

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: January 21, 2020 **Approx. Start Time:** 2:30pm **Approx. Length:** 30 mins

Presentation Title: U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor Decommissioning

Department: Transportation and Development

Presenters: Mike Bezner, Assistant Director; ODOT

Other Invitees:

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

There is no action requested. This is a presentation from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) about the proposed U.S. 26 Safety Corridor Decommissioning.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In 1996, ODOT, community members, and law enforcement worked together to designate the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor. The Safety Corridor was established as an immediate and short-term effort to reduce fatal and severe injury crashes in a 41.3 mile stretch of U.S. 26. ODOT has invested more than \$65 million in safety projects along the corridor. Projects have included rockfall reduction, center barriers, rumble strips, and new signs, as well as law enforcement overtime grants.

This effort was successful and fatal and serious injury crash rates have decreased significantly since 1996 and are now 50% of the statewide average for comparable highways. As a result, ODOT needs to explore decommissioning the Safety Corridor in order to focus its program efforts on others highways that now have a greater need. Once decommissioned, ODOT would remove the signs that read "Safety Corridor" and traffic fines would no longer be doubled. But, ODOT will continue to fund law enforcement overtime and will continue to support community-led efforts to educate people who live in and visit the Mt. Hood area about traffic safety.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

Is this item in your current budget? YES NO

What is the cost? There is no cost to Clackamas County.

What is the funding source? n/a

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

- How does this item align with your Department's Strategic Business Plan goals?

This aligns with the DTD Strategic Business Plan purpose for the Traffic Safety program: The purpose of the Traffic Safety program is to provide education, commercial vehicle inspection, traffic operations and engineering services to all road users so they can safely and efficiently use the transportation system.

- How does this item align with the County's Performance Clackamas goals?

This aligns with the County Performance Clackamas goals of:

- Build a Strong Infrastructure

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

None at this time.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

ODOT will be reaching out to the community and asking community leaders about remaining safety needs that they observe on Highway 26.

OPTIONS:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

ODOT handout

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Mike Bezner @ 503-742-4651

U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor Projects 2008-2020

Since 2008, ODOT has made \$65 million in safety investments on 41.3 miles of U.S. 26, with an additional \$4.4 million coming soon.

See what we've been up to.

SIGNIFICANT CRASH REDUCTION

Fatal and severe injury crash rates were reduced

58%

from 1996 to 2018



Fatal and serious injury crash rates as a percentage of statewide average for similar highways:

1996	2018
225%	50%

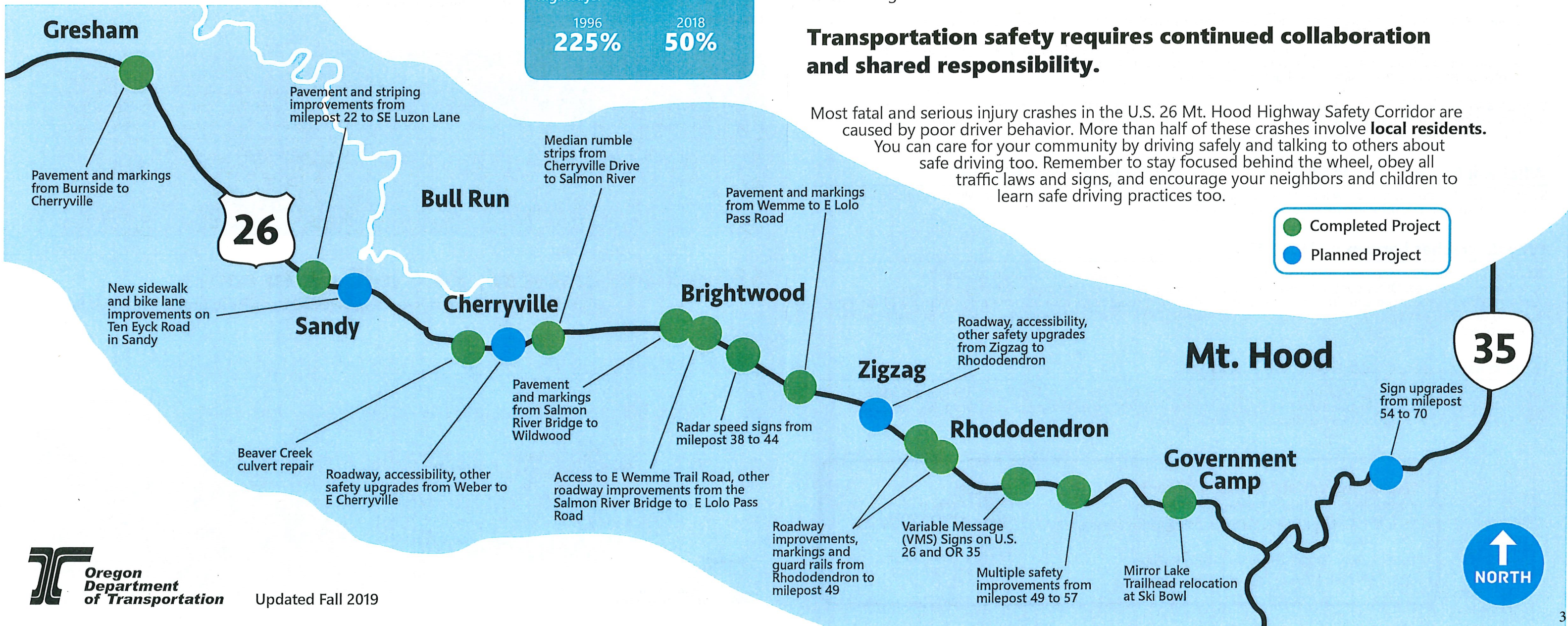
We've seen significant crash reduction since 1996 and it's time for ODOT to consider decommissioning the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor to focus our efforts on other state highways.

We want to learn more about the transportation needs in your community. In addition, we plan to invest \$4.4 million in safety-related roadway improvements in the near future.

We will continue to support community-led efforts to educate people who live in and visit the Mt. Hood area about traffic safety. ODOT will **continue to fund law enforcement overtime** through our safety grants. We are also reviewing the **Mt. Hood Multimodal Plan** and planning for transit in the area. These efforts will identify projects that will eventually lead to more infrastructure to encourage safe travel behavior.

Transportation safety requires continued collaboration and shared responsibility.

Most fatal and serious injury crashes in the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor are caused by poor driver behavior. More than half of these crashes involve **local residents**. You can care for your community by driving safely and talking to others about safe driving too. Remember to stay focused behind the wheel, obey all traffic laws and signs, and encourage your neighbors and children to learn safe driving practices too.



More about Safety Corridors and decommissioning

Why are safety corridors decommissioned?

The Safety Corridor program is designed to provide short-term tools for crash reduction in high crash corridors until long-term solutions can be developed and implemented. Once those solutions have been implemented and crash data indicates they are effective, ODOT can remove the Safety Corridor designation and apply it to other corridors throughout the state that also have higher rates of fatal and serious injury crashes.

How was U.S. 26 designated a safety corridor?

The criteria for safety corridor designation are:

1. The five year average of the local fatal and serious injury crash rate is at or above 150 percent of the latest statewide five year average for a similar type of roadway (as determined by the ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit).
2. The initial Designation Team agrees that the corridor length is manageable from an enforcement and education standpoint. The segment of highway must be similar in nature. Two to ten miles in length is preferable. Rural sections may be substantially longer than urban sections.
3. State and/or local law enforcement agencies commit to making the corridor a patrol priority.
4. A multi-disciplinary stakeholder group meets on a regular basis (at least annually, as defined in the charter). Stakeholders are defined as those individuals, groups, and agencies that have expressed a current interest in the safety corridor and are considered to have valuable input in the process.

When the 41.3 mile U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor was designated in 1996, the five year average fatal and serious injury crash rate was **225%** of the statewide average crash rate for comparable highways. From 2013 to 2017 the fatal serious crash rate was **50%** of the statewide average.

What will happen after the U.S. 26 Safety Corridor is decommissioned?

Signs that read "Safety Corridor" will be removed and traffic fines will no longer be doubled. We will continue to evaluate safety and prioritize improvements along U.S. 26.

Why do crashes happen on U.S. 26?

Between 1996 and 2019 the biggest contributor to crashes in this area was drivers driving too fast for the conditions of the road. Other contributors included not yielding and other improper driver behavior such as turning, following too close and driving on the wrong side of the road. Local residents were involved in 54% of the fatal and serious injury crashes. Other Oregon drivers were involved in 40% of the crashes and out-of-state drivers were involved in 15%.

Have crashes decreased along the corridor?

The fatal and serious injury crash rate along the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor has **decreased 58%** since 1996. From 1991 to 1995 there were 59 fatal and serious injury crashes in the corridor. From 2013 to 2018 there were 25 fatal and severe injury crashes in the same corridor.

Questions or comments? Contact:

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U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor Decommissioning

In 1996, ODOT, community members, and law enforcement worked together to designate the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor. The Safety Corridor was established as an immediate and short-term effort to reduce fatal and severe injury crashes in a 41.3 mile stretch of U.S. 26. This effort was successful and fatal and serious injury crash rates have decreased significantly since 1996.

EDUCATION

We will continue to partner with the community to identify and execute transportation education needs on Mt. Hood. It takes all of us to spread the word and ensure our neighbors and visitors travel safe.

ENGINEERING

We invested more than \$65 million in safety projects along this 41.3 mile stretch of U.S. 26. These improvements included rockfall reduction, center barriers, rumble strips, and new signs. The map below shows where we've invested that \$65 million and where we will continue to invest an additional \$4.4 million in future projects.

ENFORCEMENT

A safety corridor requires enforcement. We have funded multiple overtime enforcement grants and will continue to do so along this corridor of U.S. 26.

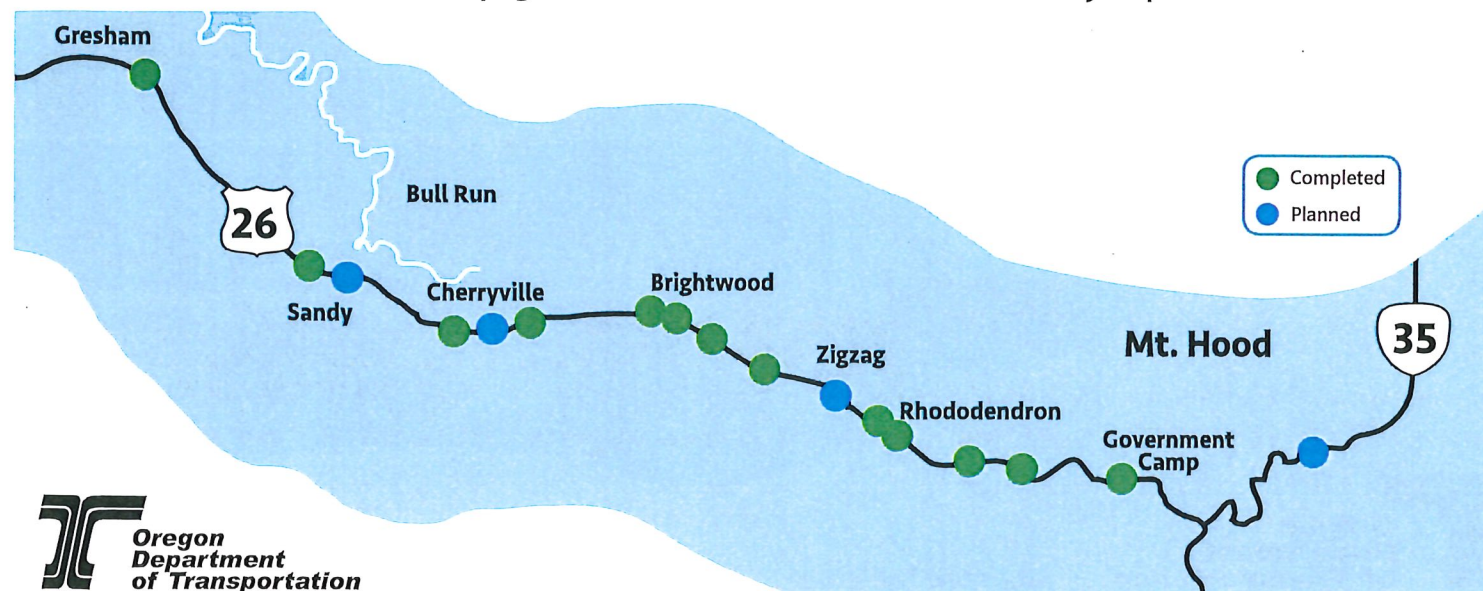
A SUCCESSFUL SAFETY CORRIDOR

ODOT's Safety Corridor Program helps us identify parts of our highway system with high rates of serious and fatal injury crashes. After we designate an official safety corridor, we work to reduce these crashes in the short term through partnerships with engineering, enforcement, education and emergency service.

Safety Corridor designation is based on fatal and serious injury crash data so that ODOT can focus program efforts on highways that need it the most. Crash rates have decreased since 1996, so ODOT needs to explore decommissioning the U.S. 26 Mt. Hood Highway Safety Corridor.

\$65 million invested, \$4.4 million to come.

Turn the page to learn where we've invested in safety improvements on U.S. 26.



 Oregon
Department
of Transportation