

# REVISION FLORENCE

## Florence Urban Renewal Agency



### **Introduction:**

After over three years of planning and two years of construction, the Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA), the City of Florence, and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) completed construction on a large-scale streetscape project, extending along Highway 101 from the Siuslaw River Bridge to Highway 126, as well as east on Highway 126 to Spruce Street.

In 2014, ODOT alerted the City of Florence on their intent to repave a portion of Highway 101. From this introduction to the project, the idea of ReVision Florence was born. By reinvesting and expanding the

project from just a repaving project to a whole re-visioning of what our City's Highway 101 corridor could look like, the Urban Renewal Agency improved our community's first impressions to the over one million people who visit Florence and the Central Oregon Coast every year.

Elements included in the final scope of the project were sidewalks, bike lanes, defined parking, landscaping, plazas, ADA improvements, street and pedestrian lighting, undergrounding utilities, and repaving Highway 101 and Highway 126.

ReVision Florence has been a regionally significant project for Florence and Western Lane County. In Lane County, Florence and Highway 101 serve as the gateway to the Pacific Ocean and other coastal recreational opportunities for visitors. This project helped Florence attract repeat visitors to our area and has served as a vital economic development catalyst for Highway 101.

### **Project Goals:**

The primary goals of ReVision Florence included:

- Reinvestment in the Highway 101 District
- Promotion of Job Growth and Job Creation
- Realignment of the Corridor with the Community's Character
- Promotion of Tourism and Expansion of Tourist Areas
- Pedestrian, Bicyclist, and Vehicular Safety in the Corridor
- Maintenance of Freight Mobility

### **Project Funding:**

The Florence Urban Renewal Agency, ODOT, Lane County, and other State and Federal funds came together to make this project a reality. The project's total costs were over \$8.5 Million, with a little under \$1.3 Million for the paving. With advocacy from City and Urban Renewal leaders of the importance of the project, the project was supported with more than half of the total project costs coming from outside agencies.

### **Public Involvement:**

Since the earliest days of the project, the public was encouraged to participate in the project. In addition to the Agency's monthly public meetings, the FURA hosted two open houses, a final design open house (April 2018) and a pre-construction open house (February 2019).

Both meetings were well attended, with well over one-hundred community members at each meeting. Staff from the FURA, ODOT and the design firm were present to answer questions and calm any concerns from Florence's citizens.





## **Business Support:**

A large streetscape project is not easy for businesses to endure, and the City of Florence made sure the project was as painless as possible for our businesses along the ReVision project corridor.

At the pre-construction open house, Urban Renewal staff released the [ReVision Florence Construction Survival Guide](#) with information about the project and information for business owners. Copies were distributed to every business in the corridor and copies were available to the public at Florence Public Works, Florence Justice Center, and the Chamber of Commerce offices.

Additionally, FURA created signs telling business patrons how to access businesses and "Open For Business!" signs that local businesses could proudly display in their windows.

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## **Placemaking:**

A key component of the project was the addition of gateway treatments to Florence's Old Town. These gateways direct visitors off of the highway into Historic Old Town. Gateways include signage, public art, landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

In addition to the gateway landmarks, the new light poles allow for banners and flower baskets. Since the project has now concluded, the Chamber of Commerce has installed additional flower baskets to the ReVision streetscape which were not there previously. In addition, the Chamber of Commerce recently released a call-to-artists to find a banner design that will encourage visitors to stop, shop, eat, and play in Florence!



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## **Results of Project:**

The overarching goal of the ReVision Florence project was to re-vision what the Highway 101 and Highway 126 corridor could be, transforming the multi-lane highway into an authentic and visually appealing first impression to locals and visitors alike. Since the project's conclusion, the City has seen new businesses want to move into the area, including a new full-service salon, a gift shop, a games shop, and a boba tea drinks shop. Additionally, construction is starting soon on a

new car wash and coffee kiosk that will re-vision a large empty property in the heart of the ReVision project.

The City of Florence has also seen an influx of tourism since the conclusion of the ReVision Florence project, with over 12% increase in Transient Room Tax (TRT) collected in 2020 and 2021 over the same months in 2018 and 2019.



With the additional growth seen from the project in the urban renewal area, the Urban Renewal Agency created a *predevelopment services grants program* available to any business in the FURA boundaries. This program will assist businesses who need additional funding to assess the feasibility of projects within the area. This grant program is in addition to the previously created *redevelopment assistance grant program* that was created prior to the ReVision Florence program and updated in 2020.

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## **More Information on ReVision Florence:**

<https://www.ci.florence.or.us/urbanrenewal/revision-florence>

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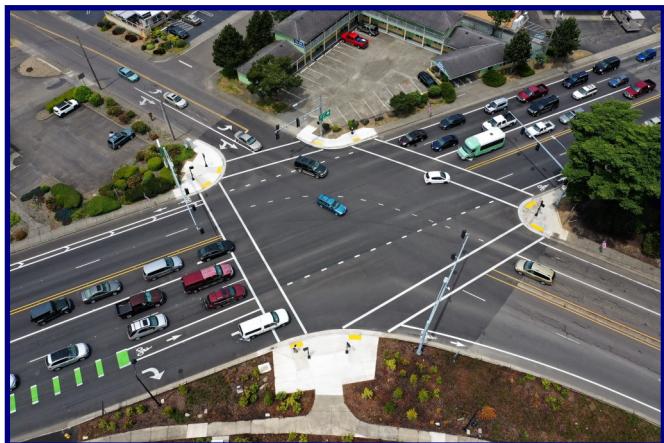
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