



TRIOMET



PORT OF PORTLAND



Metro

August 20, 2019

The Honorable Kate Brown
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Brown and Governor Inslee,

We are writing to express our support for an Interstate 5 bridge replacement project. We appreciate your joint leadership to re-start the project development.

Interstate 5 is a corridor of significant regional, state and federal interest. As the primary trade corridor on the West Coast, our economy depends on it to remain competitive and support job growth in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. The current bridge, part of which is 102 years old and built on timber pilings buried in the riverbed, poses a seismic risk and restricts movement of people, goods and services between our two states.

A new project that includes high capacity transit, congestion pricing and a structurally-sound bridge – designed with performance-based and practical design principles – could advance our regional goals on economic development, resiliency and reducing congestion. The new project should incorporate work that has already been completed in a way that is practical and efficient, while reflecting lessons learned from previous efforts and current circumstance.

As the Washington and Oregon governors and legislatures begin conversations about re-starting the process for planning a new interstate bridge, please take into account the local perspective. Experience makes it clear that our regional jurisdictions and transportation agencies need to be involved from the beginning to ensure that the project is designed to serve our communities' needs. Metro and the other signatories to this letter are committed to working with counterparts across the river to continue to identify bi-regional and bi-state solutions to our joint transportation challenges.

As the project moves forward, we respectfully request that you keep the following outcomes, processes and strategies in mind:

- Include high capacity transit (light rail and/or bus rapid transit) to consistently, efficiently and effectively accommodate the current and future transit demand north and south of the Columbia River,

- Be cost-effective, competitive for federal funding opportunities and within the two states' financial capability, in a way that minimize threats to resources that are needed for other regional priorities,
- Include congestion pricing to manage the demands of revenue generation for the project with the need to reduce traffic congestion,
- Create job opportunities for people of color, and work with local businesses to ensure the new project creates jobs for Oregonians and SW Washingtonians,
- Recognize and account for the negative impacts the construction of Interstate 5 has had on North Portland's communities of color,
- Create safe and convenient options for people bicycling and walking across the Columbia to reach destinations in our communities,
- Minimize additional neighborhood traffic, related air quality impacts and greenhouse gas emissions,
- Incorporate consideration of long-range planning elements such as smart and autonomous vehicle technologies,
- Evaluate a right-sized interchange connection to Hayden Island along with additional access to Hayden Island, and
- Feature a robust and meaningful public engagement process that identifies the goals, opportunities, challenges and concerns of communities living along the corridor.

Thank you for your consideration. We are looking forward to engaging with you and the legislators on the new bi-state Interstate Bridge committee. Let us know how we can help the state departments of transportation on next steps in setting up a decision-making and public engagement process.

Thank you,



Lynn Peterson
Metro Council President



Curtis Robinhold
Port of Portland Executive Director



Doug Kelsey
Tri-Met General Manager



Jessica Vega-Pederson
Multnomah County Commissioner



Ted Wheeler
Mayor of Portland

CC:

Oregon Transportation Commission; Commissioner Tammy Baney

Oregon Transportation Commission; Commissioner Robert Van Brocklin

Transportation Policy Advisor, Office of Oregon Governor Kate Brown; Brendan Finn

Senior Policy Advisor, Transportation & Economic Development; Charles Knutson

ODOT Interim Deputy Director; Paul Mather

WSDOT Secretary of Transportation; Roger Millar