

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Sitting/Acting as (if applicable)

Study Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: January 24, 2012 **Approx Start Time:** **Approx Length:**

Presentation Title: Canby Ferry

Department: DTD – Transportation Maintenance Division

Presenters: Cam Gilmour, Samuel Irving, Jr.

Other Invitees: Lane Miller, Darrel Burnum

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Canby Ferry is one of three historic ferries that still cross the Willamette River. A ferry has been in operation at the Canby crossing since 1914. The current vessel, the M.J. Lee II, was commissioned in 1997 and was named after the first born child in the platted town of Canby: Millard Jerome Lee.

The Ferry connects the communities of Wilsonville and Canby across the Willamette River. Access to the Ferry's southerly termini is on Holly Street as it exits the City of Canby. Access to the northerly termini is on Mountain Road which provides a link to I-205 and I-5 by way of Advance Road. These roads carry a county functional classification of Rural Minor Arterial's and are on the National Highway System. We frequently experience spikes in traffic when the interstate system experiences a slow down and people are looking for a way out of the traffic congestion. It has proven to provide an important link in the Clackamas County Transportation system to facilitate regional movement of people, motorized vehicles, goods and services.

The Canby Ferry currently operates from 6:45 am to 9:15 pm, seven days a week, year round. We close for select holidays, high water and mechanical failure. Our ridership is made up of daily commuters, local farmers and tourists. There are many local events that the ferry supports such as the Clackamas County Fair, Swan Island Dahlia Festival, Fir Point Harvest Festival, St. Josef's Winery and the Canby Saturday Market. The Clackamas County Fairground has been growing as an event center and now hosts events year round.

Annual traffic volumes are heavily influenced by winter weather shut downs, but by taking an average count over the past 10 years, annual traffic volumes equal 79,937 vehicles.

The average time it takes to cross the Willamette River on the ferry is three minutes. Without the ferry, travelers would have to detour and drive through the city of Wilsonville and Canby to get across the river. The detour length is 15.3 miles, taking an average of about 30 minutes to travel.

The Canby Ferry provides for daily commuters and is also advertised in many of the state-wide historic site publications that direct tourists to visit our ferry.

In the event of a natural disaster such as an earthquake, the ferry may provide a critical link in crossing the Willamette River.

Construction of a bridge at this site is not feasible due to the amount of funding required. The river crossing is 800 feet and it would require a structure much longer to span the banks. The cost of a bridge could easily exceed \$25 million.

Fun facts

1916 New wooden boat was constructed for	\$250.00
1953 First steel boat was constructed for	\$18,000.00
1997 Current steel boat was constructed for	\$725,000.00
2012 Anticipated cost to recondition the boat	\$1,121,000.00

Historical Notes

- July 1914 Ferry purchased in Newberg by Canby Mayor W.H. Bair and by Harry B. Evans, representing the Canby Business Men's Club. It was propelled by a splashboard driven by the river current and held on course by a cable. The first ferryman was Clem Dollar who received \$10 a month from the City of Canby to run the ferry.
- May 1916 Authorized \$250 for a new, gas-driven ferry.
- 1917 Second ferry built by Frank E. Dodge, Canby builder.
- 1917 – 1918 Edward Kilgallen, who lost an arm in childhood, succeeded Dollar as ferryman and the annual wages were reduced to \$7.50 per month. He was found dead in the boathouse at the ferry slip in 1932. He had figured his trips across the river at 1,261, carrying 1,942 passengers.
- 1919 - 1920 W.B. Nolen was paid a similar sum as ferryman.
- 1933 Theodore Neep served as ferryman on the Dodge-built craft until 1942. He and his family lived in a house on the south landing furnished by the County.
- January 1946 Ferry was swept from the moorings and pieces went over Willamette Falls.
- 1946 – 1953 Inactive.
- June 1952 Canby Chamber and Lions Club presented the Clackamas County Court with 8,000 signatures seeking restoration of ferry service.
- September 1952 County Commissioners approved construction of a steel-hulled ferry boat by L.S. Baier of Milwaukie.
- November 1952 Ferry was launched at Baier's plant and christened by Ora Lee Cattley, daughter of Canby's first mayor, Herman A. Lee, and grand-daughter of Philander and Anna Green Lee who settled in the Canby area in 1847. The ferry was named for Millard Jerome Lee, first child born (1872) in the 1870-platted town of Canby.
- July 3, 1953 Ferry service was restored with William H. Criteser and Bill Bruck as ferrymen. Chester Weaver was named third operator.
- 1956 – 1986 Miller (Ace) Mays served as ferry operator.

1959 – 1979	Victor Hodel served as ferry operator.
1960 - 1978	Richard W. Hill served as ferry operator.
1986	Free service ended and a one-way toll of \$1 was established.
1989	Ferry was renovated and repainted. Coast Guard declares that vessel would not be recertified.
December 1995	Ferry failed Coast Guard safety inspection and County contracted with Art Anderson Associates to replace it.
February 1996	Ferry closed due to severe flooding on the Willamette and remained closed during the rebuilding of ferry docks.
June 20, 1997	Service was restored with a new six-passenger ferry. The ferry crew included Joe Dietrich, John Lettenmaier, Carl Ellison, Jack Seifert, Mike Pyszka and Bret Proffitt.
July 4, 1997	Clackamas County Commissioners and the Canby community celebrated the reopening. The M.J. Lee II was christened by Doris Cattley Martin, descendent of M.J. Lee.

(from information provided by Myra Weston, Canby historian)

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

The current propulsion system on the Canby Ferry is an electric over hydraulic drive called Thrustmaster. This system is heavily worn from many years of reliable service. Over the past few years, the Thrustmaster system has been experiencing frequent hydraulic leaks that result in the ferry being shut down for repairs. In early 2010, we entered into a contract with a consultant to design a new system to replace the hydraulic one. Their recommendation is an electric propulsion system that will have two advantages over the current one. It will reduce the ferry's electricity usage and eliminate the potential of an environmentally damaging oil spill into the river. In late 2010, a federal grant under the Ferry Boat Discretionary Program opened, we applied for and were successful in securing \$1,000,000 to install the new electric propulsion system.

We are just completing the design of the repairs and were ready to go out to bid when we were notified that the Willamette Falls Locks were closed. The request for proposal is for both the dry docking and modifications of the M.J. Lee. The dry docking is explained under Legal/Policy Requirements below. Before we were notified that the Willamette Falls Locks were closed, we had scheduled the propulsion system and dry dock for the same time, with the assumption that the ferry would be able to be towed to the Portland ship yards to have both projects completed at the same time. The closure of the locks has changed the method of transport of the ferry, which would add approximately \$500,000 to the contract, or would require the work to be done on site, which would also be more expensive.

There is another federal grant opportunity open now and we have submitted a request for \$400,000 in additional funds. We don't anticipate a response back until late spring. We plan to proceed with the project without these funds to meet Coast Guard deadlines.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

The U.S. Coast Guard regulates the operation of the Canby Ferry. One of their requirements is a five year inspection where the vessel is taken out of the water for a hull inspection and then

any necessary repairs can be made. In 2006, we transported the Canby Ferry to the Portland ship yards via the Willamette Falls Locks to be inspected and this was a cost effective method of completing the inspection. In the past, it has been inspected on site.

We were due for a five year inspection in 2011 and because of the anticipated replacement of the propulsion system, we requested an extension. This extension was granted by the Coast Guard and expires on June 6, 2012. We need to have the inspection done prior to June 6, 2012 or we will lose our license to operate.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Public and Governmental Affairs have been contacted and they are in touch with congressional representatives.

OPTIONS:

None at this time.

Fiscal Impact Form

RESOURCES:

Is this item in your current work plan and budget?

- YES
- NO

START-UP EXPENSES AND STAFFING (if applicable):

To date approximately \$200,000 has been spent in preparing Plans, Specifications and Estimates for the project. This expense was necessary due to the unique characteristics of the Ferry and special consultant expertise needed.

ONGOING OPERATING EXPENSES/SAVINGS AND STAFFING (if applicable):

The Canby Ferry currently operates with two shifts, seven days a week, utilizing three employees. The employees are licensed and regulated through the Coast Guard. There are also five employees in Bridge Maintenance that are licensed to provide back-up for the regular operators and provide for maintenance of the ferry.

Transportation Maintenance, through the Road Fund, provides most of the operation funding. We recover some revenue through a user fee of \$2.00 per vehicle.

Year	Days of Operation	Vehicles Carried	Vehicles Carried % Inc/Dec	Costs*	Cost % Inc/Dec	Avg Breakeven per Vehicle Cost
2001/2002	286	65,719		\$430,096		\$7
2002/2003	327	77,848	16%	\$400,820	-7%	\$5
2003/2004	337	82,922	6%	\$397,860	-1%	\$5
2004/2005	355	92,692	11%	\$505,367	21%	\$5
2005/2006	290	80,979	-14%	\$561,277	10%	\$7
2006/2007	299	82,922	2%	\$467,490	-20%	\$6
2007/2008	318	89,027	7%	\$648,761	28%	\$7
2008/2009	325	80,119	-11%	\$598,702	-8%	\$7
2009/2010	349	77,348	-4%	\$588,960	-2%	\$8
2010/2011	331	69,800	-11%	\$574,627 **	-2%	\$8
Total:	3,217	799,376		\$5,173,959		\$6

*Costs for 2001/2002 through 2005/2006 include maintenance charges from Dept. 2480-Equip Maint. These costs were not included in previous report for 1998-2008.

**\$179,461 to Art Anderson Associates for engineering and design work for Canby Ferry Overhaul not included in 2010/2011 Costs.

FY 2010/2011

Cost of operation:	\$574,627
Revenue received:	\$119,005
Cost to Road Fund:	\$455,622

ANTICIPATED RESULTS:

When completed the Canby Ferry will meet all Coast Guard requirements and will have a modern, more fuel efficient, and environmentally friendly propulsion system.

COSTS & BENEFITS:

The Canby Ferry operates at an annual subsidy to users of approximately \$4 to \$6 per vehicle per crossing (Ferry tickets cost \$2 for cars and small trucks, \$1 for motorcycles, ticket packets \$35 for twenty passes, \$4 for car plus trailer and \$12 for large trucks). When the Ferry is closed, the detour required is about 15.3 miles in length. Out of pocket costs for an average motorist are about \$2.80, but closer to \$8 when all costs of vehicle ownership and operation are considered to take this 15.3 mile trip. Since ferry user benefits of fewer miles traveled is not presently being captured by the fees being charged, the cost-benefit of this project is less than one. We have not estimated the benefits that accrue to the local economy from tourists who are attracted to the area because of the ferry, or the ferry's value when road closures occur and the ferry is used to reroute traffic.

RECOMMENDATION:

Proceed with advertising the project for bids. A final decision on bid award will depend on the bid amount.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____
Department Director/Head Approval *Samuel Irving, Jr.*
County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Samuel Irving, Jr. @
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