

# Historic Columbia River Highway



## Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting is hybrid via Zoom and in-person  
Hood River Library Community Room  
502 State Street, Hood River, OR

Thursday, March 12, 2026  
9 AM – 12 PM

Login online: <https://tinyurl.com/AC-March2026>

Meeting ID: 821 1121 7119  
Password: HCRHAC

Call in (does not require internet): 1 (253) 215-8782  
Meeting ID: # 821 1121 7119

## Members

### **Arthur Babitz, Chair**

Jesus Mendoza

Vacant

Tricia Forsi

Mike Ballinger

Lisa Farquharson

Clay Courtright

Rian Windsheimer

Kate Baumgartner

Ian Johnson

Hood River County Representative

Hood River County Governor's Representative

Multnomah County Governor's Representative

Multnomah County Representative

Wasco County Representative

Wasco County Governor's Representative

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Oregon Department of Transportation

Travel Oregon

State Historic Preservation Office

## Agenda

- 9:00 AM Call to Order  
Arthur Babitz
- 9:05 AM Opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda
- 9:10 AM Approval of Minutes  
Arthur Babitz
- 9:15 AM Port of Hood River Welcome  
Megan Channell, Port of Hood River
- 9:20 AM Welcome New Gorge Maintenance Manager  
Chris Yamnitsky, ODOT

- 9:30 AM Stark Street Bridge Replacement Project  
Megan Neill, Multnomah County
- 10:00 AM Multnomah Falls Viaducts Construction Update  
Jack Carlson, WFLHD
- 10:20 AM Pedestrian Counts along the Historic Highway Waterfall Corridor  
AJ Zelada
- 10:50 AM Cascade Locks Bike Sweeper Report  
Ben DeJarnette, Bike the Gorge
- 11:00 AM Historic Highway State Trail Updates  
*Perham to Mitchell Update*  
Jack Carlson  
*Mitchell to Ruthton Phase 1 Update*  
Dave Arena, WFLHD and Terra Lingley, ODOT
- 11:30 AM Updates  
*TGM projects, ODOT, Friends of the Historic Highway, OPRD, Travel Oregon, USFS, and WFLHD*
- 11:45 PM Committee Round Table  
All
- 12:00 PM Adjourn

## Future Meetings

- Week of June 15
- Week of September 14
- Week of December 14

### Topics:

- State Trail Mile Markers
- Cascade Locks Transportation System Plan TSP Update

## Historic Columbia River Highway

### Advisory Committee Meeting

#### Summary

December 18, 2025

Hybrid – Zoom and Troutdale

<b>Members Attending:</b>	Arthur Babitz, Chair Mike Ballinger, Wasco County Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Kate Baumgartner, Travel Oregon Lisa Farquharson, Wasco County Clay Courtright, OPRD Jesus Mendoza, Hood River County
<b>Historic Highway AC Staff:</b>	Terra Lingley (ODOT) Kenny Werth (ODOT)
<b>Others Attending:</b>	Dick Weber Wayne Stewart, Member Emeritus Casey Gatz, USFS Jack Carlson, WLFHD Ithaca Jantzen, Experience Mt Hood and the Gorge Richard Alfieri Jennifer O’Donnell Bonnie Clark Jeanette Kloos, FHCRH Lynn Burditt AJ Zelada David Arena, WFLHD Marlee Boxler, City of Troutdale Aubrey Russell Chris Beck Paul Wilcox Doug Henne David Beagle Orren Jennings, ODOT Mike and Debbie 541-490-4408 Frank Stevens Ben DeJarnette Scott Peters, ODOT

## Call to Order

**Arthur called the meeting to order at 10:02am**

## Public Comment

No Public Comment

## Approval of Minutes

Motion from Clay Courtright, second from Lisa Farquharson. Minutes approved as submitted.

## Troutdale Welcome

Marlee Boxler: Thank you for visiting Troutdale! Quick update on the projects we have been working on. Terra is on the technical advisory board for the Sandy River Shuttle Pilot program for 2026. Troutdale received funding from Travel Oregon to run the shuttle, right now we are doing background data and performance measure planning. Pilot will be operational in 2026, a shuttle will provide trips for Sandy River floaters/tubers next summer. The City is working with Sasquatch Shuttle to provide that service and will also have inflatable river tubes to rent. This is a new experience for visitors, people who don't own floating equipment, and some who just want to try it out. If any of you have any suggestions on how to measure shuttle performance, the City would love your feedback. One of the measures is around safety on the Historic Columbia River Highway between Troutdale and Dabney.

Troutdale also has a new trail - the Sharon Nesbitt Park trail, part of the trail is still closed for construction (under the railroad) but the rest of the missing link is opened, including connection the I-84 trail. Contractor installed basalt rock railings that emulate the Historic Columbia River Highway. We have already been seeing people out enjoying the trail, biking, walking.

In addition to these opportunities, Troutdale is welcoming new businesses to town. A wine bar just opened, and a new boutique hotel is under construction. A lot of businesses are showing interest in coming to downtown Troutdale.

## New Member Welcome

Welcome Jesus Mendoza. Jesus introduced himself: Interested in the committee because he grew up in the White Salmon area and had a unique opportunity to access the state trail. Jesus enjoys the history, the community connection, and has an interest for everyone who lives and visits to have equitable access to the trail. He works for Mid-Columbia Economic Development and is interested in the trail given the economic development it can support in the Gorge. Jesus is also pursuing an Executive Masters in Public Administration from PSU. Looking forward to working on the committee.

## 2025 Year in Review/2026 Look Ahead

Terra: The December meetings give us an opportunity to see where we've been and see where we're going.

**January** - started the Bridal Veil Bridge repair project. The project replaced damaged rebar and concrete.

**February** – ODOT traffic started the traffic impact analysis for the Ruthton Trailhead, which is needed for phase 2 of the Mitchell to Ruthton project. The impact analysis is a requirement for the land use permit

to develop Ruthton Park and will help us understand how many more trips the trailhead will induce once the trail is complete.

**March** - The Mitchell Point Tunnel officially opened to the public. Multnomah County re-opened the Stark Street bridge after trucks hit and damaged the bridge required closing the bridge for repairs. The County did a great job on that project and opened it as fast as they could. ODOT and consultant staff conducted a concrete repair walk-through on the West Multnomah Falls Viaduct. A crack appeared on the Historic Highway just east of Larch Mountain Road and the highway was briefly closed to analyze the movement. ODOT then designed and planned a long-term fix.

**April** – staff attended Gorge Transit Summit to talk about the increase in transit access as well as shuttle access to the Gorge in high-use areas. Presented to The Dalles Chamber of Commerce on the Historic Highway.

**May** - West Viaduct opened to traffic and started the Multnomah Falls Timed Use Permits. Bridal Veil bridge project completed. Gorge Tourism Summit to talk about recreational activities/opportunities on the Historic Highway. Attended conference tour for Association of Western States Parks Conference. Recorded a couple of segments about the Historic Highway in an audio format for tours in the Gorge.

**June** - attended the National Visitor Use Management Training and Symposium and helped lead a tour along the waterfall corridor on the Historic Highway. Rowena fire closed the Historic Highway west of The Dalles and that is still closed.

**July** - Travel Oregon awarded a grant to update the State Trail map. Wood Village public outreach tabling event. The project team walked through the Mitchell to I-84 project, it's always helpful to get out and see what it looks like pre-construction. Larch Mountain slide repair work started, requiring a closure on the Historic Highway.

**August** - tabling event at the Hood River Farmer's Market. Larch Mountain Slide Historic Highway closure business support outreach – worked with Travel Oregon and local media to reinforce that businesses were open. Mitchell Point Drive sign and behavior changes; we looked at modifying some of the signage and working to get the word out on how to best use the shared road portion of the trail.

**September** – Historic Highway reopened at Larch Mountain Slide after repair work. Added a bunch of drainage to help keep the road from moving. The Multnomah Falls timed use permits ended. Also applied for a Rural and Tribal Assistance grant application to finish the Historic Highway State Trail design. Have not yet received a response on the grant.

**October** - East Multnomah Falls Viaduct closed for deck repairs. Opened bids for the Perham to Mitchell trail (ten bids total, three came in under the engineer's estimate). City of Troutdale opened waterfront trail.

**November** - opened bids for Jordan Road trail to Sandy River Delta – multiple bids, and two came in under engineer's estimate. Once complete, pedestrians and cyclists will be able to walk from Troutdale Visitor Center all the way to Sandy River Delta on a multi-use trail. Led a Mitchell Point tour for International Transportation Engineers student group and shared State Trail progress at the Columbia Gorge Tourism Alliance network meeting.

**December** - Perham to Mitchell State Trail construction started last week, got out for the pre-construction walk. The project team finalized the 70% design for Mitchell to I-84 State Trail project. Presented to the Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Community Advisory Committee on congestion wrap up.

**2026 Look Ahead** - Eagle Creek stair alternatives analysis being led by the USFS, excited to partner with USFS and OPRD to address the stairs on the State Trail. This is anticipated to last up to 18 months. Working to identify funding for design and implementation of the emergency trail markers. Ruthton Park traffic impact analysis - need to identify funding to be able to complete the traffic impact analysis. Modifying the Programmatic Agreement for the three Gorge communities – Cascade Locks, Hood River, and Mosier.

**Spring 2026** - Mitchell to I-84 design will be complete. We'll continue to plan for congestion mitigation. Cascade Locks Transportation System Plan update will be starting – part of that work will be updating the City's Programmatic Agreement. Cyclist and pedestrian shuttle for McCord Creek I-84 Bridge construction cross-over and State Trail closure. We're anticipating the Federal Land Access Program (FLAP) grants call for projects. Jordan Road trail construction starts early spring.

**Summer 2026** - City of Hood River Westcliff Drive refinement plan into downtown Hood River. Adopting the Cascade Ave refinement plan into the Transportation System Plan is also part of this work along with modifying the City's Programmatic Agreement. Pending funding, we will hopefully be implementing the congestion mitigation at Multnomah Falls. Mitchell to I-84 bids will open. FLAP applications are due. Multnomah Falls Viaduct project will be complete.

**Fall 2026** – Hoping to award the Mitchell to I-84 project. Jordan Road trail project should be complete. State Trail map updates should be complete.

**Winter 2026** - Perham to Mitchell State Trail construction will be complete and then moving in to construction on Mitchell to I-84.

#### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Dick Weber: By the end of May, if I'm riding westbound from Hood River, I will go through the Mitchell Tunnel, can I get through from there to Viento Park?

Terra: During construction, cyclists will use the shoulder of I-84 to get to where the trail currently ends east of Viento.

Dick: When I get to the viaduct at Multnomah Falls, will that be open?

Terra: The east viaduct is set to be open for Memorial Day 2026.

Dick: Gorge Ride through Rowena, will that be open?

Terra: Do not know yet, that section is still closed. We do not currently have funding to fix burned guardrails.

Arthur Babitz: What are you envisioning for tours this year?

Terra: There could be some walk-throughs for Perham to Mitchell State Trail construction. Also, maybe before the viaducts open, we could see if that is possible to do that as a tour. We do need UPRR training to go there.

Arthur: Can you talk a little more about the McCord Creek Shuttle?

Terra: The shuttle will run every half hour between John B. Yeon Trailhead and Exit 40 (Toothrock Trailhead). Hours will be 8am to 8pm every half hour, and every hour overnight. Access will be preserved during construction.

Arthur: Is there actual design work that must happen with updating the maps?

Terra: It's indicating where trailheads are accessible and making folks aware of sections of the trail that are outside of the accessibility standards (running slope and cross slope).

Michael Ballinger: What will the McCord Creek shuttle look like?

Terra: There will be 3 bike racks and the ability to accommodate 15 people and two mobility devices. Other bike configurations (recumbent bikes, tricycles, and cargo bikes) might be tough to accommodate.

Dick: During construction the trail will not be open to cyclists, so where do I get on and off the shuttle?

Terra: Heading eastbound, folks will board the shuttle at John B Yeon Trailhead, and heading westbound, the shuttle will pick up at the Toothrock Trailhead.

Clay: Following up on the construction impacts, we are trying to collaborate with private business and general patrons. It is a balancing act; this section is tricky. We are all doing our best, we are trying to accommodate construction and users.

AJ Zelada: A couple things about bike racks. As a preview, we have been working with Stephen Elgart at USFS to make a new recreational bike rack. These will be being installed at the beginning of 2026. These racks will work for all bikes. This does not include cargo bikes or tricycles. Next meeting, I will have pictures of these new bike racks. As a reminder, 80% of the bikes parked at Multnomah Falls are e-bikes. We need to catch up by including all bikes.

Arthur: Columbia Gorge College students take on community projects. These are done for the community free of charge. They may be able to help you get a great prototype.

AJ: Wayne Stewart and I are creating this design, that's exciting.

Chris Beck (Lake Oswego): Here on behalf of the Henry Richmond fund private foundation. Very excited to see all the work that's going on – this is a great civic project for the region. I wanted to raise the Baumann property which our foundation bought in 2007, hoping to include it as part of the trail corridor as there are very few level ground sites that would serve the trail. Now that the Mitchell Point Tunnel is complete, it raises the opportunity on how the Baumann property might see its vision implemented in coordination with ODOT. I think it is important that the committee encourages ODOT to be more flexible and open-minded about including this property in the project. It is important to get this property protected. Nancy Russell is the reason we are all here today, she is the reason for this specific property.

We owe it to her legacy. The Baumann property could save a lot of taxpayer money; it could serve as a place for construction spoils at very low cost. I know there are all kinds of reasons ODOT isn't considering this, but I think that is shortsighted. If we can all work together collectively, hoping we can work together at these meetings, maybe with other funding sources. This is not a criticism of any single person; I understand bureaucracy very well. I think it is important to keep a broad community perspective as part of these meetings.

Rian Windsheimer: We would be more than willing to work with the property owner as part of this project. The property owner is interested in providing a partial lease or some other use. ODOT has explained many times that we can't do a full acquisition with project funds, since the full property is not needed for the Trail Project. If there is something like a trade that we could do, we would be open to it. If there is other funding from other agencies, that would also help us. USFS said they have interest in acquiring the property, that would bring down costs. We have discussed speaking with our congressional delegation. The only thing is we still cannot use federal transportation funds to acquire the full parcel of this property if there is not a transportation need.

Clay Courtright: Oregon State Parks does not receive general funds, and that is why OPRD is not interested in acquiring the property. There are a lot of operational challenges with that property, there are slopes, no UPRR crossing, weed abatement, and potential historic issues. That is why we are not interested in managing the property. I think that acknowledging the concerns with the property is valid. Thank you for the comments, Chris. Oregon State Parks is willing to participate, but at this point cannot be an owner.

Arthur: I sat down with Chris to seek other funding, we appreciate pointing out the challenges related to the property. Being in public ownership would be quite beneficial to the public, and Hood River County will be providing a letter of support for the foundation to seek other funds.

#### Meeting time/date discussion

Terra: We have been holding these meetings the third Thursday quarterly for almost eight years. The third Thursday presents scheduling challenges for Rian - he has a standard third Thursday meeting that conflicts. We have also experimented with holding meetings in the morning 9:00am-12:00pm. After hours meetings are not desirable. Do we want to look at other scheduling? If there is an easy answer, that's great. I am also willing to take it offline to see what works for other members.

I was hoping to have a full roster of community representatives for this meeting but still need a Multnomah County Governor's representative.

The finalized bylaws are in the packet. We are meant to elect a Chair and Vice Chair every two years, and the election would be at the June meeting.

#### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Arthur: It probably makes sense to discuss and then finalize offline. Thursdays are open for me, while other days of the week tend to get a bit busier. I would propose first or second Thursday. Clay is nodding his head

Rian: If there is another time that works, I can try and find time.

Kate Baumgartner: I am flexible on dates but prefer that shorter morning meeting. I appreciate that option.

Arthur: I like the mix, flexibility of longer and shorter meetings.

Lisa F: Prefer not to have Wednesdays or Fridays as those are full and like the shorter earlier meetings.

Lisa [in chat]: shorter earlier meeting is better with my schedule (prefer not to have Wed or Fri)

Arthur: Chair and Co-Chair issue. I am hoping that someone is interested in stepping in the co-chair role. I am happy to show someone the ropes, it is easy. We need a co-chair to have back up.

### Historic Highway State Trail Updates

Terra: Perham to Mitchell Creek 0.9 miles this connects to the existing end of the state trail just east of Viento State Park. The project includes two bridges. One is Mitchell Creek Bridge, and the other is Perham Creek Bridge. The construction will take about a year. Construction started last week.

Ruthton Point section is set to go out to bid. The trail will be between Mitchell Point Dr and I-84. It will be a new tunnel constructed adjacent to the existing road tunnel. We have a ring of larger masonry stones around the portal; we are tweaking what the treatment is on the north side of I-84. Tweaking signage, but largely, design is done. The construction in 2027 will also include a crossover. To construct this new undercrossing, we will need to move traffic to different places to do all the steps of construction. The window is tight because of spring construction and funding deadlines. This project will be funded through a Nationally Significant Federal and Tribal Lands Program grant.

David Arena, WFLHD: We are reconciling our 95% plan, specifications, and estimate. After the New Year, we intend to enter in 100% design phase with sign off in May 2026. Solicitation, advertisement and award will be later in the summer. Early fall, late summer for construction award followed soon after with contract award and notice to proceed. As far as we know, this NSFLTP grant is on track. We are politely prodding our decisionmakers and we are confident that we will get it allocated.

### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Arthur: On the Perham to Mitchell, I had three bridges in my head

Terra: There's two bridges. There is also a culvert to address a historic channel. Three conveyances of water but only two technical bridges.

Arthur: The NSFLTP is for planning or construction?

Terra: This is just for construction.

Arthur: I am confused about the phasing.

Terra: This is just Phase 1 of Mitchell to Ruthton. For Phase 2 (I-84 into Hood River), I have applied for more funding to get Phase 2 to 100% design because we are currently at 50% design. Then we can apply for construction funding.

### Multnomah Falls Viaducts Construction Update

Jack Carlson: Construction from Feb 2024 to June 2026. The east viaduct is set to close from October 2025 to May 2026. West viaduct is all but completed. We're working on the east viaduct right now. The east structure is double the length of the west. The contractor closed the roadway on October 6. Recently we poured the bridge deck, starting with the east end.

On the west turnaround, the contractor placed gravel there and then paved the west turnaround and added barricades for the west turnaround. The contractor can close the road starting October 1 and will reopen on May 16, 2026. The contractor milled asphalt at both ends of viaduct. They are working on unsound concrete repairs and installing rebar. The concrete pour started on November 11 from 5am to 4pm and requires a 14-day wet cure for the concrete deck. Then on November 22 they poured the west half of the concrete deck. Pouring of the bridge deck is a huge step in the right direction – they'll add the grooves in the concrete once the concrete dries out a bit. The contractor will now work on all the underwork on the east viaduct.

Our next project is Perham Creek to Mitchell Point. Notice To Proceed was on December 5. We had a walk through yesterday, which is the next step to getting this job started.

#### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

AJ [in Chat]: Big Thanks to Jack C for all this leadership to managing both viaducts and the new section to Mitchell.

Dick: Is that the same contractor?

Jack: No, this contractor is from Bend - JAL. They have a very aggressive schedule and hope to get it done a few months ahead of schedule.

Wayne: In the past, you suggested that potentially if pavement is in good shape there will be no need for an overlay. What is the status of that now that the project is underway?

Jack: A lot of this project does have sections of the original pavement from the Historic Highway, we do not have any opportunity to do that, given the requirements of asphalt condition at the end of the job, along with ADA requirements.

Ben DeJarnette: Do you know when the I-84 shoulder will be separated with barriers and turned into temporary bike/ped route?

Jack: There is nothing that we are doing currently to notify bikes/peds on this.

Terra: Bikes and peds will be along the I-84 shoulder. Terra will follow up with Ben afterwards.

Arthur: The railing on the viaduct, does any of that need to be repaired?

Jack: We have replaced some concrete railings. The west viaduct is complete and that railing is starting to look good.

Arthur: How difficult is it to repair that railing when it's damaged?

Jack: Our prime contractor has experience working and fixing these railings, so that worked out well.

### Bridge Rail Replacement

Orren Jennings: We are looking at a bridge that is in the middle of the current viaduct closure, west of Oneonta. It is about 20 feet long, originally from 1914. After the Eagle Creek Fire, a tree fell and destroyed the masonry wall, but now we need some sort of barrier to help keep vehicles out of the drainage. We have no plans to know what's there. We have a maintenance recommendation to reconstruct a rail; we still have a rail on the other side behind the steel backed timber rail. There are space challenges, and we must get creative to install this railing. We propose adding a two-tube steel rail. We would try to span 28 ft with some steel rail and then flare the ends back. The rail would be made from galvanized steel and treated to look rustic brown.

Terra: Because we have white wooden railing on the north side of the highway and the proposal is to add steel tube on the south side, this is the recommendation as a cousin to the white guard rail that is used elsewhere in the Gorge. The rail is needed because the previous masonry (non-historic) rail was damaged by a falling tree after the Eagle Creek Fire. Because this is pretty much the only alternative that will work within the constraints we have, we are asking for concurrence, and if there are any small tweaks. This is pretty much the only thing we can do at this location.

### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Arthur: I am having a little trouble visualizing this, but it sounds like an engineering necessity.

Michael: Has the roadbed span been inspected, do we know if the bridge itself is intact?

Orren: Bridge inspectors go out every two years, so the structure itself is sound.

Jeanette: That railing that was destroyed was put in when ODOT had a master mason on board, the type of rock work was different.

### Updates

#### *ODOT Updates*

Terra: Heritage Excellence Award run through OPRD. Tricia shared that the Mitchell Point Tunnel project would potentially be a good nominee. If someone would like to help review and edit application materials. I would be willing to help however needed.

Arthur: Tricia looked it over and thought it would be relevant?

Terra: Yes, she indicated that she is too busy and is hoping for some helping hands.

Scott: I don't have any new updates on the rail repair from the Rowena Fire.

#### *Friends of the Historic Highway*

Jeanette Kloos: It is quiet at Friends. We are still working with State Parks on paving a section of the trail. We committed to doing both the medallions and the plaques for the Perham to Mitchell Point project. We have started our annual appeal – we've had 26 donors and over \$5,000 come in so far this month.

We had most of our normal activities this year except the Gorge Ride was canceled due to Rowena Fire. I did not realize that the Historic Highway was still closed near Rowena, so we may need to cancel the Gorge Ride (tentative date June 20) once again this year. We are seeking new board members; it's not a huge time commitment – zoom meeting every couple of months. I have been having computer issues, so I may not respond to your email very quickly. If you have something urgent, that's because my computer is not working.

Arthur: Is the Antique Car tour still a go?

Jeanette: Yes, still a go. It is the second Saturday of July. If the road is closed, again, we will not have the Gorge Ride.

Arthur: Terra, the cost was \$800,000 to replace the wooden railing?

Terra: Correct, the estimate is between \$600,000-\$800,000. Due to the referral of the ODOT funding bill, we are only doing enough hiring and materials to keep the roads functioning this winter. But nothing “extra” and “extra” in this context means buying replacement guard rail. We looked at temporary barriers and none of that is appropriate given space constraints. It is currently a conditional closure, but folks working on fire recovery can still access the properties.

#### *OPRD Updates*

Clay Courtright: Lost power in the entire district, sorry for my camera being off. Lots of things are going on with the storm.

Terra: Lisa Sumption from OPRD will be the interim ODOT director as Kris Strickler is departing in January.

#### *Travel Oregon Updates*

Kate Baumgartner: We are the first designated Wheel the World in the world; we received that designation. It is cool to see it come together. [Shared a video from Travel Oregon of Wheel the World]. Link in chat: [Accessible Road Trip Around Mt. Hood & Columbia River Gorge - Travel Oregon](#)

AJ [in chat]: Tourism of People with Disability represent a 4 billion dollar economic picture...remember often people with disabilities have 2 to 3 peers coming with them. Having rest rooms with appropriate ADA accessibility is the top priority of people with disabilities. See the previous CGTA report of accessibility of the the water fall corridor!

#### *Committee Round Table*

Wayne: A reminder there are some areas on the Historic Highway State Trail portion where we used the historic highway pavement, and several locations that have up to a 6% super-elevation on them which puts them out of standard. Hopefully we can add that to one of the items to bring those down to the 2% grade for accessibility.

Arthur: Will those be noted in the mapping? Wayne do you know where those areas are?

Wayne: Some of the specific ones that I've looked at include what we used to call Mossy Road coming down the hill towards Starvation Creek. I'm sure there are others.

Terra: I do have a list of where those spots are on the trail, and those will be indicated on the new maps and are already listed on the Sign type C. Our priority continues to be reconnecting the trail and then going back to address these areas that are not in compliance.

Arthur: The NEPA process is complete for the new Hood River White Salmon bridge crossing project. I have been on the project since 2007, NEPA started in 2003. We are still looking for funding; we have a \$530 million funding gap. The new bridge will have a pedestrian/bike component - plans call for an 8-foot sidewalk plus two 5-foot bike lanes with 2-foot buffers. Keep your fingers crossed for bridge funding – this would be great to enhance bike access for the City of Hood River.

Jesus: We also have the Accessible Gorge videos and GorgeTransit.com as other locations for people to access information on the accessibility topic.

Arthur: Yes, thank you. There is a fair amount of interest in Hood River County, including Post Canyon.

Arthur: Will we be able to decide on the next meeting date/time or do we need to vote?

Terra: I can read dates for the second Thursday of the month.

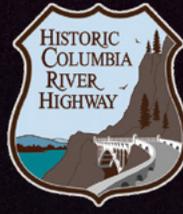
Arthur: What if we entertained a motion to send out an email poll?

Jesus: Motioned.

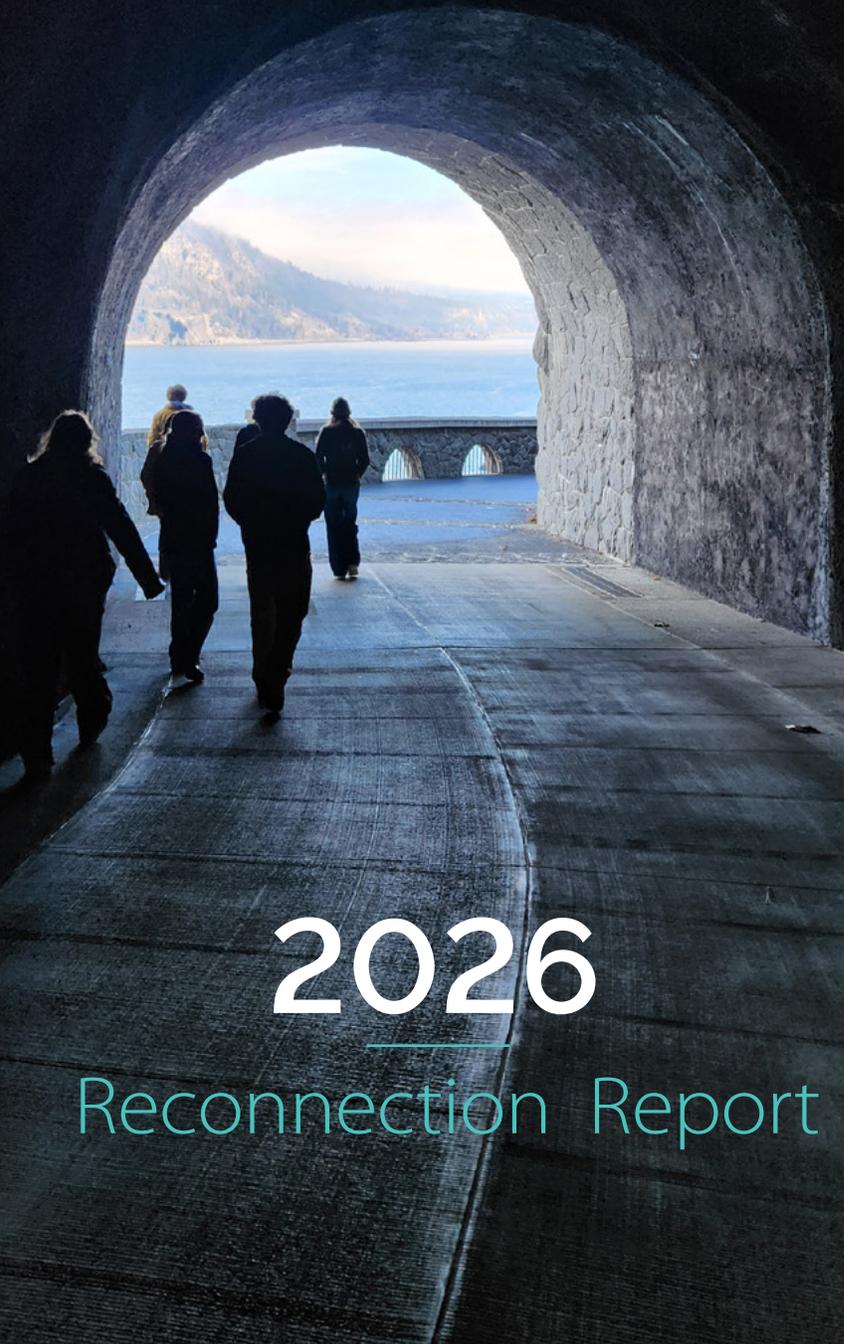
Kate: Seconded.

Arthur: Terra, send out a poll and let us know when that meeting is.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:58pm.**



# Historic Columbia River Highway *State Trail*



2026

Reconnection Report

# Completing the Reconnection

Constructed between 1913 and 1922, the Historic Columbia River Highway is filled with beautiful spots and breathtaking vistas of the Columbia River Gorge. During I-84 construction in the 1950s, 22 miles of the highway were left abandoned or destroyed.

ODOT, directed by Congress and the Oregon Legislature, is reconnecting the abandoned sections of the Historic Highway between Troutdale and The Dalles into a State Trail. Once completed, it will be possible to walk or cycle between Troutdale and The Dalles on a combination of shared roadway or car-free trail.

*A snapshot of all 73 miles*

**51 miles of shared roadway** using Historic Highway and frontage roads

**20 miles** of car-free trail complete

**1 mile** of car-free trail funded and under construction

**1.2 miles** of car-free trail 50% designed, awaiting funding

*Remember. Restore. Reconnect.*

[www.HistoricHighway.org](http://www.HistoricHighway.org)



**Completed trail!**

8 miles of trail COMPLETED!

Completed Trail!

Completed Trail!

Completed Trail!

Future Perham Creek Bridge

Future Mitchell Creek Bridge

Two new bridges will cross Perham and Mitchell Creeks between Viento State Park and the Mitchell Point Tunnel. The two bridges are consistent with historic design aesthetics.

Mitchell Point Tunnel

1.5 miles of trail COMPLETED!

The new tunnel mirrors the old highway tunnel by re-constructing arched windows with views of the Columbia River. It's a pivotal connection for the State Trail.

Future Trail Undercrossing

0.25 miles Construction: 2026-2028

The Trail undercrossing will allow cyclists and hikers to cross under I-84 and continue on to Ruthton Point and Hood River.

Future Ruthton Point Trail

1.2 miles 50% designed. Construction unfunded: \$50m

The Trail will continue east along the north side of I-84, overlooking orchards and the Columbia River. The historic Ruthton Point viaduct will be restored.

Future Ruthton Trailhead

This segment will connect the State Trail into Hood River with a new trailhead on Westcliff Drive with a circular bus loop, parking, restrooms and picnic area.

**LEGEND**

- Trail completed
- Trail under construction
- Future trail, 50% designed, construction unfunded

Mileage is approximate.



1915



2022



2024

THE HISTORIC COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY was the only paved road linking Portland and Columbia Gorge communities until the 1950s when ODOT constructed a new water-level route (now I-84). That construction severed the Historic Highway and in 1986 when President Ronald Reagan signed the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act, 22 miles of the old highway lay abandoned.

Over the last three decades, we have worked to reconnect these abandoned sections; building bridges, reconnecting fragments of the original highway, paving trail and restoring adjacent natural areas. These projects bring cyclists and hikers back to the spots where life once moved at the speed of a Model T, and trail users can once again savor the breathtaking experience along the Columbia River Gorge as it was meant to be experienced.

The State Trail provides access to recreation and a safe route for long-distance biking trips, making overnights spent in local communities a reality, a continued economic benefit to those communities. Bike rental businesses, bike repair shops, coffee shops, breweries and restaurants are flourishing as ODOT and its partners reconnect the State Trail.



The completion of the Mitchell Point Tunnel is a pivotal connection for the State Trail.

## Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee

**Arthur Babitz, Chair**  
Hood River County

**Tricia Forsi**  
Multnomah County  
Representative

**Jesus Mendoza**  
Hood River County  
Representative,  
Governor Appointee

**Mike Ballinger**  
Wasco County Representative

**Lisa Farquharson**  
Wasco County,  
Governor Appointee

**Vacant**  
Multnomah County,  
Governor Appointee

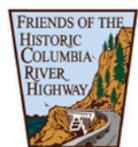
**Ian Johnson**  
State Historic Preservation  
Office

**Kate Baumgartner**  
Travel Oregon

**Clay Courtright**  
Oregon Parks  
and Recreation  
Department

**Rian Windsheimer**  
Oregon Department  
of Transportation

## Project Partners



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