EARTHQUAKE READY BURNSIDE BRIDGE

*Multnomah County is creating an earthquake-ready downtown river crossing*

Multnomah County

**BETTER – SAFER – CONNECTED** February 2021

# Technical Report Summary: Transportation

This summarizes the key findings of the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* detailed in the *EQRB Transportation Technical Report*.

## Affected Environment

Multiple data sources were used to identify the affected environment such as traffic counts from the City and County, crash data from ODOT, and transit ridership from TriMet. Three topic-specific boundaries were created for this analysis:

- Traffic, Transit, and Freight – Includes freight rail traffic under the bridge; truck freight traffic crossing the bridge; TriMet bus Lines 12, 19, and 20 crossing the bridge; MAX Blue and Red Lines under the bridge; Portland Streetcar Loops A and B near the bridge; and traffic in downtown Portland.
- Bicycles and Pedestrians – Primarily includes access onto and across the Burnside Bridge as well as stairway, ramp, and ADA accesses from the bridge to the street, transit, and trail networks below.
- Safety Analysis – Intersections where alternatives could change safety conditions for auto traffic, pedestrians, and bicycle riders.

Larger boundaries were also studied for indirect impacts such as changes to travel times during construction.

### More information

Help shape the future of the Burnside Bridge and visit **BurnsideBridge.org** for more information.

### For more information, contact:

Mike Pullen, Multnomah County Communications Office,
mike.j.pullen@multco.us, (503) 209-4111

## Impacts from the Bridge Alternatives

### Traffic Volumes and Intersection Analysis

Expected to be the same under the build alternatives as they are under the No Build Alternative because traffic operations are functionally equivalent on the existing bridge and proposed bridge alternatives.

### Safety

All the build alternatives would improve motor vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety compared to the existing conditions and No-Build Alternative because improved facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians include better separation from motor vehicles. The Short-Span and Long-Span Alternatives would result in the greatest predicted crash reduction of all the alternatives because of physical barriers and additional bicyclist and pedestrian capacity.

### Transit

For all build alternatives, TriMet transit service is anticipated to stay the same within the study area, and all the build alternatives would accommodate a future Portland Streetcar extension across the bridge.

### Active Transportation

All the build alternatives would upgrade sidewalks, ramps, stairways, crossings, and noncompliant curb ramps along the bridge and at its terminal points resulting in an active transportation network that is more comfortable and better connected. New ramps, or stairs and elevator(s), would be built on the east approach to allow for ADA access from the bridge deck to the Eastbank Esplanade below. On the west approach, new ramp and stair options would connect the bridge deck to streets and sidewalks/paths below. The Couch Extension Alternative would require closure of the one-block bicycle/pedestrian plaza between NE 3rd Avenue and NE Couch Street. It would be replaced with a bicycle route along NE 3rd Avenue and onto Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to access the bridge.

### Rail Network

As with the existing bridge, all alternatives would cross over the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) on the east bank of the river, but no alternatives would have long-term effects on the UPRR operations.

*Continued on next page...*

EARTHQUAKE READY BURNSIDE BRIDGE

*Multnomah County is creating an earthquake-ready downtown river crossing*

Multnomah County

**BETTER – SAFER – CONNECTED**

## Mitigation

Few long-term mitigation measures have been proposed because no permanent adverse transportation impacts were identified. However, extensive mitigation has been proposed for consideration to reduce construction-phase transportation impacts.cExamples include:

- To reduce impacts to bicyclist and pedestrian safety, consider temporary traffic-calming or diversion measures. Sign/mark detour routes to the Steel Bridge to the north and either Morrison or Hawthorne bridges to the south.
- Detour bus Lines 12, 19, and 20 over the Steel Bridge and prepare a transit management plan that considers tools such as transit priority, dedicated travel lanes, or other bus route and streetcar mitigation measures; this would be developed by the project team in cooperation with TriMet, PBOT, and the other project teams to develop detour routes and inform final mitigation decisions.
- TriMet operate temporary bus service around temporarily closed MAX stations.
- Support outreach and communications regarding transit service disruptions.
- Avoid capital projects, other than emergency work, that would cause long-term lane closures on other downtown bridges during the Burnside Bridge closure.

More information on this topic is available in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* and in the *EQRB Transportation Technical Report*.

## Impacts from the Bridge Alternatives (continued)

### Access

Five building access points and up to two on-street parking locations would be permanently impacted by the build alternatives. The Couch Extension Alternative would impact pedestrian access to doorways in Block 75 and the Slate apartment building; access would need to be realigned with the new (lower) street elevation of NE 3rd Avenue.

### Post-Earthquake Impacts

All the build alternatives would be designed so that the bridge could be used immediately after an earthquake for emergency response and recovery operations based on the standard of seismic resiliency for the future Burnside Bridge defined in the EQRB Seismic Design Criteria Report.

## Impacts from Construction Traffic Management Options

### Without a Temporary Bridge

**Traffic/Freight**: Approximately 35,000 daily trips crossing the Willamette River using the Burnside Bridge would need to shift to other routes and potentially other modes. Other bridges would experience congestion increases.

**Transit**: Transit riders, especially on bus Lines 12, 19, and 20, would experience substantial out-of-direction travel which would add approximately 5 minutes to travel times across the Willamette River between the approaches on each side of the river. All the build alternatives would impact MAX Red and Blue Line operations where they travel under the bridge and would require closures for multiple weeks during construction. TriMet would be expected to operate a temporary bus service around the closures.

**Active Transportation**: Construction-related closures of the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade would impact bicycle and pedestrian users of that trail throughout the construction period. Detour routes over the Morrison Bridge and Steel Bridge would add travel time for bicyclists and pedestrians

### With an All Modes Temporary Bridge

The All Modes Option would include one traffic lane in each direction plus bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

**Traffic/Freight**: Approximately two-thirds of existing vehicle trips over the Burnside Bridge could be accommodated by a temporary bridge and the remaining one-third would detour to other bridges.

**Transit**: Transit would be able to continue using the temporary crossing, reducing travel time delays compared with the full closure, but travel times for bus Lines 12, 19, and 20 would still increase slightly.

**Active Transportation**: Pedestrian volumes over the bridge would be steady while bicycle volumes would decrease slightly compared to existing conditions.

*For information about this project in other languages, please call 503-209-4111 or email burnsidebridge@multco.us.*

*Para obtener información sobre este proyecto en español, ruso u otros idomas, llame al 503-209-4111 o envíe un correo electronico a burnsidebridge@multco.us*

*Для получения информации об этом проекте на испанском, русском или других языках, свяжитесь с нами по телефону 503-209-4111 или по электронной почте: burnsidebridge@multco.us.*

**BurnsideBridge.org**

@MultCoBridges, #ReadyBurnside