

ANALYSIS

Item 40: Department of Transportation Interstate Bridge Replacement Project

Analyst: Michelle Deister

Request: Increase Other Funds expenditure limitation by \$3,636,767 and approve 12 permanent positions (9.42 FTE) for the Department of Transportation in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2022 legislative session, to provide dedicated resources to the Interstate Bridge Replacement program.

Analysis: Since the signing of a Memorandum of Intent in late 2019, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been working collaboratively with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to advance a plan for replacing the aging I-5 Interstate Bridge. The Memorandum of Intent represents a renewed commitment to the work of replacing the bridge, and both states have had legislative engagement to guide this work: Washington, with passage of Substitute Senate Bill 5806; and Oregon, with the 2018 creation of the Joint Committee on the Interstate 5 Bridge

The current effort did not gain momentum sufficient to allow for completed analysis and staff work necessary to make a 2021-23 budget request within required process timelines. By leveraging earlier applicable work from the Columbia River Crossing effort that existed between 2005-2013, ODOT was able to staff the initial phases of the project with existing resources. The project is now approaching the phase where dedicated resources and attention are required to begin construction by 2025.¹

WSDOT and ODOT are sharing project costs and staffing, with each agency bearing responsibility for specific positions in the plan. WSDOT committed \$35 million in state funding, while ODOT committed \$45 million in Federal Highway Administration (as Other Funds) formula allocations to the project. As of August 2021, a total of \$20.8 million had been spent on the project. By spring of 2022, a more detailed schedule and cost estimate will be developed². For its 2023-25 agency request budget, ODOT will incorporate these and other Interstate Bridge Replacement project costs, reflecting program maturity.

This request supports the following project positions, which will be attributed to ODOT:

- A dedicated program administrator, responsible for developing and building a project that attains the bi-state design and construction objectives;
- An assistant program administrator, to oversee joint project elements and coordination between Oregon and Washington, to achieve the design elements, construction, and procurement activities necessary to get to completion, pursuant to policy objectives of state policy makers;
- A deputy environmental manager position to navigate compliance with federal, state, and local environmental laws;
- A contracts manager to oversee the development and negotiation of agreements with agencies, vendors, and consultants;

¹ A progress reported dated December 2021 summarizes action on the project to date. [IBR Program: Report template \(interstatebridge.org\)](#)

² The Interstate Bridge Replacement Program provides summaries of feedback, meetings and expenditures at the following: [Accountability Dashboard | I-5 Bridge Replacement Program \(interstatebridge.org\)](#)

- An executive support specialist to support meetings, summaries, reporting requirements, and serve as a point of contact for customers;
- A community and government relations manager to facilitate outreach, coordinate feedback, and notify staff and policy makers of state and local issues;
- A deputy design manager focused on roadway and interchange engineering;
- A cultural resource coordinator to facilitate cooperation with state historic preservation offices and Native American nations;
- A lead traffic engineer;
- A finance manager responsible for financial modeling, coordination, and planning;
- A tolling manager, to develop and oversee a tolling plan that aligns with Oregon and Washington policy; and
- A real estate services manager to prepare and manage rights of way negotiation, acquisition, and relocation.

Personal services costs associated with this request are \$3,137,874 Other Funds, and Services and Supplies costs associated with the positions total \$498,893 Other Funds.

Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$3,636,767 in the Other Funds expenditure limitation and authorizing the establishment of 12 permanent full-time positions (9.42 FTE) for the Department of Transportation in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2022 legislative session, to provide dedicated resources to the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program.

Request: Increase Other Funds expenditure limitation by \$3,636,767 and establish 12 new permanent full-time positions (9.42 full-time equivalent) for the I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement program.

Recommendation: Approve the request during the February 2022 Legislative Session.

Discussion: Oregon and Washington have renewed their commitments to work on the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) are working together to replace the I-5 Interstate Bridge. Both Governors signed a Memorandum of Intent in late 2019. As of May 2021, both states have jointly committed \$80 million in funding, have state legislative engagement, and both states' Department of Transportations will share costs 50/50.

Both Oregon and Washington are leveraging previous planning efforts, broadening stakeholder and community involvement, building links to current community values, priorities, equity, and climate concerns. Part of the work being leveraged include lessons learned from past efforts, as the IBR program will be using knowledge and experiences and updating past work products to gain efficiencies.

Oregon and Washington have both invested in IBR leadership and governance by establishing the Joint Oregon-Washington Legislative Action Committee. The committee is comprised of 16 members, eight from each state. This action committee will provide direction and guidance for the IBR program. Part of this governance included both ODOT and WSDOT selecting a bi-state IBR Program Administrator, who is authorized to act on behalf of both states and is equally responsible to both states.

The 12 permanent full-time positions in this request are a part of the bi-state staffing plan, and the combined staffing cost over time will be shared equally by both states. These positions include senior management and technical staff that will provide oversight to the planning and development of the IBR program. They include the following:

- Program Administrator, Assistant Program Administrator, Contracts Manager, Deputy Environmental Manager, and a Deputy Design Manager have already been hired. The Cultural Resource Lead is in the final stages of recruitment.
- The balance of the positions are expected to be in recruitment shortly after the new year, which include: Executive Support Specialist, Communication/Government Relations Manager, Lead Traffic Engineer, Tolling Manager, Finance Manager and the Real Estate Service Manager.

Legal Reference: Increase the Other Funds expenditure limitation established by chapter 442 section 2(4), Oregon Laws 2021, for the Department of Transportation, Bridge Program by \$3,636,767 for the 2021-23 biennium.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Office of the Director

355 Capitol St NE

Salem, OR 97301

December 6, 2021

Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-chair
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

NATURE OF THE REQUEST

The states of Oregon and Washington are working together to replace the aging I-5 Interstate Bridge with a modern, seismically resilient, multimodal structure that provides improved mobility for people, goods and services well into the next century. The Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) program was initiated through a Memorandum of Intent signed by the Governors of Oregon and Washington in late 2019. Both states are currently engage in planning activities critical to advancing this work. As of May 2021, the Oregon Transportation Commission and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) have allocated a combined \$80 million to advance this project. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been staffing this effort with existing resources; however, we are at a critical juncture where continued progress is dependent upon creating a dedicated IBR team to ensure effective leadership, oversight, and accountability for the program. Approval of this request would establish 12 positions (9.42 FTE) and authorize expenditures of approximately \$3.6 million of Other Funds from monies already allocated for IRB Program development.

BACKGROUND

The Interstate Bridge is a vital transportation link for the greater Portland-Vancouver region. The bridge connects tens of thousands of people daily to offices, industries, schools, sporting events, places of worship, stores, restaurants and entertainment venues. The current bridge is two bridge spans, side by side. The northbound span is over 100 years old, dating back to 1917. The southbound span opened in 1958. The existing structures were not designed to support the needs of today's transportation system. Replacing the aging Interstate Bridge across the Columbia River is a high priority for Oregon and Washington.

Oregon committed previously to the Columbia River Crossing effort, which operated from 2005 to 2013. This effort was shelved when Washington did not approve construction funding. As Oregon and Washington renew their commitment to this work, we are working with partners to leverage previous planning efforts, broaden stakeholder and community involvement, and link to current community values and priorities which include equity and climate. By leveraging early work and addressing lessons learned, the IBR Program is able to gain efficiencies by reusing some work products and updating others to support more effective decision-making.

AGENCY ACTION

ODOT initiated IBR activities in late 2019; however, we did not have sufficient information to make a legislative funding request by the 2020 Agency Request Budget development deadlines. In early 2021, ODOT revisited its program development status with Legislative Fiscal and Chief Financial Office Analysts. At that time, it was still premature to advance a funding request during the 2021 Legislative Session. Over the last year, ODOT and WSDOT have worked collaboratively to develop a high-level project development plan, stand-up a leadership and bi-state governance structure, design key community engagement processes, and create a bi-state IBR program staffing plan. What follows is a high-level summary of work underway and key accomplishments to date. [The Interstate Bridget Replacement Program 2021 Progress Report](#), published in December 2021 provides more specific information on program progress.

Project Development

The Program is currently focused on building consensus on the pillars of an IBR solution, which include high capacity transit mode (or modes) on the bridge; interchange configuration on Hayden Island; number of merge and weave lanes; and replacement of the North Portland Harbor Bridge. This work is targeted for completion in the spring of 2022 and will inform the environmental processes which we plan to conclude in early 2024. Construction is targeted to begin late 2025 assuming construction funding is secured. The following graphic provides a high-level timeline for IBR project development.



During the 21-23 biennium, program staff will gain community and partner alignment on an IBR solution, define a project funding plan, and complete required Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) environmental review processes, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Consultant relationships will also be key moving forward as the project delivery strategy will be an outsourced model leveraging the General Engineering Consultant for the bulk of the work with oversight provided by a core group of experienced WSDOT and ODOT leaders. As a result, the staffing to outsourced resources is expected to be no more than 1 DOT staff to every 10 contracted staff. We have selected this approach to access a production workforce as well as key technical expertise while relying on a small group of seasoned DOT leaders to provide strategic direction, oversight and accountability.

The program is still in the early phases of development of a comprehensive finance plan. A key principle of the plan is a commitment from ODOT and WDOT to share costs 50/50. A [conceptual finance plan](#) has been completed which provides a high-level overview of the scale of need and what funding options might be available at the local, state and federal levels. IBR is

also well positioned to apply for grants included in the recent Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

IBR Leadership and Governance Structure

ODOT and WSDOT have selected a bi-state IBR Program Administrator, Gregory C. Johnson. He is authorized to act on behalf of both DOTs and is equally responsible to both states. Having a single Administrator responsible to both states will ensure that the program's direction is consistent and unified as work progresses.

The Washington State legislature established a joint committee named the Joint Oregon-Washington Legislative Action Committee. The bill invited the Oregon Legislature to participate, at which point Oregon formed the Joint Committee on the Interstate 5 Bridge. The combined committees, referred to as the bi-state legislative committee, comprises 16 members, eight from each state. Direction from the bi-state legislative committee members will shape program work by providing initial framework and guidance on the approach to developing key program decisions, reviewing and providing feedback on progress, and evaluating outcomes.

The program work will also be shaped by the direction and timelines established by the governors, legislators and transportation commissions, and will work closely with federal partners, permitting agencies and state and local elected officials, tribal governments, community stakeholders and the public.

Community Engagement Strategies

Comprehensive and equitable community engagement is at the foundation of decision making for the IBR program. Through engagement, we will pursue a solution that prioritizes safety, reflects community values, addresses community concern and fosters broad regional support. To support these goals the program formed three advisory groups to provide feedback and recommendations: Executive Steering Group, Equity Advisory Group, and Community Advisory Group. For more specifics on each of these groups and how their efforts are integrated into decision-making and governance processes visit www.interstatebridge.org/advisory-groups.

Bi-State Staffing Plan

The attached *21-23 IBR DOT Organization Chart* represents the anticipated program structure through the 21-23 biennium. Early positions are senior management or technical staff who bring seasoned judgement and experience to support critical decision-making, planning, and oversight within the program. Given the importance of these early core positions, we are asking that they be established as permanent positions for the estimated 15-year life cycle of the project. Looking ahead, ODOT also anticipates advancing a 23-25 biennium policy option package to add core program staff to oversee construction management, engineering and inspection later in the project cycle as it moves to construction in 2025.

The table that follows provides a summary of positions needs and related expenditures for the 21-23 biennium.

Position and Expenditure Summary Table						
Pos	FTE	LD/P	Classification Title	21-23 Costs	Hire Date	Status
1	1.00	P	IBR Prog Administrator	524,359	7/1/20	FILLED
1	1.00	P	IBR Asst. Prog. Administrator	479,128	10/1/20	FILLED
1	0.96	P	Contracts Mgr	323,539	8/1/21	FILLED
1	0.96	P	Deputy Environ. Mgr	338,066	8/1/21	FILLED
1	0.79	P	Deputy Design Mgr	293,271	12/1/21	FILLED
1	0.83	P	Cultural Resources Lead	182,108	11/1/21	(Recruiting)
1	0.75	P	Executive Support Specialist	118,835	1/1/22	
1	0.75	P	Comm/Govt Relations Mgr	206,252	1/1/22	
1	0.67	P	Lead Traffic Engr	179,439	3/1/22	
1	0.67	P	Tolling Mgr	183,565	3/1/22	
1	0.58	P	Finance Mgr	182,466	5/1/22	
1	0.46	P	Real Estate Serv. Mgr	126,845	8/1/22	
Total Personal Services Expenditures				\$3,137,874		
Total Service and Supplies Expenditures				\$ 498,893		
Total IBR Expenditures				\$3,636,767		

If this request is not approved, ODOT would work with the Department of Administrative Services to establish Administrative limited duration positions to advance this work. ODOT considered this option before advancing this request; however, it does not give the agency permanent positions or expenditure limitation for this work. Without dedicated expenditure limitation, ODOT's existing work plans within Bridge and Modernization limitations may have to be adjusted and work deferred to ensure we have sufficient expenditure authority to continue this work.

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve ODOT's request to establish 12 permanent positions (9.42 FTE) and increase Other Fund Expenditure Limitation by \$3,636,767 for the 2021-2023 biennium.

LEGISLATION AFFECTED

Increase the Other Funds Expenditure Limitation established by Chapter 442, Section 2(4) and 2(6), Oregon Laws 2021.

Sincerely,

Kristopher W. Strickler
 Director

21-23 IBR DOT ORGANIZATION CHART

11/8/2021

Yellow - WSDOT Positions (10)

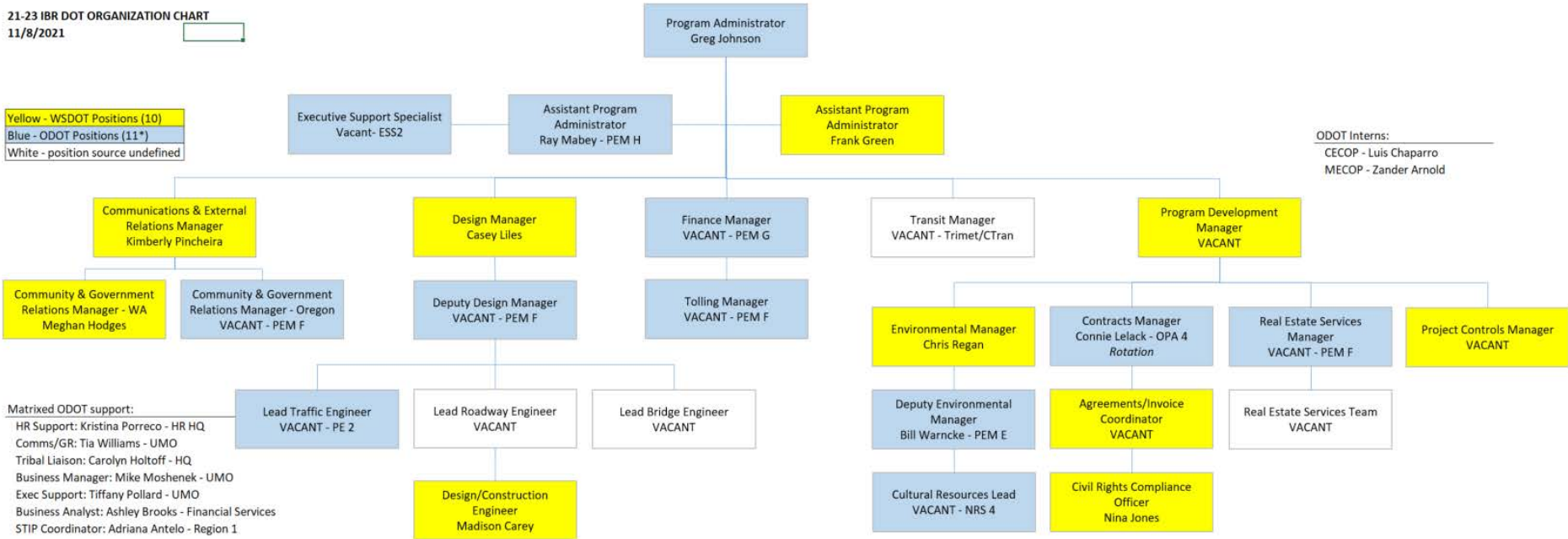
Blue - ODOT Positions (11*)

White - position source undefined

ODOT Interns:

CECOP - Luis Chaparro

MECOP - Zander Arnold



Matrixed ODOT support:
 HR Support: Kristina Porreco - HR HQ
 Comms/GR: Tia Williams - UMO
 Tribal Liaison: Carolyn Holtoff - HQ
 Business Manager: Mike Moshenek - UMO
 Exec Support: Tiffany Pollard - UMO
 Business Analyst: Ashley Brooks - Financial Services
 STIP Coordinator: Adriana Antelo - Region 1

* ODOT count does not include the Program Administrator