

The Cost Of Highway Limitations And Traffic Delay To Oregon's Economy



Client

Facts

Period 2007

Project Country

By Economic Development Research Group for the Oregon Business Council, 2007

Concerned about the nature of future highway needs and their impact on the statewide economic competitiveness for the 21st century, the Oregon Business Alliance and other private and public organizations banded together to sponsor a study of these needs and their economic importance for the state's economy in the future. Economic Development Research Group (EDRG) was selected to conduct the study.

The project team first examined the nature of the state economy and found that Oregon's economy is particularly transportation-dependent because of the state's role as an international gateway and domestic distribution hub. Working with transportation models and projections by Oregon Dept. of Transportation, the study examined the nature of traffic conditions across Oregon and how they are forecast to change over the next 25 years. It found that the state has particularly strong rail, marine, highway and air connections to national and international destinations, yet projected growth in freight and general traffic cannot be accommodated on the current system.

The analysis also showed that a variety of trends – growth in business markets and delivery trip lengths, trends toward larger trucks, greater use of intermodal connections, vehicle weight and size changes, and seasonal tourism – are all affecting future transportation needs and conditions in the state. The study used TREDIS to evaluate future scenarios representing alternative levels of investment in highway and transit transportation infrastructure across the state. It found that investment as called for in the Oregon Transportation Plan can have substantial positive impacts on statewide economic competitiveness and growth. It also concluded that failure to maintain a well-functioning transportation system can reduce the quality of life for Oregon residents and reduce the competitiveness of the state for attracting business investment, affecting future job growth and income for Oregon residents, as well as the income tax base.

The study received extensive coverage by local television and newspaper channels, as well as broader coverage by the Associated Press.

Contact Persons