NEWS RELEASE

Release:  February 19, 2009

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County responds to Cornelius Pass Road safety audit

Multnomah County transportation officials have responded to a federal road safety audit of Cornelius Pass Road with an action plan designed to improve safety through a series of prioritized improvements.

Last year the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) conducted a road safety audit at the county’s request to identify safety risks and possible remedies on Multnomah County’s section of the rural arterial, between US Highway 30 and the Washington County line.  Audit results were announced in December.

County staff will present their audit response on Friday, February 20 at a meeting of the Cornelius Pass Road Task Force, co-chaired by State Senator Betsy Johnson and Multnomah County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury.  The meeting begins at 3 pm at the Sauvie Island Grange, 14443 NW Charlton Road.  The multi-jurisdiction task force is working with Multnomah County’s Land Use and Transportation Division to identify and fund safety improvements.

The federal safety audit made general recommendations to improve safety in 18 areas, ranging from physical hazards near the road to winter driving hazards.  Multnomah County transportation staff agreed with the strategies proposed in the audit to make Cornelius Pass Road safer.  The county’s response describes the status of each audit recommendation, what actions remain to be accomplished, the estimated cost of each action, the funding source (if known) and the timeline for completion.  “The costs of the needed improvements greatly exceed the financial resources available,” said County Road Services Manager Kim Peoples.  “The audit recommendations were prioritized to determine which have the greatest potential to improve safety.  This information will help the county and the task force decide how best to use our limited resources.”

A number of audit recommendations have already been completed, such as creating a no-passing zone in the entire study area and installing advance intersection signs at key locations.  Multnomah County is planning to complete other improvements with existing funds and will seek funds from the federal economic stimulus package and from the Governor’s transportation bill expected to be passed by the Oregon Legislature this year.  The action plan will be updated as funds become available.

To download the county’s audit response, visit www.co.multnomah.or.us/roads.

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