



**Mt. Hood Multimodal  
Transportation Plan**

# Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

**2014-2029  
15-Year Rolling Plan**

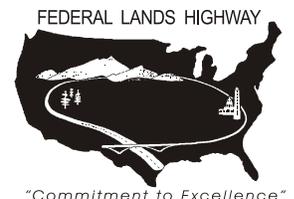


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*The Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan is a multimodal, multi-jurisdictional transportation plan created to improve safety for all highway users and expand travel options along the Mt. Hood Highway corridor.*



## Iconic Mt. Hood

Mt. Hood is a special place—a major destination, an economic driver, and a home to many Oregonians. The Mt. Hood Highway (including US 26 and OR 35) is the primary route over the mountain between the Willamette Valley, Central Oregon and the Columbia River Gorge, and provides access to major recreational attractions for millions of visitors year round and to vibrant rural communities in Clackamas and Hood River Counties.

*Mt. Hood is a special place—a major destination, an economic driver, and a home to many Oregonians.*

Diverse travel destinations and purposes create challenges for the Mt. Hood Highway. Through-traffic combined with travel to recreation results in heavy congestion during peak times, particularly winter and summer weekends.

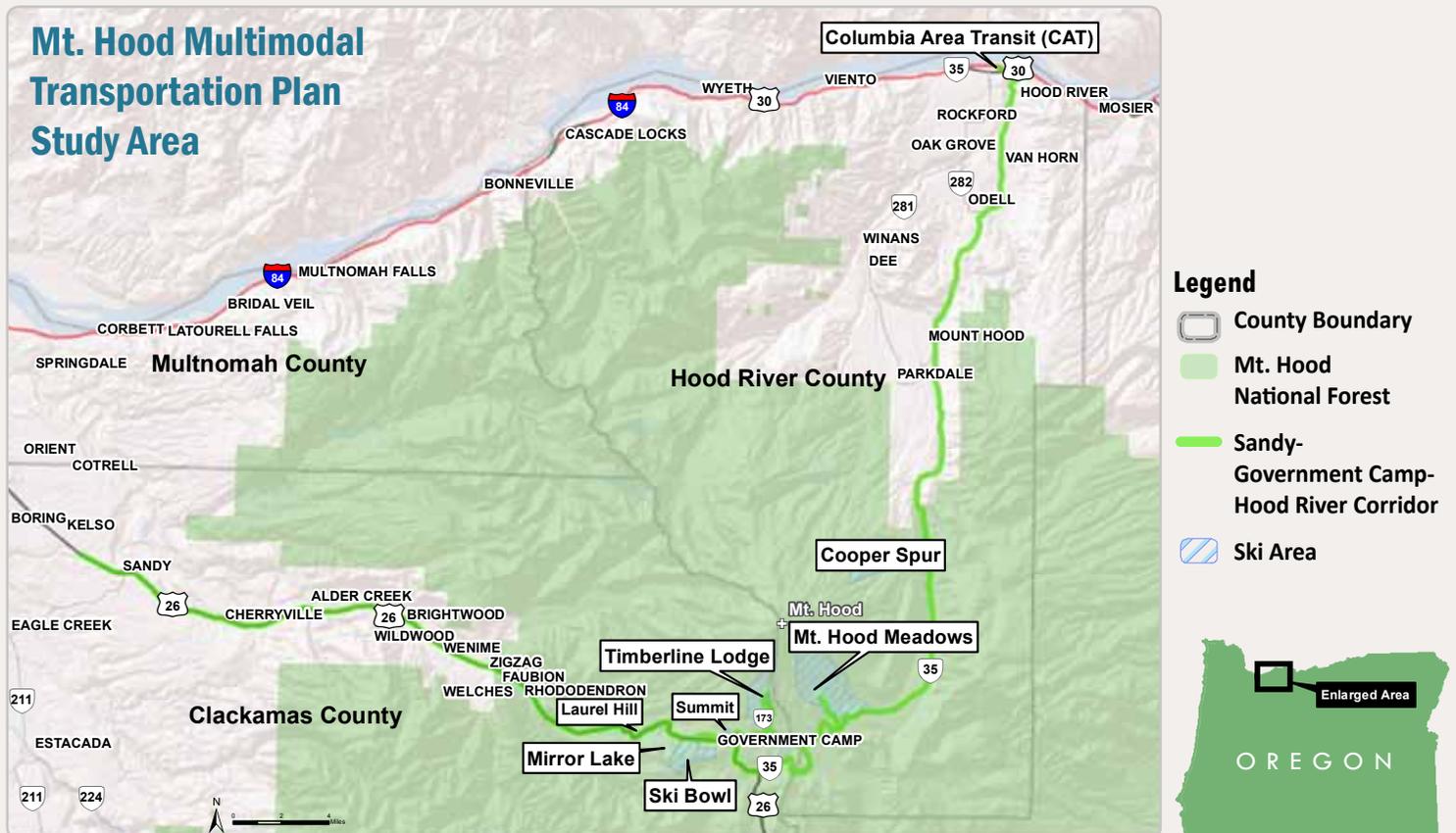
A relatively high volume of crashes has been recorded along the highway. Most of the crashes occur in winter during inclement weather.



## What Is the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan?

While Mt. Hood corridor problems have been studied for years, obtaining funding and moving improvements forward have been difficult. The Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan (MHMTP) took a different approach. It included a strong multi-jurisdictional partnership that focused on working collaboratively to move projects from planning to implementation.

The MHMTP is guided by the Project Charge developed by the Project Partners.



## Identifying the Right Projects

The MHMTP builds on previous planning efforts. Multiple plans, studies, and safety and transportation options were reviewed to identify the best solutions for the corridor. Planning started in December 2012 and was completed in January 2014.

The Project Partners screened and prioritized identified projects based on their ability to meet the

### Project Charge

Based on guidance outlined in the 2009 Omnibus Public Lands Bill and from the Oregon Transportation Commission, the Project Partners identified the goal of developing a transportation plan for the Mt. Hood Highway/US 26-OR 35 corridor to and through the northern portion of the Mt. Hood National Forest.

This planning effort will strive for affordable and achievable solutions by focusing on:

1. Improving highway safety for all users; and
2. Expanding travel options year round to enhance mobility and access recreation and rural communities.

Additional values include:

1. Projects must be financially feasible and sustainable, and
2. Projects must be implementable within 15 years.

goals of the MHMTP. Projects were reviewed to determine the ease of implementation for each, based on evaluation criteria such as the environmental complexity of the project, potential funding opportunities, and having a ready champion to bring the project to completion.

### *Transportation Options were defined as transit, bike and pedestrian improvements, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and education and enforcement.*

A universe of 300 potential project ideas was narrowed to 38 projects. This multimodal collection of projects represents safety improvements, bike and pedestrian improvements, transit options, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) options.

The projects (listed on pages 4-5) are prioritized into four groups:

1. **Implementation Plan projects** – subgroup of Group A projects that can be implemented in the first 0 to 6 years
2. **Group A projects** – highest priority for implementation
3. **Group B projects** – second highest priority for implementation
4. **Group C projects** – third highest priority for implementation

## Safety Issues and Congestion

The Mt. Hood corridor experiences safety issues and congestion based on many factors:

- Visitation is concentrated, with holiday and peak weekend travel that is up to three times higher than on other days.
- US 26 experiences approximately 150 days of congestion, primarily on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons in both winter and summer.
- Transit options are limited with no public transit between Hood River and the mountain. The new Mt. Hood Express service between Sandy and the ski resorts does not have long-term funding.
- Slow-moving recreational vehicles, trucks, and buses can cause congestion because of the lack of passing lanes.
- Lack of parking and very short turn lanes can contribute to congestion from vehicle back-ups.
- The Mt. Hood corridor has high crash rates and is designated a Safety Corridor.
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the corridor are limited, with few protected highway crossing areas.
- Development is likely to increase congestion in the area.
- Real-time traveler information on weather, safety incidents, and congestion is limited.

# Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan Projects

## Highest Priority Projects - Group A (Implementation Plan)

		Type	ID	Project Description	Time Frame
Implementation Plan Projects - Group A Action Plan (0-6 Years)	Pedestrian & Bicycle		PB-1	Mt. Hood Highway US 26 bike/ped intersection improvements in coordination with potential transit stop locations in Clackamas County.	0-5 years
			PB-3	Mirror Lake Project: Safety improvements including relocating trailhead and adding parking.	0-5 years
			PB-5	Mt. Hood Highway shoulder widening analysis for bicyclist use.	0-2 years
			PB-7	Bike/ped info and wayfinding along Mt. Hood Highway.	0-4 years
			PB-8	Bike intersection improvements at OR 35 and Historic Columbia River Highway (HCRH) (E. State St.) in Hood River.	0-2 years
		Public Transit	PubT-2	Bus: Mountain Express extension of service to the ski areas from Sandy.	0-4 years
	Safety & Road Improvements		Safe-1	OR 35 intersection improvement updates to signage at Central Vale Dr./Booth Hill Rd. (Milepost [MP] 93.5).	COMPLETED
			Safe-2	US 26 roadway departure safety improvements between MP 47.2 and 48.9 - rumble strips.	0-5 years
			Safe-3	US 26 roadway departure safety improvements between MP 44.9 and 46.6 - rumble strips.	0-2 years
			Safe-4	US 26 roadway departure safety improvements between MP 36.9-39.77 and 42.6-43.2 - rumble strips.	0-2 years
			Safe-5	OR 35 roadway departure safety improvements between MP 60 and 93.75 - rumble strips and curve warning signage.	0-2 years
			Safe-6	OR 35 intersection improvement at Dethman Ridge Dr. - striping and signing.	0-2 years
		Safe-17	OR 35/US 26 Timberline to Nottingham Roadway Safety Audit Implementation (MP 54.2–MP 70.2) - upgrading signs.	0-4 years	
	Intelligent Transportation Systems	ITS-2	Intelligent Transportation Systems along the US 26/OR 35 corridor.	0-3 years	

## High Priority Projects - Group A

		Type	ID	Project Description
High Priority Projects - Group A	Organizations, Programs & Legislation	Org-1	Transportation Management Association (TMA).	
	Intelligent Transportation Systems	ITS-1	Traveler webpage clearinghouse.	
	Public Transit	PubT-4	Expansion and development of park-and-rides.	
	Parking	Park-2	Sno-Park management/enforcement.	
		Park-3	Parking education related to parking areas and safety.	
	Pedestrian & Bicycle	PB-9	Bike intersection improvements at OR 35 and OR 282 intersection.	
	Safety & Road Improvements	Safe-10	Government Camp Loop Road (W.)/US 26 intersection safety, access, and operations improvements.	
		Safe-11	Government Camp Loop Road (E.)/US 26 intersection safety, access, and operations improvements.	

## Second Highest Priority Projects - Group B

Second Highest Priority Projects - Group B			
Type	ID	Project Description	
<b>Organizations, Programs &amp; Legislation</b>	<b>Org-2</b>	Explore legislation for Sno-Park permits to allow variation in fees.	
<b>Intelligent Transportation Systems</b>	<b>ITS-3</b>	Chain-up area education and management.	
	<b>ITS-4</b>	Increased cell phone coverage.	
<b>Public Transit</b>	<b>PubT-1</b>	Bus: Columbia Area Transit extension of service to the ski areas.	
	<b>PubT-3</b>	Mass Transit - Develop a transit portal staging concept supported by mass transit.	
<b>Private Transit</b>	<b>PriT-1</b>	Bus Intra-Forest - Improve intra-forest transit service on Mt. Hood with transit hub on mountain.	
<b>Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle</b>	<b>PB-4</b>	Government Camp - Add new pedestrian bridge or crossing over US 26 by Ski Bowl and Mirror Lake.	
	<b>PB-6</b>	Government Camp - Develop trailhead at Forest Service Compound (proposed or expanded parking).	
<b>Safety &amp; Road Improvements</b>	<b>Safe-9</b>	US 26: Timberline Highway (MP 54.3) - Improve intersection of Timberline Highway and US 26.	
	<b>Safe-12</b>	US 26: Ski Bowl West Access (MP 52.5) intersection safety improvements including reconfiguring intersection.	
	<b>Safe-13</b>	US 26: Ski Bowl East Access (MP 52.85) intersection safety improvements including reconfiguring intersection.	
	<b>Safe-14</b>	Firwood Road/US 26 intersection - monitoring and evaluation of recent safety improvements for need and implementation of further safety improvements.	
	<b>Safe-15</b>	US 26: MP 26.0–42.0 Roadway Safety Audit study (exact study boundaries to be determined).	
	<b>Safe-16</b>	OR 35: MP 93.0–102.0 Roadway Safety Audit study (exact study boundaries to be determined).	

## Third Highest Priority Projects - Group C

Third Highest Priority Projects - Group C			
Type	ID	Project Description	
<b>Public Transit</b>	<b>PubT-3b</b>	Government Camp Intermodal Hub for automobiles and alternative transportation connections.	
<b>Private Transit</b>	<b>PriT-2</b>	Aerial transportation link (ATL) project between Ski Bowl, Government Camp, and Timberline.	

For additional information on the MHMTP projects, see Appendix A: Implementation Plan on the attached CD or project website, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/pages/MHMTP.aspx>



# Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan

## Public Outreach

Public input was critical to informing the MHMTP outcomes.

The MHMTP’s broad geographical project area and diverse stakeholder interests required a wide net to gather input. Mountain resorts, businesses, property owners, residents, recreation seekers, transit providers and riders, pedestrian and cycling advocates, multiple jurisdictions, tribes, freight movers, and other entities have a keen interest in what happens on the mountain. The public involvement effort for the project was designed to discover needs, common interests, and values held by different stakeholders in order to help determine which projects would be included in the plan.

Interviews were held with key stakeholders, including the partner agencies and staff, mountain resorts, business operators, and interest groups. These interviews were used to determine stakeholders’ wants, needs, and core values that were used to guide project selection.

Two surveys were developed to gather public opinion. The first survey gathered information on travel patterns and support levels for safety and travel option projects. The feedback from this survey was used to help screen potential projects.

A second survey asked respondents to indicate their level of support for the 38 projects, including identifying their likelihood of using the projects (transit, bike/ped, parking, etc.) and which projects should be

implemented first. This information, combined with input from stakeholder groups and the Project Partners, helped select projects for the Implementation Plan.

## Prioritizing Action

The MHMTP is focused on getting projects accomplished. Thirty-eight projects have been included in the MHMTP, with 14 of these projects included in the Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan projects, a subset of the highest priority projects, are those that can be implemented in the first 6 years of the plan.

Implementation Plan projects have an action plan identifying the critical tasks, time frame, and responsible party needed for getting the project built.

*The MHMTP is not a typical long-range plan. Rather, it is a 15-year “rolling plan”—a living document that prioritizes action and is focused on getting projects accomplished.*

The MHMTP is not a typical long-range plan. Rather, it is a 15-year “rolling plan.” This means that the Project Partners have committed to engage in regular check-ins to reprioritize or add projects as funding, regulatory, and other circumstances change over time. This “rolling plan” aspect of the MHMTP will allow Project Partners to leverage financial and political resources as they become available.

## Rolling Plan Timeline





## Partnerships and Progress

Based on guidance from the federal 2009 Omnibus Public Lands Bill and from the Oregon Transportation Commission, a partnership between ODOT, the U.S. Forest Service-Mt. Hood National Forest, Clackamas County, and Hood River County worked in cooperation with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-Western Federal Lands Highway Division to produce the Mt. Hood Multimodal Transportation Plan.

The MHMTP's development relied on three committees:

*Decision Makers-* The **Project Leadership Group** (PLG) members were:

- **Jason Tell**, ODOT Region 1 Manager
- **Lisa Northrop**, U.S. Forest Service - Mt. Hood National Forest Supervisor
- **Karen Joplin**, Hood River County Commissioner
- **Jim Bernard**, Clackamas County Commissioner

The PLG, decision-makers from the partner agencies, considered

technical, stakeholder, and public input to select and prioritize the projects included in the plan.

*Managers-* A **Project Management Team** (PMT) composed of partner agencies and the consultant team managed the day-to-day activities and made recommendations on priorities to the Project Leadership Group.

*Advisors-* A **Technical Working Group** (TWG) included agency technical experts and stakeholders with local knowledge. This team used its expertise to evaluate the technical feasibility of potential projects, and shared information on local concerns and preferences.

## Early Partner Successes

Private and public partnerships created during the MHMTP process have already led to significant project implementation successes:

- Improving Clackamas County's Mt. Hood Express transit service by extending operations from Sandy-Rhododendron to Sandy-Government Camp. This expansion came via two federal grants worth nearly \$1 million. The service is also partly privately funded.



- Partner support for a \$27 million ODOT safety project on US 26 between Rhododendron and Mirror Lake/Government Camp. Scheduled for a 2014 construction start.
- Partner support for a \$4.9 million ODOT Intelligent Transportation Systems project between Hood River-Government Camp-Sandy on US 26/OR 35. Scheduled for a 2015 construction start.
- Supporting a successful \$2.3 million Federal Lands Access Program grant to fund safety improvements at the Mirror Lake Trailhead. This project is being led by Western Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA).

## Project Leadership Group



**Jason Tell**  
ODOT Region 1  
Manager



**Lisa Northrop**  
U.S. Forest Service - Mt. Hood  
National Forest Supervisor



**Karen Joplin**  
Hood River County  
Commissioner



**Jim Bernard**  
Clackamas County  
Commissioner