



AGENDA

BMPO Policy Board

Date: August 11, 2026

Start Time: 11:00 a.m.

- **Meeting Format:** in accordance with Oregon state law, this meeting is open to the public and can be accessed and attended in person or remotely.
- **In-person Attendance:** board members and members of the public may attend in person at the following location:
 - Awbrey Butte Conference Room (City Hall, 2nd Floor), 710 NW Wall, Bend
- **Remote Attendance:** board members and members of the public may attend remotely via Zoom webinar. Members of the public may also view the meeting via YouTube livestream.
 - **Zoom webinar link**
 - Zoom webinar phone: dial 1-888-788-0099 and enter webinar ID# 842 1068 1345
 - **YouTube livestream link**

BMPO Policy Board Meeting

Agenda Topics

1. Call to Order & Introductions
2. Hybrid Meeting Guidelines
3. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)
4. Meeting Minutes
5. City of Bend Transportation & Mobility Department Updates
6. Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) Amendment
7. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Expressway Designations Review
8. BUILD Act – Overview & Letter of Support
9. Other Business
10. Public Comment (Agenda Items & Wrap-Up)
11. Next Meeting & Adjournment



Agenda Detail

Start Time	Item	Information	Presenters
11:00	1. Call to Order & Introductions		Chair Méndez
11:05	2. Hybrid Meeting Guidelines		Tyler Deke, BMPO
11:07	3. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)	Time for members of the public to provide comments. Additional time for comment will be provided prior to adjournment.	Chair
11:10	4. Meeting Minutes	Attachments/Links Attachment A: Draft Policy Board meeting minutes, July 17, 2026. Action Requested Review and approve the draft Policy Board meeting minutes from July 17th. Recommended language for motion: <i>I move approval of the draft meeting minutes for the July 17, 2026, Policy Board meeting, as presented.</i>	Chair
11:15	5. City of Bend Transportation & Mobility Department Updates	Background City staff will provide updates on the following projects: • Transportation Design Standards Update (scheduled for 2027) • Slow Speeds and Safe Crossings Project • Neighborhood Connections Project Action Requested None. Information item.	Janet Hruby, City of Bend
11:40	6. MTIP Amendment	Background One amendment to the 2024-2027 MTIP is proposed. It involves adding an ODOT project to the program. Public notification of the proposed amendment was provided online and via email to media and interested groups.	Kelli Kennedy, BMPO



Start Time	Item	Information	Presenters
		Attachments/Links Link to the Transportation News Release for the proposed amendment. Action Requested Review and consider approval of the proposed amendment. Recommended language for motion: <i>I move to approve the proposed amendment to the 2024-2027 MTIP, as presented.</i>	
11:50	7. ODOT Expressway Designations Review	Background The Oregon Highway Plan includes highway classifications that reflect different characteristics of the state highway system. The classifications impact design standards, mobility standards, and access management standards. Expressways are intended to limit direct access and provide for higher speed, high volume travel between cities, and connections to major destinations. ODOT is required to review Expressway designations every six years. ODOT is proposing to modify Expressway designations on sections of US97 and US20 within the BMPO. Staff will review the proposed changes and seek feedback on a comment letter to ODOT. Attachments Attachment B: ODOT Expressway Designations Memo. Attachment C: Highway Expressway Designations Draft Comment Letter. Action Requested Consider approval of the comment letter to ODOT regarding the proposed Expressway changes to US97 and US20.	Tyler Deke



Start Time	Item	Information	Presenters
		Recommended language for motion: <i>I move to approve the comment letter for the ODOT Expressway designations, as presented (or with changes).</i>	
12:05	8. BUILD Act – Overview & Letter of Support	Background The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will expire on September 30, 2026. Congress is considering several multi-year transportation funding proposals. One proposal, the Building Unrivaled Infrastructure and Long-term Development for America’s 250th Act (BUILD Act), was approved in May 2026 by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The BUILD Act is supported by a large coalition of stakeholders, including the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO). Staff will provide an overview of the BUILD Act. Attachments/Links Attachment D: BUILD Act Key Local and Regional Provisions Flyer. Attachment E: BUILD Act Draft Support Letter. Link to AMPO Policy Resources webpage, where a library of transportation policy documents is available. Action Requested Receive an overview of the BUILD Act and consider submitting a letter of support to the BMPO congressional delegation. Recommended language for motion: <i>I move to approve the letter of support for the BUILD Act, as presented (or with changes).</i>	Tyler Deke
12:20	9. Other Business	Policy Board Updates/Requests • Updates on projects/planning efforts • Future agenda topic requests	Chair & Staff



Start Time	Item	Information	Presenters
		BMPO Staff Updates • September 18th meeting – possible reschedule • Bend TSAP Update status • BMPO letters ○ Attachment F: ODOT TSAP Comment Letter, As Submitted ○ Attachment G: ODOT Deschutes Triangle Active Transportation Plan Comment Letter, As Submitted • Upcoming agenda topics: ○ Earned Interest – FY27 Starting Balance Review & Allocation (BMPO) ○ US97: Multi-Use Trail Project Update (ODOT)	
12:30	10. Public Comment (Agenda Items & Wrap-Up)	Additional time for members of the public to provide comment.	Chair
12:35	11. Next Meeting & Adjournment	The next meeting of the BMPO Policy Board is scheduled for September 18, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.	Chair



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MEETING MINUTES

BMPO Policy Board

Location: Baney Conference Room (Oregon Department of Transportation [ODOT] Region 4 Headquarters, Building M), 63055 N. Highway 97, Bend, Oregon

Date: July 17, 2026

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Prepared by: ABC Transcription Services, LLC

In Attendance

- Voting Members
 - Vice Chair Mike Riley, City of Bend Councilor
 - Phil Chang, Deschutes County Commissioner
 - Emerald Shirley, ODOT Interim Central Oregon and Lower John Day Area Manager
- Voting Member Alternates
 - Russ Grayson, City of Bend
- Staff & Other Attendees
 - Tyler Deke, BMPO Manager
 - Andrea Napoli, BMPO Senior Planner
 - Kelli Kennedy, BMPO Program Coordinator
 - Mary McGowan, ODOT
 - Rachel Zakem, ODOT
 - Greg Bryant, member of the public
 - Stacie Fritz, member of the public

Agenda Items

1. Call to Order & Introductions
2. Hybrid Meeting Guidelines
3. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)
4. Meeting Minutes
5. ODOT Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) Update – Overview & Possible Comment Letter
6. Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Liability Insurance



7. Bend TSAP Update: Public Engagement Phase 1 Summary
8. Other Business
9. Public Comment (Agenda Items & Wrap-Up)
10. Next Meeting & Adjournment

Notes

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Vice Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. with a quorum established.

2. Hybrid Meeting Guidelines

Tyler Deke reviewed the hybrid meeting guidelines.

3. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

There were no public comments.

4. Meeting Minutes

Materials referenced

- Attachment A: Draft Policy Board meeting minutes, June 18, 2026

Motion 1: Phil Chang moved approval of the draft June 18, 2026, Policy Board meeting minutes as presented. Emerald Shirley seconded the motion which passed 4 to 0. (Ayes: Riley (City of Bend), Chang (Deschutes County), Shirley (ODOT), Grayson (City of Bend). Nays: None.)

5. ODOT TSAP Update – Overview & Possible Comment Letter

Materials referenced

- Attachment B: Draft 2026 ODOT TSAP Executive Summary
- Links to the **ODOT TSAP Update website** and **Draft ODOT TSAP**

Mary McGowan presented an overview of ODOT's draft TSAP which would guide investments toward reducing crashes and eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injury crashes. Plan goals included supporting Vision Zero by 2050 and setting a 30 percent target for reducing crashes causing fatalities and serious injuries by 2035. Supplemental automated enforcement tool options were included in the TSAP, as law enforcement staffing limitations constrained the capacity to address risky behaviors. Statewide safety data from 2019 to 2023 showed a significant spike in fatal and serious injury crashes over previous years, and the top contributing factors were outlined. The TSAP's top tier Emphasis Areas included roadway departures, intersections, speeding, and driver impairment. ODOT's TSAP adoption was scheduled for October 2026.

Questions were addressed about serious injury being defined as life-changing, debilitating injuries requiring hospitalization; vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) not appearing to contribute to the increase in fatal and serious injury crashes; returning with



more information about the statewide impact of drivers experiencing suicidal ideation; the increase in crashes involving unrestrained occupants being connected to a statewide dip in seat belt and car seat compliance; the process used to determine the tiers of Emphasis Areas; crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians being listed in the second tier because addressing the top tier Emphasis Areas would directly improve bicycle and pedestrian safety; prioritizing roundabouts as a key action included in the TSAP; and next steps for implementing and monitoring Emphasis Areas following TSAP adoption.

Discussion topics included the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) recent removal of several acknowledged safety countermeasures from its list including bike lanes, road diets, speed safety cameras, and variable speed limits, which could impact future funding applications at the federal and state level; the importance of prioritizing actions that improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety at ODOT facility intersections; and working to improve law enforcement capacity while implementing the supplemental automated enforcement tools proposed to address patrol capacity limitations.

Comments regarding ODOT's draft TSAP could be submitted to Mary McGowan by July 31, 2026.

6. FY27 Liability Insurance

Materials referenced

- Attachment C: Issue Summary

Tyler Deke asked the Board to authorize approval of the contract renewing general liability and auto liability insurance for FY27. He noted the premium cost for FY27 would decrease by over 10 percent, and that approval was retroactive as quotes had not been received until after the June BMPO meeting.

Motion 2: Emerald Shirley moved to authorize the BMPO Manager to approve a contract for renewal of general liability and auto liability insurance, in substantially the form presented to the Policy Board, for fiscal year 2027 in an amount not to exceed \$4,394.25 and to authorize the BMPO Manager to take all steps necessary to acquire the coverage. Phil Chang seconded the motion which passed 4 to 0.

(Ayes: Riley (City of Bend), Chang (Deschutes County), Shirley (ODOT), Grayson (City of Bend). Nays: None.)

7. Bend TSAP Update: Public Engagement Phase 1 Summary

Materials referenced

- Attachment D: Bend TSAP Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary
- Links to the **Bend TSAP Update website** and **Bend TSAP Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary**

Andrea Napoli presented the Bend TSAP Phase 1 Engagement Summary, noting that over 2,500 unique comments were collected during April and May 2026 and anecdotal information was used to identify locations where near misses have occurred or the



public felt unsafe. She highlighted the top public comment themes and described concerns regarding the top identified intersections and roadway segments, noting congestion was the most common issue mentioned. The most common safety improvement suggestions included safer crossings, traffic calming measures, and improved bikeways. Due to public concern, intersections with Greenwood Ave at Wall St and Bond St were selected for further study. Most of the other top public input locations already had safety improvement projects planned or funded, with notable exceptions being the intersections of US97 and Empire Ave, and US97 and Reed Market Rd. She outlined future uses of Phase 1 public input and described the focal points for the online open house which would be held in fall 2026 during TSAP Public Engagement Phase 2.

Discussion topics included possibly providing incentives for filling out a paper open house in the future to increase participation; the connection between congestion and the public feeling unsafe or uncomfortable; working with the consultant to clarify locations mentioned by the public and potentially create a visual map of comments submitted; lane reductions between Greenwood Ave and 3rd St resulting in bicyclists and pedestrians feeling safer; the high concentration of crashes at intersections along the Franklin Ave corridor between downtown and 4th St; considering how the priorities revealed by the safety data would compare to the current findings if comments and data related to congestion were removed; discussing the desired role and message for enforcement in the TSAP at a future meeting, with the understanding of law enforcement's limited capacity; and possibly reaching out to TSAP Public Engagement Phase 1 participants with the results of the public input.

8. Other Business

ODOT Expressway Designations Review: Tyler Deke stated Staff would provide information regarding ODOT's Expressway Designations at the August or September Policy Board meeting.

BUILD America 250 Act: Tyler Deke noted an update would be provided regarding current federal legislation and the BMPO could potentially send a letter of support.

9. Public Comment (Agenda Items & Wrap-Up)

There were no public comments.

10. Next Meeting & Adjournment

The next meeting of the BMPO Policy Board is scheduled for August 11, 2026, at 11:00 a.m.

Vice Chair Riley adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.



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MEMORANDUM

To: BMPO Policy Board
From: Tyler Deke
Date: August 4, 2026
Re: ODOT Expressway Designations

Background

Expressways are a highway system classification of the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP). Expressways are defined in the OHP as:

"...complete routes or segments of existing two-lane and multi-lane highways and planned multi-lane highways that provide for safe and efficient high speed and high volume traffic movements. Their primary function is to provide for interurban travel and connections to ports and major recreation areas with minimal interruptions. A secondary function is to provide for long distance inter-urban travel in metropolitan areas. In urban areas, speeds are moderate to high. In rural areas, speeds are high. Usually there are no pedestrian facilities, and bikeways may be separated from the roadway."

Expressways give priority to the efficient movement of people and goods traveling through an area on specific segments of a highway. This is achieved by limiting access and turning movements on the highway facility, allowing for higher speeds and smooth flow. Expressway designation may be applied as an overlay to the following four highway classifications designated in the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP), Policy 1A:

1. Interstate
2. Statewide Highways
3. Regional Highways
4. District Highways

Expressways are classified based on the following criteria:

- Importance as a National Highway System (NHS) route with high volumes of traffic;
- Designation as a part of the State Highway Freight System;
- Designation as a safety corridor; or
- Function as an urban bypass.

Expressway designation identifies areas where more detailed modernization and management priorities will be applied. Features to support the function of an Expressway may be implemented over time on an existing roadway or in construction of a new expressway. The following are the main characteristics that are associated with Expressways:



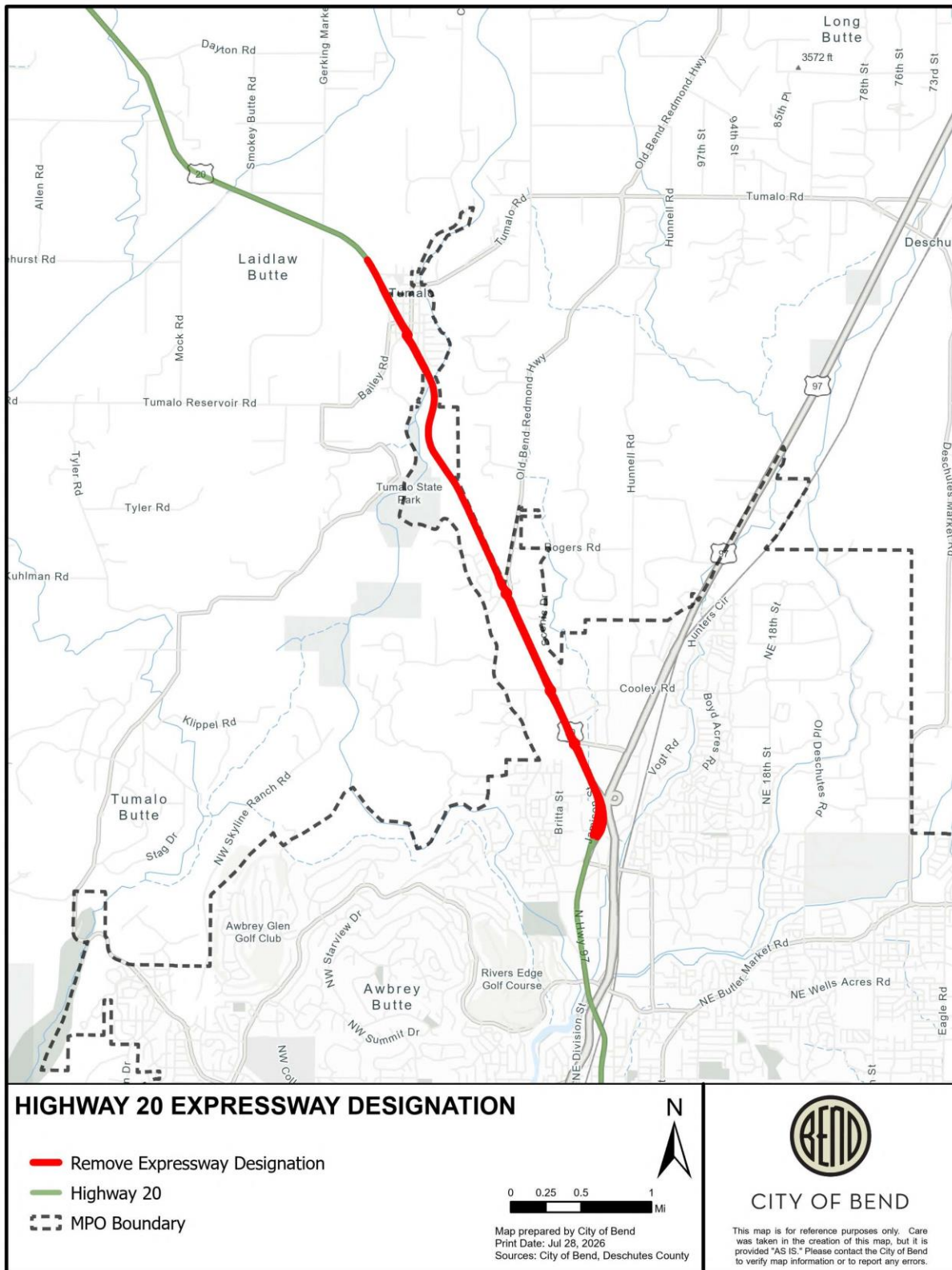
- Private access is discouraged;
- Public road connections are controlled;
- Traffic signals are discouraged in rural areas;
- Non-traversable medians are typically included;
- Parking is prohibited;
- Special Segment Designations (e.g., Special Transportation Areas) are prohibited; and
- Posted speeds are generally 50 miles per hour or greater.

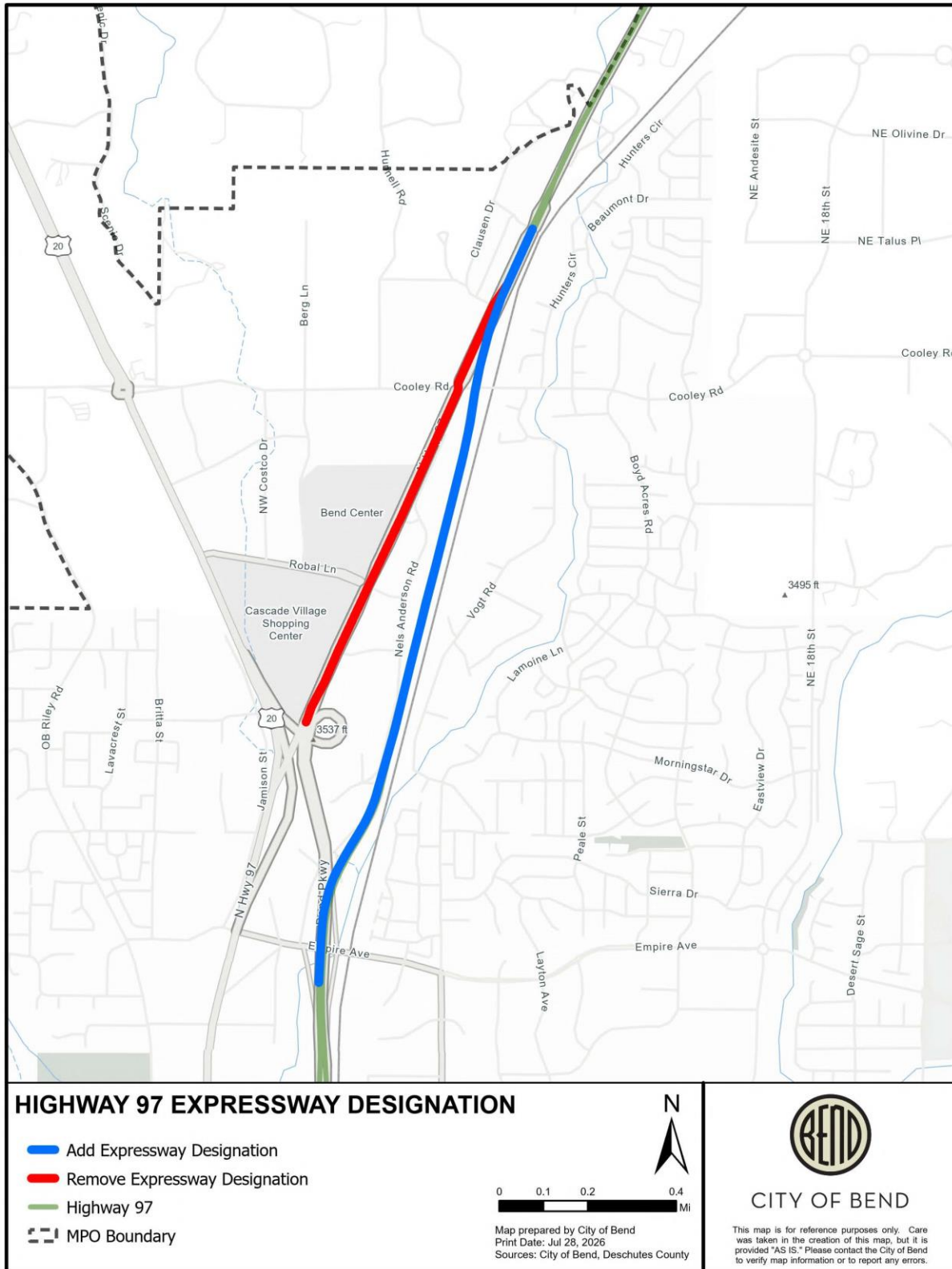
Expressways are identified by ODOT Region staff in consultation with local governments and approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC). The OTC will classify new Expressways as a subset of Interstate and Statewide highways in consultation with local governments. The OTC will classify new Expressways as a subset of Regional and District Highways with the agreement of directly affected local governments. For more information on Expressways, consult the Oregon Highway Plan.

Proposed Expressway Designation Revisions within the BMPO

Expressway designation changes are proposed on sections of US20 and US97 within the BMPO. The proposed changes are detailed in the table and maps below. US97 from Empire Avenue to the southern BMPO boundary is currently designated an Expressway and would retain that designation.

Expressway	Current Designation	Local Agencies Involved	Recommendation	Details
US-20 (Hwy 007, McKenzie-Bend)	Expressway	City of Bend, BMPO, Deschutes County	Remove section of Expressway	Remove MP 14.14 to 18.59
US-97 (Hwy 004, Redmond to La Pine)	Expressway	City of Bend, BMPO, City of Redmond, City of La Pine, Deschutes County	Remove and replace section of Expressway	US97B is to be removed and replaced by US97 (MP 133.73 -134.93), creates two segments (MP 123.60 to 133.73 and MP 134.93 to 167)







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Attachment C

Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization
710 NW Wall Street
Bend, OR 97703

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 431
Bend, OR 97709

PHONE

541-693-2113
Relay Users Dial 7-1-1

Fax

541-385-6676

WEB

bendoregon.gov/mpo

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Oregon and Lower John
Day Area Manager

Bob Townsend,
Nonvoting
Cascades East Transit,
Director

BMPO STAFF

Tyler Deke, AICP
Manager

Andrea Napoli, AICP
Senior Planner

Kelli Kennedy
Program Coordinator

August 4, 2026

Julie Brown, Chair, Oregon Transportation Commission
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol Street NE, MS 11
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Highway Expressway Designations

Dear Chair Brown,

I am writing on behalf of the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) Policy Board to express support for the proposed Expressway modifications to US20 and US97 within the BMPO.

We support removal of the Expressway designation to US20. ODOT, Deschutes County and the City of Bend have made significant investments in this corridor in recent years to improve safety and slow speeds. Lands adjacent to the segment within the Bend urban growth boundary are undergoing rapid development with additional urban development expected for the foreseeable future.

We support removal of the Expressway designation to Business 97. With completion of the US97 North Corridor project, travel patterns and traffic volumes have changed on Business 97. Removal of the Expressway designation will allow the City of Bend and ODOT to better plan for transportation system improvements and adjacent land use development along Business 97.

We support adding the Expressway designation to the new US97 alignment and retaining the Expressway designation on the remainder of US97 through the BMPO. US97 is an important component of the National Highway System and serves high volumes of traffic within and through the Bend MPO. This corridor is also part of the State Highway Freight System and serves local, regional and statewide freight traffic. US97 is the primary north-south facility east of the Cascades, and the segment through Central Oregon carries the highest volumes of traffic in Region 4 reaching almost 57,000 AADT within the Bend MPO. We also understand the potential importance of the Expressway designation in securing federal funding for future improvements to US97.



Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ariel Méndez, Chair
Bend City Councilor
amendez@bendoregon.gov



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The BUILD America 250 Act

Key Provisions for Locals and Regions

On May 22nd, the U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure passed the ***Building Unrivaled Infrastructure and Long-term Development for America's 250th*** (*BUILD America 250 Act*) (H.R. 8870) with strong, bipartisan support. This bill includes many provisions reflecting top priorities of the Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition and their members across the nation including counties, cities, towns, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and economic development organizations across the United States. Regions and local governments plan for, own, maintain, and operate over **75 percent** of the nation's transportation infrastructure.

The bill includes several provisions that recognize this role and empower local and regional partners to continue investing in the roads, bridges, and safety improvements that power our economy.

Key Local and Regional Provisions in the BUILD America 250 Act

BRIDGES

- The *BUILD America 250 Act* would make record investments in America's bridges, including in locally owned bridges. The bill would continue formula funding for bridges—a practice stood up in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)—but grow the program from \$5.5 billion per year to **\$9 billion per year**.
- While the IIJA Bridge Formula Program included a 15 percent set-aside for off-system bridges, the *BUILD America 250 Act* would include a **25 percent set-aside** for locally owned bridges. The bill would also set the federal cost share for locally owned bridges at **95 percent**, making it easier to advance these critical projects.
- Together, the growth in the program size and the larger set-aside would increase funding available for local bridges by more than **170 percent over IIJA levels**.

COMPETITIVE GRANTS

- The *BUILD America 250 Act* preserves competitive grants by retaining existing programs and establishing new efforts, including the **Surface Transportation Accelerator Grant (STAG)** program.
- Importantly, the *BUILD America 250 Act* keeps the **Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A)** program, which is a priority program for the LOT Coalition. With local governments and regional planning organizations eligible to apply, SS4A has helped direct federal resources to urgent safety projects across the country.

FORMULA FUNDING

- The *BUILD America 250 Act* would grow the **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)** program, the most flexible formula funding program supporting both state and local transportation priorities.

PLANNING

- The *BUILD America 250 Act* would **increase funding for MPOs** through the Metropolitan Planning (PL) program, while also reducing the non-federal match requirement from 20 percent to **10 percent**.
- The bill would **expand eligible uses of PL funding** to include fiscal administration of local projects, preliminary design, local technical assistance, and more.
- The bill would also require USDOT to establish a voluntary process for MPOs to **become direct recipients** of PL funds, rather than having the funding flow first through the state.



The *BUILD America 250 Act*

Key Provisions for Locals and Regions

LOCAL CONSULTATION

- Section 1317 of the *BUILD America 250 Act* would require the Comptroller General to review the suballocation of STBG funding, including how states **consult** with MPOs and RTPOs and how states **select projects** for funding with suballocated dollars. The LOT Coalition believes these processes can and should be improved across the country and welcomes this review as a first step toward that goal.

PERMITTING

- The *BUILD America 250 Act* would **streamline federal environmental review** for certain transportation projects. For example, projects receiving less than \$12 million in federal funding would no longer automatically trigger NEPA review solely because of the federal funding amount.

How to Build on *BUILD America 250* for Local and Regional Priorities

RTPO FUNDING

The *BUILD America 250 Act* makes important progress for local and regional priorities, and Congress can build on that progress by providing guaranteed federal funding for Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs). Dedicated RTPO funding would help rural regions identify needs, develop projects, coordinate with state partners, and bring local expertise into transportation decision-making.

PROJECT SELECTION

The bill also creates an opportunity to strengthen transparency and local consultation in project selection. MPOs and RTPOs work directly with communities to identify regional priorities. Stronger consultation before states obligate suballocated funds would help ensure federal dollars advance locally supported projects and deliver better outcomes.

STBG FUNDING

The *BUILD America 250 Act* would increase STBG funding, an important step for one of the most flexible programs available to states and local governments. Additional STBG funding would better reflect how communities use these dollars to advance priority projects and how states routinely transfer funds from NHPP into STBG.

PLANNING FUNDS

The bill also makes important improvements to the MPO planning program, and additional PL funding would build on that progress. Stronger planning capacity helps MPOs support better project development, improve data-driven decision-making, provide technical assistance to local governments, and ensure communities are ready to move priority projects from planning to delivery.

Bottom Line

The *BUILD America 250 Act* proposes generational investments in locally owned infrastructure and safety that align with the LOT Coalition's priorities. The LOT Coalition supports this bill and will continue working with Congress to pass a final reauthorization bill that includes both robust funding and process reforms needed to ensure that federal investment in infrastructure reaches locally led projects in communities big and small, urban and rural across the country.

Contact: Katie Economou, AMPO Legislative Director, keconomou@ampo.org





Attachment E

Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization
710 NW Wall Street
Bend, OR 97703

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 431
Bend, OR 97709

PHONE

541-693-2113
Relay Users Dial 7-1-1

Fax

541-385-6676

WEB

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East Transit, Director

BMPO STAFF

Tyler Deke, AICP
Manager

Andrea Napoli, AICP
Senior Planner

Kelli Kennedy,
Program Coordinator

August 4, 2026

The Honorable X
address

Washington, DC 20510

Dear [Congress(wo)man/Senator _____],

I am writing on behalf of the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) Policy Board to express our support for H.R. 8870, the Building Unrivaled Infrastructure and Long-term Development for America's 250th (BUILD America 250) Act.

The BMPO helps direct transportation funding to improve safety, support economic growth, and provide travel options. The BUILD America 250 Act includes several important provisions that would strengthen regional transportation and give communities better tools to plan and deliver transportation projects.

The BUILD America 250 Act would:

- **Preserve regional and local access to federal transportation funding.** Local governments own, maintain, and operate nearly 75 percent of U.S. road miles, yet have access to only about 16 percent of federal transportation funding on average. The BUILD America 250 Act would make nearly 22 percent of federal transportation funding available to local jurisdictions, including funding for bridge and safety program investments. This investment reflects the reality that many of the nation's transportation needs are identified and delivered at the local and regional level. In the BMPO, these investments could support priorities such as addressing critical safety issues along US20 and US97, modernizing infrastructure and addressing congestion at key locations along US97, supporting economic development, and improving connectivity across the region.
- **Improve project delivery.** The BUILD America 250 Act would reduce the local match for planning activities and expand the eligible uses of Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds. For the BMPO, a lower match requirement will help stretch limited local resources and make additional funding available for high priority safety and planning projects. The BMPO population has more than doubled over the past 20 years, and our region continues to see sustained growth. Planning for and building infrastructure to support this growth is critical.



- **Invest in the planning that makes projects possible.** MPOs develop long-range transportation plans and fiscally constrained Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) that identify and advance local priority projects that meet national goals. The BUILD America 250 Act would increase PL funding by over 9 percent from Fiscal Year 2026 to Fiscal Year 2027, giving MPOs greater funding certainty and the resources to deliver stronger plans that meet the long-term needs of their communities. For the BMPO, this could help support planning for critical improvements along US97, enhanced safety analysis at high crash locations and along high crash corridors, planning for rapidly urbanizing roadway corridors, and providing planning support for key local projects.

These provisions recognize that good projects begin with good planning, and the local officials closest to their communities should have the tools to help identify and advance the investments that matter most.

The BUILD America 250 Act is also supported by the Local Officials for Transportation (LOT) Coalition, representing more than 25,000 counties, cities, towns, MPOs, regional councils, and economic development organizations. Coalition members include the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO), the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the National League of Cities (NLC), the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM), and the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC).

Planning is where projects begin, where local needs are translated into investment decisions, and where federal transportation dollars are positioned to deliver lasting results. By supporting the BUILD America 250 Act, you will help ensure that cities, counties, and regions, including the BMPO, have the resources and flexibility needed to deliver a transportation system that connects our neighborhoods, supports our local economies, and serves our residents every day.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. I appreciate your commitment to strengthening the nation's transportation infrastructure and look forward to working with you as Congress advances surface transportation legislation. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ariel Méndez, Chair
Bend City Councilor
amendez@bendoregon.gov



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Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization
710 NW Wall Street
Bend, OR 97703

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 431
Bend, OR 97709

PHONE

541-693-2113
Relay Users Dial 7-1-1

Fax

541-385-6676

WEB

bendoregon.gov/mpo

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BMPO STAFF

Tyler Deke, AICP
Manager

Andrea Napoli, AICP
Senior Planner

Kelli Kennedy
Program Coordinator

July 27, 2026

Mary McGowan, Senior Planner
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol Street
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Oregon Transportation Safety Action Plan

Dear Mary,

I am writing on behalf of the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) Policy Board to express our support for the update of the statewide Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP). We support advancement of the Safe System Approach, setting goals to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes, and using data to identify the most important safety issues. Local and state funding constraints require that we use funding for projects and programs with the greatest potential to reduce serious injury and fatal crashes.

Below are our comments on the draft TSAP.

Emphasis areas

Bicyclists and pedestrians are identified as a Tier 2 emphasis area. We understand that addressing the Tier 1 emphasis areas will directly benefit the Tier 2 emphasis areas. We ask that bicyclist and pedestrian safety be explicitly considered for all intersection improvements (Tier 1).

State Highway System Safety

State highways represent a small percentage of total road mileage within the BMPO but accounted for 41% of fatalities and 33% of serious injuries from 2019 - 2024. Many of these crashes involve system users trying to cross the state highway. Additionally, US97 through Central Oregon is one of the deadliest highways in the state. We ask that ODOT continue to work with local agencies to prioritize safety investments to US97, US20 and other state highways in Central Oregon.

Law enforcement

Oregon has one lowest police to resident ratios in the US. Many transportation safety issues involve unsafe behaviors, including most of the Tier 2 emphasis areas. In Bend, speeding, use of alcohol and other substances, and distracted driving are unsafe behaviors that all show up



as issues in our safety data. There is anecdotal evidence that the lack of law enforcement directly impacts some of these behaviors. Cities and counties in Central Oregon are increasing traffic patrols, providing focused enforcement, and piloting automated enforcement technologies. We encourage ODOT to emphasize the importance of enforcement as a core behavior change tool in the TSAP, and to continue to partner with local agencies and use every law enforcement tool available to help improve transportation safety.

The city of Bend, Deschutes County and ODOT have made significant transportation system investments to improve safety for all users. Despite these projects and programs, serious safety issues persist. We must continue working together to improve transportation system safety. We look forward to continued collaboration with ODOT to improve the safety of the transportation system. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Signed by:


C7704984EAF4AD...
Ariel Méndez, Chair

Bend City Councilor

amendez@bendoregon.gov



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BMPO STAFF

Tyler Deke, AICP
Manager

Andrea Napoli, AICP
Senior Planner

Kelli Kennedy
Program Coordinator

July 28, 2026

Don Morehouse, Senior Planner
ODOT Region 4
63044 North Highway 97
Bend, Oregon 97703

Re: Deschutes Triangle Active Transportation Plan

Dear Don,

I am writing on behalf of the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) Policy Board to express our support for the Deschutes Triangle Active Transportation Plan development process. Providing enhanced options for walking, bicycling and rolling between Bend, Redmond, and Sisters is important and will facilitate safe and comfortable commuting and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

We ask that a wide range of options be considered and that feasibility and cost be considered as improvements are prioritized. We support development of corridor concepts that can be used to seek design and construction funding.

The BMPO is committed to supporting this planning process and recognizes the potential to improve transportation options across Central Oregon.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

C7704984EAF4AD...
ARIEL MENDOZA, Chair

Bend City Councilor

amendez@bendoregon.gov

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