
Western Federal Lands Highway Division

Project No. OR PFH 247(1)

Skyliners Road Improvement Project Public Open House Report



Prepared by:

Cogan Owens Cogan, LLC

Skyliners Road Improvement Project

Public Open House Report

Introduction

As part of project planning, Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFL), Deschutes National Forest, Deschutes County, and the City of Bend sponsored a Public Open House on June 14, 2011, from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at William E. Miller Elementary School in Bend, Oregon. The purpose of the open house was to explain the proposed project and to gather public input and concerns. Approximately 30 community members and other interested parties attended.

Notice and News Coverage

Community members and interested parties were notified of the open house through direct mail of a project Fact Sheet and also through a notice published in the *Bend Bulletin* on June 2 and June 6 and in *Cascade Business News* June 1, 2011. Approximately 360 interested parties were notified, including elected officials and key staff from jurisdictions and agencies in the vicinity, key highway users, residents within the highway corridor, and other parties with interests in the project.

Government-to-government notice to tribal governments in the vicinity was provided through Deschutes National Forest protocols.

A media release was distributed to seven local area media outlets in the region. Coverage of the event was provided by KTVZ News in a news story that ran on June 14 and 15 and was posted on the station's web site at <http://www.ktvz.com/news/28240945/detail.html>.

Format

The format utilized was an interactive public open house with a 30-minute open house portion at the beginning of the meeting, followed by a welcome statement and project overview presentation by Mike Odom, Project Manager with WFL. George Kolb, Deschutes County Road Department, described the project purpose and need from the County's perspective and the County's standards for road and shoulder widths for rural roads such as Skyliners.

Participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. The public open house concluded with another open house portion where participants could speak directly with project staff and with City of Bend staff on the Surface Water Improvement Project and Deschutes National Forest staff for the Phil's Trailhead project. Oral and written comments were actively encouraged throughout the open house.

Project graphic depictions (storyboards) characterized the need for action, proposed improvements, issues that have been raised, and schedule for construction. These were displayed on easels to lead participants through the project information in the following order:

- Project Location
- Purpose and Need
- Proposed Measures

- Proposed Typical Section
- Preliminary Schedule
- Issues

Materials distributed to participants included an agenda, comment form, and Fact Sheet. All material will be posted to the project website.

Summary of Presentations and Questions/Comments

Presentations

Mike Odom, WFL Project Manager, provided a description of the proposed project. A copy of his PowerPoint presentation is posted to the project web site. George Kolb, Deschutes County Road Department, discussed County road standards and anticipated approaches to construction delays.

Comments and Questions (Questions / comments are in italics followed by staff responses in regular text; similar questions and comments have been consolidated.)

Heading from Bend west on Skyliners, at the S curve there are safety problems caused by the change in grade, with a buildup of snow and ice in the winter, and line-of-sight issues. Fixing the grade of the road and daylighting by thinning trees would improve safety. Also, drainage issues need to be addressed. Need appropriate banking and need to straighten out the dip. These issues will be addressed in the design of road improvements.

What is the schedule for construction?

Clearing may begin as early as Fall 2012; excavation will begin as soon as snow clears in 2013.

We support the proposed thinning of roadside vegetation for purposes of safety, reducing fire danger in the summer, and facilitating snowplowing in the residential area in the winter.

How will bike lanes be maintained?

Periodic maintenance will be included in the County Road Department's regular schedule of maintenance. Call the Department when special needs arise, such as biking events or excessive debris is present.

How will traffic speeds through the residential area be controlled? Can rumble strips or speed bumps be added within the residential subdivision area to slow down traffic? Roundabout, island? Can the speed limit be stepped down from 55 mph to 25 mph on the downhill portion? Maybe 55 mph to 45 mph to 25 mph?

Rumble strips are generally undesirable as they hold water and make noise. Speed bumps will not be installed. The County will investigate with ODOT the possibility of another speed study for the area.

How does the schedule for water line construction match up with the road improvement project?

WFL is meeting with City, County, and Forest Service staff to coordinate the various projects. WFL will not be reconstructing the roadway twice.

The uphill shoulder needs to be widened to 8' to accommodate bicyclists. Is 8' uphill and 4' downhill an option?

WFL cannot consider 8' shoulders in the absence of data showing how the additional width improves safety to the extent that it warrants the additional expenditure of tax dollars.

The staging areas and utility parking should be co-located.

This will be considered during the design phase.

Roller skier use will increase dramatically with increased shoulder widths; are they regulated within the bike lane?

They are permitted except when they impede traffic.

How will parking at River Road be accommodated? There is a need to separate the car parking from the bike lane. Impacts on snow removal operations need to be considered.

Parallel parking restricted to residents' use will be considered in lieu of angled parking.

Will a bike lane be provided through the residential area?

Yes, it will be provided for the entire length of the improvement project, though its width may be reduced in the residential area to encourage reduced speeds by motorists.

Need a formal road closure/event management plan with a set of procedures agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Written Comments

Comment Forms

Forms were available for participants to record additional comments; 10 comment forms were submitted. Responses are reflected below.

1) *Have informational materials adequately explained why this project is needed at this time?*

Yes: 9 No: 0 Uncertain: 1

If not, please explain:

- This is the first info I have been given and I am a resident of Skyliners.

2) *What concerns do you have regarding the proposed improvements? What are your suggestions to address those concerns?*

- Only pave the road and bike lanes one time. Put the water line in at the same time.
- Fully appreciate the effort to make this happen. Thanks for wider road and bike lanes. I believe we need to cut back trees that cast shadows at both commute times making cyclists invisible. Please cut trees back from road.

- If bikers insist on using this road then the safety of drivers and riders has to be addressed. I have always felt as a driver that I was in jeopardy.
- My concern is that the project will not be done well enough to last. Do it right make the bike lanes 8 feet. More and more people will be using this road. Do it right now.
- Too many agenda's here tonight. Just do the right thing and keep all users safe.
- Consider all users – residents, recreational users, cyclists, rollerskiers. Skyliners is a popular route for rollerskiers and will become more so when repaved. A wider 8 foot uphill bike lane would improve safety for rollerskiers.
- Multi-use bike lane – should be 8 – 10 feet. Once road is redone / repaved more rollerskiers and cyclists will use it. Graded slow down sign for the community and consider an island just before the community.
- Keep it narrow through the neighborhood to keep traffic at 25 mph.
- Please stay in compliance with the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan of 1995. Please no less than 6 foot bike lanes.
- Noise and dust through the subdivision – monitor contractors periodically during construction.

3) *What techniques would work best to keep you or your organization informed and involved as this project proceeds?*

- Mail.
- Email (4)
- Website updates.
- Please keep us informed via the media as much as possible.

4) *Is there anything else you'd like to add about the proposed road improvement project?*

- Thank you (2)
- Is it possible to keep bikers off the road and let them use the so many roads already "bike ready" and safe for vehicles and bikers?
- More and more people are coming to Bend. Those that come after you will be thankful that you did the right thing and considered the extra activity 10 – 20 years later.
- You all are doing a great job.
- I think a widened area before the subdivision with an "island" is a good suggestion that should be explored. Urban vs. rural should not be a consideration. Cut all small diameter trees along the road edge.

Other Written Comments Received

In addition to the comment card responses above, two letters were received by WFL staff.

- Carolyn Daubeny

I am writing in support of an 8 ft uphill northbound bike lane and a 6 ft southbound downhill lane. Please help keep cyclists and roller skiers safe, help promote a healthy lifestyle and help keep national caliber bike racing in Bend. This road is used by a wide variety of people, from pro elite cyclists and national team cross country skiers [for roller skiing] to weekend warriors and families - room to pass safely in a bike lane is a necessity. Skyliners Road needs resurfacing and does need bike lanes. The new pipeline is a perfect opportunity to create these bike lanes. Skyliners is not a highway, rather it is a scenic byway with a small community near the end, that provides access a major recreational area from Phil's Trail head to Tumalo Falls. The road does not need to have a clearings cut on either side of it - Skyliners is a road through a national

forest. Just separate the cars from the bikes and the roller skiers. Small Parking areas can be built in conjunction to the release valves of the new pipeline. There is nowhere where the trees impair vision. Please think of how California Hwy 1 is goes through the Redwood forests. The road is built around the trees. Please do not let the large Ponderosas be cut. The current logging operation has created a huge mess and the contractor's failure to clean up their mess has left huge a fire hazard. Please do not add to this mess -I have heard that there is a plan for 60 to 100 foot clearings on either side of the road- please do not let this happen.

- Cheryl Howard, Deschutes County Bike Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Chair
On behalf of the Deschutes County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), I respectfully submit this letter to provide comments reflecting our position regarding the proposed Skyliners Road reconstruction. Our mission is to promote and encourage safe bicycling and walking as a significant means of transportation in Deschutes County. BPAC members are appointed by the Deschutes County Board of County Commissioners, and we serve to advise Deschutes County, the Cities of Bend, Redmond and Sisters, and ODOT in bicycle and pedestrian transportation, and matters pertaining to existing and proposed road construction and signing. The Committee is recognized as a source of current information relating to the use of bicycle and walking as a means of transportation, and strives to support them as a viable means of transportation in Deschutes County. We wish to acknowledge the hard work of your team, and applaud the responsive design resulting from your diligent research efforts and public input opportunities. We fully endorse the current proposed design, which includes 11-foot motor vehicle travel lanes and the provision of 6-foot designated bike lanes adjacent to the motor vehicle travel lanes in each travel direction. I would like to emphasize that it is our position that the bike lanes should be officially designated as such, as appears to be the current plan. This designation will provide for more uniform enforcement of traffic laws, consistent expectations for all road users, clear objectives for maintenance and striping and, we hope, a much safer shared-use travel experience for generations to come. Thank you, again, for your efforts, and thank you also for this opportunity to submit comments on behalf of the Deschutes County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. We look forward to project completion in 2014, and please let us know how we might be of assistance to you in the interim.

List of Participants

- Mike Odom, Project Manager; Jennifer Corwin, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative; David Kennedy; Victoria Brinkly, Charles Dissen, Kevin Parker, Curtis Jorgenson, Ted Wood -- WFL
- Carol Snead, HDR; Jim Owens, Cogan Owens Cogan -- Contractors
- John Short, Tad Hodgert, Carolyn Daubeny, Peter Aune, Jim Terhaar, Jony Abrams, Gerry Abrams, Dick Ridenour, Doug Treadwell, Gregg Terhaar, Harriet Clark, Kerie Raymond, Ron Taylor – Residents
- Andy Su, Ambrose Su, Melinda Clark, Mark Clark, Gary Fowles – Cyclists
- Tim Edwards – Deschutes County Sheriff's Office
- Michael Martin – Bicycle Resource of Bend
- Nan Loveland – Old Farm District Neighborhood Association
- Tyler Deke – Bend MPO
- Bruce Ronning – Bend Park & Recreation District

- Garry Zimmerman – Bend Velo
- Jim Gattey
- Bob Crain
- Rachel Mavis
- John Hannon
- Jeff Schuler
- Charlie Sottosanti
- Tim Gibbons
- Lucas Freeman

Attachments

- Fact Sheet
- Media Release
- Public Open House Agenda
- Public Open House Comment Form

Skyliners Road Improvement Project

FACT SHEET

May 2011



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration



Western Federal Lands Highway Division
Federal Highway Administration



Deschutes
National
Forest



Deschutes County



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, June 14, 2011
6:00 – 8:00 pm

William E. Miller Elementary School (Gym)
300 NW Crosby Drive; Bend, OR 97701

- To explain the proposed project
- To obtain input on the project's design

What is the Skyliners Road Improvement Project?

Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFL) of the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with Deschutes County and the Deschutes National Forest, is proposing to reconstruct Skyliners Road to address the deteriorating roadway surface and the existing mix of bicycle and motorist use. The Skyliners Road Improvement Project (Project) starts at the western city limits of Bend and extends westerly for approximately 8.4 miles to the junction with Forest Service Road 4603. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2013.

Why are improvements needed?

The Project is needed to increase safety for roadway users and to reduce maintenance costs. The road pavement is deteriorating and requires frequent maintenance. In some areas, the pavement edge is breaking up, resulting in increased maintenance costs and leaving no paved shoulder for bicycles and pedestrians. Trees close to the roadway create shady areas that can limit visibility and result in icy conditions during the winter months. These conditions have led to increasing concerns about the potential for bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist accidents.

What improvements are proposed?

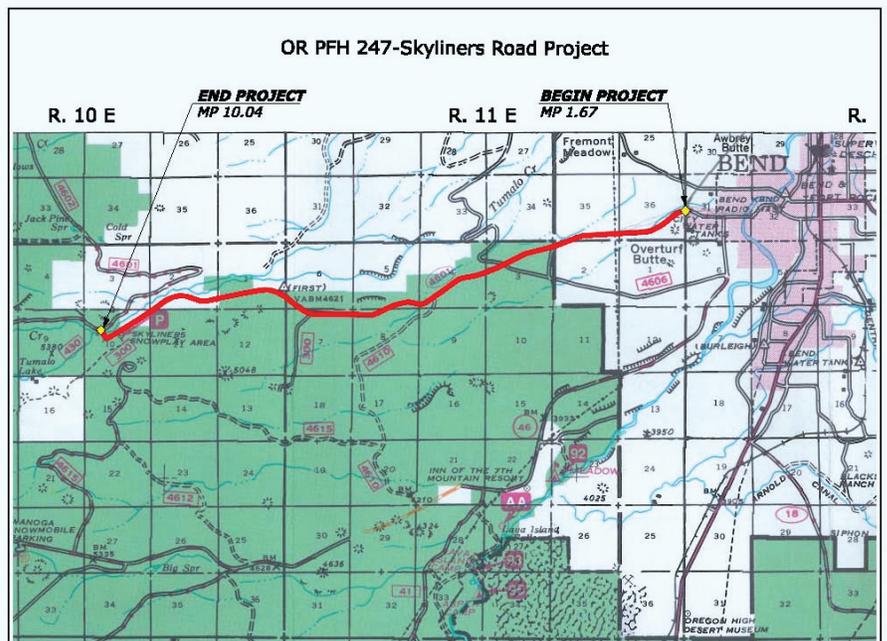
To increase safety for all types of traffic using the road and to reduce maintenance requirements, WFL proposes to:

- Construct a durable pavement surface requiring minimal maintenance for up to 20 years;
- Reconstruct and widen the roadway to provide wider shoulders that can better accommodate bicycles;
- Make minor adjustments in the road alignment; and
- Thin existing roadside vegetation to create a 12-20 foot clear zone between the roadway and adjacent forest cover on publicly-owned land.

How are these improvements being coordinated with other projects in the area?

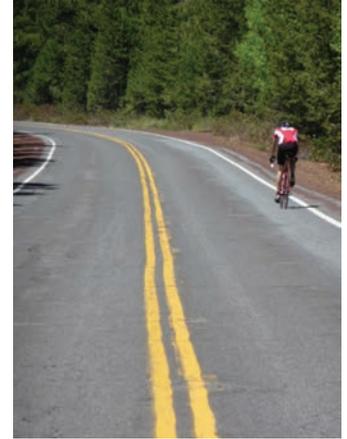
The Skyliners Road Improvement Project is being coordinated with the City of Bend's Surface Water Improvement Project and with improvements proposed by the Deschutes National Forest to Phil's Trailhead.

The City of Bend owns and operates an existing surface water supply system that includes a treatment facility at the City's Outback reservoir site and two raw water pipelines that run from the Bridge Creek intake facility to the Outback



FACT SHEET (continued)

site. These pipelines are generally parallel to Forest Road 4603 and Skyliners Road and are located mostly on Forest Service land. The City plans to build a new treatment plant, replace the existing pipelines with a new single pipeline, and possibly construct a new hydroelectric generation facility at the Outback site with associated improvements at the intake facility. The City's preferred new route for the new pipeline involves using the the Skyliners Road prism. Work on the pipeline will be coordinated with the Project to ensure construction avoids damage to the newly reconstructed road.



WFL is also coordinating with the Deschutes National Forest on proposed improvements to Phil's Trailhead which is accessed by Skyliners Road. Deschutes National Forest is proposing to re-design the Phil's Trailhead to provide a high-quality recreation site to primarily serve existing trail users in the area.

When will construction occur?

Skyliners Road reconstruction and widening is currently scheduled to begin in Spring 2013, with completion potentially extending to Winter 2014. Due to weather constraints, it is unlikely that all improvements can be completed within one construction season.

What types of traffic control will be needed?

At this preliminary stage, the level of traffic control needed is not clear. While daytime road closures will be avoided, regularly scheduled delays (e.g., 30 minutes) are likely. Nighttime construction may be an option, depending on the ability to minimize effects to landowners and wildlife. Additional public outreach will occur as the designs for both the pipeline and roadway projects progress and traffic control needs become more evident.

What is occurring between now and the start of construction in 2013?

WFL is currently developing the preliminary design for proposed improvements, as well as the environmental documentation required to obtain permits for the Project. Environmental clearances are expected by Spring 2012, with final design by Fall 2012.

What public outreach opportunities are being provided?

In addition to a Public Open House on June 14, regular project updates will be available through a Project web site. Additional public outreach and input opportunities will be provided before the completion of the design in the Fall of 2012. Public outreach will continue in the form of public notices, newsletters, and web site information during project construction.



How do I obtain additional information?

For more information about this Project, please refer to the Project website at www.wfl.fhwa.dot.gov/projects/or/skyliners/, or contact Mike Odom, Project Manager, at 360-619-7568 or Mike.odom@dot.gov.

If you have written comments, please submit them to: Jennifer Corwin, Environmental Protection Specialist, Western Federal Lands Highway Division, 610 East 5th Street, Vancouver, WA 98661.



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 2011



Western Federal Lands Highway Division
Federal Highway Administration

Further Information – Mike Odom, at 360-619-7568, Mike.odom@dot.gov

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULED FOR SKYLINERS ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands Highway Division (WFL), has scheduled a public open house to present information about the proposed reconstruction of Skyliners Road in Deschutes County, OR and to answer questions and gather public input about the project. The open house is scheduled for June 14, 2011; 6:00 – 8:00 pm at William E. Miller Elementary School (300 NW Crosby Drive; Bend, OR 97701).

In partnership with Deschutes County and Deschutes National Forest, WFL proposes to reconstruct the road to provide a durable surface and to widen the paved surface to better accommodate the mix of uses on the road. The proposed alignment will follow the existing alignment and minor alignment adjustments will be made to minimize impacts. The road pavement is deteriorating and requires frequent maintenance. In some areas, the pavement edge is breaking up, resulting in increased maintenance costs and leaving no paved shoulder for bicycles and pedestrians. Trees close to the roadway create shady areas that can limit visibility and result in icy conditions during the winter months. These conditions have led to increasing concerns about the potential for bicyclist, pedestrian, and motorist accidents.

The Skyliners Road Improvement Project design, permitting and construction activities are being coordinated with the City of Bend's Surface Water Improvement Project and the Deschutes National Forest's proposed improvements to Phil's Trailhead, given the close proximity of these two projects to Skyliners Road. The City of Bend is proposing to place a large portion of its new waterline in the shoulder of Skyliners Road. Phil's Trail trailhead is accessed by Skyliners Road.

Proposed road improvements will start at the western city limits of Bend and extend westerly for approximately 8.4 miles to the junction with Forest Service Road 4603. Construction is currently scheduled to begin in Spring 2013, with completion potentially extending to Winter 2014. The types of traffic control needed will depend on what is required for both the road and pipeline project. At this preliminary stage, the level of traffic control has not been determined. While daytime road closures will be avoided, regularly scheduled delays (e.g. 30 minutes) are likely. Nighttime construction may be an option, depending on the ability to minimize effects to landowners and wildlife. Additional public outreach will occur as the designs for both projects progress and traffic control needs become more evident.

WFL is seeking public input at this time to develop an understanding of the social, economic, and environmental issues and concerns residents and users of the road may have regarding the project. A brief presentation will be made at the open house at approximately 6:30, to be followed by a question and answer session.

For more information about this project, please refer to the project website at www.wfl.fhwa.dot/projects/or___ or contact Mike Odom, Project Manager, at 360-619-7568 or Mike.odom@dot.gov.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**



Western Federal Lands Highway Division
Federal Highway Administration



**Deschutes
National
Forest**



Deschutes County



**Skyliners Road Improvement Project
Public Open House
June 14, 2011
6:00 – 8:00 pm
William E. Miller Elementary School; Bend**

Agenda

6:00 – 6:30	Open House	
6:30	Welcome and Introductions Project Description	George Kolb, Deschutes County Mike Odom, WFL
6:45	Questions/Answers	Jim Owens, Facilitator
7:15 – 8:00	Open House	
8:00	Adjourn	

Skyliners Road Improvement Project
Public Open House
June 14, 2011
6:00 – 8:00 pm
William E. Miller Elementary School; Bend

Comment Form

The purpose of the Skyliners Road Improvement Project is to increase safety for roadway users and to reduce maintenance costs. Public input is being sought at this time in order to prepare the environmental documentation required to obtain permits and to finalize the project design.

- 1) Have informational materials adequately explained why this project is needed at this time?
___ Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain

If not, please explain: _____

- 2) What concerns do you have regarding the proposed improvements? What are your suggestions to address those concerns?

- 3) What techniques would work best to keep you or your organization informed and involved as this project proceeds?

- 4) Is there anything else you'd like to add about the proposed road improvement project?

Please return this comment card today or by **July 5, 2011** to:
Mike Odom, Project Manager
Federal Highway Administration, Western Federal Lands Highway Division
610 East Fifth Street; Vancouver, Washington 98661-3801
Ph 360-619-7568. e-mail Mike.odom@dot.gov

THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

