

Transportation White Paper Sellwood Bridge Replacement

Background

The Sellwood Bridge is a regionally significant transportation facility. It links two state highways and is the only Willamette River crossing in a 12-mile reach. The bridge provides a critical segment for inter-county trips between Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties. It is the busiest 2-lane bridge in Oregon, carrying over 30,000 vehicles daily.

After 85 years, the existing bridge has reached the end of its useful service life. It is functionally and structurally obsolete (rating 2 out of 100 on a bridge sufficiency index). The narrow two-lane bridge has a single narrow, substandard sidewalk and no bike lanes. Congestion and slow travel speeds caused by high travel demand occur on the bridge and approaches for several hours each day. The bridge is part of the regional freight and transit system. However, trucks and buses have been prohibited from using the bridge since 2004, diverting approximately 100 buses and 1,200 trucks to other routes each day.

Project

Replacing the Sellwood Bridge will improve connections, operations and safety for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

The project will remove deficiencies of the existing bridge, reduce congestion at each bridge head, and enhance safety by reducing the risk of head-on collisions on the bridge. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities will replace the one narrow sidewalk, bring the bridge into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and improve connections to regional trails on each side of the bridge. Trucks, buses and emergency response vehicles weighing more than 10 tons will be able to again use the bridge, with improved safety. Economic and congestion mitigation benefits will come from removing the existing tight turning radii and weight restrictions that force trucks to travel out-of-direction. The existing vulnerability of the bridge to earthquakes and landslides will be corrected by a new bridge.

Environmental benefits will also result from a new structure. The existing structure discharges roadway stormwater runoff directly into the Willamette River, home to several federally-listed fish species. State-of-the-art stormwater treatment facilities will capture and treat run-off before it is released to the river. Removing the current structure will also eliminate lead based paint from falling into the river. The project will create approximately 4,000 jobs.

Status

The Sellwood Bridge project has a preferred alternative approved by a federal Record of Decision. A deck arch bridge type has been selected and in-water construction is anticipated in the summer of 2012.

Funding Plan

Multnomah County with the State of Oregon, City of Portland, Clackamas County and the federal government have a funding plan that finances all but \$20 million of the \$290 million project. The final increment of the funding plan is needed through federal assistance via the authorization bill, multiple appropriations bills, and/or competitive grant solicitation such as the recent TIGER program.

Contributions from each entity are as follows:

Multnomah County	\$127 million
City of Portland	\$80 million
Clackamas County	\$22 million
State of Oregon	\$30 million
<u>Previously secured federal funds</u>	<u>\$11 million</u>
Remaining gap	\$20 million