



March 15, 2007

07-018 R1

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Regional Projects Website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/MLK/index.shtml#update>

VIADUCT REPLACEMENT PROJECT UNDER WAY

A contractor for the Oregon Department of Transportation is now working on the second of two phases to replace the Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue viaducts on Highway 99E in southeast Portland. The viaduct replacement project is scheduled to be completed by early fall 2010. Max J. Kuney Construction of Spokane, Washington is the prime contractor on the \$64 million project.

Project Open House

A project open house is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 20 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the OMSI Auditorium, 1945 SE Water Ave., Portland**. ODOT and contractor staff will be on hand to discuss project details and traffic impacts during construction.

Phases of Work

Phase one of the project, which began in March 2006 and is now near completion, focused on relocating utilities and building the new southbound Highway 99E exit and entrance ramps near the Ross Island Bridge. Phase two will focus on replacing the existing viaducts. Due to the extremely complex nature of the viaduct replacement work, travel lanes will be shifted multiple times during the life of the project. **However, two travel lanes will be maintained in each direction throughout the majority of construction.** Specific stages will require temporary closures of one or more lanes in each direction on some nights and weekends.

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Work to be completed

The viaduct replacement project includes the following:

- Replace the MLK, Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue viaducts. The new viaducts will feature two travel lanes in each direction, bicycle lanes and sidewalks
- Pedestrian ramp improvements at 6th Avenue connecting Woodward Street with Powell Boulevard and the Ross Island Bridge. Pedestrian ramps on both sides of the viaduct at Division Place will connect with streets below
- Access improvements at Woodward Street for northbound traffic entering and exiting Highway 99E
- Architectural features sympathetic to the removed historic viaduct including four prominent pylons and historical-style illumination

Viaduct History

Although it appears to be a single structure, the viaduct is actually two separate structures. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Viaduct, which serves southbound traffic on Highway 99E, was built in 1936 on the edge of a wetland filled with sawmill waste up to 66 feet deep. As a result, the structure has several columns and spans that have visibly settled. The railings, joints, columns and beams are deteriorating. Because of its condition, the viaduct is posted for legal loads only. Southbound overweight vehicles are not allowed to cross the viaduct. The Grand Avenue structure, built in 1965 and serving northbound traffic, does not meet today's standards for width or safety.

The viaducts carry approximately 60,000 vehicles per day with traffic peaks exceeding 6,000 vehicles per hour. Approximately 20 percent of the vehicles using the viaduct each day are trucks. Highway 99E is the primary commuter and freight route between downtown Portland and the southeastern metropolitan area.

To view historic pictures of the viaduct, visit:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1/MLK/historic_photos.shtml

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