



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Matt Ransom, Executive Director  
**DATE:** February 28, 2017   
**SUBJECT:** **Designation of I-5 Bridge Replacement as a Project of Statewide Significance – Resolutions 02-17-03 and 02-17-04 (Action)**

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***ATA GLANCE***

*The Board of Directors previously requested a discussion regarding Resolutions designating an I-5 bridge replacement project as a Project of Statewide Significance and regarding clearing impediments in law. The Board moved Resolution 02-17-03 at the February Board meeting, and the motion was tabled until the March Board meeting to allow for additional agency review. The Board also requested additional discussion of Resolution 02-17-04.*

**BACKGROUND**

At the November 1, 2016 RTC Board meeting, the Board agreed to discuss a Resolution introduced under Board Business. That Resolution, prepared by citizen advocates, asks that the RTC Board recommend that the State of Washington designate an I-5 Bridge Replacement project as a “Project of Statewide Significance”.

Since that time, the RTC Board was briefed on this topic at the December, January, and February meetings. At the February Board meeting, the Board moved a motion to Adopt Resolution 02-17-03, and that motion was tabled to allow for additional agency review until the March Board meeting. During Board discussion, the request was made to also discuss Resolution 02-17-04 at the March Board meeting, allowing for further review and potential action.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

*Member Agency Resolutions*

Since the February RTC Board meeting, several RTC member agencies have adopted resolutions that, in some form, recommend moving forward with planning towards replacement of the I-5 bridges and supporting designation as a Project of Statewide Significance.

*State Legislation*

Since the February RTC Board meeting, bi-cameral legislation was introduced in the House and Senate (HB 2095 and SB 5806) to designate an I-5 bridge replacement project as a Project of Statewide Significance and also to advance a technical inventory and legislative working group review of a future bridge replacement project. A separate bill pertaining to establishing a legislative workgroup to review bi-state river crossing(s) was also introduced in the House (HB 1222).

As of this report, the proposed bills, HB-2095 and SB-5806, were passed out of their respective Transportation Committees and are pending additional legislative procedural review. Alternatively, HB 1222 did not advance out of committee.

## **RESOLUTION**

RTC's existing Board policy and project priorities are expressed in the current Regional Transportation Plan (2014). The proposed Resolutions are consistent with existing regional intent which is to progress towards the funding and construction of an I-5 Bridge replacement project within the 20-year planning horizon.

A summary of the Resolutions is noted below:

Resolution 02-17-03: *To support designation of an I-5 Bridge Replacement Project as a Project of Statewide Significance.*

Resolution 02-17-04: *To support clearing of impediments in law to funding a future I-5 Bridge Replacement Project.*

## **POLICY IMPLICATION**

The proposed Resolutions fall within the parameters of current RTC Board policy and authority. As proposed, the Resolutions would act as an RTC Board statement of support to external parties for advancing a project already identified as a priority project in RTC planning documents.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATION**

None as Proposed. The proposed Resolutions do not materially affect the RTC's current Work Program or Budget (2017). However, should funding be set aside for new project efforts related to an I-5 Bridge replacement project, then RTC staff would assess at that time the nature and scope of RTC's direct involvement in any future project effort.

## **ACTION REQUESTED**

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution 02-17-03 and further discussion and adoption of Resolution 02-17-04.

Attachments:

Resolution 02-17-03

Resolution 02-17-04

**SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTION 02-17-03**

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING TO THE STATE OF WASHINGTON THAT A FUTURE  
I-5 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT BE DESIGNATED AS A TRANSPORTATION  
PROJECT OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE**

**WHEREAS**, the I-5 bridge is designated as part of a national defense interstate highway system serving the west coast from Canada to Mexico, including Oregon and Washington and is the primary interstate corridor serving the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area; and

**WHEREAS**, bi-state crossing projects, such as an I-5 bridge replacement project, will involve collaboration of both states, regional agencies, and public and private actors within each state; and,

**WHEREAS**, travel time conditions along the I-5 Corridor in Vancouver continue to deteriorate, and total traffic crossings of the Columbia River bridges on I-5 hit an all-time high, as measured and reported by the Regional Transportation Council's Congestion Monitoring Report (2016); and,

**WHEREAS**, existing traffic congestion in the I-5 bridge corridor is negatively impacting the economies of Southwest Washington and the Portland metropolitan area, including businesses and industries that are designated industries of regional and statewide significance; and,

**WHEREAS**, lack of project planning and funding for an I-5 bridge replacement project means continued congestion and delays in the corridor for general traffic, freight mobility, and emergency responders for the forthcoming future; and,

**WHEREAS**, an I-5 bridge replacement project is subject to being designated as a Project of Statewide Significance.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Directors of the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) that RTC recommends that the State of Washington designate a future I-5 Bridge Replacement as a Project of Statewide Significance.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2017,

by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ATTEST:

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Jeanne E. Stewart  
Chair of the Board

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Matt Ransom  
Executive Director

**SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTION 02-17-04**

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CLEARING OF IMPEDIMENTS IN LAW TO FUNDING  
A FUTURE I-5 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, The Regional Transportation Plan (2014) identifies a project to replace the I-5 bridges as a regional project priority; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan (2014), and in the public safety, health and welfare, to advance work towards a future replacement of the I-5 bridges and associated improvements in the I-5 corridor; and,

**WHEREAS**, travel time conditions along the I-5 Corridor in Vancouver continue to deteriorate, and total traffic crossings of the Columbia River bridges on I-5 hit an all-time high, as measured and reported by the Regional Transportation Council's Congestion Monitoring report (2016); and,

**WHEREAS**, an effect of the lack of project planning and funding for an I-5 bridge(s) replacement project results in continued traffic congestion in the corridor for the forthcoming future; and,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Directors of the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) that RTC supports clearing of impediments in current law which precludes the planning, funding, and construction of a future I-5 bridge replacement project.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2017,

by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ATTEST:

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Jeanne E. Stewart  
Chair of the Board

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Matt Ransom  
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