

CITY OF COOS BAY CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
November 18, 2025	5.a

TO: Mayor Benetti, Council President DiNovo, and City Councilors

FROM: Jennifer Wirsing, Public Works Director

THROUGH: Nichole Rutherford, City Manager

ISSUE: Consideration to Submit Testimony to the ODOT Speed Zone Review Panel

SUMMARY:

At the November 4, 2025 meeting, Council approved to appeal ODOT's recommendation to reduce the speed limit from 45 to 40 miles per hour, along Highway 101 from Fir Street to the northern city limits . Now, Council will discuss how they want to approach the hearing for the Speed Zone Review Panel, what materials, if any, will be presented, and who should attend.

ACTION REQUESTED:

If it pleases Council, provide staff direction on how the Council wishes to participate in the ODOT Speed Zone Review Panel hearing.

BACKGROUND:

At the November 4, 2025, Council Meeting, Council approved a motion to appeal the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) speed study that recommended the speed limit along Highway 101 between Fir and the Coos Bay/North Bend city limits be reduced from 45 to 40 miles per hour (mph). This motion is in line with the North Bend City Council who also wanted a speed limit lower than 40 mph in their jurisdiction from the Coos Bay/North Bend city limits to the southern entrance to their downtown district. Because the two cities did not concur with the ODOT speed study, the case will now be presented to the Speed Zone Review Panel where a hearing will be held on December 9, 2025 at 1:00 pm in Salem to resolve the contested speed zone. Attendance at the hearing can be virtually via Microsoft Teams or in person. Attendance from either city is not mandatory, but it is highly encouraged according to an ODOT representative. If the city is unable to attend any previous correspondence outlining the city's reasons for the appeal, as well as any new information the City would like to submit, can be presented by an ODOT representative on the city's behalf. However, if the city chooses to send a representative to provide testimony, the review panel will first hear ODOT's staff presentation and then it will be followed by any input from the local jurisdiction and then any input from the public. After the presentation, testimony, and public input is received, the hearings panel will then deliberate and make a final decision.

Staff was unsure on what approach Council would like to take on this issue. Staff has prepared a draft statement/testimony but understands the Council may want a different approach. The city can provide written and/or verbal testimony. Supporting materials, such as a PowerPoint presentation or other documents are also allowed. Any electronic materials that the Council wishes to present must be provided to ODOT two weeks in advance of the meeting. According to ODOT staff, the city's presentation can be as simple as reading a prepared statement or as detailed as a formal presentation, whichever the city prefers. Staff is requesting guidance from Council on the following:

1. Does Council want to submit testimony? If yes, Staff has presented a draft testimonial for consideration.
2. Do members of the Council want to attend the hearing in person and/or virtually? Or direct staff to attend?

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

None

ATTACHMENT(S):

- HWY101 Speed Study Limits Exhibit
- Draft Testimony for Speed Zone Review Panel 2025-12-09