

Talent downtown traffic project to kick off

Construction in 2012 will add plaza to the city center

By **TONY BOOM**
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TALENT — Work crews will break ground Wednesday on the first phase of a \$3.3 million project that will give the city a new gateway entrance to downtown.

The ground-breaking is set for 9:30 a.m. behind the Camelot Theatre Building at Main Street and Talent Avenue.

When completed in 2012, the work will send traffic directly into the downtown core on an extension of Main Street that will link up with West Valley View Road near Highway 99. Currently, traffic is routed on West Valley View to Talent Avenue, then to Main Street.

The Talent Urban Renewal Agency has spent five years on project design, right-of-way acquisition and financial arrangements. The costs will be funded by a \$1 million state grant and through property tax assessments.

First phase of the project includes construction of Seiber Street east of the new Camelot Theatre from New Street to the Valley View-Main connection and other work. Seiber Street will include 36 head-in parking spaces.

Camelot Theatre will move to its new building just to the north of the current theater on the corner of Talent Avenue and Main Street in June. The old theater building stands where Main Street will be extended.

Besides the street, the first phase includes an alley just north of the new theater, curbs and sidewalks on parts of New Street, and a storm water retention pond on the corner of New and Seiber streets. Work will be finished in November.

Connection of Main Street to West Valley View Road will take place in 2012. That portion will include a roundabout that links Main Street with West Valley View Road. A plaza will be created on the western side of the roundabout.

In the future, Wagner Street may be connected to the roundabout if the Talent Irrigation District equipment yard and shops relocate elsewhere.

Pilot Rock Excavation Inc. of Central Point submitted the low bid of \$379,105 for the initial work. The firm previously upgraded Talent Avenue from Main Street to Colver Road for the agency.

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