



STAFF REPORT / RESOLUTION

TO: Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors
FROM: Matt Ransom, Executive Director
DATE: October 29, 2019 
SUBJECT: **Resolution Supporting Acceleration of Connecting Washington Projects, Resolution 11-19-27**

ATA GLANCE

The RTC Board of Directors has longstanding policy in support of implementation regional priority projects. The proposed Resolution advocates for accelerating implementation of the I-5 / NE 179th Street interchange improvement project in association with continued implementation of the Connecting Washington statewide funding program.

BACKGROUND

On July 15, 2015, Governor Inslee signed into law the state’s most recent statewide transportation funding package. This package was named Connecting Washington. As adopted, the Connecting Washington package provided a comprehensive response to both the state and local government’s transportation project and funding needs. Notably, the Connecting Washington packages funded specific projects, provided a limited increase in funding to state facility maintenance and operation’s needs, and provided a direct distribution of limited revenues to local government.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT HISTORY AND CONTEXT

The RTC Board supports implementation of regional priority projects as established in the Regional Transportation Plan (2019). The Board also periodically expresses legislative priorities when endorsing specific resolutions and also through annual consideration of the Clark County Transportation Alliance (CCTA) Policy Statement. RTC staff also engages with state legislators and their staff in regards to providing specific information about regional projects upon request or when RTC can provide assistance.

In the past several years, Clark County and the Washington State Department of Transportation have entered into project development agreements to push forward on pre-design studies needed to support the implementation of the Connecting Washington project to replace the I-5 / 179th St. Interchange. In addition to those joint project planning activities, the Clark County Council has been evaluating and recently advanced growth management compliance plan to fund County roadway improvements in adjacency to the interchange area.

As with most major statewide funding packages, changes to project scope and revised implementation schedules are adopted in subsequent legislative sessions. In a prior legislative session, a new appropriation of \$500K was added to the I-5 / 179th St. Interchange project to support the ongoing pre-design work.

At this time, additional pre-development funding is needed, and it is in the public's interest to support accelerating the release of Connecting Washington programmed funds (i.e. reprogram to an earlier biennium).

RESOLUTION

The proposed Resolution would act as an RTC Board statement of support for accelerating the funding programming of the I-5 / NE 179th Street Interchange project. That may allow regional partners to implement the project sooner than is currently scheduled. The Resolution also broadly supports legislative efforts to fully fund RTC region Connecting Washington projects when adjustments are needed to deliver the projects.

POLICY IMPLICATION

The proposed Resolution is consistent with and advocates for timely implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan (2019).

BUDGET IMPLICATION

None as Proposed.

ACTION REQUESTED

Adoption of Resolution 11-19-27.

Attachment: Resolution 11-19-27

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

RESOLUTION 11-19-27

A RESOLUTION supporting the accelerating of the project delivery of vital regional transportation improvement projects, 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

WHEREAS, the Connecting Washington statewide transportation funding package funded several high priority regional improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, the interchange of Interstate 5 at NE 179th Street is a regional gateway to key assets including the Clark County Event Center at the Fairgrounds, and serves an as yet under-developed quadrant within the Vancouver Urban Growth Area; and

WHEREAS, the Interstate 5 / NE 179th Street improvement project is funded in the Connecting Washington transportation package and would provide more immediate benefit to regional stakeholders if the project were to be built sooner than currently programmed.

NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL:**

Section 1. The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council supports Legislative efforts to accelerate the interchange improvements at Interstate 5 and / NE 179th Street.

Section 2. The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council supports Legislative project budget adjustments where labor, materials, and right-of-way costs have risen substantially for regional projects funded in the Connecting Washington package and for which

such an adjustment will ensure that the transportation system and public benefits envisioned by the Connecting Washington projects are achieved.

ADOPTED this 5th day of November 2019, by the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

ATTEST:

Anne McEnery-Ogle
Chair of the Board

Matt Ransom
Executive Director