

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENDORSING THE) RESOLUTION NO. 23-5306
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR THE)
EARTHQUAKE READY BURNSIDE BRIDGE) Introduced by Chief Operating
PROJECT) Officer Marissa Madrigal in
) concurrence with Council President
) Lynn Peterson

WHEREAS, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the federally-recognized metropolitan transportation plan for the greater Portland Region, and must be updated every five years; and

WHEREAS, the RTP fulfills statewide planning requirements to implement Statewide Planning Goal 12 (Transportation), as implemented through the Transportation Planning Rule and the Metropolitan Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Rule; and

WHEREAS, the RTP is a central tool for implementing the Region 2040 Growth Concept, and constitutes a policy component of the Regional Framework Plan; and

WHEREAS, the most recent update to the RTP was completed on December 6, 2018, following adoption by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and the Metro Council; and

WHEREAS, JPACT and the Metro Council must approve any subsequent amendments to add new projects or policies or to substantially modify existing projects or policies in the RTP; and

WHEREAS, the next update to the RTP is currently underway, and will be completed by December 6, 2023; and

WHEREAS, our region’s infrastructure systems need to be resilient and prepared for multiple hazard risks, which include earthquakes, wildfires, landslides, floods, severe weather and volcanic events, and the increasing impacts of climate change; and

WHEREAS, resilient infrastructure systems and emergency management planning will help mitigate the risks these hazards pose to the public health and safety of communities and the region’s economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, research and experience demonstrate that climate change and natural hazards have a disproportionate effect on historically marginalized communities, including Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), people with limited English proficiency, people with low income, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities, who typically have fewer resources and more exposure to environmental hazards, and are, therefore, the most vulnerable to displacement, adverse health effects, job loss, property damage and other effects; and

WHEREAS, the Willamette River Bridges, including the Burnside Bridge, provide critical east-west connections that connect the two halves of the region and are of regional economic importance; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 RTP describes the need for a long-term strategy for maintaining the region's bridges, particularly the bridges spanning the Willamette River; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, the City of Portland identified the Burnside corridor, including the Burnside Bridge, as an Emergency Service Lifeline Corridor; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, Metro identified the Burnside corridor, including the Burnside Bridge, as a Regional Emergency Transportation Route (ETR); and

WHEREAS, the 2018 RTP identified the need for an update to the designated Regional ETRs to support future planning, policymaking and investment related to regional emergency management, transportation recovery and resiliency; and

WHEREAS, updates to the Regional ETRs incorporated changes recommended by the City of Portland, Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties and ODOT through recent work that evaluated seismic risks along Statewide Seismic Lifeline Routes identified in the Oregon Highway Plan; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Regional ETR Update Report identified a network of local and state-owned route segments in the region that should be designated as Regional ETRs, and summarized key findings about the resilience and connectivity of these routes and recommendations for future planning work, including a second planning phase to tier and operationalize the routes; and

WHEREAS, the analysis found that many of the Regional ETRs and their bridges are vulnerable to significant seismic and other hazard risks, such as flooding, landslides and liquefaction; and

WHEREAS, the analysis found that the network of Regional ETRs provide adequate connectivity and access to the Statewide Seismic Lifeline Routes as well as the region's population centers, isolated populations, areas with high concentrations of vulnerable populations, and critical infrastructure and essential facilities of state and regional importance; and

WHEREAS, by accepting the findings and recommendations in the 2021 Regional ETR Update, JPACT and the Metro Council recognized that all routes designated in the report are of state and regional importance during an emergency; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Regional ETR Update Report identified the Burnside corridor, including the Burnside Bridge, as a Regional ETR; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Regional ETR Update Report identified the Burnside Bridge as the only non-state owned ETR with a direct connection over the Willamette River to downtown Portland; and

WHEREAS, the Burnside Bridge carries approximately 38,000 people daily by car, truck, bus, bicycle and on foot; and

WHEREAS, Multnomah County is the owner and operator of the Burnside Bridge; and

WHEREAS, in the 2015 Willamette River Bridges Capital Improvement Plan, Multnomah County identified the need to either replace the existing Burnside Bridge with a new seismically resilient bridge or complete a major seismic rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, from 2016 to 2018 Multnomah County conducted a feasibility study for an Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge, which developed and screened over 100 river crossing alternatives; and

WHEREAS, in November 2018 the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners approved the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Feasibility Study Report and advanced four bridge alternatives for further study in the Environmental Review phase; and

WHEREAS, from October 2018 to July 2022, Multnomah County convened three stakeholder committees to provide input on the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project: the Community Task Force, the Policy Group, and the Senior Agency Staff Group; and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2020, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners approved the Long-span Approach Alternative and the No Temporary Bridge Option as the Preferred Alternative for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project; and

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2021, Multnomah County and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project that assesses the potential impacts of the project alternatives, including the No-Build Alternative, the Enhanced Seismic Retrofit Alternative, the Replacement Alternative with Short-span Approach, the Replacement Alternative with Long-span Approach, and the Replacement Alternative with Couch Extension; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2022, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners approved three cost-saving refinements to the Preferred Alternative, consisting of a bascule movable span, a westside girder approach and reduced width of the bridge; and

WHEREAS, on April 29, 2022, Multnomah County and the FHWA published a Supplemental DEIS for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project, which addresses refinements to the Replacement Alternative with Long-span Approach that was published in the February 2021 Draft EIS; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2022, the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project Policy Group, which consists of elected officials and agency executives from Multnomah County, the cities of Portland and Gresham, TriMet, ODOT, FHWA and staff representatives from Oregon's Congressional delegation and the Oregon Legislature, endorsed the refinements to the Preferred Alternative as described in the Supplemental DEIS; and

WHEREAS, on July 20, 2022, the Portland City Council adopted Resolution No. 37582, to accept the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge design as defined in the Supplemental DEIS and direct further actions; and

WHEREAS, Multnomah County and City of Portland are actively collaborating on project refinements to address further actions identified in Portland City Council Resolution No. 37582 and in response to public involvement during SDEIS phase; and

WHEREAS, Multnomah County and the FHWA anticipate publishing a Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project in 2023; and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2020, the Metro Council approved Resolution No. 20-5122 adopting the Get Moving 2020 Corridor Investment Package, which identified the Burnside corridor, including the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project, as a regional funding priority; and

WHEREAS, JPACT and Metro Council identified the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project as a regional funding priority as part of the 2021 Jobs, Climate Action, Transit & Safety: Greater Portland's 2021 Regional Congressional Directed Spending Request; and

WHEREAS, the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project is projected to cost up to \$895 million; and

WHEREAS, federal funding is increasingly competitive at the federal level, and project-specific funding in federal legislation has resumed; and

WHEREAS, the FHWA requires that the construction phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project be included in the RTP financially constrained project list prior to issuing a Record of Decision for the project; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 RTP currently identifies the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge as a regionally significant project; and

WHEREAS, the adopted 2018 RTP financially constrained project list includes Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects (RTP Project 11129 and RTP Project 11376) that reflect planning and project development activities, including planning required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, project design and right-of-way acquisition; and

WHEREAS, the adopted 2018 RTP strategic project list includes additional priority projects the region would pursue if more funding becomes available, including the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Phase 3 (RTP Project 12076) that reflects the construction phase of the project; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 RTP does not currently include the construction phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project in the RTP financially constrained project list or RTP financial plan; and

WHEREAS, since adoption of the 2018 RTP a financial plan for construction of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project has been completed using best available information that shows project costs and future revenue sources that are reasonably likely to be available and can be included in the 2023 RTP financially constrained revenue forecast, including \$300 million identified in locally committed funding from Multnomah County; and

WHEREAS, on May 5, 2022, Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 22-5255, For the Purpose of Approving a Work Plan and Public Engagement Plan for the 2023 RTP Update, and is therefore no longer accepting formal amendments to the 2018 RTP while the 2023 RTP is being developed; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 RTP call for projects will begin in January 2023; and Multnomah County submitted a letter on December 30, 2022 committing to submit the construction phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project among their list of project priorities recommended for the 2023 RTP financially constrained project list; and

WHEREAS, in November 2023, Metro Council and JPACT will consider approval of the 2023 RTP and financially constrained project list; and

WHEREAS, at its meeting on February 16, 2023, JPACT recommended approval of the following; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council:

1. Supports the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project as a priority for the region, consistent with federal, state, regional and local resilience priorities, and supports the Burnside Bridge as a Regional Emergency Transportation Route.
2. Supports an Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Preferred Alternative as described in Exhibit A, "Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Preferred Alternative," attached.
3. Recognizes the extensive, multi-year public process and advanced technical analysis that has been completed to date resulting in the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Preferred Alternative being approved with broad local and regional support.
4. Recognizes that Multnomah County has prepared a finance plan for the project, as described in Exhibit B: "Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Financial Plan," attached, which identifies project costs and future revenue sources that are reasonably expected to be available for inclusion in the 2023 RTP financially constrained revenue forecast.
5. Supports Multnomah County's commitment to submit the construction phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project among their list of project priorities recommended for the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan financially constrained project list as described in Exhibit C, "Letter of Commitment from Multnomah County Transportation Division Director," attached.
6. Directs Metro staff to accept the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project submission for inclusion in the list of projects considered in development of the 2023 RTP financially constrained project list.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 16th day of March, 2023.

Lynn Peterson, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney