

The problem today

With traffic levels hampering downtown circulation, and long delays in west Salem, policy makers are evaluating potential transportation infrastructure.



Commercial St. at Division St. and Front St.



Wallace Rd. at Glen Creek



Court St. at Front St.

As the population of Salem increases, traffic and congestion will increase.

+20%

GROWTH IN SALEM'S POPULATION

predicted, 2018 to 2038

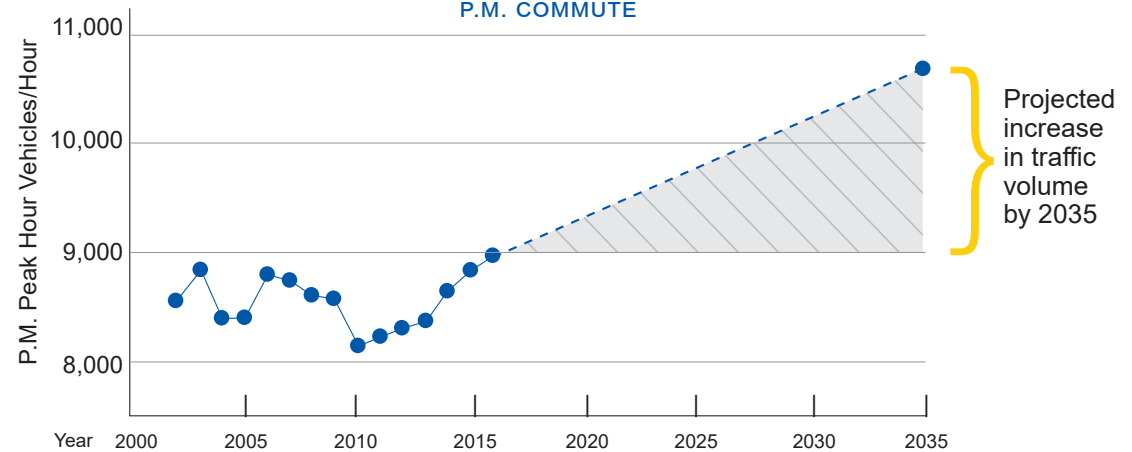


+1% per year

AVERAGE GROWTH IN TRAFFIC VOLUME

predicted, 2016 to 2035**

Salem Bridges Traffic Volume
P.M. COMMUTE



*2002-2016 data based on ODOT Traffic Recorders Data

**2035 PM peak hour volume based on data from the PSU Population Research Center forecasts

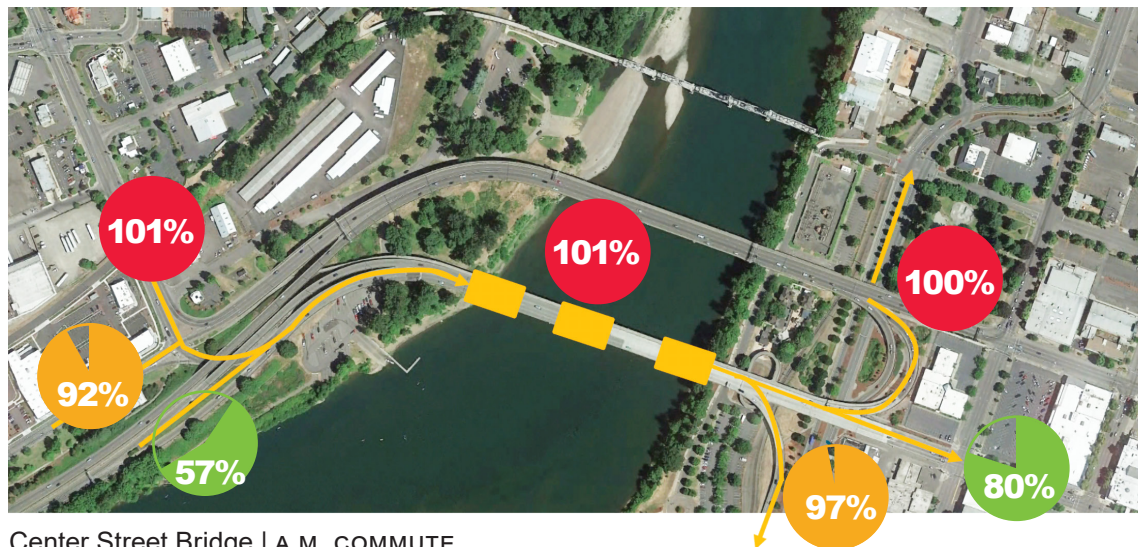
Composed of the Mayor and three City Councilors, the Salem Congestion Relief Task Force investigated potential ways for the City to relieve congestion and advise the City on policies and actions to improve traffic flow.

What causes morning and evening congestion?

Traffic jams in the morning and evening are caused by bottlenecks at the Center Street and Marion Street bridges. During morning and evening commutes, traffic on the bridges nears or exceeds capacity in many areas.

MORNING RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Measures Of Road Capacity Used During Morning Peak Traffic Hours



Center Street Bridge | A.M. COMMUTE

- At or over capacity
- Near capacity
- Below capacity

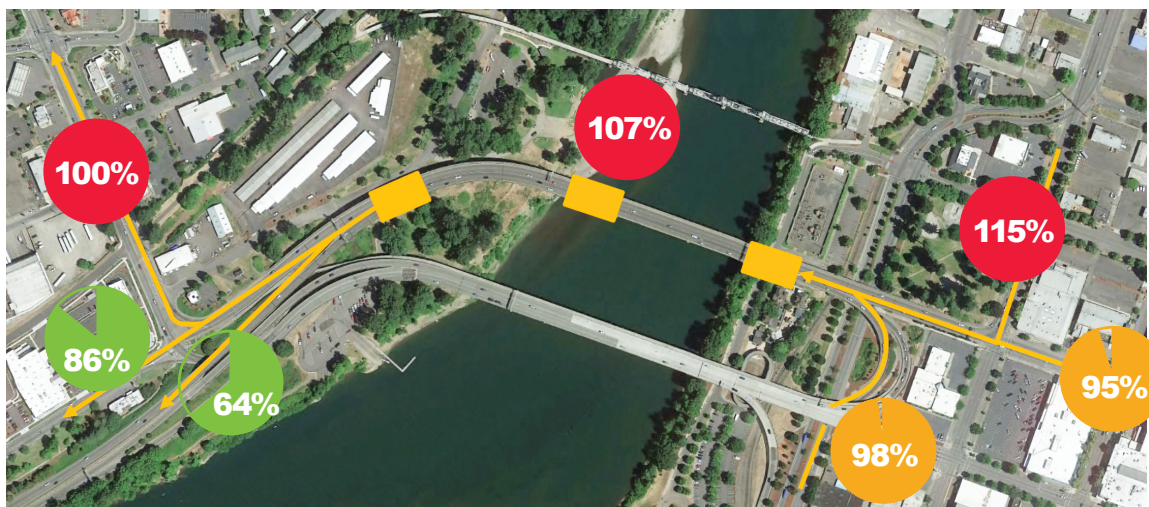
Morning Intersection Operations



- Fails to meet standards
- At or near standards
- Vehicle queuing (back-ups) during peak traffic hours

EVENING RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Measures Of Road Capacity Used During Evening Peak Traffic Hours



Marion Street Bridge | P.M. COMMUTE

- At or over capacity
- Near capacity
- Below capacity

Evening Intersection Operations



- Fails to meet standards
- At or near standards
- Vehicle queuing (back-ups) during peak traffic hours

Salem Bridges: Key Connectors

Regional travelers, freight, and residents depend heavily on Salem bridges for daily travel, due to lack of alternative routes.



MARION STREET BRIDGE



CENTER STREET BRIDGE

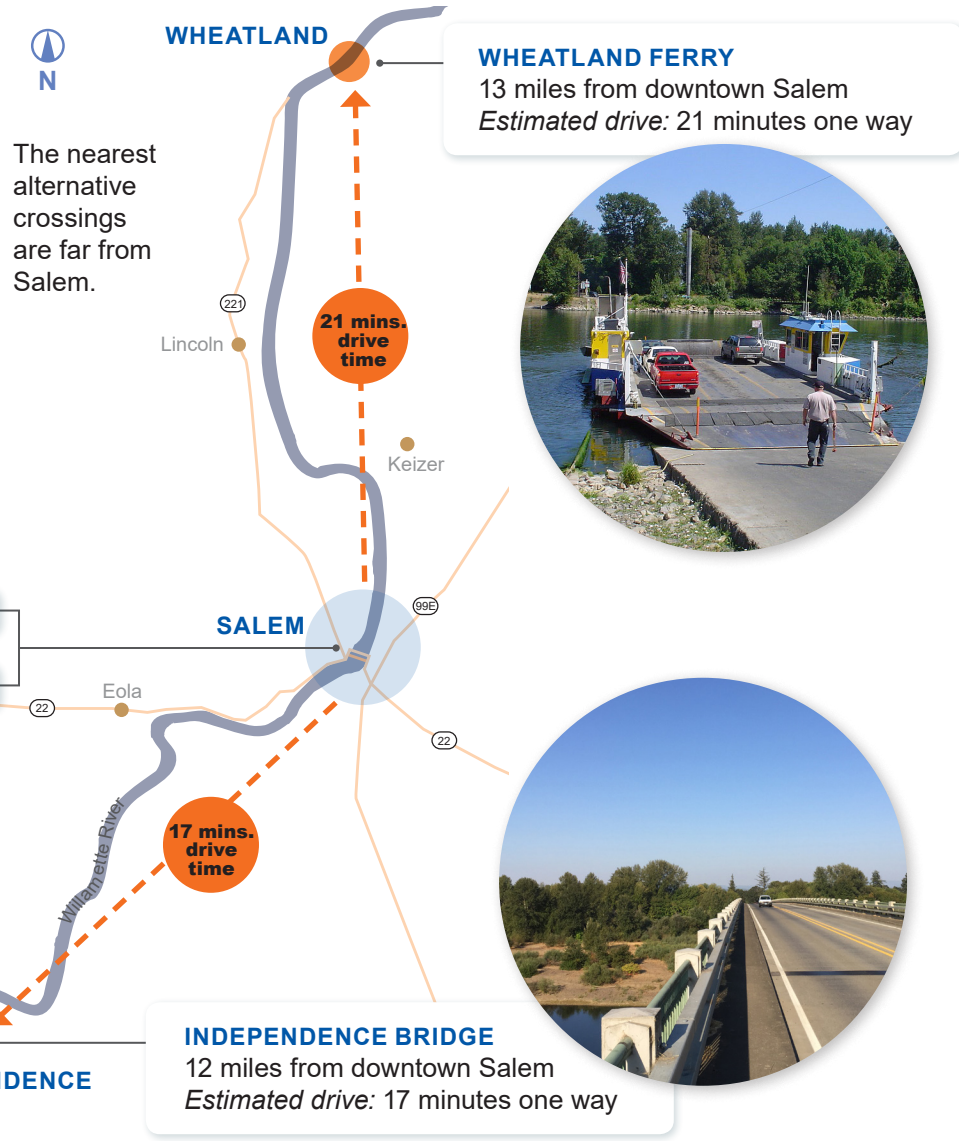


Photo credits: Marion St. and Center St. Bridges :M.O. Stevens - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4706428 & commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4707249 Wheatland Ferry: Andrew Parodi at the English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9998081

Short-Term Actions

The Task Force recommends the following actions.



Guide signage

Improve guide signage leading up to and on the bridges



Increase pedestrian delays

Increase pedestrian delays at signalized intersections during peak periods



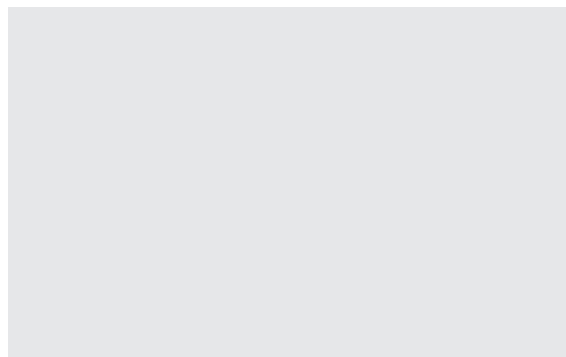
Travel time signage

Install travel time signage in the study area

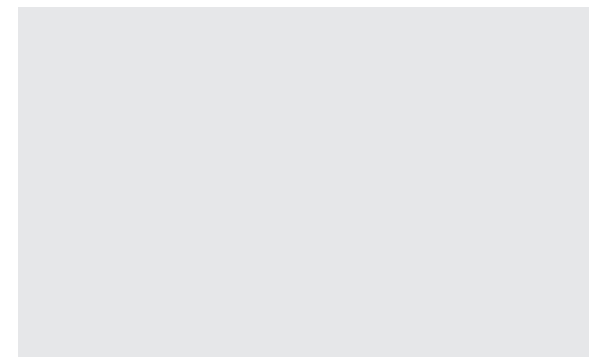


Musgrave Avenue connector

Remove the barrier on Musgrave Avenue east of Wallace Road to allow traffic to access Wallace Marine Park



(Box available if Actions added)

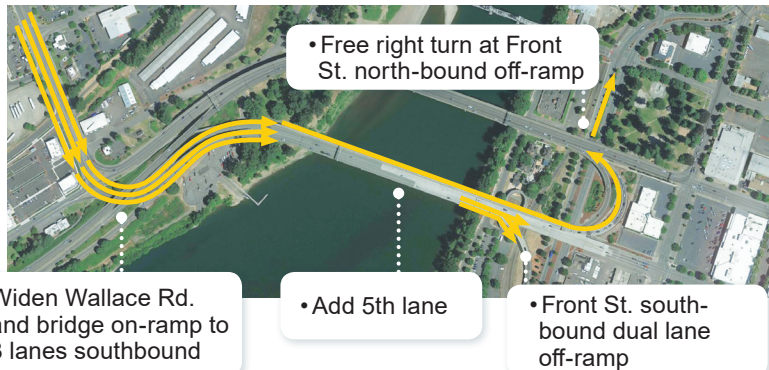


(Box available if Actions added)

Longer-Term Options

The Task Force evaluated several packages of potential improvements. The most promising packages are described below. The Task Force did not reach consensus and therefore are not recommending these for further study.

Center Street Bridge Package



Summary

- Improves Wallace Rd. and Front St.
- Bottlenecks still exist at both Commercial St./Front St. intersections
- Project Cost: \$100–\$137 million

Marion Street Bridge Package



Summary

- Improves Commercial St., Marion St., and Wallace Rd.
- Weaving (lane-changing) on bridge still occurs, and with five lanes
- No improvements for Front St. on-ramp to bridge
- Project Cost: \$55–\$65 million

Considerations

- Solution packages are expensive.
- The benefits are not long-lived. Travel times initially would be reduced by as much as 50%, while some areas would not see any reduction. Travel times would return to preconstruction levels within 10 years (2028).
- Making a single improvement, rather than implementing the whole package, can help in the immediate area, but it will either move the problem to a different spot, or fail to relieve overall congestion in the area.