



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# AGENDA REQUEST AND STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** December 13, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding between Crook County, Deschutes County, and ODOT relating joint obligations to maintain and operate George Millican Road for freight use and accommodation.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

*Move to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between Crook County, Deschutes County, and ODOT relating joint obligations to maintain and operate George Millican Road for freight use and accommodation.*

**BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

George Millican Road (GMR) is a 30-mile county road which connects US 20 (near Millican) to OR 126, west of Prineville. Approximately 23 miles of the road is located in and within the jurisdiction of Crook County and the remaining 7 miles are under the jurisdiction of Deschutes County. GMR was fully extended in 2005 in a project spearheaded by Crook County, in partnership with Deschutes County, to primarily provide economic and freight connectivity to US 20 from Crook County.

Since 2005, GMR has succeeded in accommodating freight connectivity, not only for the benefitting communities, but also as a route which provides over-size load routing for freight moving thru the state of Oregon. As such, GMR serves a purpose that is vital to the freight industry and also provides an ability to bypass some inconvenient and congested urban areas with oversized loads.

In early 2021, ODOT, in consultation with the State's Mobility Advisory Committee (MAC), approached Crook and Deschutes counties with concerns expressed by the freight industry related to potential reduction in the ability to move large loads thru various roundabouts under consideration in the US 20 corridor in Deschutes County. In discussions and negotiations with freight representatives, the idea of a collective management strategy via a MOU was offered as a means to provide some assurance that GMR would continue to remain

an acknowledged freight route. In doing so, the freight community has withdrawn opposition to the roundabout project at US 20/Ward-Hamby, east of Bend.

The MOU between Crook, Deschutes, and ODOT has been prepared with the general and collective understanding that:

1. GMR is recognized as a route of significant importance to the freight community to accommodate oversize loads.
2. Crook and Deschutes will continue to maintain and operate GMR with the same level of service as presently provided.
3. All parties will communicate and collaborate on solutions if any project on GMR will result in a reduction in the vehicle carrying capacity of GMR (ie, reduction in over width, overweight, over length and over height).

In summary, the MOU memorializes and documents our current practices and understanding of the importance of GMR for freight accommodation, and pledges a level of communication with stakeholders should circumstances change in the future.

The Crook County Court approved the MOU at their December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**BUDGET IMPACTS:**

The MOU will not increase maintenance or operating expense beyond what is currently provided.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Chris Doty, Road Department