

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: May 10, 2023 **Approx. Start Time:** 10:30 AM **Approx. Length:** 30 minutes

Presentation Title: Bull Run Bridge Update

Department: Transportation and Development

Presenters: Dan Johnson – Director, Mike Bezner – Assistant Director

Other Invitees: Joel Howie- Transportation Engineering and Construction Supervisor, Joe Marek- Traffic Safety Program Supervisor

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Direct staff on which funding strategy to pursue to replace the Bull Run Bridge.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Bull Run Bridge, which crosses the Bull Run River, was installed at its current location in 1926. It was originally constructed in 1894 as part of Portland's Burnside Bridge over the Willamette River. The Bull Run Bridge is a key access point to the Bull Run Reservoir, which provides clean water to over 800,000 customers in the Portland area and provides access for about 160 households in the Sandy area.

The bridge has deteriorated significantly over the last 25 years. In January 2023, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) performed an updated load rating calculation that resulted in the County having to restrict vehicles weighing more than 12 tons from crossing the bridge.

Smaller ambulances and fire trucks are still able to cross the bridge to respond to medical and fire/wildfire emergencies, but heavier loads must use a detour route of approximately 30 miles through Multnomah County that includes 2 bridges that are already restricted for some specific heavy truck configurations. The heavier loads that cannot currently use the Bull Run Bridge include trucks associated with Portland Water Bureau activities within the Bull Run Watershed, trucks used for logging operations on private and public lands, full-size county-operated snowplows and sanders, and garbage trucks. Further deterioration of the structure could require the bridge to be closed to all traffic in the next five to 10 years if it is not replaced.

The county funded and completed a 30% design study that analyzed the best location to build a replacement bridge based on cost and environmental requirements. However, the county does not have the additional funding needed – estimated at approximately \$14 million – to fully fund replacing the bridge. The County submitted seven grant applications between 2018 and 2022 for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding to construct a new bridge but have not been successful in being awarded any funds.

In addition to our FHWA grant applications, the County has also applied to ODOT and the Local Agency Bridge Selection Committee (LABSC) for replacement funding. The LABSC, composed of 9 voting members (3 from ODOT, 3 from cities, 3 from counties), awards grants based on a Technical Ranking Score (TRS). The TRS includes a wide variety of factors such as structural adequacy, traffic, detour lengths, bridge railing, safety, etc. In the last application round, the Bull Run Bridge had the 6th highest TRS out of 37 candidates statewide. Unfortunately, the available statewide federal formula funding (\$16.4 million) for local agency bridge replacements was not enough to include Bull Run. Of note, two bridges that are funded in the Draft 24-27 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) are in Clackamas County: \$7 million to replace the Abernethy Creek (Holly Lane) Bridge, and \$2 million in design funding for the Dodge Park Bridge that carries Lusted Road over the Sandy River.

Since the last LABSC round, a few TRS rating criteria have changed for the Bull Run Bridge, increasing its TRS for the next round.. Historically, the LABSC has not permitted a local agency to move funding from one bridge to another based on local preference. However, staff did reach out to the committee and has received word that the committee would approve moving the \$2 million of 24-27 STIP design funding from Dodge Park to Bull Run if the county formally requests it. Both bridges are good replacement candidates, but Bull Run carries more truck traffic, has a significantly longer detour to Sandy, and is in poorer condition with a lower load posting. Further, Dodge Park Bridge is on a “Local Delivery Only” route due to curve restrictions elsewhere on Lusted Road.

The cost of either bridge is a significant portion of the total funding available for local agency bridges statewide. Whichever bridge is funded for design is likely to receive construction funding in the next STIP cycle, while the other would have to wait for future opportunities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

Is this item in your current budget? YES NO

What is the cost? \$14,450,000

What is the funding source? tbd

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

- How does this item align with your Department’s Strategic Business Plan goals?
This aligns with two Transportation Maintenance performance measures:
 - Maintain the average condition of inspected bridges scored as good condition at 26% or higher
 - Maintain the average condition of inspected bridges scored as fair condition at 69% or higher

- How does this item align with the County’s Performance Clackamas goals?
This aligns with four county goals:
 - Build public trust through good government
 - Grow a vibrant economy
 - Build a strong infrastructure
 - Ensure safe, healthy and secure communities

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

- Federal requirements determine when County bridges must be posted to restrict loads.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

- Staff has had discussions with area residents and the local CPO – Bull Run – for several years, as well as with companies that operate heavy trucks in the area. Most recently, staff updated area residents at the March 28 Bull Run CPO meeting and since then informed them about the most recent grant denial and this policy session.

OPTIONS:

- A. Request that ODOT and the LABSC reallocate the \$2 million in previously awarded design funding from the Dodge Park Bridge to the Bull Run Bridge.
- B. Keep the LABSC award for Dodge Park Bridge. Complete the Bull Run bridge design and right-of-way acquisition for \$2 million with County Road funds, work with regional partners like the Portland Water Bureau to supplement County Road funds, and keep applying for grants to fund Bull Run Bridge construction.
- C. Keep the LABSC award for Dodge Park Bridge. Work with regional partners like the Portland Water Bureau and apply for the next applicable state or federal grant for Bull Run Bridge’s design, right-of-way and construction.

RECOMMENDATION:

Option A: Request that ODOT and the LABSC reallocate the \$2 million in previously awarded design funding from the Dodge Park Bridge to the Bull Run Bridge.

ATTACHMENTS:

n/a

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval 
Department Director/Head Approval 
County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Mike Bezner @ 503-742-4651