



Business Leaders Building Community

January 10, 2026

Commander
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Room 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067

RE: Comments on the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program Navigation Impact Report (NIR)

Submitted via email: d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil

Dear Commander:

On behalf of the 120 businesses that are part of the business leaders group Identity Clark County, we are submitting this letter to **affirm support** for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program's **fixed span bridge configuration** option over the Columbia River with 116' of vertical navigation clearance.

We are pleased that the IBR program has secured mitigation agreements with river users who occasionally benefit from higher bridge clearance. This clears the way to begin construction in 2026 on a far more affordable, practical and resilient structure and approaches. We note that – even after mitigation – **building a replacement bridge without a liftspan is a more affordable option which is congruent with the Administration's emphasis on fiscal stewardship.**

The I-5 bridge is the lifeline to our regional community and economy. The time is now to replace the antiquated and functionally obsolete I-5 bridge and improve its complex interchange network. Replacement is a far better option than pursuing seismic retrofit upgrades, deck replacement, painting and seismic improvements that otherwise would be required soon.

We appreciate the diligence of the IBR Program in studying multiple options to address the project's purpose and need while balancing many priorities. We believe our region is best served by a fixed span option allowing for a safe, practical and more cost-effective bridge design. We understand that formal Agreements have granted adequate mitigation for those few companies who depend upon a higher clearance for a portion of their commerce. Further, we note there is minimal additional economic or development opportunity offered by a lift span because the dredged 43-foot shipping channel stops to the west of the current I-5 bridge and there is virtually no shoreline land available for development upriver.

With estimated construction costs rising by the day and congestion from the aging lift span continuing to impose real, escalating impacts on our economic viability, it is critical to our region, state and nation that replacement of the I-5 bridge begin as soon as possible.

We appreciate the efforts of all involved in planning, design and funding of this critical transportation facility expected to last a century. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Josie Hyde, ICC Chair
Division President, WFG National Title

Ron Arp, ICC President

cc: info@interstatebridge.org
admin@iccbusiness.org

P.s. Please note that the more than 60 regional endorsers of the Clark County Transportation Alliance assign top regional priority to replacing the I-5 bridge and improving its influence area.

CLARK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE

2026 Policy Statement



Supporting Organizations

Amalgamated Transit Union 757
 Association of Washington Business
 Battle Ground Public Schools
 Building Industry Association of Clark County
 Building Owners & Managers Assn of Oregon
 Camas School District
 Career Connect Southwest
 City of Battle Ground
 City of Camas
 City of La Center
 City of Ridgefield
 City of Vancouver
 City of Washougal
 Clark College
 Clark County
 Clark County Association of Realtors
 Columbia Corridor Association
 Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council
 Columbia River Econ Dev Council
 Columbia River Steamship Operators' Assn
 Cowlitz Economic Development Council
 C-TRAN

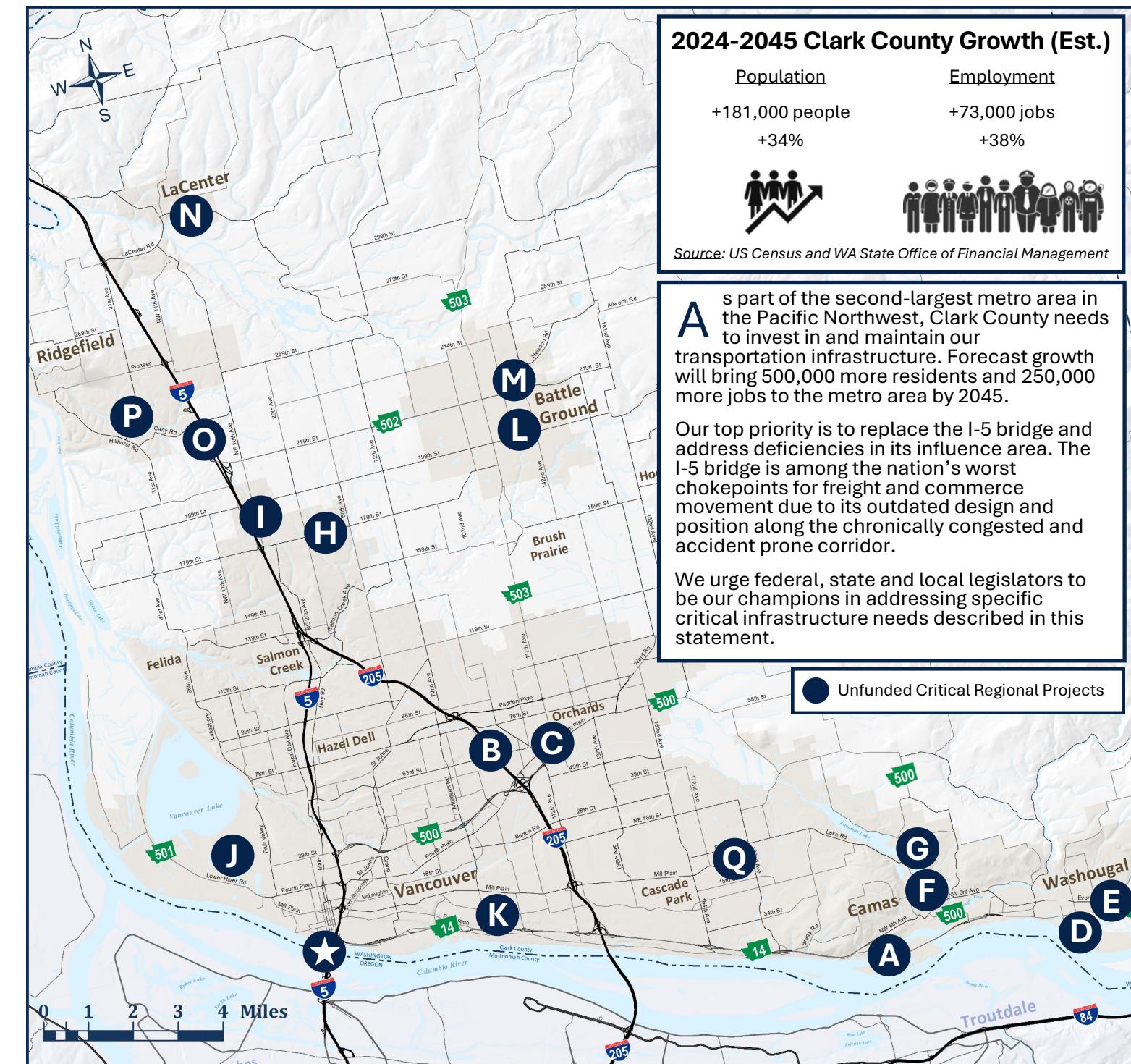
Downtown Camas Association
 East Vancouver Business Association
 Evergreen Public Schools
 Fourth Plain Forward
 Greater Portland, Inc.
 Greater Vancouver Chamber
 Hazel Dell/Salmon Creek Business Association
 Hockinson School District
 IBEW Local 48
 Identity Clark County
 Legacy Health
 LIUNA Local 335
 National Assn of Minority Contractors Oregon
 NW Utility Contractors Association
 Oregon Trucking Associations
 Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
 Partners in Careers
 PeaceHealth Columbia Network
 Port of Camas-Washougal
 Port of Portland
 Port of Ridgefield
 Port of Vancouver USA

Port of Woodland
 Portland Metro Chamber
 Ridgefield Main Street
 Ridgefield School District
 SW WA Central Labor Council
 SW WA Contractors Assn
 SW WA High Technology Council
 SW WA Freight & Commerce Task Force
 SW WA Regional Transportation Council
 The Historic Trust
 Vancouver Clinic
 Vancouver Housing Authority
 Vancouver Public Schools
 VPS
 VDA
 Visit Vancouver Washington
 Washington Ports
 Washington State University Vancouver
 Working Waterfront Coalition

WTA
 WBA
 Washougal School District
 Washougal Rising
 Workforce Southwest Washington

CLARK COUNTY TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE

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A CALL TO FURTHER ACTION

I-5 Bridge Replacement and Influence Area Improvements

Challenge: The I-5 bridge spans are functionally obsolete, seismically vulnerable and require outsized maintenance investments to remain operational. A bi-state approach focused on practical solutions to improve mobility through the I-5 corridor will deliver needed multi-modal infrastructure congruent with the I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan (2002).



Action #1

Support Timely I-5 Bridge Replacement: We fully support replacement of the I-5 bridges and related corridor improvements:

- **Supplemental EIS:** support timely completion of studies, reports and permit applications.
- **Bi-state legislative consensus:** drive toward regional consensus for a long-term multi-modal solution.
- **Funding commitments:** deliver balanced project funding by providing additional federal grants, commitments from both states and local contributions.



109-year-old I-5 Bridge

Freight and Commerce Challenge

Washington and Oregon are among the top freight-dependent states in the US. Yet we are hampered by two of the nation's worst freight and commerce chokepoints just six miles apart (ATRI, 2025) requiring bi-state coordination: **I-5 Bridge across the Columbia River** (#31) and **I-5 at I-84 Rose Quarter** (#27). These are the two worst chokepoints in the Pacific Northwest.

Regional Preservation & Operations Needs

Challenge: Within Clark County, deferred preservation due to persistent underfunding threatens the state highway system. Nearly 50% of state highways are overdue for major work, including Clark County's rough road section of I-5 south. To begin to catch up statewide: \$500-\$600M is needed next biennium and \$2-\$3B over the next 10 years. (WSDOT, 2024)

Action #2

Pursue Consistent Funding to Advance State of Good Repair: Make significant investments to reduce the funding gap for preserving existing bridge and pavement assets. Consider new, stable funding models (e.g. road-usage charge) and updates to local options and authorities. And work with competitive grant program administrators to align policies with funding needs and cost structures.

Fund Operations: Dedicate additional maintenance, planning and traffic operations funds for critical urban areas (SR-14, SR-500, I-5 and I-205) to optimize safety and mobility on our existing system.

Target Zero and Safety Program Enhancements

Challenge: Inaction annually costs Washingtonians \$18.1B inclusive of medical care, emergency services, market productivity and related expenses. (WSDOT, 2024)

Action #3

We fully support high impact investment of state and federal resources to stem the tide of fatal and serious injury crashes on state and local roadways.

Prioritize grant and program enhancements for:

- Safe Routes to Schools, Complete Streets and Active Transportation programs.
- Public awareness programs deployed by local agencies and the Washington Traffic Safety Commission.
- Expand resources and tools/technologies to achieve state Target Zero goals.
- Leverage federal Safe Streets & Roads For All planning and implementation grants.

Facilitating Transportation Mobility, Economic Growth and Equity

We urge legislators to embrace the following priorities where possible:

- Support Lower Columbia River deepwater shipping channel for the next 20-years, through the USACE's channel maintenance plan, including funding for confined aquatic structures in the first 10 years of the program.
- Fund regionally significant freight mobility improvements for river, road and rail for Ports, as well as track improvements for the county-owned Chelatchie Prairie Railroad.
- Stabilize statewide programs including the Public Works Trust Fund, CERB, FMSIB, TIB and FRAP, and protect Tax Increment Financing (TIF).
- Support broadband infrastructure to disperse economic opportunity.
- Actively embrace smart technologies to support conversion of public and private fleets to alternative fuels where practical.
- Support evaluation of transportation investments to help ensure equity and climate goals.
- Place high priority on long-range land-use and strategic transportation corridor planning to serve steadily rising population and commerce forecasts, including a third corridor across the Columbia River once a Record of Decision is issued for the I-5 bridge replacement program.



Chronically-congested SR-500/Fourth Plain/SR-503 intersection

CATALYTIC REGIONAL PROJECTS AND NEEDS

Challenge: To support community development, population and economic growth, and urban vibrancy, our communities have a growing list of transportation and infrastructure priorities totaling \$740M.



60-year-old West Camas Slough Bridge

Action #4

Fund Regionally Catalytic Projects to Address Immediate Needs:

Secure funding for priorities that reduce congestion hotspots, improve safety and deliver multi-modal investments. Each project has been vetted through the regional planning process.

	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	~ COST	LEAD AGENCY
A	SR-14 – WEST CAMAS SLOUGH BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS	Add multimodal capacity and increase earthquake resilience; cost estimate updated considering site and risk details, market increases and inflation.	\$130M	WSDOT
B	I-205/SR-500 TO PADDEN PKWY	Add auxiliary lanes to address congestion hotspot (Note: scoping study underway to update cost estimate).	\$70M	WSDOT
C	SR-500/FOURTH PLAIN/ SR-503	Initial intersection improvement to address congestion hot spot.	\$25M	WSDOT
D	WASHOUGAL 32ND ST RAIL UNDERPASS	A total of \$71.6M is committed or pending, including local match dollars, to eliminate at-grade rail-crossing, improving safety, community connectivity and economic opportunity.	\$97.5M	City of Washougal
E	WASHOUGAL RIVER RD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS	Install dual roundabouts on Washougal River Road at 18th/O St and Shepherd Rd to improve safety and accommodate future growth.	\$6M	City of Washougal
F	SR-500/EVERETT ST — LACAMAS LAKE BRIDGE	Install new Lacamas Lake Bridge and landings above the floodplain with multimodal capacity.	\$16M	City of Camas
G	SR-500/EVERETT ST — NE 35TH AVE TO NE 43RD AVE	Improve SR-500 to multi-modal urban arterial standards supporting new economic development opportunities.	\$17M	City of Camas
H	179TH ST FROM NE 15TH AVE TO NE 50TH AVE	Improve roadway to multi-modal arterial standards supporting expanded capacity and economic development opportunities.	\$76.6M	Clark County
I	NE 15TH AVE FROM 179TH ST TO NE 10TH AVE	Add arterial connection to increase capacity in conjunction with 179th/I-5 interchange upgrade.	\$21.8M	Clark County
J	FRUIT VALLEY FREIGHT ACCESS AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS	Planning, engineering, environmental review and construction for new north-south freight arterial.	\$130M	City of Vancouver
K	MACARTHUR BETWEEN N BLANDFORD AND S LIESER	Corridor improvements including multi-modal paths, roundabouts at key intersections and traffic safety enhancements.	\$50M	City of Vancouver
L	EATON BLVD FROM SW 20TH AVE TO SR-503	Improve roadway to urban arterial standards and improve traffic safety.	\$11M	City of Battle Ground
M	DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND CIRCULATION PROJECT	Construction for the downtown circulation and revitalization project plan including focus on alternative transportation options.	\$19.5M	City of Battle Ground
N	PACIFIC HWY SHARED USE PATH	Complete pathway connection between downtown and northeast communities.	\$1.05M	City of La Center
O	RIDGEFIELD/I-5 S CONNECTOR/I-5 TO HILLHURST RD	Add western ramp access at I-5 and arterial street extension to Hillhurst Rd.	\$40M	City of Ridgefield
P	ROYLE ROAD — SOUTH PHASE; S 19TH ST TO HILLHURST RD	Improve roadway, multimodal improvements, remove fish barrier, resiliency for water and sewer extensions.	\$20M	City of Ridgefield
Q	PUBLIC TRANSIT	Help fund construction of C-TRAN's 9-mile extension of the Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line enhancing multimodal connections across Vancouver.	\$10M	C-TRAN