



Multnomah County is creating an earthquake-ready downtown river crossing.

BETTER – SAFER – CONNECTED

August 15, 2024

# Community Design Advisory Group

## Meeting 10 Summary

Community Design Advisory Group members heard public comments, additional information from County staff on maintenance costs and bridge proximity to surrounding buildings as well as online survey comments on the Inverted Y tower and Basket Handle Arch. Committee members continued deliberations before reaching a bridge type recommendation. In a 14-2 vote, the committee selected the Inverted Y cable stay as its bridge type recommendation. The committee's recommendation will be presented to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, Sept. 3.

The meeting was held in-person in the David Evans and Associates Willamette Room from 6:00-8:00 p.m. It was live-streamed and recorded.

### ATTENDEES

#### CDAG MEMBERS

Aaron Whelton, Portland State University  
Anthony Jackson, Community Member  
Brian P. Kimura, Japanese American Museum of Oregon  
Carol Gossett, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry  
Erik Swenson, Portland Saturday Market  
Gabe Rahe, Burnside Skatepark  
Guenevere Millius, Sunnyside Neighborhood Association  
Ian Sieren, Community Member  
Jason Halstead, Community Member  
Paddy Tillett, Architect/Design Professional  
Patrick Sullivan, Community Member  
Robert Hastings, Willamette Light Brigade  
Sharon Wood Wortman, Historian  
Susan Lindsay, Buckman Neighborhood Association  
Valerie Schiller, Multnomah County Bike and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee  
Todd DeNeffe, Central Eastside Industrial Council

#### ABSENT

Fred Cooper, Laurelhurst Neighborhood Association & Native American Youth and Family Center  
Jackie Tate, Community Member  
Neil Jensen, Gresham Chamber of Commerce  
Ed Wortman, Community Member

#### STAFF

Jon Henrichsen, Multnomah County  
Megan Neill, Multnomah County  
Emily Miletich, Multnomah County  
Elizabeth Britell, Multnomah County  
Steve Drahota, HDR  
Carol Mayer-Reed, Mayer/Reed  
Cassie Davis, CD Consulting  
Brandy Steffen, JLA Public Involvement  
Tuyen Ta, JLA Public Involvement  
Jen Winslow, JLA Public Involvement

#### ARCHITECT

Keith Brownlie, BEAM Architects

**PUBLIC**

*Members of the public were welcome to observe the meeting as non-participatory attendees:*

Rick Potestio

Adam Zucker



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## SUMMARY

**Brandy Steffen, JLA Public Involvement**, reviewed the agenda and meeting protocols. Three CDAG members, Aaron Whelton, Erik Swenson, and Gwen Millius, joined the meeting remotely.

**Adam Zucker and Rick Potestio**, shared public comments about their bridge type preferences with CDAG members and County staff.

**Adam Zucker** stated: “I am a water resource engineer by training and a neighbor of Fred Cooper. I have come to talk about access to the river. I have been following and know the ramps are not going to happen. I want to add some suggestions for the design team to consider. There are other options for getting to the river in this project. I think there is an access road on Water Ave [right now] that provides a temporary road, and as part of the project, working with the contractor could be an option to be permanent access. There are also great opportunities to make access from 3rd Ave, working with the railroad, and making tunnel access to get to the river. As temperatures get hotter and summer gets longer, the Willamette River is the City’s largest and cheapest cooling center; having a cooling system and providing access to the river is really important to our community. Lastly, the City of Portland is making it much harder and more expensive to develop in the floodplain. As part of that access and improvement, there's a lot of material under the bridge in the overpass that could be used as mitigation to improve access to the river that could probably offset some if not all of your floodplain impacts in this project.”

**Rick Potestio** stated: “I have been following this process for many months. At this critical point, I am not here to call into question the technical, environmental, legal, regulatory data frameworks or any base information that underlies this ambitious multi-year process. My intention is merely to explore a river-centric design with the hope that we might return to the drawing board and think about this once again.

It's my contention that the bridge's primary span should be over the river, where it logically and intuitively belongs. I worry that the casual observer, the tourist, the bridge enthusiast, and most of Portland Public School's third graders learning about bridges will look at the design you choose and wonder if the surveyor incorrectly located the river or if the contractor read the bridge drawings backward. The bridge we build should not evoke comparisons to monsters such as Frankenstein and Godzilla but rather be a harmonious design that inspires pride in our city and values. The bridge should transcend its functional purpose and connect our city and citizens to our history and aspirations for a better future. This bridge should honor the place and traditions of those who inhabited this land for eons, and ultimately, I think this bridge should celebrate the river where all these converge.

I've presented you with two designs in this little document. I've generated a few more, and I reference them this way. But it's important to note that in my designs, I correspond my piers and foundations with those of either of the preferred alternatives. I'm trying to present an idea that does not question the base assumptions of this project. The two represented eliminate the need for gargantuan bascule piers. The two designs challenge the interpretation and application of the height limit regulations with regard to the Westside historic district by exceeding the 75-foot height limitation for a portion of their span. But each design utilizes one structural typology across its entire span, eliminating the current design's



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eccentric loading on piers and complex connections between differing bridge structures. I believe a single, unified structural typology will be better able to withstand and survive the intense and unpredictable forces of a major quake than a hybrid of many disparate structures.”

**Jon Henrichsen, Multnomah County**, provided additional information on graffiti removal costs, weathering steel maintenance and bridge type proximity to Central Eastside buildings and the skyline.

**Megan Neill, Multnomah County**, shared feedback and comments from the Portland Design Commission. Six of the seven design commissioners preferred the cable stay design with five of the seven preferring the Inverted Y Tower.

**Brandy Steffen** read comments from CDAG members Neil Jensen, Fred Cooper and Ed Wortman, who could not attend the meeting. Brandy recapped the last meeting to frame the group’s current conversation around a bridge type recommendation. She reminded the group that consensus as outlined in the charter was 75% agreement; with 16 members present, 12 members were needed to reach that threshold.

**CDAG members** discussed the remaining bridge options. Members shared feedback they heard from the community and in their neighborhoods. They weighed each bridge option’s best features as community representatives. Facilitator Brandy Steffen asked the group for a temperature check to get a sense of where they were heading. During that conversation there was less interest by the group for the remaining arch design. A majority consensus was reached with a final count of 14 of 16 members recommending the Inverted Y Tower. The two members who did not vote for the Inverted Y mentioned the online survey results showed the community’s preference was for an arch design. Those two members also expressed considering cost implications.

While this topic did not apply to the bridge type recommendation, many committee members expressed a desire to connect the bridge with the Eastbank Esplanade and Tom McCall Waterfront Park.

*The meeting recording and materials are available at:*

[www.multco.us/earthquake-ready-burnside-bridge/community-design-advisory-group-meeting-materials](http://www.multco.us/earthquake-ready-burnside-bridge/community-design-advisory-group-meeting-materials).

## DECISIONS

14 of the 16 present CDAG members recommended the Inverted Y Tower.

## NEXT STEPS

Three CDAG representatives will share the group’s recommendation to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners during a briefing on September 3, 2024. The next CDAG meeting will be in November 2024.