

Memo

Date: Friday, May 30, 2025
To: Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) and Interested Parties
From: Blake Perez, Associate Transportation Planner
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Subject: 2024-27 MTIP Formal Amendment Request: Interstate Bridge Replacement Program
Major Project Assessment Summary

Purpose: The purpose of this assessment is to document how the proposed Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) amendment performs in accordance with local, regional, and state transportation policies, as well as how the project addresses the five goal areas of the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Introduction and Background:

The MTIP is a federally required document that helps track and manage regionally significant transportation investments. The MTIP is a list of transportation projects and programs that are scheduled to receive federal transportation money for the four-year reporting period. An active MTIP may be amended if additional funding becomes available. The Metro Council adopted the 2024-27 MTIP in July 2023.

The proposed formal amendment to the 2024-27 MTIP adds funding to the preliminary engineering phase and adds the right of way, utility relocation, and construction phases to the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (IBR). In 2021, a 2021-2024 MTIP amendment was made to include preliminary engineering for the IBR Program. As part of that 2021 amendment process, Metro completed a similar project assessment.

The proposed amendment includes pre-completion tolling work. Beginning in 2027, the IBR Program plans to implement pre-completion tolling on the existing Interstate Bridge while the new bridge is under construction. Establishing pre-completion toll operations before the new bridge opens will provide a source of revenue to pay current interest on the debt, thereby minimizing capitalized interest costs while also providing direct capital funding on a pay-as-you-go basis. All-electronic, time-of-day variable-rate tolling will follow a fixed schedule and is assumed for both travel directions. Additionally, Program partners have adopted time-of-day variable-rate tolling as a key component of the Modified Locally Preferred Alternative, which is currently undergoing NEPA analysis.

The Modified LPA refers to an agreed upon set of components that will be further evaluated through the federal environmental review process. It is not the replacement bridge's final design but rather a key milestone setting the Program's direction as further analysis evaluates the plans for a replacement multimodal river crossing system.

This Major Project Assessment models, reviews, and evaluates a complete build of the IBR Program against local, regional, and state transportation policies, and the five goals of the adopted 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This evaluation shows how adding the IBR program funds to the 24-27 MTIP

influences the full package of investments in the 24-27 MTIP (Note: Metro included a complete build of the IBR Program in the 2045 fiscally constrained model for the 2023 RTP.)

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and IBR Program staff provided project information, such as, but not limited to, project plans, finance, cost estimates, and programming, that supported this assessment. This assessment is provided to inform the amendment decision process regarding consistency with investment priority policies.

History of Interstate Bridge Replacement Program and Proposed MTIP Amendment

The Interstate (I-5) Bridge is a critical connection linking Oregon and Washington across the Columbia River. With one span now 108 years old, it is at risk of collapse in the event of a major earthquake and no longer satisfies the needs of modern commerce and travel.

In 2004, regional leaders identified the need to address the I-5 corridor, including the Interstate Bridge, through previous bi-state, long-range planning studies. In response, the Washington and Oregon Departments of Transportation (WSDOT and ODOT respectively) formed the joint Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project. The intent of this project was to improve safety, reduce congestion, and increase the mobility of motorists, freight traffic, transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians. This project was active between 2005 and 2014 and successfully received a federal Record of Decision (ROD) in December 2011. However, the CRC project did not secure adequate state funding to advance to construction and was discontinued in 2014.

In 2019, former Oregon Governor Kate Brown and former Washington Governor Jay Inslee signed a Memorandum of Intent directing ODOT and the WSDOT to relaunch efforts to replace the aging Interstate Bridge. Both governors, as well as the bi-state legislative committee, provided clear direction that the IBR Program must build upon past work from the former CRC project that remains valid to maximize the past investment and ensure efficient decision-making, while also considering the physical and contextual changes that have occurred since the CRC project was discontinued.

Proposed MTIP Amendment Phases

The proposed MTIP amendment includes programming by phase for the activities listed below:

Preliminary Engineering Phase

- Program additional funds for the 2025-27 biennium in the Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase from a variety of sources.
- Complete NEPA work (anticipated in late 2025) followed by obtaining a ROD.
- Continue design work for the first several construction packages, including the Columbia River Bridge replacement, SR 14 package A, Evergreen Blvd. replacement, and Columbia River Bridge Approaches packages.

Right of Way Phase

- Establish the Right of Way (RW) phase and program funding from a variety of sources to begin the initial acquisition of properties.

Interstate Bridge Replacement Program - Major Performance Assessment Summary

Utility Relocation Phase

- Establish the Utility Relocation (UR) Phase and program funding from a variety of sources to provide payments to eligible utilities that need to relocate because of construction of the IBR Program.

Other Phase

- Establish the Other (OT) phase and program Washington's Move Ahead Washington (WA MAW) funding to begin early procurement work for toll gantries and cantilever sign structures.

Construction: Columbia River Bridge Replacement Package

- Establish a new key number and the construction phase for the Columbia River Bridge Replacement package to construct the replacement I-5 bridge downstream of the existing bridge shore to shore over the Columbia River. This includes the construction of two new bridges to accommodate highway, active transportation, transit modes and construction of shoulders on I-5 to accommodate Bus on Shoulder and improve safety. (Note: This work is contingent upon completing the federal NEPA process and receiving a ROD.)

Construction: Pre-Completion Tolling Phase I Package

- Establish a new key number and a construction phase for the Pre-Completion Tolling Signage construction package to implement pre-completion tolling on the existing Interstate Bridge while the new bridge is under construction. Programming the funding in this MTIP amendment would allow for the purchase and installation of permanent traffic control and illumination systems to include new toll signage in both Oregon and Washington in the vicinity of the Interstate Bridge.

Consistency with the Congestion Management Process and Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1G and Action 1G.1

Regional and State policies give direction on prioritizing investments and when to consider adding motor vehicle capacity to the transportation system. Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) Policy 1G and Action 1G.1 direct ODOT to maintain highway performance and improve safety by improving system efficiency and management before adding capacity.

In the materials provided to Metro, the Interstate Bridge Replacement project has documented consistency with the state and regional policy by focusing the project scope on the first three steps of the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) Action 1G.1. These three steps are:

1. Protect the existing system. The highest priority is to preserve the functionality of the existing highway system by means such as access management, local comprehensive plans, transportation demand management, improved traffic operations, and alternative modes of transportation.
2. Improve efficiency and capacity of existing highway facilities. The second priority is to make minor improvements to existing highway facilities such as widening highway shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes, providing better access for alternative modes (e.g., bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters), extending or connecting local streets, and making other off-system improvements.

3. Add capacity to the existing system. The third priority is to make major roadway improvements to existing highway facilities such as adding general purpose lanes and making alignment corrections to accommodate legal size vehicles.

Consistency with RTP Congestion Management Process

The IBR project is consistent with the RTP Congestion Management Process, in prioritizing four of the six strategies as part of the project outcomes, which includes:

1. TSMO strategies, including localized Travel Demand Management (TDM), safety, operational and access management improvements. The IBR Program's Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) features integrated multimodal improvements with transportation management elements. The Program developed safety and operational improvements to I-5 to work in conjunction with high-capacity transit, active transportation facilities, variable rate tolling, transportation demand management and transportation systems management. The non-highway elements of the IBR Program (transit, active transportation, tolling, TDM and TSM) would all help provide multimodal choices and management tools to help reduce demand. They would also be tools the region could dynamically adjust over time to manage higher levels of highway demand if they were to occur.
2. Transit, bicycle and pedestrian system improvements. The IBR Program is adding transit only lanes for buses and an extension of the MAX light rail to Vancouver, Washington. New bike lanes and sidewalks are included in the project. Investments also include a system of shared use paths, bikeways, and sidewalks within the IBR Program area. Active transportation design is also expected to be ADA compliant and include other features, such as barriers, illumination, signing, and striping to enhance user experience, safety, comfort, and route directness.
3. Connectivity improvements to provide parallel arterials, collectors or local streets that include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, consistent with the connectivity standards in section 3.3.4 and design classifications in Table 3.9 of the 2023 RTP, to provide alternative routes and encourage walking, biking and access to transit. The IBR Program proposed construction packages to incorporate alternative corridors that bypass busy freight and vehicle interchanges. For example, a shared-use path along the proposed extension of Expo Road provides an alternative route that bypasses the Marine Drive Interchange. Where separate corridors for active transportation use are impractical, active transportation facilities are designed in accordance with state and local agency standards for safety. Active transportation design is also expected to be ADA compliant and include other features, such as barriers, illumination, signing, and striping to enhance user experience, safety, comfort, and route directness.
4. Motor vehicle capacity improvements, consistent with the RTP Regional motor vehicle network vision and policies in Table 3.8 and section 3.3.3 of the 2023 RTP, only upon a demonstration that other strategies in this subsection are not appropriate or cannot adequately address identified transportation needs. The addition of one auxiliary lane in each direction will improve both the safety and efficiency of the three through travel lanes by providing drivers with more distance to speed up or slow down before entering or exiting mainline I-5, reducing bottlenecks and helping to optimize traffic flow by giving drivers space to merge safely. The addition of full safety shoulders will provide faster crash recovery, improve access for emergency vehicles, and provide a safe space for travelers recovering from an incident. The

safety shoulders will also be able to accommodate express bus service, while dedicated space for light rail transit will further ensure that transit operations are separated from general purpose traffic to improve the efficiency of operations.

Consistency with Statewide Land Use Planning Goal 12.

In Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals, Goal 12 requires cities, counties and the state to create a transportation system plan that considers all relevant modes of transportation: mass transit, air, water, rail, highway, bicycle and pedestrian. The resulting plan should support a variety of transportation modes so residents are not limited in the ways they can access the jobs, goods, or services available in different parts of their community. A well-designed transportation plan conserves energy while also minimizing adverse social and economic impacts for disadvantaged areas. The IBR project aligns with these goals by:

- Serving statewide, regional, and local transportation needs.
- Serving the mobility and access needs of those who cannot drive and other underserved populations.
- Providing for affordable, accessible and convenient transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access and circulation, with improved connectivity.
- Helping to reduce pollution from transportation to meet statewide goals to reduce climate pollution.
- Facilitating the safe flow of freight, goods, and services within regions and throughout the state.

Consistency with Local Plans

Metro's Regional Transportation Plan is a blueprint to guide investments for all forms of travel – motor vehicle, transit, bicycle and walking – and the movement of goods and freight throughout the Portland metropolitan region. The plan identifies current and future transportation needs, investments needed to meet those needs and what funds the region expects to have available over the next 25 years to make those investments a reality. On Nov. 30, 2023, Metro Council adopted the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan, via Ordinance No. 23-1496. Metro included a complete build of the IBR Program in the 2045 fiscally constrained model for the 2023 RTP.

The City of Portland's 2035 Comprehensive Plan is built on the 2012 Portland Plan, the Climate Action Plan and Portland's 1980 Comprehensive Plan, which was Portland's first Comprehensive Plan developed under the statewide land use planning system. The new Plan continues the commitment to link land use and transportation decisions. The Plan continues Portland's commitment to compact development, with active employment centers, expanded housing choice, and access to parks and open space. The IBR Program advances multiple goals articulated by the Transportation component of the Comprehensive Plan, including:

- Create a coordinated, efficient, more affordable multimodal transportation system.
- Reduce service disparities and achieve equitable access to all types of facilities and transportation modes.
- Ensure safety of the most vulnerable users (people with disabilities, young people, the elderly).
- Guide the location and design of new street, pedestrian, bicycle, and trail infrastructure.

The City of Portland's 2035 Transportation System Plan, adopted in March 2020, is the City's 20-year plan to guide transportation policies and investments in Portland. The TSP helps implement the City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan. The 2035 TSP lists the Columbia River bridge replacement and interchange improvements as a financially constrained project to be completed within 1 to 10 years.

The IBR Program would provide transportation infrastructure to support the land use plans for Hayden Island. Specifically, the project would support the City of Portland's Hayden Island Plan, adopted in 2009, which seeks to protect the interests of the island, provide guidance to the former CRC project, as well as ensure that the amount and type of development on Hayden Island would not overload the proposed freeway improvements. The Hayden Island Plan was developed during the former CRC project and is referenced in its plan. The IBR Program's Modified LPA is consistent with the Hayden Island plan, supporting specific goals such as:

- Light-rail transit to, and a station on, Hayden Island.
- A light-rail transit alignment adjacent to the west side of I-5 instead of a separate alignment to minimize the barrier effects.
- Access to local street systems south of North Portland Harbor without using the freeway.

The IBR Draft SEIS evaluates consistency with additional local plans in Chapter 3.4- Land use and Economics, which can be found online at: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/media/wy2hwg4g/chapter-3-04-land-use-and-economic-activity.pdf>.

Consistency with RTP Investment Priorities

Metro staff assessed how the proposed MTIP project amendment advances the RTP investment priorities of Mobility Options, Thriving Economy, Safe System, Equitable Transportation, and Climate Action and Resilience and how the project impacts the package of MTIP investments towards those RTP goals. Metro staff completed a similar assessment as part of the initial evaluation and adoption process for the 2021-24 MTIP. (Note: Thriving Economy was recently included in the 2023 RTP but was not part of the 2024-27 MTIP assessment process. It has been included in this assessment.)

Metro staff used three main tools to evaluate the 2024-2027 MTIP investment package and to prepare the PAE:

- the Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM).
- The Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator (MOVES) Model; and
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The outputs for this analysis are for the entire area within the Metro jurisdiction or Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and the year modeled was 2027 (the last year of the current 2024-27 MTIP). This analysis does not include the level of detail covered by a full corridor study which typically includes current and future operating characteristics of the corridor and detailed impacts of the project at the corridor level.

In addition to evaluating the three projects included in the proposed amendment, staff performed a full build analysis of the IBR Program, even though a full build won't be completed during the current MTIP timeframe, to ensure consistency with the RTP. Table 1 summarizes the evaluation results based on the RTP investment priorities. An analysis by RTP investment priority for each performance measure, with detailed definitions, is outlined in summary tables that follow.

Table 1. Summary of RTP Investment Priorities Evaluation – Interstate Bridge Replacement Project Complete Build

RTP Priority	Measure Description	Model Result
Equitable Transportation	1. Weighted average household access to jobs within a 30-minute driving commute or 45-minute transit commute.	0
	2. Weighted average household access to community places within a 20-minute driving commute or 30-minute transit commute.	0
	3. Miles and percentage of active transportation infrastructure added to the completeness of the regional active transportation work.	0
Climate Action and Resilience	1. Projected daily metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduction per capita.	0
	2. Projected daily metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduction	0
	3. Miles and percentage of active transportation infrastructure added to the completeness of the regional active transportation work.	+
Safe System	1. Amount of investment of safety activities which address fatalities and serious injuries crashes.	^
	2. Amount of investment of safety activities which address fatalities and serious injuries crashes on high injury corridors, equity focus areas, and high injury corridors in equity focus areas.	^
Mobility Options	1. Mode split	0
	2. Miles traveled by mode	0
Thriving Economy	1. Is the project located in an area that is prioritized for future job growth?	+
	2. Is the project located in an area with higher-than-average job activity?	+

Key:

0 neutral or no significant change

^ not directly addressing the region's desired outcome; has other related benefits

+ trending towards the desired outcome for that priority

- trending away from the desired outcome for that priority

+/- potential to trend toward desired outcome but still to be determined until further details are known

-/- risk to trend away from desired outcome but still to be determined until further details are known

Equitable Transportation

To measure equity in the context of the project, Metro staff evaluated whether the project increases access to travel options in Equity Focus Areas and how the project has been identified as a priority transportation improvement by BIPOC and low-income persons or communities.

Desired Outcome	Performance Measures	IBR Completion
Increase Access to jobs	1. Weighted average household access to jobs within a 30-minute driving commute or 45-minute transit commute.	Results from the RTDM indicates a very small decrease (<1%) of access via auto trips to medium wage jobs across the entire MPA area, non-equity focus areas, and equity focus area. There is a small increase (<1%) in access to medium wage jobs via transit across all areas.
Increase access to community places	2. Weighted average household access to community places within a 20-minute driving commute or 30-minute transit commute.	RTDM results indicate no change in access to community places such as grocery stores, medical facilities, and community gathering places.
Complete any gaps in the active transportation system in an equity focus area	3. Miles and percentage of active transportation infrastructure added to the completeness of the regional active transportation work.	Per GIS analysis, some gaps will be completed in this project in the vicinity of Marine Drive and on Hayden Island surface streets. While the areas studied in Oregon are not located in an Equity Focus Area, they are in Equity Focus Areas on the Washington side of the IBR Program.

Climate Action and Resilience

To measure climate action and resilience in the context of the project, Metro staff evaluated how the project aligns with Metro's RTP climate goals and polices and whether the project includes elements that will increase access to and use of multi-modal options or increase motor vehicle travel.

Desired Outcome	Performance Measures	IBR Completion
Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions per capita	1. Projected daily metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduction per capita.	Using a combination of the RTDM and MOVES, results indicate a very small decrease in GHG per capita (-0.3%) at the regional level.
Reduction in daily metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions	2. Projected daily metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduction	Using a combination of the RTDM and MOVES, results indicate a very small decrease in daily tons of GHG (12,566 to 12,533) at the regional level.
Improves system completeness of active transportation network	3. Miles and percentage of active transportation infrastructure added to the completeness of the regional active transportation work.	Gaps in the bicycling network are addressed in the Marine Drive Package through a new path that connects Marine Drive to Expo Road. Additionally, gaps in the pedestrian network are addressed in Hayden Island Surface Streets and Marine Drive Interchange.

Safe System

To measure safety in the context of the project, Metro staff evaluated whether the project includes scope elements, including recognized safety counter measures, to address documented safety issues that contribute to crashes that result in fatal and serious injuries. Metro staff also assessed the scope of work against the region's high injury corridor network to better understand whether the project is addressing the locations with a propensity of crashes leading to fatalities and serious injuries. IBR project staff provided additional relevant safety related information that is summarized in the table below.

Desired Outcome	Performance Measures	IBR Completion
Increase level of investment to address fatalities and serious injuries	1. Amount of investment of safety activities which address fatalities and serious injuries crashes.	A GIS analysis of the project indicates Marine Dr & MLK Blvd. are high-injury corridors. Neither of these projects are included at this time in the current proposed amendment but are part of the full build. The IBR Program Modified LPA proposes substantial changes to the configuration of the roadway network within the five-mile corridor, including but not limited to new or removed ramps, reconfigured interchanges, and access point changes. These changes would make I-5 more consistent with modern design standards and would reduce weaving, thereby improving safety. According to information from the IBR Program, the IBR Program is anticipated to reduce crashes by 13-17% in 2045 compared to the No-Build Alternative.
Increase level of safety investment on high injury corridors, and high injury corridors in equity focus areas	2. Amount of investment of safety activities which address fatalities and serious injuries crashes on high injury corridors, equity focus areas, and high injury corridors in equity focus areas.	Many of the projects within the IBR Program, including those in the proposed amendment, are not located in a high injury corridor. Nor are the projects located in an equity focus area on the Oregon side of the project. However, the project is within an equity focus area on the Washington side.

Mobility Options

To measure mobility options in the context of the project, Metro staff assessed whether the project influences changes to mode split (e.g. driving, transit, bike) and miles traveled by mode per capita.

Desired Outcome	Performance Measures	IBR Completion
Achieve a more equitable mode split amongst driving, transit, and biking	1. Mode split	Results from the RTDM indicate no significant change in mode split.
Decrease miles traveled by vehicle and increase miles done by bike and transit	2. Miles traveled by mode	RTDM results indicate a very small increase in personal vehicle driver miles traveled (0.13%), personal vehicle passenger miles traveled (0.07%), and pedestrian miles traveled (0.09%). Model results show a small decrease in bike miles traveled (-0.11%) and transit miles traveled (-0.02%).

Thriving Economy

To measure economic vitality in the context of the project, Metro staff assessed whether the project is in an area that is prioritized for future job growth and if the project is in an area with higher-than-average job activity.

Desired Outcome	Performance Measures	IBR Completion
Increase transportation option in areas prioritized for future job growth.	1. Project is located in an area that is prioritized for future job growth	Multiple census tracts that are considered regionally significant industrial areas are located within the project area. Within the project area there are identified station communities, planned high-capacity transit, corridors, and employment land all identified in the 2040 Growth Concept Map.
Increase transportation options in an area with higher-than-average job activity	2. Project is located in an area with higher-than-average job activity	According to Metro's 2022 Economic Value Atlas, the Census Tracts that are within the project area have job activity that are greater than the regional average. The two Census Tracts have a score of 8.9 and 5.2 compared to the regional average of 5.0.