

A note from the Panoramic Access Special Road District

Dear Panoramic property owners:

As many of you already know, serious talks are underway regarding improving our roads. These discussions are taking place both among neighbors and at the monthly Road District meetings. We want to assure everyone that no decisions have been made. We are currently gathering information and evaluating options.

Ideas being discussed include traditional asphalt paving, applying a product called Otta Seal, improving the roads with additional gravel and continuing with the current road surface. All options have strengths and weaknesses. None is perfect, and the Board, as well as the newly formed Road Improvement Committee, is weighing them all.

Otta Seal constitutes a middle ground, so to speak, between asphalt paving and gravel. It involves compacted layers of gravel and a specially formulated oil product and results in a hard, smooth and durable surface. It is being used successfully in several areas around Central Oregon and is used worldwide, especially in Scandinavia.

The Board has heard from many property owners and participation in meetings has increased. Now is the time to get involved to insure your ideas or concerns are addressed. Some owners are concerned about the cost of such a project and worried about increased property taxes. There is no question that any change in the status quo, even upgrading gravel surfaces, will come with a bill.

The Board is very sensitive to these concerns – and details regarding costs and financing are currently our top priority. As information is gathered, it will be delivered in a timely way to all property owners. The Board will undertake informal polls to gauge interest and concerns among owners. Public meetings will be held, and before any decisions are made property owners will be polled by mail ballot. This may happen several times to reach consensus on the way forward. Before any actual work is started, we will need to make a decision on how to allocate costs and notify all property owners about their portion of the cost. At this point we will need to hold a public hearing and allow property owners to file objections to the plan. As you can see, you will have many opportunities to make sure your needs and concerns are addressed by the Board.

The Board expects to have to borrow the funds required to be paid back over ten years. Under state law, property owners will have the option to pay the assessment in a lump sum or to make annual payments over a period of years. Our goal is to spread the costs equally among all property owners.

It is clear from discussions we have had with several Sisters-area real estate brokers that the *market value* of all of our properties will increase with some form of

hardened surface. This does not mean Oregon property taxes will increase. State law specifically forbids increases in *assessed value* and therefore property taxes due to improvements such as these. We have contacted the Deschutes County Assessor's office and have been assured this information is correct.

The Board sincerely invites ideas, comments and opinions of all Panoramic property owners. Board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m at the Oregon Department of Forestry fire station at 16721 Pine Tree Lane off Highway 126 between Camp Polk Road and Sisters. We encourage everyone interested in the process to attend Board meetings to add input and keep up to date on the process.

The Board has set up the Road Improvement Committee, chaired by Jim Becker, to investigate: (1) road improvement options, their pros and cons, and their cost – both the initial investment and the annual maintenance; (2) options for financing any planned improvements; and (3) outreach to property owners to gauge the level of support and to address any questions or concerns. We are inviting all property owners to join the Road Improvement Committee – or least come and make your preferences, questions and concerns known to the committee.

Lastly, the unfortunate fact of projects such as this is that, no matter what we end up doing in the end, some people will be left disappointed. The board is working hard to facilitate open discussion and research, through the Road Improvement Committee and regular monthly board meetings. We solicit the participation of all property owners. We strongly desire that this process will be driven by the owners, and not board members personal opinions. The Board has an obligation to represent and act upon the wishes of the Panoramic community. The Board will take no action unless it is supported by a majority of property owners.

Sincerely,

Panoramic Access Special Road District Board of Commissioners

Nyle Head, President

Annie Wittenberg, Treasurer

Lee Lucas, Secretary

P.S. The Board will continue to keep you all informed on the project via the mail. We also send out regular, informal, updates and meeting minutes via email. Please send us your email address to receive these email updates. Send to: panoramicroads@gmail.com

In addition, our website is now up and running and documents such as this letter and meeting agendas and minutes are being uploaded. Please view at: www.panoramicroads.org