



# Summary

Draft

## INTERCHANGE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN I-5: Fern Valley Interchange

### THE FERN VALLEY INTERCHANGE PROJECT

ODOT and the City of Phoenix are getting ready to build a new Fern Valley Interchange and rebuild Fern Valley Road and N. Phoenix from OR 99 to north of the Arrowhead Ranch entrance. The project is being built to relieve traffic congestion and provide for responsible growth through 2030.

### THE CHALLENGE

The City of Phoenix is preparing to spend \$2.3 million on the project and ODOT about \$40 million from scarce highway dollars that are also in demand by other jurisdictions throughout the region. In addition, Phoenix is counting on growth, especially northeast of the interchange, to expand its tax base and provide needed services to the community. The wrong kinds of growth early on will limit growth later. To avoid this, the Interchange Area Management Plan needs to allow growth, but manage it. And the plan needs to bind both today's decision-makers and future decision-makers.

### THE PLAN

The plan has nine measures to provide for responsible growth in Phoenix and keep traffic moving easily back and forth over I-5:

#### Walkable Community Transition Overlay Zone

This measure responds to city, community, developer, and ODOT concerns regarding development. It takes a staged approach to allowed development. Developments covering a large area, in a way that commits to transit/walking/bicycling options, would be allowed the greatest number of land use types. Developments covering a smaller area, or not fully committing to transit/walking/bicycling options, would be allowed fewer land use types. Small or piecemeal developments, uncommitted to transit/walking/bicycling options, would be allowed the fewest land use types.

“Walkable Community” development means a mix of commercial and residential uses built so that residents have the choice to either walk, bicycle, or drive from their homes to services for daily needs. Some businesses that provide those services, like restaurants and service stations, also meet highway user needs. Some highway-oriented uses, like motels, also meet occasional needs of community residents. Office buildings can enjoy good highway access and their occupants can choose to live nearby and walk or bike to work.

## Capacity Expansion

Some additional turn lanes will be needed over time to keep congestion at acceptable levels. Phoenix and ODOT will work with developers to fund such improvements.

## Bus Stop and Transfer Site Coordination

In the future, RVTD wants to run busses along N. Phoenix Road and between this new line and its existing route on OR 99. ODOT and Phoenix will help RVTD locate bus stops and places for passengers to transfer among these routes.

## Shared Park-and-Ride Lots

ODOT and the City of Phoenix will help RVTD arrange shared park-and-ride lots near the interchange. At such lots, a property owner allows bus riders and carpoolers to park. They are often at churches or shopping centers that have extra parking.

## Jackson County OR 99 Widening Avoidance Overlay Zone

Even with the interchange project and proposed roadway mitigation, OR 99 is projected to become congested. To avoid the need to widen OR 99 over the next 20 years it will be necessary to avoid new high-traffic generating uses along it. This measure will allow all existing uses along OR 99 north of the city limits to remain, but restrict new development of some uses that generate lots of traffic, like fast-food restaurants.

## OR 99 Setback

Even with the preceding measure, widening OR 99 north of the Phoenix couplet may be needed in the long term. This measure will require new buildings along OR 99 to be set back far enough from the road that they will not have to be bought and demolished if the community decides that OR 99 is to be widened in the future. Jackson County rules, which apply outside city limits, already have such a requirement.

## South Valley Transportation Strategy

The City of Phoenix and ODOT will commit to working with Jackson County and Medford to formulate a strategy to avoid traffic from outside Phoenix causing congestion on the interchange, N. Phoenix Road, and Fern Valley Road.

## Cross-Approval

This measure will give ODOT the opportunity to review large developments that could make the new interchange and adjacent roadways too congested again, and work with Phoenix and developers to find solutions to the increased congestion.

## Motor Vehicle Trip Reduction Designs and Programs

The City of Phoenix will require applications for large development projects to propose specific commitments to reduce motor vehicle trips by employees and visitors, such as preferred parking for employee carpools, support for employee telecommuting, bicycle parking facilities, off-peak work hours, etc.