



Results from public comment period

ODOT held an open house for the *Oregon 42: Lookingglass Creek to Interstate 5* project in Winston on Nov. 15, 2022. As a result of public feedback, some project elements will be changed.



ODOT plans to install a new traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road and make other safety improvements along Oregon 42.

The *Oregon 42: Lookingglass Creek Road to Interstate 5* project has two primary goals. The first is to preserve the existing facilities by resurfacing 4½ miles of highway and repairing five bridges within the project area. The other is to improve safety for drivers and other road users.

Background: In 2011, ODOT initiated a study to identify potential safety improvements along this section of Oregon 42. The study included a public advisory committee and two public open houses. Two years later, the *OR 42 Expressway Management Plan: Lookingglass Road to I-5 Exit 119* was released, and it identified 23 possible improvements. ODOT evaluated the list of improvements in terms of safety benefits, costs, and impacts to the community.

In 2021, ODOT began design work on a project that would pave Oregon 42 from Lookingglass Creek to Interstate 5. With the addition of safety funding, we began considering features that would produce the largest safety benefit if added to the project.

From early in this process, we understood the local community strongly supported adding a traffic signal at the intersection of Oregon 42 and Rolling Hills Road. In 2013, we received a petition with more than 130 signatures requesting a new signal. Before a location can be approved for a new traffic signal, it must meet several criteria set by the federal government relating to traffic volumes and other road conditions. Our analysis indicated that this location did not meet any of the required criteria. So we began looking at other possible safety features we could add to this project.

Our analysis indicated that many crashes along the corridor involved lane departures, turning movements and rear-end crashes. We gave priority to safety features that would help reduce these types of crashes.

First, we decided to place a raised concrete barrier along the median of Oregon 42 between Grant Smith Road and the northbound I-5 ramps, where we had seen several lane-departure crashes. Next, to reduce the number of crashes related to turning movements, we added concrete barrier, traffic separators and concrete islands at other locations along the corridor, between Grant Smith Road and Winery Lane and between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road. This reduction in turning options required us to create safe U-turn accommodations at three highway intersections. Finally, we planned to adjust the traffic signals to help reduce rear-end crashes.

When we looked at how these changes would affect traffic, we found that traffic volumes increased enough at the Rolling Hills Road intersection to meet the criteria for a traffic signal. A signal would also be necessary to provide safe U-turn accommodations at Rolling Hills Road.

Public outreach: In October 2022, ODOT mailed more than 420 letters to property owners in the neighborhoods north of Oregon 42 in the area of Emils Way, Landers Avenue and Rolling Hills Road. These letters explained the project and asked for public input. We sent a similar letter to all of the property owners on Winery Lane. Two weeks prior to the open house, we mailed more than 6,300 postcard invitations to residents in Green and Winston. ODOT staff visited all of the businesses located along the project footprint and handed out flyers. We also distributed door hangers with open house information in the Emils Way and Heatherwood Lane neighborhoods.

All of the letters, postcards, flyers and door hangers contained the project website address (www.Winston42.com). We understood that some people wouldn't be able to attend an open house, so we posted all of the displays and slideshows on the project website one week before the in-person event and we provided an e-mail address where folks could send their comments.

ODOT held a public open house for the project on Nov. 15, 2022, at Winston Middle School. More than 50 people attended, asked questions and shared their opinions. That evening, we received 30 comments cards. We also received about a dozen e-mails and a few phone calls. The 30-day comment period ended on Dec. 15.

Many individuals supported the project, while others expressed opposition or concern about project features. This feedback has been extremely valuable to us, challenging some of our assumptions and helping us to look at this project from different points of view.

Comments lead to changes: As a result of the public comments, we plan to make four changes to the project:

1. We will continue to allow left and right turns between Oregon 42 (both directions) and Winery Lane. As several individuals pointed out, there are businesses on Winery Lane that depend on commercial truck* deliveries and these trucks would not be able to make a right turn from eastbound Oregon 42 onto Winery Lane.
2. By keeping a turn lane at Winery Lane, we will no longer need to provide U-turn accommodations for Oregon 42 at Grant Smith Road (eastbound to westbound) or Carnes Road (westbound to eastbound).

* – In this document, the term “commercial truck” refers to semi-trailer trucks. These are officially classified as WB-67, but are commonly known as “semis,” “tractor trailers” or “18-wheelers.”

3. We will add right-turn lanes to westbound Oregon 42 at Landers Avenue and Rolling Hills Road. The lanes will allow motorists to veer out of the highway travel lanes and slow down before turning right. This should help reduce the risk of rear-end crashes in these areas.
4. We will add streetlights on the westbound side of Oregon 42 at Landers Avenue and Jackie Avenue. (We had already planned to install illumination at the new Rolling Hills Road traffic signal.)

Most other safety features – including the traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road and the raised barrier and traffic separators between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road – will remain in the project due to the benefits they provide the traveling public.

Some people may question why we will continue to allow left turns into Winery Lane but not at other locations. In the area of Oregon 42 between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road, alternate routes are available for commercial trucks and other large vehicles. But there are no alternate routes at Winery Lane. There is only one way in or out, and the corner is too tight for commercial trucks on eastbound Oregon 42 to turn right at Winery Lane.

We understand that there are many concerns about the proposed features, and we would like to take this opportunity to respond to some of the most common questions and comments we received.



Winery Lane runs parallel to Oregon 42 before turning sharply and connecting to the highway. The 2013 *Expressway Management Plan* recommended the closure of the westbound Oregon 42 left-turn lane into Winery Lane as a way to improve safety at this intersection. However, several individuals pointed out that commercial trucks use this turn lane to reach businesses on Winery Lane, and that these trucks would not be able to make right turns from eastbound Oregon 42 into Winery Lane. ODOT traffic engineers evaluated and confirmed this claim. As a result, the turn lane will be kept in place.

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ODOT responses to public comments

NEW TRAFFIC SIGNALS: *We received several comments supporting the decision to place a traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road and none in opposition. However, three individuals requested a traffic signal at Lookingglass Road, one person requested a traffic signal at Landers Avenue, and three others mentioned problems at the Abraham Avenue intersection.*

At this time, Lookingglass Road does not meet the required criteria for installing a traffic signal, though that could eventually change. ODOT will continue to monitor traffic volumes and conditions.

At the time of the open house, the City of Winston was developing their Transportation System Plan, which may address the Lookingglass Road intersection. We recognize there are valid concerns about this intersection, and we will continue to work with city staff and other stakeholders to consider possible solutions.

Landers Avenue does not meet any of the federal requirements to install a new traffic signal and it is too close to the signal at Carnes Road. In high speed areas of highway (this section of Oregon 42 has a posted speed limit of 50 mph), we prefer a half mile of space between traffic signals. This helps prevent traffic at one intersection from backing up to the other and affecting its operations. Landers Avenue is about 1,500 feet away from Carnes Road.

A few people requested a traffic signal at Abraham Avenue due to increased traffic, recent development and problems with sight distances. The intersection does not meet the necessary criteria for a traffic signal, but ODOT staff will visit the intersection and consider possible changes to improve sight distances and the flow of traffic.

YELLOW FLASHING LIGHTS: *Four individuals recalled a time when a yellow sign with flashing lights was posted on the railroad bridge, alerting westbound Oregon 42 drivers of the signal at Carnes Road. They requested that we bring these signs and flashing lights back.*

For many drivers, the signs with flashing yellow lights provided a useful warning to slow down when approaching a traffic signal. Unfortunately, other drivers used these signs as a cue to speed up and race through the signal before it turned yellow or red, which likely played a role in many rear-end crashes.

ODOT is planning to use a different technology to help reduce crashes at Carnes Road, Grant Smith Road and Rolling Hills Road.

When approaching a traffic signal that turns yellow, some drivers are caught in a “dilemma zone.” If they proceed through the intersection and the signal turns red, they risk crashing into cross traffic. If they stop too suddenly, they risk being rear-ended. The new system looks for natural gaps in traffic before moving from a green to yellow phase so that fewer drivers face this dilemma. This technology has proven effective in other cities and states.

HIGH SPEEDS: *Eight people requested a speed reduction along Oregon 42, four people asked for more law enforcement, and several other comments were related to traffic calming features that*

could be added to the highway. Five individuals requested right-turn lanes due to high speeds and the potential for being rear-ended when turning right.

We agree that many drivers exceed the posted speed limit through this section of Oregon 42 and that speeding plays a role in many crashes. But solving this problem isn't as easy as posting new signs with lower speed limits or asking for more police patrols. A driver who disregards a 50 mph sign is likely to ignore a lower posted speed limit in the same area. Local police departments may not have the staff or funding to increase patrols.

The new traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road will likely slow traffic between Green and Winston. Safety features, such as raised concrete barrier and channelizing islands in the center median, can also help calm traffic. After the project is completed, ODOT will conduct a speed zone investigation to determine the appropriate posted speed in this section.

In response to the public comments we received, ODOT will add right-turn lanes for westbound Oregon 42 at Landers Avenue and Rolling Hills Road. This will allow drivers to exit the travel lane and slow down before turning right, reducing the risk of rear-end crashes.



The right-turn lane on westbound Oregon 42 allows motorists to veer out of the travel lanes before slowing down and turning right at Lookingglass Road. In response to public comments ODOT received at November's open house, similar right-turn lanes will be added to westbound Oregon 42 at Landers Avenue and Rolling Hills Road.

WINERY LANE: *Four individuals expressed concern about removing the westbound Oregon 42 left-turn lane at Winery Lane and placing median barrier or traffic separators at that location. They claimed that trucks cannot make right turns from eastbound Oregon 42 onto Winery Lane and that removing the left-turn lane for westbound Oregon 42 would make it impossible for any trucks to turn onto Winery Lane.*

After reviewing these comments, ODOT staff examined the intersection and confirmed that large commercial trucks will not be able to navigate a 180-degree turn from eastbound Oregon 42 onto Winery Lane.

The 2013 Expressway Management Plan suggested that a local road be constructed between Winery Lane and Grant Smith Road. However, neither the county nor any private developers have expressed an intention to build such a connection. Without a local connection, the only path trucks can use to enter Winery Lane is the left-turn lane from westbound Oregon 42.

Therefore, we have decided to leave this left-turn lane in place. ODOT will not place barrier or traffic separators in this area. Since left turns will be allowed into and out of Winery Lane, U-turn accommodations are no longer needed for eastbound-to-westbound Oregon 42 at Grant Smith Road and for westbound-to-eastbound highway traffic at Carnes Road.

RAISED MEDIAN BARRIER: *In response to ODOT’s proposal to restrict turning movements by placing barrier along the highway median between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road, two people simply said “No barriers.” Several others questioned the benefits of restricting turn movements in this area by noting that these features would not have prevented some recent crashes. A few individuals mentioned the inconvenience or financial burden of taking longer routes to reach their destinations. Others expressed concern about whether emergency service vehicles would be impacted by the restrictions.*

There have been hundreds of crashes along this corridor in recent years, and it’s true that no feature or set of features would have been prevented all of them. But crashes that involve turning movements are common in this area and can be very serious or fatal. Raised barrier and traffic separators in the highway median will go a long way in reducing those types of crashes, preventing many injuries and saving lives. We expect that the combination of traffic signals at Rolling Hills Road and median barrier will result in lower speeds, which will also improve safety.

We understand these restrictions will require more driving, gas and expense, but the distances are fairly short. It is exactly one mile from Carnes Road to Rolling Hills Road. For a round trip to Roseburg, Heatherwood Lane residents will travel an extra 0.3 miles while Emils Way residents will travel an extra 1.5 miles. For a round trip to Winston, Emils Way residents will travel no additional distance while Heatherwood Lane residents will travel an extra 1.6 miles. For most people, this will add less than 25 miles a month to their commute, which translates to about one gallon of gas. In exchange for that gallon of gas, they will get safer roads.

There should be little impact to emergency service response times. The nearest fire station (Fire District No. 2, Station 2) is located on Carnes Road and has primary responsibility for responding to incidents in the area of Emils Way, Landers Avenue, Jackie Avenue, Lane Drive and Rolling Hills Road. Fire trucks and ambulances from Station 2 will not be affected by the barrier when traveling to incidents in this area.

If the Station 2 personnel are already in the field, the Winston-Dillard fire station will send trucks or ambulances to this area of the Green District. The location of the barrier would require these vehicles to make a left-turn at Landers Avenue or a U-turn at Carnes Road. All emergency service providers will be notified of these traffic control changes.

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U-TURNS: *Several people expressed safety concerns about the proposed U-turns at Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road. Three individuals mentioned that either commercial trucks or farm trucks with livestock trailers are used in the area and would have difficulty negotiating U-turns on the highway. One person suggested that elderly drivers might have trouble making U-turns. A few others asked whether the turn lanes at Rolling Hills Road and Carnes Road were long enough to accommodate U-turn traffic. Two people asked if U-turns will be allowed at Landers Avenue.*

At this time, we are only looking at two locations for U-turn accommodations: Carnes Road (eastbound to westbound Oregon 42) and Rolling Hills Road (westbound to eastbound Oregon 42). Motorists making U-turns will share the same lane with vehicles making left-turns. A dedicated signal (green left arrow) will be provided for vehicles making left turns or U-turns; all oncoming traffic will receive a red light. In this way, making a protected U-turn will be just as safe as making a protected left turn.

Most passenger vehicles, including pickup trucks and delivery trucks, will be able to make U-turns at these locations. Commercial trucks, trucks with livestock trailers, and drivers who feel uncomfortable making U-turns can use local roads to change direction.

We believe the system can accommodate an increase in local traffic related to U-turns. The turn lanes at Rolling Hills Road and Carnes Road are both 360 feet long. If each vehicle needs about 20 feet of space, the turn lane should be able to hold 18 vehicles. Each traffic signal cycle is about two minutes in duration, which should provide enough time for all vehicles in the turn lane to clear the signal. In other words, the signal can accommodate 18 vehicles in a turn lane every two minutes.

We have looked at the traffic data from different times of day and days of the week. We have counted the total number of vehicles turning out of Emils Way, Landers Avenue and Jackie Avenue. If we assume that every vehicle that turned left onto eastbound Oregon 42 will instead turn right and make a U-turn at Rolling Hills Road, we will only see a total of 82 vehicles making U-turns or left turns at this location during the busiest hour of the day (and 24 vehicles in the peak 15 minutes). Those are well within the thresholds for the turn lane since it is capable of accommodating more than 400 vehicles an hour and 100 in 15 minutes.

Of course, traffic can change over time. We will monitor the intersections and make any necessary adjustments to ensure the signals operate properly.

For safety reasons, U-turns will only be allowed where there are traffic signals on Oregon 42, at the intersections of Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road. The eastbound Oregon 42 left-turn lane onto Landers Avenue is not designed to accommodate U-turns. A “No U-turn” sign will be posted at this location.

LOCAL ROADS: *Several people suggested that local road connections are needed, especially for the segments of Rolling Hills Road. One person suggested we convert the multiuse path between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road into a one-way (eastbound) frontage road. Some residents expressed concern about damage to Jackie Avenue and Harmony Drive due to increased traffic.*

The 2013 *Expressway Management Plan* identified several possible local road connections in the Green District for consideration. The highest priorities were connecting the segments of Rolling Hills Road and connecting Grange Road with Roberts Creek Road via Brittney Avenue. The plan also recommended improving connectivity in the area of Melody Lane and Chandler Drive. An

additional connection was suggested between Winery Lane and Grant Smith Road. As of 2022, only the Grange Road connection to Roberts Creek Road has been constructed.

Constructing new roads or connections can be expensive. Neither Douglas County nor ODOT have available funds at this time to connect the segments of Rolling Hills Road or build other local road connections. As a result, any connections that are built will likely be developer-driven. The new traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road will provide a safe and easy path for local residents to reach Oregon 42. This could potentially make the area more attractive to home buyers and developers.

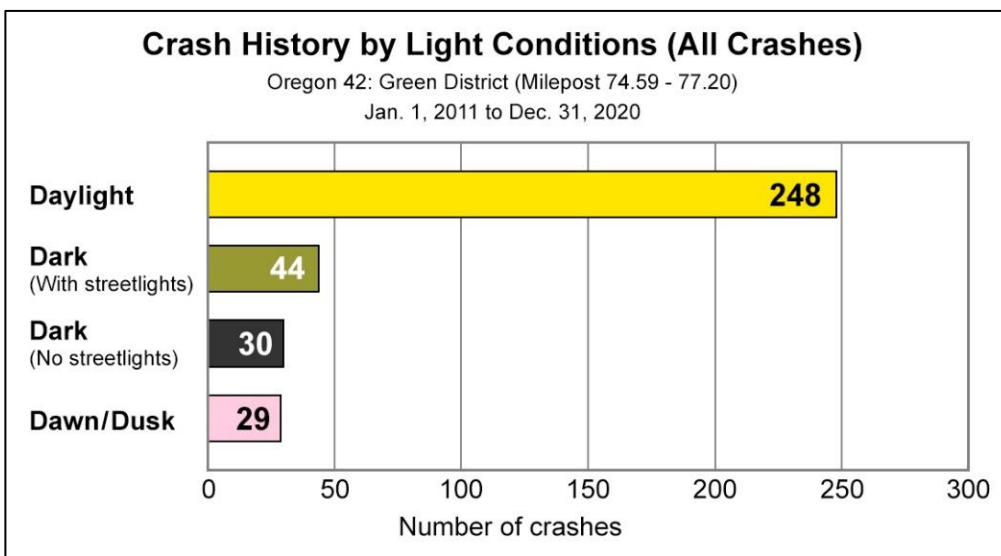
Creating a frontage road along the westbound side of the highway is unlikely to happen due to high construction costs, right-of-way considerations and impacts to the bicyclists and pedestrians who use the existing multiuse path.

We understand the project features will cause some local motorists to explore alternate routes, possibly along Jackie Avenue and Harmony Drive. We have shared these concerns with Douglas County Public Works, which is responsible for maintaining local roads in this area.

STREETLIGHTS: *A handful of people claimed that most crashes on Oregon 42 in the Green District occur at night and that adding streetlights along the westbound side of the highway would provide more safety benefit than other features. Several said the lack of streetlights at intersections make it difficult for drivers to see pedestrians and bicyclists on the multiuse path.*

It is true that many crashes on Oregon 42 in the Green District take place at night, but the majority have happened during daylight hours.

For the 10-year period ending Dec. 31, 2020, a total of 351 crashes were reported on Oregon 42 between the Umpqua River and Interstate 5 (milepost 74.59-77.20). A total of 248 crashes (almost 71 percent) occurred during daylight hours. Another 74 crashes (21 percent) took place at night, but 44 were in areas that already had streetlights. Another 29 (8 percent) took place at dawn or dusk.



Of those 351 crashes, 30 involved fatalities and serious injuries: 16 occurred during daylight hours, six at night in areas that already had streetlights, seven in areas without streetlights, and one at dusk.

In other words, approximately 71 percent of all crashes and 53 percent of fatal and serious injury crashes occurred during daylight hours. The high number and percentage of daylight crashes tells us that we need to do more than add streetlights.

Nevertheless, we understand many factors can lead to a crash, and lighting conditions may be one of them. We recognize the benefit of adding streetlights along the section of highway between Carnes Road and Rolling Hills Road. Our original plan for the new traffic signal at Rolling Hills Road included new streetlights. In response to the public comments we received, we will also add streetlights at Landers Avenue and Jackie Avenue.

BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS: *Some of the open house attendees requested that ODOT make bike-pedestrian facilities safer, including the multiuse path and crosswalks. Another suggested a new pedestrian crossing at the Green Bridge (South Umpqua River).*

The Expressway Management Plan recommended a multiuse path undercrossing at the Green (South Umpqua River) Bridge, but this was left out of the project due to concerns about costs, high water and potential erosion at this location. However, ODOT will provide crosswalks with push-button beacons a short distance away at Rolling Hills Road.

As mentioned earlier, we now plan to install new streetlights at Rolling Hills Road, Landers Avenue and Jackie Avenue.

For the benefit of pedestrians, ODOT will replace the sidewalk corners at 14 intersections, replacing ADA curb ramps and installing yellow truncated domes.

OTHER ITEMS: *Below we will address miscellaneous issues and concerns that were mentioned in the public comments.*

- One person asked if the project is required to meet Oregon’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions goal. Not every ODOT project is required to move us towards the statewide goal of reducing greenhouse emissions. Some projects may advance other goals, such as traffic safety, but may not reduce GHG emissions. ODOT’s aim is to have an overall project mix that advances Oregon toward our statewide GHG emission reduction goals. Although this project may not result in lower GHG emissions, we have many other projects locally and across the state that do.
- A few people asked about public transportation. We are taking bus stops into consideration and will likely relocate the stop near Rolling Hills Road. We will share all comments about bus pullouts, accessibility and other safety features with the local transit authority.
- Two people asked about the construction schedule and why we are waiting so long to bid. We kicked off design of the project in 2020 and it often takes a few years to design a project. We are currently about halfway through our design and should be ready to bid by the fall of 2024. We currently estimate that a contractor will need about two years to complete the project, though this timeline is still under consideration.
- A few people mentioned concerns outside of the state highway system, such as issues on Carnes Road and Lookingglass Road. We have forwarded these comments to local authorities.

- A couple of individuals asked about road signs and rumble strips. We will review these comments to determine if these can be addressed by our maintenance office.

We want to thank everyone who visited the project open house and submitted comments. Your feedback has made a difference and will help us improve the design of this project.

We encourage anyone who believes their comments were not addressed in this document to contact ODOT Public Information Officer Dan Latham at Dan.Latham@odot.oregon.gov or 541-817-5200.

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