UPCOMING MEETINGS

Interchange Area Management Plan Meetings

In November 2006, ODOT expects that Stakeholder Working Group meetings will be held to help develop the Dayton, East Dundee, Oregon 219 and East Newberg Interchange Area Management Plans (IAMPs).

For the latest information on the Newberg-Dundee Bypass and IAMP meetings, visit the project web site at:

www.newbergdundeebypass.org/getinvolved/
or contact Lauren Golden at (503) 963-7017 or lgolden@parametrix.com.

BYPASS PROJECT UPDATE

On August 4, ODOT took the Bypass and interchange design options that the community helped us create to the Project Oversight Steering Team (POST), a group of locally elected officials and other community members who provide advice to ODOT on the project. The POST agreed that ODOT had selected the most appropriate options to study in detail in the Design Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Design DEIS), and added one additional design option. On September 19, the design options were presented to a group of state and federal agency representatives (known as the Collaborative Environmental and Transportation Agreement on Streamlining or CETAS) and also received their verbal concurrence on the design options.

The Newberg-Dundee Bypass Alternatives Screening report is available that presents and summarizes these design options and can be found on the project’s web site: www.newbergdundeebypass.org/maps.

NEXT STEPS

With the design options selected, ODOT has begun the process of analyzing their impacts through the Design DEIS process. Once the impacts are identified, ODOT will present this information to state and federal agencies and the public for comment. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for early Fall 2007. This process will conclude with the selection of a single design option, called the Preferred Alternative, which ODOT will seek to fund and build.

You can learn about additional opportunities to be involved, and more about the Bypass, at www.newbergdundeebypass.org.
ENVIROMENTAL WORK CONTINUES

ODOT is required to analyze the impacts to the built and natural environment that would result from each of the Bypass design options. This analysis will address the project’s effects in areas ranging from air quality to endangered species. Rachel Rounds, a wildlife biologist is one of those whose job it is to analyze these impacts.

“This is Willamette wet prairie,” says Rachel Rounds, gesturing towards a meadow of grasses in southern Dundee, “much of the Willamette River valley used to look like this.” Rounds puts a ruler next to a tiny, pink flower in bloom throughout the field, noting that it is a Meadow Checkermallow, a native prairie species in the Willamette Valley.

After snapping a photo of the flower and recording the finding, Rounds walks into the prairie to test soil samples. “This might be a wetland,” she says, examining the soil, “but we’ll have to come back during the rainy season to really see how wet it is during the winter.”

Rounds and a crew of biologists, botanists, and wetland scientists have been doing field work for the past six months throughout the Bypass project area, recording observations about wildlife habitat, wetlands, rare plants, creeks, and streams. With this background information in place, they are ready to analyze the impacts of the selected design options (see front page article, Bypass Project Update). Their work, and the work of others, will ultimately be used by transportation engineers to design roadways and bridges that minimize environmental and community impacts.

STRATEGIC PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS BEGIN

The Federal Highway Administration has authorized ODOT to begin strategic property acquisition for the Bypass project. The full property (or right of way) acquisition program is expected to begin after the Preferred Bypass Design Alternative is approved, which is anticipated in Fall 2008.

ODOT’s Melissa Mallott, Senior Right of Way Project Manager, is managing the acquisition of the right of way needed to complete the Newberg-Dundee Bypass project. It is ODOT’s aim to protect all parties’ rights under the Federal Uniform Relocation Act while acquiring the right of way for this project.

“I know how important a workable solution for the congestion is to local residents,” said Mallott, “I look forward to working with the communities involved to help make the solutions a reality.”

The state is empowered to acquire private property for public use, while also protecting the rights of the individual property owners. Thus, ODOT has a dual responsibility. It is to recognize and protect the individuals who are affected by acquisition of land, as well as provide competent, efficient, and cost effective service to the public.

ODOT is required by state and federal law to provide Just Compensation to property owners for right of way acquisition. Just Compensation is determined through an impartial appraisal or market value determination process, and includes payment for land to be acquired and buildings and other improvements that are impacted by the project. ODOT also provides relocation assistance and determines and pays relocation benefits as appropriate under federal law.

If you have questions about relocation or about the acquisition of property for the Bypass, please contact:

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