

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: FINAL March 25, 2021
TO: ODOT Region 2, City of Gearhart, and the Stakeholder/Technical Advisory Committees
FROM: Ryan Farncomb (Parametrix), Kevin Chewuk (DKS)
SUBJECT: Tech Memo #3: Project Definition and Corridor Vision and Goals
PROJECT NAME: US 101 Gearhart Facility Plan

This memorandum documents the need for a Facility Plan on US 101 in Gearhart, Oregon, describes a vision for the future of the corridor, and identifies goals that will inform the process and decision-making. The study area for the Facility Plan is US 101 within the city limits of Gearhart, from Airport Road in the south to Ocean Home Farm Lane in the north. The corridor is approximately 2.3 miles long. The study area limits are approximate; the facility plan should consider logical termini for potential future improvements that may be slightly beyond (or within) the city limits of Gearhart.

The vision and goals are based on local goals already established in the Gearhart Transportation System Plan (TSP) and include guidance from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) *Blueprint for Urban Design* (BUD) as well as statewide and local plans. The BUD calls for development of a project vision that acknowledges the existing and future land use context, as well as the nature of future growth. The final vision and goals will inform development of the project Decision Framework that will guide selection of the preferred alternative for future improvements to US 101 in Gearhart.

This memo was reviewed by ODOT, the City of Gearhart, and the project's stakeholder and advisory committees. Public feedback also inform the final vision and goals.

BACKGROUND

This section describes findings and goals related to US 101 from the Gearhart TSP and discusses the study area's urban context, as defined by the BUD. The Facility Plan vision and goals described later in the memo are built on these local goals as well as on the urban context as defined in the BUD.

Gearhart TSP

The Gearhart TSP establishes the need for further planning and corridor safety improvements to US 101. It identifies multimodal circulation, connectivity, and safety needs along US 101 through the city. Many of these areas included constrained right-of-way, environmental concerns, or other development limitations on the range of possible improvements; these issues necessitated creative solutions. Community feedback indicated a strong desire to improve US 101 appropriately for urban transportation use and to reduce impediments for those walking, bicycling, or taking transit and to improve safety for all users. The TSP evaluates a range of possible options to address these concerns and ultimately recommends a solution to reconfigure the existing width of US

101 to provide bicycle lanes and an adjacent shared-use path, and it identifies locations for potential enhanced highway crossings.

Blueprint for Urban Design and Urban Context

The BUD provides guidance on determining the urban context for state highway segments. Determining the appropriate urban context is important to the overall design process described in the BUD and heavily influences the design choices that will be considered for the highway. Additionally, the urban context and highway designation, among other factors, influence the vision and goals described below.

There are six urban context types described in the BUD; the US 101 corridor through Gearhart (approximately 3 miles long) exhibits characteristics of several urban context types. Table 1 below describes the preliminary urban context for different segments of the corridor and justification for the designation. Overall, the corridor exhibits a mix of commercial and residential uses along US 101. There is no useable parallel route near US 101 that could be used by bicyclists and pedestrians as an alternative route. Cottage Avenue and Gearhart Green Drive are parallel to US 101, but are located approximately ½ mile west of the highway.

Table 1. Urban Context and Justification

Segment	Urban Context	General Description	Setbacks	Criteria					Future Land Use
				Building Orientation	Land Use	Building Coverage adjacent to ROW	Parking	Block Size	
Airport Road to 5th Street	Commercial Corridor	Predominantly commercial uses set back from the highway with off-street parking	Medium	Toward parking lots (not along highway)	Commercial, Industrial, some single-family residential	Low	Off-street	Large blocks, not well defined	Remain commercial into the future, with additional low-density residential planned in the future.
5th Street to Ocean Home Farm Lane	Rural Community	Predominantly single-family residential located off of short public and private roads adjacent to US 101. Some commercial uses on west side of US 101.	Medium	Internal (away from US 101)	Residential with limited commercial	Low	Off-street	Medium	Much of the land immediately west of US 101 is zoned for mixed commercial/residential. However, there are probable wetlands throughout, and the properties may have limited future development potential, meaning the west side may stay undeveloped.

ROW = right of way

Note: Please refer to Chapter 2 of the BUD for more details on the factors that contribute to determining urban context.

“Commercial Corridor” and “Rural Community” are the two main urban contexts in the study area. Figure 1 shows the proposed urban context designations described in Table 1. ODOT will make a final determination of the appropriate urban context for this segment of US 101 through Gearhart after reviewing with stakeholders.

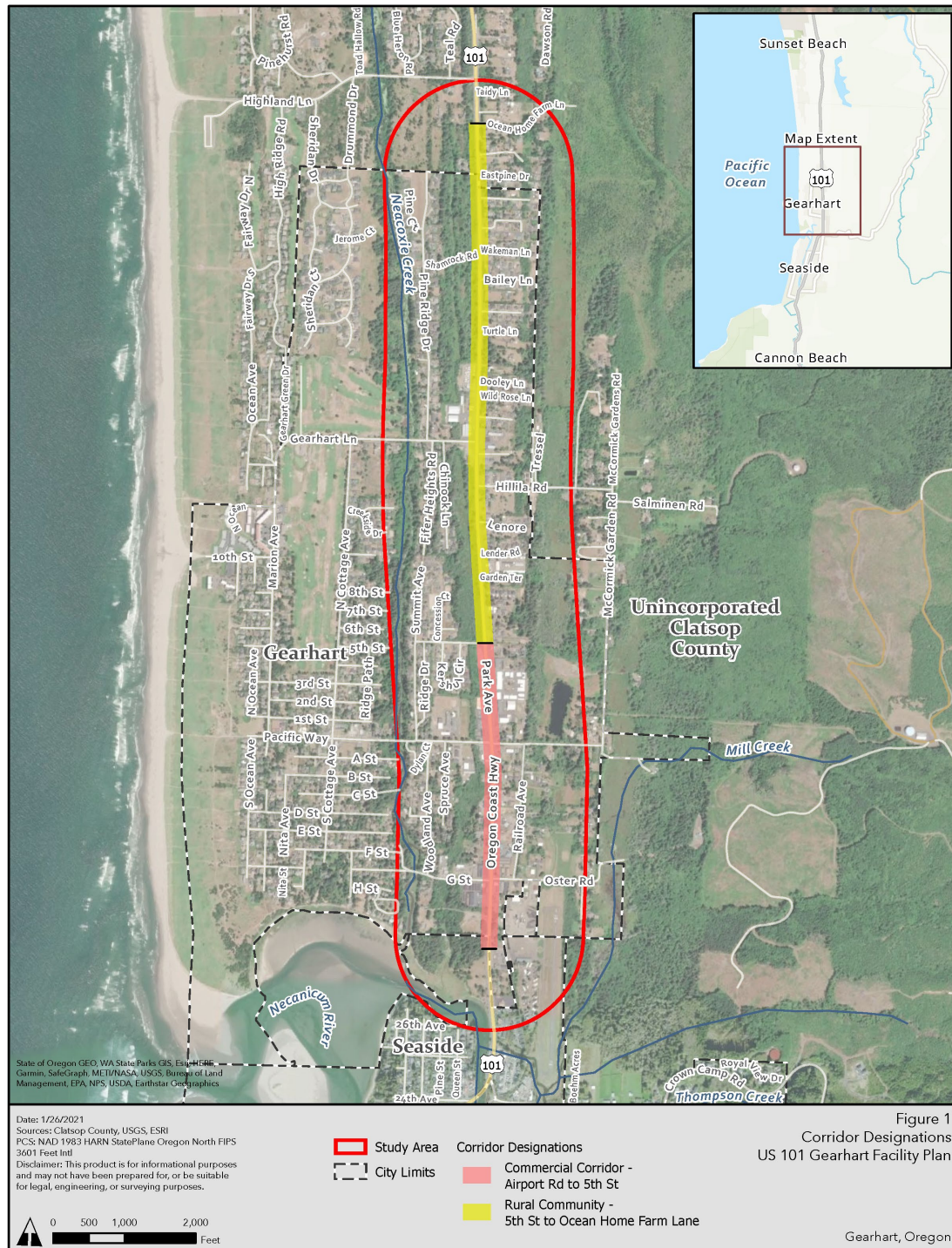


Figure 1. Urban Contexts on US 101 in Gearhart

The BUD describes general modal priorities for each urban context type, shown in Figure 2. These considerations are guidelines and specific modal recommendations will be determined during development of the Facility Plan.

Land Use Context	Motorist	Freight	Transit	Bicyclist	Pedestrian
Traditional Downtown/CBD	Low	Low	High	High	High
Urban Mix	Medium	Low	High	High	High
Commercial Corridor	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
Residential Corridor	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
Suburban Fringe	High	High	Varies	Low	Low
Rural Community	Medium	Medium	Varies	High	High

High: Highest level facility should be considered and prioritized over other modal treatments.

Medium: Design elements should be considered; trade-offs may exist based on desired outcomes and user needs.

Low: Incorporate design elements as space permits.

Figure 2. General Modal Considerations in Different Urban Contexts

Source: Blueprint for Urban Design

An additional consideration is the ODOT state highway designation (statewide, regional, etc.), but this is secondary to the urban context. US 101 is designated as a Statewide Highway. Statewide Highways typically provide inter-urban and inter-regional mobility and provide connections to larger urban areas, ports, and major recreation areas that are not directly served by Interstate Highways. A secondary function is to provide connections for intra-urban and intra-regional trips. These designated functions of US 101 will be balanced with the urban context and user needs to select the most appropriate design solutions for the corridor.

CORRIDOR VISION

Users

Primary users of the US 101 corridor through Gearhart include bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists, and transit users; travelers include a mix of residents, regional through-traffic, and tourists. Bicyclists ride along the Oregon Coast Bike Route through Gearhart, and pedestrians access businesses on both sides of the highway and hike along a portion of the Oregon Coast Trail that runs adjacent to US 101 south of G Street. Transit stops are located on US 101 near Pacific Way (northbound and southbound).

Vision

US 101 will be safe for all highway users, including people driving, walking, cycling, or waiting for the bus. The corridor's critical role serving regional traffic is balanced with changes that will calm traffic, increase highway safety, reduce flooding, and add visual appeal. As Gearhart's second

“Main Street,” people will feel both safe and comfortable accessing local businesses on foot or by bike.

Goals

The following goals reflect local goals expressed in the Gearhart TSP and guidance from the BUD. Stakeholder and public input helped to refine these goals before they were finalized.

1. Ensure that the US 101 corridor is safe and comfortable for everyone using the highway, including drivers, freight, and people who walk, cycle, use mobility devices, or take transit.
2. Design, operate, and maintain the US 101 corridor to align highway function with the evolving character of the surrounding community.
3. Address stormwater and flooding issues in the corridor that create hazards for all users.
4. Balance corridor travel needs so people and goods can affordably, reliably, and efficiently reach their destinations across all modes of travel.
5. Ensure that the US 101 corridor is convenient and accessible and connects people to destinations throughout the city and beyond.
6. Reduce transportation-related disparities and barriers along the US 101 corridor.
7. Protect the natural, cultural, and built environments with context-sensitive design solutions.