

**CITY OF BROOKINGS**  
**Press Release**  
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**Airport Infrastructure Project Breaks Ground**

The Brookings Airport infrastructure project could lay the foundation for job-creating, private investment at the airport and adjacent lands zoned for light industry, according to several speakers at the project groundbreaking ceremony this week.

Speaking at the event, Congressman Pete DeFazio said he looked forward to working with the City and the County to resolve lingering airport area access issues raised by the Federal Aviation Administration.

DeFazio said he appreciated the opportunity to visit the airport and observe the topography and access first-hand. After intervening with the FAA to get the stalled project back on track last year, DeFazio said he and his staff have more work to do to clear the way for new development.

Mayor Ron Hedenskog thanked DeFazio for his assistance while also acknowledging the help from U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.

Also participating in the groundbreaking event were City Manager Gary Milliman, Project Engineer Steve Major and General Contractor Casey McClennan.

Utilizing over \$1.7 million in grant funding awarded in 2012 by the US Economic Development Administration and \$1.2 million in City funds, this project will provide water and sewer services to both the airport and to the underserved residential properties located nearby.

The first phase of work, starting next week, will include a significant amount of earthwork and trenching which will require heavy equipment to be operating there throughout the summer. Construction hours will be limited to 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. on weekends or holidays.

“We have finally completed the many environmental studies and agency approvals required before starting construction, so now we are eager and ready to commence,” said City Manager Gary Milliman.

This project, which also includes construction of a 500,000 gallon water storage tank, will spur economic development by providing infrastructure necessary to support light industry and/or airport-dependent development on the approximately 155 acres at and adjacent to the airport that were recently annexed into Brookings.

“We receive numerous requests from potential developers and small business owners looking to relocate,” said Milliman. “With this improvement, we will now be able to offer them shovel-ready development options.”

Mayor Ron Hedenskog added, “I think this project is vital to reversing the effects of the economic downturn and will have a prolific impact on Brookings’ future. I am very pleased it is getting underway.”

By extending utility service, this project will also enhance the disaster resiliency of the airport for use as a staging area and key transportation facility in the event of a high-level natural disaster.

Because the airport is located outside of the tsunami inundation zone, it would likely be the only transportation access to support response and recovery. It is designated as a regional staging area for the receipt of supplies and other resources in the event of need for disaster relief. Adequate water and sewer facilities at the airport are essential to sustain a disaster relief effort.

“Brookings Airport will provide a lifeline to the community during a major emergency when road systems serving Brookings and Curry County are obstructed,” Milliman said. “The addition of the water tank also enhances fire protection and provides an additional reserve to sustain the water system if our source of supply is disrupted.”

“This project addresses such a broad array of issues including economic development and emergency preparedness,” said Hedenskog. “It is absolutely invaluable.”

**NEWS MEDIA: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** For further information on this release contact Teri Davis 541/469-1102.