

US 26: Wildwood-Wemme Project EA Construction Impacts

A specific construction-staging plan has not been developed at this point. Such plans are not typically developed until the details of the alternative receive further planning and engineering. The purpose of this report is to identify and highlight the major elements of construction that could be expected with the US 26: Wildwood-Wemme Project, and to describe *in concept* how the Build Alternative or the Widen to the North Alternative is likely to be constructed. More detailed construction planning would be done during the Preliminary and Final Design stages of the project's development, after the Environmental Assessment (EA) and subsequent Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) are completed.

There are two alternatives being considered in the Environmental Assessment, the No-Build and the Widen to the North Alternatives. There would be no construction impacts with the No-Build Alternative.

When the final staging plan is developed it will provide for the following, to the greatest extent practicable:

- Construction of new road elements in such a way as to minimize traffic disruptions.
- Continued access to residents and businesses throughout construction.
- Minimizing construction-related impacts on neighborhoods including traffic, air quality and noise impacts.

Overall Construction Schedule

Widening of Highway 26 from Wildwood to Wemme to include a center turn lane and increase shoulder width could begin as early as the summer of 2007, but it will more likely be in the fall of 2007. The project is anticipated be constructed in three main phases. The 3 main project phases would include:

- Site Preparation

The first phase of project construction would include the removal of trees to the construction limits and the relocation of all impacted utilities. The tree removal will coincide with all necessary environmental regulatory constraints as defined in the EA such as the Migratory Bird Act dates which typically are late fall through winter. This phase of construction could take approximately 6 months to a year, depending on various factors.

- Site Construction

The second phase of construction would include the earth moving actives that would shape the new road prism and deal with storm water collection and treatment. This phase would also include all base coat paving, temporary striping, sign and safety guardrail installations, driveway reconstructions, and the reconstructing of intersecting roads that serve the adjacent residential areas. This phase of construction would be expected to take approximately 18 months.

- Pavement Preservation.

The third phase of construction includes the final paving overlay of the Wildwood-Wemme Project along with three other adjacent segments of US 26, all together totaling approximately 10 miles in length. The pavement preservation will encompass this project by installing the final roadway wearing surface on the area of new construction and overlaying the existing travel lanes, center turn lanes, and shoulders, as part of the overall 10-mile preservation project. This phase of construction could take approximately 6 months.

Timing of Construction Activities

Construction work could occur on a year round basis, although it could be difficult to do construction activities in the winter months due to the possibility of snow or other severe winter weather conditions in the area. In order to minimize the traffic impacts some work activities could be scheduled during low traffic times, such as during the off season for winter sports that occur on Mt Hood. Certain activities, such as paving are particularly difficult to complete during the winter months and will be performed during the summer seasons.

Lane Closures and Narrowing of Lanes

A specific construction-staging plan has not been developed for this project yet. The construction staging plan will be developed after the EA process is complete and the design of the project proceeds through final design. Realignment of lanes and lane narrowing would likely be required at various stages of the project construction. Road closures for public safety should be limited to short durations for tree falling. Lane closures may be required for activities such as utility relocations, logging, construction and grading, paving and striping, and to the extent practicable will be coordinated with other lane or road closures in the area. Project work that requires temporary lane closures will be scheduled at low peak periods and/or hours if practicable to the greatest extent possible.

Detours

No detours of Highway 26 traffic are anticipated for construction of this project. During any temporary closures of intersecting side roads for reconstruction, alternate access will remain available, such as only one end will be closed thus maintaining residential access.

Traffic Mobility

Traffic delays are an unavoidable consequence of highway construction. For the logging portion of the work the main issue is trees falling onto the highway and safety of passing motorists. During that tree falling time all traffic will be stopped for short periods. Lane closures or lane narrowing may cause slowing but should be minimal during all other construction times.

Access Changes

Access points for residents and businesses may require temporary changes during construction. Revised accesses will be based on the construction needs while maintaining adequate public access. Appropriate signing will be installed to help maintain access for residents and to businesses during construction. Project staff and contractors will coordinate through ODOT

community affairs staff with businesses to ensure effective communications during the construction period.

Noise and Vibration Impacts

Construction of this scale will cause noise that would likely exceed the current levels. Certain activities such as tree cutting, roadway grading and guardrail installation would be the louder of the construction related activities. These types of activities will be limited to daytime hours. Night work would require that appropriate noise permits be acquired.

The project would cause some limited construction related noise impacts to occur throughout the construction period. Noise impacts will range from trucks, cranes, bulldozers and other type of construction vehicles. Vibratory compaction equipment and pile driving during guardrail construction maybe felt rather than heard and can be disconcerting.

Air Quality

Large equipment and earthmoving has the potential to have minor localized impacts to air quality in the area adjacent to the project construction. Appropriate steps will be taken to minimize and reduce dust from leaving the work site. ODOT will work with the contractor(s) to manage dust, use appropriate equipment and maintain the equipment to minimize emissions.