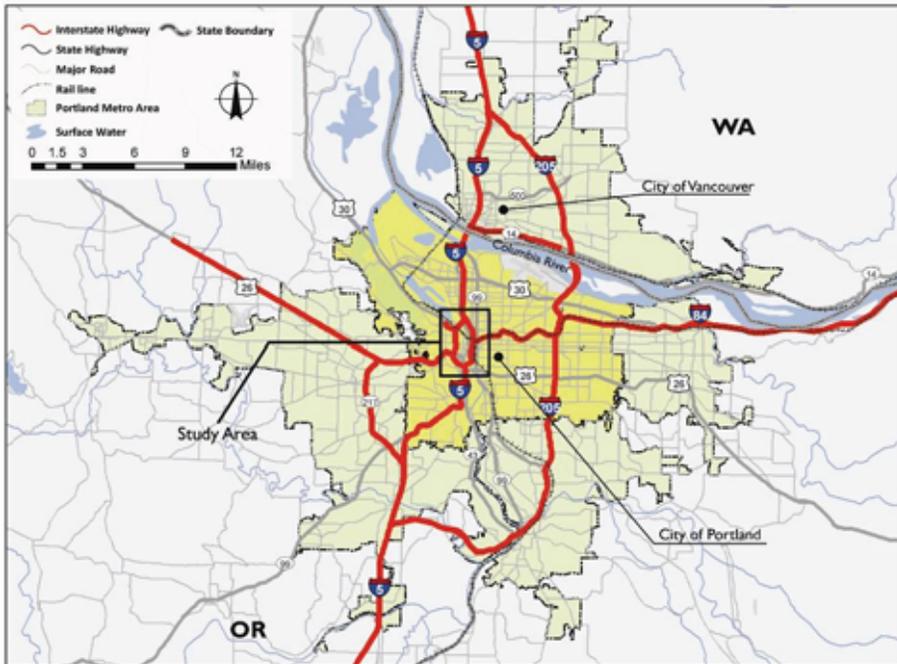


US 99W/Harbor Drive

	US 99W	I-81
Project Type	removal of an at-grade waterfront highway	existing elevated highway - TBD
Interstate Highway?	no	yes
Through Traffic?	yes	yes
Vehicles /day	25,000	100,000
Project Length	3 miles	1.4 mi.
Context	downtown: Willamette River waterfront	downtown
City	Portland, OR	Syracuse, NY
Population	437,000	140,658
Timeline	planning 1966-1968; freeway removed 1974	unknown
Cost/Cost per mile	not available	unknown

Regional Context: Portland



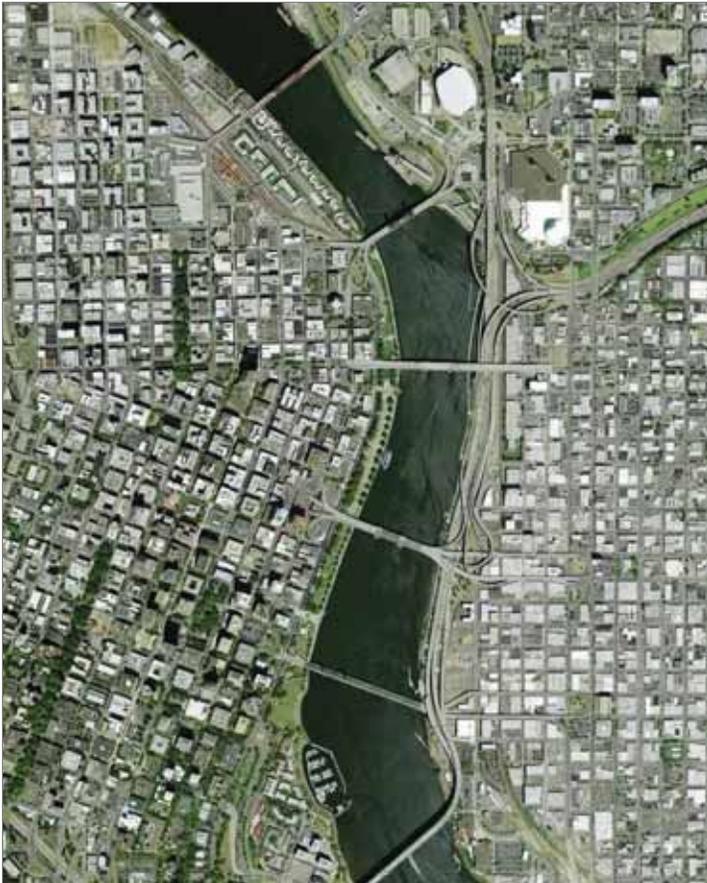
Project Location



This project replaced a riverfront highway, US 99W, with a park and boulevard. The opportunity to make this change came about with the construction of I-5, which paralleled US 99W on the east side of the Willamette River. Despite the increased freeway capacity provided by I-5, the Oregon DOT proposed to widen route 99W. This instigated a waterfront planning process, which eventually recommended in 1968 that the riverfront be reclaimed as a public park. I-405 was then completed in 1973, providing another parallel north-south route through Portland, and further obviating the need for the capacity provided by 99W. In 1974, Harbor Drive/99W was closed to traffic, and the Tom McCall Waterfront Park was constructed. No congestion was reported with the closure, and the park has proven to be a highly valued place in Portland.

What was the decision-making process?

A citizen's task force formed to develop a waterfront plan once the Oregon DOT announced plans to expand Harbor Drive/99W. This group eventually recommended closing the road and establishing a park, which was embraced by the city leaders and the public.



Source: National Agricultural Imaging Program (NAIP) Aerial Photo, NRCS

What were the outcomes?

This project is considered highly successful. Due to the availability of parallel routes, the traffic impacts were minimal, and the new park has helped revitalize the Willamette River waterfront. Further, the changes stimulated redevelopment in surrounding areas which increased property values, expanded the tax base, and helped encourage a more compact, sustainable development trend for the city.

Are there parallels to *The I-81 Challenge*?

The role and function of 99W was vastly different from I-81, as it served much lower traffic volumes and had two parallel interstate corridors in the immediate vicinity. This project was also conducted in a different era in terms of funding, regulation, and design practices.

What can we learn from this project?

Traffic Circulation and Urban Mobility: The construction of I-5 and I-405, parallel to this corridor, made the decision to remove the 99W highway much easier. Both of these roads provide alternative high speed through routes, as well as access to downtown.

Economic Development/Urban Design: Providing an opportunity for redevelopment and removing obstacles to public waterfront access have resulted in substantial economic and quality of life benefits for the city and the region. The park is immensely popular, and property values in the area have increased relative to other parts of the city.

Political/Public Process: The implementation of this freeway conversion, which occurred much earlier than others in this report, came about due to the cooperation of a grass roots organization and the local political establishment.

For More Information:

<http://www.westcoastroads.com/oregon/portland.html>