledge to bring across the matrix of land ownerships.
- Paul Severns is another good contact to learn more about the great copper butterfly. He was the one that first rediscovered them in the West Eugene Wetlands.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

- It might be helpful to speak with biologists from the Institute for Applied Ecology. They help with sensitive species monitoring and Fender's Blue surveying. Might have information related to Kincaid Lupine.
- WREN works with variety of organizations to take community members on project and wildlife tours focused on sensitive species, plants, wildlife, conservation projects, etc. Many concerns previously voiced also impact education in the area. If any decline in species occurs, it would be their responsibility to convey that to the community. Their responsibility is to tell the stories of these places, both of species and people.

- McKenzie River Trust doesn't lead trips within project area or own property here, does have a couple conservation easements up Coyote Creek.
- Churchill High School projects are mostly along the eastern boundary (Terry Street, West Eugene wetlands, Stewart Pond, etc.). Project area isn't a direct impact to that area, but Amazon Creek flows into this area of interest.
- This project presents a great learning opportunity regarding sustainable design, and creative design solutions for habitat restoration. See opportunity to use this as a case study for students. Would like to get student input through Open House and more.
- The Tribal outreach piece is very important from an ecological and cultural history perspective.
 - A: Have to be very conscientious when doing tribal liaising due to dynamics of inter-governmental relations. Will include update on tribal conversations in the Spring meeting.
- Opportunities for signage along Multi-Use Path/roadway are great (e.g. cultural history, place name, language, stream crossings and geography).
 - A: More likely to put signage on Multi-Use Path than the state highway due to safety regulations. Can definitely look at opportunities along path.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene: Naturalist, Environmental, Hunter, Fisher Meeting

August 12, 2020



Welcome and Introduction

Self Introduction

- In this virtual meeting setting, Ellen will do a roll call style start to the meeting. When called, please provide a brief introduction including:

-Name

-Organization you represent

-Brief description of how your organization utilizes the corridor

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Naturalist, Environmental, Hunter, Fisher Meeting #1

Agenda

10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Introduction

10:15 – 10:25 Project Background and Overview

10:25 – 10:50 Environmental Studies and Corridor Tour

10:50 – 11:25 Questions and Comments

11:25 – 11:30 Next Steps

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Background and Overview

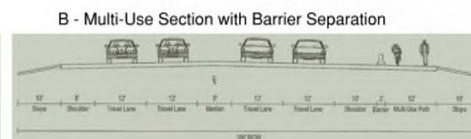


The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** evaluated a series of alternatives for the OR126 corridor to address congestion and safety needs. Following an extensive stakeholder outreach effort, a preferred alternative was selected in late 2012. The corridor plan was formally adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** recommended alternative included these elements:

-



Project Overview

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.

*Future phases depend on securing additional funding.

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Project Overview



Building on the **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**, the Oregon Department of Transportation will confirm the outcome of the plan, refine the design and complete the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene





Environmental Studies and Corridor Tour

Environmental Studies



Purpose: define *affected environment*, including resources in *Area of Potential Impact (API)* to inform design and Federal environmental classification.

API encompasses all reasonable potential design elements and environmental constraints.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Environmental Studies

Discipline	Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis will be performed to determine if project conforms with air quality goals
Archaeological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural resources have been previously identified near the corridor - a review of the corridor will be conducted
Biological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endangered Species Act (ESA) plants and critical habitat present in the corridor No ESA listed fish present
Historic Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A field review is scheduled to review residential and business properties



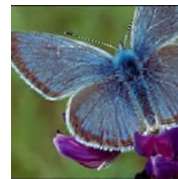
Willamette Valley Daisy



Kincaid's Lupine



Bradshaw's Lomatium



Fender's Blue Butterfly Habitat

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Environmental Studies

Discipline	Summary
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noise analysis in accordance with FHWA and ODOT will be conducted to determine if mitigation is required or practical
Parks & Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design will avoid and/or minimize impacts to these resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perkins Peninsula Park Fern Ridge Wildlife Area - South Marsh Parking Lot Fern Ridge Wildlife Area - Fisher Butte Parking Lot
Water Quality/Hydrology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater treatment will be planned consistent with state and federal standards
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design will avoid/minimize/mitigate impacts to important water bodies

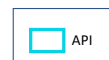


OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 1 of 5



Area of Potential Impact (API) encompasses all reasonable potential design elements and environmental constraints.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 2 of 5

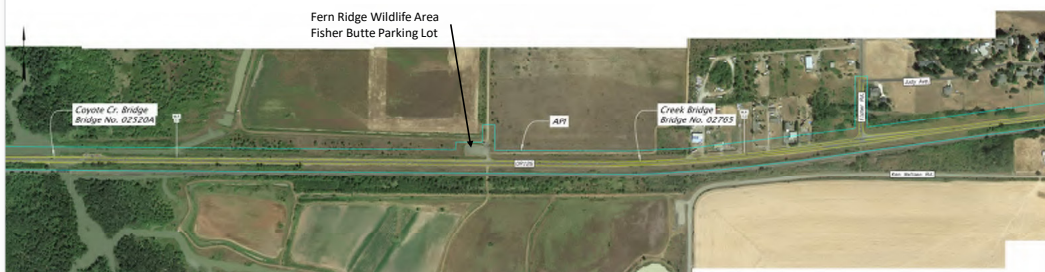


OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 3 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 4 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Corridor Tour

Segment 5 of 5



OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Questions and Comments

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Next Steps

- Project team to continue field data collection efforts and begin design refinements

Upcoming Meetings

- Virtual Open House #1 – September 8-25, 2020

ODOT Project Website:

<http://ow.ly/1zGa50AHxUE>

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



Thank you!

OR126: Veneta to Eugene



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene Constituent Consultations Summary April 15 & 16, 2021

The project organized three groups for in-depth stakeholder conversations:

- Highway Users: emergency vehicles, freight, businesses, commuters
- Adjacent Users: pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters
- Wetlands Users: naturalists, ecology educators, fishers, hunters

We first met with these groups in August 2020 to confirm the direction established by the 2013 Fern Ridge Corridor Plan and to enlist organizations to spread the word about how to connect with the project.

On April 14 & 15, 2021, we again met virtually with these groups to review study progress.

The goals of the second round of meetings were to:

- Review the engineering and environmental studies.
- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Listen and respond to concerns and document them.
- Gather wetland mitigation strategy suggestions.
- Explain the schedule of the current NEPA effort, and future phases.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.
- Apprise participants of the open house in April/May.

What follows are summaries of each consultation organized by the key themes discussed.

Prepared for ODOT
By Cogito & DOWL
April 2021

OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Highway Users Consultation Summary
April 14, 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 AM
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Matt House (Western Lane Ambulance District), Mayor Keith Weiss (City of Veneta), Jesse Dolin (Oregon Coast Visitors Association), Bobby King (RR King Logging), Stephanie Sarles (Siuslaw Vision), Craig Soderberg (City of Veneta), Randy Duval (Mapleton School District), Bart Mealer (Friends of Florence Van), Kelly Stewart (Port of Siuslaw), Mayor Joe Henry (City of Florence), Mike Miller (City of Florence), Richard Colton (Three Rivers Casino), Kurt Straube (DariMart), DeAnna Townsend (Mid Lane Cares), Molly Cary (ODOT), Frannie Brindle (ODOT), David Simmons (DOWL), Stan Petroff (DOWL), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Invited but unable to attend: Katy Pelroy (Ecosystems Transfer and Recycling), Adam Rosenthal (Y Cook Food Stop), Tressa Miller (Lane Fire Authority)

Follow up: We extended email and phone opportunities for input to any who accepted and did not attend, or experienced technical challenge to participation.

A PowerPoint accompanied the presentation and was emailed to those who could not view the shared screen during the meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint was also sent with this summary.

Welcome and Introduction – Teninty

Ellen welcomed the group and reminded them that we are in the final stages of public involvement on this project. The meeting purpose is to hear feedback on project developments since the last round of constituent meetings in August 2020. This conversation was organized to hear from users who drive the corridor frequently. Ellen invited everyone to introduce themselves and share how they use the project area:

- Matt House – Conducts interfacility transfers between Florence and the valley with Western Lane Ambulance District.
- Mayor Weiss – The area is important to Veneta for many reasons. Concerned with transportation from I-5 to Florence going through Veneta.
- Jesse Dolin – A lot of travelers on 126 are headed to the coast. Appreciates being here.
- Bobby King – Runs a logging business out of Florence. A lot of their trucks go back and forth through this area.
- Stephanie Sarles – Works with a community building organization that makes sure everyone is connected. Interested in economic development, travel, tourism, healthcare.
- Craig Soderberg – Lives in Veneta, serves on Park Board & Planning Commission, works in Eugene. Drives highway on a daily basis. Has both personal and community interests in the corridor.
- Randy Duval – As maintenance supervisor for the school district, runs a lot of busses through that corridor and has lots of staff that drive there.

- Bart Mealer – Provides daily no cost bus transport for cancer patients between Florence, Eugene, and Springfield.
- Mayor Joe Henry – Mayor of Florence. Happy to participate.
- Mike Miller – Florence community utilizes the corridor extensively by traveling between Florence & Eugene for shopping, business, and leisure.
- Rich Colton – This highway is extremely important to the casino, given how many visitors come to the coast from Eugene, Springfield, and I-5.
- DeAnna Townsend – A lot of their clients drive or walk to their programs. Soon going to be partnering with a new health clinic at the Elmira High School. Potentially have a lot more clients who will be traveling on Territorial Road. Also commutes from Eugene to Veneta every day.
- Kurt Straube – Manages two DariMart stores in Veneta that both generate a lot of truck and customer traffic. Store on 126 & Ellmaker is most directly impacted, but both stores rely on that connection.

Project Background – Simmons

- This project builds on the Fern Ridge Corridor plan. In that planning effort, ODOT and stakeholders evaluated a series of alternatives to address safety issues and congestion along OR 126. After substantial outreach at that time, a recommended alternative was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in 2013.
- Fern Ridge Corridor Plan recommended alternative included:
 - Four-lane cross section.
 - Multi-Use Path (MUP) adjacent to the roadway or along a southern route.
 - Short-term spot improvements.
- The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan was Phase 1 of the planning effort. We are currently in Phase 2 – ensuring there is still support for the recommended alternative, refining the design, and completing environmental studies (funded through HB 2017 in the Oregon legislature).
- Funding for future phases has not been secured. Completing the current Phase 2 will position the project to be eligible for federal funding and grants.
- The draft Proof of Concept (POC) presented today represents a 10% level of design.
- Project spans from Huston Road in Veneta to Terry Street in Eugene. It extends about one mile longer into Eugene than the Corridor Plan did, for consistency and continuity.

Engineering Status - Petroff

The project team has been refining the Four-Lane Alternative recommended in the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan. Some of the modifications include adding retaining walls, shifting the roadway alignment in some places, and evaluating intersection improvements including roundabouts. Given that a key purpose of this project is improving safety, the project team presented historical crash data along the corridor along with information on how signalized and roundabout intersections improve safety.

- Crashes have been steadily increasing along the corridor over the last 20 years.

- There have been six fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes reported in the last 5-year crash history. These are spread throughout the whole area; there is not one clear hotspot.
- A total of 209 crashes were documented between 2014-2018. The primary crash type was rear-ending, with 70-75% occurring in daylight and not in adverse weather.
- The heat map shows more crashes at the east end (between Green Hill Road and Fisher Road), likely due to congestion, difficulty pulling off the road, and difficulty making turns safely.
- The team completed traffic analysis and forecasts for nine intersections along the corridor. Five were found to need modifications to meet ODOT's mobility targets (capacity requirements).
- Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended at Green Hill Road, Central Road, and Huston Road; Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements were recommended at Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road.
- The POC includes two options for every intersection, but ODOT currently favors roundabouts for their safety and maintenance benefits. Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 48%. However, they tend to cost more to construct and have a bigger footprint.
- Each roundabout is unique depending on constraints in each area (e.g., railroad, private properties).
- The turn lane improvement would add some space in the median, where drivers turning onto the highway can accelerate before fully merging into traffic.
- Several sample sections of roadway were presented:
 - Terry Street – Green Hill: This section looks similar to existing four lane section east of Terry Street. This is a more urban cross section with curbs on both sides, raised median, left turn lanes where necessary, and landscaped planting strips. Sidewalk on the south side and MUP on north side. Just 0.3 miles north on Terry Street, there's a good connection for bikers and pedestrians to get on the Fern Ridge Path.
 - Along Reservoir: The roadway widens towards the railroad and into the reservoir here, but the plan is to make the embankment slope steeper to decrease impact to reservoir while still providing a wide shoulder and barrier between the roadway and MUP. Anywhere that has a barrier or swale separating path and roadway, the path will be 14-feet wide.
 - Section at Shady Rest: The team shifted the alignment south here and added retaining walls to avoid impacts to houses on the north side.
 - Ellmaker – Huston: This is a transition zone from rural to suburban just east of the Veneta city limits. The wider roadway is shifted south, with a small retaining wall used in some places to minimize impacts to parking areas on north side. Planning for raised median in the center of the roadway; transit stops where needed and a curb separating the roadway and the MUP.

Environmental Status – Simmons

Over the last several months, a significant amount of environmental fieldwork has been accomplished. Most of the areas of environmental study are underway, drafted, or completed.

Dave presented a status report on each study, with the exception of two discipline areas – Community/Environmental Justice and Parks and Recreation – which will be completed after the design and other environmental studies are further along.

- Biological resources: The area has endangered plants and Fender’s Blue Butterfly habitat. Efforts are underway to minimize impacts to plants and habitat.
- Wetlands: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team is considering potential ways to mitigate impacts based on the initial project footprint.
 - Slide image (26) demonstrates wetland mapping along the corridor. Red lines delineate area of potential impact (API); the API serves as the conservative outer boundary of what areas may potentially be impacted – and therefore the limits of where data is collected. The blue area denotes wetlands within the project API.
 - The West Eugene Wetlands Plan – adopted in 2004 by Eugene and Lane County – creates special protections for wetlands identified by the Plan. Preliminary conversations are underway with the City and County to outline the amendment process that must happen prior to construction. It is helpful that this project is included in both the City’s and County’s Transportation System Plans.
- Rare Plants: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team is developing a mitigation plan. Will prepare a biological assessment and then have a consultation with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services later this summer.
- Air Quality: Draft memorandum is prepared. Impacts fall below threshold required to trigger further action/mitigation.
- Noise: Draft report is prepared. Noise increased to the point that walls were evaluated at two locations. Neither location met the benefit vs. cost standard threshold to recommend noise walls.
- Archaeological: There is a lot of potential for archaeological sites along the corridor. An extensive amount of field work is underway and will be completed throughout the summer.
- Historic: Draft memorandum is prepared. A few structures are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These will undergo further evaluation to determine their eligibility.
- Recreational access changes: The informal boat access at Coyote Creek along the reservoir section will be eliminated. ODOT does not have a responsibility to replace it, but is interested in having conversations to consider improving other access options, in partnership with other agencies. Several options were discussed:
 - Cantrell Road: Calmer location for launching due to less traffic, but also in disrepair. Located about a mile upstream along Coyote Creek. May need investment in enhancements to both launch facilities and parking. ODF&W owns the land on both sides; the County owns the roadway.
 - Perkins Peninsula: Distance from informal launch to Perkins Peninsula is about a mile, but otherwise this is a good alternative launch location.
 - Fisher Butte parking lot: From a portage standpoint, there is quite a bit of distance from parking lot to the water. There may be a possibility to extend water or to provide parking access to launch closer to the water.

Ellen asked for clarifying questions, comments, and suggestions up to this point from three user perspectives:

- Emergency Vehicles / Large Rigs
 - Matt – Concerned about large apparatus trucks navigating the roundabouts. For EMS/ambulance, it is usually not a factor. With double lanes, it will probably be big enough.
 - Stan – Has heard this concern a lot. ODOT has done a lot of simulations with many sizes of trucks to test their turning radius.
 - Bobby – Not a fan of roundabouts but will accept them given the safety concerns. Concerned about the length of log trucks, though.
 - Katie was not able to join, but spoke on the phone to add the concerns of sanitation vehicles that frequently have to stop and make turns.
 - Richard – Doesn't see any concerns. It seems like the team is taking a lot into consideration. It sounds like roundabouts are probably the answer; not stoplights.
- Coastal residents/users:
 - Mayor Henry – The design appears well done. Likes roundabouts and believes they will be beneficial to everyone from Florence who commutes through the corridor.
 - Bart – Likes the idea. Folks who travel faster than busses and vans will be able to get around them more easily and safely.
 - Jesse & Stephanie - No additional comments.
- Commuters:
 - Craig – Is there education for new drivers on how to handle roundabouts? Problems arise with yielding, going too fast, etc.
 - Dave – There is usually extensive outreach and education to remind people of what the rules are. It is in the driver's manual. There are still pros and cons to roundabouts and a decision won't be made in this phase. Signals are less expensive initially and have less footprint; they are more expensive to maintain and have negative air quality impacts from idling. Roundabout design has evolved quite a bit to accommodate big trucks. Google "roundabout truck rodeos" to see videos of oversized and permit sized vehicles running through design mock-ups.
 - Bobby – Have you done those experiments with low boy trucks that carry big equipment?
 - Dave – Yes.
 - Mayor Weiss – We need improved transportation as more people move into the area. The most important part of this project is safety – roundabouts are well worth additional impacts if they save lives.
 - DeAnna - Her daughter was hit in a roundabout recently. Accepts roundabouts if it's the only solution, but carefully assess whether this is the right option for safety on a road that is going to see increasing traffic, especially truck traffic.
- Other comments:
 - Kurt – As the owner of a business at the Ellmaker intersection, only concern about a roundabout is the impact of a bigger footprint on their driveways. If it encroached into the parking lot or restricted the flow of traffic through two accesses, that would have a very negative impact on their business.

- Dave – Design details such as driveway locations will be evaluated when funding is secured for design and construction. Collecting this type of input now will assist when evaluating tradeoffs in the future. A traffic signal or roundabout are being considered at the Ellmaker intersection.
- Craig – How much do roundabouts on a highspeed highway cause people to slow down? Does it create a backlog on the highway?
 - Dave – Lots of data has been collected in rural locations. These are a little larger to allow for higher speeds (20-25mph) through the roundabouts. The design also uses reverse curvature and plenty of signage approaching roundabouts to ensure drivers slow down.

Draft Implementation Plan – Simmons

Along with the POC, the project team is thinking about how to break the project into smaller sections for implementation. As funding for the entire project is unlikely, dividing the project into segments should provide more opportunities to build portions of the project as funding is secured.

- The implementation plan will likely change depending on what funding becomes available. The draft is a starting point to help people communicate with elected officials.
- The initial draft concept proposes beginning at the Eugene end, since that is where the 4-lane section stops today and where many of the accidents and higher traffic volumes occur.
- The four sections include: 1) 1-mile section to Green Hill Road; 2) railroad overcrossing; 3) Fisher Road intersection to Fisher Butte parking lot; 4) longest section adjacent to reservoir to Ellmaker Road (will require permit from the U.S. Army Corps.- best to secure permit entire segment at once); 5) entering Veneta at Huston.
- The entire project is over \$200 million, so breaking it up into phases will make it easier to secure funding.

Q&A

- Craig – Are all five sections about equal cost?
 - Dave – Section 4 is the longest and most expensive, so looking at dividing it into two sections.
- Bobby – Is any funding currently secured for the project?
 - Dave – No, not yet. This stage of completing the environmental documentation makes it more competitive for federal funding.
- Jesse – Love the idea of Cantrell Road kayak launch.

Project Schedule and Next Steps – Simmons & Teninty

The project team plans to finalize the POC in the next several months, with input from agencies. They hope to have the environmental documentation completed within the next year. The Draft POC with a program budget and implementation plan will inform state and local agencies in seeking funding. Three constituent meetings (including this one) are being held this week, and a second online open house will begin on April 26th.

Additional discussion and closing comments:

- Craig – Is there a strong voice to maintain the highway as it is? That seems impossible.
 - Ellen – There are environmental concerns and concerns about expanding facilities for fossil fuel-based transportation.
- Molly – Appreciates hearing from this group of users because they verify that this is a needed project. Appreciates how they articulate the problems on the highway; just sad ODOT can't move immediately into constructing a piece of this. Requests that constituents speak with their elected officials to help secure funding.
- Mayor Weiss – Hasn't heard from Travel Lane County. Are they involved in this project?
 - Ellen – Yes, they have been involved since the beginning. A representative will join the bike, pedestrian, and boater group this afternoon.
- Jesse – Has a good synergy and open communication with Travel Lane County.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Bike, Ped, Boater Consultation Summary
April 14, 2021, 2:00 – 3:30 PM
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Jeff Malik (Travel Lane County), Jenna Berman (ODOT), Todd Bowen (Lane County Parks-Perkins Peninsula), Reed Dunbar (City of Eugene), Evan MacKenzie (City of Veneta), Larry Craig (Mobility International), Larry Diffie (GEARS – Greater Eugene Area Riders), Len Goodwin (City of Veneta), Cassidy Mills (Lane Council of Governments), Emma Newman (City of Springfield), Richard Hughes (Eugene VELO Cycle Club), Sasha Vartanian (Lane County), Tressa Miller (Lane Fire Authority), Dwan Sheppard (Co-Motion), Molly Cary (ODOT), Frannie Brindle (ODOT), David Simmons (DOWL), Stan Petroff (DOWL), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Invited but unable to attend: Shane Harvey (Oregon Country Fair) Crystalyn Frank (Oregon Country Fair), Tom Cotter (City of Veneta)

Follow up: We extended email and phone opportunities for input to any who accepted and did not attend, or experienced technical challenge to participation.

A PowerPoint accompanied the presentation and was emailed to those who could not view the shared screen during the meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint was also sent with this summary.

Welcome and Introductions – Watchie

Chris welcomed the group and reminded everyone that this is the second of two consultation meetings being held for bikers, pedestrians, and boaters to provide suggestions and considerations for this project team. Following this group's initial meeting in August, there was an open house with a high level of participation. This discussion will look at the Proof of Concept (POC), which is about 10% design, and will be followed by another open house later this month. Chris then invited attendees to introduce themselves and share how they use the highway.

- Jeff Malik – Promotes tourism to Eugene, Veneta, and other destinations nearby. Very interested in use by locals and visitors to the area, particularly outdoor recreationists.
- Todd Bowen - Manages three major parks on Fern Ridge, including Perkins Peninsula. Excited to open it up to the bicycle community and fisherman.
- Jenna Berman – Excited about looking at opportunities for future projects.
- Reed Dunbar – Interested in forging connections to the west of Eugene and making sure there is multimodal access between Veneta and West Eugene.
- Evan MacKenzie – Overwhelming majority of Veneta residents use the corridor to commute into Eugene/Springfield for employment and service needs.
- Larry Craig – Personal interest as a manual wheelchair user - uses hand bike attachment to frequently ride bike paths all around Eugene and Lane County. Mobility International holds activities at Fern Ridge, including people who use adapted sailboats.

- Larry Diffie – Interested in safe passageways to get to places like Veneta. Loves to ride to Veneta but currently has to go the long way around.
- Len Goodwin – 126 is the artery that feeds the City of Veneta. Interested in stimulating tourism and recreational activities. Has concern about the highway portion of this project, but happy about economic growth opportunities and ability for more active transportation and alternate users to get to the Fern Ridge and Veneta areas.
- Cassidy Mills – Works with rural communities to increase access through active and shared transportation. Represents Veneta Elementary School and Elmira School communities.
- Emma Newman – Springfield resident and personal user of 126 to get to the coast.
- Richard Hughes – Uses 126 as a cyclist, boater, and for driving to the coast.
- Sasha Vartanian – So many ways this is an important area for Lane County. County has a “towards zero deaths” policy, and 126 is a huge safety issue for all users. In the midst of creating the first Lane County Bicycle Master Plan. Looking at 126 and other opportunities for people to bike to Veneta from the metro area.

Project Background – Simmons

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- Each roundabout is unique depending on constraints in each area (e.g., railroad, private properties).
- The turn lane improvement would add some space in the median where drivers turning onto the highway can accelerate before fully merging into traffic.
- Sasha – How do roundabouts work for bicyclists?
 - Stan – At each approach to the roundabout, there are ramps designed to bring bikes off the bike lane/roadway shoulder onto the sidewalk. Bicyclists and pedestrians are then directed to crossings at each entrance to the roundabout, where median islands provide a refuge in the center as they cross the road.
- Emma – Thought the recommendation was to have a shared use path on the north side. Can you clarify the recommendation for bike facility?
 - Stan – That is correct. There will also be 8-foot shoulders, so nothing is preventing bikes from using the roadway shoulder. But the hope is that bikes will use the 12-foot separated multi-use path (MUP).
- Len – Do roundabouts also reduce the speed that people move through them, further preventing crashes?
 - Stan – That is correct. We also design the approaches to the roundabout using reversing curves, so that traffic has to slow down before entering the roundabout.
- Several sample sections of roadway were presented:
 - Terry – Green Hill: This section looks similar to existing four-lane section east of Terry Street. This is a more urban cross section with curbs on both sides, raised median, left turn lanes where necessary, and landscaped planting strips. Sidewalk on the south side and MUP on north side. Just 0.3 miles north on Terry Street, there's a good connection for bikers and pedestrians to get on the Fern Ridge Path.
 - Along Reservoir: The roadway widens towards railroad and into reservoir here, but the plan is to make the embankment slope steeper to decrease impact to

reservoir while still providing a wide shoulder and barrier between the roadway and the MUP. Anywhere that has a barrier or swale separating path from roadway, the path will be 14-feet wide.

- Richard – Have you considered running the path from the corridor down Green Hill to Meadowlark Prairie? That’s where the bike path terminates, and more people are using Crow Road than would be using 126 as a connector.
 - Dave – Making that connection is in the City’s Transportation System Plan, but it’s not a part of this project.
- Len – How wide will the boating channel from Coyote Creek into the reservoir be once this is complete?
 - Stan – It will get a little bit narrower, but not significantly. A retaining wall will hold in the fill to reduce impact to the channel.
- Section at Shady Rest: The team shifted the alignment south here and added retaining walls to avoid impacts to houses on the north side.
- Ellmaker – Huston: This is a transition zone from rural to suburban just east of the Veneta city limits. The wider roadway is shifted south, with a smaller retaining wall used in some places to minimize impacts to parking areas on north side. Planning for a raised median in the center of the roadway; transit stops where needed and a curb separating the roadway and the MUP.

Q & A

- Len – The reservoir cross section didn’t show anything about existing boating access. Will the unofficial access be eliminated as a part of that process?
 - Dave – Yes. This will be discussed later in the meeting.
- Larry – Will reflectors be added to the concrete barriers separating the MUP on north side, for traffic to see at night?
 - Stan – Typically do that at curbs, but can definitely add more. That level of detail will be addressed later in the design process.
- Reed – Concerned about how the MUP interacts with high-speed traffic going in and out of driveways between Ellmaker and Huston Roads. Are you bending out the MUP at driveways, or planning to consolidate the number of driveways?
 - Dave – While they’ve given some thought to that, the ability to consolidate and move driveways will be deferred until there is funding available to review accesses.
- Emma – Concerned about people speeding into Veneta if the roadway is wide at that section. Do any areas still have swale separating the MUP from roadway? Will the 10-foot-wide shoulder be necessary where MUP doesn’t have a physical barrier?
 - Stan – There are still some segments along the corridor with a swale, but not much. The shoulder width is standard for ODOT. Moving barriers closer to the roadway makes it likelier that someone who runs off roadway might hit it. Hopefully roundabouts will help reduce speeding into Veneta.
- Emma – Curious about ODOT’s new Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD), which may change standards for shoulder width and support slower speed.
 - Jenna – This project area is a mix of rural and urban context. Not sure if the plan is relevant.

- Stan – Did look at the BUD process. It switches back and forth from rural to urban standards. The rural portion is more to the urban standard than it usually would be.
- Jenna – The BUD doesn't talk a lot about shoulder width.
 - Dave – Trying not to deviate from ODOT's standard at this phase. Better to apply for those exceptions when funding for a design is secured.
- Evan – Also concerned about the MUP west of Ellmaker Road, with 60 mph traffic and people making extremely speedy exits out of driveways onto 126. That sounds like a terrible environment as a bicyclist. Would likely divert to Wildwood as a personal user. There has to be a better location than putting cyclists in harm's way by encouraging them to use 126 there.
 - Dave – Interested in a conversation about where the MUP stops. Maybe there could be a parallel route that diverts away at Ellmaker. That level of feedback is welcome on the POC right now.
- Tressa – Also sees huge public safety concern with a MUP from Ellmaker to Territorial near the highway speeds (even with roundabouts). Businesses will lose front edge and people will be speeding out of driveways. Not sure diverting the path would help.
- Len – Glad to see no noise walls are recommended.

Environmental Status – Simmons

Over the last several months, a significant amount of environmental fieldwork has been accomplished. Most of the areas of environmental study are underway, drafted, or completed. Dave presented a status report on each study, with the exception of two discipline areas – Community/Environmental Justice and Parks and Recreation – which will be completed after the design and other environmental studies are further along.

- Biological resources: The area has endangered plants and Fender's Blue Butterfly habitat. Efforts are underway to minimize impacts to plants and habitat.
- Wetlands: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team is considering potential ways to mitigate impacts based on the initial project footprint.
 - Slide image (26) demonstrates wetland mapping along the corridor. Red lines delineate area of potential impact (API); the API serves as the conservative outer boundary of what areas may potentially be impacted – and therefore the limits of where data is collected. The blue area denotes wetlands within the project API.
 - The West Eugene Wetlands Plan, adopted in 2004 by Eugene and Lane County, creates special protections for wetlands identified by the Plan. Preliminary conversations are underway with the City and County to outline the amendment process that must happen prior to construction. It is helpful that this project is included in both the City's and County's Transportation System Plans.
- Rare Plants: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team is developing a mitigation plan. Will prepare a biological assessment and then have a consultation with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services later this summer.
- Air Quality: Draft memorandum is prepared. Impacts fall below threshold required to trigger further action/mitigation.

- Noise: Draft report is prepared. Noise increased to the point that walls were evaluated at two locations. Neither met the benefit vs. cost standard threshold to recommend noise walls.
- Archaeological: There is a lot of potential for archaeological sites along the corridor. An extensive amount of field work is underway and will be completed throughout the summer.
- Historic: Draft memorandum is prepared. A few structures are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These will undergo further evaluation to determine their eligibility.
- Recreational access changes: The informal boat access at Coyote Creek along the reservoir section will be eliminated. ODOT does not have a responsibility to replace it, but is interested in having conversations to consider improving other access options, in partnership with other agencies. Several options were discussed:
 - Cantrell Road: Calmer location for launching due to less traffic, but also in disrepair. Located about a mile upstream along Coyote Creek. May need investment in enhancements to both launch facilities and parking. ODF&W owns the land on both sides; the County owns the roadway.
 - Perkins Peninsula: Distance from informal launch to Perkins Peninsula is about a mile, but otherwise this is a good alternative launch location.
 - Fisher Butte parking lot: From a portage standpoint, there is quite a bit of distance from parking lot to water access. There may be a possibility to extend water or to provide parking access to launch closer to the water.
- Participants offer suggestions and comments about recreational access alternatives:
 - Evan – Rides by the Cantrell Road access every day. The site does not appear to be maintained. The boat launch shown in the photo has not been there for at least a year and a half. It is also increasingly being used as a camp site for unhoused population. Beyond the difficulty getting into the water, there are a number of downed trees in the water. Unclear if one could reach the reservoir paddling from here.
 - Emma – Has put in at Cantrell Road within the last year. Hard to do without infrastructure or a launch, but it was passable to paddle to the reservoir.
 - Jeff – Agrees with Evan and folks from Veneta.
 - Todd – No concerns about Perkins Peninsula as the alternate boat access point. They definitely have room to handle the extra pressure from the informal launch being removed. Happy to hear the channel near roadway will remain wide enough for motorized boats. This was a concern after the last meeting. Regarding roundabouts, he sees a lot of people entering the highway at 55 or 60 mph; a roundabout would be great.
 - Cassidy – Has a meeting with principal of Veneta Elementary coming up. Will debrief this presentation with her and follow up with Chris.
 - Larry – Appreciates the great information and conversation. Looks forward to seeing what occurs.

Draft Implementation Plan – Simmons

Along with the POC, the project team is thinking about how to break the project into smaller sections for implementation. As funding for the entire project is unlikely, dividing the project into segments should provide more opportunities to build portions of the project as funding is secured.

- The implementation plan will likely change depending on what funding becomes available. The draft is meant to be a starting point to help people communicate with elected officials.
- The initial draft concept proposes beginning at the Eugene end, since that is where the 4-lane section stops today and where many of the accidents and higher traffic volumes occur.
- The four sections include: 1) 1-mile section to Green Hill; 2) railroad overcrossing; 3) Fisher Road intersection to Fisher Butte parking lot; 4) longest section adjacent to reservoir to Ellmaker road (will require permit from the Army Corps.- best to secure permit entire segment at once); 5) entering Veneta at Huston.
- The entire project is over \$200 million, so breaking it up into phases will make it easier to secure funding.

Q&A

- Sasha – Understands the need to break this up into phases. It would be nice to see area with highest fatal and severe injury crashes prioritized first.
 - Dave – It is true that the whole corridor has safety risks. It comes down to conversations about where it makes sense to build first. It would be hard to have a 4-lane highway in the middle and retain only two lanes on either end. Another challenge is when to integrate the multi-use path. It's harder to obtain the true benefit of this before the whole corridor is improved.
- Reed – Recommends starting with segment 4, since it is currently the most inaccessible portion for multimodal accommodation.
 - Dave – Would love to do it all at once. There are indeed many ways to break it up. This is just meant to understand what each phase would entail.
- Chris – Is it possible to build the multi-use path as a separate section?
 - Dave – Since the MUP is at the edge of the roadway, that would be difficult. You could phase it, but you would need to at least build the embankment in the wetland area all at once.

Project Schedule and Next Steps – Simmons & Watchie

The project team plans to finalize the POC in the next several months, with input from agencies. They hope to have the environmental documentation completed within the next year. The Draft POC with a program budget and implementation plan will inform state and local agencies in seeking funding. Three constituent meetings (including this one) are being held this week, and a second online open house will begin on April 26th.

Additional discussion and closing comments:

- Jenna – ODOT’s new Active Transportation Needs Inventory has a bike/ped score. East and west ends of the project area are the most “red” or toughest for bike/peds. Equity score and connectivity scores are included as well.
 - Reed – Not sure if he agrees.
 - Dave – The implementation plan could certainly begin at either end of the project.
- Molly –The project wants to be all things to all people right now but will have to make choices at some point. We are hearing great support and are getting through the NEPA process. It would be wonderful to construct something within the next several years. The only way that happens is if people advocate with their elected officials.
- Please share the open house link.

OR126: Veneta to Eugene
Ecology, Hunter, & Fisher Consultation Summary
April 15, 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 AM
via Microsoft Teams

In Attendance: Debbie Schlenoff (Lane County Audubon Society), Alison Center (North American Butterfly Association), Holly McCrae (McKenzie River Trust), Dylan Rice (duck hunter), Jed Kaul (Long Tom Watershed Council), Laura Maloney (Willamette Resource & Education Network), Shane Harvey (Oregon Country Fair), Molly Cary (ODOT), Austin Bloom (DOWL), Lizzie Zemke (DOWL), David Simmons (DOWL), Bob Goodrich (DOWL), Frannie Brindle (ODOT), Ellen Teninty (Cogito), Chris Watchie (Cogito), Alex Renirie (Cogito)

Invited but unable to attend: Councilor Tom Cotter (City of Veneta), Katy Pelroy (Ecosystems Transfer and Recycling), Adam Rosenthal (Y Cook Food Stop), Steven Stavros (Emerald Empire Bass Club), Michael Hartman (Native Plant Society Emerald Chapter), Sarah Ruggiero Kirby (Churchill High School)

Follow up: We extended email and phone opportunities for input to any who accepted and did not attend, or experienced technical challenge to participation.

A PowerPoint accompanied the presentation and was emailed to those who could not view the shared screen during the meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint was also sent with this summary.

Welcome and Introduction - Teninty

Ellen welcomed the group and reminded everyone that we are in the final stages of public involvement on this project. The meeting purpose is to hear feedback on project developments since the last round of constituent meetings in August 2020. Two other meetings yesterday consulted with highway users, bikers, pedestrians, and boaters. This meeting is for ecologists, hunters, and fishers who use the wetlands area in particular. Ellen invited everyone to introduce themselves and share how they use the project area:

- Debbie Schlenoff – Audubon members and many other community members use the Fern Ridge area for birding. It's considered an important bird area.
- Alison Center – Uses the area, especially the West Eugene Wetlands, for giving butterfly field trips and doing butterfly counts. The area has a number of sensitive species and good habitat for a variety of butterflies (e.g., milkweed patches along south side of road).
- Holly McCrae – Management partners in the West Eugene Wetlands. Have a couple conservation areas they manage near the corridor.
- Dylan Rice – Drives the corridor every day to get to work in the Fern Ridge School District. Hunts and fishes in the area regularly.
- Jed Kaul – Work on a variety of public and private lands to restore habitat in the Fern Ridge area. Also fishes the reservoir.
- Laura Maloney – Runs a lot of programs for adult and child learners in the Fern Ridge area.
- Shane Harvey – Representative from Oregon Country Fair.

Project Background - Simmons

- This project builds on the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan. In that planning effort, ODOT and stakeholders evaluated a series of alternatives to address safety issues and congestion along OR 126. After substantial outreach at that time, a recommended alternative was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) in 2013.
- Fern Ridge Corridor Plan recommended alternative included:
 - Four-lane cross section.
 - Multi-Use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route.
 - Short-term spot improvements.
- The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan was Phase 1 of the planning effort. We are currently in Phase 2 – ensuring there is still support for the recommended alternative, refining the design, and completing environmental studies (funded through HB 2017 in the Oregon legislature).
- Funding for future phases has not been secured. Completing the current Phase 2 will position the project to be able to compete will for federal funding and grants.
- The draft Proof of Concept (POC) presented today represents a 10% level of design.
- Project spans from Huston Road in Veneta to Terry Street in Eugene. It extends about one mile longer into Eugene than the corridor plan did, for consistency and continuity.

Engineering Status - Simmons

The project team has been refining the Four-Lane Alternative recommended in the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan. Some of the modifications include adding retaining walls, shifting the roadway alignment in some places, and evaluating intersections improvements including roundabouts. Given that a key purpose of this project is improving safety, the project team presented historical crash data along the corridor along with information on how signalized and roundabout intersections improve safety.

- This corridor has a lot of crashes, steadily increasing over the last 20 years.
- There have been six fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes reported in the last 5-year crash history. These are spread throughout the whole area; there is not one clear hotspot.
- A total of 209 crashes were documented between 2014-2018. The primary crash type was rear-ending, with 70-75% occurring in daylight and not in adverse weather.
- The heat map shows more crashes to the east end (between Green Hill Road and Fisher Road), likely due to congestion, difficulty pulling off the road, and difficulty making turns safely.
- The team completed traffic analysis and forecasts for nine intersections along the corridor. Five were found to need modifications to meet ODOT's mobility targets (capacity requirements).
- Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended at Green Hill Road, Central Road, and Huston Road; Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements were recommended at Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road.
- The POC includes two options for every intersection, but ODOT currently favors roundabouts for their safety and maintenance benefits. Converting a signalized

intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 48%. However, they tend to cost more to build and have a bigger footprint.

- Each roundabout is unique depending on constraints in each area (e.g., railroad, private properties).
- The turn lane improvement would add some space in the median where drivers turning onto the highway can accelerate before fully merging into traffic.
- Alison – Wonders why K.R. Neilson Road is not getting any changes. The bend there is pretty tricky to navigate. One could easily get rear ended.
 - Dave – A left turn lane will be provided at this intersection.
- Several sample sections of roadway were presented:
 - Terry – Green Hill: This section looks similar to existing four lane section east of Terry Street. This is a more urban cross section with curbs on both sides, raised median, left turn lanes where necessary, and landscaped planting strips. Sidewalk on the south side and MUP on north side. Just 0.3 miles north on Terry Street, there's a good connection for bikers and pedestrians to get on the Fern Ridge Path.
 - Along Reservoir: The roadway widens towards railroad and into reservoir here, but the team is planning to tighten up the embankment with a steeper slope to decrease impact to reservoir while still providing a wide shoulder and barrier between the roadway and MUP. Anywhere that has a barrier or swale separating path from roadway, the path will actually be 14 feet wide.
 - Section at Shady Rest: The team shifted the alignment south here and added retaining walls to avoid impacts to houses on north side.
 - Ellmaker – Huston: This is a transition zone from rural to suburban just east of the Veneta city limits. The wider roadway is shifted south, with a smaller retaining wall used in some places to minimize impacts to parking areas on north side. Planning for a raised median in the center of the roadway; transit stops where needed and a curb separating the roadway and the MUP.

Q & A

- Alison – What plants will be used in the planting strips? Suggests native plants and shrubs that provides habitat, instead of grass that requires mowing.
 - Dave – ODOT tends to avoid using grass due to maintenance and water use. In some cases the median is just a hard surface to facilitate emergency vehicle access. In wider places, the preference is tough, drought-tolerant species if they are used.
- Dylan – What's the plan for lighting on the roadway?
 - Dave – From an environmental standpoint, they would typically avoid continuous lighting. Lighting would focus on potential conflict sites (e.g., intersections where the MUP crosses roadway).

Environmental Status – Bloom & Zemke

Over the last several months, a significant amount of environmental fieldwork has been accomplished along the project. Most of the discipline areas of environmental study that are being evaluated at this stage are underway, drafted, or completed. Austin and Lizzie presented a status report on each study, with the exception of two discipline areas –

Community/Environmental Justice and Parks and Recreation – which will be completed after the design and other environmental studies are further along.

- Now the team is focusing on the big picture – federal and state NEPA required studies and analysis. Federal, state, and local permitting will happen in future stages. They intend to gather environmental commitments and mitigation efforts that will be attached to this project up through the last phase.
- Biological resources: The area has two federally listed endangered plant species – Willamette Daisy and Kincaid’s Lupine and habitat for the Fender’s Blue Butterfly, a listed invertebrate. Bradshaw’s Lomatium was recently removed from the endangered plant species list. Efforts are underway to map current conditions in order to minimize impacts to plants and habitat.
- Wetlands: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team has finalized a map of the wetlands and is considering potential ways to mitigate for impacts that cannot be avoided.
 - The area of impacted wetlands has not yet been determined and will be established after the Proof of Concept is finalized this summer. 60 acres of wetlands have been mapped within the project area. Most are meadow wetlands, 19 are associated with the reservoir, and others are more groundwater/prairie.
 - Slide image (26) demonstrates wetland mapping along the corridor. Red lines delineate area of potential impact (API); the API serves as the conservative outer boundary of what areas may potentially be impacted – and therefore the limits of where data is collected. The blue area denotes wetlands within the project API.
 - The West Eugene Wetlands Plan, adopted in 2004 by Eugene and Lane County, creates special protections for wetlands identified by the Plan. Preliminary conversations are underway with the City and County to outline the amendment process that must happen prior to construction. It is helpful that this project is included in both the City’s and County’s Transportation System Plans.
 - A number of jurisdictions overlap within the wetlands – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of State Lands, as well as special management areas.
- Rare Plants: Fieldwork and memorandum are complete. The team is developing a mitigation plan. Will prepare a biological assessment and then have a consultation with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services later this summer.
- Air Quality: Draft memorandum is prepared. Impacts fall below threshold required to trigger further action/mitigation. ODOT does not currently have a greenhouse gas emissions methodology, so that is not part of this documentation.
- Noise: Draft report is prepared. Noise increased to the point that walls were evaluated at two locations. Neither location met the benefit vs. cost standard threshold to recommend noise walls.
 - Debbie – Were noise impacts on wildlife considered?
 - Dave – No. The criteria only considers human impacts.
- Archaeological: There is a lot of potential for archaeological sites along the corridor. An extensive amount of field work is underway and will be completed throughout the summer.
- Historic: Draft memorandum is prepared. A few structures are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These will undergo further evaluation to determine their eligibility.

- Recreational access changes: The informal boat access at Coyote Creek along the reservoir section will be eliminated. ODOT does not have a responsibility to replace it, but is interested in having conversations to consider improving other access options, in partnership with other agencies. Several options were discussed:
 - Cantrell Road: Calmer location for launching due to less traffic, but also in disrepair. Located about a mile upstream along Coyote Creek. May need investment in enhancements to both launch facilities and parking. ODF&W owns the land on both sides; the County owns the roadway.
 - Perkins Peninsula: Distance from informal launch to Perkins Peninsula is about a mile, but otherwise this is a good alternative launch location.
 - Fisher Butte parking lot: From a portage standpoint, there is quite a bit of distance from parking lot to the water. There may be a possibility to extend water or to provide parking access to launch closer to the water.
- Ellen invited boaters to comment on the alternate launch access sites:
 - Jed – Launches on Cantrell Road when accessing Coyote Creek. Uses Perkins or Orchard Point to launch motorboats. Doesn't use informal launch area.
 - Dylan – Doesn't use informal launch area either. Uses Perkins or Orchard Point.
- Ellen invited additional comments about the environmental studies:
 - Alison – Has the team studied Pond Turtles as a sensitive species in the area? Curious to see an environmental report on impacts to them. Also, it looked like some wetlands on the (West Eugene Wetlands) map were marked yellow for “yet to be restored.” Would that be a mitigation effort to balance construction?
 - Austin – Some areas in yellow have already been restored, but certainly not all of them. The team is almost ready to dive into a mitigation plan. A key requirement is that it has to be viable into the future (i.e., include assurances and alternatives in case a certain area designated for mitigation is developed by the time construction begins on this project). This group has a lot of knowledge about that area. Please contact Austin to arrange further conversations about ideas for mitigation.
 - Austin – Regarding Pond Turtles, they are listed as sensitive. No surveys were completed last summer.
 - Alison – There is a study underway by Fish & Wildlife to see if they should be listed. Oregon just completed a 3-year survey of the state. U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management both list them as a sensitive species.
 - Lizzie – That is important to keep in mind, since Pond Turtles might be federally listed by the time this is ready to be built.
 - Dylan – Pond Turtles are endangered in Washington and now threatened in Oregon (specifically in Lane County). He has seen a bunch of turtles in the reservoir area.
 - Holly – Given that the transportation sector remains the largest contributor of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Oregon, doesn't understand how this is not part of the environmental analysis.
 - Dave – ODOT has broader planning tools but has not adopted methodology for studying GHG on a project basis. ODOT is looking at this right now.

- Molly – The governor has mandated ODOT to address GHG in the future. They are beginning to develop a process and procedure. The new process will begin with projects in the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. Hopefully by the time they have money to build this project, the process will be more refined.
- Dylan – A lot of waterfowl nest in the marshy areas to the north of the highway on the west end of the reservoir section. Sees ducks and geese in the shallows there every day. It seems like the footprint of this project will impact them.
- Jed – There aren't many native fish in the area; just some cutthroat trout that migrate through Coyote Creek. The reservoir mostly has warm water introduced species (Crappie, Bluegill, Bass), which most anglers are targeting. Their habitat might be impacted if the road was pushed north, and there are opportunities to improve their habitat.
 - Austin – Has been in close coordination with ODF&W on this project. Most of that has been focused on fish passage statutes. Bird/fish impacts and mitigation efforts have also come up. In addition to federal NEPA work, the team is working with agencies to identify improvements on state-listed species of concern, nesting habitats, etc.
- Laura – All her concerns about wildlife have been addressed by others.
- Alison – Mitigation efforts to restore Kincaid's Lupine has made Fender's Blue a success story. They have had a good population increase. Please keep that going as one of the mitigation strategies. Please protect the milkweed patch between K.R. Neilson Road, the railroad tracks, and the highway.
- Austin – The team is also discussing recreation enhancement opportunities for warm water fishing along the MUP.
 - Ellen – Will connect you with Steven from the Emerald Empire Bass Club.

Draft Implementation Plan – Simmons

Along with POC, the project team is beginning to think about how to break the project into smaller sections for implementation. As funding for the entire project is unlikely, dividing the project into segments should provide more opportunities to build portions of the project as funding is secured.

- The implementation plan will likely change depending on what funding becomes available. The draft is a starting point to help people communicate with elected officials.
- The initial draft concept proposes beginning at the Eugene end, since that is where the 4-lane section stops today and where many of the accidents and higher traffic volumes occur.
- The four sections include: 1) 1-mile section to Green Hill; 2) railroad overcrossing; 3) Fisher Road intersection to Fisher Butte parking lot; 4) longest section adjacent to reservoir to Ellmaker road (will require permit from the U.S. Army Corps.- best to secure permit entire segment at once); 5) entering Veneta at Huston.
- The entire project is over \$200 million, so breaking it up into phases will make it easier to secure funding.

Project Schedule and Next Steps – Simmons & Teninty

The project team plans to finalize the POC in the next two months, with input from agencies. They hope to have the environmental documentation completed within the next year. The Draft POC with a program budget and implementation plan will inform state and local agencies in seeking funding. Three constituent meetings (including this one) are being held this week, and a second online open house will begin on April 26th.

Additional discussion and closing comments:

- Ellen – There are a few users who could not make it, but they will receive notes and be consulted: Empire Bass Club and the Native Plant Society Emerald Chapter, and the Environmental Science Academy at Churchill High School.
- Debbie – Appreciates that the team is asking for feedback. Several people have a lot of concerns about the segment running by the reservoir and wetlands. Their first preference is not to expand past two lanes in section 4. There will be significant wildlife impacts (e.g., food sources for migratory birds) and sensitive plants.
- Alison – Feeling pretty comfortable with what's happening for butterflies. More restoration or prairie habitat will help them out. Recommends following up about Pond Turtles with ODF&W.
- Austin – Would WREN be a good place to talk about some mitigation challenges?
 - Laura would be helpful, but also the Eugene staff will know about successes and challenges.
 - Paul Gordon would also be great. Trevor Taylor was integral in the wetland mitigation plan. Mike Shippey used to work with ODOT and had his own wetland mitigation bank. Ellen promised to follow up about additional suggestions and contacts.
- Molly – Really appreciates everyone's input and for taking the time today. Feels like the project team is addressing concerns to the best of their ability.

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: CONSTITUENT MEETINGS

April 14-15, 2020



WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

In this virtual meeting setting, we will do a roll call style start to the meeting. When called, please provide a brief introduction including:

- Name
- The organization you represent
- Brief description of how you or your organization utilizes the corridor



AGENDA

15 minutes	Welcome and Agenda Review
5 minutes	Project Background
15 minutes	Engineering Status
15 minutes	Environmental Documentation Status
5 minutes	Draft Implementation Plan
5 minutes	Project Schedule and Next Steps
30 minutes	Questions and Comments

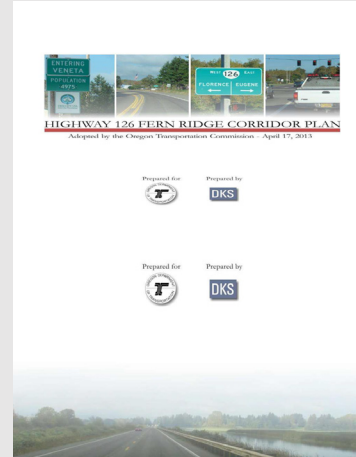


PROJECT BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan:

- Evaluated a series of alternatives to address congestion and safety needs.
- Included extensive stakeholder outreach.
- Recommended plan was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



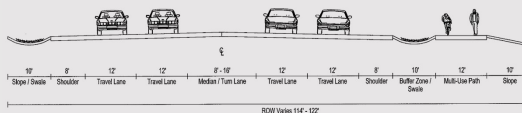
BACKGROUND

The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan recommended alternative included these elements:

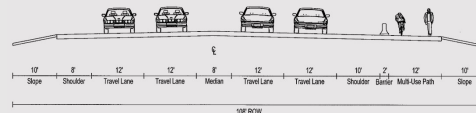
- Four-Lane cross section
- Multi-use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route
- Short-term Spot Improvements



A – Multi-Use Section with Swale Separation



B – Multi-Use Section with Barrier Separation



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a recommended alternative.	Refine conceptual design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the recommended alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct recommended alternative

**Future phases depend on securing additional funding.*

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Building on the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, we are confirming the outcome of the plan, refining the design and completing the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.



ENGINEERING STATUS

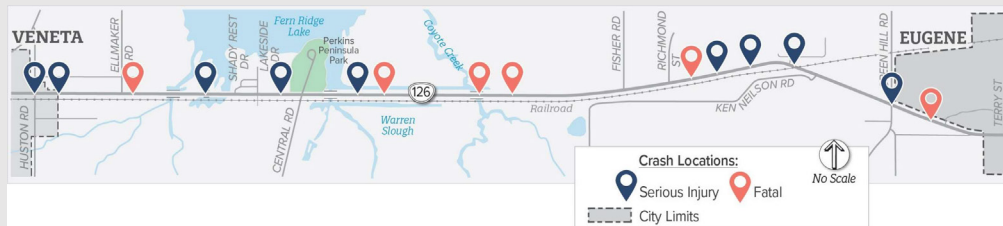
OR126 CORRIDOR CRASH DATA

- 1998-2002: 13 crashes per year.
- 2005-2009: 25 crashes per year.
- 2014-2018: 37 crashes per year.



SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

- 6 fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes.



SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

- 209 total crashes.
- Primary crash type was rear-end
- Majority (70-75%) of crashes occurred during clear, dry daylight hours.



INTERSECTION RECOMMENDATIONS



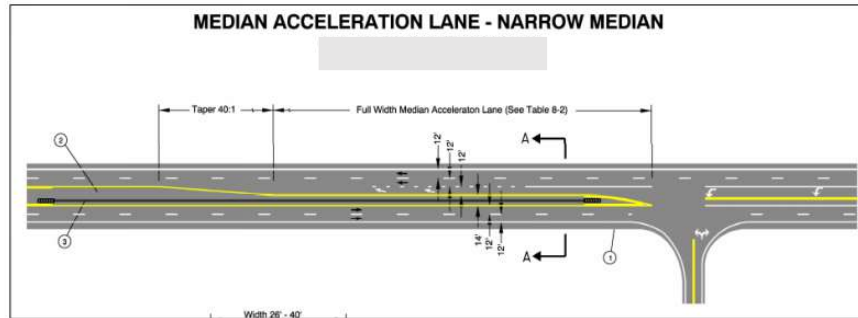
Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals

Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements

DUAL-LANE ROUNDABOUT - EXAMPLE



TURN LANE IMPROVEMENTS - EXAMPLE



Source: 2012 ODOT Highway Design Manual

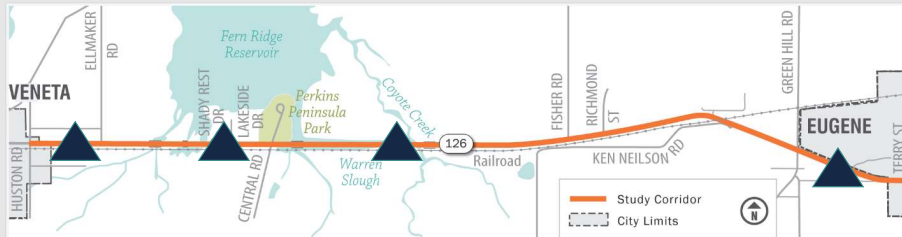


INTERSECTION SAFETY PERFORMANCE

- Roundabouts reduce fatal and injury accidents by 82% compared to rural stop-controlled intersections.
- Converting a rural stop-controlled intersection to a signalized intersection can reduce angle crashes by 77%, but can also increase rear-end crashes by 58%.
- Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 48%.

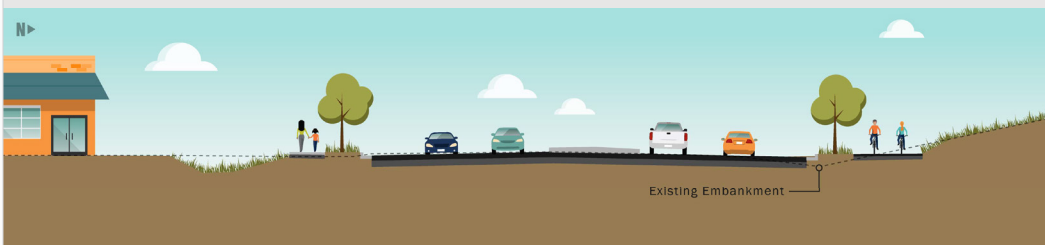


ROADWAY SECTIONS

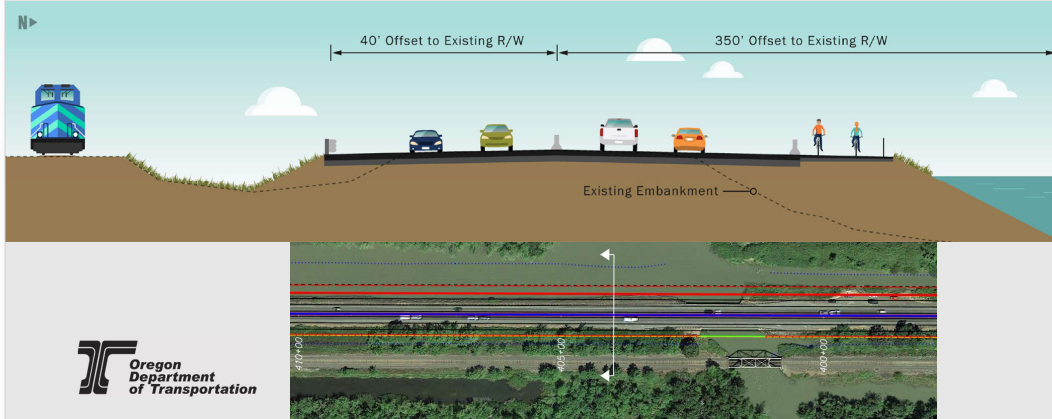


▲ Cross Section Location

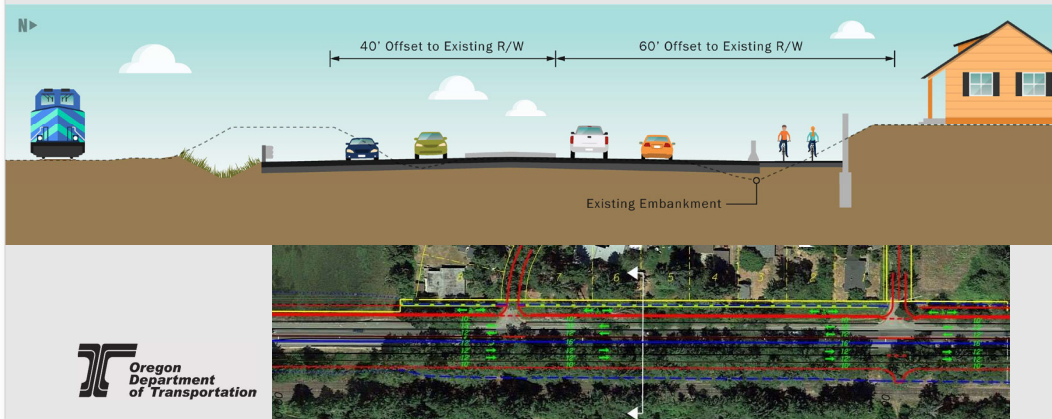
ROADWAY SECTION (TERRY – GREEN HILL)



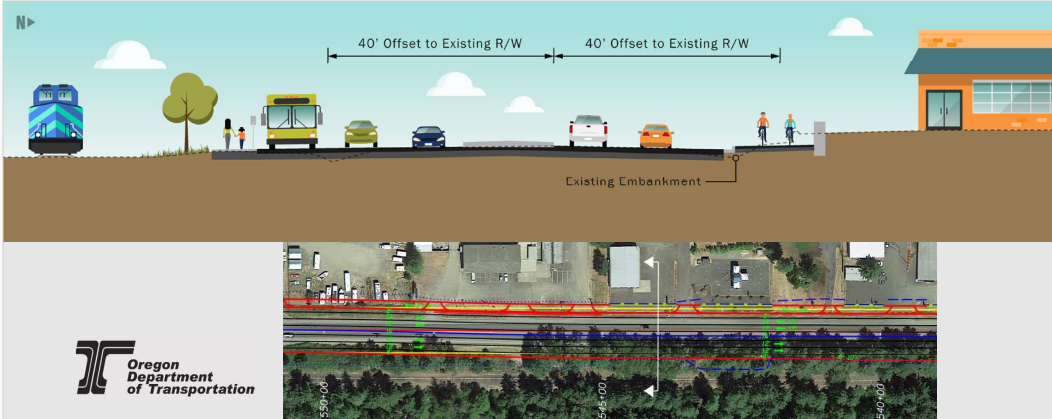
ROADWAY SECTION ALONG RESERVOIR



ROADWAY SECTION AT SHADY REST



ROADWAY SECTION (ELLMAKER – HUSTON)



ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION STATUS

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

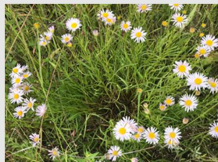
Discipline Areas

- Air Quality (Drafted).
- Archaeological (Underway).
- Biological Resources (Underway).
- Community/Envir. Justice.
- Hazardous Materials (Completed).
- Historic Resources (Drafted).
- Land Use (Underway).
- Noise (Drafted).
- Parks & Recreation.
- Water Quality/Hydrology (Drafted).
- Wetlands (Underway).



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

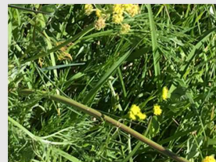
Biological Resources



Willamette Daisy



Kincaid's Lupine



Bradshaw's Lomatium



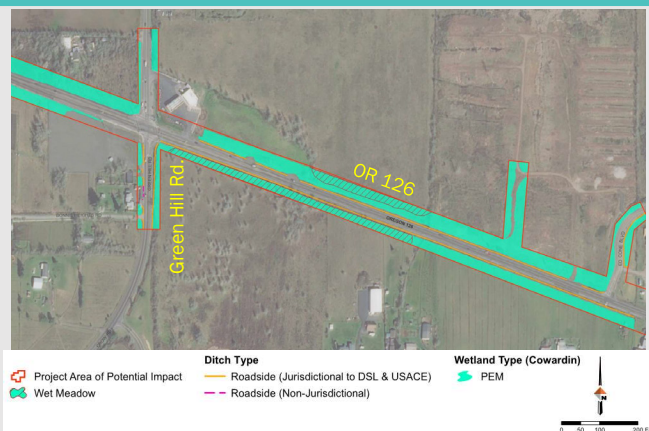
*Fender's Blue
Butterfly Habitat*

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field work and documentation memorandum completed. Conceptual mitigation plan (in preparation).
Rare Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field work and documentation memorandum completed. Rare plants impact mitigation plan (in preparation). Biological Assessment (in preparation). Formal Endangered Species Act Consultation with USFWS (to begin late summer 2021).

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Example of wetland mapping gathered along project corridor.



WEST EUGENE WETLANDS

WEST EUGENE WETLANDS PLAN 17

Map 3 Wetlands Designations Map

- Wetland Designation**
- **Protect** Wetlands to be Protected (areas generally unsuitable for disposal of dredged or fill material).
 - **Restore** Wetlands to be enhanced for Mitigation Credit.
 - **Develop** Wetlands to be Developed (possible future disposal sites for dredged or fill material).
 - **Planned Transportation Corridor**
 - **Utility Corridor**

— OR 126 Project Area

Source: West Eugene Wetlands Plan, May 2004



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft memorandum prepared. Project impacts fall below thresholds triggering action/mitigation.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft report prepared. Walls were evaluated at two locations and found to not meet benefit/cost thresholds and are therefore not recommended

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline	Summary
Archaeological	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Field work underway
Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Baseline survey completed and the report has been drafted. One historic resource has recently been determined eligible and Determinations of Eligibility forms for four more resources will be prepared.



RECREATIONAL ACCESS CHANGES

Informal kayak/canoe access will be displaced by the widened road.

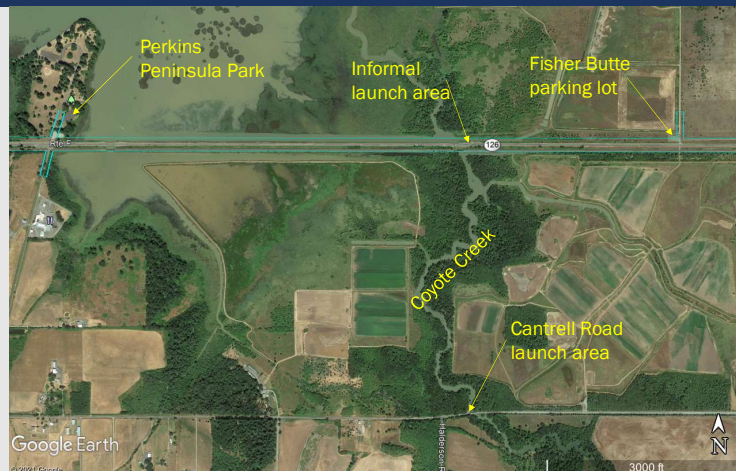


RECREATIONAL ACCESS CHANGES



Alternative kayak/canoe
access available on Cantrell
Road.

RECREATIONAL ACCESS CHANGES



DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

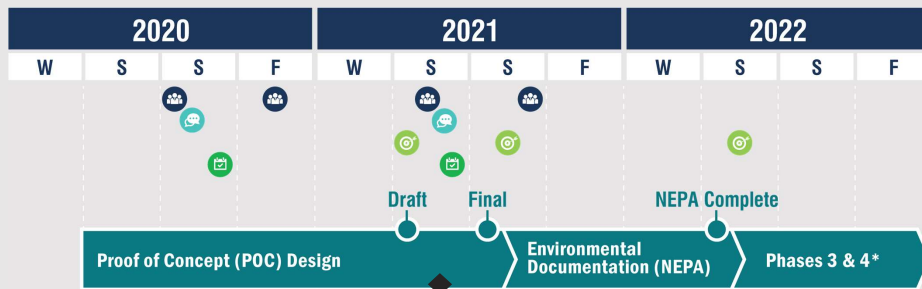
DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT SCHEDULE

 Steering Committee Meeting
  Open House
  Constituent Outreach
  Project Milestone



We are here

*Preliminary/final design and construction phases depend on funding

NEXT STEPS

Spring/Summer 2021

- Online Open House #2 – late April/early May.
- Final Proof of Concept – June.
- Complete environmental documentation with goal of completion by Spring 2022.



QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

APPENDIX E OPEN HOUSES



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene NEPA Study

Open House #1 | September 8 – 25, 2020

SUMMARY October 2020



Project History	2
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Results	5
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PROJECT HISTORY

OR 126 BETWEEN VENETA AND EUGENE is a State Highway, a freight route, and an important connector for people and goods traveling between the Willamette Valley and the Oregon Coast. The seven-mile corridor is heavily traveled at commute times, has a posted speed of 55 miles per hour, and is intersected by numerous driveways and side streets.

There are limited passing opportunities, inadequate bicycle and pedestrian-only facilities, narrow to no shoulders in many places, and passes through environmentally sensitive wetlands.



The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** evaluated a series of alternatives to address congestion and safety needs for this section of OR 126. Following an extensive stakeholder outreach effort, a recommendation was made in late 2012. The Oregon Transportation Commission formally adopted the plan in April 2013.

The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan recommended:

- Four-lane cross section.
- Multi-use path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route.
- Short-term spot improvements.

Fig. A: Multiuse Section with Swale Separation

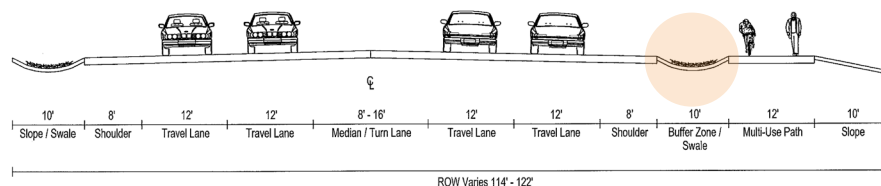
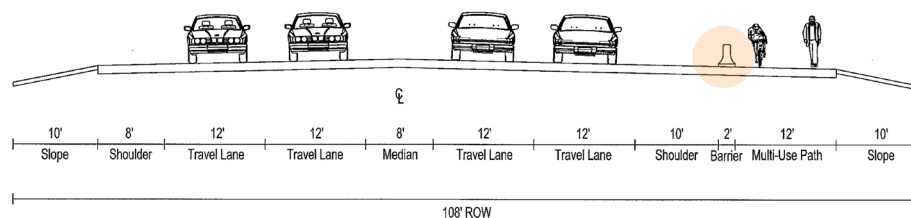


Fig. B: Multiuse Section with Barrier Separation



Since 2013, ODOT has elected to evaluate the multi-use path along OR 126. A southern route along Lane County roadways will be considered as part of the County's bicycle master plan. Providing a buffer zone between the roadway and the path is preferred, as shown in the top cross section, Fig. A. Where the roadway is directly adjacent to the reservoir and no turn lanes are needed, a narrower cross section will be used to reduce the impact to the environment, as shown in the bottom cross section, Fig. B. During this interim between Phase 1 and 2, described in the graphic below, we have repaved, striped, provided bus turn outs and built a right-turn lane at Ellmaker Road.

To move the project forward, the Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, funded engineering refinements and completion of the necessary environmental documentation consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), referred to as Phase 2 in the graphic below.

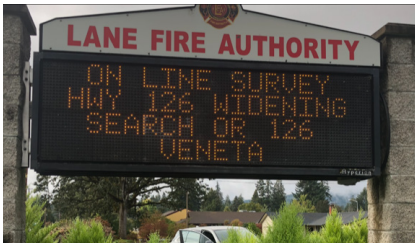
Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.
	Phase 2 establishes the project footprint and studies the project's impacts on the environment. The project's goals include balanced attainment of the widest range of benefits for the population and environmental resources. The study will also produce a cost estimate and a strategy for implementation, as funding becomes available.	<i>*Future phases depend on securing additional funding.</i>	

OUTREACH DURING PANDEMIC AND WILDFIRES

Thousands of people care about the safety and mobility of this stretch of highway, and we worked to make sure there was an opportunity for them to share their personal experiences and concerns. Outreach efforts kept public safety in the forefront by providing electronic and phone methods to gather public input. Garnering over 300 survey responses, we achieved our communications goals using multiple methods.



Getting ready for Meals on Wheels with hardcopies included in 60 boxes



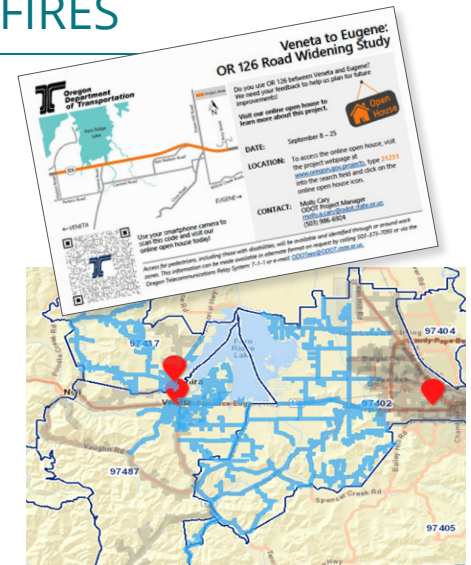
"Do you travel between Veneta and Eugene on OR 126? The Oregon Department of Transportation is conducting a study about widening the road.

If you want to learn more about the study and give ODOT your opinions and experiences, they are hosting an online open house that will be open through Sept. 25th. To find it you can type OR 126 Veneta in the search bar of your browser.

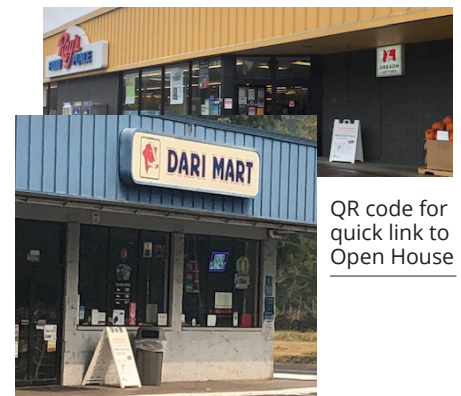
They would appreciate any and all feedback."

Phone message to Fern Ridge School District families

- **Website** with live link to Open House.
- **Email** with link sent to 1,663 Interested Parties.
- **Postcard mailed** to 4,828 households.
- **Postcard placed** on store and organization customer counters and in food pantry boxes.
- **Media Release** to selected outlets.
- **Facebook** Open House promo for nine agencies and organizations.
- **A-Frames** placed at key intersections.
- **A-Frames with QR** code placed at local store entrances.
- **Phone calls** to 36 adjacent businesses.
- **Phone announcement** via Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noti reaching 3,000–5,000 people.
- **Reader Boards** with Open House information at two prominent locations.
- **Hard copies** in food pantry boxes, at Veneta's Farmers' Market, Meals on Wheels deliveries, Café 60 (senior and disabled, services), Dixie's Café.



Postcards delivered along seven postal routes to 4,828 houses



QR code for quick link to Open House



With the pandemic, the Love Project food pantry is drive-thru. Hard copies of the Open House and postcards for online access were placed in 200 boxes.



Signs at busy intersections



Postcards on counters of local businesses

OPEN HOUSE RESULTS

After a brief project background that proposes widening to two lanes each direction, adding shoulders, and a protected multi-use path, we asked:

1. Do you have any congestion-related concerns that you would like us to be aware of? If yes, please tell us where on the corridor.
2. Within this section of OR 126, are there any additional changes you would like for us to consider? If yes, please tell us where on the corridor.

We received a total of 323 responses, with 294 online submissions and 29 by phone, email and hard copy. Two-thirds of the respondents live on the west side of the project area, with more than half from the City of Veneta.

The results are summarized on the following pages.

ROAD WIDENING

Hundreds stated enthusiastic support for additional lanes, shoulders, safer turning, and safe access for boaters, including adequate parking. Of the 324 respondents, 11 are opposed to widening OR 126 due to concerns about Veneta's growth and impacts on the environment.

Representative Comments

"I use 126 at different times of the day and it's always congested. There needs to be a second lane added in each direction. Or at the very least, a dedicated passing lane for safety."

"I would like to see a central divider that prevents the possibility of head-on collisions, at least in the areas where a turn lane is not required. Head on collisions at 55mph+ speeds must be a high fatality type situation."

"All along the corridor there is no shoulder for a vehicle having issues i.e. flat tire or emergency to safely pull over."

"When there is a crash, emergency vehicles cannot get through quickly."

"This is a waste of taxpayer money. The only elements you should address are safety. This stretch of road is one of the most dangerous in Oregon. Adding more lanes will increase dangerous driving behavior and increase speeds. Those will lead to more serious crashes and injuries. This will not be positive for climate change in any way."

"I would like you to fully consider the No-Build Option. Two lanes are enough now that more people are working from home."

"The entire length of the project plan is a concern regarding congestion. It is difficult in the narrow section without any median, if there is a car breakdown. Also ensure that striping and reflectors are current and strong due to fog conditions and visibility issues."

"The entire two-lane portion of the corridor is dangerous. Especially at night and/or in poor driving/visibility conditions. There need to be streetlights along this route."

"I've been a career firefighter here 22 years and the majority of my serious or fatal wrecks involving both autos and pedestrians have been in this corridor. 126 is long overdue for an expansion to improve safety."

TURN SAFETY

Many said they cannot safely turn on and off OR 126, and repeatedly expressed desire for intersection improvements. Those few opposed to road widening do support safety improvements, including widening for turn pockets. Difficulty turning was frequently mentioned at:

- Huston Rd.
- Ellmaker Rd.
- Central Rd.
- Perkins Peninsula Park
- Fisher Rd
- KR Nielsen Rd.
- Greenhill Rd.
- Diess Feed and Seed

Representative Comments

"Our company is finding it more difficult at times to even pull out of our parking lot. The traffic has increased so significantly over the past two years. Our trips towards Eugene during business hours take longer, due to the frequent long lines of traffic."

"Central Road and Fisher Road can get sketchy when cars are slowing down to turn or if cars pull out in front of moving cars."

"I believe that widening the road is the right step to ensure the safety of motorists, bicyclist, and pedestrians. Areas of concern are autos forcing into traffic and causing accidents at Central, Ellmaker, and Huston."

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Hundreds enthusiastically supported a multi-use path. Some preferred concrete barrier separation over bioswales, due to adjacent vehicle speeds. Several suggested a thoughtful east-end connection into the Eugene path system. Of the 324 total responses, five are against a multi-use path because they do not want gas tax dollars to fund bicycle and pedestrian improvements or expressed concern about people camping along paths.

Representative Comments

"I'm 100% for this project. The bike/multiuse access is a huge plus. I would love to bike commute, if there is a safe way to do so."

"I am glad there will be one or more protected lanes for bicycle traffic. I need to commute between Veneta and Eugene and do not own a car."

"The stretch over the wetlands is extremely dangerous, with people on bicycles trying to ride with no shoulder."

"The expansion to five lanes makes a lot of sense and a separated bike lane would be an asset used by many cyclists. This separation should be a hard barrier vs. a swale."

"I've never been a big fan of highway dollars going to bike paths. I'm not sure how much gets diverted but I don't want my money being spent that way. If bikes want a path, have them register and pay a fee for improvements."

"I support this project. Is there a way to also include a bike lane or wide shoulder connecting 126 and Greenhill Road to the Fern Ridge Path trailhead on Greenhill? Many cyclists ride this coming off or going to Crow Road. It's less than a mile but is mostly shoulderless. Thanks."

ACCESS TO NATURE AND RECREATION

The Fern Ridge Corridor provides valued access to nature and recreation. This area is used for boating, fishing, and hunting. It also provides an important outdoor laboratory for environmental education and conservation organizations.



Representative Comments

"A replacement for the informal parking and boat entry area at Coyote Creek is important. While the area to the east (where a drainage ditch is located) has been suggested, that is often seasonally dry. It would make more sense, I believe, to expand the area outside of the entry to Perkins Peninsula Park to accommodate boaters."

"The wetlands, lakeside, and Coyote Creek are popular recreation areas and have their parking and traffic issues. It would be best to consider these as you plan."

"The kayak put-in near the railroad bridge can get congested and dangerous."

PROJECT AREA

Many requested the project boundary be amended to go to Territorial Highway, rather than stop at Huston Rd.

Representative Comment

"Ending the project at Huston will bring significant congestion from that area to the intersection of Territorial Hwy. There are many roadside businesses in that section with direct access to OR 126. Plus, the City recently has added new

businesses in that area. (Grocery Outlet and Dollar General). With the project being a few years out, serious consideration should be given to extend the project to Territorial Hwy."

URGENCY

Respondents expressed gratitude for the recent spot improvements. Paving, striping, rumble strips, bus pullouts and the right-turn lane at Ellmaker Road are well-appreciated, but many requested moving faster with implementation of the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan.

Representative Comments

"Biggest concern for me is to actually get the funding for the project and implementation."

"Safety is the priority. Sooner the better."

"Veneta is an important part of the economy of West Lane County and the traffic problems have intensified in recent years. This stretch of road is the gateway to the coast and carries many recreational vehicles that are hard to get around with no passing lanes. It is a very dangerous highway and needs to be widened. West Lane citizens deserve to have safe highways."

"I have had several near miss head-on crashes and most of my friends have, too. Anything that can speed up this process will save lives."

"I know every person in this community that I've spoken to very badly wishes this project to proceed. I believe a project like this would be not only welcomed but celebrated."

NEXT STEPS

Conceptual design will continue, with more information to share in spring 2021, including including how we propose moving forward in stages as funding is available. The next Open House is planned for late spring or early summer 2021.



OR 126: Veneta to Eugene NEPA Study

Open House #2 | April 26 – May 9, 2021

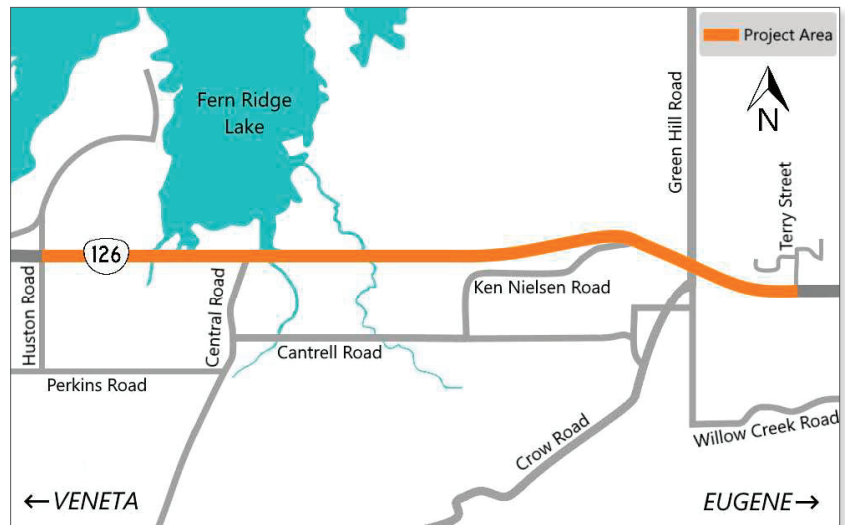
SUMMARY June 2021



Project Study Area	2
Project Background	3
Where We Are Now	4
Outreach	5
Environmental Studies	6
Intersections with OR 126	7
Roadway Sections	9
Next Steps	11

PROJECT STUDY AREA

OR 126 between Willamette Valley and the Oregon Coast is an important connector for daily commuters, emergency services and freight delivering goods and services. This area is also a local resource for outdoor recreation and environmental education.



The seven-mile section between Houston Road in Veneta and Terry Street in Eugene that we are studying is currently a two-lane road with narrow shoulders and no bicycle lanes or sidewalks for pedestrians. Some solutions have been recommended to improve the safety and mobility of the highway for everyone.

Several people suggested that the project limits should extend further west on OR 126 to Territorial Highway. We do not currently have funding to complete a study within the Veneta city limits, but this has been identified in the city's Transportation System Plan. When funding is available, we will ensure that all recommendations work together to develop a safer road.

"I'm really excited about this. I've traveled this road five days a week for the past 20 years because of my job. I've always been concerned about safety driving on it and I've also been disappointed that I haven't been able to bike or walk on it. This will solve at least the portion of the roadway between Eugene and Veneta."

– Cary, Eugene

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2011 and 2012, we worked with engineers, environmental scientists, area residents and businesses to help us to identify and prioritize needed improvements to the highway. The resulting Fern Ridge Corridor Plan was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.

Since 2013, we have made some improvements in the area, including:

- Repaving and striping.
- Providing bus turn outs.
- Building a turn lane at Ellmaker Road.

We elected to evaluate the multi-use path along OR 126 with a buffer between the roadway and the path. Lane County will consider a southern route as part of their bicycle master plan.

Fig. A: Multiuse Section with Swale Separation

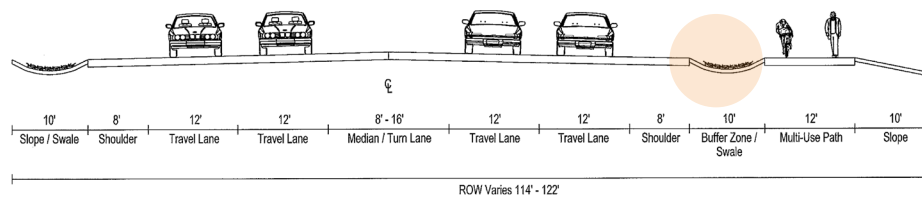
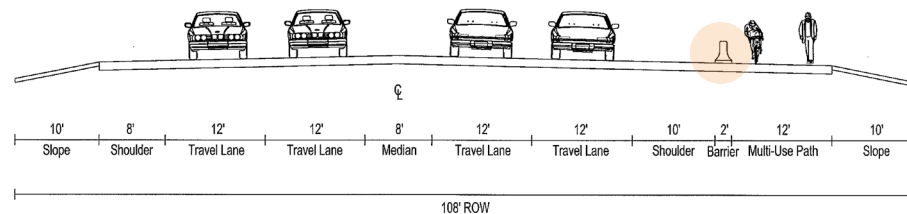


Fig. B: Multiuse Section with Barrier Separation

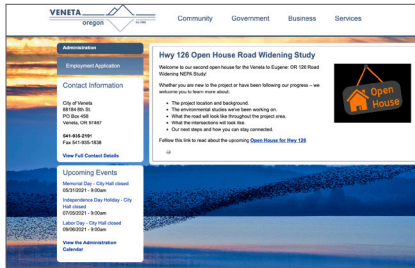


WHERE WE ARE NOW

There are four key phases.

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative.	Refine Conceptual Design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the preferred alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct preferred alternative.
	Phase 2 establishes the project footprint and studies the project's impacts on the environment. The project's goals include balanced attainment of the widest range of benefits for the population and environmental resources. The study will also produce a cost estimate and a strategy for implementation, as funding becomes available.	<i>*Future phases depend on securing additional funding.</i>	

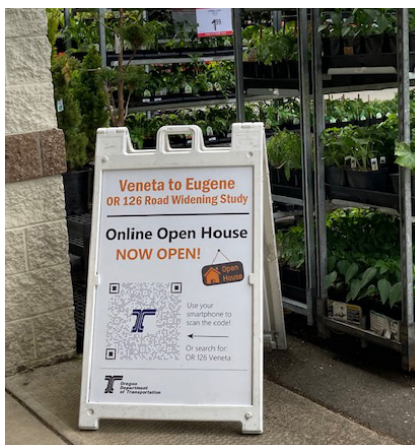
OUTREACH DURING A PANDEMIC



Veneta website connected residents with information and opportunity to participate in the Open House



Promotional material provided to local agencies and organizations for social media and newsletters



QR code for quick link to Open House

- **Website** with live link to Open House.
- **Email** with link sent to 1,700 Interested Parties.
- **Postcard** mailed to 4,828 households.
- **Postcard placed** on store counters, in food pantry and Meals on Wheels boxes.
- **Facebook/Newsletters** Open House promo used by ten agencies and organizations.
- **A-Frames** placed at key intersections.
- **A-Frames with QR** code placed at local store entrances.
- **Phone calls** to 25 adjacent businesses.
- **Phone announcement** via Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noti reaching 3,000–5,000 people.
- **Reader Boards** with Open House information at two prominent locations.



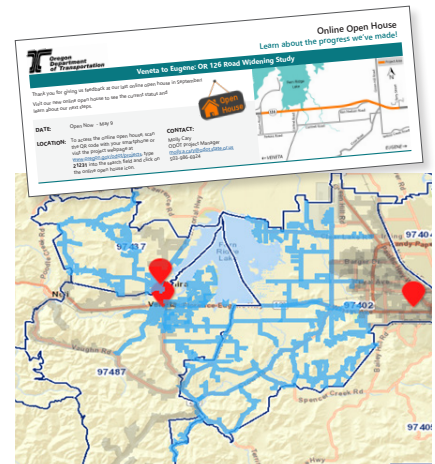
Postcards added to Meals on Wheels boxes



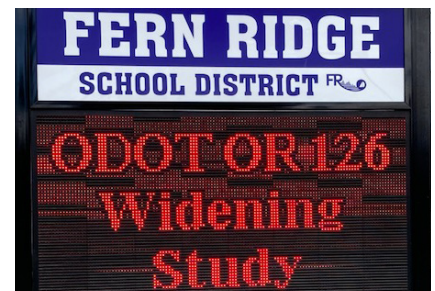
Signs at busy intersections



Postcards on counters of local businesses



Postcards delivered along seven postal routes to 4,828 houses



Fern Ridge School District reader board

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

WETLANDS

We are designing to minimize impacts to the wetlands that are on both sides of the highway. Before construction we will get all required permits and plan for mitigation.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

There are three endangered plants here: the Willamette Daisy, Kincaid's Lupine and Bradshaw's Lomatium. Plants also provide habitat for the endangered Fender's Blue Butterfly.



CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are archaeological and historic resources on this corridor. Five properties will be evaluated for eligibility for historic designation.

AIR QUALITY

Evaluation found no action or mitigation to be required by Federal Highway Administration standards.

NOISE

Evaluation found no noise mitigation is needed.

CONCERNS

Four of 69 comments oppose road widening for environmental reasons.

Widening this highway will only induce demand and increase the amount of vehicle miles travelled, greenhouse gas emissions, and devastating environmental impact.

– Shane, Eugene

INTERSECTIONS WITH OR 126

Stakeholder feedback continues to request Improving safety at intersections. We evaluated nine intersections for how they are working now and how they are forecast to work in 20 years. Five need modification to meet our goals. We have identified two potential solutions for each, which will be examined more closely in the future when funding is available.



- 1 **HUSTON ROAD:** Two lane roundabout or traffic signals.
- 2 **ELLMAKER ROAD:** Two lane roundabout or turn lane improvements.
- 3 **CENTRAL ROAD:** Two lane roundabout or traffic signals.
- 4 **FISHER ROAD:** Two lane roundabout or turn lane improvements.
- 5 **GREENHILL ROAD:** Two lane roundabout or traffic signals.



ROUNDABOUTS provide excellent safety and improved air quality. They may cost more to construct and are less expensive to maintain.



TRAFFIC SIGNALS improve safety over stops signs but tend to result in increased rear-end crashes. They are usually less expensive to construct than roundabouts but have higher long-term maintenance costs.



TURN LANE IMPROVEMENTS may include adding turn lanes on the side roads and a lane at the median for vehicles turning left onto the highway to have time to accelerate and merge into the traffic flow. The additional lane in the median allows drivers to make the left-turn in two stages, with the need to look for a gap one direction at a time, resulting in improved safety and less congestion on side roads.

"The intersection at Ellmaker Road needs more than just turn lane improvements. The recent updates to the turn lanes have helped those turning off of 126 onto Ellmaker but during all times of the day it is very difficult to find an opening in the traffic flow to safely enter 126 eastbound. Too often drivers stack up on Ellmaker waiting to go east and eventually they have to make a risky jump in front of 65 MPH traffic from the east, west or both."

- Herb, Veneta

ROUNDBABOUTS

Comments from the open house were skeptical of roundabouts with two-thirds preferring traffic signals.

Representative Comments

"I worry about the roundabouts. Many drivers may not understand how a roundabout works. They may be tourists pulling a trailer or a motorhome pulling a car westbound into sunset blindness. I believe the roundabout is more of a danger than traffic lights."

– Sandra, Jefferson

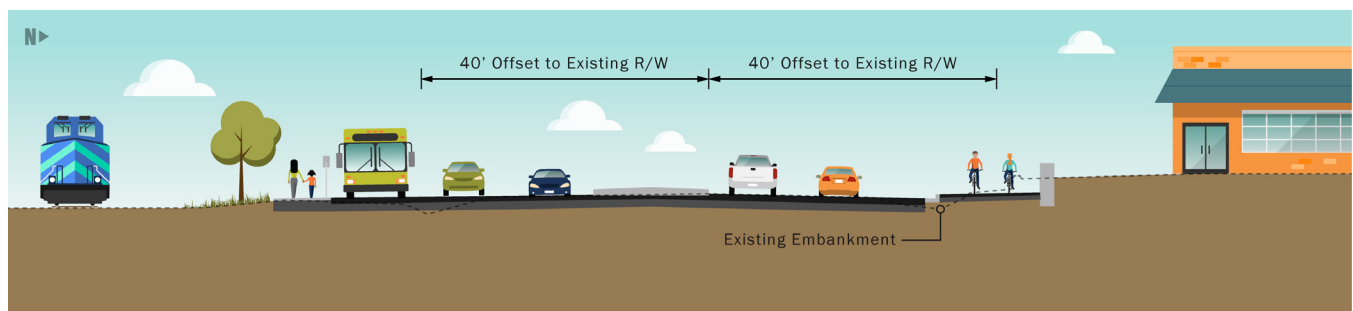
"I am favor of improving the five intersections named. As a 40-year veteran street paramedic I can usually identify dangerous intersections. All five of these scare me. **I like the idea of roundabouts or traffic lights** — but not improved turn lanes that don't help those turning left from the access road."

– Gary, Eugene

"I prefer roundabouts. The traffic flow is smoother, and it slows down the drivers who use the straight stretch as a speedway. I live off 126 and making a left turn is often difficult and stops all the cars behind. I am so pleased with the process you are using to identify what is needed to improve 126 by asking the people who use it most."

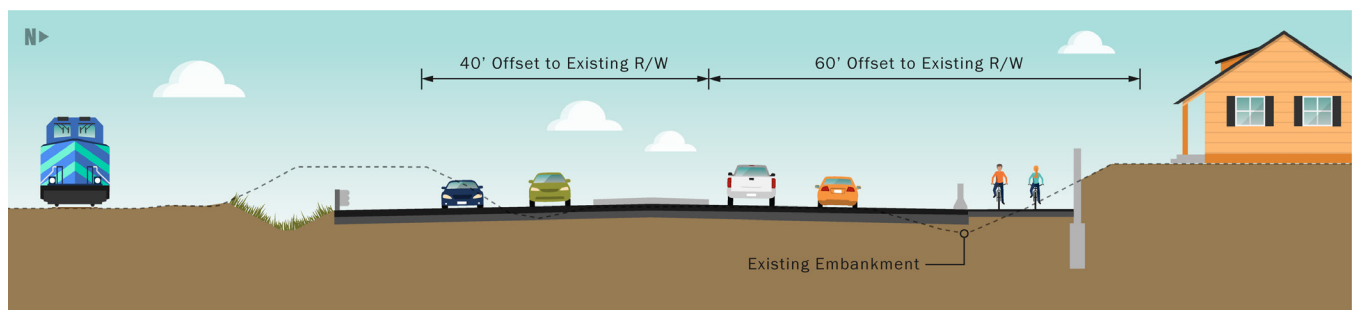
– Lynn, Veneta

ROADWAY SECTIONS



1 HUSTON ROAD TO ELLMAKER ROAD

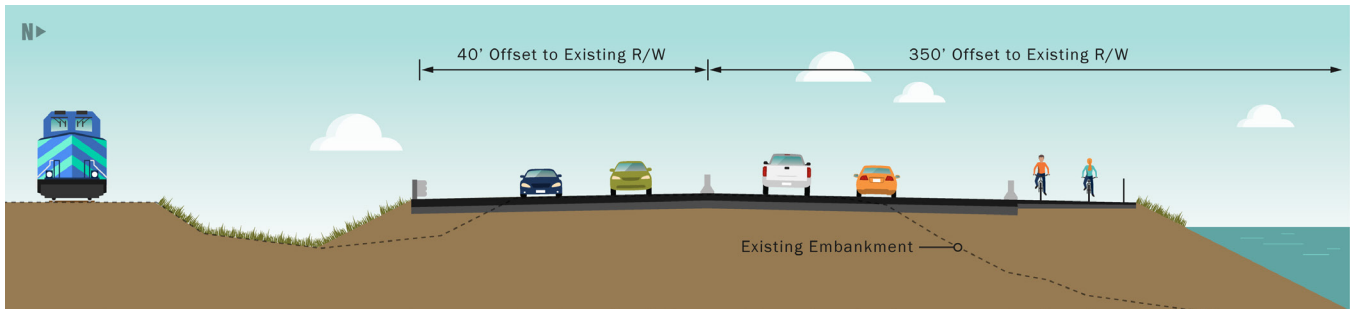
Most of the roadway widening shifts toward the railroad to reduce the impact to the properties on the north side. This includes a median separating opposing travel lanes, which may be raised or designed to accommodate a left-turn lane. There will be bus stops. Driveways and accesses will be designed when construction funding is secured.



2 SHADY REST DRIVE

Most of the roadway widening shifts toward the railroad to reduce the impact to the homes on the north side. The multi-use path shifts closer to the roadway and a retaining wall is added to further reduce impacts.

Continues >>



3 CROSSING FERN RIDGE RESERVOIR

To reduce impacts to the reservoir, the roadway and the multi-use path shift toward the railroad and use steeper slopes for the embankment.



4 GREEN HILL ROAD TO TERRY STREET

This is within Eugene's city limits and includes curbs and landscaping. The multi-use path will be on the north side, while the south side will have a sidewalk. This section includes a median that separates opposing travel lanes, which may be raised or designed to accommodate a left-turn lane.

Please make sure to include bike and pedestrian facilities that are separated and protected. This would encourage more biking/walking along this corridor and reduce the number of cars and therefore congestion and emissions in the corridor. Roundabouts are the safest intersections and are cheaper to maintain down the road.

–Josh, Eugene

NEXT STEPS

We will complete the conceptual design work this summer and anticipate completion of the environmental work in the next year. This summer, we will also begin work to secure funding for the design and construction of the project.

I think it is critical to begin now to lay groundwork for a substantial federal request for funding.

– Len, Elmira

APPENDIX F LANE ACT MEETINGS

MARCH 2021 -- M I N U T E S

Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LaneACT)
The meeting was held via teleconference

March 10, 2021
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Jeff Gowing, Cottage Grove, Chair
Sean VanGordon, Springfield, Vice Chair
John Fox, Coburg
Shelly Clark, Creswell
Claire Syrett, Eugene
Woody Woodbury, Florence
Don Bennett, Lowell
Keith Weiss, Veneta
Don Nordin, Lane Transit District (LTD)
Heather Buch, Lane County
Gwen Jaspers, Lane County Transportation Advisory Committee (LC TrAC)
Frannie Brindle, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Paul Thompson, Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Doug Barrett, Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians
Pete Petty, Highway 126 East
Rob Zako, Environmental Land Use Designated Stakeholder
Laughton Elliott-DeAngelis, Bicycle & Pedestrian Designated Stakeholder
Eugene Organ, Other Stakeholder
George Grier, Other Stakeholder
Shelley Humble, Other Stakeholder

ABSENT: Dunes City, Junction City, Oakridge, Westfir; Port of Siuslaw; and Patrick Kerr, Rail Designated Stakeholder.

OTHERS: Molly Cary, Zacharias Heck, Bill Johnston, Amanda Pietz, ODOT; Maddie Phillips, City of Creswell; Randy Groves, Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene; Emma Newman, City of Springfield; Matt Michel, City of Veneta; Jay Bozievich, Mark Nystrom, Becky Taylor, Lane County; Aurora Jackson, Tom Schwetz, LTD; Denise Walters, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG); Dave Simmons, DOWL; and Ellen Teninty, Cogito.

1. Call to Order (Welcome and Introductions)

Chair Jeff Gowing called the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LaneACT) meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Review Agenda – Additions or Deletions

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Consent Agenda

- **Approve Minutes from February 10, 2021 meeting.**

Mr. Zako made a correction to a statement attributed to him on page 6: “Mr. Zako advocated for the relationship between OTC and the ~~ATCs~~ **ACTs** move beyond the one-way process of input to a two-way relationship of dialogue.”

Consensus: Approve the February 10, 2021 meeting minutes as corrected.

4. Public Comment

No one indicated interest in providing public comment.

5. Announcements and Information Sharing

- **ODOT Update**

Ms. Brindle discussed the recovery efforts to retrieve a drill rig that had fallen over the edge when a wall collapsed beneath it on Highway 101. She referenced a *Yachats News* article Ms. Walters had sent via e-mail earlier that day entitled *ODOT Contractors retrieve 28-ton drilling rig from rocks below U.S. 101 on Saturday, highway reopens 24/7 with flaggers at Brays Point*. Ms. Brindle relayed the conditions leading up to the accident and the work ODOT staff had done to restabilize the retaining wall and reopen the highway. She highlighted the drill rig operator had survived the fall. Ms. Brindle noted the project ended up costing about \$450,000.

- **Metropolitan Policy Committee Update**

Mr. Thompson said at the last MPC meeting, members approved two amendments regarding project fund allocations and discussed progress made on the update to the Intelligent Transportation System Plan (ITS).

When Councilor Syrett asked for more information regarding the funding reallocation from the Ferry Street Bridge seismic retrofit project to the seismic bridge retrofit project on Amazon Creek at Bailey Hill Road, Mr. Inerfeld explained the cost to retrofit Ferry Street Bridge was much higher than the funds available. The Bailey Hill Road bridge retrofit project was a better fit. Mr. Thompson added the funds could not be carried forward and needed to be reprogramed.

Mr. Thompson noted there had been quite a bit of outreach from federal elected and appointed officials regarding an infrastructure bill and a transportation funding bill. MPC staff and the Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) had been asked for policy level input regarding proposed changes in the highway transportation bill and a list of potential earmarked projects. They were meeting with local government lobbyists in preparation for the upcoming United Front trip to Washington D.C. in April.

Councilor Syrett asked if the MPC was in a position to facilitate expansion of highspeed fiber/broadband for the MPO area. She observed the addition of the infrastructure had been a boon for downtown Eugene and she wanted to see it expanded further.

Mr. Thompson explained if the backbone of the system was located within the Eugene, Springfield, or Coburg metropolitan areas, the MPC might have a role. He noted the DeFazio transportation bill passed in the House last year included funds for broadband.

Mr. Nordin recalled previous discussions about an additional bridge over the Willamette River by the Beltline Highway. When he asked if the project was still under consideration, Ms. Brindle said yes. The local arterial bridge was included in the Beltline Highway Improvements, one of the projects ODOT staff had recommended as a potential earmark.

- **Legislative Update**

Mr. Thompson said there was not a lot of action yet at the State legislature regarding major transportation bills.

Other Member Updates

Commissioner Buch said Lane County had posted an online open house to gather input for their bicycle master plan (lanecountybmp.com) which included an interactive map and online survey. It was open until March 22, 2021. She had participated in the National Association of Counties (NACO) Transportation Steering Committee legislative conference and had advocated for ACTs to be more involved in setting priorities for the infrastructure and transportation bills. Commissioner Buch emphasized the importance of identifying “shovel ready” projects.

Ms. Jaspers announced LC TrAC was still looking for new members. The application deadline had been extended to April 8, 2021.

Councilor Fox said Ms. Brindle had attended a Coburg City Council meeting the prior evening to discuss improvements planned to the Interstate-5 interchange into Coburg. He was anticipating the new interchange would be more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Nordin pointed out that LTD was ahead of schedule for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by switching to renewable diesel (R99) fuel in lieu of petroleum-based diesel and accelerating their purchase of electric buses.

Mr. Petty gave an update on Highway 126 East, six months after the Holiday Farm fire. He said most of the area's infrastructure had been repaired, except for internet service. The tree removal work caused traffic delays, which had resulted with some people going too quickly to make up time. Mr. Petty hoped additional law enforcement would help deal with those speeding.

6. Oregon Highway 126 West: Veneta – Eugene corridor improvements

Ms. Brindle referred to the background information about the project included in the agenda item summary. She said House Bill 2017 (HB2017) included funding for the environmental study and preliminary design for expanding the corridor to four lanes and an adjacent multi-use path, as per the adopted *Fern Ridge Corridor Plan*. She added a source of funds for construction had not been identified. Ms. Brindle introduced Dave Simmons with DOWL, the ODOT planning and engineering consultant.

Mr. Simmons gave a powerpoint presentation entitled *Oregon 126: Veneta to Eugene, LaneACT Presentation*. He reviewed the elements of the *Fern Ridge Corridor Plan*, including the short-term safety improvements already completed. The current phase would result in documentation required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a requirement to compete for federal funding. Mr. Simmons explained the analysis focused on a seven-mile corridor, six of which was from the Eugene city limits to Veneta and one of which was Terry Street to Greenhill Road in Eugene (part of Eugene's Transportation System Plan (TSP)).

Mr. Simmons noted the public outreach component had been facilitated by Cogito. They had conducted a number of constituent conversations and an online open house. A postcard mailing to residents in the Elmira/Veneta area and West Eugene encouraged their participation. Mr. Simmons reviewed the results of the public outreach: ongoing support for the four-lane alternative, crossing/intersection safety improvements, and environmental impact concerns. The online open house also documented frustration that no construction funds had been identified to mitigate the ongoing safety problem.

Turning to the environmental study, Mr. Simmons described how the engineering team established the footprint of the project and the environmental team added a buffer to determine the study area. He reviewed the environmental disciplines being studied and noted four endangered plants and habitats had been identified and mapped.

Mr. Simmons reviewed the traffic volume and crash data collected. He said many of the crashes were rear-end collisions and problem areas were at key intersections on the corridor's east end. Mr. Simmons also discussed ways the engineering team was shifting the corridor's footprint in order to minimize the environmental impact. He reviewed current engineering designs for the corridor at key points. Mr. Simmons concluded with the project schedule going forward.

Councilor Syrett said she used the corridor frequently and emphasized the need for safety improvements on the road. She recommended widening the outreach to include people who regularly used the corridor to commute from the coast or to recreate in Fern Ridge and asked to

be placed on the interested parties list. When Councilor Syrett asked if the study had accounted for the impact of the pandemic on 2020 traffic volume data, Mr. Simmons said yes.

Councilor Syrett also inquired if wetlands mitigation efforts were included in the study. Responding, Mr. Simmons assured her they were.

Mayor Weiss expressed the importance of the project to the City of Veneta. He added that not a lot of trucks used the corridor to haul freight but there were a lot of recreational vehicles and people hauling trailers with boats, dune buggies, etc. going to the Coast.

Ms. Jaspers asked if light rail had been considered as opposed to widening the road. She advocated for thinking in different ways about accommodating increased traffic volumes.

Mr. Simmons said no, they focused on the preferred alternative from the *Fern Ridge Corridor Plan*. He noted there was transit service along the corridor but it was very limited. Ms. Brindle added light rail was expensive and needed a lot of ridership to make it economically feasible.

When Mr. Organ asked if the project was “shovel ready” and could be included if federal funding became available, Ms. Brindle said she expected the project would need to be completed in phases because the total cost would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr. Zako also asked to added to the interested parties list. He requested more information on how adding the lanes addressed the safety problem.

Mr. Simmons explained the underlying reasons for the crash data were high traffic volumes and high speeds. With a second lane, through traffic was able to move over to allow people to slow down to turn.

When Mr. Barrett requested crash data for Highway 126 West to Florence, Ms. Brindle offered to share that information at a later time as it was beyond the scope of the corridor project.

Commissioner Buch said the corridor had been a safety issue for a very long time. When she asked if Mr. Simmons had a cost estimate, he responded it was about \$200 million.

7. Oregon Transportation Commission Outreach

Ms. Walters referenced the draft of Mayor Gowing’s letter to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) regarding OTC’s engagement with ACTs. She asked if there were important points people thought should be added or changed.

Mr. Thompson thought the letter should be more explicit that the OTC should share the rationale about why they made the decisions they did and why the input received was or was not heeded.

Councilor Fox suggested Ms. Walters expand the size of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation so it was more legible.

8. Lane County Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Mark Nystrom, Lane County Climate Strategist, gave a presentation entitled *Lane County Community GHC Inventory and Survey Results*. He explained Lane County had contracted with The Good Company to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory that included: direct local emissions from transportation, building energy, waste disposal, refrigerants, and agriculture/forestry/land use; indirect emissions from the production of goods, food, fuel, and air travel; and the impacts of forest growth and carbon offsets. Mr. Nystrom described the data sources and protocols used to establish the inventory and noted the data was from 2019.

Comparing all types of direct emissions, Mr. Nystrom stated transportation was the biggest factor (66% of local emissions), of which 51% came from gasoline passenger cars and 44% from diesel commercial vehicles and freight. He noted in Lane County, diesel emissions were primarily from freight passing through the area on Interstate-5.

Under indirect emissions, Mr. Nystrom highlighted the impact of manufacturing vehicles, consuming meat and dairy products, waste and wastewater treatment, and using natural gas instead of electricity. He noted some industrial uses of natural gas currently could not be replaced by electricity. Mr. Nystrom explained how consumer data informed the estimate of air travel impact: it was not limited to activity at Lane County airports but extrapolated air travel use based on income levels.

Discussing negative emissions, Mr. Nystrom emphasized Lane County's extensive forest lands sequestered 3.5 million tons of carbon in its annual growth. He also discussed Northwest Natural Gas's Smart Energy Program, a voluntary carbon offset program ([Join the Smart Energy program - NW Natural](#)). Mr. Nystrom explained neither of the negative emissions had been subtracted from the sum of direct and indirect emissions.

Mr. Nystrom said the next phase would be to convene stakeholders to work on solutions. He posted a link to their monthly newsletter for LaneACT members to get more information. (<https://lanecounty.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=ab159120efc7bf8c6948af729&id=452775fd67>).

Councilor Syrett observed Lane County had a very robust general aviation sector and she questioned why more direct measures (e.g., aircraft fuel sold or take-off and landing counts) weren't used in lieu of income-based consumer assumptions.

Due to time constraints, Mayor Gowing suggested Mr. Nystrom return to a future LaneACT meeting to continue the question-and-answer segment.

9. ODOT Climate Office Update

Amanda Pietz, ODOT Climate Office Director, presented a powerpoint entitled *Climate Office Update*. She explained her office focused on three key areas: mitigation (reduce pollution from the transportation system), adaptation (analyze climate impacts on the transportation system to

improve resiliency), and sustainability. Ms. Pietz announced it was the one-year anniversary of Governor Brown's directive on climate change (Executive Order 20-04), the biggest factor of which was to address emissions from the transportation sector. She reviewed work accomplished by ODOT, including establishing the Climate Office, addressing climate issues in ODOT's Strategic Action Plan (e.g., increase the electric charging infrastructure), redirecting funding in the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (60% increase funding for Non-Highway), assisting local jurisdictions conduct greenhouse gas emission scenario plans, establishing a new grant program for electric vehicle charging infrastructure (targeting rural areas and disadvantaged communities), encouraging electrification of the transportation system, and incorporating equity into the climate actions undertaken

Specifically discussing electrification of the transportation system, Ms. Pietz described how OR Team mapped the electrification efforts throughout the state. ODOT staff had also conducted a Transportation Electrification Infrastructure Needs Analysis (TEINA), which identified gaps and recommendations for the public charging system, and established the Community Charging Grants program to provide \$2 million for charging stations.

Mayor VanGordon observed that an earlier effort to encourage electric charging stations had not been as successful as hoped because of difficulties maintaining them. Some had been removed. Ms. Pietz concurred ongoing maintenance and upgrades to charging stations were issues.

Turning to the STIP, Ms. Pietz illustrated the tools Climate Office staff developed to inform the OTC on the impact of different funding allocation choices on the identified desired outcomes, including climate mitigation and climate adaptation. She described their methodology. Ms. Pietz noted the OTC had decided to increase funding in the Non-Highway area by sixty percent. She acknowledged the incremental dollar amount was relatively small but the decision indicated directionality towards greenhouse gas reduction. Ms. Pietz said the next phase was how to apply the greenhouse gas lens to project selection. The focus was the result of the project to the end-user. The Climate Office staff had developed an emissions-reduction guide for project managers to use when scoping project proposals.

Ms. Pietz said ODOT was also doing a Greenhouse Gas Inventory, working with The Good Company, and developing an adaption roadmap which assessed the threats of climate change and ODOTs responses to them (e.g., evacuation routes).

The scheduled meeting time was reached before LaneACT members were able to ask follow-up questions. Mr. Grier noted greenhouse gas emissions reductions were part of their Area Strategies discussions. He requested Ms. Pietz return for further dialogue.

10. Adjournment

Mayor Gowling reminded LaneACT members the next Steering Committee meeting was scheduled for March 19, 2021 and LaneACT on April 14, 2021. He then adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

(Recorded by Beth Bridges)

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: LANE ACT PRESENTATION

March 10, 2021



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Project Background and Overview.
- Public Outreach.
- Environmental Studies.
- Engineering Status.
- Project Schedule.
- Next Steps.

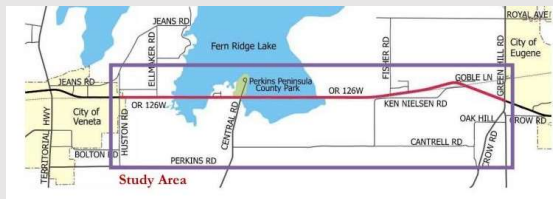


PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan**:

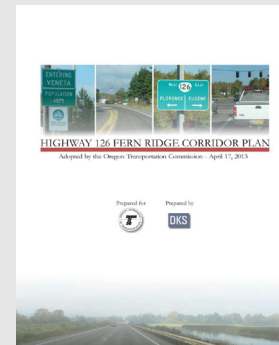
- Evaluated a series of alternatives to address congestion and safety needs.
- Included extensive stakeholder outreach.
- Recommended plan was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



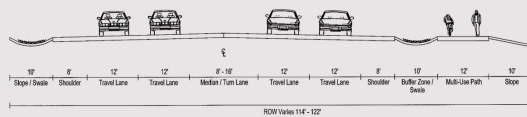
BACKGROUND

The **Fern Ridge Corridor Plan** recommended alternative included these elements:

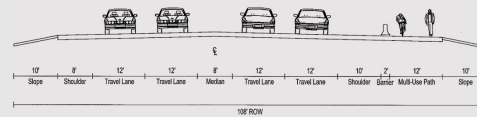
- Four-Lane cross section
- Multi-use Path adjacent to the roadway or along a separate southern route
- Short-term Spot Improvements



A – Multi-Use Section with Swale Separation



B – Multi-Use Section with Barrier Separation



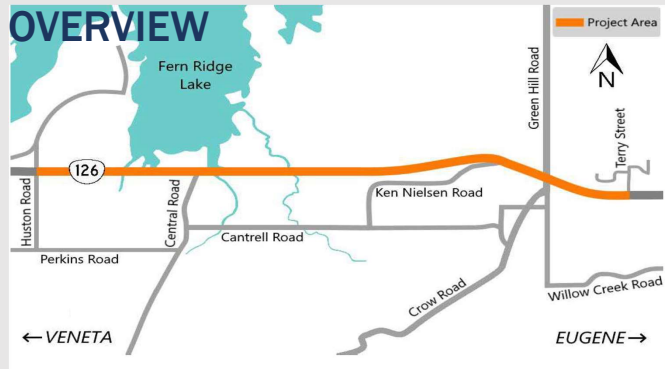
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a recommended alternative.	Refine conceptual design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the recommended alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct recommended alternative

**Future phases depend on securing additional funding.*

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Building on the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, we are confirming the outcome of the plan, refining the design and completing the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

OUTREACH PLAN & SCHEDULE

Key Activities	2020				2021	
	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
• Project Steering Committee						
• Stakeholder Interviews						
• Constituent Consultations						
1 Naturalists/Environmentalists/Hunters/Fishers		1			1	
2 Bicyclists/Pedestrians/Boaters		2			2	
3 Highway users/EMS/Freight/Business/Tourism		3			3	
• Equity Approach: Targeted Outreach						
• Open Houses						



DESIGN
DRAFT
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

DESIGN
FINAL
PROOF OF
CONCEPT

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Meeting Goals

- Learn from the wide range of user experiences on the corridor.
- Expand the pool of local leaders who understand the project.
- Review previous work in the corridor and explain current efforts.
- Document their input.
- Invite participants to share information with their organizations.



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Three meetings held August 11-12, 2020 with invited participants

1. Highway Users: commuters, businesses, freight, emergency vehicles. *(15 participants)*
2. Pedestrians, Bicyclists and Boaters. *(13 participants)*
3. Environmental, Hunter and Fisher. *(10 participants)*



CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS

Some Key Messages from Participants

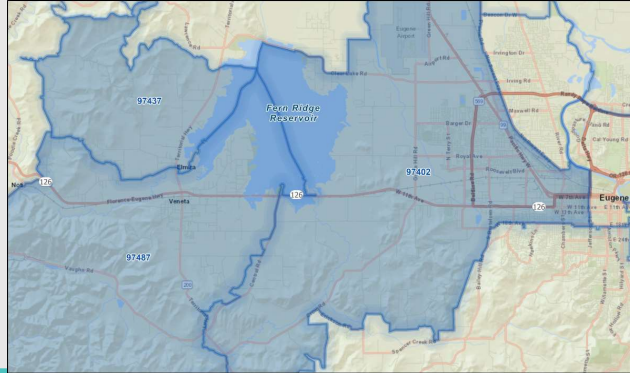
- Support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- Maintain access for businesses, trucks and emergency vehicles.
- Provide complete design for multi-use path with safe connections and crossings of roadway.
- Concern with project impacts to fish, wildlife and plants.



OPEN HOUSE OUTREACH

Target Audience:

- Veneta, Emira and surrounding community.
- Eugene – portions of Bethel, West Eugene and Churchill neighborhoods.



ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Statistics:

- Opened September 8 through September 25.
- Received 324 survey responses.
- Postcards garnered the highest number of participants (3x higher than any other outreach method).

OUTREACH DURING PANDEMIC AND WILDFIRES

Thousands of people care about the safety and mobility of this stretch of highway, and we worked to make sure there was an opportunity for them to share their personal experiences and concerns. Outreach efforts kept public safety in the forefront by providing electronic and phone methods to gather public input. Garnering over 300 survey responses, we achieved our communications goals using multiple methods.



Getting ready for Meals on Wheels with transportation to and from.



Sign for the Land for Anthony project.

"Do you travel between Veneta and Eugene on OR 126? The Oregon Department of Transportation is conducting a study about altering the road."

If you want to learn more about the study and give ODOT your opinions and experiences, they are hosting an online open house that will be open through Sept. 26th. To find it you can type OR 126 Veneta in the search bar of your browser. They would appreciate any and all feedback."

Please message to Fern Ridge School District families

• A-Frame with QR code placed at local store entrances.

• Phone calls to 36 adjacent businesses.

• Phone announcement via Fern Ridge School District to 1,500 households in Veneta, Emira, Walton and Noot reaching 3,000-4,000 people.

• Router Boards with Open House information at two prominent locations.

• Hand copies in food pantry boxes, at Veneta Farmers' Market, Meals on Wheels deliveries, Café 60 (senior and disabled services), Dave's Café.

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Postcards were delivered along open house routes to 4,028 homes.

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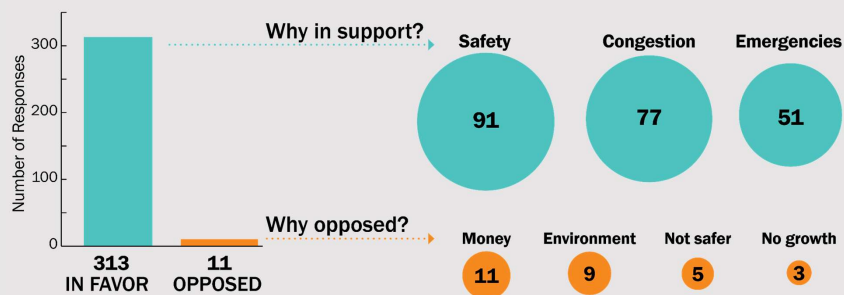
ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

Input Summary

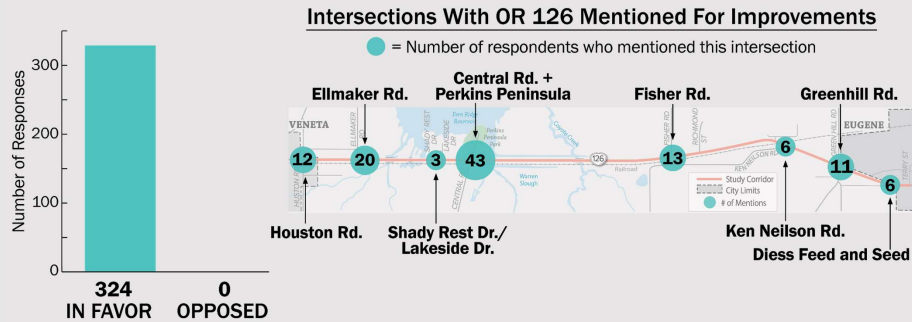
- Support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- Requests for intersection changes to improve safety turning on and off the roadway.
- Desire to maintain access to nature and recreational opportunities.
- Requests to extend project limits west to Territorial Road.
- Sense of urgency.



DO YOU SUPPORT ADDING TRAVEL LANES?



DO YOU SUPPORT ADDING TURN-SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS, INCLUDING WIDENING FOR TURN LANES?



DO YOU SUPPORT A SEPARATED MULTIUSE PATH?



OTHER CONCERNS



Safe access to recreation (24)



Speed enforcement (23)



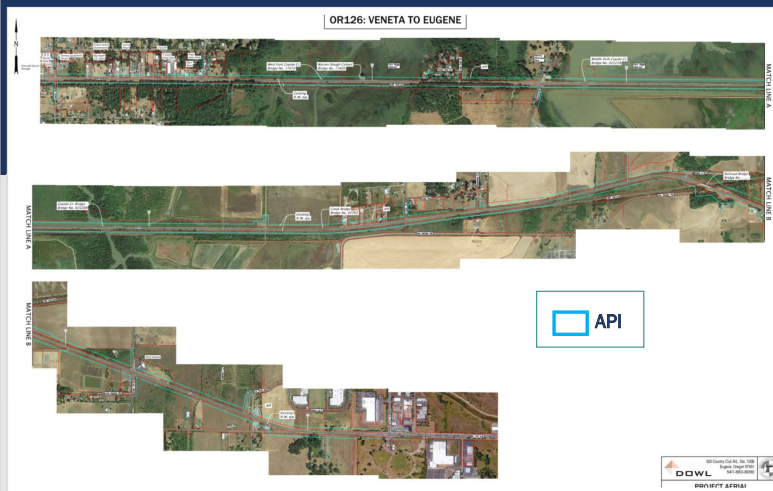
Lack of shoulder for emergency use (51)



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



Purpose: define *affected environment*, including resources in *Area of Potential Impact (API)* to inform design and Federal environmental classification.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline Areas

- Air Quality.
- Archaeological.
- Biological Resources.
- Community/Envir. Justice.
- Hazardous Materials.
- Historic Resources.
- Land Use.
- Noise.
- Parks & Recreation.
- Water Quality/Hydrology.
- Wetlands.



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Endangered plants and habitat within the project corridor



Willamette Valley Daisy



Kincaid's Lupine



Bradshaw's Lomatium



*Fender's Blue
Butterfly Habitat*



ENGINEERING STATUS

CORRIDOR TRAFFIC VOLUMES



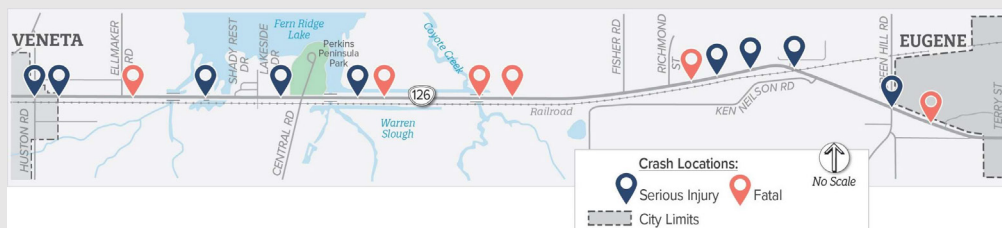
Existing (2020) Volumes



Future (2044) Volumes

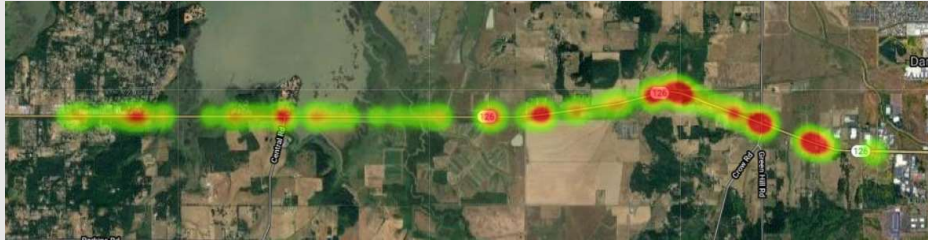
SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

- 6 fatal crashes and nine serious injury crashes.



SAFETY PERFORMANCE (2014-2018)

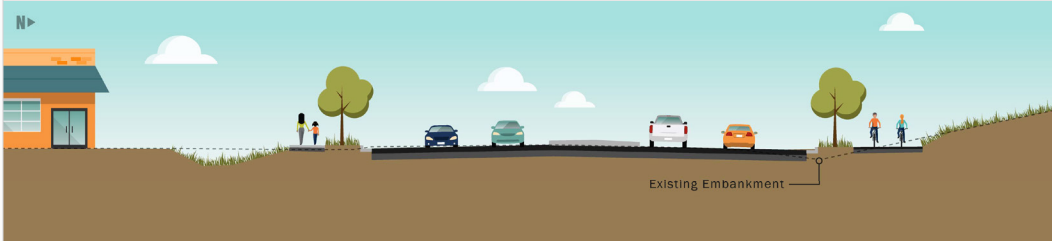
- 209 total crashes.
- Primary crash type was rear-end.
- Majority (70-75%) of crashes occurred during clear, dry daylight hours.



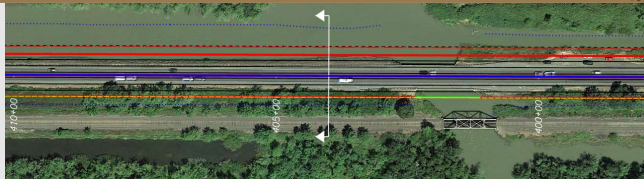
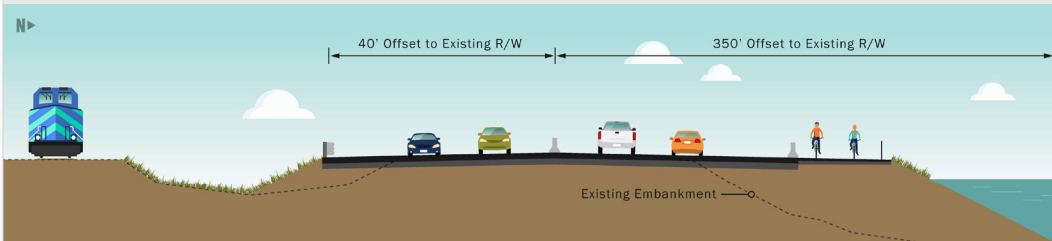
ROADWAY DESIGN

- Alignment shifts with consideration of corridor constraints.
- Initial conversations with USACE and Coos Bay Railroad.
- Many details to address – work in progress.

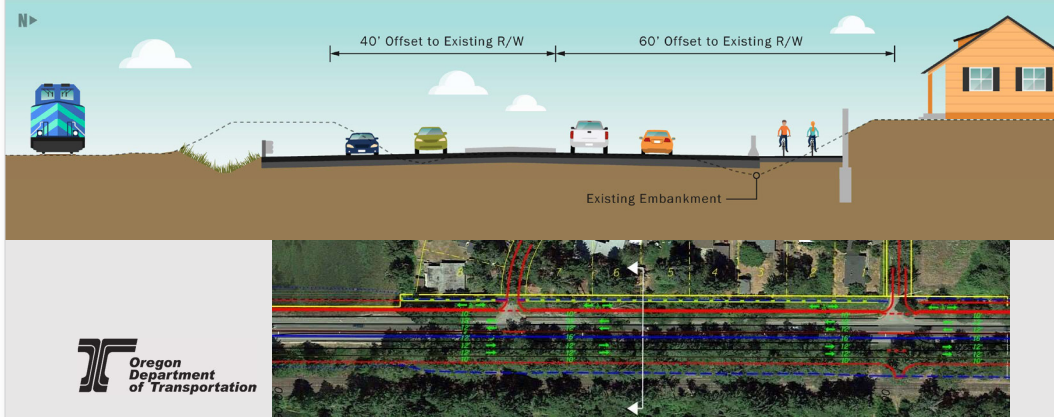
ROADWAY SECTION (TERRY – GREEN HILL)



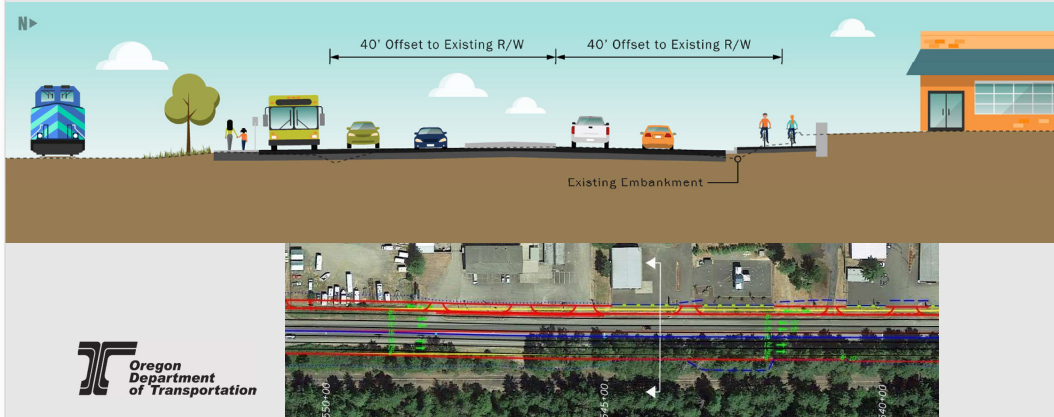
ROADWAY SECTION ALONG RESERVOIR



ROADWAY SECTION AT SHADY REST

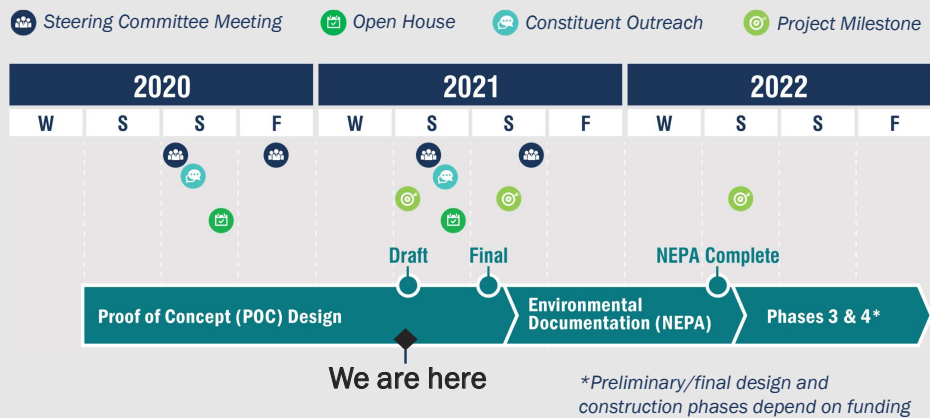


ROADWAY SECTION (ELLMAKER – HUSTON)



PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT SCHEDULE



NEXT STEPS

Spring 2021

- Draft Proof of Concept Design.
- Steering Team #3.
- Second round of constituent meetings.
- Online Open House #2.



QUESTIONS

JANUARY 2022 -- M I N U T E S

Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LaneACT)
The meeting was held via teleconference

January 12, 2022
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Jeff Gowing, Cottage Grove, Chair
Shelley Humble, Other Stakeholder, Chair Elect
Sean VanGordon, Springfield, Vice Chair
John Fox, Coburg
Shelly Clark, Creswell
Claire Syrett, Eugene
Mike Miller, Florence
Karen Leach, Junction City
Keith Weiss, Veneta
Heather Buch, Lane County, Ambassador Elect
Don Nordin, Lane Transit District (LTD)
Gwen Jaspers, Lane County Transportation Advisory Committee (LC TrAC)
Pete Petty, Highway 126 East
Frannie Brindle, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Paul Thompson, Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Doug Barrett, Confederated Tribes
Sarah Mazze, Bicycle & Pedestrian Designated Stakeholder
Rob Zako, Environmental Land Use Designated Stakeholder
Eugene Organ, Other Stakeholder

ABSENT: Dunes City, Lowell, Oakridge, Westfir; Port of Siuslaw.

OTHERS: Mark Bernard, Molly Cary, Bill Johnston, ODOT; Randy Groves, Rob Inerfeld, City of Eugene; Emma Newman, City of Springfield; Matt Michel, Kyle Schauer, City of Veneta; Tressa Miller, Lane Fire Authority; Maddie Phillips, Creswell; Jay Bozievich, Becky Taylor, Lane County; Claire Roth, BEST; Paula Taylor, Denise Walters, Lane Council of Governments (LCOG); Garrett Gray, Confederated Tribes; Dave Simmons, DOWL; Ellen Teninty, Cogito; and Steve Piercy, public.

1. Call to Order (Welcome and Introductions)

Chair Jeff Gowing called the Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LaneACT) meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Review Agenda – Additions or Deletions

There were no changes to the agenda requested.

3. Consent Agenda

- **Approve Minutes from December 8, 2021 meeting.**

Consensus: Approve the Minutes from the LaneACT December 8, 2021 meeting as submitted.

4. Public Comment

Steve Piercy addressed the Oregon 126 West Safety Improvements Project scheduled to be discussed later in the agenda. He stressed the paramount goal was to improve safety and other goals identified were less important. Mr. Piercy noted clearly stated goals enabled the project to be better evaluated after it was completed.

5. Announcements and Information Sharing

- **ODOT Update**

Ms. Brindle gave an update on the Oregon Transportation Commission's (OTC) work on refocusing the Area Commissions on Transportations (ACTs). Feedback from the ACTs had been reviewed and the final adoption of the work was scheduled for the January 20, 2022 OTC meeting. Ms. Brindle explained either Commissioner Julie Brown or Commissioner Sharon Smith would be attending LaneACT meetings when possible. She added the OTC was also discussing funding scenarios for the additional \$1.2 billion federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Mr. Thompson asked about the OTC liaisons to LaneACT. He noted Dean Marcilynn Burke had been confirmed by the Senate and was now a member of the Commission. When he suggested she would be the ideal OTC liaison as she was from Lane County, Ms. Brindle offered to follow up on his suggestion with Amanda Pietz.

Ms. Brindle announced the Port of Coos Bay had received federal and *ConnectOregon* grants to develop a full-scale container terminal. The Port had also partnered with NorthPoint Development. She was working with the Coos Bay railroad staff to see if they had any shovel-ready projects that qualified for ODOT's rail safety grant program. Ms. Brindle also reviewed the upcoming schedule to determine ACTs' recommendation for the *ConnectOregon* grants.

- **Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) Update**

Mr. Thompson highlighted the MPO adopted the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan. They also approved their recommendations on the aforementioned funding scenarios, which MPO Chair Berney would present to the OTC, and set their priorities for the major local ODOT projects.

- **Other Member Updates**

Ms. Jaspers shared Lane County was hosting an online open house on the 30th Avenue Active Transportation Plan's draft designs for improving multi-modal safety. The virtual meeting was scheduled on February 16, 2022 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Nordin said LTD had joined other community partners working to address human trafficking problems. He also noted the LTD Board was asking for input on their general manager search.

Councilor Fox announced the Coburg City Council delayed approval of the land annexation (intended for an industrial park), in part because of I-5 overpass interchange safety concerns.

Ms. Humble described an upcoming meeting at which members would rank applications for the Critical Oregon Airport Relief (COAR) grants.

6. Appoint LaneACT Officers for 2022

Councilor Clark, who served on the Nominating Committee with Councilor Fox and Mr. Zako, discussed the process they undertook to identify the proposed diverse leadership team.

Councilor Fox reviewed their recommendations: Shelley Humble for Chair, Mayor VanGordon for Vice Chair, and Heather Buch for Ambassador.

Mr. Zako discussed the Ambassador role and described the advantages of having the three-person team. He noted it was the first time LaneACT had utilized the Ambassador role.

Councilor Syrett expressed strong support for the role of Ambassador and the slate of candidates.

Consensus: Appoint as LaneACT Officers for 2022: Shelley Humble as Chair, Mayor VanGordon as Vice Chair, and Heather Buch as Ambassador.

Mayor Gowling turned over the virtual gavel to Ms. Humble.

7. Oregon 126 West Safety Improvements

Ms. Brindle introduced Dave Simmons, DOWL, Molly Cary, ODOT Project Manager, and Ellen Teninty, Cogito. Mr. Simmons started the Powerpoint presentation entitled *OR 126: Veneta to Eugene*. He recalled the project team had previously presented at the March 2021 LaneACT meeting. Mr. Simmons described the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted in 2013, as Phase One of the project. They were currently engaged in Phase Two, in which they confirmed the outcomes, refined the design alternatives, and are now completing the environmental documentation required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) so the project can compete for federal funding. He described how updated traffic and safety data indicated five

intersections along the corridor needed improvements. Mr. Simmons detailed the two alternatives developed for each of the intersections (Green Hill Road, Central Road, Huston Road, Fisher Road, and Ellmaker Road). He highlighted the safety advantages of roundabouts and also acknowledged they used more land, creating a larger project footprint. Looking at the causeway portion of the project, Mr. Simmons described how using a retaining wall and shifting the causeway closer to the railroad reduced the impact on the reservoir.

Ms. Cary reviewed which components of the NEPA documentation had been completed and which were still in progress (archeology, biological assessment for protected plants, environmental justice, and historic resources). She emphasized how closely they had worked with staff from the Army Corps of Engineers and ODFW regarding the reservoir and the park and the surrounding area. Ms. Cary explained they assumed the larger project footprint at each intersection when doing the NEPA study. When it was time to do the final design for the project, they could make changes as long as they stayed within the footprint the federal government had approved.

Ms. Teninty described the public involvement efforts. They had utilized a steering committee (local government elected and appointed officials), two rounds of constituent consultations (small stakeholder groups, e.g., highway users, emergency responders, adjacent businesses, bike/ped interests, boaters, naturalists), and two open houses. She summarized the feedback from the latest constituent consultations and open house, noting the urgent need to improve the safety and concerns about economy and concerns about roundabouts.

Mr. Simmons agreed they had heard a lot of apprehensions about roundabouts. He emphasized the final solutions wouldn't be determined until funding was secured and illustrated how a roundabout worked in conjunction with a railroad crossing. Mr. Simmons said the project team had also looked at an incremental approach and had identified the intersections at Green Hill Road (Eugene) and Houston Road (Veneta) as the highest priorities. Also reviewed were phased approaches to constructing the project. These included five large segments as well as smaller interim safety improvements. He concluded the presentation saying they expected to complete the NEPA study in spring/summer 2022.

When Ms. Mazze asked for more information on the concern mentioned about economy in relation to the project, Mr. Michel, Veneta's City Administrator, explained Veneta was a growing community, including housing developments and there were a lot of businesses near Highway 126 that tourists stopped at when going between the coast and the valley. Mayor Weiss added the improved highway not only served Veneta, but also another 5,000 people living in Elmira. Ms. Teninty also explained that many comments centered around travelers needing to use the highway to get to and from their jobs as well as shopping and services.

Mr. Zako asked how the road functioned during construction and if the NEPA analysis was available for public review. He questioned the categorical exclusion, noting the impact on surrounding wetlands.

Ms. Cary explained that construction staging is the responsibility of the contractor but the broad footprint that was studied allows for additional roadway width to shift traffic while construction

is underway. She noted the roundabout designs were offset a bit to help with the construction staging. Ms. Cary said that completed technical reports were available to the public unless their content is protected, such as location of archeological sites or location of protected plants. The NEPA document, which is a Categorical Exclusion, has not been to her knowledge reviewed by the public prior to being signed by FHWA. She also referred to the large size of the Fern Ridge reservoir and the surrounding area which is predominantly wetlands, when compared with the area impacted the impact is not considered significant, in the context of NEPA.

When Councilor Syrett asked if LaneACT's comments at the March meeting were included in the record, Ms. Teninty assured her they were. Councilor Syrett asserted the project was a huge amount of pavement going through a very environmentally sensitive area. She also asserted that no mitigation for wetland impacts was planned. She asked if they had considered three traffic lanes instead of four and requested more information on what wetland mitigation strategies would be used. Dave Simmons assured her all impacts would be mitigated.

Mr. Simmons responded four lanes were needed to meet the projected traffic volumes.

Ms. Mazze advocated for a different approach: focus more on decreasing the number of vehicles, e.g., more transit and e-bicycles. Do not expand the highway to four lanes.

Lane County Commissioner Jay Bozievich described his experience working on the corridor. He explained Fern Ridge reservoir was not a significant natural resource and the proposed expansion did not have major impacts to the wetlands. Commissioner Bozievich observed if there was an accident on the highway, it basically shut down. This was a problem for moving freight and had negatively impacted Veneta's industrial park development. He also said there needed to be a center-lane barrier to reduce head-on crashes (often fatal at highway speeds).

When Mayor VanGordon asked for clarification on next steps, Mr. Simmons emphasized the final design would not occur until funding had been identified. Mayor VanGordon agreed the highway had not been designed for the current volume of traffic and the safety issues needed to be addressed. He added it was important for LaneACT to support smaller jurisdictions, such as Veneta, Elmira, and Florence.

Tribal Council Member Barrett described the perils of driving between Florence and Eugene: there were not enough passing lanes; high water can shut down the highway at Cushman; and landslides can impede alternate routes.

Mayor Weiss expressed strong support for the proposed improvements. Not only would they address safety and congestion concerns, the bicycle/pedestrian lane was very important to Veneta's economic development. He added the impact to the reservoir was not huge.

Ms. Brindle described other highway facilities in Lane County that had less traffic but better improvements (e.g., Highway 99 between Junction City and Eugene). She summarized the current state of the highway between Veneta and Eugene as not up to standard.

Mr. Organ recalled in 2011 LaneACT members had discussed the need to fix the highway. Too many fatalities occurred because of the current design. He expressed hope construction funding would become identified soon.

8. ODOT Projects to Prioritize for Future Funding Opportunities

Ms. Brindle referenced the cover letter and table included in the agenda packet. She said the list was of major projects on the state system in Lane County that were currently in some phase of development but were not yet funded for construction. Ms. Brindle briefly reviewed each of the projects: Beltline Phase 1 (complete Delta interchange), Beltline Phase 2 (local arterial bridge), Coburg I-5 Interchange, Springfield Main Street Phase 1 (32nd Street to 42nd Street), Oregon 126 West Phase 1 (Terry Street to Greenhill Road), Oregon 126 Eugene to Veneta Phase 1 (intersection improvements), and Creswell (Highway 99 and Oregon Avenue intersection improvements). She said time had been scheduled at the February LaneACT meeting to hear the MPO's priorities and discuss LaneACT's priorities in case additional funding was available as part of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Mr. Zako suggested delaying the discussion on project priorities until the work done by the Area Strategies subcommittee was reviewed by LaneACT. When he asked when that was scheduled, Ms. Walters replied it was scheduled for the March meeting.

Mayor VanGordon asked Ms. Brindle to present more information on the projects in February, including project maps.

Councilor Syrett concurred with both the previous speakers.

Councilor Fox spoke to the importance of the overpass improvement for those living in Coburg.

9. Consolidation of ODOT Public Transportation Funding Programs

Due to time constraints, Mark Bernard, ODOT Regional Transit Coordinator, offered to come back in February or March.

10. Adjournment

When Mr. Zako asked about the next Steering Committee meeting, Ms. Walters responded she wanted to confirm the date and time with the new members.

Ms. Humble adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

(Recorded by Beth Bridges)

OR 126: VENETA TO EUGENE: LANE ACT PRESENTATION

January 12, 2022



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Project Background and Overview.
- Design and Environmental Update.
- Public Outreach Summary.
- Implementation Strategies.
- Next Steps.

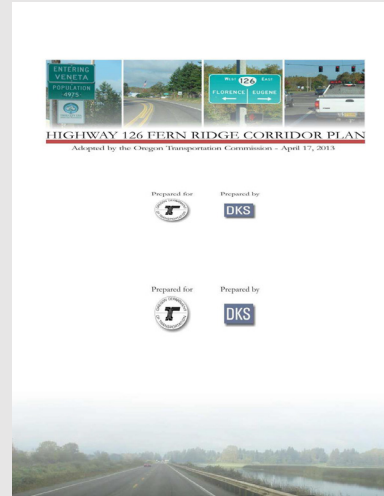
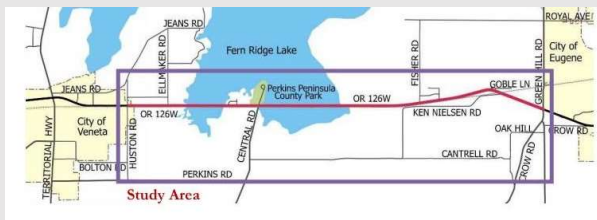


PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND

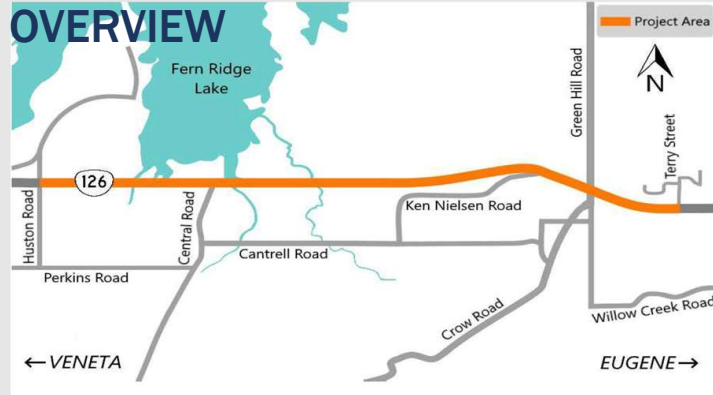
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan:

- Evaluated a series of alternatives to address congestion and safety needs.
- Included extensive stakeholder outreach.
- Recommended plan was adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in April 2013.



This project picks up where the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan concluded.

PROJECT OVERVIEW



Building on the Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, we have confirmed the outcome of the plan with the community, refined the design concept and are completing the environmental documentation needed to advance the project once additional funding is secured.

The corridor study east limits stopped at Green Hill Road, but this current effort includes an additional one-mile segment within Eugene from Green Hill Road to Terry Street. Terry Street is where the roadway currently changes from a four-lane roadway to two-lane roadway. Eugene has a project in their TSP to widen this one-mile segment to four-lanes, so we've incorporated that project into this effort for consistency.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Phase 1 Completed 2011-2013	Phase 2 Underway 2020 - 2022	Phase 3 Future*	Phase 4 Future*
The Fern Ridge Corridor Plan, adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission, identified needs, showed a range of alternatives, and selected a recommended alternative.	Refine conceptual design and complete comprehensive environmental studies of the recommended alternative to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.	Preliminary and final design, and preparation of construction plans.	Construct recommended alternative

**Future phases depend on securing additional funding.*

The Oregon Legislature, through HB 2017, provided funding for this current phase of the project.

This project is in Phase 2.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

 Steering Committee Meeting
  Open House
  Constituent Outreach
  Project Milestone



*Preliminary/final design and construction phases depend on funding

March 2021 Lane
ACT Briefing

We are here

The project schedule shown here shows the timeline for design efforts, which concluded in the early fall with the submittal of the Final Proof of Concept. Environmental studies should be completed this spring. Stakeholder outreach and public involvement are noted along the top, with two rounds of outreach held in 2020 and 2021, which are covered in more detail later in this presentation.



DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Final Proof of Concept was submitted in early September to ODOT and the local agencies.

FUTURE (2044) INTERSECTION OPERATIONS

- Five intersections require additional improvements to meet ODOT mobility targets with the widening of OR126 to four lanes.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or traffic signals are recommended for the Green Hill Road, Central Road and Huston Road intersections.
- Dual-lane roundabouts or turn lane improvements on OR126 are recommended for the Fisher Road and Ellmaker Road intersections.



A review of traffic volumes was completed last year. Out of the nine study intersections within the corridor, five were shown to need additional modifications to meet ODOT's mobility targets. We will review the proof of concept plans for Green Hill, Central, Huston and Ellmaker today.

OR126 CORRIDOR CRASH DATA

- 1998-2002: 13 crashes per year.
- 2005-2009: 25 crashes per year.
- 2014-2018: 42 crashes per year.



Crashes along the project corridor have been increasing over the past 20 years.

INTERSECTION SAFETY PERFORMANCE

- Roundabouts reduce fatal and injury accidents by 82% compared to rural stop-controlled intersections.
- Converting a rural stop-controlled intersection to a signalized intersection can reduce angle crashes by 77%, but can also increase rear-end crashes by 58%.
- Converting a signalized intersection to a roundabout reduces all accidents by 78%.

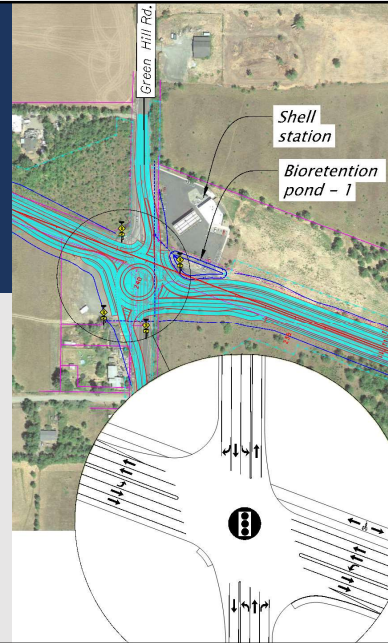


In developing the proof of concept plans, we've opted to develop designs for two options at each of the five intersections, to keep the options open for future determination of the best solution when funding is secured. Roundabouts provide clear safety benefits, as demonstrated here, but also cost more to construct and have a much larger footprint, creating more impact. Rear-end crashes are the most common crash type within the project corridor.

FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

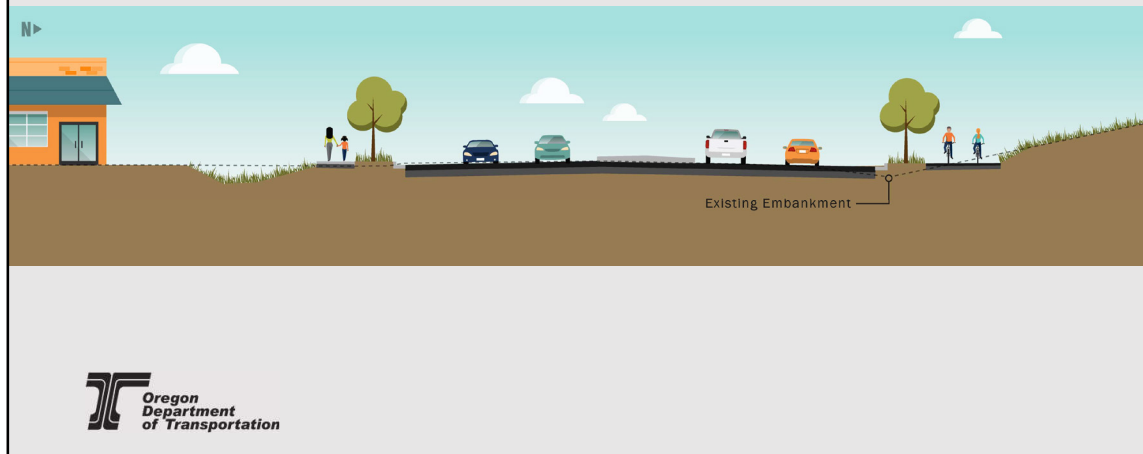
Green Hill Road Intersection

- Roundabout or Traffic Signal

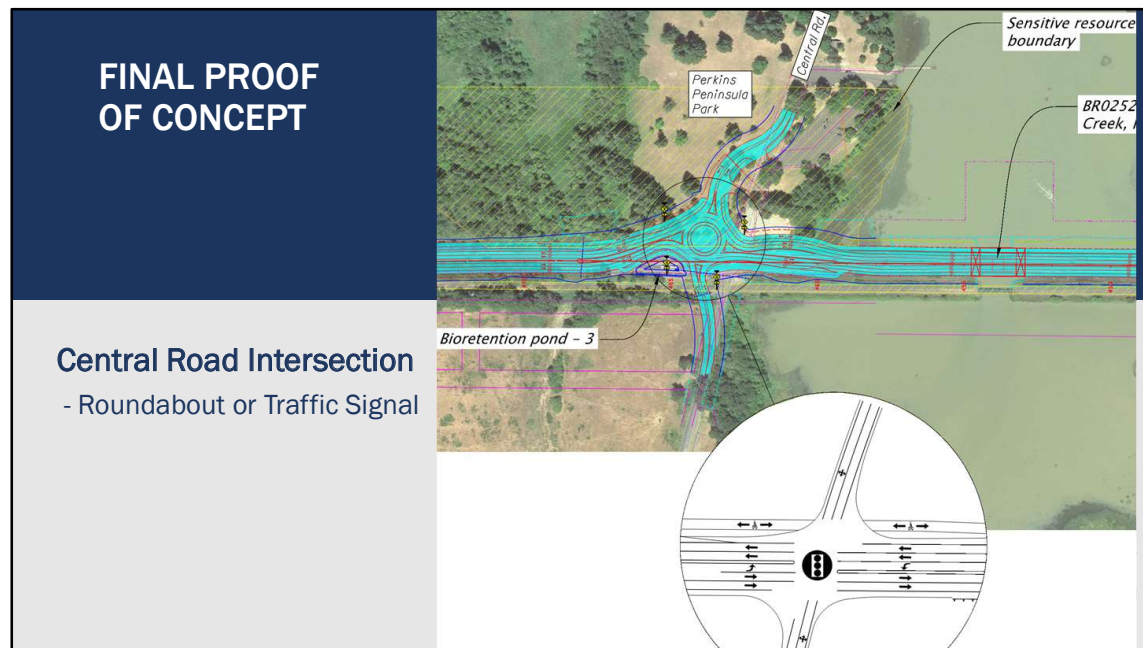


The following slides show excerpts from the Final Proof of Concept design completed in September. Shown here is the Green Hill Road intersection, where a roundabout or traffic signal is proposed. Design considerations included siting the roundabout off to one side of the existing road to reduce traffic impacts during construction, wetland and rare plant impacts and impacts to the residence south of the intersection.

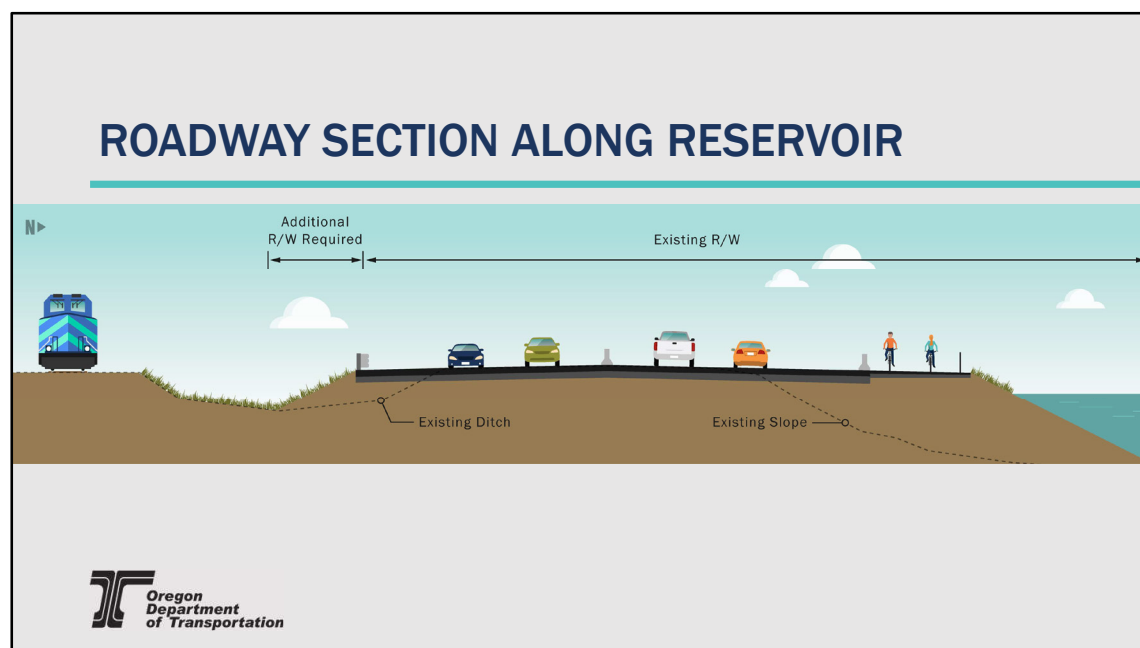
ROADWAY SECTION (TERRY – GREEN HILL)



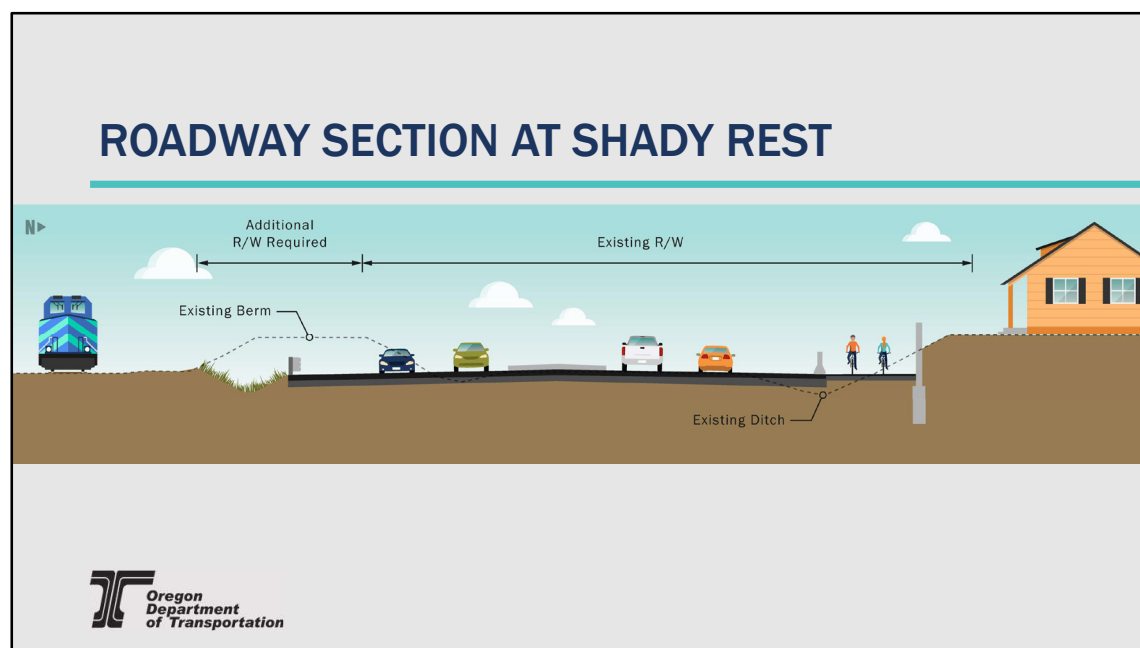
Within the City of Eugene, a four-lane urban section with a raised median or left-turn lane is proposed. Curbs and landscape strips frame the roadway, with a sidewalk along the south side and the shared-use path shown on the north side. The shared-use path is proposed to extend the entire length of the project, beginning at Terry Street. This would provide a good connection to the Fern Ridge Path, which has a trail head 0.3 miles north on Terry Street.



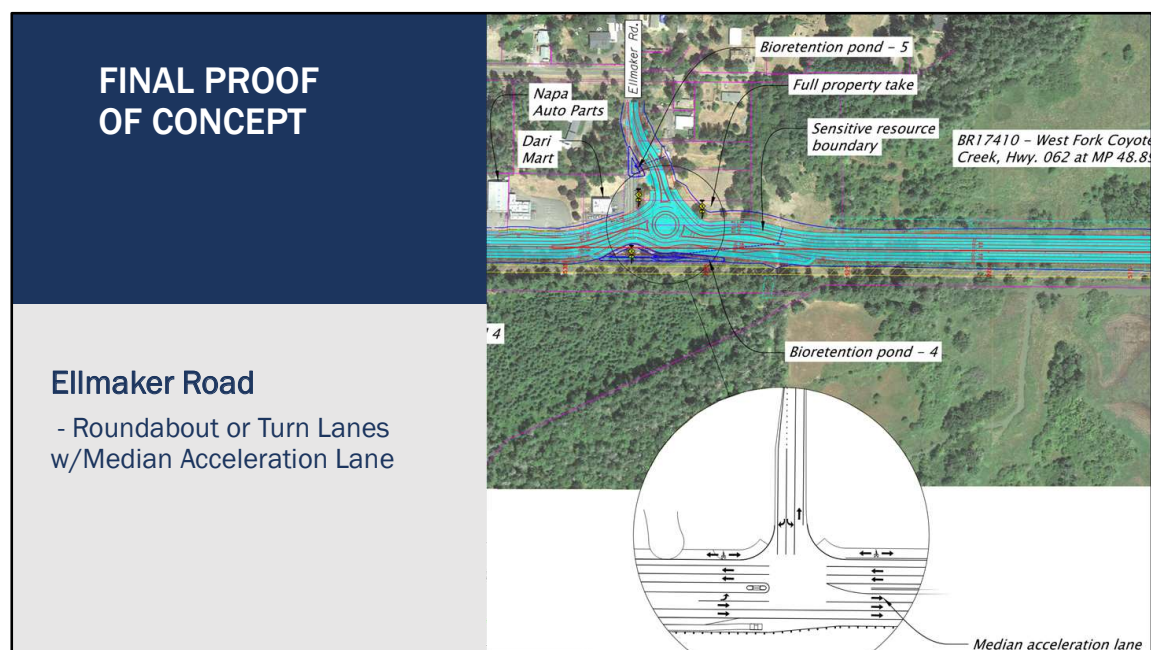
This is the Central Road intersection. This intersection demonstrates the competing objectives when considering a roundabout at this location, in terms of the roundabout offering improved safety, while requiring more land to construct. Design refinements at this intersection included the park entrance showing revised gate location and connections to the boat launch area and gravel parking lot.



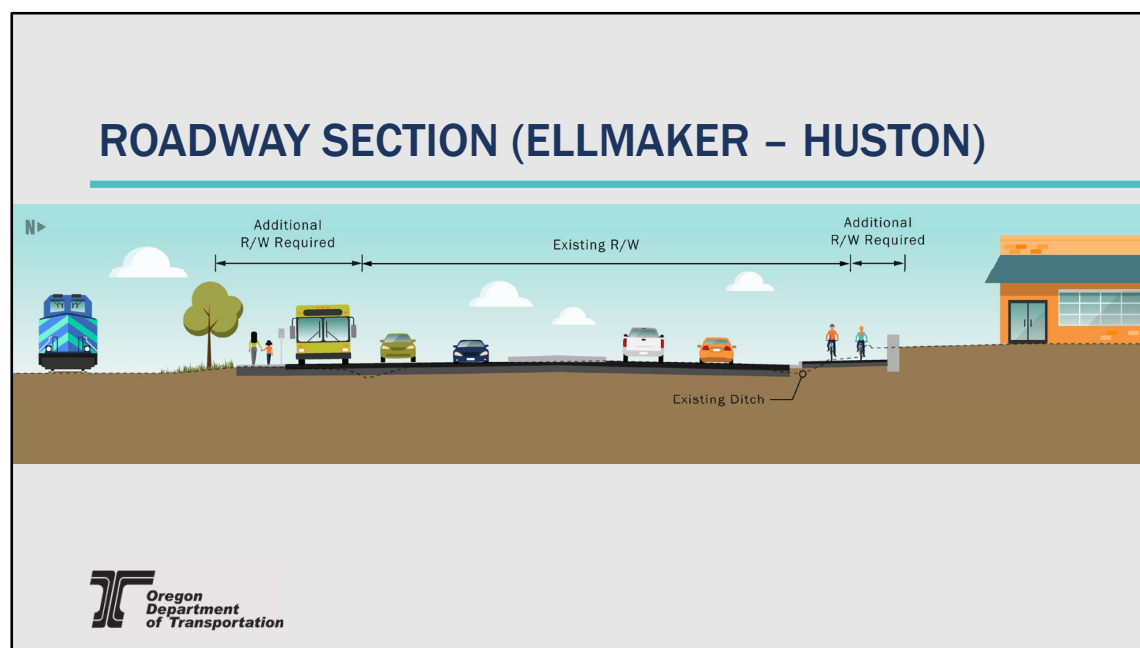
OR 126 is alongside the Fern Ridge Reservoir for about 2 miles of the project corridor. Design refinements include steepened embankment slopes on both sides of the road and shifting the roadway south toward the railroad to reduce the footprint and impact to the reservoir. A retaining wall has also been evaluated for some portions of the embankment area to reduce reservoir impacts. This concept would require some combination of ROW and easements from the railroad.



This roadway section is located at the Shady Rest neighborhood located between Central Road and Ellmaker Road. Design refinements include a retaining wall that reduces the ROW needs along the north side of the road to the side road areas. This was accomplished by shifting the roadway centerline south and would require some combination of ROW and easements from the railroad.



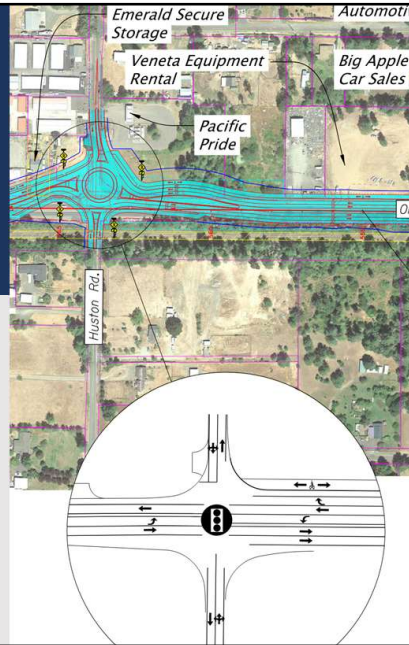
This intersection, like Fisher Road, did not meet the requirements for a traffic signal. The intersection recommendations for this location are a roundabout or turn lane improvements, which include providing turn lanes on the side road and a median acceleration lane for vehicles entering the roadway to use. The roundabout concept would impact the Dari Mart and one residence on the east side of Ellmaker.



This roadway section between Ellmaker Road and Huston Road proposes widening the road, requiring ROW from the businesses on the north side of road and the railroad on the south. This section shows a bus pullout, similar to those constructed near Ellmaker Road in 2019.

FINAL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Huston Road Intersection - Roundabout or Traffic Signal



Huston Road Intersection. Once again, the roundabout concept would require more space and impact the commercial properties on the north side of the road, particularly on the west side of Huston Road.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Discipline Areas

- Air Quality (Completed).
- Archaeological (Underway).
- Biological Resources (Underway).
- Community/Envir. Justice. (Underway)
- Hazardous Materials (Completed).
- Historic Resources. (Underway)
- Land Use (Completed).
- Noise (Completed).
- Parks & Recreation (Underway).
- Water Quality/Hydrology (Completed).
- Wetlands (Completed).



Progress on the environmental studies continues. Many of the discipline areas have completed analysis. Of note, coordination with the USACE has not revealed significant concerns. The project team has provided the USACE copies of the technical work and design modifications have been made in response to their comments, including retaining a channel east of Coyote Creek to maintain water flow to an intake structure and canals that provide water to the Fisher Butte natural area. Design refinements have also been made to the Perkins Park entrance.

Wetland project impacts would be mitigated through a combination of onsite and offsite locations. Mitigation opportunities have been discussed with local natural resource groups reached during the constituent meetings. Stormwater treatment would also require a combination of onsite and offsite treatment.



PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

STEERING COMMITTEE 11 representatives



- 1 July 15, 2020
- 2 November 18, 2020
- 3 March 18, 2021
- 4 October 28, 2021

CONSTITUENTS CONSULTATIONS #1 43 representatives

- 1 August 11, 2020
HIGHWAY USERS
Emergency vehicles | Freight Business | Commuters
- 2 August 11, 2020
ADJACENT USERS
Pedestrians | Bicyclists | Boaters
- 3 August 12, 2020
WETLANDS USERS
Naturalists | Ecology Educators | Fishers | Hunters

CONSTITUENTS CONSULTATIONS #2 35 representatives

- 1 April 14, 2021
HIGHWAY USERS
Emergency vehicles | Freight Business | Commuters
- 2 April 14, 2021
ADJACENT USERS
Pedestrians | Bicyclists | Boaters
- 3 April 15, 2021
WETLANDS USERS
Naturalists | Ecology Educators | Fishers | Hunters



INTERVIEWS 8 organizations May 2020



OPEN HOUSES

- #1** Sept. 8-25, 2020
748 unique visitors
296 responses via online open house
29 responses via hard copy/phone/email
15 staff follow-up responses via phone and email
- #2** April 26-May 9, 2021
756 unique visitors
68 responses via online open house
18 staff follow-up responses via phone and email

This slide summarizes the three primary means of reaching out to the community to gather feedback on the scope of the project and ultimately confirming that we were headed in the right direction with the project. The Steering Committee included staff and elected officials from the Cities of Eugene, Veneta, Florence, Coos Bay Rail, LTD and Lane COG. Two rounds of outreach to project constituents and the general public were held in August and September 2020 and April and May 2021.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

25
PHONE
CALLS
to adjacent business
and properties, twice

- 1 September 2020
- 2 April 2021



EMAIL
UPDATES
4 project
updates to
345 addresses on
Interested Parties List



- 1 September 2020 Invitation
- 2 December 2020 Report
- 3 April 2021 Invitation
- 4 July 2021 Report

COMMENTS
& **RESPONSES**
VIA EMAIL & PHONE

Interactions with
77 people



COMMUNICATIONS WITH DECISION-MAKERS

- Letters to local and state legislators in project area: Throughout
- Briefing of Lane Area Commission on Transportation

- 1 March 2021
- 2 January 2022



TITLE VI & EJ TARGETED OUTREACH

- Inclusion in interviews to establish partnerships
- Inclusion in Constituent Conversations
- Open House outreach through:
 - School districts: Mapleton, Fern Ridge and Bethel
 - Subsidized housing: Homes for Good, St. Vincent DePaul
 - Food pantries: The Love Project, Meals on Wheels, Café 60
 - Specific stores: Darl Mart, Bi-Mart Discount Store, Dixie's Café
 - Specific locations: Veneta Skate Park, Perkins Peninsula Park
 - Accessibility organizations: Mobility International, Eugene Adaptive Recreation Program, Friends of Florence Van, Lane County Senior & Disabled Services
 - Postcards to 4,828 households surrounding the project

MEDIA
outreach to
local papers



- 1 Fern Ridge Review
- 2 Siuslaw News

The 2nd slide is a continuation of outreach and input. We formed great partnerships with organizations that reach thousands of local residents.

For example, the Fern Ridge School District twice sent out a phone message to 1,500 households in Veneta, Elmira, Walton and Noti reaching 3,000–5,000 people.

The area housing authorities and food pantry services partnered with us 100% to reach their constituents.

The City of Veneta used Facebook to reach residents.

And we sent postcards to almost 5,000 households.

Our e-invites went to 1,700 recipients.

We placed information of A-frames and reader boards that reached folks as they passed through the corridor.

And we called adjacent properties and businesses twice for direct questions and personal conversations.

CONSTITUENT CONSULTATIONS – ROUND 2

Some Key Messages from Participants

- Continued support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path.
- A mix of support and apprehension with roundabouts.
- Concern with project impacts to fish, wildlife and plants.



At our March 2021 briefing, we summarized what we heard from the community during the first round of outreach in August and September 2020. This slide outlines key messages from the second round of meetings in April 2021 when we presented the draft Proof of Concept.

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE #2

Input Summary

- Continued support for 4-lane alternative with separate multi-use path (four of 68 comments opposed road widening due to concerns over natural resource and climate impacts).
- Two-thirds of comments indicated a preference for traffic signals over roundabouts.

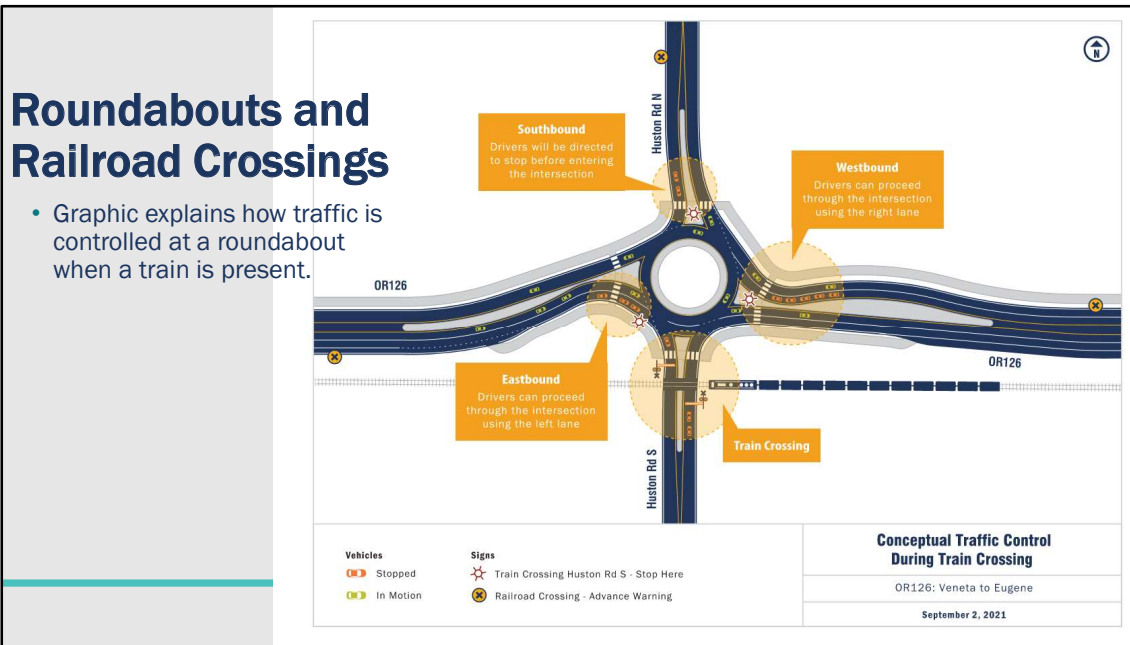


The second Open House was held April 26-May 9th. Key messages are summarized on this slide.

REGARDING ROUNDABOUTS

- A decision on the intersection treatment (roundabouts vs other alternatives) has not been made. Roundabout intersections take up more space and are therefore being used for the environmental evaluations. A decision on the intersection type will be made when funding is secured for the project.

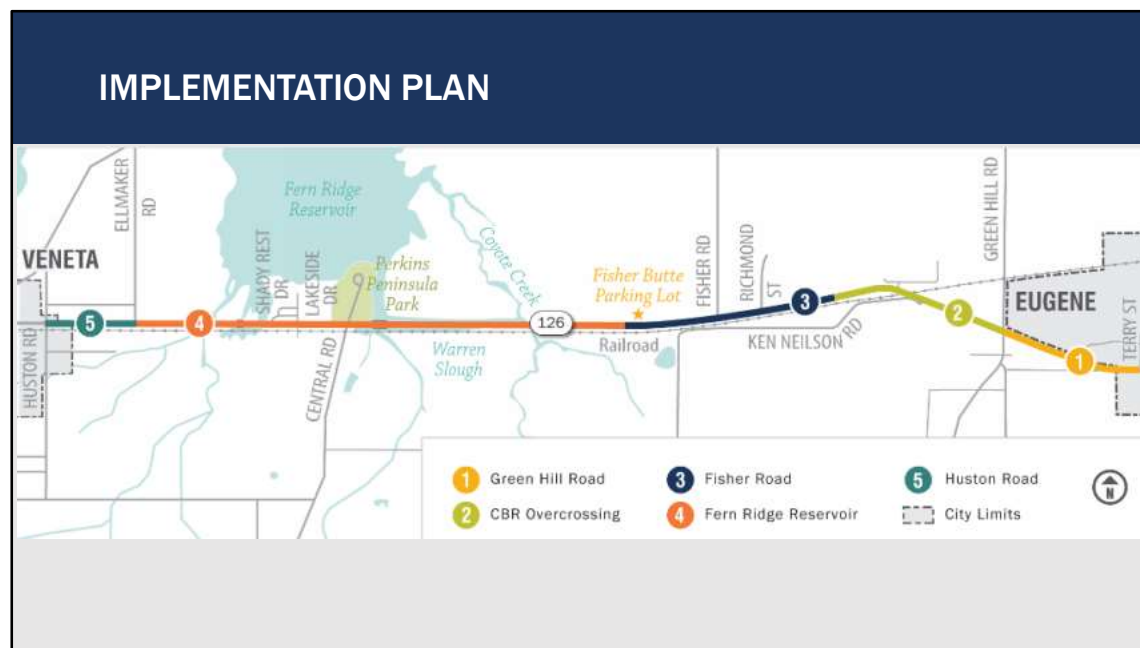




Based on feedback from the Veneta community, this graphic was prepared and shared with the City of Veneta staff to present to the City Council and the community.



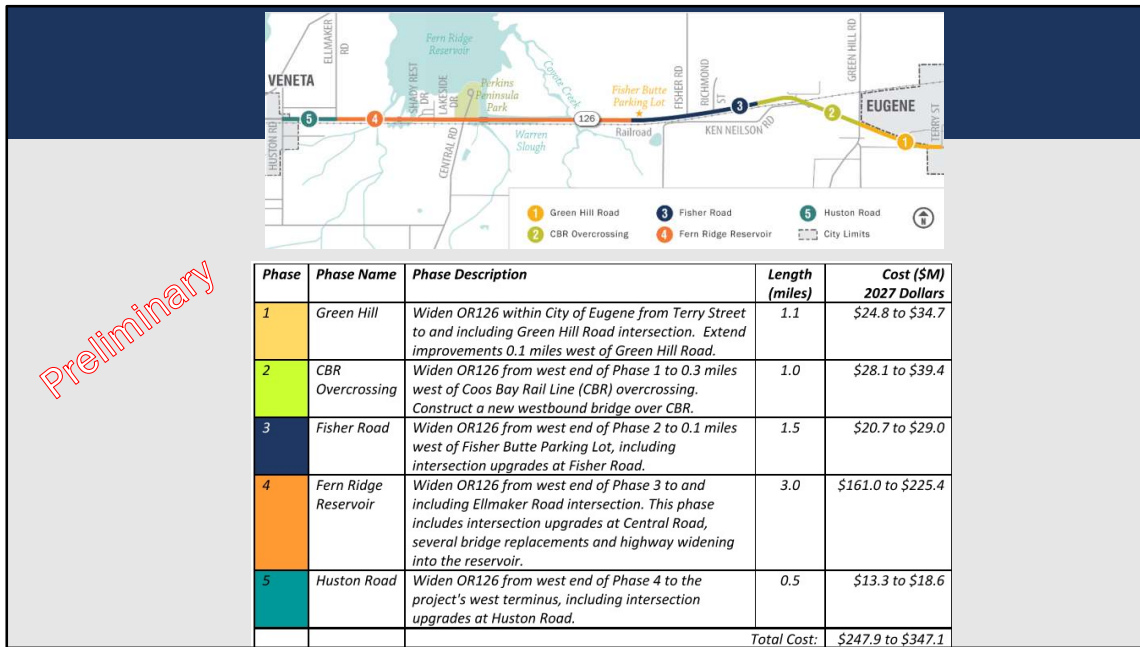
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



As part of refining the design concept, an implementation plan was drafted, recognizing that funding to complete the project all at once is unlikely. This plan was developed based on the following considerations:

- Traffic volumes and accident rates are higher on the east end, so starting at east end with improvements would ensure the highest benefit to cost with Phases 1 and 2.
- the existing four lane section ends at Terry Street
- There are other phasing scenarios that could be explored, depending on funding levels, type of funding and community priorities.

There may be a need for earlier project phases that do not involve construction of the roadway, but rather address other project needs, such as wetland, habitat, and stormwater offsite mitigation, archeological recovery, land use actions.

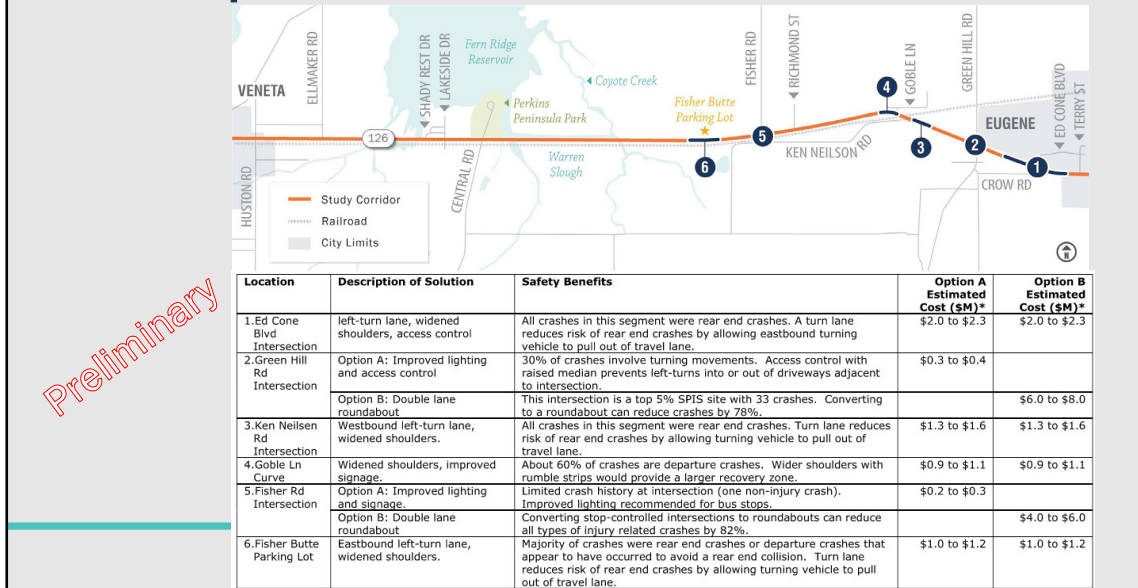


Preliminary cost estimates for the 5 segments are shown on this slide.



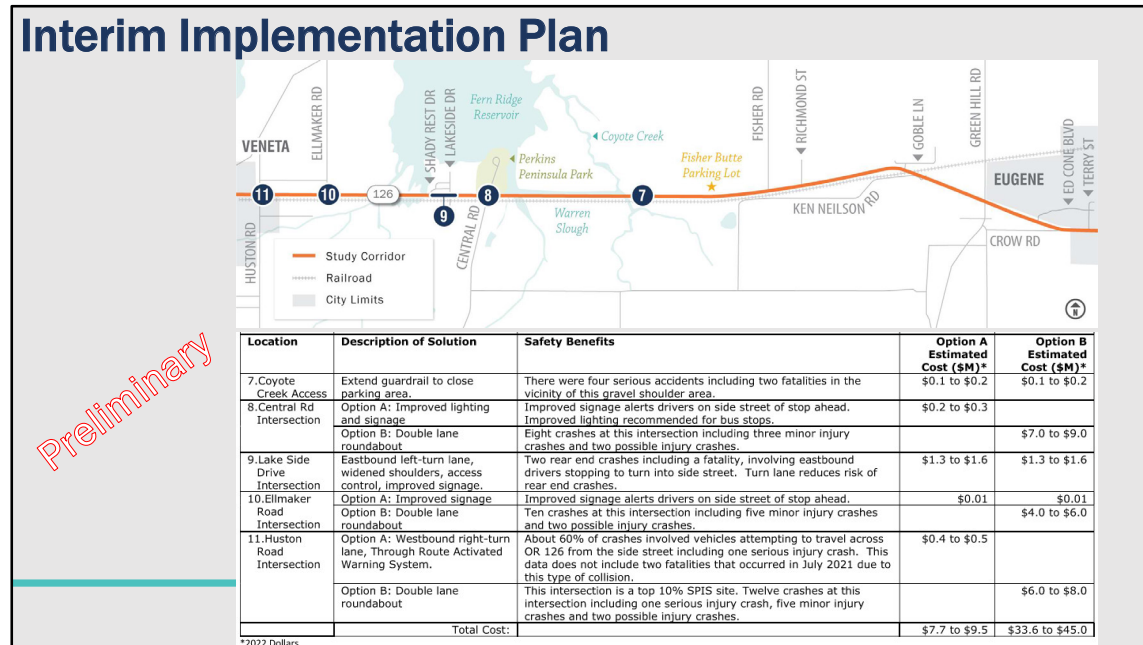
Recognizing the need to improve safety along the corridor, ODOT has developed an interim plan that targets those locations along the corridor where crashes have occurred. This map of the project corridor identifies eleven locations where modifications are proposed to improve safety, and in some cases reduce congestion.

Interim Implementation Plan



This plan includes two options. Option A identifies a series of corridor modifications that are lower cost with limited intersection changes. Option B includes the installation of a double lane roundabout at the five intersections as identified in the Proof of Concept Design. Six of the eleven locations are identified on this slide. The Green Hill intersection has the highest accident rate within the corridor and should be a high priority to improve. The Goble Lane curve has the highest segment crash rate.

Interim Implementation Plan



The five locations listed on this slide complete the list of eleven total locations. There are a variety of combinations for how the improvements could be implemented. The Huston Road intersection has the second highest intersection crash rate and should be a high priority for improvements.

NEXT STEPS

Spring/Summer 2022

- Complete NEPA.



QUESTIONS
