

Comments on December 3rd Open House for the Hawthorne Bridge

Recognition of ODOT's role – ODOT is charged with the managing the design and construction of the Hawthorne Bridge using the City's chosen "vision."

Technical issues –

1. **The slope of the ramp** -Even with years of preliminary planning, no one has confirmed if the ramp will "fit" between Burlington Railroad property and Hill Street. There is no excuse for this failure.
2. **ADA compliance** – Both the city and ODOT acknowledge the ramps must comply with ADA standards. The proposed 7.5% ramp slope requires 5-foot-long flat landings every 33.33 feet. This bridge could have the longest handicap ramps in the state. The city and ODOT failed to reflect this accurately in their renderings. Can't wait to see the bicyclists' reaction.
3. **Connection to Harriman** – This presentation proposes four options for reconstructing one block of street. Was ODOT not informed of the previous incomplete study and the failed community engagement. Is this an intentional "end-run" around the neighborhood stakeholders? To let "participants" at this open house make the decision?
 - a. Oregon DLCD gave the city \$150,000 to complete five tasks including a case study to connect Drake Park to Juniper Park. Study ran from June 2024 to May 2025.
 - b. The first community engagement with the Downtown Bend Business Association was in October 2024. All participants felt it was a trainwreck.
 - c. The director of Growth Management hosted a second meeting in December 2024 with a clear message that the real planning of any new streetscape would not occur until the city updated its transportation system plan.
 - d. ODOT should not include any proposal for a redesign of Hawthorne Avenue west of Hill Street.
 - e. The study was completed in May 2025 without a complete case study to connect Drake Park to Juniper Park.
4. **Location of bridge abutments and length of span.**
 - a. The abutments should be located at the west edge of the Parkway and the east edge of Burlington Railroad right-of-way. The current concept shows

the bridge span extending beyond these rights-of-way. These overhangs will be a magnet of homelessness to camp under the spans.

- b. A short second span would be needed to cross First Street, but again, limit the span to only what is needed to cross this local street.

5. How secure is the funding?

- a. Has ODOT confirmed that the federal funding commitment is still in place and/or will not be rescinded before construction starts?
- b. This latest iconic bridge won't happen without the federal funds. Don't spend state funds with any uncertainty.
- c. In 2016, CH2MHill provided the city with a much simpler \$5M Bridge design that could be used if the federal funding is rescinded.

ODOT's role doesn't include "promotion"-

- 1. It was a mistake for ODOT to include lengthy narrative on the how the design arrived here and the listing of "benefits. It just invites questions on the "vision" which ODOT didn't have anything to do with. The Council made this decision. The city should have provided a narrative and defended it.
- 2. FYI. Nearly all the benefits are based on "if you build it, they will come." The city and advocates haven't provided any evidence, just rhetoric. Their claimed benefits are nothing but assumptions. Meanwhile, there were plenty of facts ignored in their deliberations, such as,
 - a. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)'s 2045 transportation plan forecasts the bicycling share of commuting only increases by 1% after nearly a billion dollars of projects.
 - b. The MPO's 2021 US 97 Parkway Plan recommended keeping the right off at Hawthorne open because of its importance to the business community.
 - c. The city continues to prove the old saying that "cities make the worst developers" with the absence of any progress in their desired re-development in the Core Area.

Updates on nearby Bend projects – Why was the Greenwood Avenue Pilot Program was not included. Is it because it failed to achieve its projected benefits. Crashes doubled. Congestion increased. 89% of the survey "participants" opposed the project. And the Franklin Avenue project will be even worse.