

Bridge Condition: Percent of state highway bridges that are “not distressed”

ODOT bridge conditions are characterized by the performance measure “not distressed” which means the bridges have not been identified as having freight mobility, deterioration, safety or serviceability needs and are not rated as Structurally Deficient based on Federal Highway Administration criteria.

Our strategy

The ODOT bridge strategy which focuses on preservation and maintenance (shown at the right) was developed in response to insufficient funding levels needed to sustain conditions of the many of bridges reaching the end of their service life.

-  Protecting high-value coastal, historic, major river crossings and border structures
-  Using Practical Design and funding only basic bridge rehabilitation projects and rare replacements
-  Prioritizing maintenance on highest priority freight corridors
-  Practice bridge preservation best practices
-  Raising awareness of the lack of seismic preparation
-  Addressing significant structural problems (only) on low-volume bridges to protect public safety
-  Monitoring the health of bridges

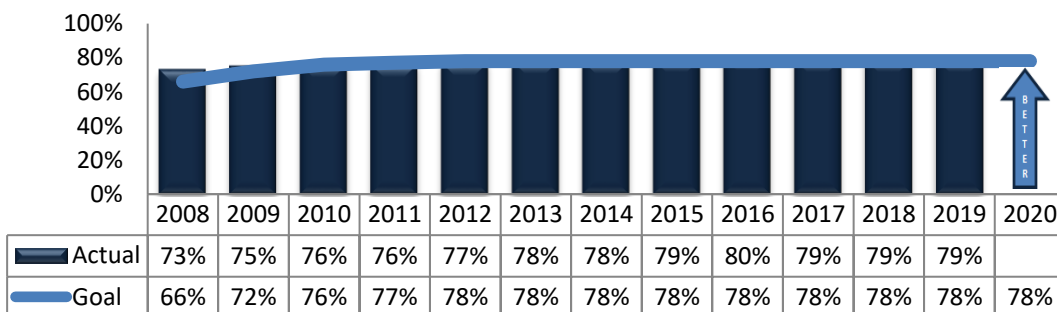
About the target

The target goal for “not distressed” bridges was established by analyzing the impact of program funding targets approved by the Oregon Transportation Commission, deterioration rates of our aging structures and historic performance of the Bridge Program in addressing needs in twelve categories.

How we are doing and Projected Conditions

The improvement in the percent “not distressed” measure since 2007 is largely due to the investments from the OTIA III State Bridge Delivery Program. Bridge Program funding levels have been able to maintain the bridge performance measure for the last six years, as shown, with only a slight drop from 2018 to 2019 (79.0% to 78.9%). The predominant distresses are due to the aging bridge inventory and bridge functionality issues such as deck geometry and vertical clearance.

Bridge Condition - Percent of State Highway bridges that are not 'distressed'

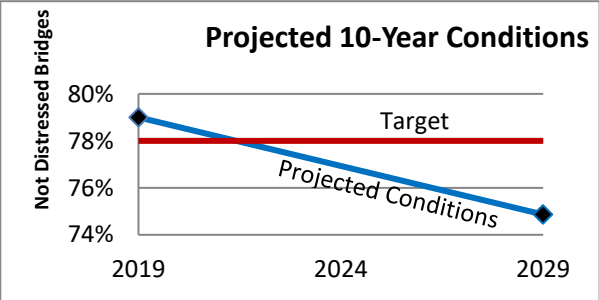


Fact

Nearly half of the state’s bridges are over 50 years old and were built to older, lesser standards never intended for today’s heavy loads and traffic volumes.

Bridge Condition, cont.

A recently completed analysis shows that over the next ten years the new HB 2017 funding will not stop the decline, only slow it. This decline is primarily due to the aging bridge inventory and a long history of underfunding of the Bridge Program that precluded systematic replacement of deteriorated bridges.



Factors affecting results and what needs to be done

A sustainable bridge program includes replacing bridges when they reach the end of their service life at 100 years. Due to underfunding, at the current rate a bridge will have to last more than 900 years before replacement. The result is a large population of aging bridges in fair condition.

With a disproportionate number of bridges in fair condition, available funding will only be able to address the most critical needs with few bridge replacements on priority routes. The fair bridges will continue to challenge the Bridge Program's ability to

address major rehabilitation and maintenance needs while also funding timely preservation treatments to optimize structure service life.

We continue to put effort into extending the service life of many bridges beyond a normal time period because of inadequate funding. The performance of the older bridges is unreliable and requires increased effort by inspectors and maintenance personnel to maintain safe conditions. There is real concern that current resources will not be able to keep up, resulting in bridge postings or closures which cause hardships for the communities that depend on these bridges.

About the data
Each state reports bridge conditions for the National Bridge Inventory, using standard criteria established by FHWA.

Contact information

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Data source

A snapshot of the bridge inventory is taken each April. Data in the snapshot is consistent with the annual NBI submittal required by FHWA. The snapshot provides a convenient and consistent reference point each year.

