Record of Decision signed for Newberg-Dundee Bypass Project

NEWBERG—A major milestone was reached for the Newberg-Dundee Bypass Project when the federal government signed the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Tier 2 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The Oregon Department of Transportation was notified of the document’s signing on June 6 by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Receiving the ROD signals the end of the Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement Process (NEPA), and is the official federal approval that allows the project to move into final design and construction. While the Bypass calls for an 11-mile, four lane, access-controlled expressway around the cities of Newberg and Dundee, construction will be phased beginning with Phase I starting sometime during the next year. Phase I will be a two-lane route from OR 219 southeast of Newberg to OR 99W southwest of Dundee.

With the phased in approach and expected funding, ODOT has been able to accelerate construction from a projected start of April 2016 to sometime in 2013 or earlier. Much of the right of way (ROW) has been acquired for Phase I and design work is well under way. In addition, Phase 1 has received $192 million from the Oregon Legislature’s Jobs and Transportation Act (JTA) and is nearly fully funded now.

Because of the size and complexity of the project, the environmental process was divided into tiers. The Tier 2 environmental process began around 2005-6 following the completion of the Tier 1 process and ROD in August 2005. The federally required environmental process for the project began around 2000.

Phase I is expected to significantly reduce traffic congestion on OR 99W in Newberg and Dundee, and improve the safety and livability in both communities. The date for the start of construction of Phase I could be announced within the next three months.