



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 2 Headquarters

455 Airport Road SE Building B


Salem, Oregon 97301-5395

Telephone (503) 986-2600

Fax (503) 986-2630

DATE: August 27, 2015

TO: Dan Fricke, Region 2 Senior Region Planner
Salem River Crossing Project Manager

FROM: 
Don Jordan, District 3 Manager

SUBJECT: Alternate Traffic Routing Plans for Closure of Marion and Center Street Bridges

Several years ago the City of Salem and ODOT jointly developed an alternate routing plan to provide two-way traffic on one of the two bridges crossing the Willamette River in Salem in case of a bridge closure.

These plans reroute traffic in the downtown area as well as on OR 22 in west Salem to direct two-way traffic on to the bridge that remains open during an incident. Implementation of the plan would allow for continued two-traffic flow across the Willamette River, but there are many limitations:

- The plan requires mobilization of significant manpower and equipment; including closure of many existing movements, shutting down lanes and flagging at several intersections and turning off signals.
- In the event of an incident, especially if it occurs during a peak traffic period, it will be difficult to get staff and equipment on scene to implement the plan due to the rapidly expanding congestion in the bridgehead area which in just a few minutes will back up for miles.
- The plan would lessen the amount of lanes available and require out of direction travel severely reducing the capacity. We have 4 lanes in each direction now, and that would be reduced to one lane with some possibility of a second in one direction. Remember we have to have separation between traffic directions, so at best we have 3 lanes available.
- The plan could require a minimum of up to 3 to 5 hours to implement and the actual time would be dependent on the above limitations.

We presently have four lanes in each direction (with on and off ramps running freely in the planned directions). Reducing four lanes of traffic into one lane or in

some cases two, with out-of-direction traffic movements, will severely limit the amount of traffic that can cross these structures probably to about 25% of normal capacity. Big backups and severe congestion would exist! You can't take 4 lanes of free flowing traffic and move it into one or two lanes, require them to make out-of-direction movements, and expect it to work efficiently. Safety will also be compromised as a result of the unexpected and out-of-direction traffic movements that would be required.