

**ACEC/ITD Highway Leadership Team (HILT)**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**January 7, 2026**  
**1:00 – 2:00 PM**  
**C3 Salmon River Conference Room & TEAMS**

**\*Notes**

*Attendees (ITD): Jason B, Amy S, Jesse B, Dave K, Jason M, Monica C, Todd H, Doral H, Mohsen A, Mike J (remote)*

*Attendees (Consultants): Justin W, Tim B, Paul W, John R, Dan J, Bob B, Ryan V, Jeremy R, Paul A, Rob C, Heather C (remote), Molly L*

**1. Introducing Chief Deputy, Dave Kuisti and other leadership changes**

*i. Dave K provided an update on changes at ITD:*

- 1. Dan McElhinney departed the department in November.*
- 2. Dave Kuisti is the new Chief Deputy Director (and acting Chief Engineer)*
- 3. Dave K will now participate in House and Senate committee presentations at the start of the Legislative Session this month.*
- 4. Another Division Administrator position is open*
- 5. Damon Allen (D1 District Engineer) is retiring January 16, 2026. An announcement of replacement is expected by the end of January.*
- 6. Amy Schroeder is the Division Administrator overseeing the Planning, Public Involvement, Public Transportation, and TECM sections.*
- 7. Mike Johnson is still the State Bridge Engineer and also Division Administrator overseeing the Bridge, Environmental, Asset Management, and Right of Way sections.*

**2. Appreciation for allowing Consultants to use certified wage rates; Feedback about implementation**

*i. ITD Feedback on change:*

- 1. The initial sticking points, such as consultants implementing more pay changes, were addressed once ITD staff understood that the change was primary to reduce issues with administration.*
- 2. The change has cleared up some issues, but some districts are still seeing a lot of back and forth with consultants regarding billings.*

**2. Consultant Engagement in Program Delivery Conference.**

- i. District 4 (Jesse B) is leading the conference scheduled for April 7-9*

1. *ITD is discussing doing a “Poster Session” on projects on ITD highways or other innovative projects for both ITD staff and consultant community. It will facilitate mixing, mingling, and networking. May be first/last hour of the day on one day. ITD will let ACEC know when a decision has been made.*
  - a. *ACEC suggestions and recommendations*
    - i. *ACEC recommended that ITD give ACEC at least 45 days of notice to get the word out to members so they can prepare.*
    - ii. *ACEC suggested that it would also be helpful if ITD could provide guidance on number of attendees from each firm for the session and if there is a limit to the number of posters.*
    - iii. *ACEC offered to help with refreshment costs if desired.*
  - b. *ITD indicated that the room is relatively large*
2. *The conference is for ITD staff with consultants invited only for specific training purposes.*
3. *Conference theme: “Clue”.*

### **3. Individual DE Updates and Priorities**

- i. *District 2 (Doral H)*
  1. *The district is monitoring potential impacts from the state budget deficit.*
  2. *The district has relied significantly on the consultant community to help train staff on projects, but those staff are more experienced now and able to do more work.*
  3. *The district is planning to have junior staff serving as the project manager with consultants handling specialized project tasks (traffic, structures, etc.).*
  4. *Doral also mentioned some notable accounting back and forth between the DCOM and consultants related to the certified wage rates and intends to get an updated report on the invoicing and details in the coming months.*
- ii. *District 3 (Jason B)*
  1. *Most work is associated with design and construction groups.*
  2. *Hiring has shifted to be easier to hire engineers, but more difficult to hire construction technicians.*
  3. *The district has had a tough time staffing all the jobs with inspectors.*
  4. *Some major projects include the Snake River Bridge, Rainbow Bridge, Banks intersection, and others will need major construction help.*

5. *There are some future projects that may lead to design work coming up including the I-84 mobility study recommendations for projects (such as auxiliary) which maybe be in the \$100M range for construction.*
  6. *Interest by developers for using STAR projects has increased. May see legislation to raise maximum amount.*
  7. *Additionally, development outside of the urban area (e.g. Mayfield Springs between Boise and Mountain Home) may impact project needs.*
- iii. *District 4 (Jesse B)*
1. *The district staff appreciate consultant visits before Christmas.*
  2. *Travis Hitchcock was promoted to lead project delivery along with Doug Yearsley.*
  3. *Resident project managers will be under the same manager.*
  4. *The district is still having challenges hiring engineers.*
  5. *The district is relying heavily on consultants for engineering.*
  6. *The district is ramping up testing and inspection capabilities.*
  7. *Connie in the environmental section retired leaving them with big shoes to fill and may need assistance from the consultant community to backfill in the environmental side.*
- iv. *District 5 (Todd H)*
1. *One more year remaining for the heavy construction at the interchanges.*
  2. *Afterwards, it is expected to get back to normal workload.*
  3. *The district is fully staffed in all the design and construction sections with a mix of new and experienced staff.*
  4. *Design for most projects is done in-house with consultants doing specialty work.*
- v. *District 6 (Jason M)*
1. *The district has used a lot of over-the-shoulder training from consultants. Design staff are new and need to get experience.*
  2. *New projects are becoming simpler as compared with past projects.*
  3. *Projects include a couple environmental studies.*

## **ITD TOPICS:**

### **1. FY26 and FY27 Revenue Projections**

- a. *Amy S provided summary of budget projections ITD has been working on.*
  - i. *Strategic Initiatives are from general funds. The \$165M (60% of the \$275M state transfer last year) was in budget projections and all 7-years of the ITIP. That money is primarily dedicated to safety and capacity projects and is vulnerable due to the projected state deficit.*

- ii. Discussions in the legislature are expected to be about Strategic Initiatives funds being used to balance budget.*
  - 1. FY 26 has a targeted holdback of \$45 million, which can be met from reserves and bond match, allowing ITD to advertise all FY26 construction projects programmed in this fiscal year.*
  - 2. Some safety and capacity projects might be on hold this year until bonds become available.*
  - 3. In any case, ITD is scenario planning in case there is a revenue drop in FY27.*
    - a. The annual TECM pay-as-you-go may be used to continue to keep ITIP projects moving forward instead of being tied up in debt service.*
- iii. During community and legislative outreach, ITD continues to hear a strong desire to continue the mobility and expansion projects, so we are optimistic that transportation funding will rebound.*
- b. ITD will know more as the session progresses.*