

Bike lanes won't fit on WW Road improvement project

Budget constraints will mean reduced shoulder widths

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The Star-News

Designated bike lanes cannot fit on the planned renovation of 7.5 miles of Warren Wagon Road north of McCall, a public meeting on the project was told last week.

The bike lane were in the project when a previous public meeting was held in February 2015, but the high cost of widening the road has meant taking the paths out, according to Dan Slanina of the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The news was delivered during a presentation on the project held last week at the Payette National Forest headquarters building in McCall.

The project, due to start in 2018, has a budget of \$11 million to improve the section of the road, which begins about two miles from McCall and ends with the intersection of East Side Drive north of

Payette Lake.

The road is narrow, the pavement is deteriorating and there is danger from rocks falling from the hillside along the road, according to a federal study of the road.

During the 2015 meeting, engineers said they had hoped to include defined bicycle lanes or shoulders as wide as four feet as part of the project. But new costs estimates of widening the road to fit the paths ate too far into the budget, Slanina said.

"Every foot that we add is going to be over a million dollars," he said.

The current plan is to have shoulders that are three feet wide, but even that width might be reduced in sections, Slanina said.

One More Meeting

At least one more public meeting will be planned on the design, which is scheduled to be finished by the end of 2017.

See **LANES**, Page A-2

design," he said.

Bicycle lanes have never been part of the project, said Doug Hecox, a spokesperson for the Federal Lands Highway Division.

"The original project funding request is for only one-foot shoulders up to East Side Drive," Hecox said. "However, because of the bike/pedestrian use along the project corridor, we are trying to provide more shoulder width that can reasonably be built along this portion."

Valley County commissioners tried to get bicycle lanes added to the project when it was proposed for funding, commission Chair Gordon Cruickshank said Tuesday.

"(Their) response was the funding would only do the roadway rehab," Cruickshank said. "If Valley County wanted to add bike lanes the estimate was another \$8 million to \$10 million."

Commissioners asked that the shoulders of the project be widened as much as possible instead of designated paths, he said.

For information about the project, contact Daniel Slanina at Daniel.slanina@dot.gov or (360) 619-7617.

Lanes

(Continued from Page A-1)

"That's what we're looking to you for, to help with the

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