

Regional trail scheduled to open soon between the bridge and Willamette Park

SELLWOOD BRIDGE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Although the new Sellwood Bridge opened last February 29 to traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists, work continues to take place on and around the new structure.

Dismantling the old bridge, aligning the interchanges, and paving an underpass for those traveling between Lake Oswego and Portland are but a few of the projects left. Landscaping,

stormwater control, and trail work are also on the "to-do" list until at least November of this year.

Delays may occur, at any time, but bridge personnel are trying to alleviate wait times, according to Mike Pullen, Multnomah County spokesman.

"There were traffic jams before our project, during our project, and there will likely be traffic jams after we are done," Pullen explained. "The signals on Tacoma Street are part of the issue that the new bridge will not change."

Pullen gave *The Post* some project developments for the west side. The northbound through lane of Macadam Avenue opened on the lower level of the interchange. Both lanes eliminate the need for through traffic to pass the traffic signal on the upper level.

In mid-June, a regional trail opens between the bridge and Willamette Park. The contractor has built columns for the bridge that will carry bicyclists and pedestrians on the regional trail under the main bridge to reach its south sidewalk. Electricians are installing

traffic signal poles and equipment on the west end of the bridge. The outside girders are being stained to match the brown-orange of the steel arches.

Now that northbound through traffic is no longer using the on-ramp to the bridge, the contractor is widening the ramp's sidewalk. On the ramp from the bridge to northbound Macadam Avenue, crews are excavating and grading. The ramp's sidewalk will be widened in the next several weeks.

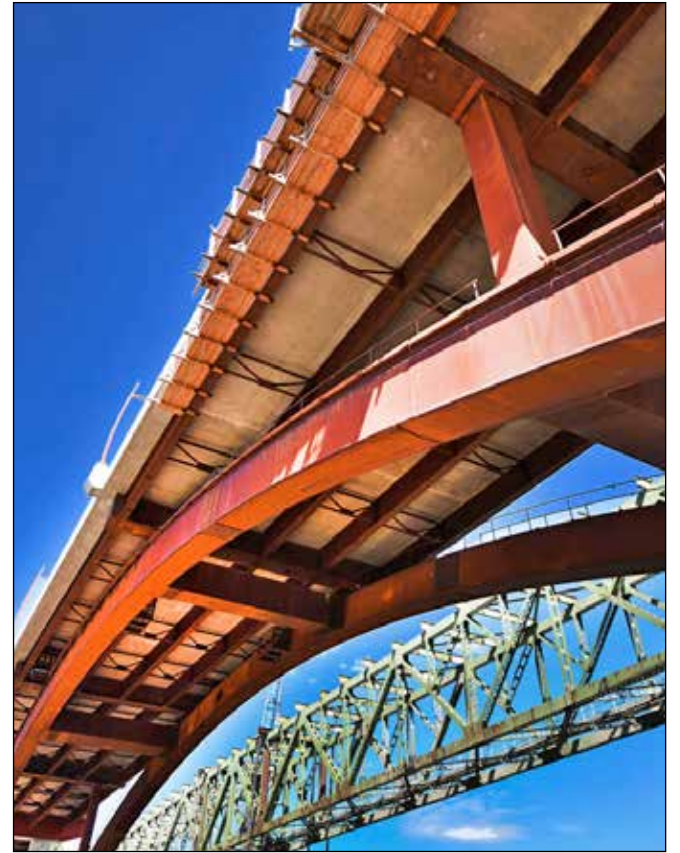
Crews are also building a parapet and the west half of the sidewalk on the southeast ramp leading to Macadam Avenue north. The parapet allows viewing locations away from sidewalk traffic.

Work will continue on the two westside interchange ramps. Handrails and architectural lights are being installed on the arches.

The old bridge deck and railings are gone as well the west approach to the detour bridge. The four original steel truss spans are going to be lowered to a

barge and it will take about two weeks to remove each span. The river piles will be removed during the in-water work period that begins in July.

Editor's Note: For a diagram of the new bridge or for current construction photos and updates visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.



A view from below the new bridge shows the trusses of the old bridge in the background. (Photo courtesy Multnomah County)



Spokane Street Ferry: The ferry John F. Caples carried folks across the Willamette River between West Portland and Sellwood from 1903 until the Sellwood Bridge was built in 1925. (Photo courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

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