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NEWS RELEASE

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January 16, 2015

COURTNEY: OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION PLAN INCLUDES FINAL FUNDING PIECE FOR MINTO BROWN BRIDGE

(SALEM) – Senate President Peter Courtney announced today that the final piece of funding for the bike and pedestrian bridge linking Salem’s Riverfront and Minto Brown Island Parks is included in the latest State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission Thursday morning.

The STIP includes \$1,581,000 for the foot and bicycle bridge. City officials say the grant will complete the funding for the \$10 million bridge and trail project, which will be paid for with a combination of state, federal and local funds.

“This bridge provides a critical recreation and transportation link between downtown and Salem’s own urban natural area, as well as neighborhoods and business districts along South River Road.” Courtney said. “It will double the opportunities for walking, running and cycling along the Willamette River. It will make Salem’s park system on the river a true Oregon gem.”

Courtney (D-Salem/Gervais/Woodburn) said he plans to appear in support of the bridge project as part of the Transportation Commission’s public review of the STIP next month. Public hearings on the STIP will be held in several locations around the state, including a hearing at the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, 100 High Street SE, Suite 200 in Salem at 3:30 p.m. February 6.

The 304-foot bridge will span the Willamette Slough from the south end of Riverfront Park and connect to Minto Brown Island Park via a new 3,800-foot-long trail. When complete, the bridge will connect more than 1,000 acres of parks and 20 miles of trails. Other planned projects will connect additional parks and 10 more miles of trails, connecting to State Capitol State Park, Willamette University and Salem Hospital.

ODOT previously awarded the city \$876,600 for the project. Funding was also provided by the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (\$750,000), Business Oregon, and key city sources.

The state also played a key role in opening the Union Street railroad bridge to bicycles and pedestrians. A total of \$4.19 million in ODOT funding played a key role in converting the bridge from railroad usage and in removing lead paint from the structure.

The Oregon Transportation Commission will conduct its final review of the 2015-18 STIP in November 2014 with final review and approval by the United States Department of Transportation scheduled for February 2015.

The 2015-2018 STIP contains approximately \$1 billion in projects and programs. It is ODOT's four-year, short-term capital improvement program developed through the coordinated efforts of the department, federal and local governments, Area Commissions on Transportation, tribal governments, and the public. Sources available for funding include federal transportation funds, state highway funds, and other funds.

The full 2015-18 STIP can be found at http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/STIP/STIP/DRAFT_STIP_15-18.pdf. The Minto Brown Bike and Pedestrian Bridge project is listed on page 89.