

**Region 1
2010-2013 Construction STIP
Modernization Project Criteria Summary Report**

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Project Name: US 26 Staley's Junction Improvement

Key Number: 13957

Project Location: Sunset Highway (US 26)/Nehalem Highway (OR Highway 47) at Staley's Junction Intersection MP 45.48, near the new L.L. "Stub" Stewart State Park.

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$9,575,000 *

***Cover Over project from 08/11 STIP**

PE and ROW will be funded by OTIA III funds and \$2,500,000 will be funded with local funds.

Project Description: Increasing traffic volumes at the Sunset Highway (US 26) and Nehalem Highway (OR 47) junction (Staley's Junction) create undesirable operating conditions which decrease traffic safety. Conditions are expected to deteriorate further with the opening of a new Oregon state park approximately five miles north of Staley's Junction.

ODOT, Washington County and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) are working as a partnership to develop and fund the improvements. In order to start construction in 2010, the partnership will have to complete the environmental, land use and public participation requirements, right-of-way acquisition; and plans, specifications and estimates (PS&E).

Project Eligibility:

Consistency with Existing Plans:

The project was identified and listed as a solution in the adopted 1999 Portland to Cannon Beach Junction Plan.

Consistency with OHP Policy 1G, Action 1.G.1:

The Corridor Plan is consistent with OHP Policy 1G, Action 1G.1. The following are the key themes reflected in the Corridor Strategy objectives.

“Allocation of state resources to highway projects according to the following priorities:

- (1) Maintenance of the existing facility to ensure that it remains safe and functional, e.g. fixing potholes.

- (2) Preservation of the roadway by investing in roadbed and pavement reconstruction as needed to minimize maintenance costs;
- (3) Transportation system management to optimize existing highway capacity;
- (4) Safety and capacity improvements; and
- (5) Projects that support economic development, particularly recreation and tourism.”

The project was listed as Project #018A in ODOT’s Portland to Cannon Beach Junction Hwy. 26 Corridor Plan (April 1999) as a long-term (10-20 year) need. Replacement of an existing intersection with an interchange in AF-20 districts is allowed as a Category C project under Article VII: Public Transportation Facilities of the Washington County Community Development Code. As a Category C project, the applicant must submit an alternative analysis report demonstrating that the applicant has evaluated alternative alignments and provided opportunity for citizen input into the selection of the proposed alignment.

The intersection improvement was a recommendation for the 2006-09 STIP by the NW ACT for the D-STIP modernization projects. It was ranked by the ACT as the second highest priority in Region 1. The city of Vernonia and the Counties of Columbia and Washington are very concerned about the traffic conditions with the addition of the state park.

The final project description will be developed during the project refinement planning. Project was scoped by Region 1 for the 2006 -2009 STIP, again for the 2008-2011 STIP, and again for the 2010-2013 STIP.

Project Prioritization:

- *Project Readiness* – This project can begin construction within the 2010-2013 timeframe of the STIP. This project has been classified as a Categorical Exclusion (CE).

Support of OHP Policies

Policy 1A -- Highway Classification: US 26 is a Statewide Highway. It is also part of the National Highway System and a state designated freight route.

Policy 1B – Land Use: It is not within an area designated as special land use per the OHP. Project area is in rural western Washington County.

Policy 1F – Mobility Standards: Based on planned land uses, the design of the project will maintain ODOT mobility standards.

Policy 2D – Public Involvement: The IAMP development includes a significant public involvement process to develop consensus on the interchange concept and access management.

Policy 2F – Traffic Safety: The project will improve safety at the intersection by eliminating a dangerous at-grade left-turn. This area has a high crash rate particularly for left turn movements from Nehalem Highway onto Sunset Highway east and west bound.

Policy 3A – Access Management/Spacing Standards: The IAMP addresses both access management and spacing standards.

Policy 3B – Medians: The IAMP requires medians on the Sunset Highway.

Policy 3C – Interchange Access Management Areas: As part of the project an IAMP is being prepared.

Policy 4A – Efficiency of Freight Movement: The project improves safety for freight traffic between the Portland metro area and north-coastal communities.

Policy 5A – Environmental Resources: The project was identified with consideration of planning-level environmental constraints. There are wetlands and flood plain within the project area. A culvert at MP 45.63 has fish passage issues and is structurally obsolete; will need to be made fish passable. Potential hazardous materials contamination in the area of the service station will need to be addressed.

Support of Freight Mobility: The project is to construct a grade-separated interchange to provide a safe and efficient crossing of traffic between the Sunset and Nehalem highways. The safe improvement will benefit freight mobility on the Sunset Highway, which is a state designated freight route.

Leverage of other funds and Public Benefit – The Project leverages the complete construction of the L.L. “Stub” Stewart State Park of approximately \$6.5 million. The State Park has facilities for day use/hiking, equestrian, group camping (80 sites), and yurt camping. The state park is open for day use/hiking, but in order to develop the overnight uses, Staley’s Junction intersection must be improved to safely accommodate the increase in traffic. Washington County and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) are partners with ODOT in the improvement of the intersection to accommodate the increase in activity at the park. The public benefit is that the park will provide regional and countywide outdoor activities to the Portland metro area.

Support of Additional ACT Criteria: The NW ACT developed Prioritization Criteria Factors to assist in scoring of the projects submitted to them. The Technical Criteria for scoring the projects were:

- System-wide Congestion

The project addresses future congestion at the junction of two state highways resulting from the new state park.

- Economic and Community Development

The project supports the new state park which is an economic and community development opportunity.

- Safety

This project will significantly improve safety.

- Community Partnership

This project is the result of a partnership by ODOT, Washington County and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD).

- Connect Oregon

US 26 is an important freight and tourist route between the Portland metro area and the North Coast.

In September 2007, the NWACT affirmed their ranking of PE and ROW for the Glencoe Interchange as the #1 D-STIP project for Washington County for the '10-'13 STIP.

Conditions of Approval: This modernization project to construct a new interchange at Staley's Junction requires an approved Interchange Access Management Plan (IAMP) per the OHP Policy 3C. The IAMP is in process and expected to be completed soon.