



Oregon

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 19, 2016

TO: Julie Warncke, Transportation Planning Manager
City of Salem

FROM:  Dan Fricke, Senior Transportation Planner
Region 2

SUBJECT: Salem River Crossing - Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1G – Major Improvements

The Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) recognizes that construction of new transportation facilities is very expensive and it is unlikely that many new highways will be built in the future. The OHP Major Improvements Policy (Policy 1G), “. . .reflects this reality by directing ODOT and local jurisdictions to do everything possible to protect and improve the efficiency of the highway system before adding new highway facilities.” This dictate to protect and improve efficiency is further described in Action 1G.1 (OHP – page 86) which establishes a four-step hierarchy of activities that can protect and improve efficiency before adding new facilities.

Region 2 staff, with the assistance of the city and the Salem-Keizer Metropolitan Planning Organization, reviewed the many improvements that have been implemented over the last 20 years in the River Crossing study area and have compared them to the four-step process in OHP Action 1G.1. The attached document lists those activities within each of the improvement categories. Based on the attached information, it is ODOT's opinion that the Salem River Crossing project has met the requirements of, and is consistent with, the OHP Major Improvements Policy and Action 1G.1.

Salem River Crossing – Review of Consistency with Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1G and Action 1G.1

Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1G – Major Improvements

It is the policy of the State of Oregon to maintain highway performance and improve safety by improving system efficiency and management before adding capacity. ODOT will work in partnership with regional and local governments to address highway performance and safety needs.

There have been many projects/activities undertaken over the years by ODOT and other local and regional entities in the area of the proposed Salem River Crossing project that address the priorities described in Policy 1G/Action 1G.1. A list of these activities/improvements follows.

Action 1G.1

Use the following priorities for developing corridor plans, transportation system plans, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and project plans to respond to highway needs. Implement higher priority measures first unless a lower priority measure is clearly more cost effective or unless it clearly better supports safety, growth management, or other livability and economic viability considerations. Plans must document the findings which support using lower priority measures before higher priority measures.

1. ***Protect the existing system – The highest priority is to preserve the functionality of the existing highway system by means such as access management, local comprehensive plans, transportation demand management, improved traffic operations, and alternative modes of transportation.***

- ODOT implemented access management on Wallace Road with the Salemtowne to Orchard Heights project described in priority 3 below and as redevelopment of commercial properties has occurred on Wallace Road south of Orchard Heights Road.
- Relocation of a traffic signal on Wallace Road from 7th Street to Taggart Street when that street was extended.
- Illustrating the proposed location for Marine Drive in the city's comprehensive plan and TSP consistent with the recommendation of the 'Wallace Road Local Access and Circulation Study'.
- Added video cameras to Wallace Road and other intersections in order to better manage and adjust traffic signal timing.
- Continued funding and development of the Regional Travel Demand Management and Regional Rideshare Program.
- Expansion of transit services to Polk County, including a new park and ride lot at the Polk County Fairgrounds in Rickreall and Route 2X serving trips between downtown Salem, west Salem, and Grand Ronde.
- Completion of the Salem River Crossing Alternate Modes Study which evaluated measures that could be implemented to reduce single occupant vehicle traffic on the Marion and Center Streets Bridges. Measures identified in that study will be implemented as part of the Salem River Crossing project.

2. **Improve efficiency and capacity of existing highway facilities** – *The second priority is to make minor improvements to existing highway facilities such as widening highway shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes, providing better access for alternative modes (e.g., bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters), extending or connecting local streets, and making other off-system improvements.*

- Implementation of the following recommendations of the Bridgehead Engineering Study:
 - Provide two exclusive right-turn lanes from Commercial Street to the Marion Street Bridge (there is currently one exclusive right-turn lane and a right/through option lane)
 - Construct a pedestrian underpass on Front Street at Court Street (after additional consideration, the City constructed a staged, at-grade pedestrian crossing at this location rather than an underpass and widened the Center Street Bridge exit ramp to southbound Front Street reducing delays and queuing on the Center Street Bridge)
 - Widen the westbound approach from the Marion Street Bridge to provide two right-turn lanes onto northbound Wallace Road
 - Remove the eastbound left-turn from Edgewater Street to Wallace Road
 - Provide a free-flow exit ramp from the Center Street Bridge to northbound Front Street (the City has installed a traffic signal at this location which was the identified minimum build solution)

- Installation of sidewalks and bike lanes on Wallace Road as part of the Salemtowne to Orchard Heights project described in priority 3 below.
- Construction of the West Salem Transit Center
- Construction of the Union Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge and associated improvements
- Addition of paved bicycle path connection (through Wallace Marine Park) between Glen Creek Road and Union Street Bridge.
- Extension of Taggart Street from Wallace Road to 7th Street which has removed some traffic from Wallace Road by providing an alternate access to properties east and west of Wallace Road.

3. **Add capacity to the existing system** – *The third priority is to make major roadway improvements to existing highway facilities such as adding general purpose lanes and making alignment corrections to accommodate legal size vehicles.*

- Completion of the OR 221 (Wallace Road) Salemtowne to Orchard Heights project in the mid-90s which added a travel lane in each direction, included access control and installation of a raised median, and installation of traffic signals at Orchard Heights, River Bend, and Oak Crest Drive (Salemtowne entrance).
- The Wallace Road at Glen Creek project (completed in 2014) has added left-turn capacity from northbound Wallace Road to Glen Creek Road and eastbound right-turn capacity from Glen Creek Road to Wallace Road.

4. **Add new facilities to the system** – *The lowest priority is to add new transportation facilities such as a new highway or bypass.*

- Marine Drive is illustrated in the city's comprehensive plan and TSP, but has not been constructed.
- The Salem TSP and SKATS RTSP identify a new bridge on a Pine-Tryon alignment as the locally preferred location for a new bridge pending completion of an environmental impact statement.