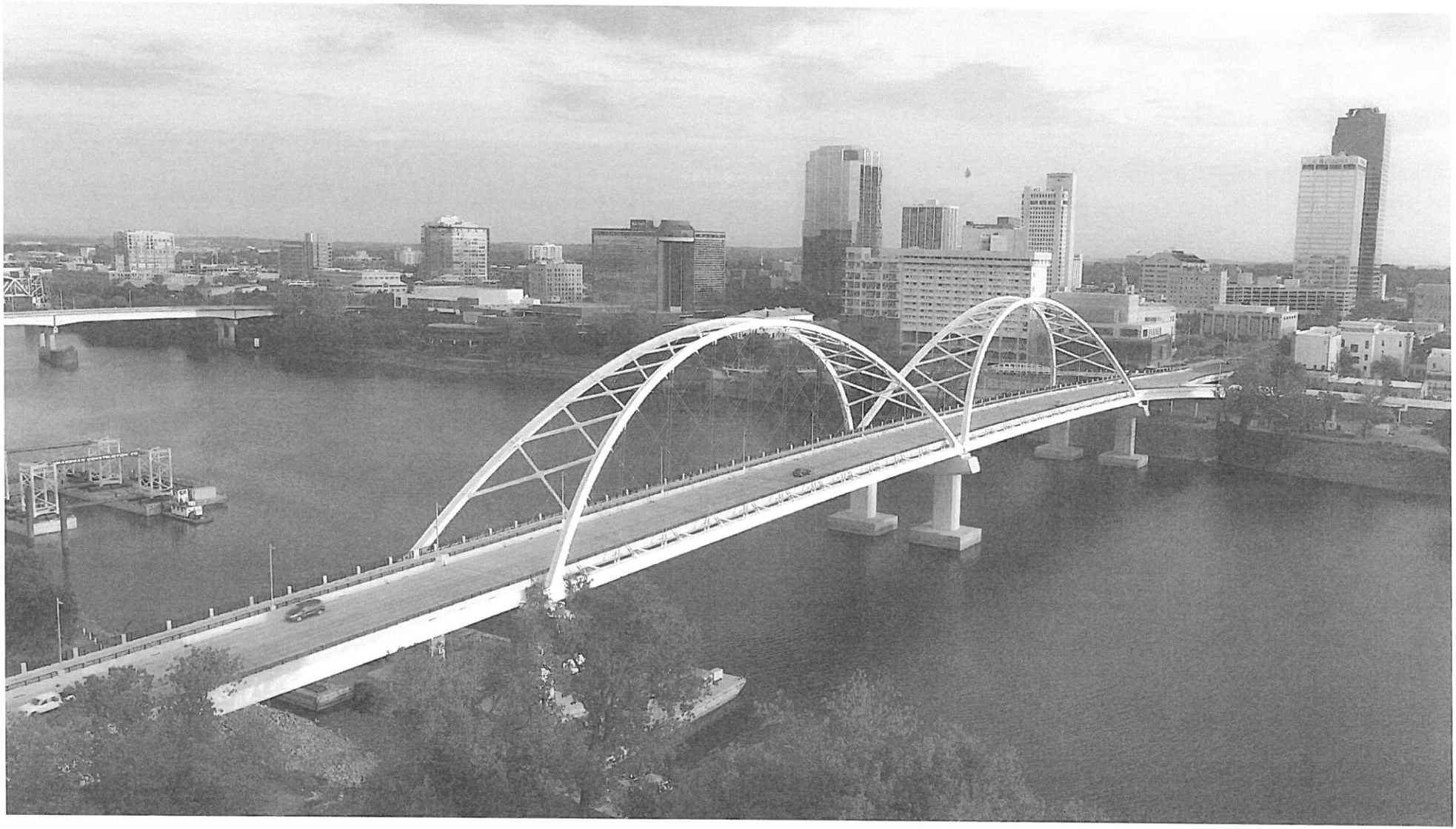

Submitted by Ron Swaren
4/3/2018

Action needed for replacement of the I-5 Bridge NOW.

A resolution passed by the labor Roundtable in the summer of 2014 recognize the importance of all of the work expended by so many individuals, including elected officials to develop a compromise that planning groups and the majority of elected officials of both states and the governors supported. The process that was followed was too cumbersome, and took too much time, but it is a process that has been established to make sure everyone is heard. When we were dealing with funding agreements on the 205-Bridge many years ago, it was the strong support from our community leaders, business and labor, which said to our elected officials get the job done. It is time to say that again. We all recognize that compromise must be made on projects like this. We can't let those who tried to distract us by telling us we can get a bridge without tolls, or build another bridge without going through a process similar to what we used on the I-205 and I-5 Bridges. This approving process will be required when any major bridge is proposed in our state. We need to get the I-5 bridge replacement done now. Any major changes to the existing plan will delay its construction and will probably increase the projects cost and create more delay, congestion, injuries and economic impact on our area. The impact on families due to the traffic congestion and delays also needs to be considered. We don't seem to understand the impact this is having on both of our states

In any proposed new bridge east or west of I-5 will require new connections to major streets that do not exist now and a process of permitting that we have been experiencing on the current replacement of the I-5 bridge. If we can't solve the I-5 bridge replacement now we need to be asking ourselves how do we expect to come up with other bridges when the same process is needed that is required for I-5 bridge replacement.

It is difficult to ask our elected officials to support a compromise plan unless those of us in the community and our elected officials and Governor are strong advocates of the project. To date that has not been done. We saw in the last legislature that we couldn't even designate this important project as a project of statewide significance.

We are requesting that the RTC and our local elected officials contact the governors and legislators of both the states of Oregon and Washington and tell them that the I-5 replacement bridge is a project of statewide significance and that they need to take action NOW.

Submitted by Al Bauer
4/3/2018