

**Historic Columbia River Highway
Advisory Committee Meeting**

Meeting will be Hybrid
Cousins' Country Inn
2114 W 6th Street, The Dalles, OR 97058
Online Information below
Login online: <https://tinyurl.com/AC-Jun2023>



Meeting ID: 819 5654 9638
Password: HCRHAC

Call in (does not require internet): 1 (253) 215-8782
Meeting ID: # 819 5654 9638

Thursday, June 15th, 2023

10 AM – 2:00 PM Advisory Committee Meeting

MEMBERS:

Arthur Babitz, Chair
Leti Valle Moretti
Ernie Drapela, Vice-Chair
Tricia Forsi
Judy Davis
Lisa Farquharson
Clay Courtright
Rian Windsheimer
Staj Olson
Chrissy Curran

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:

Time	Agenda Topics	Presenter
10:00 AM	Call to Order	Arthur Babitz, Chair
10:05 AM	Opportunity for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda*	
10:10 AM	Approval of Minutes	Arthur Babitz, Chair
10:15 AM	Viento to Mitchell Pt State Trail Update Funding Option Y updates	Jack Carlson, FHWA
10:35 AM	Mitchell Point Tunnel Update	Austin Armstrong, FHWA
10:55 AM	Transit/Shuttle Updates	Amy/Kent/David
11:15 AM	Portland Women's Forum	Clay/David, OPRD
12:00 PM	Lunch Break	

12:45 PM	Mile Marker Plan update	Dan/Terra
1:05 PM	State Trail Design update	Wayne Stewart
1:45 PM	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ September 21, 2023 ○ December 14, 2023 • Friends of the Historic Highway • OPRD • Travel Oregon • USFS • WFLHD 	Terra, Jeanette, Clay, Staj, Donna, Matt
1:55 PM	Committee Round Table	All
2:00 PM	Adjourn	

September Agenda items

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee 2023 Work Plan

1. **The Final 1.5 Miles of 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 5**
5. **Eagle Creek Stairway Replacement**
6. **Waterfall Corridor Visitor Experience Management**
7. Congestion and Safety Plan Implementation Projects
8. Twin Tunnels Safety Improvements Implementation
9. Historic Guardrail Research/Analysis
10. Larch Mountain Slide – Funding

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

June 15, 2023

Hybrid – Zoom and Cousins Country Inn

Members Attending:	Arthur Babitz, Chair Ernie Drapela, Vice Chair Judy Davis Tricia Forsi Wayne Stewart, Member Emeritus Lisa Farquharson Arthur Carroll, Member Emeritus David Spangler, OPRD Marc Berry, Member Emeritus Kristen Stallman, ODOT
Historic Highway AC Staff:	Terra Lingley (ODOT) Katelyn Jackson (ODOT)
Others Attending:	Jeanette Kloos Beatriz Parga Doug Henne Mike Standley Jonathan Maus Bob Hadlow (ODOT) Kent Krum... Stephen Elgart, USFS Kristin Cianci Andy Lebar Melanie Jonathan Maus, Bike Portland Donna Mickley Casey Gatz, USFS AJ Zelada Kathy, MCEDD

Call to Order

Arthur called to order the meeting at 10:05.

Public Comment

Lisa: Welcome to The Dalles and thank you for coming! I brought Chamber of Commerce packets with encouragement to come visit The Dalles. So much to see and do. I invite you to have an adventure when the meeting is over.

Arthur: If you have time, go check out the murals, including the Historic Highway mural painted last August.

Arthur: Bill Pattison passed away shortly after the last meeting. It meant a lot he was able to attend the meeting in March. He was a tremendous mentor who introduced me to Hood River history and this group and wrangled me into chairing this group. He also preceded me as mayor of Hood River. There will be a memorial in July.

Carolyn Wood: I was a former board member for 18 years. He really got things moving in Hood River County for this organization. This past winter we have community concerts in The Dalles. He and a group came it was fun to see him and talk to him.

Arthur: I think it’s fair to say we would not be where we are in this project without Bill. He would say “We just need to make sure we get the damn road build” so let’s get on with that.

Beatriz Parga: I have some questions in regards to certain management for the old highway. We have news from NEMCCA and Terra about no mowing during fire season due to budget cuts. When will mowing begin and when can we reduce fire risk?

Kent: We are mowing less than historically but have not ceased all mowing activities. The old highway has been mowed between Troutdale-Larch. On the freeway, instead of mowing all the clear zones, we’re only mowing down the shoulder. We don’t mow due to fire; it’s about visibility. This is a statewide initiative. If you drive down I-5 you will see they have done one swath, like I-84 in the Gorge.

Arthur: How would someone provide comments to ODOT on this?

Terra: Ask ODOT

Katelyn [in chat]: Ask ODOT contact info at this link <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/pages/ask-odot.aspx>

Beatriz: I thought the speed limit was supposed to be reduced to 35 mph and Terra confirmed it was 40 mph. Which sections were lowered and what were the standards used? What about mixed use in a non-urban corridor? How are those standards being applied?

Terra: There is a very specific process. They do a speed study to look at different land uses, activity, number of pedestrians. It’s an engineering decision. Corbett-Ainsworth speeds were lowered in 2020/2021. Lowered down from the standard 55 mph to 40 mph. It’s 20 mph right in front of Multnomah Falls. Local jurisdictions can request a speed study from ODOT and there is some recently passed legislation that I don’t know how it interacts with ODOT’s speed process.

Beatriz: What’s the standard for a mixed-use area with parks? I found 25 mph online. Increasing population. Safety concerns with the changing area, type of use. Recently had a crash in front of my property.

Terra: Mixed use means something different than what you’re describing to urban planners. This is a rural highway. Mixed use to planners means ground level businesses, etc.

Arthur: The advice I was given in Hood River County is to speak to your county commissioners. It’s been a frustrating process. Changing speed limits don’t change the speeds.

Katelyn [in chat]: <https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Engineering/Pages/Changing-Speed-Limits.aspx>

Beatriz: We already did a speed study in 2015. ODOT talked about it at our community meeting after the Eagle Creek Fire. Why were those standards not applied?

[editorial note – the Eagle Creek Fire started in 2017]

Arthur: It sounds like that’s when we went from 55 to 40 mph?

Beatriz: Wasn’t speed a part of that?

Terra: Yes, the 2019 Congestion and Safety Plan recommended reducing the speed from 55-40 mph, and that’s what happened in 2020/2021.

Beatriz: I’ve been having a hard time getting a hold of any one at Forest Service. What’s being done about finding a host at Wahkeena Falls? People are parking along the old highway.

Stephen (USFS): Looking for host, and this is our only site left without one. We’re actively pursuing. It’s not as easy as it has been in the past. We’ve seen a downtick in available hosts since COVID.

Beatriz: I’ve sent at least two prospective hosts and I’m not sure I’m sending them to the right person.

Stephen: I’ll put my email in the chat.

Arthur: Maybe east county items on the agenda and the next meeting or meeting after that.

Melanie Finstad, Visit Hood River: Are there paper permits for Multnomah Falls? I got an email from someone asking about same day paper permits.

Terra: Yes, there are two locations that distribute same day in person permits. Gateway to The Gorge Visitor Center in Troutdale and the Cascade Locks Historical Museum.

Melanie: What about Hood River?

Terra: Not right now, but perhaps in the future.

[Approval of Minutes](#)

Minutes approved.

Mile Marker Plan Update

Dan Shanahan (ODOT): The Dalles ODOT maintenance district manager.

We talked about the safety aspect of the green paddles and emergency services being able to respond. We had a fatality and it took 20-30 minutes for everyone to respond. It wouldn't have changed the outcome, but travel time and misunderstanding on locations could make a difference in the future. We're looking for a standard that everyone can be used to respond.

I don't have any issues with the existing concrete mile markers. I would like to see the green paddles, so people know what to look for.

Terra: Dan has done a lot of work to understand where the old ones are and where new ones would need to go.

Connor: Only one in Mosier. Chenoweth Creek would be the closest location where old and new would be located. The closest new/old markers is near Chenoweth, but they're mostly far apart.

Dan: one of the conversations was if they were going to be right on top of each other. We would use the smallest paddle available and only on one side of the Highway.

Marc: When we use the word separate, could you define that?

Dan: there was a concern that we'd have a green paddle and concrete marker right on top of each other. Only two locations where they would be close. The green markers will be the numbers the dispatch and other emergency service providers have.

Melissa [in chat]: Is this after the non-motorized section after the East Mark O Hatfield area?

Terra [in chat]: This is the drivable section between Mosier and The Dalles

Donna, USFS: is brown a possibility?

Dan: I asked and no, there's no MUTCD option to have a brown one based on what we must follow. The posts will be brown.

Connor mocked up what it would look like. Brown post with green color.

Donna: no opportunities for exceptions?

Dan: No, we'd be taking it on as a district. I haven't seen anyone approve a sign that doesn't meet federal requirements. It'd have to go to our statewide traffic engineer.

Terra: MUTCD signs are allowed by right in the scenic area. Otherwise, NSA permit.

Marc: When will this be finished in Mosier?

Dan: It won't take long to install, but we wanted to go through the committee first. Our sign shop in Salem would make them and then it would take a day or two to install.

Marc: This year?

Dan: I would think so.

Judy: As someone who lives on this section, I’m all in favor for getting the markers up to increase safety and so people know where they are going.

Tricia: All for modern markers. We’re still going to be upkeeping the historic as necessary?

Dan: it hasn’t been done, but we can start them up again. We have molds.

Arthur: is there an inventory of what still exists?

Connor: Between Mosier and The Dalles, only milemarker 84 is missing and 85 is broken.

Dan: we could put in the paddles and work to restore the concrete ones.

Arthur: I’m a fan of the historic ones and I think a lot of people moving at slow speeds can take them in.

Art: given the recommendation from the USFS about color... (clarify the posts will be brown even if the sign is green)

Dan: paddles will be double-sided so numbers are visible from both directions, but placed only on one side of the highway.

Arthur: Commission members, are there objections? I am not thrilled but understand.

Tricia: In favor of new markers for safety. Old ones are worth preserving.

Dan/Terra: share photos back.

Kent: Timeframe will be different for R1 and R4.

AJ: excludes through trail sections?

Dan: yes, this is just for the drivable sections of the Historic Highway.

Transit/Shuttle Updates

Kent Krumpschmidt (Sasquatch): Shuttles are going well. We’ve taken over management of the Multnomah Falls lot on the Historic Highway and moved the entrance to the west side with diagonal parking. We were able to do that without reducing parking spots. Traffic flows much smoother and we maintain free flow traffic with flagger and parking attendant in front of Multnomah Falls. We give them the options of the shuttle, etc. when the lot is full. We’ve seen much more illegal parking along the highway and an increase of people walking on the highway to get to the Falls. We’re hoping our law enforcement partners can help enforce. A lot of people parking in the old highway have permits but ended up at the Historic Highway lot. It’s a high number of people. A lot of people circle again and again in front of the crosswalk, committed to find a prime spot. One car came by 18 times. We’re collecting parking lot data we can hopefully use and share.

Terra: in your packet you have this map of the transit and shuttle options. The back includes tour companies and contact info. Put together by Hood-Gorge RDO staff.

Wayne: As part of the data collection, are you getting information about the length of time they are parking in the lot?

Kent: I'm having employees count the amount of cars entering for hour, so we could estimate it, but not directly correlated by car. We've been doing this since the second week and it's starting to show some patterns.

[Viento to Mitchell Pt State Trail Update](#)

Jack Carlson, WFL

Project started in January 2022 and will be completed this fall.

Since our last meeting, the contractor has completed a lot of the activities, including the remodel of the Viento maintenance facility with meeting room and break room. The campground restrooms are complete. Guinett stone placed the stone veneer on the outsides of the buildings. Local painters came in to paint the exterior a nice green. The existing foundation is natina stained. The main entrance has wood in natural staining.

On the east side, we removed all the old siding and replaced. We added new windows and HVAC. There's a utility shed for all the utilities to come into the shed and feed into the camp.

The campground restroom was old with septic pumped out. New one comes with a state-of-the-art septic system. Two bathrooms in the south with restrooms and two north have showers. All four restrooms are heated.

The contractor has paved the parking lot and campground and went on to finish the pavement this Monday, between Viento and east 2 miles. The stripers added the crosswalk and arrows.

Guinett placed the stone basalt bands. We have a bicyclist repair station and bike rack. They also worked on the kiosk.

Placed precast pilasters at the trailhead going west to Starvation and to the east going through. There is also a water jug filler station.

We also installed the Historic Highway signs. We had a father-son team out of Hood River.

We have a hiker-biker section of the campground with three-sided shelters. There are three of them in this area. Working with the OPRD architect and field team, these have come together. Viento Creek is right on the backside. We also have tent pads. There is an ADA fire pit and section where the ground meets ADA requirements.

There are lockers for campers and there is an electrical outlet in each locker so you can charge overnight and be ready to go.

The contractor placed topsoil throughout the campground and have begun seeding.

The contractor has finished all the MSE walls. They are painting them colors to make a basalt shade. The barrier rail is placed up against the MSE wall and has now been painted black. The pedestrian handrail is placed on top of the wall and on barriers along the trail.

Marc: Width?

Jack: 12 foot paved with 2 foot gravel shoulders on both sides.

Gabion baskets contain rockfall along the trail. One section at pinnacle and one east of dome rock. Rock supremacy did the rockfall work. They finished the mid-slope attenuator placement at Stepped Cut. The rocks fall, hit the fence on the bench and then release down the slope without hitting the trail. A lot of fence and work.

Timelapse of hiker-biker pods. Walkthrough of campground with basalt bench to overlook creek. All tent pads are less than 2% to drain water, but also comfort.

Art: OPRD design or contract?

Jack: both, but Ben at OPRD provided a lot of input.

David: The original plan had this down on the creek, but we realized there wasn't enough room, and it was too close to the riparian area. We pulled it up onto the bench and swapped a drive-in spot for an ADA tent spot. We changed a lot on the spot.

Arthur: First come first serve? Is there a time limit for length of stay?

David: I want to say 3-5 days. Yes, first come.

Videos of painting, striping, paving trail and campground, mulching, placing topsoil, and trail paving.

Melanie (in chat): Are these reservation only? Hiker/Biker

David: Hiker biker will always remain first come first served. We will always find space for cyclists. Drive in are first come this season.

Kathy (in chat): Did you already explain how the sewer system works? Is it a filtration system?

Jack: Pretty neat pump system with large filtration tank built into the facility. DEQ system and approved connections through Hood River County.

Kathy (in chat): Do you have to remove the solids or is everything handled on site?

David: every now and then we need to pump but the reality is most of it is handled on site with multiple tanks.

Art: I'd recommend we have a tour or meeting so we can see it. This is a significant recreational opportunity and project.

Arthur: I agree!

Art: The integration of the ADA is significantly important, and I appreciate seeing it.

Arthur: We did a tour a few months ago and I was really surprised to see how far it has come. It looks amazing.

Wayne: I appreciate all the effort you've put in. I know you've talked about paying a lot of attention to trees, views, etc. Where do we stand on Option Y?

Jack: Kudos to State Parks, design team, lead inspector Aaron.

David: Echoing what Wayne said. Federal Highways doesn't do vertical construction very often and having Jack's expertise and attention to detail resulted in an exceptional product.

Terra: No news on option Y. FLAP funding in 2026. Congressionally directed spending request for \$4M in, but no status.

Wayne: Any potential for bridge funding from ODOT?

Terra: not at this moment but I continue to keep my eyes and ears open.

[Mitchell Point Tunnel Update](#)

Austin Armstrong, WFL

We've had quite a bit of completing work these past few months. We're starting to see it shape up.

We're still working on the bench approaches and starting in the parking lot. We will start on the east approach and almost all the way to the eastern edge of the project.

They are starting to put the stone facing on the retaining wall. They are 80 feet up with the wind blowing. Once it starts getting too windy and blowing the basket, there are sensors that lock the controls so you can only descend. They have been lucky with a lot of decent days recently.

At the last meeting, we had the portal tented off to cure concrete. Some of the arch stones were placed. Each stone had to be placed with rebar sticking out so when they pour the concrete, they would be secure.

From the inside, the smaller stones are the ones placed and with the concrete placed behind.

There will be some cleanup work now. The north side of the outside portion will have some cleanup on the concrete. Some work on the top of the west side. The stonework is pretty much complete. The inside with the cast in place you can see the form lines. We're looking at a light sandblast to blend, not quite the rubbed finish, but a nice texture.

Arthur: does it tunnel wind through?

Austin: You're getting a nice breeze but not a wind tunnel effect. Once you leave the west portal, you walk into a bit of a fan.

Arthur: Any whistling portals?

Austin: not that I've heard.

Guinett laid out the numbers for the 2024 key stone. He did it in one day and it was impressive.

Wayne: What is the weight of stones?

Austin: the bigger ones were 2-3,000 pounds.

Inside the tunnel, we’re getting to the point of grading it using automated grading systems. A tripod is set up and it shuts a laser on the bulldozer to raise and lower each corner of the blade. In the next few weeks, we will hopefully start laying out and pouring the concrete floor.

Arthur: any surprises with drainage?

Austin: I wouldn’t say surprises but there’s a lot of fractured rock and sometimes water seeps through. Water will run off to the sides and drain out.

About 70-80 feet of cast in place around the steel sets in the west portal. All wall segments are cast. They did a really good job with the curves. Though the panels are flat, they’re situated nicely and looks like a curve. Sandblasting will make it look smoother. Two sections of the roof are completed, eight feet at a time. It takes about a week to form and cast. After three days, the forms are lowered by six inches and slid over to the next section. We still have quite a bit to do.

Marc: What is the tunnel length?

Austin: 655-feet

Arthur: When will pour be done?

Austin: there’s also a wall on the south side. We’re still several months out from completing the concrete.

Wayne: do the portals look the same?

Austin: similar. West portal has more stone on one side. We added more rock bolts, and the masonry will cover that up.

Since the last meeting, they have placed the stone on the bench retaining wall on the inside for the most part. There’s a large wall they still have to build that’s posing to be a challenge. It will have to wait until concrete work is complete because working on the wall will block tunnel access.

Removed old single vault toilet and set in a new double vault. We just formed and poured concrete sidewalk around the toilet to meet ADA requirements. All the asphalt is off the parking area and prepping for grading.

Arthur: still good on completion?

Austin: April 2024. We hope we can pave this fall. If we do that, it will be final touch ups and the tunnel could be complete in January-February.

[Portland Women’s Forum](#)

David Spangler, OPRD

We are still in the concept phase. We developed 30% plans and came to the community and realized it's not what they wanted. We returned with a concept plan to get feedback on what the community is looking for. We've put out the design contract with Ashley Vance and they're putting together two concepts. We will review internally and hope to have a community meeting in July/August. From there, will move forward.

We are in the process of getting the land use planning in place. There was a road previously there we needed to vacate. It was two tax parcels and required a determination to combine. Once we get the design plans pulled together, we'll work to submit NSA permit.

You will notice there is a parking blob. Right now, that is an open field. Our total spaces originally took our maximum from the master plan's plus the allowed variance. It was too many spaces. We're scaling back and will have a final number in the concept plans. We expect it to be around 50 spaces.

It is a recreational intensity class that allows for significant parking. We hope shuttle operators can use and as a transfer point for larger buses to transition for smaller. It's a great jumping off place for biking. Everyone agrees there needs to be a restroom. We will have a plumbed, standard OPRD restroom facility. It will take some pressure of Vista House septic. We rebuilt it three years ago and maintains at current threshold but can't take much more.

On the east side, it will retain existing parking. So many people just pull off, eat lunch, enjoy a quick look. We're retaining a series of parking spaces up front. We will take off the entire existing parking lot further north because the vehicles obscure the view. This will open up the view and provide a more natural experience. Retain existing historical viewpoint.

The final plan will be a lot of weeds removal. There's a large locust grove that will be removed and replanted with native species. There was a viewshed project years ago and we will continue that work and bring back the viewshed to what it was. Removal of invasive cherry trees.

Construction to be completed within a two-year time frame based on NSA permit.

Ernie: will you access and enhance the old hiking trail to I-84?

David: no. it doesn't have a good terminus. Right now, how it intersects with the private property is people wandering. We will maintain it but not improve it for public user trail. It is in the master plan for long term.

Ernie: there's an old concrete bomb shelter on the lower level.

David: the trail makes a curve and there's a trail that pulls into the retreat center, and folks end up on private property. We need to mitigate that and possibly do some trail realignment. We did the complete archeology. Retain historical structures.

Wayne: We have talked about the possibility of having shuttle service running from here to Exit 35. I would encourage to be thinking about possibility for additional parking and shuttle turnaround at Ainsworth. I'd agree 50 parking spots makes sense currently, but design in a way in the future it could be

expandable. I could see 100 at Women’s Forum and 100 at Ainsworth to facilitate shuttles back and forth.

David: as we move through with the community, the level of the expansion was the biggest concern. We want to ensure shuttles can maneuver and have parking but didn’t want it to be a central parking spot.

AJ: One of the phenomena was see at Hatfield West is vans and carriers bringing in 12-20 bikes. Will that be part of the transit option for parking? I would think they would be coming to Women’s Forum to zoom down.

David: As we get feedback back, we may be able to incorporate some trailer spaces.

AJ: we’d love to see two ways to get from the highway into the parking lot. A single entry can be difficult with people coming in or out and waiting to turn.

David: Right now, that entrance is permitted by ODOT. As soon as we start looking at putting in additional parking, the concern is we’d have to do an expansion of the Historic Highway and we don’t know if that would be allowed. We’d need turn lanes and we’d be changing the historic entrance.

Terra: An early concept had an in and an out. I think the concern is the big curve and the site lines. Concerns from the community one entrance could be gated at night. The consolidated entrance made sense for those reasons.

AJ: would it require a larger turning radius for a single entrance?

David: that turning radius allows larger vehicles. Looking at a bike lane or area for cyclists to have without a level of interaction.

AJ: is there anything to prevent people from parking at Women’s Forum and walking to Vista House?

David: no signage or anything discouraging.

Ernie: Is there a challenge in providing a drain field for the restroom?

David: we did a full wetland delineation. Multnomah County and DEQ would dictate what we’re able to do. If we have low levels of nitrate requirements, small footprint etc. we will put a similar system as we did in Viento.

Ernie: would the solution/design be comparable to Vista House?

David: depends on the County and DEQ. On the back of the napkin, if a typical drain field is allowed, we’d be able to put in the number of laterals but we don’t know.

Marc: David joked about Memorial Day visitation. Is there something we should know?

David: there was a high level of visitation, interesting decisions, illegal parking and accessing areas.

Terra: for the record, I would say don’t park your car in the eastbound lane at Vista House and walk away.

David: There was a car parked in the middle of the highway coming up from Latourell at sunrise one morning. There was no one in sight. At sunset, just above Vista House there were three cars parked in the middle of the highway for photos. This was a normal, off-season day.

We will have a sheriff’s deputy working with us starting Monday.

State Trail Design Update

Wayne Stewart

Sponsored by Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway, Jeannette and AJ, through DEA to complete the State Trail Consistency and Enhancement Report

State Trail construction has been occurring since the 90s. Different people worked on the projects in design and construction. Over time, some things are not consistent. In 2011, we put together State Trail guidelines for use moving forward. Now, we’re looking at additional consistency to go back to earlier projects as funds become available or as things need to be repaired.

Jeanette hired a landscape architect to put together background information on the completed trail and pulled out types of projects to discuss. We held a workshop with OPRD, USFS, ODOT, Historic Highway reps.

Looked at transition zones. At Wyeth, Viento and Mitchell, we have a bollard on the center to discourage driving in the area and concrete pylons on each side of the trail entrance.

Marc: no gates?

Wayne: we’re not proposing any new gates like at Mosier.

Wood fencing – we have historic white and non-historic brown. At McCord to Moffett, we put in about a thousand feet of white rail that should have been brown. White is only where the 1924 log catalogues. Kent has had concerns about the shifting of dimensions over time. They have some issues having a stockpile of the various sizes so the materials can be purchased.

Fences between Hood River and Mosier have a round wood and chain link fence. Kent has asked for the rectangular wood to reduce stockpile needs. There are several types of proximity fences. Small mesh fences are blown over with snow plowing. The 4-wire fencing doesn’t provide as much protection between trail users and the shoulder of I-84. We’re looking at modifying to 5 or 6 wires to increase safety for kids and dogs.

Gates options for a simple metal gate or heavier option. We’re not proposing new gates like at Mosier, but we have a suggested design.

We’ve had two types of seating with a horizontal column of basalt and short sections set vertically as a seat. These are appropriate.

They will have guidance for seat walls. Masonry veneer of concrete block core.

Bike rack design with a horizontal top bar and rounded corners. Picnic tables have a few variations of wood and some concrete tables. Trash and recycling containers to be resolved.

Original mile markers on the trail are limited. Where we've used remnants of the original highway, there are 5 or 6 locations that could have mile markers. Three or four along the way and Hood River to Mosier. Medallions are being placed during construction to mark the historic sections. Some of the early ones are backward. We have to figure out getting them out and moved around.

Terra: We're missing a few.

Wayne: How do we mile mark the state trail? We want something different than the green paddle. David brought up how often do we mark and what system? David suggested we call them emergency markers and give them a number. Placed at intervals or high-crash areas.

Curbs are mostly concrete in the background. Stone curbs in the foreground should continue. It takes a stone mason to place, but they really look like they fit.

Pavement repairs to be located and fixed as money is available.

Identify enhancement opportunities and list them.

I would say we're 75% of the way through.

Wayne showed some fencing options with different wire amounts and spacing. Six inches seems like a reasonable standard for kids and dogs.

Arthur: building code is 4 inches.

Wayne: We've used 6 inches. This is one of those compromises between snow.

Wayne: showed some examples of benches. We have stone benches and at the trailheads it would be nice and could be an ADA issue that has a back and an arm. One possibility is metal or a cedar seat with metal frame. We need to work with David and parks.

Arthur: SHPO?

Terra: probably would require a NSA permit.

Wayne: metal type trash can option, including some that are bear resistant. There's no resolution on this as these are very different.

Wayne showed a drawing of an emergency marker using the NSA standards. A three-foot post and 16-inch-wide sign with a curved top that has a number. It could be two sided so you can read from each direction. Low enough it's not in your view line.

AJ: Emergency vehicle use the access from I-84 along power line roads and gates. We sort of want to have a trail marker that's consistent with the I-84 access points. That way they don't have to go to the beginning of the trail and drive down.

Kent: an example would be a call for an ambulance at MP 54.4 and the emergency access point is right there.

David: the thought was to eliminate having an intrusive mile marker every mile. It would be similar to the waterfront concept and having them in very specific locations.

Arthur: The Hood River waterfront was divided into sectors and labeled. Has it been successful?

David: I think so. I’ve seen it in multiple places. Needs to be in collaboration with dispatch at all counties.

Arthur: I haven’t seen it in a long-linear segment. How many people are going to know they fell by emergency marker 15?

David: Thanks for not sharing the trash can design we have because they’re not beautiful. One of the things for us is sustainability of infrastructure and looking at it with the long term in mind. As we look at improvements, knowing that some of those could be basalt curbing may become cost prohibitive and need some levels and flexibility. The big one as an agency is sustainability and having funding to maintain the level of infrastructure we put in.

Kent: We’ve created this infrastructure with no long-term funding source. All it says is state parks will do this piece and ODOT will do this piece. I didn’t have the money to reopen Eagle Creek – it would still be closed, but Terra and Kristen found funds. How do we maintain this, prioritize, and move forward? Getting a plan in line and being able to get a funding source. We can’t fund the extras. We’re breaking even in maintenance this year and then going in the hole. Having a plan and looking at it like mini STIP or FLAP projects.

Marc: on the cement posts that have markers and the green ones, will they always be similar markers? How do you keep people from being confused?

Terra: they’re about 14.2 miles off. That was a big part of the conversation last meeting. The general consensus was that the green paddles are obvious mile markers as a national standard. Very few people understand the concrete posts are mile markers. Friends didn’t notice it and didn’t know they were mile posts. The numbers are also hard to see. The green will become more obvious. We could also have the emergency services ask if they’re looking at green or concrete.

AJ: Apart from infrastructure, the response is that someone finds someone down. A good dispatcher will say go find the nearest marker.

Arthur: frequently you won’t want to leave the person.

AJ: You can’t just call and say you’re on the north side of Mt. Hood. You have to find something.

Arthur: Long term, technology will fix it.

Arthur: consistency over time – I see the level of vegetation choking out viewpoints change. Do we have a standard to measure or track what the view should be from a particular viewpoint?

Wayne: there was a study a few years ago and led to parks opening some views. That was only the western side, but I don’t think it was ever extended to the east. I don’t know how we get that updated.

Arthur: maybe we need our own key viewing areas and that when you’re at this overlook you should be able to see the river.

Art: recommend an amendment to the state system for the trail.

Arthur: things change slowly over time, and you don’t realize it.

Judy: did the guidelines have anything to do with scenic views?

Wayne: I don’t remember.

Terra: I think it’s mostly design and not viewshed.

Arthur: the tree canopy the highway was designed for was nothing like the tree canopy we have today. The Gorge was recovering after a wildfire. Today, we preserve and protect the trees and it can conflict with the historic nature of what the view from the Historic Highway was like. We have far more trees in Hood River than we ever had. We have scenic viewpoints where you cannot see anything anymore due to vegetation. You don’t know the viewpoint was there to see the rock formation of the river.

Judy: and you need a permit that could be denied?

David: I believe we can cut back as maintenance but putting in a review for a larger effort.

Terra: I think that’s part of why only some of the viewshed recommendations were implemented. There’s no priority between natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational - values. How do you balance them all?

Arthur: I’d like to know if when we have specifically crafted views... we’ve lost 80% of the original views and we don’t realize we’ve lost them.

Kent: when you look at photos, you realize drastically that 90% of the views are gone.

Kristen [in chat]: There is a perfect example of lost view along the Mossy Road segment. There is the perfect view of Wind Mountain that is lost to the trees.

Ernie: Visual integrity was a term we used previously.

Kristen: We had a really good process in the vegetation management on the drivable segments of Historic Highway. Maybe we do a similar approach on the State Trail. What that entailed was looking at old photographs and postcards. Methodology was award winning.

Kristen [in chat]: https://nsbfoundation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Viewshed_Promotional_Poster_Hikari-NSBF-webinar-handout-Sept-2020.pdf

Arthur: for some future agenda could we put an item on what was done in the past?

Kristen: Sandra Hikari would be a great resource.

AJ: seasonal views change.

Arthur: did we do viewshed at Multnomah Falls?

Terra: we talked about views to Multnomah Falls in the pedestrian circulation study.

Ernie: I recall years ago I went to Angels Rest and was charmed. I went to Devils rest and was betrayed – it was surrounded by trees.

Updates:

ODOT:

Terra: I know several of you may have seen the Bike Portland article about the Eagle Creek Stairs. We put in a funding request for an alternatives analysis and a previous mockup of visuals were met with concerns. We’ve asked for \$400k in additional funding for more studies. USFS is hoping to staff up landscape architects. Sen. Merkley gave his thumbs up so we’re hoping that goes through and we can start working toward replacing the stairs.

NSFTLP grant was not selected for funding. I’ll be working to find out why. This is our fourth unsuccessful attempt. I do not know who got funding. There are two or three more IJA bill programs that have funding, but FHWA doesn’t have the staff to release notice of opportunity and grant process. This is for Option Y and Mitchell to Ruthton which will be at 50% design. We’re holding NSA and other permits because they are only good for three years. We need them to not expire before we have funding available.

Kristen: Amazing opportunity on Aug. 7. The Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation will be meeting in Hood River. Hood River ACT members host a tour of the tunnel prior to the ACT meeting. We want to make this the event not to be missed. We want to tempt the Portland area people. The Hood River reps would be able to present on transportation. We’d like them to sign a resolution of support to present to the Oregon Transportation Commission and ride the CAT bus to the tour. We may be able to get some OTC members out. Rian is working to get a presentation at the OTC meeting in November.

Kent: I have never seen a historic concrete mile marker from Larch to Troutdale at all. Did you say in 90s they were put in? They’re all gone. Not sure the timeline.

We have installed about 80% of the controlled access gates on the Historic Highway. They’re dapper brown with reflectors. We can use these in emergency situations to close the road.

We spent about a month removing routine debris. Removed 800-1,000 yards near Larch and Vista. We addressed removal of about 70 hazard trees in conjunction with state parks. It had been about five years since we assessed. There’s more work to be done but the traffic is so bad we won’t do more until fall.

Terra: Multnomah Falls timed use permits are in full swing. Shuttle providers are a big help. We’re starting to see some problems all along the Historic Highway at other locations.

Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway

Jeanette:

Julia Rizzo was out and invited us to participate. One of the things that struck me between Eagle Creek and Viento is that so much has changed and that’s a good thing.

Gorge Ride attendees growing. Antique car has 30 passenger spaces!

Work parties are coming up. Need volunteers.

OPRD

David: Multnomah County Sheriff’s Officer starts Monday working with us along the Historic Highway.

Vista House - we will have the wall repaired hopefully at the end of the month and working with Kent to remove barriers in July. This will help improve circulation.

Hoping to do some small paving projects in the fall in some areas that need repair. We continue to have user conflicts on the State Trail especially from Hood River to Mosier. Bikers and hikers are upset at each other.

Rowena Crest usage is amazing. Something we are going to have to continue working on to manage the use during that short time frame during wildflower season. The Memaloose overlook has really taken off on usage as well.

Thanks to Jeanette for west end clearing and work.

Ross Kihs has moved back to Bend within OPRD and his position is open.

USFS

Casey: After close to two years with low staff, we’re starting to turn the corner. We’re bringing on two landscape architects next month. We will have four months of training with a 20-year employee from another scenic area.

Committee Roundtable

Tricia: None!

Judy: Echo traffic on U.S. 30 at Mosier and Rowena. During wildflower season it’s unbelievable how many cars there were in Mosier. Anywhere they could park within 0.5 mile of Memaloose. Tom McCall volunteered Mother’s Day weekend and 100+ cars at all times. Some of the issues we have associated with the waterfall corridor at least for a month are also present in Mosier.

Marc: I’m really impressed with public transportation. Was able to take bus from Hood River to Gateway and take max and bus to appointment. Only cost \$2.50. I appreciate it. Mosier has really been effected by ebikes. People buy or rent them in Hood River and come through Twin Tunnels. I’ve seen people come up to Rowena or even up steep Husky Road. They have significantly increased.

Lisa: We want them to come a little further! I appreciate the crowding issues but we haven’t had them yet. Tourism season has started and our office is open weekdays. Ships are coming in on a regular schedule and hotels are filling up.

Art: Reinforce scheduling trip to Viento.

Wayne: I want to talk about Option Y. We have two major projects underway and there will be a gap of about ¾ a mile between. It’s \$6.5M. We have a FLAP grant in 2026. We’ve got a contractor who is very good on the Viento project and mobilized on site. They also provided a bid on Option Y but we didn’t have enough funding. I know Rian has been trying to find funding and Terra has been working on it. The issue is that we are going to lose at least two years and have two finished projects that are disconnected. I think this is an opportunity for the advisory committee to try to find some bridge funding. If not, I’m sure there will be a real mess at the tunnel Exit 58 and then people will figure out about the undercrossing from Hood River. The neighbors are concerned. I don’t know if the advisory committee is willing to try to find bridge funding. Senators, governor, OTC.

Terra: \$7.9M accounting for inflation.

Arthur: do we have any ideas on the outlook on the congressionally directed funding?

Terra: I believe it was recommended by staff but no idea on the outlook. IJA opportunities haven’t been opened.

Wayne: short term funding is used all the time in the private sector. Organizations buy land and hold them until the government can take them over. Can we find an organization?

Arthur: I don’t know what you’re asking for that hasn’t been done.

Wayne: We have the ability to advise ODOT and go directly to offices.

Arthur: We know they have been approached and responded and recommended. They’re approaching the point in their session where money would be allocated and we have to wait.

Wayne: Are there end of biennium funds available that haven’t been expended?

Arthur: facing similar issue on Hood River Bridge when we can’t shake loose the funds to move forward on design. IJA has flooded opportunities. There are projects all over the country that are demanding the funds. Delays increase cost. Contractors are busy. Hood River Bridge lost out to tunnel in New Jersey handling NE rail traffic. All projects have risen to the surface to compete. I think our best chance is the congressionally directed funding and I think we’re going to have to wait.

Art: can we leverage the cost savings?

Arthur: no, everyone has the same cost increases.

Terra: not sure we can borrow against the FLAP funding and what that added cost would be. When it’s grant funding... not sure.

Arthur: There’s a danger as they don’t have the money right now and could change their mind.

AJ: previously bridge work money was borrowed. We’re still paying interest on those bonds but the bridges haven’t fallen down.

Arthur: it’s hard for me to go to a congressional office and say fund this instead of bridges that are crumbling.

Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2023
Hybrid – Zoom and Cousin’s Country Inn (The Dalles)

Kent: two years seems like a long time, but I started The Dalles Bridge work started in 1998.

Arthur: I don’t want us to be running a fire drill and claiming crisis. I’d rather us work on the funding for Mitchell to Ruthton. We know this gap is funded.

Kent: I’m still waiting on trail projects to finish to find money to fix the Larch Mountain slide.

Ernie: Get Wayne on the program for the Aug. 7 event to appeal to movers and shakers.