



Oregon Highway 99W/18 Bypass

A Federal High Priority Corridor

Background

The Newberg Dundee Bypass Project is the final component of a regional bypass that began in the 1960s. By 1960 it was obvious that Highway 99W through McMinnville, Oregon, was failing, resulting in major impacts to a regional highway serving western Oregon from Portland to Eugene, and the coast. Due to intense congestion, the Highway 18 bypass was built to divert Highway 99W through traffic to the east of McMinnville and Lafayette on a new highway connecting back to Highway 99W at McDougall Junction just north of Dayton (see map).

A major benefit of this new bypass was its connection to Highway 18 southwest of McMinnville, which allowed traffic to and from the central Oregon coast to bypass the congestion of McMinnville and Lafayette.

Completion of Phase I of the Newberg Dundee Bypass

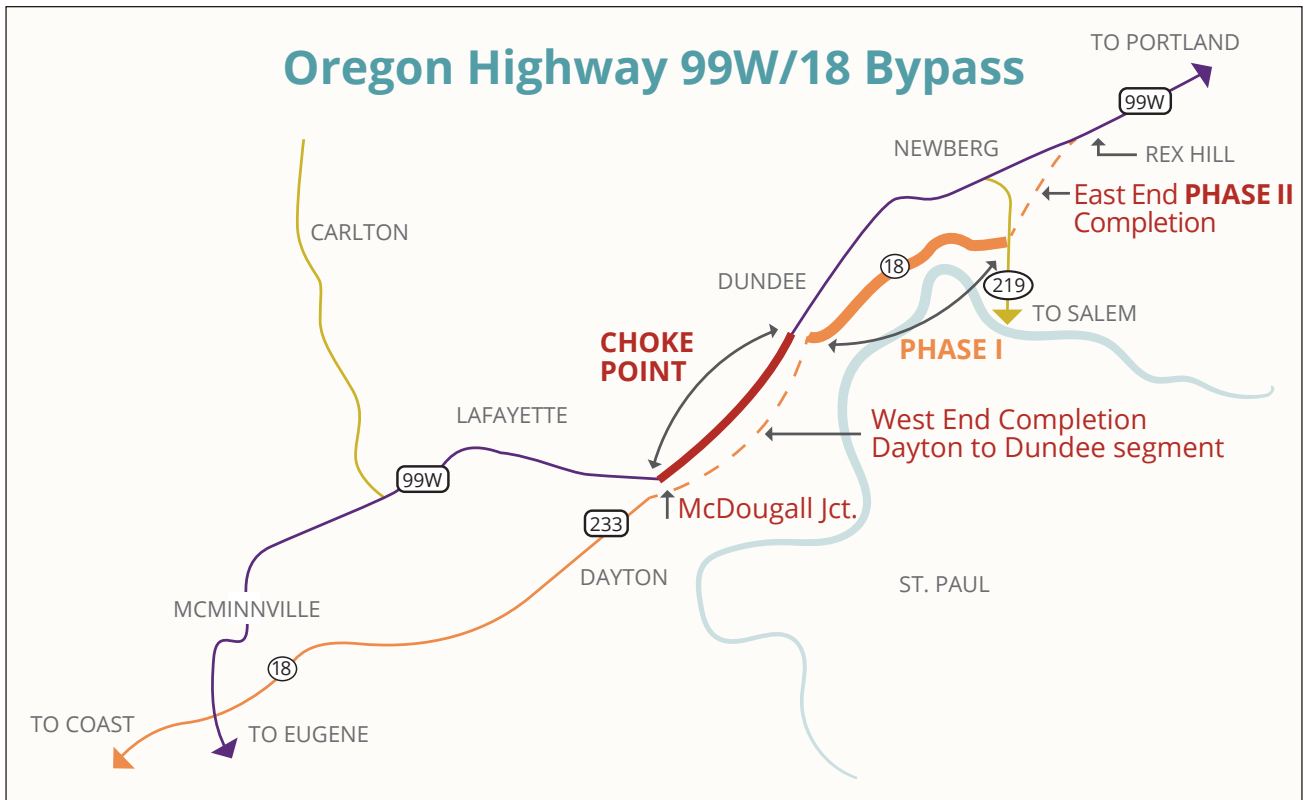
In January of 2018, the first phase of the bypass opened. This section provides a direct connection between Dundee and a major part of Newberg from Highway 99W west of Dundee to Highway 219, a distance of approximately four miles. Phase I costs were approximately \$242 million.

Phase I funding sources

- \$192 million
State of Oregon
- \$30 million
Federal funds
- \$16 million
Yamhill County, the cities of Dundee, McMinnville and Newberg
- \$4 million
Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde

Phase I results

- Created approximately 1,500 construction jobs.
- The cities of Newberg and Dundee are beginning to see their downtowns rejuvenated, safety improved and dramatic reductions in noise and air pollution.
- 12,000 motor vehicles a day are using this segment of the bypass, and over 1,000 are heavy vehicles, including trucks and buses.
- The benefit to through traffic is dramatic, particularly for tourists seeking access to Oregon's pinot noir wine region (a multibillion-dollar industry), the Evergreen Aviation Air Museum in McMinnville, Spirit Mountain Casino, Chinook Winds Casino and the central Oregon coast.
- Business travel from the region west of Newberg and Dundee to the Portland metropolitan area has been significantly enhanced and travel from McMinnville to Portland International Airport can usually be accomplished in an hour.
- The flow of freight traffic to the businesses, industries and wineries of the region has been significantly enhanced. This includes 200 manufacturing businesses.



Phase II is underway

The full benefit of Phase I of the bypass will be significantly diminished over time without the completion of the entire project. To ensure these benefits, Phase II from Highway 219 back to Highway 99W at Rex Hill has moved into design and engineering, and it is imperative that we move forward with completion of the entire project.

With completion of Phase II, only one segment (Dayton to Dundee) of the entire 20 miles of the Highway 99W/18 regional bypass from northeast of Newberg to southwest of McMinnville would remain to be constructed.

Phase II funding sources

ODOT is now in the process of purchasing right of way for Phase II with an important parcel now having been acquired, and has contracted for final design and engineering. These actions have been made possible with the following funding:

- \$10.5 million from savings from the Dundee to Highway 219 Phase, a portion of which are funds contributed by local entities
- \$22 million from HB 2017 passed in 2017 by the Oregon Legislature

Oregon Governor Kate Brown has included \$32 million in her 2019-21 budget proposal to the Oregon State Legislature. If this \$32 million is provided, approximately \$150 million in additional funding will be needed to ensure completion of the project.

Complete the bypass: Dayton to Dundee

How important is the construction of the final link from Dayton to Dundee to the entire Highway 99W/18 bypass project? Very! Upon completion of Phase II, Highway 99W and Highway 18 through traffic will be separated from local traffic and congestion from northeast of Newberg to southwest of McMinnville except where the traffic in the middle of the bypass (Dayton to Dundee) is merged into two traffic lanes – the “choke point” (see map). This choke point is akin to a water project that requires a 4-inch water line being reduced to a 2-inch water line in its middle segment.

To further exacerbate this choke point, it is located in a segment of Highway 99W where five roads provide access to the Dundee Hills, in the very heart of Oregon’s pinot noir wine region. Among the wineries directly connected to this segment of Highway 99W are Sokol Blosser, Stoller, Domaine Drouhin, Domaine Serene, Archery Summit, De Ponte Cellars, Durant Vineyards, Hyland Estates, Vista Hills, Winter’s Hill Estate, White Rose Estate and Remy Wines.

The impact of the access to these wineries, added to an already overloaded segment that is beginning to fail, is that ODOT has undertaken a study of the congestion and safety concerns of this two-lane chokepoint.

The portions of the bypass already constructed are critically important to the regions of western Oregon and the central Oregon coast. The need to complete the entire bypass project is compelling:

- To eliminate the negative traffic congestion resulting from this Highway 99W segment’s lack of capacity and conflicting traffic demands.
- Construction of this federal high priority corridor project will provide thousands of jobs over a period of several years.
- The members of the Newberg and McMinnville Chambers of Commerce alone represent more than 18,500 jobs. These chambers are strong supporters for completing of the bypass. They understand the critical importance of transportation and efficient movement of freight to their members . Their businesses are just a part of the region which relies on this transportation corridor to sustain present and develop future jobs.
- The overall bypass through Yamhill County provides access to one of the finest pinot noir wine regions in the world. More than 250 of these wineries are located in Yamhill County, which is a very significant part of Oregon’s \$6 billion wine industry.
- The Newberg Dundee bypass is being constructed to withstand a 9.0 Cascadia subduction earthquake which will provide critical life-saving access and emergency services for the region during and after any earthquake and coastal tsunami.

What do we want?

Complete the entire regional bypass, including Phase II and the link from Dundee to Dayton, starting now.

The estimated cost to complete the entire project is approximately \$296 million (2022 dollars), which includes \$32.4 million in Governor Brown’s proposed budget.

What do we need from the Oregon State Legislature?

In order to leverage federal dollars for construction, it is essential that we get the project “shovel ready.” Projects best positioned for federal funding are shovel ready and have the necessary funding committed for design/ engineering and right-of-way acquisition. In the case of this project, construction of four key bypass project connectors are vital so that the final seven miles of highway can be built.

*We are asking the state of Oregon to invest **\$150 million** in state funding to leverage the dollars necessary to complete the entire project.*

Critical multimodal, environmental and resiliency factors

Transit/pedestrian/bicycles

The Newberg-Dundee Transportation Improvement Project, referred to as the Newberg-Dundee Bypass Project, is a multi-modal project, with transit a key component. As early as 2003, the Parkway Committee planned for a transit program and obtained a federal grant of \$167,000 as a first step to establish a robust rural transit system to help mitigate traffic congestion on this regional corridor.

As a result, the Yamhill County Transit Area (YCTA) was established to provide fixed-route and other transit services in Yamhill County. YCTA operates morning and afternoon express bus service between McMinnville, Tigard and Hillsboro, connecting to Portland area transit services (bus, light rail, commuter rail). Service also connects to Salem and Grand Ronde, linking to Tillamook and Lincoln County Transit Systems. In 2018, YCTA utilized 35 buses that logged 683,512 miles over 275 miles of routes, resulting in 750,000 passenger trips. Completion of the bypass will improve efficiency of this express service and help maintain a reliable schedule because of less congested conditions. It will also reduce travel times and improve reliability for bus services between Yamhill County communities bogged down in OR 99W traffic.

Another component of the bypass project is support of the Chehalem Heritage Trails Interconnection between Newberg and Dundee. This project will greatly improve livability by offering a safe, off-road bicycle and pedestrian connection between communities, expanding on the Parks and Recreation District's efforts to create safe routes to schools in the area.

Reducing pollution and helping the climate

The existing OR 99W and bypass will be more efficient in reducing traffic congestion by:

- Removing 2,000+ trucks and 55,000+ cars a day in some areas
- Removing 30,000+ cars a day in other areas
- Fewer trucks and cars idling at traffic signals and in congested areas

All of this will result in reduced fuel consumption, emission of greenhouse gases, and other transportation and carbon-related pollutants.

Emergency evacuation and resiliency

A critical element to the State of Oregon Transportation Plan¹ is resiliency to a Cascadia subduction zone event. The bypass is being constructed to withstand a 9.0 Cascadia subduction earthquake. Highway 18 and the bypass are essential to moving large numbers of people from the Oregon Coast to locations that can provide critical access to life-saving emergency services, during and after any earthquake or coastal tsunami. It also will provide a route to bring critical supplies to staging areas at McMinnville and Spirit Mountain Casino near Grand Ronde. Highway 18 and 99W are Oregon Lifeline Routes, and are a Tier I transportation corridor for the Central Oregon Coast and for people escaping from the disaster zone and for emergency crews responding to impacted areas.

The bypass will also support travel to the McMinnville Airport, a Category II and Tier 3 (T3) airport. T3 airports will provide access to medical and emergency services and economic and commercial restoration to the entire region after a Cascadia subduction zone event.

¹The Oregon Resilience Plan (2013), https://www.oregon.gov/oem/documents/oregon_resilience_plan_final.pdf