Update on IBR Program Activities

January 19, 2022

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator
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Program Timeline

Prior planning efforts

2004

IBR Program Planning and Environmental

2019

We are here

Design

2024

Construction

2025

Where we’ve been

Community Engagement

Where we are

Community Engagement

Where we are going
Changes in the Program Area

In the years since the previous planning efforts, the baseline conditions, regulatory and policy context, and community priorities have changed.

Examples of these changes include:

- Regional, state, and local equity policies and priorities
- Regional, state, and local climate goals and priorities
- Oregon tolling/congestion pricing programs being studied
- Demographics along the I-5 corridor and nearby neighborhoods
- COVID-19 impacts on transportation
- Environmental regulations
- Expanded transit service in the corridor (i.e., VINE BRT and bus-on-shoulder on I-5 in Vancouver)
- Current Regional Transportation Plans and City Comprehensive Plans
- Updates to USACE, USCG and FAA requirements
- Land use policies, planned development, and zoning changes
- Federal transit funding requirements
- Freight/industrial activity
IBR Design Options that Respond to Changes

▸ Transit Mode
  − Reviewing 4 LRT, 3 BRT, 1 BRT to LRT, and Bus on Shoulder options

▸ Hayden Island / Marine Drive Interchange
  − Full, partial and none

▸ Vancouver Interchanges
  − Downtown Vancouver connections

▸ Bridge Crossing and Alignment
  − Curved alignment, Straight alignment, Stacked alignment

▸ Number of Auxiliary Lanes

All options assume replacement of North Portland Harbor Bridge. More work will be done to identify benefits and impacts of replacement.

Active transportation improvements are integrated into design options for all areas, with additional detail to be added as they are further developed.
Design Option Engagement + Outreach Tactics

- **Online Open House**
- **Community Briefings**
  - 4 virtual events attended by 91 people
- **Online Community Survey**
  - ADA testing, available in 11 languages
  - Approx. 9,500 surveys submitted
  - Additional outreach to equity priority communities
- **Listening Sessions**
  - Co-hosted with CBO partners
  - Live language translation and ASL interpretation
  - 350+ participants

- **Community Working Groups**
  - Active Transportation, Downtown Vancouver, Hayden Island/Marine Drive, Multimodal Commuter

- **CBO Mini Grants**
  - Awards of either $2,000 or $5,000, depending on level of engagement, to CBOs that serve or represent equity priority communities

- **Youth Press Conference**
  - High school and college level journalists

- **Freight Workshop**
  - Co-hosted with Port of Portland and Port of Vancouver
Next Steps in Identifying the Modified LPA

▸ Early 2022

- Report out on feedback received from recent community engagement efforts
- Finalize screening criteria informed by equity and climate frameworks, community values and priorities, and technical expertise
- Evaluate design options based on screening criteria, community input, and modeling data
- Collaborate with partners and stakeholders to develop and reach consensus on the modified LPA
- Begin detailed environmental analysis of the modified LPA
- Continued community engagement and opportunities for feedback
Near Term Timeline

▸ Identify initial recommendations on program components by spring 2022
▸ Programming boards, councils, and commissions between spring and summer
▸ ESG endorsement by June 2022, followed by Bi-State Legislative Committee review

Beyond Summer 2022

▸ Additional analysis will occur as part of the NEPA process beginning in 2022, with the Final Supplemental EIS estimated to be published by late 2023
▸ Additional development of design details – mid-2022 through mid-2024
  - Ex.: Bridge type, active transportation facilities and connections, affected local roadways, transit details, off-site improvements
▸ Updates to the Conceptual Finance Plan will occur in fall 2022 in preparation for the 2023 OR and WA legislative sessions
Governance Structures Study
Current and Prior I-5 Bridge Agreements

**Current**
- 1966 I-5 Maintenance Agreement (for the existing I-5 bridge)
  - Parties: OR and WA State Highway Commissions (now DOTs)
- 2019 Interagency MOU on IBR program
  - Parties: ODOT and WSDOT
- 2020 IGA on IBR program – the latest agreement on the program
  - Parties: ODOT and WSDOT
- IGA is the predominant form of O&M agreements for WA/OR bridge crossings

**Prior (1)**
- 2006 Intergovernmental Funding Agreement
  - Parties: ODOT and WSDOT
- 2012 Interstate Tolling Agreement
  - Parties: OTC and WSTC

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1. These prior agreements were specifically for the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project.
Bi-State Agreement Options Assessment

- Review of national best-practice examples of multistate transportation authorities understand their responsibilities, structures, and decision-making authorities.
- Review and compare how Oregon and Washington handle governance responsibilities.
- Develop criteria for assessing potential governance structures based on best practices and the local context.
- Identify governance structure options with consideration of an interstate compact approach informed in consultation with the National Center for Interstate Compacts.
- Assess alternative governance structures by applying criteria to the governance structure alternatives with the assessment framing tradeoffs in the context of best practices and local considerations.
- Evaluation of tolling considerations and existing/past agreements for the CRC project.
Initial Takeaways

▸ IGAs have been the predominant tool for state delivered crossings as well as O&M agreements for the seven OR/WA state bridges.

▸ The IBR program can be delivered through existing authority and entities using one or more IGAs.

▸ Other governance structures offer advantages and disadvantages.

▸ Key differentiating factors of options include:
  – Speed of project approvals and delivery
  – Whether existing or new entities are responsible for program delivery
  – Flexibility for innovative delivery
Tolling Update
The IBR program and ODOT toll program are separate but related efforts to improve key highways and manage congestion on the regional transportation system through investments in the corridors in which tolls are collected.

Each state’s approach and framework for transportation policy and investments will be accounted for as the tolling approach is developed for IBR.

To understand the impacts on Washington and Oregon travelers and the impacts on each project, the IBR and ODOT tolling teams are coordinating to ensure that consistent tolling assumptions are considered in the traffic modeling for both projects.

The timing and details of how tolling may be implemented as part of each effort are still being determined.

- Oregon Toll Program potential geographical pricing limits will be finalized in the 2024 timeframe
- The soonest tolling could begin on the Interstate Bridge is in late 2025 or early 2026
The Urban Mobility Office oversees the Oregon Toll Program, which is implementing two projects:

- I-205 Toll Project
- Regional Mobility Pricing Project
ODOT’s I-205 Toll and Regional Mobility Pricing Projects

- **I-205 Toll Project**
  - 2020: Environmental review
  - 2021: Regional planning
  - 2022: Environmental review
  - 2023: Federal review
  - 2024: Earliest tolling could begin

- **Regional Mobility Pricing Project**
  - Equity framework
  - Develop equity & mobility strategies

- **Public Input**
  - Comment period for draft document
  - Final environmental document
  - *May require federal approval

**Regional Mobility Pricing Project Study Area**
- Toll Evaluation Area
- I-205 Toll Project
Bi-State Tolling Considerations

Ongoing bi-state coordination questions to be answered:

▸ Which state will collect tolls on the bridge?
▸ Specific steps to authorize IBR as a toll facility
  - Existing legislation, modifications to legislation, future legislation
▸ How will interoperability between the two state’s toll systems be achieved?
▸ What will the customer experience look like? What is needed to make sure it is seamless?
State Tolling Statutes, Policies and Procedures Memo

- Summarizes federal and state tolling statutes, policies, and procedures in Oregon and Washington to serve as a reference as the two states consider tolling for the IBR program

- Information presented includes:
  - Roles and responsibilities of each state’s Transportation Commission, state Legislatures, and Departments of Transportation
  - Toll authorization and toll rate setting procedures in each state
  - State constitutional and statutory restrictions on the eligible use of toll revenues
  - Processes involved with toll financing in each state
  - Equity considerations/requirements for establishing tolling in each state
While funding bridge replacement construction is the primary objective of tolling on IBR, toll rates are expected to vary by time of day in a manner that would support mobility and relieve traffic congestion, promoting travel time savings and improved reliability.

The time savings benefits of the tolling extend to all travelers, with the greatest benefit to those without flexible work hours that travel during the morning and afternoon peak periods.

The details of how tolling may be implemented as part of either effort are still being determined; however, from a customer perspective, the operation of the two efforts will be seamless for travelers on the regional transportation system.
IBR Preliminary Toll Rates for Initial Analysis

- Toll rates and policies will be jointly set by the Oregon and Washington State Transportation Commissions.

- The preliminary toll rates for initial analysis identified by the program pivot from the planned CRC toll rate schedule:
  - The average revenue per trip is equivalent to the CRC toll rate schedule when expressed in constant FY 2022 (2021) dollars, though they exhibit more variation by time of day and direction.
  - The IBR preliminary toll rates for initial analysis are assumed to escalate annually to keep pace with general price inflation.

- Current modeling being completed on IBR models a typical weekday, variable rate toll scenario. A sensitivity analysis that reflects a representative toll scenario will be completed to account for tolling in Oregon.
Toll T&R Analysis and Commission Engagement

- **Level 2 Toll Traffic & Revenue Study**
  - Late summer ‘22 – summer ‘23 (assumes current draft schedule of IBR solution in spring 2022)
  - **OTC / WSTC engagement in testing toll rate schedule scenarios and toll policies** — fall ‘22 - spring ‘23

- **Level 3 (investment-grade) Toll Traffic & Revenue Study**
  - Early 24 — spring ‘25
  - **OTC / WSTC rate setting** — late ‘24 – spring ‘25 (ending with rate adoption)

- With legislative approval, **pre-completion tolling could begin as early as late 2025**
  - Dependent upon readiness of toll back-office, customer service center and roadside toll systems
Forthcoming toll policy discussions

▸ WSTC and OTC will determine exemptions and discounts for buses, emergency vehicles, and low-income travelers

▸ The IBR program will work to identify how and when toll considerations may move through advisory and community groups for consideration by the Commissions

▸ Oregon has legislation regarding equitable income-based toll rates
  – “Before the Department of Transportation assesses a toll, the department shall implement a method for establishing equitable income-based toll rates to be paid by users”

▸ Low-income exemptions do not currently exist within Washington

▸ WSTC recently published a report regarding low-income toll program options for users of the I-405 and SR 167 Express Toll Lanes
Next Steps
Questions?

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