

Good afternoon,

We at ODOT want to thank those of you who attended last evening's open house in Crescent Lake, and let you know we heard, loud-and-clear, your messages about the OR 58: Salt Creek Tunnel and Half Viaduct project.

- You told us that the staging of the project, with six 4-day closures in 2012, would create a significant economic burden on your businesses and your incomes.
- We heard you when you told us that you rely on the summer months, specifically July and August, for as much as 70% of your annual income.
- We learned that many of you rely on drive-by business for as much as 50% of your income and that closures would eliminate much of that drive-by business.
- We also learned that it would be virtually impossible for you to manage advance bookings without a predetermined schedule of closures.
- We have also taken note of the single most used word of the evening--"devastating"--which was used to describe the economic impact of the closures.
- We also heard from two of you who are in complete support of the project, even with the closures.
- One was from a person who travels the corridor 40+ times a year who said he could sacrifice convenience for the safety of friends and family.

Shared Ideas

We appreciate that you were willing to offer alternatives that would help make the project more acceptable to you. The ideas you offered included:

- Staging the project in May, June, September and October with only single lane restrictions in place for July and August.
- Extending the project over additional seasons to reduce the number of complete closures per year.
- Establishing predetermined closure dates and enforcing the dates with the contractor.
- Penalizing the contractor if the closure schedule varies from what was initially planned.
- Working with the contractor to house employees in local inns and motels in an effort to help replace lost revenue.

Another issue that was of concern to you was communication of closure times and dates during construction. Let me reassure you that ODOT would use many communication channels to make sure information reaches you. Those channels would include the web, TripCheck.com, 5-1-1, email, media, and a dedicated phone line to call for schedules. For motorists, we would use Variable Message Signs at strategic locations (perhaps even Weed, CA, as one person suggested), paid media in tourist, RV, hiking, fishing and hunting publications and blogs and newsletters of similar groups.

Next Steps

What we'll do next is take your comments, concerns and suggestions and combine them with those of the Oakridge open house tomorrow night, and present them to the Project Design Team for discussion and consideration.

We will seriously consider ways to reduce the impacts wherever possible. We will then come

back to visit you in the next few weeks with proposed solutions.

We will also be setting-up a meeting with emergency responders to discuss how multiple agencies can coordinate emergency services and communication so that no one goes without critical emergency coverage during the project.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments, please let us know. Also, if you have neighbors or friends who did not participate in the open house, encourage them to email their comments to me by Friday, September 9th.

Thanks again for taking the time to participate in the open house. We look forward to meeting with you again soon.

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