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WILLAMETTE VALLEY ROUNDUP

BY NATHALIE WEINSTEIN

Ground-breaking set for \$187M bridge project in Eugene

The largest bridge project to result from the Oregon Transportation Investment Act's bridge delivery program will kick off in Eugene next week.

After shear cracks were found on the bridge, which brings Interstate 5 over the Willamette River in the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area, it was restricted and finally decommissioned in 2004 when a temporary bridge structure was erected. Now, the Oregon Department of Transportation will move forward with construction of a new, permanent structure.

"The current bridge is at the end of its useful life," project spokesman Todd Hartman said. "We're going to tear down the old structure and build up the new one. A design is in place and we're beginning on the construction phase this fall."

Hamilton Construction, in partnership with Slayden Construction, will be the general contractor for the project, which is projected to cost more than \$187 million. It is expected to be completed in winter 2012.

A ground-breaking ceremony for the new bridge is set for Tuesday at 10 a.m. under Franklin Boulevard; parking is available at the former Motor Pool at 3233 Franklin Blvd. Sen. Ron Wyden and Rep. Peter DeFazio will attend. For more information on the project, visit www.willamettebridge.org.