



**City of Portland, Oregon**  
**Bureau of Development Services**  
**Land Use Services**  
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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## Historic Landmarks Commission Briefing

### DISCUSSION MEMO

**Date:** October 2, 2023  
**To:** Historic Landmarks Commission  
**From:** Hillary Adam, Design & Historic Review Team  
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**Re:** Briefing – Section 106 Report for Interstate Bridge Replacement Project  
October 9, 2023

This memo is regarding the upcoming Briefing on October 9, 2023, regarding the Section 106 Report for the Interstate Bridge Replacement Project. The following supporting documents are available as follows:

- Presentation by Portland Parks & Recreation – attached
- [Link to Interstate Bridge Cultural Resources webpage](#)
- [Link to Interstate Bridge Replacement Project website](#)

#### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Interstate Bridge Replacement Project is an interstate effort, led by the Oregon and Washington Departments of Transportation, to develop a plan for a new seismically resilient multi-modal bridge across the Columbia River to provide improved mobility for people, goods, and services. A new bridge would replace the existing bridge(s), the northbound of which is a National Register-listed Historic Landmark.

#### AFFECTED HISTORIC RESOURCES

Because the proposal is partly funded with federal dollars, a Section 106 review is required. Section 106 refers to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve. This process gives interested parties and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation the opportunity to comment on potential effects to identified historic properties.

The presentation identifies the Affected Project Area (APE), certain properties determined to be historic or potentially eligible for listing in the National Register (DOE), and findings of effect (FOE) on those identified properties.

There are a total of 8 properties identified as historic or eligible, with 4 identified as having an adverse effect.

## REVIEW PROCESS

One of the identified adverse effects is the proposed demolition of the northbound bridge, which is listed on the National Register. Demolition of the Oregon portion of this bridge will require a Type 4 Demolition Review, to be reviewed by Portland City Council, following a public advisory meeting with the Historic Landmarks Commission. The official recommendation to approve or deny the request will be made by the Bureau of Development Services, however, the Landmarks Commission may provide oral or written testimony to City Council. The Landmarks Commission meeting is part of the public record for the hearing at City Council.

No formal review process by the Landmarks Commission will be required for the replacement bridge.

## FUTURE DEMOLITION REVIEW APPROVAL CRITERIA

The future approval criteria for the demolition review can be found in [33.846.080.C.1](#), which reads as follows:

1. Demolition of the resource has been evaluated against and, on balance, demolition has been found to be equally or more supportive of relevant goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, and any relevant area plans, than preservation, rehabilitation, or reuse of the resource. The evaluation must consider:
  - a. The resource's age, condition, historic integrity, historic significance, design or construction rarity, value to the community, and association with historically marginalized individuals or communities;
  - b. The economic consequences for the owner and the community;
  - c. The merits of demolition;
  - d. The merits of development that could replace the demolished resource, either as specifically proposed for the site or as allowed under the existing zoning;
  - e. The merits of preserving the resource, taking into consideration the purposes described in Subsection A; and
  - f. Any proposed mitigation for the demolition.

## STAFF COMMENTS

While the demolition of the historic bridge has not been reviewed through the required Demolition Review process, replacement of this bridge has long been considered a likelihood and, in 2022, Portland City Council adopted [Resolution #37581](#) endorsing the proposed replacement alternative.

Adverse effects, and particularly demolition of a historic resource, invite the opportunity for mitigation, as is noted in the approval criteria listed above. The loss of the historically significant bridge demands the design of a high-quality and inspiring new bridge. While there is no local review for the design of the new bridge, the future bridge's design quality is a factor that can and should be discussed as part of mitigation for the loss of the historic bridge. At the October 19, 2023 joint Landmarks and Design Commission Briefing, you will have the additional opportunity to discuss the future bridge design with the Design Commission. For a sneak peek at that October 19<sup>th</sup> discussion, you can view the bridge options currently under analysis in the environmental review here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/nextsteps>.

For your upcoming discussion on October 9<sup>th</sup>, it is also important to note that five additional resources are suggested to be eligible for listing in the National Register and also expected to experience an adverse effect as a result of the project. These include:

- Interstate Bridge, southbound (1958) – Significant under Criteria A and C; to be demolished.
- Harbor Shops (1978) – Significant under Criteria A and C; to be demolished.
- Jantzen Beach Moorage (1958-1977) - Significant under Criterion A; removal of a portion.
- Jantzen Beach Water Tank & Pump House (1968-1980) – Significant under Criteria A and C; to be demolished.
- ODOT Permit Center (1959-1966) – Significant under Criteria A and C; to be demolished.

Additionally, this storied location invites further opportunities for mitigation related to the following significant historical sites within the APE:

- Vanport – On Memorial Day 1948, this City of about 18,500 people was destroyed by floodwaters in an instant, resulting in the loss of 15 human lives and rendering nearly all its inhabitants, houseless. Vanport’s history is particularly significant in that it was one of the most integrated cities in Oregon due to its development as a town to house workers of the Kaiser Shipyards during WWII, thus attracting many African-Americans to Oregon. The eastern edge of the city lies within the APE and there is the potential for discovery of buried artifacts.
- North Portland Assembly Center – from May 2, 1942 to September 10, 1942, this building was used as a detention center for nearly 3,700 people of Japanese descent before their forced relocation to internment camps in the Pacific Northwest following Executive Order 9066.
- Pacific International Livestock Exposition – immediately prior to its use as a detention center in 1942, the same building was used from 1924, when it was built, for livestock exhibition and auction.
- Jantzen Beach Amusement Park – between 1928 and 1970, an amusement park was located just west of the interstate on Hayden Island. Notably, in-ground swimming pools, which were the first to include an underwater musical soundtrack, were located in the southeast corner of the park near the southern shore of Hayden Island and the interstate; the remnants of these pools could still be located below ground.
- Historic Infrastructure – Additionally, historic streetcar lines and historic sewer pipes could be among the buried historic infrastructure that may be discovered upon excavation in and around the APE.