

SECURE OREGON'S SHARE OF FUNDING FOR THE INTERSTATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The Opportunity and Why It's Important

The Interstate 5 Columbia River crossing is one of the worst choke points for interstate travel and commerce in the nation. Not only is it a bottleneck that restricts the Oregon economy, it is also a potential disaster. Over 100 years old, it is vulnerable to total collapse in the event of an earthquake. Federal infrastructure funds will likely be available to support this project if Washington and Oregon can agree on a design and secure matching funding.

Current Status

A bi-state commission is working on the design. A locally preferred alternative should be ready by mid-summer, 2022. Washington State has committed \$1 billion to the project and federal funding will likely be available for at least half of the cost if Oregon and Washington can agree on a proposal. Oregon will need to come up with its share of the state match, probably equal to Washington at \$1 billion.

Recommendations

- Complete a cost-effective design that accommodates freight, light rail transit, and automobiles. The design should address critical freight needs that affect commerce throughout Oregon and the entire West Coast.
- Review funding options and secure adoption of a funding strategy by the 2023 Legislature. Ensure that funding does not crowd out other projects called out in the 2019 Oregon Transportation Program, including the Rose Quarter project.