

South Cooper Mountain Concept Plan / 175th Avenue

October 9, 2014

Prepared by

Washington County Department of Land Use & Transportation

South Cooper Mountain Concept Plan (SCMCP) Roadway Framework

Cooper Mountain has primarily rural roads that serve urban transportation needs. The key challenge for the Cooper Mountain area is how to plan for growth and ensure solutions are delivered for multiple interrelated needs as the area develops: high volumes of regional through-traffic; intersections and road sections with known safety and capacity issues; almost no existing pedestrian and bicycle system; and the vision to provide transportation options.

The following objectives were established through the South Cooper Mountain Concept Plan (SCMCP) to address identified transportation issues:

- It is well documented that north-south traffic is over-reliant on one corridor: the Roy Rogers/175th to 170th Avenue corridor. The solution is to reduce that reliance and distribute regional flows through a combination of improvements and new connections that result in a more complete network. Key proposed projects include: (1) improving 175th at high priority locations such as the “kink” and the Kemmer/175th Avenue intersection; (2) connecting 175th Avenue to 185th Avenue via Kemmer Road and a new road east of 190th; (3) realigning the three 90-degree corners of Tile Flat and Grabhorn Roads; (4) improving Scholls Ferry Road to 5 lanes west of 175th to Tile Flat Road; and (5) extending Tile Flat Road to Roy Rogers Road (long term).
- Tile Flat and Grabhorn Roads were redesignated from Collectors to Arterials as part of Washington County’s 2014 TSP update. The redesignations result in a consistent functional classification from Scholls Ferry Road to Tualatin-Valley Highway via 209th Avenue, which is planned as a 5-lane Arterial between Farmington Road and Tualatin-Valley Highway. Washington County’s rural Arterial standard is two travel lanes, shoulders, and turn pockets as needed.

175th Avenue Functional Classification

- 175th Avenue is designated as an arterial in the Washington County Transportation System Plan (TSP). Based on the analysis performed for the 2002 TSP update (Ordinance 588-A), 175th Avenue was redesignated from a Major Collector to an Arterial.
- The planned alignment of 175th Avenue to straighten the "kink" was also adopted as part of the county's 2002 TSP update.
- Daily traffic volume on 175th was approximately 8,500 in 2013, an increase of approximately 2,500 since 2008. Forecasted daily traffic volume for 175th Avenue is 16,000-18,000 by 2035.
- The segment of 175th Avenue between Weir Road and Horse Tail Lane is a rural arterial as it is located outside the UGB. Until such time that it is brought into the UGB, urban type facilities cannot be constructed (i.e. curbs, gutters, sidewalks, bike lanes, and street lighting).

Major North-South Routes outside the Planning Area

Current state rules and regulations pertaining to planning outside an urban growth boundary limit our ability to explore certain major north-south route alternatives (i.e. around the mountain). However, this issue will be considered as part of the upcoming Washington County Transportation Study (kicking off early next year).

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Transportation Financing Strategy

Designating, planning and developing new urban land in Washington County is a complex process that includes several critical steps – one of which is providing a transportation financing strategy. Prior to allowing urban development within new urban areas, a financing strategy must demonstrate a reasonable approach to adequately funding the necessary transportation systems and services over the course of the area's build-out period. The proposed SCMCP and related Infrastructure Funding Plan translated the transportation networks into discrete transportation projects, which include new facilities and a number of needed improvements to existing facilities. Improvements will occur over time, with funding from two primary sources.

- **Developer Contributions:**

A significant portion of the South Cooper Mountain Infrastructure Funding Plan relies on development related revenue. New development is required to provide adequate transportation facilities, which may include constructing on-site local access roads, frontage improvements along major roadways and potentially off-site improvements. Developers also pay the countywide Transportation Development Tax and may be required to pay Supplemental System Development Charges in new development areas.

- **Public Funding:**

The Major Streets Transportation Improvement Program (MSTIP) is funded by a portion of the countywide property tax. MSTIP is identified in the South Cooper Mountain Infrastructure Funding Plan as a potential source of funding to address existing capacity and safety issues. With each 5 to 6-year MSTIP funding cycle, dozens of projects compete for limited funding, and eligible needs far exceed available revenue. Given the competitive and discretionary nature of MSTIP, it is difficult to make assumptions about its availability for funding transportation needs in new growth areas.

- **Timing of Improvements:**

Under this approach, most infrastructure improvement will occur incrementally as development occurs and development-related revenues accrue. The South Cooper Mountain Infrastructure Funding Plan sorted projects into three categories by time period (near, mid and long-term). These time periods are planning-level best guesses about when the project may be built based on assumptions of need and funding availability and is primarily an accounting function.

Operational Issues

Managing traffic operations, including speed zones, roadway signage and accommodating turning movements, are subject to review, investigation and engineering judgment. Funding for improvements like these are also limited and there are many significant needs identified throughout the county.

If a city or county thinks the speed for a particular street or highway should be changed it can make a request to ODOT for a review and investigation. Requests are submitted to the Traffic-Roadway Section which initiates an investigation to determine if a speed zone should be changed. The Region traffic engineering staff conducts an investigation using procedures in accordance with nationally accepted traffic engineering standards. Factors taken into consideration are accident history, roadside culture, traffic volumes, and roadway alignment, width and surface. The 85th percentile speed is a major factor in establishing speed zones. This is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the vehicles are traveling. This is used as an indication of the speed most drivers feel is reasonable and safe.