

# Tonquin Road, future 124th Ave. work progressing

■ Plans are to have a new road, Basalt Creek Parkway, completed in the spring

By RAY PITZ  
The Times

While those construction waits along Southeast Tonquin Road may prove a little frustrating at times, work at revamping a portion of the road in anticipation of connecting Southeast 124th Avenue from Tualatin-Sherwood to Tonquin roads is proceeding at a steady clip.

Already visible is 124th Avenue coming into Tonquin Road from the north, which will create a new intersection about one-quarter mile east of Morgan Road.

And soon, installation of the first section of the Willamette Water Supply Program's new water transmission line will be installed under the same roadways as part of infrastructure that will provide for the future water needs of the city of Hillsboro.

Once completed, 124th Avenue will stretch approximately 1.5 miles from Tualatin-Sherwood to Tonquin roads.

Renus Kelfkens, a project manager with the Washington County Department of Land



Heavy machinery (left) moves dirt on the Basalt Creek Parkway bridge which extends from Southwest Tonquin Road to Grahams Ferry Road. Below, Renus Kelfkens, project manager for Washington County Department of Land Use and Transportation, stands on Basalt Creek Parkway above a bridge that's being built in the background.

TIMES PHOTOS:  
JAIME VALDEZ



where it connects to Grahams Ferry Road, said Kelfkens.

Well under construction is the 120-foot-long railway bridge, which raises the road-

bed 40 feet on both sides of the tracks, Kelfkens pointed out during on a recent tour. Portland & Western Railroad owns those tracks, which carry Tri-

## ROAD WORK FACTS

■ Tonquin Road will become three lanes (with a continuous center lane) from Morgan Road to Graham's Ferry).

■ Graham's Ferry Road will be widened to three lanes from Tonquin to Day roads.

■ Traffic signals will be installed at the intersections at 124th Avenue and Tonquin Road as well as at Tonquin and Graham's Ferry roads.

■ Future speed limits on Tonquin Road will be 35 mph; the speed limit on Basalt Creek Parkway will be 45 mph.

Met's WES commuter rail.

"We'll flatten the curves at the railroad (tracks) on either side," said Kelfkens, "so it will improve the distance crossing the railroad (tracks)."

The Basalt Creek Parkway project included the removal of three homes — two of which were purchased outright by the county, and one through the condemnation process.

At some point, Tonquin Road will be shut down temporarily so the water pipeline can be installed, said Kelfkens. That will mean a detour, which will route traffic along Basalt Creek Parkway from the 124th Avenue intersection to Grahams Ferry Road.

While completion of the entire project is still two years off (winter of 2018), Basalt Creek Parkway will be completed in early spring.

Ultimately, Basalt Creek Parkway will become the new arterial roadway, a road designed to handle higher capacity traffic, which will relegate Tonquin to collector status, meaning it will handle low-to-moderate traffic.

Also, future annexations will make Basalt Creek Parkway the dividing line separating Tualatin from Wilsonville, said Kelfkens.

For the city of Sherwood, the 124th Avenue extension means not only a possible shortcut for motorists heading into town but also a connection to the Tonquin Employment Area, 300 acres of property set aside for small to mid-size manufacturers. The area could create up to 3,000 jobs, according to Sherwood officials.

Meanwhile, the Willamette Water Supply Program is about to begin work on installing water pipes under the 124th Avenue and Tonquin Road right-of-way.

All of that is part of a 30-mile pipeline to provide Hillsboro with drinking water that will be transmitted in the future from the Willamette River at Wilsonville. Plans are to begin laying pipe underneath 124th Avenue in October, according to Marlys Mock, media and community relations coordinator for the Willamette Water Supply Program.

"It will be installed in phases to match the timing of the road construction," said Mock, adding that completion of the waterline is currently planned for summer 2018 with a construction cost of approximately \$10.5 million."