I-5: Iowa Street
Viaduct Replacement Project

Project Background

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is replacing the two Interstate 5 viaducts that cross over a ravine near SW Iowa Street in Southwest Portland. The project is at milepost 298 on I-5, just north of the Terwilliger curves. Project construction began in August 2010 and is scheduled to be completed in 2014. ODOT appreciates your patience during this project work, which can often be noisy and inconvenient.

The decks of the I-5 Iowa viaducts were in very poor condition and there was the need for seismic upgrades. ODOT's bridge maintenance unit had done several patching projects on the deck. The patches were not a permanent repair and continued to fail as new cracks appeared. This project replaces the old viaduct structures.

The original viaducts were completed in 1957, with three lanes in each direction and three-foot shoulders. The new viaducts will maintain three lanes in each direction. Safety will be improved with 12-foot shoulders, wider center medians, higher concrete barrier, and retaining walls along the east and west sides of the freeway. Following construction of the viaducts, the walking trail passing under the viaducts will be rebuilt to City of Portland trail standards.

Northbound Bridge Demolition and New Bridge Construction

The demolition of the northbound bridge was completed over the winter and construction of the new structure is underway. Construction of the new northbound structure will continue through the summer and fall of 2012. Once the structure is complete, northbound traffic will shift onto the new structure.

A view of the viaduct project area

A view of the northbound bridge being demolished in early 2012

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An artist's rendering of the Oregon Basalt retaining wall

Retaining Wall Façade and Construction

ODOT asked the community for feedback on potential wall treatments for the retaining walls in the project area. We attended several public forums and events, and used an online survey to seek input about possible wall treatments. Over 400 people provided feedback about the retaining wall treatments. We appreciate the community participation and are pleased to announce that the Oregon Basalt wall treatment will be used on all publicly visible retaining walls for this project.

In addition to the large and visible retaining walls on the west side of I-5, there are several retaining walls of varying size that are being constructed on the east side. These walls generally range from a couple of feet in height to about 10 feet high.

Contact Information

To join the project mailing list or schedule a meeting about the project, contact:

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503-731-3490

Tree Planting

ODOT has worked with the City of Portland to minimize the impact of tree removal in the ODOT right-of-way. Approximately 2,150 native trees and more than 3,000 native shrubs will be planted along the freeway to mitigate the tree removal - this is more than twice the number that were removed. Tree species to be planted include Grand Fir, Big Leaf Maple, Red Alder, Black Hawthorn and Douglas Fir. New shrubs include Vine Maple, Ocean-spray, Indian Plum and Red Elderberry.

Stormwater facility and tree plantings at the Corbett Street exit

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