



## MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION

### Roads and Bridges Update Minutes

Tuesday, January 15, 2026, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
Commissioners' Boardroom  
Courthouse Square, 555 Court St. NE, Suite 5231  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Attendance:

**Commissioner's:** Colm Willis, and Kevin Cameron.

**Board's Office:** Trevor Lane, Heather Inyama, Toni Whitler, Matt Lawyer and Alvin Klausen.

**Legal Counsel:** Steve Elzinga, and Andrew Mittendorf.

**Public Works:** Dennis Mansfield, Ryan Crowther, Carl Lund, Lani Radtke, Scott Wilson, and Brian Nicholas.

**Gervais City Council:** Rick Honbaum.

Commissioner Kevin Cameron called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

-Commissioner Colm Willis

### 2. Draft Rural Transportation System Plan (RTSP)

-Carl Lund

- 20-year plan encompassing projects, policies, and standards for Marion County:
  - Incorporating land use, public input, and funding constraints.
- Draft plan, nearly 800 pages, has been in development for over a year and a half:
  - Consultant recommended language changes to land use created concern:
    - Allow appeals to Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) for small items like stop signs.
    - Potentially diminishing local authority.
- Adoption deadline:
  - Funding for consultant expiring in June.
  - County has some schedule leeway.
  - Expect to finalize code and policy placement:
    - Sort which rules should reside in county standards, code, or RTSP.
    - Over the next two weeks.
- Revising document for clarity:
  - Goals and objectives section.
- Feedback:
  - "Balancing pedestrian/bicycle needs" should not overshadow freight or other transportation modes.
  - Term "equity" should be reworded to avoid ambiguity.
- City and community engagement is integral.
- Gervais city manager stated increased heavy truck and employee traffic:
  - Due to Amazon's expansion.

- Impacting residential and school areas.
- Solutions:
  - Pursuing sidewalk and one-way street couplets to handle truck turns.
  - Use railroad Right-of-Way (ROW) for alternate routes.
  - Seek county partnership and planning support.
- Key RTSP features:
  - Maintain long lists of projects so county is grant-ready.
  - Divide into “financially constrained” and “aspirational” groups.
  - Constrained projects are those to be fundable within plan’s timespan.
- Reflect current-dollar cost estimates in plan:
  - Clearly state inflation/resource risks for projects delayed many years.
- Major policy, project, and program elements reviewed:
  - Safe Routes to School plans.
  - Coordination with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT).
  - Collaborative solutions for multi-jurisdictional issues.

### 3. Private Oils

- a. Juniper Street:
  - Low-volume residential road between two paved sections.
  - Originally paved by residents/company “private oil” agreement.
  - Currently suffering from surface cracking and pavement alligatoring.
  - Some repairs are being done now, with base failures being patched.
  - Options:
    - Patch potholes and surface.
    - Waiting until nearby roads scheduled for overlays:
      - Before chip seal or limited overlay.
    - Or change to gravel if it is nonviable to maintain as pavement.
    - Residents told that work could be several years out:
      - Depending on when nearby roads are addressed.
- b. Stratford Drive:
  - About 800 feet of damaged pavement.
  - Originally upgraded by adjacent property owners for dust abatement.
  - Cost to rehabilitate and connect to 82nd was estimated at ~\$114,000.
  - Proposed approach:
    - Provide spot repairs when doing work on nearby paved roads.
    - Avoid costly one-off projects.
  - Project scope limited to necessary repairs and connections for efficiency:
    - Preference for cost effectiveness.
  - Residents desire improved rideability:
    - Minimal county investment warranted by low-traffic roads.
- c. Hunsaker Road:
  - Central segment with substantial base failure:
    - Focus of current repairs.
    - Serves about 50 vehicles daily.
    - Mostly used for farm/dairy access.
  - County options:
    - Patch/overlay only the worst segments.
    - Extend overlay to paved connections for ease of future maintenance.
    - Repair if too costly/complex.
    - Revert all or part of the segment to gravel.

- Proposal is to do significant work when nearby projects justify mobilization:
  - Chip seal as a cost-saving measure.
  - Provide residents with realistic schedules and expectations.
- d. Approach for Future:
  - Countywide, only 35 private segments exist:
    - Most lack written maintenance agreements.
    - Creating ambiguity on responsibility.
  - Proposal:
    - Treat as county-maintained low-volume roads.
    - Apply minimal but effective maintenance solutions.
    - Avoid special treatment unless co-located with larger projects.
  - Written communication to be created for residents of each road:
    - Explain schedule uncertainty:
      - Work may be three to five years away.
    - Set expectations on scope:
      - No full road rebuilds unless justified.
  - Segment's longevity cannot be justified:
    - County prepared to remove failed pavement.
    - Revert roads to a gravel standard.
  - Effort to avoid expensive repairs per vehicle:
    - Focus on fairness to the entire county network.

#### **4. Lake Labish Crossings**

- Several roads cross the Lake Labish basin:
  - Labish Gardens, 55th, 65th, and 75th Avenues.
  - Challenging organic soils causing:
    - Chronic settlement.
    - Pavement failure.
    - Narrow shoulders.
    - Drop-offs.
- County maintenance cost on crossings is about \$23,300/mile/year:
  - About seven times higher than the network-wide average.
  - Increasing frequency of repairs and safety hazards.
- When repaved additional asphalt weight exacerbates edge failures and settlement:
  - Engineering solutions:
    - Geo-synthetics.
    - Lightweight fill.
    - Soil improvements.
    - Possible conversion to bridges.
  - These are cost prohibitive.
- Possible detours and importance of these roads to farm operations and local traffic:
  - Full closures would create major reroutes, especially north-south.
- Advocacy actions:
  - County to draft a letter and seek state/federal funding.
  - Segments should be treated as “bridges” for the sake of funding.
  - They serve similar purposes:
    - Crossing water and act as sole connectors.
- Interim measures:
  - Restricting heavy vehicles.
  - Possibly prohibiting school buses from crossing.
  - Potentially reverting severely compromised segments to gravel.

- Ongoing investigation:
  - Which routes are highest priority.
  - Alternative traffic plans.
  - Coordination with ODOT and state legislators.

## **5. Yamhill County Intergovernmental Agreement Wheatland Ferry**

- Governs operating costs and capital contributions for Wheatland Ferry operations:
  - Split between Marion and Yamhill counties.
- Amended agreement removes former funding cap of \$71,000 or 24%:
  - Replaces it with population-based proportional sharing.
  - Adds federal improvement projects to the cost pool.
- Yamhill County is reviewing and expected to approve revised agreement:
  - Will then go before Marion County.
- Includes routine biennial population checks to update proportional contributions:
  - Ensure fairness as demographics shift.

## **6. ODOT ROW Maintenance**

- Complaints about sign and debris maintenance along I-5 frontage Enchanted Way:
  - It is ODOT's ROW, not the county's.
- County leadership met with ODOT's maintenance supervisor and management:
  - Clarify and improve processes and responsibility boundaries for ROW issues.
- Staff to write memo clarifying outcomes and next steps from their joint meeting:
  - Focus on improving state-county partnerships for:
    - ROW.
    - Litter.
    - Homeless encampments.
    - Related maintenance complaints.
- Advocacy to ensure ODOT's actions better align with needs of county constituents.

## **7. Other**

- Brooklake Road will undergo major water main installation:
  - Requiring boring pipes under railroad tracks with "jack and sleeve" methods.
  - Will necessitate a single-lane, 21-day closure.
  - Notification of detour/traffic management to follow final contractor submissions.
- Ongoing/updated Safe Routes to School priorities:
  - Proactive pre-applications for sidewalks, crossings, and safety improvements at multiple schools.
  - Success in recent projects like Hayesville Elementary School.
- Transparency for residents and affected parties on project timelines:
  - Need flexibility in planning due to funding, weather, and community input.
- "Aspirational" projects may remain unfunded for years:
  - Include major road widenings, trails, or roundabouts.
  - Kept on lists to remain eligible for grants or sudden opportunities.
- Balance ideal improvements (bike lanes, pedestrian facilities) with rural-prioritizing freight/farming needs:
  - Engage state requirements for RTSP while customizing local priorities.

**Adjourned** – time: 2:16 p.m.

**Minutes by:** Mary Vityukova

**Reviewed by:** Gary L. White