



proud past, promising future

NEWS RELEASE

September 19, 2008

Contact: Linda Small, Project Manager, (360) 397-6118 Ext. 4753;
e-mail Linda.small@clark.wa.gov;
Jim Gladson, Public Information, (360)397-6118 Ext. 4398.
e-mail Jim.Gladson@clark.wa.gov

New Highway 99 bridge over Salmon Creek opens today after 5 p.m.

Formal dedication event planned for Friday, September 26

Traffic on Highway 99 over Salmon Creek will be restored when the new bridge opens after 5 p.m. today, according to Clark County Public Works. This major north-south route in the urban heart of the county has been closed since the old bridge was judged unsafe for use in December 2007.

The bridge replaces an aging structure originally built in 1927. The new span has four travel lanes, a center median, bicycle lanes, curb/gutter, sidewalks and two pedestrian overlooks with views of Salmon Creek. This new structure is wider, longer and much safer for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, according to project manager Linda Small.

Salmon Creek is also a better place because of this project. The county restored more than 650 feet of stream channel west of the bridge, which will improve salmon and steelhead passage both up and downstream.

The project also made major road improvements on Highway 99 between Northeast 117th and Northeast 122nd avenues, including medians planted with trees and shrubs, according to Small. "We designed the bridge and road approaches to add visual appeal to this segment of Highway 99 and support the efforts of Team 99 and community revitalization along the corridor," she said.

Getting this new bridge in place quickly was a major county and community objective. Public Works used an alternate bid process encouraging bidders to not only submit the lowest total cost, but also the shortest possible construction schedule.

Ostrander Rock and Construction of Longview won the construction contract with a bid that included completing the bridge within 160 days from start to finish. Work started in April 2008 and is now substantially complete -- a week earlier than the contract deadline. Cascade Bridge of Vancouver worked with Ostrander to build the bridge structure.

Small says the contractors have been excellent to work with throughout the five-month process. "They have delivered a very complex construction project with high quality at amazing speed," she said.

The community also played a big role in getting this project done. Months before construction started, the county formed the Kline Outreach Advisory Group to help project staff communicate with affected businesses and residents. The group includes representatives from neighborhood and business associations, local business operators and public safety agencies.

“We know this project had impacts on businesses in the vicinity. The outreach group has done a commendable job of helping us share information with the community, and representing business concerns related to the closure,” Small said. “We thank all of those involved in this project for their help, and especially their patience along the way.”

The Board of Clark County Commissioners will host a dedication ceremony on Friday, September 26 beginning at 10 a.m. This will be followed by a reception located in the Salmon Creek United Methodist Church parking lot north of the bridge on Highway 99. Residents and businesses are invited to attend.

Finishing work will continue at the bridge for several more weeks. There still may be periodic lane closures to protect workers, but the bridge will remain open to two-way traffic at all times, according to the county.

To view a photo history of the bridge construction from April through September, visit the project Web site at www.clark.wa.gov/klinline. The photo gallery includes high-resolution, downloadable photos.