

Stadium Freeway connection approved by City Council

Members of the Portland City Council Thursday approved the recommended interim connection for Interstate-405 (Stadium Freeway) in Northwest Portland, despite objections from business and industry spokesmen in the area.

The interim connections are scheduled for use beginning this fall when I-405 is completed, and will be used for about a year. Further alterations will be necessary in about a year when the Fremont Bridge is completed, Harbor Drive is closed, and a decision is made on where to build, or whether to build, I-505.

All automobile traffic and local truck traffic will come off I-405, head north on NW 21st Avenue and then head west on NW Vaughn Street.

Parking will be removed from Vaughn Street and it will have three 12-foot lanes (two eastbound and one westbound) instead of two 10-foot driving lanes and two 8-foot parking lanes as it does now.

Traffic headed east toward the freeway will leave Vaughn at NW 22nd Avenue, go south to NW Thurman Street, and then follow Thurman east to the freeway on-ramp.

A special route for the estimated 1,000 trucks which go through the area each day without stopping will be established along NW Nicolai Street, with trucks moving north on NW 21st Avenue and south on NW 22nd Avenue to and from the freeway.

It was the separate truck route which was opposed by spokesmen for businesses and industries in the area,

most of them along Nicolai Street.

They contended that the additional truck traffic on Nicolai would compound an already bad traffic situation because of use of the street by Burlington Northern Railroad.

They said the intersection of NW 22nd Avenue and Nicolai Street would especially cause problems because trains block all traffic whenever they make the turn — as they do six times a day on regular runs, and other times when they are delivering and picking up freight box cars from industries in the area.

Those opposing the Nicolai truck route suggested that all traffic be routed along Vaughn Street.

Support for the proposed

interim connection was given by the two citizen groups in the area, the Northwest District Association and the Wilamette Heights Neighborhood Association. Both groups also asked, however, that the freeway on-ramp be placed on NW Upshur Street, rather than NW Thurman Street, to prevent an increase in traffic on Thurman.

Council members approved the plan as proposed, but promised to consider changes in the routings later if severe problems arise.

Scott Coulter, metropolitan engineer for the State Highway Division, estimated cost of the project at about \$80,000, with the state paying all \$5,000, which will be paid by the City of Portland.