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NEWS RELEASE

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SW 53rd St. and West Hills Rd. Roundabout Receives Project of the Year Award

CORVALLIS, Ore. – The Benton County Public Works SW 53rd St. and West Hills Rd. Roundabout project was awarded the Public Works Project of the Year for Transportation Projects less than \$5 million by the Oregon Chapter of the American Public Works Association.

The intersection of SW West Hills Road and SW 53rd Street is traveled by approximately 10,000 vehicles each day, and serves as a connection between northwest Corvallis, Highway 20, Oregon State University, and northern Philomath. Between 1985 and 2010, there have been 38 recorded crashes at the intersection resulting in 1 fatality and 33 injuries.

Early on in the planning stage of this project, consultants conducted a transportation analysis for 2013-2031 and found that a roundabout would require greater capital investment, but the total life-cycle costs were lower than those associated with a traffic signal. The results also showed that the installation of a signalized intersection instead of a roundabout would result in approximately four more injury or fatal crashes and approximately four additional property damage-only crashes.

The American Public Works Association awards the Project of the Year to recognize excellence, innovation and cooperation with regard to management and administration of public works projects through the alliance of the managing agency, consultant and contractor.

Implementing a roundabout in an area with no prior experience with modern roundabouts was a challenge for the Public Works department. It required extensive research and communication with the community. County staff utilized open houses, postcards, County website, County newsletters, and press releases in local newspapers to provide community members with information about roundabouts and to provide construction updates. County staff also prepared informational brochures describing how to navigate the roundabout in a vehicle, as a cyclist, or on foot. Through public outreach, Benton

County was able to come up with a design that not only met the safety and efficiency needs of the intersections, but also the desires of the community.

The goal of this project was to improve the safety of the intersection and reduce delays. Since the roundabout was completed, the average vehicle delay during peak flows was reduced to approximately nine seconds and there have been no severe accidents.

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