

NEWS from BENTON COUNTY

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Tips for Rural Property Owners

Some people move to areas with gravel roads because of the rural feel and lower speeds that people typically driver; however, living with dust on a gravel road can be quite a nuisance. There are many products on the market to reduce dust on gravel roadways or even your driveway. A common one used is lignin, another product we have been testing out is called Earthbind100. There are also products like pine sap and one that has binding enzymes. If you want to have dust control placed in front of your property, you have two options: you can work with the county and we will work with a contractor for you; or you can work directly with a contractor on your own. If you contract on your own, you need to get approval from the County before work begins. We just need to know what is being placed on County Roads and Local Access (Public) Roads. If you choose to contract through the County, please note, we do not guarantee the effectiveness of these products due to the weather and traffic conditions that may affect the product. We do ensure that you get the amount of product that you pay for.

Do you live next to a roadside ditch and feel it is not maintained as often as you wish?

It is true that we have limited resources; however, we try and mow the ditches on County Roads at least once per year. Maintenance of ditches helps prevent flooding impacts to the roadway and your neighbors. The County spray program also helps with weeds along roadways. You can help us by not filling in your ditch with any dirt, rocks, or vegetation unless you



A dust control application on a gravel road.

are helping to stabilize the ditch. If you want to spray, you can get a permit through Public Works or if you prefer not to have the ditches sprayed, we just ask that you keep them mowed on a regular basis. The County is ultimately responsible for keeping driveway culverts clear of debris as well, homeowners can help by not blocking

the culvert and regularly trimming vegetation.

What do you do if weeds are a nuisance? You can have them sprayed or you can keep them cut. The County completes some spraying on County roads, once in the spring and once in the fall (for different types of vegetation). Weeds can be damaging to a lawn or

field and controlling them is important for our economy and livability.

Do you have drainage issues? Ask us for help. We will send employees with experience in drainage issues to consult with you at no charge. We can tell you what the problem is, why it likely happens, and some possible remedies.

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Transportation System Plan Update and Corvallis-Albany Bikeway projects slated for second half of 2016.

As construction season comes to a close, planning will start ramping up. An update to the Benton County Transportation System Plan (TSP) will begin in the fall of 2016.

The Transportation System Plan is updated about every 20 years and funded by a grant from the state. The TSP is required by the state and it focuses on the next 20 years, listing the projects that are expected to be needed to meet the community's changing needs due to population change, safety issues, and to provide a blueprint for enhancements to the entire Benton County transportation system. The TSP covers everything from roads, bridges and intersections to bike paths and transit. We will be seeking citizens and professionals in transportation, planning, and parks to be part of a stakeholder committee to guide the decisions for the update of the TSP.

Many local governments are working on their TSPs and our update will coordinate with theirs. The Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning

Organization (CAMPO), the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO), City of Corvallis, City of Philomath, City of Jefferson, and the City of Millersburg are all updating or creating entirely new TSPs.

In addition to the TSP update, staff and the public will continue to investigate the potential of the Corvallis-Albany Bikeway (previously called the Corvallis to Albany Multi-Use Path). ODOT has partnered with the County to help fund the planning for this project. Below is a short FAQ about the project's current state.

Why did the name of the project change?

The County wants to be very transparent. The primary intent of this project is to create a safe route for biking. The occasional runner, walker, rollerblader, or non-motorized scooter may also use the route but these types of paths are usually mostly used for bikes. "Bikeway" is also a common term shared by many other local routes such as the Campus Way or Midge Cramer

Bikeway.

Didn't the Planning Commission disapprove of this project? Why continue this effort?

The results of a community-wide survey showed that there would be significant use if a bikeway were built somewhere between North Corvallis and North Albany. While the specific route along the railroad was not supported, it may be possible to connect the two cities along another route.

Are you looking at the original location you looked at for 10 years?

Every option to connect the two cities is on the table. The bikeway would need to be located somewhere between the cities within the corridor bounded on the east side by the Willamette River, Highway 99 to the west and the County Line in the north.

What happens next?

During the summer, the consultant, Barney and Worth is interviewing a number of constituents including, but not limited to, land owners, farm owners, government officials, bike advocates,

business owners, and safety officials. The purpose of these interviews is to determine what road blocks a project like this may have, as long as we talk about all options and not only the old original option that was not approved. We will then present that information to the Commissioners and determine if we should continue on to the next step.

If the project moves forward, the county will start an evaluation process with stakeholders to determine all possible locations and then review each location for impacts to the land, farms, safety, businesses, engineering needs, and the environmental to determine if any location is viable. If a few locations are viable, we will then finish the process by gathering input from the public and stakeholders before selecting a location that appears to be the most acceptable. If no location is deemed acceptable, the project will be closed until such time, if ever, a viable option is found.

Pedal Corvallis Bike Share Now Open!

Share adventure, share fun, share bikes! A bikeshare program called Pedal Corvallis rolled into town this summer with 6 stations and 35 bikes throughout Corvallis, including at the Benton County Health Department, 530 NW 27th Street, and the Lincoln Health Center, 121 SE Viewmont Avenue.

An annual membership costs \$25, or you can get a month pass for \$10 or a 3-day pass for \$5. To learn more and sign up, visit www.zagster.com/pedalcorvallis. The program is open to anyone age 18 and older and membership is free for InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO) members.

Pedal Corvallis is spearheaded by IHN-CCO and the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments along with several public and private partners, including Benton County. Other station locations are:

- Downtown Transit Center, 5th Street and Monroe Avenue
- Oregon State Credit Union, 1980 NW 9th Street
- SamFit / Samaritan Square, 777 NW 9th Street #310
- Osborn Aquatic Center, 1940 NW Highland Drive

Biking just 30 minutes a day can reduce the risk of heart disease by 82% and the risk of diabetes by up to 58%.



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Summer 2016 Construction

The County has had a busy summer. While some cities and counties use contractors to do a lot of the work on their transportation system, Benton County completes most of their work in house. This saves money by allowing more projects to be completed within the limited roads budget.

July is when most everything starts. This year, July began with the annual chip seal program, which was focused on the eastern side of the County between Corvallis and Monroe. By the middle of July, the replacement of a bridge over Hammer Creek south of the Alpine on Bellfountain Road had begun along with the start of two fish passage culvert replacements on Evergreen Road. Next year, Evergreen Road will receive a

hard-surface as part of a partnership with local residents.

In August, Independence Road gets an asphalt overlay between Highway 20 and Pettibone and from Ryals to Camp Adair. In 2017, Phase II Independence Road improvements will be completed with an overlay from Pettibone to Metge and widening between Metge to Ryals for bike lanes. North Santiam Paving has been hired for the Phase I work on Independence Highway. That contractor also will overlay Robinhood in North Albany and Luckiamute Road in the northwest part of the County.

Planning for 2017's projects will begin in fall and will include some additional overlays and work on two bridges.

A Wide Range of Regional Collaboration Continues!

Collaborating with local partners continues to be a source of success for Benton County. The County once again joined forces with Polk County, Linn County, and ODOT for the annual Chip Seal maintenance program. This year, Benton and Polk counties jointly purchased a new Chip Seal machine, saving each County \$150,000.

Also this year, Public Works hosted workshops on Roadway Surfacing Alternatives and Bridge Inspection for local governments. In addition to the workshops, the county held a forum for all of the county's Road Districts to encourage collaboration amongst the districts and the County and to get a better understanding of the districts' needs. In 2017, Public Works anticipates following up this year's success with a forum for Road Districts titled "How to Maintain Your Roads".

The County Shop continues to assist our neighbors locally and regionally. This entrepreneurial program has been active for more than 20 years and pays for itself year after year. Recently, Polk County Fire, McMinnville Fire, and Western Lane Ambulance District (Florence area) have been added to the continually growing customer base.

Public Works is also working with the Cascades West Council of Governments (COG), which covers Benton, Linn, and Lincoln, Counties on a grant for planning

and infrastructure improvements on South Fork Road on the way to Alsea Falls. The grant also involves a partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The county has also supported COG's efforts in coordinating the designation of a Scenic Byway on Highway 34.

Benton County continues to support ODOT in their efforts to study and improve the safety of Highway 20 between Corvallis and Albany; the goal is to see incremental improvements over the next several years in reducing severe accidents. In turn, ODOT continues to support the County in its efforts to investigate the potential for a bikeway between Corvallis and Albany.

In partnership with the City of Albany, Public Works has been working to reduce speeds and truck traffic on Springhill Drive. Speed radar signage, truck detours, the future use of Hickory, and the safety of the Highway 20/Springhill intersection are all part of the discussions with the City.

And lastly, the county has been working with the City of Corvallis on improving the agreement concerning properties that are either in the City or the Urban Growth Boundary and use a County Road as their access. Staff from both agencies are reviewing their process to make sure both governments' needs are met with the hope of reducing the delays or impacts to the public during the development process.

Advisory Committee Openings

The Public Works Department has a number of different opportunities for residents to get involved. One of the ways that residents can get involved and help make recommendations to the County is as a part of one of our advisory committees. Each committee is made of up residents who have an interest in the committees topic and staff by Public Works personnel. The committees provide advice from the residents' viewpoint to help the department and the county.

Come be a part of one of our committees:

- Roads Advisory Committee
- Bike Advisory Committee
- Environmental Issues Advisory Committee

To apply you can visit the County website at <https://www.co.benton.or.us/boc/page/committee-vacancies> and fill out an application; or you can call Teresa Farley in the Board of Commissioners Office at 541-766-6800 for more information on how to apply.



Benton County Cultural Coalition

GRANT MONEY AVAILABLE FOR ART, CULTURE AND HERITAGE PROJECTS IN BENTON COUNTY

The Benton County Cultural Coalition (BCCC) is beginning its FY 17 grant cycle to distribute funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust (OCT).

Interested organizations may submit a Letter of Intent online at http://www.bentonculture.org/?page_id=17.

Letters of Intent will be accepted August 1st through September 10th.

Any registered 501(c) (3) organization or partner group may apply.

PRIORITIES:

- *Art projects and programs that offer innovation, variety, and scope for Benton County's diverse population*
- *Cultural/Educational projects that enhance citizen understanding, growth, and participation*
- *Heritage programs that foster preservation and beautification.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION, WRITE TO: BentonCoalition@gmail.com

Public Works Week

Public Works Week was a hit with area elementary schools. From May 15-May 21, Public Works staff made presentations to Alsea, Franklin, Hoover, Jefferson, and Lincoln, Elementary Schools. They displayed the roadside mower, backhoe, and bucket truck.



After describing the equipment and answering questions, staff did a little skills demo where the kids cheered them on to success. This is the second year in a row that Public Works has visited various area schools during Public Works Week.



Public Works Employees (from left to right) Erik Remington, Don Boyd, Jim Stouder, Joe Whitlock with a thank you from the elementary school classes.