



Land Use & Transportation Planning Program  
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## Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Board Room, Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Dehner  
Ryan Farncomb  
Art Graves  
Andrew Holtz  
Talia Jacobson  
Tyson Poskochil  
Rory Renfro  
John Russell (A)  
Chad Tucker  
Susan Watt

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Laura Becker (A)  
Martha Berndt  
Carolyn Briggs  
Jim Couch  
Jessica Ghiglieri (A)  
Greg Olson

STAFF: Kate McQuillan (Transportation Planner), Jon Henrichsen (Bridges Division Manager), Mike Pullen (Communications Office), Ken Huntley (Engineer, Bridges Division), Steve Katko (consultant from CH2M), Bryan Nicholas (consultant from David Evans and Associates).

GUESTS: Rithy Khut, Joel Huffman, Richard Marantz

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm. There was a quorum of members present.

### **2. Approve January 2016 Meeting Minutes**

There were no corrections for the January 2016 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Andrew Holtz moved to approve the January 2016 meeting minutes with the proposed edits. Michael Dehner seconded the motion.

APPROVAL: January 2016 meeting minutes were approved.

### **3. Public Comment**

Rithy Khut, a member of the city of Portland's Bicycle Advisory Committee, shared that there is a current vacancy on the City's committee for a resident east of 82<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Anyone with interest or suggestions can get in touch with Rithy or Roger Gellar (City of Portland's Bicycle Coordinator).

John Russell asked if there is a way to get real time information on Willamette River bridge lifts. Jon Henrichsen, Bridges Manager, replied that yes in fact a new smart phone app is currently in testing phase that would provide real-time alerts of bridge lifts on the four Willamette River draw bridges. A more final version of the app will hopefully be released at the end of this year.

### **4. Staff Report**

Kate thanked the Committee for all their comments on the County's draft rural area Transportation System Plan (TSP). Over the last month, staff met with neighbors from both the west and the east sides of the County. Having the BPCAC's comments and priorities helped with these discussions. County staff is currently writing the draft TSP which will go to the project's Community Advisory Committee at the end of the month.

On a personal note, Kate shared that she's five month pregnant. She anticipates missing the Committee's May meeting, but will focus on the April and June meetings to help transition a temporary staffing scenario for Committee meetings from July through September while she's on maternity leave.

### **5. Chair Report**

Chad asked volunteer time keeper to help keep the agenda flowing. For this meeting, Michael volunteered to be the role of timekeeper.

### **6. Sellwood Bridge Update**

Mike Pullen from Multnomah County Communications Office introduced Steve Katko of CH2M who presented the latest traffic control staging for the Sellwood Bridge replacement project. The main span of the new Sellwood Bridge is expected to open to traffic on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The full span of the new bridge will open in phases from March 1<sup>st</sup> through November of this year as the project team completes the east end of the bridge span as well as the west end intersection with Highway 43. As the project team finishes bridge construction through November, all modes will experience width restrictions through the temporary facilities.

At the west end of the bridge, bicycle and pedestrian access through the cemetery will remain. The current intersection is temporary until northbound Highway 43 traffic can be shifted to the new underpass under the bridge, expected in early summer 2016. The final interchange will then be completed by end of summer 2016, including the new 12-foot sidewalks on the ramps towards fall. Left turns from the west end of the bridge (heading southbound to Lake Oswego)

will be allowed around August 2016. Until then, westbound bridge traffic wanting to head south towards Lake Oswego will need to continue using the current detour of northbound Macadam / Highway 43 to the Taylors Ferry u-turn.

The multi-use path from the bridge to Willamette Park is expected to be completed this April. The path opening was delayed due to finding cultural artifacts during construction. The multi-use path bridge underneath the Sellwood Bridge is anticipated to be completed and open by September.

The east approach of the bridge will experience the most temporary traffic control changes until the final bridge completion. All modes of traffic will be restricted through an approximately 400-foot long section at the east end of the bridge where the old bridge is being torn down to accommodate the full anticipated width of the new bridge. This temporary pinch point includes two 12-foot travel lanes with temporary concrete barriers pinned to the bridge deck on either side. Beyond the southern concrete barrier will be a rebar construction area closed off to all traffic. Beyond the northern concrete barrier, bicyclists and pedestrians will share a 6.5-foot two-way travel lane. The north sidewalk along the main span and east of the construction zone will be fully open to bicyclists and pedestrians. The south sidewalk is not yet built and will be under construction through November. Similarly the new signal at SE 6<sup>th</sup> Ave and Tacoma Street on the east end of the bridge will not be activated until the fall.

Mike shared some upcoming events related to the Sellwood Bridge. On Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, the County is hosting a celebration on the deck of the new bridge from noon to 4pm including music, food vendors, and a parade. The City of Portland's Sunday Parkways is planning a southeast Portland / Milwaukie route on October 2<sup>nd</sup> that will ride over the new Sellwood Bridge. And lastly, the Providence Bridge Pedal will include the new Sellwood Bridge this year.

Questions and comments from the BPCAC regarding the final traffic control phases include:

- Will the bridge lighting be installed before the March 1<sup>st</sup> opening? Staff replied yes, all the permanent lights are already installed on the bridge. At the east end of the bridge where there is still quite a bit of construction, the County will keep the temporary construction lights currently in place.
- Are any extended closures planned for the Springwater Trail underneath the east end of the bridge? None are planned.
- Will there be any river traffic closures planned? None planned at the moment, but possible very short channel closures are possible.
- Could the County consider adding temporary "Bikes in Roadway" (or similar) signage during the March to November traffic control phase when confident cyclists may prefer to use vehicle lane as opposed to the shared bicycle and pedestrian lane? County can look into.
- Some BPCAC members noted the pedestrian-activated button for the crosswalk at the west end interchange is difficult to reach. Staff noted similar concerns heard from community members. Staff will look into relocating the button.

Staff wanted to share with the Committee proposed changes to the final bridge cross-section. The intention for the proposed changes is to slow vehicle traffic. The proposed changes to the final bridge cross-section include narrowing travel lanes from 12-feet to 11-feet, slightly increasing the width of the center stripe, and narrowing the bicycle lanes from 6.5-feet to 5.5 feet but adding 2-foot buffers between bicycle lanes and travel lanes.

Staff specifically asked for the Committee's feedback on staining the bicycle lanes green. Sellwood staff recently used concrete stain on another part of the bridge and was disappointed with the outcome. Staff believes the stain will wear easily and may not be the best surface for cyclists to ride on. Staff can look into using methyl methacrylate (which has a gritty surface better for cycling) but this option hasn't been scoped. Thermoplastic, which is what the City of Portland uses for its green bike boxes, is prohibitively expensive for use along the entire bridge span. Both concrete stains and the methyl methacrylate options would produce a dark green shade of span, different from Portland's "vibrant green" color.

- Members generally felt okay with not using green stain or other green material along the entire bridge span. Members felt that the green markings are excellent for indicating potential conflict areas (like at intersections), but that this would not be necessary in buffered bike lanes.
- With the argument of green markings best used to indicate potential conflict areas, Committee members expressed a desire to explore using green markings at the intersections on either side of the Bridge. County staff agreed to wait until the Bridge intersections near completion to see how and where green markings could be added for bicycle safety. Staff noted that using vibrant green thermoplastic (like the City of Portland) could be a possibility since it would require far less material (and be much less expensive) at the intersections rather than marking the whole bridge.
- Members expressed mild concern that the difference of color between the County's proposed darker colors and the well known Portland vibrant green could be confusing to road users (citing NE Multnomah Blvd in NE Portland which uses brown pavement markings).

## **7. Broadway Bridge Repainting Project Update**

Mike provided a brief update on how the Broadway Bridge Repainting Project is coming along. The north sidewalk of the Broadway Bridge has been closed since January 25<sup>th</sup> to repaint hand rails and will continue to be closed until late February. In late March, the Broadway Bridge will be closed to all motor vehicles for three weeks. The south sidewalk will be closed, but the north sidewalk will be open for bicycle and pedestrian traffic. The project is expected to be completed in April this year.

## **8. Morrison Bridge Deck Replacement Project**

Ken Huntley, Engineer with Multnomah County, and Bryan Nichols from David Evans and Associates shared a project update for the upcoming Morrison Bridge deck replacement which is currently at 60% design. The traffic control plan for this project will be similar to that used in 2012 when the bridge deck was initially installed.

As for the schedule, the project team is hoping to begin construction by late 2016.

Unlike the deck replacement project in 2012, this upcoming project will require replacing mechanical systems underneath the deck. To accommodate the mechanical work as well as maintaining some traffic flow during construction, the bridge will rotate work by quadrants. When either north side quadrant is under construction, the whole north side of the bridge deck (i.e., the current westbound lanes) will be closed to traffic. Similarly, when either of the south side quadrants is under construction, the whole south side of the bridge deck (the current eastbound lanes) will be closed to traffic.

During construction, the side of the bridge open to traffic will have a temporary cross-section of two 12.5-foot travel ones (one eastbound, one westbound), use of the existing sidewalk (on the north side) or the multi-use path (on the south side), and a 4- to 5-foot buffer for bicycle and pedestrian traffic in addition to sidewalk or multi-use path.

The project team is focusing on providing as much information to the bicycling and pedestrian community ahead of time to help plan trips, knowing these closures are not ideal. Staff proposes placing detour signage along the Eastbank Esplanade, the Waterfront, and as far east as SE Hawthorne Blvd. Project staff will rely on bicyclists and pedestrians to redirect themselves for the detour.

Questions and comments from the BPCAC include:

- Is it possible to keep the multi-use path open when the north side of the bridge deck is under construction? Project staff looked into this alternative. Unfortunately, project staff will need to use the space for temporary structures to install the concrete fill. Thus the multi-use path will be completely closed to bicycle and pedestrian traffic when the north side of the deck is under construction.
- Will there be any other Willamette River bridge closures during this project? There is a possibility this project may overlap with the Broadway Bridge Rall Wheel Replacement Project. At this time, there are no known closures for the Hawthorne and Burnside bridges during this timeframe. The primarily winter timeline also helps as it's less likely other construction projects will take place.
- What will be the posted speed on the bridge? The posted speed will remain the current 25mph for the duration of the project.

## **9. Draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan**

Talia Jacobson, a BPCAC committee member, works as the Active Transportation Lead for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). As an ODOT employee, Talia provided an overview of the draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that is out for public comment. Talia recommends Committee members view the online Open House (Kate will resend the link) to review sections of the plan.

The Draft Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is a long range plan with a 25-year vision that serves as a modal plan within the broader Oregon Transportation Plan. This plan was developed to guide transportation policies for all agencies and jurisdictions, not just policies that would affect the statewide transportation only. This plan does not include street design guidelines or prioritized project lists.

Talia encouraged Committee members to review Chapters 3, 4 and 5 to provide specific comments on by February 18, 2016. In particular, strategies surrounding Goal 8 (“Strategic Investment”) may have impacts on project selection criteria for future federal funds awarded through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process.

Some comments and questions from the BPCAC include:

- The policy section regarding “Accessibility and Connectivity” does not mention crosswalks. Crosswalks seem to be mentioned only in the policy section related to safety.
- When discussing school siting policies, there is a lack of discussion regarding who bears the burden of schools sited on the outskirts of a city or town. Schools are pressured to purchase the cheapest land available, often on the edge of a city or town. Then families and tax payers must bear the burden of transportation costs getting kids to and from school.
- Do the equity policies have urban and rural components? Talia replied that the strategies within policies are intended to help both urban and rural communities. If Committee members have comments about specific policy language that sounds “too urban” or “too rural”, please let ODOT project staff know.
- Do the health policies and strategies consider air quality and vehicle emissions? Particularly on the affects of youth and school populations? Talia replied, not so much. Some of the policies and strategies regarding sustainability discuss vehicle emissions, but not from the health perspective. Committee members specifically mentioned the state of Oregon’s weak diesel exhaust standards compared to other states, noting these weaker standards may have an adverse impact on people who walk or bike.

## **Meeting Adjourned**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

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## **Meeting minutes written and submitted by:**

Kate McQuillan, Transportation Planner and BPCAC Staff Liaison

**The next BPCAC meeting is scheduled for:** Wednesday, March 9, 2016 from 6:30-8:30pm, at the Multnomah Building.