



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Oregon Transportation Commission

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DATE: January 11, 2024
TO: Oregon Transportation Commission

FROM: Kristopher W. Strickler
Director

SUBJECT: Agenda M – Urban Mobility Office (UMO) Update

Requested Action:

Receive an update from the Urban Mobility Office on the progress of core projects outlined in the Urban Mobility Strategy, including the Westside Multimodal Improvements Study and the I-5 Boone Bridge Replacement Project.

Background:

Westside Multimodal Improvements Study

The Westside Multimodal Improvements Study began with a request to Governor Brown from Washington County businesses and jurisdictions to look at ways to address travel needs to sustain the area's economic health and quality of life. The Westside Study Area, centered on the US 26 Sunset Highway from Hillsboro through the Vista Ridge Tunnel, is home to approximately 90,000 residents and 124,000 jobs. It is a regional employment destination, with many people traveling into and out of the area for work, and an economic engine for Oregon, producing many high value exports. The study's purpose was to collaboratively identify the transportation issues in the Westside Corridor and to identify multimodal investments that can address them to support the regional economy and accommodate future growth in a socially and environmentally sustainable way.

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) partnered with Metro to convene and chair a Steering Committee composed of representatives of jurisdictional partners and community-based organizations. Over the course of six meetings, the Steering Committee came to understand existing conditions, expected changes in population and travel demand, and study how different investments might affect the study goal areas: Mobility, Safety, Social Equity, Climate Action, and Economic Vitality. The final meeting occurred in November 2023.

The study analyzed over 80 transportation projects, policies and programs that could help improve existing and future transportation deficiencies in the westside corridor. These include investments

in high-frequency and high-capacity transit, shuttles and circulators, park-and-ride centers, closing gaps in the bicycle and pedestrian networks, and other strategies.

Additionally, the committee expressed interest in studying the effect of tolling to manage congestion and demand on U.S. 26. The committee recommended conducting a study of tolling paired with strategic capital investments, including improving bottlenecks at the U.S. 26 and Interstate 405 interchange and safety improvements and widening on Cornelius Pass Road, which is a major connection between the Tualatin Valley and Columbia County. The study found that tolling could be an effective tool to reduce congestion and improve safety when combined with other transit and corridor improvements.

The steering committee is expected to make its final recommendation in the coming months. The final report from the study will include recommendations for further analysis and implementation and will also identify lead agencies. Funding will be needed to advance the study's recommendations. More information can be found on the project website: [Oregon Department of Transportation : Westside Multimodal Improvements Study : Urban Mobility Office : State of Oregon](#)

I-5 Boone Bridge Replacement Project

Traffic congestion on and approaching Boone Bridge negatively affects traveler safety, freight movement and the economy. Currently, there are more than 126,000 vehicles including an average of 17,000 trucks crossing the bridge every day. Closely spaced interchanges result in limited space for drivers to merge into through traffic. Expected population and economic growth in the region will increase the delays drivers experience in the project area due to congestion, which affects interstate and local road movements.

As part of the I-5 Boone Bridge Replacement Project, ODOT is exploring solutions to create earthquake readiness, improve safety, increase bicycle and pedestrian options, and improve the main north-south interstate on the West Coast. The project is in Wilsonville where I-5 crosses the Willamette River. Project benefits are expected to include:

- Creating an I-5 bridge over the Willamette River that can withstand an earthquake and maintain the connection to the Mid-Willamette Valley and areas south of the Portland metro area
- Improving safety and options for travelers walking, driving, biking or taking transit
- Auxiliary lanes are being evaluated to reduce crashes, manage congestion and improve travel time for all travelers, including freight
- Accommodating future population and economic growth

The project is in the Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) phase. This phase is a collaborative transportation decision-making process that gathers community and agency input early to fully establish the needs and goals of the project and identify possible solutions.

In partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), ODOT has initiated collaboration with 18 federal, state, regional and local agencies. In November 2023, the project sponsored both an online and in-person Open House to ask community members their thoughts about the draft purpose, needs, and goals for the project. ODOT will use the feedback to guide the development of project options. Over 110 people attended the in-person Open House and over 180 people filled out an online survey, indicating high interest in the project. Most people said their greatest concerns about I-5 in the project area are getting stuck in traffic congestion or knowing when to leave their house to get to their destinations.

During 2024, key activities include: developing the purpose and need statement, evaluating project alternatives, and preparing a cost estimate based on conceptual design assumptions. When the PEL process is complete, the next step is an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The timing for future phases is dependent upon funding availability.