



Congestion and Transportation Safety Improvement Plan

Fact Sheet – April 2018

Visitors to the Historic Highway

In the past 10 years, traffic along the Historic Highway grew nearly 50 percent. Much of that growth occurred after 2013.

In past years, more than 1,000 pedestrians crossed the Historic Highway every hour on weekends to access Multnomah Falls. This plan aims to address the congestion challenges that come with our interest and appreciation for enjoying the Historic Highway and the destinations in the Gorge.

More people are visiting the Columbia River Gorge each year

For over 100 years, thousands of drivers, cyclists and hikers have used the Historic Columbia River Highway to access some of the Gorge’s most beautiful and popular destinations.

As the population grows, more people seek out the beauty of the Columbia River Gorge.

We need to address traffic congestion

Traffic congestion on the Historic Highway has worsened in recent years, increasing safety concerns and affecting the experience of visitors and residents. The Oregon Department of Transportation is working with its partners to prepare the Congestion and Transportation Safety Improvement Plan.

The plan aims to improve the experience for all people living, accessing and visiting the area by:

- **Enhancing safety** for all users including people who drive, walk, cycle and take public transportation
- **Reducing excessive delays** due to traffic congestion and vehicles parked on the shoulder of the roadway
- **Minimizing conflicts** between cars, cyclists and pedestrians
- **Identifying sustainable funding** to implement strategies
- **Providing improved access** for recreational and scenic enjoyment of natural and cultural resources
- **Decreasing negative effects** of traffic congestion and vehicles parked on the shoulder of the roadway on scenic, natural, cultural and recreational resources

Our focus is the waterfall corridor

The study area for the Improvement Plan includes the drivable portion of the Historic Highway and connecting Multnomah County roads between the Portland Women’s Forum State Scenic Viewpoint and Ainsworth State Park. The study area also includes parking facilities for trailheads and viewpoints, including the Multnomah Falls parking lot on Interstate 84.



2017 Fires

The Eagle Creek Fire started on Sept. 2, 2017 and closed the Historic Highway, I 84 and popular destinations along the waterfall corridor.

Part of the Historic Highway remains closed following the Eagle Creek Fire. Tree felling, and hazard removal work continues throughout the area, and many popular destinations and trails along the waterfall corridor remain closed. Once the area is safe to enjoy again, we expect these visitor numbers to return.

This plan will consider the effects of the fire when developing strategies to address traffic congestion and safety in the future.

Project partners and stakeholders

This effort continues the essential collaboration of public agencies with transportation and land use authority in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area:

- Oregon Department of Transportation
- Oregon State Parks and Recreation
- U.S. Forest Service
- Multnomah County
- Federal Highways Administration

ODOT will involve various stakeholders in development of the improvement plan, including federally recognized Tribes, residents, visitors, the Columbia River Gorge Commission, elected officials, emergency responders, cyclists, local businesses, hikers and other recreationalists and advocacy organizations.

Join the conversation

The project team is committed to hearing from people who love the Gorge to identify ideas and concerns. The strategies ODOT develops will reflect input received. To find out how you can have your say, go to the project website: <http://tiny.cc/HCRH-plan>

- **Subscribe to email updates:** Learn about upcoming opportunities to participate and new information. Sign up for email updates on the project website.
- **Participate in a Community event:** Subscribe to the email updates to receive information about future events, where you can talk to the project team, see information displays and provide comments at key stages in the project.
- **Attend a Project Leadership Team Meeting:** dates and times of the Project Leadership Team meetings are available on the project website, and public comment opportunities are available.
- **Contact us:** You can also provide your comments on the project website at key stages in the project.

Project schedule:



Additional Information

For more information please contact the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Coordinator, Terra Lingley on 503 731 8232 or email terra.m.lingley@odot.state.or.us

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