

## Project Conclusions

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 (some approaches to the bridge would have no travel time change); travel times would return to pre-construction levels within ten years or less after project completion.

The Task Force did not reach consensus on any long-term major capital improvements.

### Key Points:

- 1. The population of Salem and the region is projected to grow more than 20 percent over the next 20 years.** The majority of residential growth is expected to occur west and south of downtown.
- 2. Vehicle congestion in the study area is projected to increase.** This will result in longer travel times and the duration of the morning and afternoon peak commutes 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 roads leading to and from the bridges.
- 4. A congestion pricing (tolling) program could reduce vehicle congestion at peak hours.** ODOT has studied congestion pricing on I-5 and I-205 but has yet to implement it.
- 5. New Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies such as commuter reduction programs could create capacity.** Programs could include voluntary change in employment start and end times, incentives to use available ridesharing programs, and increased transit frequency during peak hours.
- 6. 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.
- 7. Improving the morning eastbound traffic flows (Center Street Bridge) costs over \$100 million.** The set of capital projects that would improve 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 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.

**8. Improving evening westbound traffic flows (Marion Street Bridge) costs over \$55 million.** The set of capital projects that would improve 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.

**9. In addition to the capital costs of each of the project packages, there are also social, environmental, and economic costs.** For example, 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.

**10. Currently, 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.

**11. 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.