

McLoughlin Boulevard



photo courtesy OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

aerial view of the improvements along McLoughlin Boulevard in downtown Milwaukie.

Hit the road, Jack.

Smooth driving for Milwaukie residents as project wraps

Milwaukie and the state unveil a new, improved McLoughlin running through the heart of the town

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Milwaukie celebrated the conclusion of a decade of effort this past week, with the official opening of the \$4.7 million McLoughlin project.

"It was done two months ahead of schedule and on budget," said Paul Shirey, the engineering director for the City of Milwaukie. "We only had \$80,000 in change orders on \$2.8 million of actual construction — that's chump change."

The balance of the budget was spent on planning, design, engineering and acquiring the property along the west side of McLoughlin Boulevard.

"Where we are standing right now, there were a couple of buildings, and now we have this fantastic view of the river," said



photo by PATRICK SHERMAN

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Paul Shirey addresses the crowd.

McLoughlin:

“It makes Milwaukie stand out...”

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Grady Wheeler, the city's public information coordinator. “I think this creates a sense of place for Milwaukie. Before this, people would fly through here and not understand that they were entering a downtown district.”

The work along McLoughlin incorporates some unusual features for a state highway, implemented specifically to enhance safety and beautify the downtown area.

“The state has a special designation that we were able to apply to this urban highway, to do some things that would not normally be permitted on a highway with this volume,” said Shirey. “We have three signals in six blocks, whereas we had two before. That provides safe access to the riverfront, which was one of the primary objectives of the project.”

On the west side of the roadway, the sidewalk is separated from the busy street by a planted landscape strip, and a planted median has been added in the middle of the roadway.

Elaborately patterned crosswalks have been installed at every pedestrian crossing, evoking the brick streets of European cities.

“That’s not an appliqué,” Shirey explained. “Those are inlays — we heated up the asphalt and put in a template. That’s thermoplastic, one-eighth of an inch thick.”

He estimated that the crosswalks will require maintenance every three years, as the inlays wear out from the constant traffic on McLoughlin Boulevard.

“The manufacturer of the product told us how to do it — we’ll need to do some maintenance, but it’s relative easy to

repair,” said Shirey.

The project also provided an opportunity to re-surface the thoroughfare.

“We ground off the surface and re-applied a 4-inch overlay,” Shirey said. “That’s called preservation — we’re preserving the base of the roadway by replacing the overlay.”

“In two small places, we had to replace the base itself, but overall the base was in great shape. The new overlay will add considerably to its life.”

He estimated that it could be upwards of two decades before the road would again need to be resurfaced.

With the McLoughlin project completed, work is moving ahead for the development of the city’s riverfront park.

“We just had council approval for the plan, so we’re moving towards putting out a request for proposals to do the final design work,” said Dave Green, chair of the Riverfront Board. “Once we have the design, we’ll start looking to identify funding sources for the

park itself.”

He estimated that work on the park would be completed in late 2008 or early 2009.

The changes along McLoughlin met with the approval of the citizens who turned out for the opening ceremony, held last Wednesday.

“It makes it a beautiful place to be,” said Jeanne Garst. “I love the design of the crosswalks — it’s art. I think it’s all beautiful — there’s nothing I don’t like about it.”

Stewart Taylor added: “It’s a great project and a tremendous improvement. It makes Milwaukie stand out along the corridor. This is a vibrant community that’s growing and completing good projects.”

Milwaukie Police Chief Larry Kanzler was also pleased by the improvements.

“It’s great — absolutely great,” he said. “It’s going to promote safe access to the park and the urban renewal aspects of the project have already eliminated a lot of our crime problems. The tavern and the hotel that were located here generated a lot of our call volume.”

“This is going to be a beautiful site, and it’s going to be easy for our officers to patrol and keep an eye on.”

Katie Holman and Roomie Hub contributed additional reporting to this story.

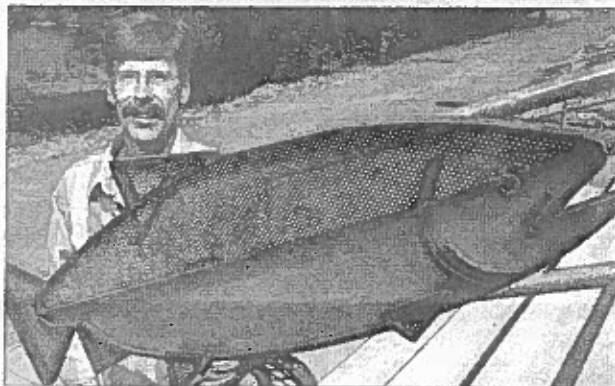


photo by PATRICK SIERMAN

Todd Rau poses with one of his artistic creations.

Sidebar

Swimming against the current

The centerpiece of the work completed along McLoughlin Boulevard in downtown Milwaukie last week is Desmet Plaza, which will serve as the gateway to the riverfront park, scheduled to be completed by 2009.

A tumble of boulders has been distributed as if at random across the site — some embedded in the concrete walkway, others in the nearby grass. A short staircase

leading down towards the river is flanked by a pair of metal salmon, crafted by local artist Todd Rau.

“JoAnn Herrigel from the city looked me up,” said Rau. “I’ve done some work for Windhorse Coffee & Tea, and she contacted me and told me what she was thinking about, and we came up with this idea.”

Rau said the sculptures draw attention to the space by catching people’s eyes.

“When I was installing them, I had a lot of people stopping by to admire them,” he said.

PROJECT OF THE YEAR: TRANSPORTATION LESS THAN \$2 MILLION

SE Yamhill Street "Green Street" Improvements

Managing Agency: City of Gresham, Oregon
Primary Contractor: Westech Construction, Inc.
Primary Consultant: City of Gresham, Oregon
Nominated By: APWA Oregon Chapter

The SE Yamhill Street Improvement Project has improved urban SE Yamhill Street between SE 190th Avenue and SE 197th Avenue with facilities for motor vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians and the disabled. The roadway improvements consist of overlaying and widening the existing roadway, sidewalk installation, drainage facilities and landscaping. The project implemented "Green Street" strategies that minimize impacts to the environment, and was funded with a \$450,000 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan Grant and a \$50,000 Community Development Block Grant.

The improved Yamhill Street cross-section now consists of a 42-foot roadway in a 60-foot right-of-way. Adjacent to the roadway, a 4-foot-wide planter strip and 5-foot-wide sidewalk was installed on each side of the street. The planter strip was constructed as a filter-strip/bio-filtration swale that provides water quality for any stormwater runoff generated by the hard surfacing.

The 42-foot roadway section is now divided into an 18-foot, two-way travel lane with two 12-foot parking bike lanes on each side. The narrowness of the two-way travel lane is intended to work as a traffic calming feature, requiring opposing vehicles to slow when passing one another or parked vehicles.

The 18-foot two-way travel lane was paved with standard Class "C" asphalt concrete. The adjacent parking and bike lanes were paved with an open-graded pervious asphalt concrete. The sidewalks were paved with pervious Portland cement concrete. The extensive decision to use pervious paving materials on this project minimizes the impacts to the environment resulting from concentrated runoff and necessary drainage. The variety of pervious materials installed in a single project, such as Yamhill Street, allows city engineers and planners to observe and compare these materials side by side and further evaluate their effectiveness.

The pervious surfacing and underlying soil was designed to absorb rainfall up to a 25-year rainfall event. Larger events will generate some runoff to the roadside filter-strip. Runoff not infiltrated in the vegetated areas will have an opportunity to infiltrate into infiltration trenches under each of the

driveway crossings. Lastly, in the event concentrated runoff accumulates at low points, it will enter sedimentation man-holes and drywells. During the past year concentrated flows have not been observed accumulating in the swale or inlets. This indicates the pervious hard surfaces are accepting the precipitation without generating excess runoff.

All aspects of the project centered on a "green" theme. Many of the native elements unique to the project area were used in the planning and design of the project. The soils native to the site were draining well and proved to be a major factor in the design incorporating stormwater disposal facilities.

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