Conclusions and Key Points

Increasing vehicular flows across the Marion Street and Center Street bridges during peak travel times will require an estimated $55-$65 million for the Marion Street Bridge area and $100 - $137 million for the Center Street Bridge area.

If the projects are completed, travel times in the peak hour(s) for both eastbound and westbound traffic across the bridges would be reduced by as much as 50 percent initially; travel times would return to pre-construction levels within ten years or less after project completion.

Key Points:

1. **Population will increase.**
   Salem's population is projected to grow more than 20 percent over the next 20 years, with the majority of residential growth occurring west and south of downtown.

2. **Congestion will increase.**
   Vehicle congestion in the study area is projected to increase, as measured by both travels times and the duration of the peak period on the two bridges.

3. **Congestion is directly related to vehicle flows to, from, and across the bridges.**
   To relieve vehicle congestion in the study area, the Task Force focused on options that would increase vehicular traffic flows across the Marion and Center Street bridges, including the approaches to and egress from the bridges.

4. **There are no programmatic or policy solutions.**

   There is no set of new programs or policies that would increase traffic flows and significantly reduce vehicle congestion on the Marion Street and Center Street bridges.

5. **There are no low-cost solutions.**

   There is no single project at a specific location that would significantly reduce congestion across the Marion Street and Center Street bridges. To significantly reduce congestion, a set of capital projects must be packaged together. There are several lower-cost improvements that could provide benefits at specific locations or to a limited number of users. Examples include: intersection modifications; additional guide signage; enacting turn restrictions at certain times of day; providing a park and ride/walk/shuttle facility at Wallace-Marine Park; creating a circulator/trolley program, and implementing Intelligent Traffic System technologies.

6. **The preferred option to increase morning eastbound traffic flows (Center Street Bridge) costs over $100 million.**
   The set of capital projects that would increase eastbound traffic flows across the Center Street Bridge involves widening Wallace Road NW to three lanes southbound; widening the eastbound bridge approach structure; adding a fifth lane on the bridge; making modifications to the north and southbound off-ramps to Front Street NE and addressing downstream bottlenecks at intersections

Conclusions and Key Points

of Front/Commercial/Division streets and Front/Commercial/Trade streets. If constructed, this option is estimated to:

- Cost between $100 and $115 million if conducted in conjunction with projects to address westbound traffic (Marion Street Bridge). If not conducted in conjunction with Marion Street Bridge projects, the cost increases by approximately $19 to $22 million.
- Initially reduce peak travel times by approximately 50 percent. Travel times would return to pre-construction levels approximately ten years following project completion.

7. **The preferred option to increase evening westbound traffic flows (Marion Street Bridge) costs over $55 million.**
The set of capital projects that would increase westbound traffic flows across the Marion Street Bridge involves adding a third right turn lane on Commercial Street; adding an additional westbound lane on Marion Street NE by removing parking; widening the bridge approaches; adding a fifth lane on the bridge; removing the pedestrian sidewalk on the bridge and widening Wallace Road NW to three northbound lanes. If enacted, this option is estimated to:

   - Cost between $55M and $65 million.
   - Initially reduce peak travel times 30 and 50 percent for vehicular traffic originating from north and east of the Marion Street Bridge, respectively. Travel times for traffic originating from south of the bridge would remain unchanged. All travel times would return to pre-construction levels less than ten years following project completion.

8. **The preferred alternatives will incur other costs in addition to construction.**
In addition to the capital costs of each of the project packages, there are also social, environmental, and economic costs related to such items as: property acquisition and condemnation; business and travel disruption; impacts to public parks and recreation, and construction involving the regulated floodplain, over-water work, and the Willamette Greenway. Quantifying these costs was outside of the scope of the Task Force.

9. **Salem does not have standards for acceptable travel times.**

   Salem does not have adopted standards for travel times between points and has not established a threshold above which a travel time is considered unacceptable. Salem does have adopted standards for roadways and intersections related to volumes and capacities. The preferred options would result in improvements to these standards, but traffic growth over time would erode these gains.

10. **Seismic retrofits are likely for the Center Street Bridge but unlikely for the Marion Street Bridge.**
The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will be conducting a study to determine whether the Center Street Bridge needs to be seismically retrofitted and, if so, the cost for retrofitting. Depending on the results of the study, ODOT may retrofit the bridge; $60 million was identified in legislation towards this work. ODOT has determined it will not retrofit the Marion Street Bridge because doing so is not cost-effective.