



MEMORANDUM

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director
DATE: August 28, 2018 
SUBJECT: **Resolution Supporting the Replacement of the Interstate 5 Bridge between the State of Washington and the State of Oregon**

AT A GLANCE

The Board of Directors has longstanding policy in support of a regional priority project to replace the I-5 bridges. The following report describes RTC's recent policy endorsements and a Resolution that was introduced (at the August 7 RTC Board meeting) supporting the replacement of the Interstate 5 Bridge between the State of Washington and the State of Oregon. This memorandum presents some background for RTC Board discussion.

BACKGROUND

At the August 7, 2018 RTC Board meeting, a Resolution was introduced for Board discussion by Board Vice-chair Mayor McEnerny-Ogle during meeting agenda topic: Other Business; From the Board. The Resolution (attached) was prepared by the City of Vancouver and was unanimously adopted by the Vancouver City Council on August 6, 2018. Since that time, other member agency jurisdictions are considering this same Resolution.

POLICY CONTEXT

Development of regional support for replacement of the I-5 Columbia River bridges has taken many forms. In recent years, the RTC Board has adopted policy, plans and ratified legislative statements which support replacement of the existing I-5 Columbia River bridges. Those policy endorsements have included:

Specific Study / Project / Resolution Endorsements:

- Resolution: I-5 Transportation and Trade Study (BR 12-02-25)
- Resolution: I-5 Columbia River Crossing Locally Preferred Alternative (BR 07-08-10)
- Resolution: I-5 Columbia River Crossing Final Environmental Impact Statement (BR 08-11-14)
- Resolution: Recommendation to the State of Washington that a Future I-5 Bridge Replacement Project be Designated as a Transportation Project of Statewide Significance (BR 02-17-03)
- Resolution: Supporting Clearing of Impediments in Law to Funding a Future I-5 Bridge Replacement Project (BR 02-17-04)

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- Endorsement: Clark County Transportation Alliance 2018 Policy Statement (*identified I-5 Bridge Replacement and Corridor Enhancements as regional priority project*)

Specific Plan Approvals:

- Since 2008, the RTC Board has approved a Regional Transportation Plan which includes a specific project to replace the I-5 bridges.
- Between 2002-2008, the RTC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan: Strategic Plan Appendix included a recommendation to add capacity to the I-5 bridge(s).

OPTIONS

The proposed Resolution is within the parameters of current RTC Board policy. RTC endorsement would add to the regional agency advocacy, and may bolster a *call-to-action* for advancing this important regional project. Considering that, the following options are available to the Board.

- 1) Do nothing
- 2) Adopt the Resolution as submitted at a future meeting.
- 3) Provide feedback to the Executive Director for follow-up efforts and/or action.

NEXT STEPS

Following the Board discussion at the September 4 meeting, staff will move forward in a manner consistent with Board direction.

Attachment

- Interstate 5 Bridge Replacement Resolution; introduced at August 7, 2018 RTC Board of Directors meeting.

[Meeting Date]

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION supporting the replacement of the Interstate 5 Bridge between the State of Washington and State of Oregon, guided by the principles herein.

WHEREAS, Interstate 5 is a corridor of national significance that serves the entire west coast of the United States, as well as international commerce with Canada, Mexico, and all of the countries of the Pacific Rim that access US west coast sea ports; and

WHEREAS, the Interstate 5 Bridge is a key economic connector to two major ports and much of the industrial land in the Vancouver-Portland Metropolitan Region; and

WHEREAS, Interstate 5 between Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon experiences some of the most severe congestion along the entire length of the Interstate 5 corridor, especially during the daily commuting periods, affecting travel time reliability and hindering the efficient movement of people and freight; and

WHEREAS, existing bi-state public transit service is inadequate to meet demand, and existing service operates in mixed-traffic, which has significant negative impacts on performance and operational outcomes; and

WHEREAS, high capacity transit does not currently connect Vancouver and Portland, and high capacity transit with a dedicated guideway would provide greatly improved transit service with much better schedule reliability and service than mixed-traffic operation; and

WHEREAS, frequent crashes on the corridor and on the Bridge itself affect public safety;
and

WHEREAS, the existing Interstate 5 bridges are functionally obsolete and do not meet current seismic standards; and

WHEREAS, replacement of the Interstate 5 Bridge is needed to support critical trade routes, address congestion, provide transportation choices, and improve safety;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF VANCOUVER:

Section 1. The City of Vancouver City Council supports efforts to begin a new project development process for an Interstate 5 Bridge replacement, consisting of:

- a. A replacement bridge
- b. High capacity transit with a dedicated guideway

Section 2. The City of Vancouver City Council supports a multi-modal approach of highway, high-capacity transit, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements to support the City's and region's travel needs.

Section 3. The City of Vancouver City Council urges Governor Jay Inslee and the Washington State Legislature to provide adequate funding to the Washington State Department of Transportation to materially advance project development for an Interstate 5 Bridge replacement.

ADOPTED at a Regular Meeting of the Vancouver City Council this _____, of _____, 2018.