Edition 4, April 2004

BRIDGE SPANS is a monthly newsletter compiled by staff of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Project in Gig Harbor, Washington. In an effort to keep residents and businesses along the SR 16 corridor — not to mention bridge buffs — up to date on the $849 million project and informed about traffic impacts, the state Department of Transportation provides a monthly summary of activities related to the construction of the twin bridge. The parallel bridge is scheduled for completion in early 2007.

Spring Open House in Tacoma, May 19. The Washington State Department of Transportation and Tacoma Narrows Constructors invite those who travel the State Route 16 corridor to attend a May 19 open house at Tacoma’s Wilson High School. Join us to learn more about the 2004 construction schedule for SR 16 and summer activities planned for the new Tacoma Narrows Bridge. In addition to the new bridge being in its second full season of construction, the first of three SR 16 roadway projects is underway. The three projects between Interstate 5 and Gig Harbor, together with the new bridge, will provide greater traffic capacity, and ultimately, safer and more reliable travel along SR 16.

What: Open House, SR 16 Roadway Projects & New Tacoma Narrows Bridge
When: May 19, 6 - 8:30 p.m.
Where: Wilson High School, 1202 North Orchard St., Tacoma

Temporary Traffic Revision for Weatherswood. Today (April 15), tomorrow and Saturday, design-builder Tacoma Narrows Constructors (TNC) will close a segment of Weatherswood Drive NW above Stone Drive NW so crews can grade and pave the roadway in preparation for opening Stone Drive in a new alignment. The Weatherswood Drive NW segment closure will occur again on Monday, April 19 for paving activities. During the road closures, a detour will be provided along the new Stone Drive alignment and traffic control will be in place. Weatherswood Drive NW and Serena Lane NW residents may exit their neighborhood by using Lucille Parkway NW.
For questions or comments about these temporary traffic changes, contact Erin Babbo, TNC Public Affairs Manager, at (253) 853-9777.

36th Street Ramps Open to Traffic April 24. The new eastbound State Route 16 exit to 36th Street NW and 36th Street on-ramp to eastbound SR 16 are scheduled to open to traffic on Saturday, April 24. Once these permanent ramps open, crews will permanently close the eastbound SR 16 exit to Stone Drive NW and the Stone Drive NW on-ramp to eastbound SR 16. (Please note that the Stone Drive NW on-ramp to eastbound SR 16 will remain open to construction vehicles.)

Visit the TNB web site to view a detailed map (www.tacomanarrowsbridge.com). For questions concerning these traffic revisions, contact staff of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge Office, (253) 534-4640 or toll-free at (877) 762-7769.

Bird’s Eye View of Bridge Construction. When another web camera went live earlier this week, bridge enthusiasts around the globe gained another virtual window from which to watch construction progress of new Tacoma Narrows Bridge. The new web cam, in conjunction with the existing web cam, will increase construction views from one image to five and include shots of the eastern and western caissons, the eastern and western anchorages and the entire bridge. One camera is positioned on the existing bridge’s east tower. In an emergency, this web cam could be used to enhance traffic monitoring in that it covers the bridge span itself. The camera views can be found at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr16narrowsbridge/webcams/

New Narrows Park Opens on June 26. The Narrows Park is one of the peninsula’s best-kept secrets. Situated on the shores of the Tacoma Narrows just south of the bridge, the 35-acre park features 1,200 feet of beach. Other than the virtual window that is your computer monitor, the best vantage point to view bridge construction will be at the new Narrows Park. This once private property, known to locals as “Doc Weather’s,” was purchased by Pierce County Parks in 1996. After receiving a facelift this spring, the park will reopen on Saturday, June 26. The renovation plans began last spring when Pierce County Parks, design-builder Tacoma Narrows Constructors and WSDOT joined forces to make site improvements. The park, with a newly relocated entrance, will have a newly-paved access road, a new parking lot and a viewing platform. Visitors will be able to stroll to the beach on a paved path that ends at a gazebo. A lawn area suited for picnicking also connects to the beach. Bridge enthusiasts will find two telescope viewers as well. The handicap-accessible park will be open between dawn and dusk. Visit the bridge web site later this month to see a map of the park and driving directions.

Working on the Bridge Project. The Tacoma Narrows Bridge Project recently launched a new website, www.tacomanarrowsbridgebusiness.com, to provide businesses and individuals information about working on the Narrows Bridge project. Visit the website to learn how to become part of the project.