



AGENDA COVER MEMORANDUM

AGENDA DATE: April 28, 2026

PRESENTED TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Brett Henry, Parks Division Manager

AGENDA TITLE: ORDER 26-04-28-11/ In the Matter of Authorizing Emergency Procurement for the Stabilization of Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges and Delegating Authority to the County Administrator to Sign the Emergency Procurement Authorization Form

I. MOTION

Move to authorize emergency procurement for the stabilization of Currin and Stewart covered bridges and delegating authority to the County Administrator to sign the Emergency Procurement Authorization Form.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Board is being asked to approve an emergency procurement under Lane Manual LM 20.200.120(C) to obtain engineering, construction, and related professional services needed to stabilize the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

Board Order 26-02-03-08, adopted on February 3, 2026, authorizes the allocation of up to \$500,000 from Transient Lodging Tax reserves to the Public Works Parks Division for stabilization of the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges. The Board approved the funding to support tourism and economic vitality, preserve the bridges' historic significance, and address identified structural needs, noting that existing Parks funding is insufficient to cover the projected costs.

B. Policy Issues

Pursuant LM 20.200.120 (C), certain contracts may be awarded without competitive selection, if an Emergency exists that requires prompt execution of those contract(s) to preserve public funds, property, or the uninterrupted provision of government services.

For this exemption, Emergency is defined as circumstances that could not have been reasonably foreseen, and create a substantial risk of loss, damage, or interruption of services, or a threat to property, public health, or safety, as provided in ORS 279A.010 (f).

C. Board Goals

The stabilization and rehabilitation of the County's covered bridges align with the Lane County Strategic Plan (2025–2027), including Goal Two: Vibrant Communities and Goal Three: Robust Infrastructure. These historic bridges support tourism and contribute to the economic vitality of the Cottage Grove area. Their preservation also strengthens the resilience of County infrastructure and supports continued progress toward accessibility and climate-related goals.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

This item has direct financial implications. If approved, the Public Works Parks Division will immediately begin emergency procurement for engineering, construction, and related professional services for stabilization of the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges. The current Engineer's Opinion of Probable Costs for stabilization of both bridges is \$480,000–\$780,000, and additional funding may be required if project costs exceed initial estimates.

Staff resources will be required for procurement, contract administration, and coordination with permitting and regulatory agencies. While emergency procurement may improve delivery efficiency, it does not eliminate the need for competitive qualification-based selection or ongoing contract administration.

E. Health Implications

If the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges are not stabilized in a timely manner and were to fail, the consequences could include significant risks to public safety as well as environmental and infrastructure impacts.

From a public safety standpoint, structural failure could result in serious injury or death if pedestrians or visitors were on or near the bridges at the time of collapse. Even though the bridges are currently noted as non-operational, covered bridges often remain areas of pedestrian curiosity

and tourism activity, increasing the risk that individuals could enter restricted areas. A collapse could also endanger people in or near the water below, including swimmers or others recreating in the river.

There are also environmental risks associated with an uncontrolled collapse into the river. Debris could obstruct stream flow, potentially creating localized flooding or altering water movement. Large structural components and debris could introduce contaminants or physical hazards into the aquatic ecosystem, affecting fish habitat, water quality, and downstream conditions. Debris could accumulate against downstream infrastructure such as culverts, bridges, or bank stabilization features, increasing the risk of further damage or secondary flooding.

In addition, in the event of a collapse, authorities having jurisdiction may pursue regulatory review and enforcement actions, including the imposition of fines or penalties, particularly if resulting impacts involve unpermitted in-water work, environmental damage, or other regulatory violations.

F. Analysis

Based on the documented structural evaluations, both the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges are considered unsafe for pedestrian use and at risk of collapse, creating a clear life-safety concern. Continued delay increases the risk of deterioration and potential failure, elevating both safety hazards and potential loss of these historic assets.

The stabilization work is complex and requires specialized design and engineering, careful construction sequencing, and close coordination with environmental and historic preservation requirements. The project must also navigate permitting requirements, including potential in-water work authorizations, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office, and joint agency permit review. These processes can significantly affect both design development and construction timing.

Because of these constraints, it is important to engage a qualified contractor early in both the engineering and permitting phases to help determine feasible means and methods, support permit-ready design, and ensure construction approaches align with regulatory requirements. Early involvement is also critical to minimize impacts to the historic structures and the waterway while maintaining compliance.

The project is further constrained by seasonal and environmental work windows, including in-water work restrictions, river conditions, and weather-dependent construction activities. These limitations create a narrow timeframe for completing design, permitting, and construction, particularly if work is to occur during the upcoming summer season. Delays in procurement could result in missing these windows and pushing

the project into a later year, increasing risk and cost.

While a standard competitive procurement process provides broader price competition, it also requires a longer timeline. Given the urgency, technical complexity, permitting constraints, and limited seasonal window, an expedited or limited competition approach under LM 20.200.120(C) is supported to ensure timely stabilization and reduce risk to public safety and the structures.

G. Alternatives/Options

Traditional Design–Bid–Build (standard competitive procurement): This option follows the standard public works sequence of completing full design and permitting prior to advertising the project for competitive bid, followed by award and construction. While this approach provides the strongest price competition and transparency, it is sequential and time-intensive. Given the current structural condition and the complexity of permitting and design, this process would likely result in significant delays and could cause the project to miss critical seasonal in-water work windows. A delay of this length increases the risk that existing structural deficiencies worsen during the pre-construction period, potentially escalating both safety concerns and overall project scope. The extended timeline presents a material risk to timely stabilization.

Decommissioning and removal of the bridges: This option would involve the permanent removal of the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges, either through dismantling or demolition, followed by debris removal and site restoration. While this approach would eliminate the ongoing structural safety risk and long-term maintenance needs, it would still require extensive permitting, including environmental approvals for in-water work and review related to the bridges' historic status. In addition, removal would result in the permanent loss of significant historic and cultural resources that contribute to tourism and community identity. Depending on site conditions and environmental constraints, demolition and debris management could still be complex and costly, particularly in a regulated river environment.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

Public Works recommends that the Board authorize an emergency procurement exemption under LM 20.200.120(C) due to the urgent life-safety risk, structural instability, and time-sensitive seasonal and permitting constraints associated with the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges. An expedited approach is necessary to engage qualified contractors early, support permitting and constructability, and complete stabilization within limited in-water work windows while reducing risk to public safety and the historic structures.

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

If the Board approves the recommended emergency procurement exemption under LM 20.200.120(C), staff will immediately begin the selection process to retain qualified engineering and construction services for the Currin and Stewart Covered Bridge stabilization project. Consultant selection and contract execution would occur as soon as practicable to allow early initiation of engineering, permitting coordination, and construction planning.

Following contract award, consultants and contractors will begin work on structural evaluation refinement, design development, and coordination with permitting agencies, including in-water work authorization and State Historic Preservation Office review. Construction timing would be aligned with available seasonal work windows, with the goal of initiating stabilization work during the upcoming summer season, subject to permit approvals.

Substantial stabilization outcomes would be expected following completion of the 2026 construction season, contingent on regulatory approvals and final project sequencing.

VI. FOLLOW-UP

If approved, staff will proceed with the selection process to secure engineering, construction, and related services. Resulting contracts will be brought forward for approval in accordance with Lane Manual 20.400. Board or County Administrator authorization is expected due to the estimated project value.

Updates will be provided to the Board or County Administrator as necessary or requested, including key milestones such as contract award, permitting progress, and construction readiness.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

1. Emergency Procurement Authorization Form
2. DOWL Technical Memorandum Stewart and Currin Covered Bridges Cost Estimating

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO: 26-04-28-11

In the Matter of Authorizing Emergency Procurement for the Stabilization of Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges and Delegating Authority to the County Administrator to Sign the Emergency Procurement Authorization Form

WHEREAS, an emergency exists that requires prompt execution of a contract to preserve public funds, property, public safety, and the uninterrupted provision of government services; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recognizes that on November 21, 2025, Lane County Traffic Engineering evaluated the non-operational Currin and Stewart Covered Bridges; and

WHEREAS, based on a structural assessment, determined both bridges pose safety, environmental, and financial risks due to the potential of collapse.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

The authorization of emergency procurement for the stabilization of Currin and Stewart covered bridges and delegation of authority to the County Administrator to sign the Emergency Procurement Authorization Form.

ADOPTED this 28th day of April, 2026.

Ryan Ceniga, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners