

I-5 Willamette River Bridge - Environmental Assessment

OPEN HOUSE #1

April 5, 2006

WELCOME!

*Please share your comments and ideas by filling out a
comment form before you leave.*

The Project

ODOT is currently studying feasible solutions for a new permanent bridge to replace the old bridge and the temporary bridge built in 2004.

- The Environmental Assessment (EA) will examine various options for the new permanent bridge and will evaluate the potential impacts.
- ODOT will be seeking public input throughout the process.

The Project Area

A “built environment” in a natural setting...

- Complex location with river, wetlands, parks, Greenway, steep rock outcrop, utilities, and railroad.
- The interstate crosses over and connects state highway and ramps (Franklin Blvd).



Transportation Problem

A 2002 inspection identified shear cracks in the bridge structure. Weight limits were posted that forced heavy haul trucks to detour 200 miles on an alternate route. Without a replacement bridge, this would have major impacts on the economy.

- A temporary bridge was constructed in 2004 to keep traffic moving through the area, with the commitment by ODOT to replace it with a permanent structure designed to meet all applicable standards for interstate structures.

Proposed Solution

Replace the existing interstate bridge and remove the temporary detour bridge.

- The new bridge would be built to all current standards and would accommodate future traffic needs, as well as be designed to complement community and natural resource values.
- In addition, the Patterson Slough bridge, about 450 feet north of the Willamette River bridge, may also need to be replaced if impacted by the project.
- Various bridge design options along the current interstate alignment will be analyzed in the EA.

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve safety and maintain connectivity and mobility for all users of Interstate 5 crossing the Willamette River in the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan Area.

- The existing bridge is in poor structural condition and has been decommissioned. The temporary bridge is not designed to withstand earthquakes and does not meet federal standards for permanent interstate bridges.
- The decommissioned bridge cannot be cost-effectively repaired or widened to accommodate future traffic increases (the current level of 49,000 average daily traffic [ADT] is projected to increase to about 73,000 ADT by 2030).

Project Funding

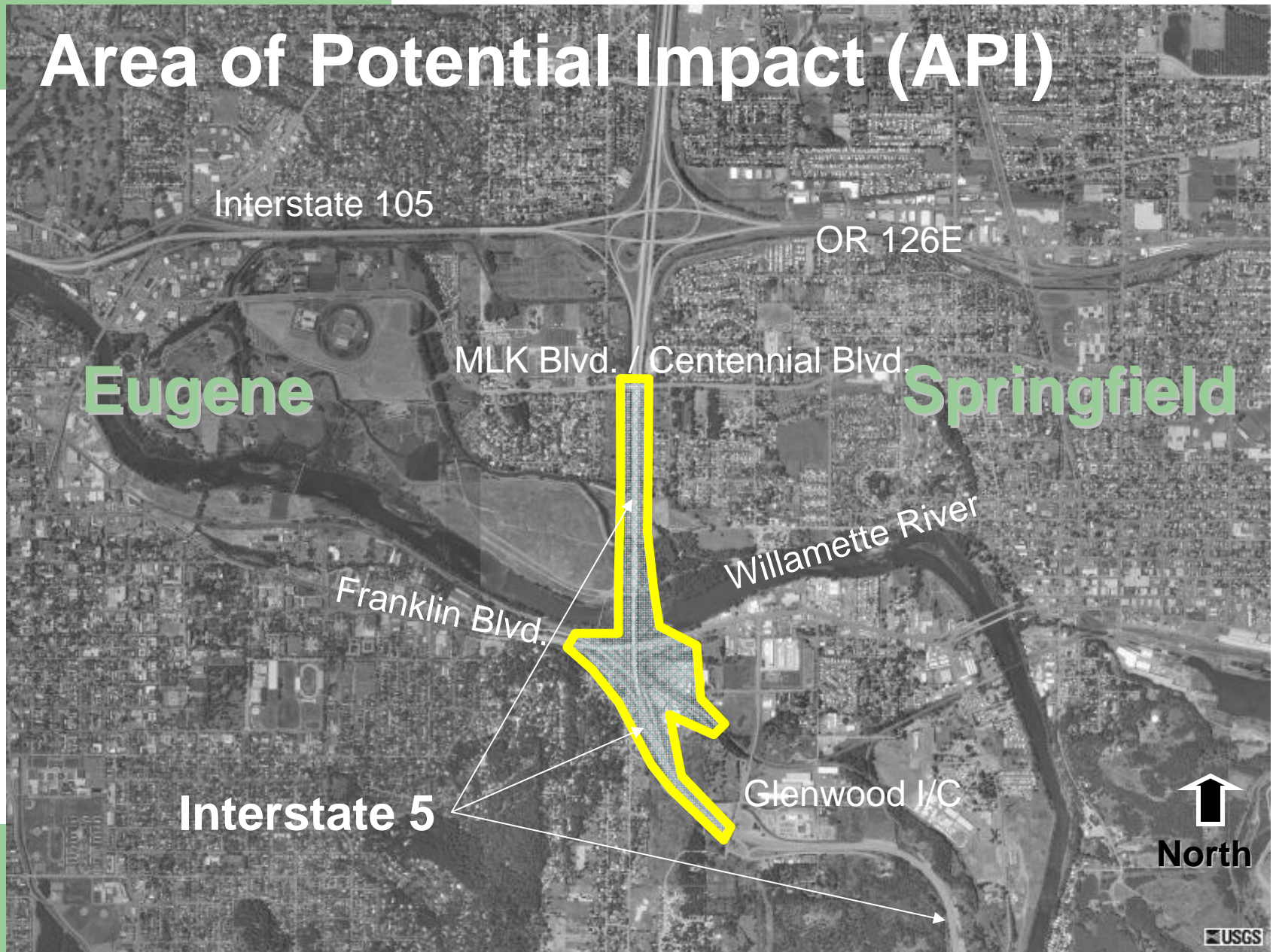
- A total of \$114 million has been allocated for the project:
 - \$2.75 million for environmental work
 - \$11 million for preliminary engineering
 - \$100 million for engineering and construction
- Funding is being provided by the Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) and through federal earmark funds.

What Is OTIA?

The Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) is the state's 10-year, \$3 billion program to repair or replace hundreds of bridges, pave and maintain city and county roads, improve and expand interchanges, add new capacity to Oregon's highway system, and remove freight bottlenecks statewide.



Area of Potential Impact (API)



Natural Resources in the Area

- The Willamette River, Greenway, and Riparian Corridor are important habitat for salmon, trout, herons, and other protected species.
- The Eugene Mill Race Diversion Dam structures (built in 1939) are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- East Alton Baker Park (Whilamut Natural Area and Eastgate Woodlands) are located at the north end of the project.
- The Willamette River and Patterson Slough provide recreation for boaters, floaters, rafters, and kayakers.

Natural Resource Map

Natural resources were surveyed for the temporary bridge and include:

- Small patches of wetlands, river (with Spring Chinook salmon, possible bull trout), Patterson slough ('canoe trail' and heron rookeries), and tributaries.
- Willamette River Greenway and Significant Goal 5 Riparian Corridor.
- Historic sites (Eugene Mill Race Diversion Dam structures, in water and on land).
- East Alton Baker Park (Whilamut Natural Area and Eastgate Woodlands) - lots of trails.



Parks Near the Bridge

Parks are very important in the Eugene and Springfield communities. Hikers, runners, and cyclists use countless trails, and river recreation abounds.

- Whilamut Natural Area is on both sides of the bridge, at the north end of the project.
- The east side is managed by the Willamalane Park & Recreation District. The west side is managed by the Eugene Parks and Open Space Division.



Known Design Constraints

This is a very complex area, with several physical limitations for connecting the new bridge with the interstate and Franklin Boulevard ramps at the south end of the project:

- High power electrical lines on both sides of the bridge.
- Buried high-pressure gas lines and other utilities under bridge.
- Franklin Boulevard, on/off ramps, and railroad under bridge.
- Judkins Point rock outcrop (determines interstate alignment) and houses.

In addition:

- Parks (north end) and Mill Race structures (in the river).

Environmental Work: Status

The project team is coordinating with the appropriate regulatory agencies. Technical work has begun and will be performed through the spring and summer. Much of the environmental work for the temporary bridge will still be applicable for this project. Updates will include:

- Wetlands
- Storm water treatment
- Archaeological and historic resources
- Noise
- Park impacts
- Willamette River Greenway Goal Exception process
- Goal 5 (riparian) resources
- Biology

Coordination with Other Projects

Several other projects/studies are currently underway in the area. ODOT will coordinate with these projects and accommodate future plans, to the extent feasible. Projects include:

- Study of future configurations of Franklin Boulevard.
- Study of potential improvements at Glenwood Interchange.
- Phase II of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Franklin Boulevard.
- Glenwood Redevelopment Plan for City of Springfield along Franklin Boulevard.

Public Involvement

ODOT will be seeking public input throughout the process. In February the project team met with several community representatives. Ways to get involved include:

- **Get on the project mailing list.** To receive project updates and stay informed.
- **Attend the public meetings.** Learn about the project, submit comments, and talk to project staff.
- **Tell us what you think.** Fill out a comment form, or call or email the project contacts anytime.
- **Visit the web site.** For updated information.
- **Request a speaker.** If you would like a presenter to speak to your group, please contact us.

Project Schedule

Issues review, stakeholder interviews	Winter/Spring 2006
Public Open House	Spring 2006
Preliminary technical and environmental work	Spring/Summer 2006
Public Open House/Workshop(s)	Summer/Fall 2006
Prepare Environmental Assessment (EA)	Fall 2006 to Spring 2007
Public Hearing on Draft EA	Spring 2007
Revised EA and Federal Highway Admin. Approval	December 2007
Final Design and Permitting	2008 to 2009*
Construction	2009 to 2011

We are here

* Additional public meetings to be determined

Issues & Concerns

A number of issues have been raised that will be addressed in the EA process. These include:

- How will the parks and natural habitat be impacted?
- Will the trails stay open and will boating/rafting be safe during construction?
- What will be the effect on the river, including water quality, fish habitat, and the river banks and riparian areas?
- Will there be noise or displacement impacts to neighborhoods?
- What will the new bridge look like?

(Other concerns? → Please fill out a COMMENT FORM before you leave

Contact ODOT for More Information:

Ann Sanders, Project Leader

(541) 744-8080 Ann.I.SANDERS@odot.state.or.us

Joe Harwood, Public Information Officer

(541) 726-2442 Joseph.D.HARWOOD@odot.state.or.us

Susan Vickers, Environmental Project Manager

(541) 986-6926 Susan.VICKERS@odot.state.or.us

Visit the project web site:

www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION2/I-5WRB.shtml

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