

# Ross Island Bridge Rehabilitation Project Fact Sheet

September 2014



The Ross Island Bridge is showing its age. Contractor crews working for the Oregon Department of Transportation will begin work in October 2014 to remove paint and rust, make repairs to the structure and repaint the steel supports. The work will preserve the structural integrity and lengthen the lifespan of this key link in the regional transportation system.

## TAKING CARE OF AN IMPORTANT CONNECTION

The Ross Island Bridge, opened in 1926, provides access across the Willamette River for an average of 63,000 vehicles daily, along with pedestrians and bicyclists. The bridge was last painted in the 1960s. Since then, bubbles and cracks have appeared in the paint and rust has formed.

The Ross Island Bridge Rehabilitation Project includes:

- Structural work (Fall 2014)\***  
 Crews will replace about 250 rivets and reinforce steel supports to repair rust damage.
- Painting (2015-2017)\***  
 Crews will remove the existing paint and repaint the bridge's steel structure the historic blue-green color it has worn since the 1960s. Work will occur over three seasons, from spring to fall.
- Additional maintenance (2016)\***  
 Roadway work is also planned under the west end of the bridge at the Highway 43 (SW Macadam Ave) northbound ramp connecting to SW Kelly Ave. Design is underway and more information will be available in 2015.

This maintenance project focuses on rehabilitating the existing, historic structure. When construction is complete, no changes will occur to traffic flow or travel lanes for drivers, bicyclists or pedestrians as a result of the project. The project will cost approximately \$30-\$40 million, paid with state and federal funds.



Rust damage on steel supports of the Ross Island Bridge.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

**Minimal disruptions to traffic:** The project will not affect daytime weekday travel. Some nighttime and/or weekend lane closures will be necessary for the contractor to set up and move equipment and remove debris.

**Intermittent nighttime sidewalk delays:** Expect temporary nighttime delays on the bridge sidewalk while contractors access the work zone beneath the bridge deck. Flaggers will direct sidewalk users and may close the sidewalk for up to 20 minutes at a time during nighttime hours, Monday through Saturday.

*(Continued on back)*

PROJECT SCHEDULE	2014		2015				2016				2017			
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	
Structural work*														
Painting *														
Additional maintenance *														

\*Please note: Schedules are subject to change due to weather and site conditions. Visit [www.RossIslandBridgeProject.org](http://www.RossIslandBridgeProject.org) for the most up-to-date information.

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**Noise:** Replacing rivets, sandblasting and removing rust is noisy. Noise from rivet removal will be heard in intermittent bursts during daytime hours only, Monday through Saturday, starting in fall 2014. Noise due to sand blasting and rust removal will begin in 2015 to prepare the steel surface for painting and also will be limited to daytime hours.

**On the bridge:** Travelers on the bridge will see little of the work. All work will occur beneath the bridge deck. Barges and/or work platforms for crews will be visible from nearby roadways and vantage points. Tarps will cover active work areas to contain debris.

### LEARN MORE AND STAY INFORMED

Additional information, including a video about the project, bridge history, newsletter sign-up and more are available by viewing the online open house at [RossIslandBridgeProject.publicmeeting.info](http://RossIslandBridgeProject.publicmeeting.info)

Access the project website at [www.RossIslandBridgeProject.org](http://www.RossIslandBridgeProject.org)

**Contact ODOT:** Dee Hidalgo, ODOT Community Affairs, 503-731-8237, [Dee.Hidalgo@odot.state.or.us](mailto:Dee.Hidalgo@odot.state.or.us)

For ADA Title II or Civil Rights Title VI accommodations, translation/interpretation services or for additional information call 503-731-8237, TTY (800) 735-2900 or use the statewide Oregon Relay Service: 7-1-1.

**¿Habla usted español? Podemos proveer la información en esta publicación en español. Para recibir la información en español, por favor llámé al (503) 731-4128.**

### A KEY PART OF THE CITY

The Ross Island Bridge was designed by Gustav Lindenthal, a leading American bridge engineer from New York. It opened in 1926 and was one of the first Willamette River Bridges in Portland that did not include streetcar tracks (the Sellwood Bridge, which opened in 1925, did not include streetcar tracks). A lot has changed over its 88 years of service to the region, but the Ross Island Bridge remains an important and unique connection. Some interesting facts include:

- The Ross Island Bridge helped open up much of southeast Portland to residential and commercial development.
- The Ross Island Bridge is the most traveled non-interstate Willamette River bridge in Portland for motor vehicles.
- Portland's famous Bull Run water is carried via a pipe under the bridge deck to the west side of the river.
- It was one of several Willamette River bridges included in a colorful initiative in the 1960s to paint each bridge a new hue. At the time, the new color for the Ross Island Bridge was described as a "deep Mediterranean Blue."
- Construction of the Ross Island Bridge cost \$1.9 million.
- It was the last of three bridges that Multnomah County completed over the Willamette River in the 1920s, following the Sellwood Bridge and the Burnside Bridge.
- Ownership of the Ross Island Bridge transferred from Multnomah County to the Oregon Department of Transportation in 1976.



Photo courtesy of the City of Portland, Archives and Records