



Questions and Answers: Sunrise Corridor Transportation Improvement Project

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1. What is the Sunrise Corridor Transportation Improvement Project? The Sunrise Corridor is a proposed new highway corridor that would provide a direct connection between I-205 and US Highway 26 in Clackamas County. Two separate sections of the proposed corridor have been discussed over the years and are currently in different phases of planning, the Sunrise Project and the Sunrise Parkway.

The Sunrise Project is a proposed six-lane, limited-access highway stretching over five miles along the OR 212/224 corridor between I-205 and Rock Creek Junction. The purpose of this project is to address traffic congestion and safety problems in the corridor. The project also would serve the major truck and freight distribution center in the Clackamas Industrial Area, one of Oregon's busiest and most critical trucking centers, and a major link that connects the State's farms, urban markets, and ports. The OR 212/224 corridor currently carries more than 60,000 vehicles per day. Trucks generate more than 12% of this traffic.

The Sunrise Project is currently the subject of a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) that will be completed in late 2007. More information about the project may be found at:
www.deainc.com/sunrise/background.html.

The Sunrise Parkway is a proposed four-lane, limited-access parkway stretching eight miles further east along Highway 212 corridor, from Rock Creek Junction to US Highway 26, to serve the newly incorporated City of Damascus, as well as route regional through-traffic outside the Damascus Town Center. The project was examined in conjunction with the recently completed Damascus/Boring Concept Plan. The Concept Plan will be refined in the City of Damascus' Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan. The Sunrise Parkway would likely require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement within the next few years. The project also would serve traffic from future development in Damascus, as well as the growing need in the area for access to the State highway system. The Damascus/Boring Concept Plan findings and recommendations may be found at:
www.co.clackamas.or.us/dtd/Ingplan/damascus/.

2. What is the funding obstacle to building the project? There are no currently identified public funding resources for constructing the Sunrise Project, the Sunrise Parkway, or any other transportation projects of this magnitude. By taking a public-private partnership approach, ODOT is able to enlist the private partner, the Oregon Transportation Improvement Group (“OTIG”), in taking some of the upfront financial risks.

3. Why is ODOT considering tolling this facility? Because there is no public funding available, ODOT is looking at tolling as a possible option for funding construction, operation and maintenance of new, large projects such as the Sunrise Project. In 1999 the Legislature next directed ODOT to examine tolling as a way to help pay for new roads (ORS 366.292). During the next several months, OTIG and ODOT will be examining the potential use of tolling as one of several possible funding mechanisms for this project. Public input will be sought on all options put forward.

4. Why was an Australian firm chosen? OTIG’s principal partner, Macquarie, has extensive experience in bringing major, unfunded transportation projects to successful completion. They are currently developing the Sea-to-Sky Project in British Columbia that will be built for the 2010 Winter Olympics, and South Bay Expressway in San Diego, a project that had been books for years. They have worldwide experience operating tolling facilities. Macquarie recently acquired the operating rights to the Chicago Skyway for \$1.9 Billion and the Dulles Greenway in Virginia for \$533 million, two facilities in major metropolitan areas funded through tolling.

If the Sunrise Project is approved for construction through this public-private partnership, OTIG will obtain bids from firms to be the design-construction contractor. This will allow US firms to bid and will assure highly competitive pricing for the project. It will also provide economic benefits to the community and region.

5. Is it true that Macquarie is being paid \$20 million – what’s this for? No. Oregon Transportation Improvement Group has agreed to bear the cost of conducting the pre-development studies, and it was their willingness to do so that was a key point in their proposal. ODOT has set aside an amount not to exceed \$20 million for *possible* reimbursement for the cost of conducting the pre-development studies if ODOT or Oregon Transportation Improvement Group decide not to proceed with any of the projects – Sunrise Project, the South I-205 Corridor, or the Newberg-Dundee Bypass. None of the \$20 million will be reimbursed if the projects move successfully into implementation. And actually, total pre-development costs for the three individual projects are estimated at over \$26 million, but ODOT’s risk is capped at \$20 million. ODOT’s maximum exposure for the Sunrise Project is \$10 million, and these are funds ODOT would have had to spend anyway to do the necessary research on the project.

6. Are environmental impacts being considered (streams, wetlands, etc.)?

Yes. Addressing environmental needs is a major component of any transportation project, including the Sunrise Project. ODOT will comply with all of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, including analyzing reasonable alternatives. This requires an extensive look at the impacts on fish, wildlife, waterways and wetlands, and ODOT is nationally recognized for its environmentally sensitive management practices.

7. What is the impact on existing homes and businesses?

If the Sunrise Project goes forward, it is anticipated that some properties may be acquired. If property is acquired for the Project, just compensation is determined and paid. In many cases, relocation benefits are also determined and paid, including advising the tenants of options.

8. Why is this good for Clackamas County?

OTIG is providing its own time and expertise to determine the technical and financial feasibility of constructing the Sunrise Project much sooner than it would have been possible under the normal public sector funding process. Thus, there is a very strong incentive for OTIG to complete its work as early as possible — which could ultimately bring the benefits of less traffic congestion through this corridor much sooner than could happen through the normal processes.