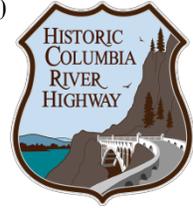


Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting will take place via Zoom – Information below
Login online: <https://tinyurl.com/HCRHAC-August2020>

Meeting ID: 920 5310 4739
Password: 263377

Call in (does not require internet): 1 (253) 215-8782
Meeting ID: 920 5310 4739#



Monday, August 10th, 2020

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM Begin call/sign-in testing for video and audio connections

1:00 PM – 2:00 PM Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENDA:

Time	Agenda Topics	Presenter
1:00 PM	Call to Order	Arthur Babitz, Chair
1:05 PM	Opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda*	
1:10 PM	Approval Minutes	Arthur Babitz, Chair
1:15 PM	Review of letter to Director Strickler, modifications and edits	All
1:55 PM	Committee Round Table	All
2:00 PM	Adjourn	

Public comment will be accepted prior to the meeting and during the meeting itself.

*If possible, please contact Roxane Glynn at Roxane.GLYNN@odot.state.or.us or 503-731-3246 to indicate that you'd like to provide public comment during the meeting, and we will do our best to call on you during the public comment period.

If you'd like to share your testimony, please submit written testimony via email to Roxane.GLYNN@odot.state.or.us, phone 503-731-3246, or regular mail 123 NW Flanders Street, Portland, OR 97209. Comments received after the meeting will be shared with committee members.

September Agenda items

- Update on Wa Na Pa Street improvements
- Nationally Significant Federal and Tribal Lands Program funding opportunity update
- Oneonta Tunnel Construction update

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee 2020 Work Plan

1. **The Final Five Miles Engineering – in process**
2. **Mitchell Point to Hood River State Trail funding**
3. **Multnomah Falls Viaducts Railroad Coordination – in process**
4. **Columbia Gorge Express –Year 4**
5. **Eagle Creek Stairway Replacement**
6. Congestion and Safety Plan Implementation Projects
7. Gorge Commission Management Plan Update
8. Historic Guardrail Research/Analysis and speed zone analysis
9. Twin Tunnels Safety Improvements Implementation
10. Larch Mountain Slide – Funding

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting

Summary

July 13, 2020

Zoom

Members Attending:	Arthur Babitz, Chair Wayne Stewart, Vice chair William Pattison (shown as Bill Pattison) Judy Davis Ernie Drapela Francie Royce Rian Windsheimer (ODOT) Marc Berry Mark Stevenson (OPRD)
Historic Highway AC Staff:	Terra Lingley (ODOT) Katelyn Jackson (ODOT) Roxanne Glynn (ODOT) Kerrie Franey (ODOT)
Others Attending:	A.F. Litt Bob Woody Patty Fink Robin Wilcox, OPRD Jeanette Kloos Tbd370 Kathy Fitzpatrick Kevin Jason Kelly, ODOT Kent Krumpschmidt Kristen Stallman, ODOT Botlhe Masedi Malcolm Diana Caroll Valerie Egon, ODOT Shana Bucher Jennifer O'Donnell Richard Alfieri Bonnie Clark Seth PEG Willis Seth Miller - Oregon Parks Forever Skyler L. Vanessa Vissar Megan Ramey

	Morai Helfen, USFS Nancy Nelson Jonathan Maus Rajic Batra Traci Manning Christyheymusoc Stan Hinatsu, USFS Walter 503-710-4391 971-235-1685 AJ Zelada Alan Dayley Renee Tkach Lizzie Keenan Glenn Doug Henne SabrinaS Lynn Burditt, USFS Bob Woody
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Call to Order

Arthur Babitz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and invited the public to comment on items not on the agenda.

Welcome

Public Comment

Aaron Litt: Aaron is gathering documentation on the sections of the Historic Highway together on a website. www.recreatingthehcrh.org. There's a lot of work going in along the old highway right now and he wanted to share the resource with the committee.

Skyler L.: Skyler represents Wildwood touring company. He struggling to get information from land managers around openings.

Megan Ramey: Commented on parklets in Hood River on the Historic Highway. Parklets allow a restaurant to expand operations into a parking lot. There are three in Hood River. ODOT has directed them to close. Restaurants are using this as a way to recover from the pandemic. Ask ODOT to support the local business, too.

Rian: This has been an issue – we just got notice these were in place Monday. The City has been developing a policy for city streets for about a month. ODOT is in favor and wanted to figure out how we could participate. The City proceeded without ODOT's buy in and are not in alignment with what ODOT expected. We want to figure out what we can do to help businesses and health. We are working with the City to figure out how we can implement this quickly. ODOT has a permit process that the City would need to fill out. We are working to see if the parklets can be located to city streets. We've set a deadline of tomorrow to move the existing parklets and

implement new ones in line with our guidance. Our goal is to figure out how to reduce down time between the existing and new. We may need to extend our deadline a little further so we can keep those areas open for businesses. We're cooperating with the City to make sure there is room for businesses.

Jeanette Kloos: sharing comments from Dick Weber about the guardrail along the Sandy River Bridge area. Last week, within 15 minutes, he saw 74 bike riders in the area and noted the guardrail was adjacent to the fog line. He also said he was hopeful they could do a better patch job where guardrail was removed.

Aaron Litt: I have a lot of questions about how that guardrail fits in with the historic context.

Rian: We were only looking to do a temporary solution. The camping, the environmental deprivation are also problems and we need to figure out how to address it short term and long term. The guardrail was never intended to take up space intended for cyclists. Unfortunately, when they went to install it, there was a gas line where they wanted to place the posts. In the field, instead of stopping and reevaluating, they installed the rail closer to the fog line. That was a mistake. We're still looking for a temporary and long-term solution.

Aaron asked whose jurisdiction it is. Terra explained generally 30 feet of centerline, including where dumping was happening, is ODOT property, but there are also private landowners whose property is impacted.

Approval of Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes.

Funding

Terra: Viento to Mitchell Creek is expected to begin construction in 2022. Mitchell Point is expected to begin in 2021.

She oriented the committee on the remaining unfunded sections of the State Trail:

Segment G- Mitchell Point to Ruthton Point

Segment H- Ruthton Point to Ruthton Park

The Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects grant Program funding is a competitive process. Current cost estimate for all remaining segments combined is a total of about \$52 million.

Wayne Stewart:

There could be four pieces:

- The existing undercrossing to Ruthton Point - ~\$18 million
- Segment H from Ruthton Point to Ruthton Park - ~\$18 million
- Ruthton Park itself - ~\$2 million

- The undercrossing – two new bridges on I-84 for an undercrossing of the correct width and height - ~\$12M

Should we go for all segments at \$52 million knowing there is only \$70 million for the whole country; or should we apply for the first three options, not including the undercrossing; or a lesser piece?

We have the narrative and framework for the project so it would be fairly straightforward to apply again. Our odds of getting this are likely not high. The next FLAP applications would be coming in the first part of next year, so anything we do now will help set us up for the next application.

Terra: I think we would describe the whole project, because it's a compelling argument, but also make it clear in our application that we could get a segment done with less funding.

Arthur: Have we gotten any guidance from the grantors?

Terra: The minimum application is \$25 million. FHWA did not give any indication on the number of projects there were looking for.

Judy: I think it's a good idea to ask for the whole thing. I prefer finishing the trail itself to working on the park or the undercrossing. Arthur noted Francie's thumbs up.

Ernie: I favor Terra's approach. We have a lot at stake here and we need to keep the momentum going.

Wayne: Are we going to have assistance from a public relations firm? Terra: yes, we're pursuing options.

Via chat: Armanda Zelada asked if there matching monies required from ODOT. Terra: Yes! 10.27%

[Gorge access strategy to address congestion and safety](#)

Terra: The Advisory Committee bylaws guide how the committee engages with issues related to the Historic Highway. We have worked together on a vision and the highest priority is to reopen and reconnect the Historic Highway.

The Advisory Committee advises and makes recommendations to the Oregon Transportation Commission, the Director of ODOT, and the Director of OPRD.

With that introduction, Terra turned it over to Renee Tkach from Friends of the Gorge.

Renee: Project manager for Gorge Towns to Trails, a vision to not only connect a system of existing and new trail projects, but to connect the dots for providing congestion and safety relief, as well as alternate forms of transportation to work on moving away from a car-centric Gorge. We do not lead congestion/transportation, but we do participate as a partner. They also work with the state of Washington. WSDOT and the USFS received a FLAP grant to do a congestion study on SR 14, similar to the study completed on the Historic Highway. Additionally, there is legislative interest at the Federal level in addressing carless transportation and congestion in the Gorge. It's bigger than just state and local stakeholders.

Kathy Fitzpatrick: The mobility manager for Mid-Columbia Economic Development District (MCEDD). The regional transit strategy is in phase 1, which is to look at the local planning work: work that has already happen, work underway and stitching those together to look at a regional system. MCEDD received the funding through ODOT (STIF) and HB 2017.

The transit strategy will look at where those plans intersect and form a regional vision around transit in the Gorge region. These plans are from a variety of groups that have an interest in transportation. The first phase continues through March 2021 to create a high level regional vision. In February, we pulled together project partners to take a look at what service exists now. There was a lot of appreciation and amazement about what we already have. Everyone looked at each other and realized they may serve different areas, but their interests and reliance on public transportation was similar. It went a long way to creating the partnerships we need for a cohesive network.

Mt. Adams Transportation Service fixed route services launched in 2018 and the trends have just been going up. Pre-COVID, our public transportation systems were not only running, but also our community was using transit in the Gorge.

In February, we started to craft a vision statement for public transportation in the Gorge. I think one of the words that the committee has focused on was “access” and that was definitely a topic, whether that’s getting a veteran to the VA in Portland or someone on the Gorge shuttle.

Phase 2 will be looking at capacity and organization logistics. Kathy is conducting interviews with each of the entities the plans belong to and making sure she’s correctly interpreting their plans. Kathy will circle back with the committee to make sure the transit strategy characterize existing studies correctly.

Francie: In your review, I’m assuming the reason you want to come back to this committee is that there is some plan to run buses on the Historic Highway? Are there plans or are you proposing plans to run buses on the Historic Highway? Kathy: I’m not creating a new plan. I’ll be pulling projects from existing plans to create a comprehensive strategy.

Aaron: Where are all the stops? Kathy: What this phase of the strategy does is really pull together what exists now and what is in existing plans? Aaron: I know there’s a stop at Rooster Rock, but I’m curious how we get people out there without it being Rooster Rock and Multnomah Falls.

Patty Fink: Director of CAT, also known as Hood River County Transit.

During COVID, discontinued service to Portland March 23. Phase 1, limited service to Portland for Gorge residents on June 1. Phase 2, June 15, reservation system for service to/from Portland. Service makes one trip in the morning and one in the afternoon. Phase 3 will happen with Multnomah Falls opens, CAT is ready and will support partners.

CAT wipes down high touch areas every trip, full clean every shift, provides 3 feet distancing between seats, installed plexiglass shields for between drivers/passengers, drivers wear masks. Patty went over staff requirements.

Multnomah Falls service – we are following ODOT and land manager’s leads. We have a proposal for 10-20 minute service throughout the day (for a transit only concept), and are working with ODOT on priority access to parking lot and access for riders.

CAT has a Gorge Transit Vision – document included in presentations. We anticipate that there should be a shuttle from Ainsworth State Park to the Troutdale area. Our concern is that there isn’t a stable funding source. We know that the U.S. 26/OR 35 corridor is being pushed by the large ski resorts – we hope to be a part of that. We are pushing very hard on MCEDD to move forward and get this done.

Wayne: When we first started talking about congestion about 6 years ago, we were specifically talking about congestion in the Waterfall Corridor on the Historic Highway. There has been conversation of a need to look wider. We’re seeing there’s a lot of interest to deal with this in a holistic manner. I’m pleased to see it’s shifted.

Senate Bill 766 is the legislation that set up the Advisory Committee. It said the Advisory Committee shall review highway related and other public actions, with the exception of maintenance ... and submit recommendations to the ODOT director.

In the past 20 years, we have not submitted many formal recommendations. If the Advisory Committee feels we should be taking specific action, do we make a recommendation to the director of ODOT?

The Portland Metro population is currently 2.5 million people, but by 2040 it is expected to be 3 million. We’re seeing overuse of the Waterfall Corridor now and anticipate more and bigger issues in the future.

USFS and OPRD need to deal with how many people are allowed in a recreational area (recreational intensity class).

The Advisory Committee needs to decide if they want to recommend a car-centric or different approach.

One proposal was using the connections on I-84 and a shuttle that would go between Rooster Rock and Multnomah Falls at I-84, then also having a secondary shuttle on the waterfall route.

On I-84, we’re looking at the regional connection and would include at least a stop at Multnomah Falls (I-84 Exit 31). We’re making a connection from a regional standpoint. The people who chose to drive would park at Rooster Rock and get on a shuttle only to Multnomah Falls and back. The proposal would be to convert the I-84 Multnomah Falls lot to a transit center (no private cars during the day). A second shuttle system would run from Portland Women’s Forum and Ainsworth State Park with buses passing about every 15 minutes. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., there would be no private cars on the Historic Highway. This would leave room for cyclists and other users.

This seems like the perfect time to try a pilot and people have been away long enough they might accept another approach, especially framed as a pilot. We have had conversation with some service providers already.

Rian (in chat): Seems like Parks and USFS need to make access and capacity decisions and we should weigh in on those. I don't know that we can make modal decisions, transit connection decisions utilizing state parks and other landowners’ properties until they have an approach there. Our focus should

remain on the highway, making trail connections, not recreation site management. Parking fees and shuttle service are beyond our scope. We should be commenting and providing advice, but it's not our role to determine shuttle headways etc. I'm open to conversation, but I think we're getting beyond our scope.

AJ (in chat): Having a Transportation/Access Management Plan could invite participation in its interdependency manner to deal with multi agency issues/barriers.

Seth Miller (in chat): Love this Transit concept!

Arthur: Do we want to promote a move from the car-centric focus of the Historic Highway?

Bill: We've discussed this for a long time. Wayne and his group have come up with something we could really sink our teeth into. Seems it would be acceptable. I, for one, would like to see us start with this approach. Because of the recent closure, we have an opportunity we did not have a year or two ago.

Ernie: I'm really intrigued with this. I know we've spent a lot of time ... it is now rather timely to move ahead with a pilot approach and I think that will give us the information on if this is feasible and how the public will react.

Judy: I like the approach. I am wondering what the current approach is for reopening the highway. Is there really time to do a pilot?

Rian: I think there's a plan to open it sooner than that.

Patty Fink (in chat): Strongly agree that NOW is the time to begin implementing this concept. Even if it's not exactly the way this is now. We can move toward this.

Stan Hinatsu, USFS: with respect to reopening the highway, we're working with ODOT, of course, and OPRD to reopen the highway in a measured approach so we're not overwhelmed with visitors. And the Gov. has now initiated masks outdoors. We are trying to figure out metered use into Multnomah Falls. We have discussed closing the Historic Highway lot at Multnomah Falls and only allowing access through the I-84 lot. We're looking at keeping Wahkeena picnic area and north side parking closed. We'll likely open the Horsetail Falls parking Lot. Hopefully by August sometime, early August, we can pull something off. There's quite a lot of detail for the site at Multnomah Falls for how we can meter that lot and maintain social distancing.

Francie: I'm a strong supporter of moving away from a car-centric Historic Highway. It wasn't built for the quantity of vehicles that currently use it. I think it's clearly within our scope to address this issue as the preservation of the highway and environment around the highway. I respectfully disagree with Rian's comment in the chat. I appreciate the work Wayne and Kathy are doing separately. I would add bicycle and pedestrians to that transit oriented highway. This approach of reducing car traffic within a fragile area is very common in national parks around the county. While not a national park, the Gorge is treated as such by people. More and more people are going to visit as we complete the reconnection. Those reconnected areas are going to be car free and we have to be considerate of those who are coming to participate in a car free experience.

Kathy (in chat): The planning, studies, strategies, and pilot projects developed for the Waterfall Corridor will serve to inform best practices for the Gorge corridors of SR 14 and I-84. SR 14 become overwhelmed by traffic and congestion long before the Eagle Creek Fire. Both east and west ends of the Gorge need solutions sooner than later. Successes and even failures of pilot projects could push these solutions forward. Pilot projects that have elements that fail just move you toward eventual success-- you just keep working on iterations!

Jennifer O'Donnell (in chat): I have not heard mention of residents living along the highway. How will their needs be addressed? Also, could you please clarify where parking will be located to access the shuttle. AJ (in chat): Residents would have 24 hour access; visitors to parks would have permissions; vendors would have access

Rian: I don't want my tone to be misinterpreted. We have a lot to say. We should not be dictating USFS and OPRD access and use of land. This isn't a national park and the road's not part of one, but certainly there's a lot to think about. I don't think I disagree with the approach or what members are saying here, especially as we continue on our final objective of connecting the trail. I think when we reconnect the Historic Highway; we will see a spike in demand that will be incompatible with two-way traffic. We are not the ones who are going to change the designation of state parks to all forest service for example ... those groups are going to be larger than us ourselves. We can be a part of that ... that's not our problem alone to solve. If we are saying we want to let the director know we need a group to put together a long-term future ... that was my point to make.

Arthur: It seems like unanimity from the commission on the high level to have a discussion on how we move away from a car-centric focus. I see Wayne and friends have worked up an example ... that makes it clear it is possible to solve this problem. It looks so finished that it could be taken as a specific concept to be implemented. I take it as an example of a solution. How do we as a commission take this concept and get behind it in a way that's within our scope?

Wayne: Is this the way to go? A shuttle on I-84 and a second shuttle on the Historic Highway. Should we take some staff time and figure out how to turn this concept into reality? Some ideas may be too timid. We need to take a strong stand that we need to move away from a car-centric orientation to a transit focused. More people focused.

Lynn Burditt: I appreciate the opportunity. I have many similar thoughts to what Rian did. In some ways, I believe this may be going too far. I appreciate that we all need to come together on these things and how they may fit. Bi-state solutions are needed. If we don't figure this out in an integrated fashion, we're just creating a different issue. I see AJ noted that residents would have access, but that assumes all the people to manage access. As I look at the immediate concept, Oneonta Gorge is not a trail and we will not support a stop to let people out to go hiking. Things like that, when you get into the weeds ... In terms of access to public lands, the idea that there would be no vehicle access at all, if you got on transit, walk or bicycle, I think that's a red flag for us. I think everyone's aware that the restrictions were eased right before the Fourth of July between Vista House and Bridal Veil. I'm anticipating we will have eased access between Bridal Veil and Ainsworth long before a pilot.

Arthur: the committee seems behind the idea that we want to light a fire. ODOT, USFS, OPRD, how would you recommend approaching you to make this happen?

Lynn: One piece, the work that we've all done to try to agree on some strategies, that Wayne have said are too timid, saying that the work that we have done is too timid is concerning to me. How could we be more effective in moving forward what we've been working on with a more integrated group? It could be supporting what Representative Blumenauer's office is working on, or what we've been working on with Multnomah County, etc. and figuring out what we can move faster? We can have great ideas, but if we don't have the resources ...

Rian (in chat): Lynn's comments go to my larger point that an effort like this needs to be led with land managers and folks who could coordinate and manage a number of activities and providers that are beyond the scope of this group alone. I think our group suggesting this direction should be explored is ok. We don't control the outcome on our own. An appropriate group with the right charge and some designated funding would be a good first step.

Rian: A group has been working with Representative Blumenauer's office, and we have agreed that there needs to be something that looks a little bit different and everyone needs to be at the table. But there needs to be funding to support the planning effort. The objective isn't any longer how many people we can get there, but how we can manage the resources? Supports recommending we get a group together with funding to help solve this issue. The committee should have a role in saying it's not working right now and that transit has proven there's a way to get people there We think there's a better way. There are questions land managers need to answer. It's not just us – it may be our role to say we need to do something different here, but not to say this is how it's going to work and the land management plan.

Mark Stevenson, OPRD: I don't want it to appear that only the agencies are challenged by how to pull this off. I think Wayne will remember about five years ago pleading with us to stop the silos between agencies. Now, since the fire, we have stronger relationship than ever. We sometimes meet several times a week. Part of the plan, which is a great plan, has to do with the purpose of Rooster Rock becoming a parking lot and place to move people. It doesn't exist to be a parking lot and to collect fees for a parking lot. There are things to consider. We are willing to be at the table and we recognize that we add to the challenge. More than half of our customers, and of USFS's customers, come in their cars. We have to be careful.

Francie: I'm sympathetic to the concerns of the agency people on how to implement moving away from a car-centric highway. I understand the agency people want to focus in on how, but the broader question is what needs to be brought to the committee. The basic fundamental question: Do we believe the Historic Highway should move away from a car-centric approach and toward a transit, cyclists and pedestrian approach? I want to take us back and make sure that we answer the fundamental question.

AJ (in chat): Yes

Arthur: facilitation challenges. I think we've already said we are in favor. I'll roll that into this proposal: we as a group, draft a letter to Rep. Blumenauer, agency directors, counties, land management agencies

that 1) we believe it's time to make a shift in focus. 2) we have some example, illustrations, that should be taken as such. We would like to participate in conversation about this and would like you to tell us how to do that.

Wayne: Support. Judy: support. Ernie: I'm reflecting back on what Wayne said in the opening part of the remarks that we have a voice, a voice to ODOT. We should put the burden on them—they have the resources. Arthur: We think the big thoughts and we ask them to solve them as we pose them.

Rian (in chat): Would you like Terra and I to take a shot at a letter, share it with Wayne and circulate it before the next meeting?

Wayne: I would volunteer to draft it to sending around to committee members for comment.

Megan Ramey (in chat): Can the Historic Highway State Trail and waterfall corridor be opened now, in its entirety, to walking and biking as a preliminary pilot, assuming the unpaved trails are closed? In a preliminary pilot, nothing changes in keeping the parking lots closed, just open through walking and biking on the asphalt.

Rian: I offered to have Terra and Wayne work on it together. We can offer some direction and guidance on where this should go and Wayne could add more about the effort and why. It would be good teamwork.

Patty Fink: CAT would like to have a copy. Involved and see whatever is appropriate

Lynn: The one piece we shouldn't lose as the letter gets started ... that we don't lose sight on why this highway was created, the historical and purposeful context, as we discuss removing cars altogether.

AJ (in chat): Precursor to the Highway were Native American trails along the River

Alan Dayley (in chat): Also considering options that the private sector might have to offer to reduce vehicular traffic... without reducing foot traffic to the sites

Megan Ramey: I want to admit to guilt and I'm sorry Terra, Lynn and Rian, I swear I did due diligence in checking all the resources. I want to speak to the vision and experience of what's possible. We took CAT from Hood River to Cascade Locks. We had Dinner at Thunder Island and rode our bikes, loaded with camping gear, to the biker/hiker camping spot in Ainsworth. It was an experience we will never forget. I think there is an intermediary pilot that allows very little management of opening the highway to walking/biking and letting transit doing the job to get people there.

Kent Krumpschmidt: We started a business. We planned to run a shuttle down the old highway. We have leased our own parking area that alleviates some of the congestion. Part of the discussion we would like to hear is how us as a private entity can be part of the solution.

Updates

Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway:

Jeanette Kloos: we have hired Bryan Bains to do a Historic Highway State Trail inventory. He will get started in July. Otherwise, quiet due to all the cancellations.

ODOT: Please see the e-news letter from two weeks ago for a comprehensive list of all the maintenance done on the Highway while it was closed.

USFS:

Lynn: If you do go to the Ready, Set Gorge website, there will be a conversation about tourism in the COVID environment. We're trying to maintain information there about what's open in the COVID situation. We're trying not to market. We're having a lot of visitors that tend to forget the virus does exist. The Gov. did announce this morning that if you cannot social distance outdoors it is the expectation you wear a mask. We are struggling with this and to manage high visitation sites.

The Herman Creek Trailhead will be closed for hazard tree removal. After those trees come down and we can do some restoration to manage root rot, we hope to reopen the trail.

OPRD:

Robin Wilcox is now the permanent planner

Vista House and John B. Yeon to Cascade Locks will remain closed in Phase 3. Ready Set Gorge website to learn more.

We're hurting. 70% of staff laid off state wide. 25% of admin services. MG Devereaux, deputy director's last day is today. Our customers are hit and miss if they are following social distancing.

Travel Oregon

Not attending

WFL

Not attending

Committee Round Table

Ernie: I've enjoyed today's meeting and was at least able to participate. I have a question about the damaged Rowena guardrail and have a question about where we stand on that. Terra: I reached out to our maintenance folks on the east side and haven't heard back. They do have Michael Byrne on contract to fix the masonry.

Bill: Most of us are in the public eye and are considered to be the answer to all the questions. Where are we with the staircase? Terra: No status updates on that. The last discussion we had on that was on the priority. We are working on doing some geotechnical work.

Wayne: No additional comments. Very good meeting and thanks everyone for comments.

Francie: I also thought it was a good meeting. I want to thank Wayne and AJ for bringing the proposal forward and the reporting by Kathy and Patty. Is it possible to defer repairing Ruthton Park and the underpass until the stairs are eliminated? Perhaps we can look at this later.

Judy: Good discussion. Highway 30 from Rowena Crest to The Dalles is being chip sealed this week.

AJ (in chat): Thank you all for the sincere conversation! Are there other silo funds available for ADA for the stairs?

Marc Berry: no comments

Arthur: His car is up and running.

Thank everyone for their cooperation.

Meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

DRAFT ~~TWO~~THREE, ~~28-4 July~~August 2020 (HCRH AC LETTERHEAD)

Dear Director _____, Strickler,

The Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee is a body dedicated to providing feedback to the Oregon Department of Transportation along with the Oregon Parks and Recreation District (OPRD) on the reconnection and rehabilitation of the Historic Columbia River Highway and the Historic Highway State Trail. Our focus of the past 33 years has been how to reconnect the Historic Highway, and we're proud to be able to say that the full reconnection of the 73 miles is within reach. As we near completion of the State Trail, we recognize that the Historic Highway and Trail will continue to draw cyclists and hikers to the Oregon side of the Gorge to observe the breathtaking vistas and take in the world-class destination that we are working to create. Over the past thirty or so years, we have also seen an increase in congestion and safety concerns throughout the corridor as vehicles traveling the Historic Highway has grown.

Since 2014, the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee has been ~~confronted with~~working on addressing congestion issues along the "Waterfall Corridor" of the Historic Highway (~~HCRH~~Historic Highway). Some of the major issues include:

- ~~•~~ Multnomah Falls is the most visited natural recreation site in ~~the Northwest~~Oregon.
- ~~•~~ Between April and November, parking lots ~~are most~~ often ~~filled to capacity~~ before 10 am and remain full until around 5 pm.
- ~~•~~ Frequent traffic back-ups near Multnomah Falls on the Historic Highway exasperate motorists and hinder search and rescue, police, fire and other emergency service providers.
- ~~•~~ Unthinking-Distracted drivers create a serious safety hazard at the I-84 Exit 31 parking lot, which is frequently ~~filled to capacity~~full. Vehicles occasionally back up onto the fast lane of ~~the~~ Interstate 84 at this left exit while trying to enter the lot. ~~It is only a matter of time before a fatal accident occurs at this exit.~~ There are serious safety concerns at this exit.
- ~~•~~ Designated parking areas for other waterfall trailheads accessible from the ~~HCRH~~Historic Highway are often full by mid-day and motorists waiting for available parking spaces ~~to open~~ back up traffic and/or park illegally.e
- ~~•~~ Completion of the State Trail, expected in the mid 2020's, ~~is will~~ significantly ~~increas~~ing the number of bicyclists (and pedestrians) on the ~~HCRH~~Historic Highway between Troutdale and The Dalles as visitors and recreationists are drawn by the world-class facility under development. Conflicts already exist between motorists and bicyclists along the "Waterfall Corridor" and these conflicts will increase ~~issues of safety if not addressed soon~~ as visitor demand increases.
- ~~•~~ Because the Historic Highway pavement is narrow and curves are sharp, larger vehicles — such as RV's and tour buses — have trouble maneuvering when the ~~HCRH~~Historic Highway is crowded with smaller vehicles.

Congestion Mitigation to Date

ODOT and its partners (USFS and OPRD) have worked together for years trying to mitigate congestion while continuing to allow ~~unfettered-unrestricted~~ access to the Historic Highway and Multnomah Falls. There is a need for all organizations involved in land and transportation management in the ~~the~~ Columbia River Gorge to collaborate on developing a vision for the future. Organizations on the Oregon side of the River include the USFS, OPRD, ODOT, Gorge Commission, Hood River and Multnomah Counties as well as local transportation and transit providers.

Mitigation actions accomplished or underway to date include:

- ~~Installation of~~ overhead VMS signs warning when the Exit 31 parking lot is full.
- ~~Installation of~~ gates to close the eastbound Exit 31 exit ramp.
- ~~Removing or blocking al of illegal-informal~~ parking areas along the Historic Highway.
- ~~Striping of~~ fog lines to allow for parking enforcement.
- ~~Hiring of~~ Posting pedestrian crossing guards at Multnomah Falls.
- ~~Subsidizing public transit service from the Portland Metro Area (Gateway Transit Center)~~ including a shuttle between Rooster Rock State Park and Multnomah Falls.
- Instituting an additional length limit restriction between Portland Women’s Forum and Ainsworth State Park from 50 feet down to 35 feet.
- Lowering the speed limit east of Corbett to Bridal Veil from 55 mph to 40 mph.
- Creating a “Gorge Forum” to continue conversations on access and congestion challenges amongst agency partners in the Gorge.
- Coordinating with existing programs, such as Ready, Set, GOrge! communication and outreach to move visitation further east and to less busy times to reduce peak demands on the Waterfall Corridor.
- Developing a long-term Columbia Gorge Express transit funding and governance strategy: Columbia Area Transit took over inter-city service in November 2019. The Rooster Rock shuttle is funded through summer 2021.

While these actions help reduce congestion, they are ~~being overwhelmed by~~ unable to keep pace with the ~~ever~~-increasing population of the Portland-Vancouver metro area. Looking forward, the population of the Portland mMetro area is projected to increase 30-35% by 2040 — adding an additional 525,000 people ~~to the area~~. Many of these newcomers will be outdoor enthusiasts who will be heading to the Gorge to recreate. How are we going to accommodate them?

HCRH-Historic Highway Advisory Committee Recommendations

After careful consideration, the HCRH-Historic Highway Advisory Committee has ~~come to the conclusion~~ that maintaining unfettered access to the Historic Highway while managing the limited parking supply no longer works. We must find a A new approach to providing a quality recreational

experience ~~must be found~~ consistent with the National Scenic Area and the historic nature of the Highway.

Therefore, pursuant to the Advisory Committee's responsibilities under Senate Bill 766 (1987), we are formally recommending that management of the "Waterfall Corridor" of the Historic Columbia River Highway (from Women's Forum to Ainsworth State Park) be changed from a "car centric" to a "transit and bicycle oriented" approach. While ~~much planning will need to be undertaken by~~ ODOT, USFS, and OPRD staffs will need to undertake much planning, a transit and bicycle oriented approach should include the following:

- ~~Development of~~ a free Waterfall Corridor shuttle to encourage the spreading of recreation use over the entire 13 miles of the Waterfall Corridor.
- ~~Conversion of~~ the Exit 31 lot to a transit center hub, that ~~excludes~~ personal vehicles. Tour bus operators and regional transit providers will use the transit center, ~~keeping them off the Historic Highway.~~ Sustainable funding will be ~~A charge will be~~ needed to help support the Waterfall Corridor shuttle.
- ~~Control of~~ visitor personal vehicle access to the Waterfall Corridor during heavy recreational use hours and days. Maintain a ~~Access will be maintained~~ for the approximately 12-50 homeowners, businesses, including access for vendors, bicyclists, emergency services and employees. ~~•~~
- Allow the general public to have full access via private vehicles to the Historic Highway ~~during all days and hours~~ when the shuttle is not in operation.
- ~~Secure~~ one or more large parking lots (e.g., Rooster Rock, Troutdale, Cascade Locks) to intercept motorists heading to Multnomah Falls. Recreationists will need to be shuttled to and from Multnomah Falls (Exit 31 on I-84). Sustainable funding such as A ~~a~~ parking charge or other visitor fee will be necessary to pay for this shuttle service and the Waterfall Corridor shuttle.
- ~~Continuation of~~ regional transit service linking Portland, Troutdale, Multnomah Falls, Cascade Locks, Hood River, Mosier and The Dalles. This will ensure that persons without access to a personal vehicle will have equitable access to Multnomah Falls and the Waterfall Corridor.
- ~~Consider~~ Work working with Oregon and Washington land and transportation management organizations to develop a Regional Transportation Access Plan
- Request federal funds for the U.S. Forest Service, in partnership with Oregon and Washington to develop a set of alternatives and lead a NEPA effort to identify any legislative changes and enable the agency to move forward with implementing a new approach.

~~Summary~~

The present car centric approach to managing congestion on the Historic Highway is no longer working. Conversion to a transit and bicycle oriented approach ~~appears to offer~~ s the best chance of managing use going forward while providing recreationists with a high quality outdoor experience. We ask that you,

your staff and the Oregon Transportation Commission ~~give-seriously~~ seriously ~~consideration to~~ this recommendation. The Advisory Committee ~~stands-is~~ is ready to meet with you and/or the Oregon Transportation Commission to discuss our recommendation in ~~greater~~ detail.

Regards,

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee

Arthur Babitz, Chair Governor's Hood River County representative

Wayne Stewart, Vice Chair Multnomah County Representative

Judy Davis Wasco County Representative

William Pattison Hood River County Representative

Francie Royce Governor's Wasco County Representative

Ernie Drapela Governor's Multnomah County Representative

Rian Windsheimer Oregon Department of Transportation

Mark Stevenson Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Kristin Dahl Travel Oregon

Chrissy Curran State Historic Preservation Office

DRAFT ~~TWO~~THREE, ~~28-4 JULY~~August 2020