



PRESS RELEASE

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**Rhododendron Drive Realignment & Improvement Project Updates:
Open House Video Available to View Online
Construction Activity to begin March 11, 2024**

FLORENCE, OR – The City of Florence, RH2 Engineering, and K&E Excavating hosted an open House on Wednesday, March 6th at the Florence Events Center regarding the upcoming Rhododendron Drive Realignment and Improvement Project. During the open house, the project team displayed renderings of the improvements, presented on what to expect during construction, and answered community member questions regarding the much-anticipated project.

The link to the full presentation video and the materials distributed at the open house can be found on the project website at <https://bit.ly/RhodyRealignment>.

The long-awaited project will impact Rhododendron Drive from Wildwinds to 35th Street, involving shifting the roadway to the east, reconstruction of the failing road base, upgrading water and sewer lines, stormwater improvements, power and communications utility relocations, installation of retaining walls, creation of a separated multi-use path, and finally repaving.

Construction activity for the Rhododendron Drive Realignment and Improvement Project will begin March 11, 2024.

People can expect to see crews, equipment, and materials in the area beginning next week. Impacts to residents and the motoring public during the week of March 11th will be minimal. The contractor will be completing some underground exploration to determine exact location of utilities in relation to the work zone.

Throughout the duration of the project, community members should expect limited access in the project area. Traffic flow and access for residential access in the project area, as well as those needing to access the Lane County Transfer Station and the Oregon Coast Humane Society, will be maintained during construction. The City of Florence and the project team ask that those not needing to access the area please avoid the construction zone so the contractors can work more effectively.

The project team is working with the Lane County Transfer Station and the Oregon Coast Humane Society to maintain business access to New Hope Lane. Any temporary disruptions will be communicated with businesses and their patrons. The team has also ensured that local emergency services will retain access to the area throughout the project.

The Rhododendron Drive Realignment and Improvement Project is expected to be completed by December 2025. Learn more about the project at <https://bit.ly/RhodyRealignment>.

The City will share information related to specific impacts of the project on social media, both Facebook and Instagram, as well as posting updates on the project webpage and sending out notifications to the email distribution list. An FAQ section will also be developed based on the questions we received at the open house and future questions we receive on the project. That will also be linked on the project webpage.

If you are interested in staying up to date on the project, please visit <https://bit.ly/FlorenceSubscriptions> to sign up to receive emails regarding project updates and meeting notifications, and to subscribe to the Rhody Drive Construction Project Updates subscription list.

About the Project

The Rhododendron Drive Realignment and Improvement Project is not merely a roadway paving project. It is also for water and wastewater pipe line replacement and the installation of a separated multi-use path. The project will shift the roadway to the east in the area of Marine Manor south to the end of the river overlook pullout area. This is necessary in order to improve vision clearance and provide an enhanced parking area along the river.

One of the key features of the project is dealing with the slopes on the east side of Rhododendron Drive south of New Hope Lane. The project utilizes the slope to the benefit of the project by incorporating the multi-use path and elevating it in this section of the project. This will allow pedestrians and bicyclists a view of the river and sand dunes from above motor vehicle level.

The project will also install a pedestrian activated signal to allow pedestrians and bicyclists an opportunity to cross Rhododendron Drive east to west at New Hope Lane so they, too, can have access to the river.

The City of Florence opened bids on the Rhody Drive Realignment & Improvement Project in December 2023. K&E Excavating, Inc. out of Salem, Oregon, was awarded the construction contract for this \$7 million project. Project costs include \$250,000 for engineering services and \$6,750,000 for the construction phase. Additionally, Lane County is contributing \$338,000 to reconfigure the intersection to New Hope Lane and access to the Transfer Station.

The funding for the project comes from the City of Florence's funds for streets, wastewater, water, and stormwater and were approved in the [2023-2025 Biennial Budget](#) and [2023-2025 City Work Plan](#).

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Supporting Information: Rhododendron Drive Realignment and Improvement Project Summary provided to Open House attendees on March 6th.