



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

BETTER – SAFER – CONNECTED

SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

Community Task Force (CTF) Meeting #17

Meeting information

Project: Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge

Subject: CTF, Meeting #17

Date: Monday, September 21, 2020

Time: 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Location: WebEx Video Conference Call and livestream

Attendees:

CTF Members:

Art Graves, MultCo Bike and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee
Dennis Corwin, Portland Spirit
Ed Wortman, Community Member
Frederick Cooper, Laurelhurst Neighborhood Emergency Team and Laurelhurst Neighborhood Association
Gabe Rahe, Burnside Skate Park
Howie Bierbaum, Portland Saturday Market
Jackie Tate, Community Member
Jane Gordon, University of Oregon
Jennifer Stein, Central City Concern
Marie Dodds, AAA of Oregon
Neil Jensen, Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce
Paul Leitman, Oregon Walks
Peter Englander, Old Town Community Association
Robert McDonald, American Medical Response
Sharon Wood Wortman, Community Member
Stella Funk Butler, Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations
Susan Lindsay, Buckman Community Association
Tesia Eisenberg, Mercy Corps
William Burgel, Portland Freight Committee

Project Team Members:

Megan Neill, Multnomah County
Ian Cannon, Multnomah County
Mike Pullen, Multnomah County

Heather Catron, HDR
Cassie Davis, HDR
Steve Drahota, HDR
Liz Stoppelmann, HDR
Michael Fitzpatrick, HDR
Jeff Heilman, Parametrix
Allison Brown, JLA
Laura Peña, EnviroIssues
Sarah Omlor, EnviroIssues
Patrick Sweeney, PBOT

Apologies: Peter Finley Fry, Central Eastside Industrial Council, Timothy Desper, Portland Rescue Mission



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Summary Notes

This online virtual meeting was held over WebEx and livestreamed to the public via Vbrick. 14 public attendees logged in to view the livestream. A recording of this meeting is available on the [Committee Meeting Materials](#) page on the project website.

In advance of the meeting, the public was invited to submit comments to the Community Task Force (CTF). A comment received in advance of the meeting was shared with the CTF and acknowledged in the meeting during the public comment period.

This summary includes the nature and dialogue of the meeting, including questions and comments submitted by CTF members through the WebEx chat function.

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND HOUSEKEEPING

Allison Brown, JLA, welcomed everyone to the meeting, went over the virtual meeting protocols and took roll call. She acknowledged that three members were retiring from the committee:

- Cameron Hunt, Portland Spirit
- Dan Lenzen, Old Town Community Association
- Kiley Wilson, Portland Business Alliance

Three new members were joining:

- Dennis Corwin, Portland Spirit
- Jane Gordon, University of Oregon
- Peter Englander, Old Town Community Association

PUBLIC COMMENT

Allison shared a written comment submitted prior to the meeting. She reminded the group that it was also emailed to them before the meeting. The public comment was provided by John Czarnecki and urged the committee to recommend the retrofit option to save the historic bridge. If the retrofit wasn't chosen, John suggested that the towers and railings be saved and incorporated into the long span bascule option.

RECOMMENDED PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE REVIEW

Review summer outreach feedback

Mike Pullen, Multnomah County, told the committee about the various outreach activities over the summer and what they had heard from the public. He shared that the project team held over 70 briefings, 19 conversations with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) organizations, and hosted an online open house and survey among other activities. The online open house had over 25,000 visitors and over 6,800 survey responses. The online open house and survey were translated into six different languages: Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian.





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The survey results showed that there was strong consensus with the CTF's recommendations. 88% of respondents agreed with the CTF's recommendation of the Replacement Long Span and 84% agreed with a full bridge closure during construction. Top comment themes from the survey's open-ended questions were:

- Replacement Long Span:
 - Support cost savings
 - Support fewer overall impacts
 - Safest and most seismically resilient
 - Support preservation of Skatepark
 - Concerns with the aesthetics of the conceptual renderings
 - Concerns with losing historic resources

- Full Bridge Closure:
 - Support cost savings
 - Support construction time savings
 - Support preservation of Skatepark
 - Support fewer environmental impacts
 - Concerns with traffic impacts, especially for motor vehicles
 - Concerns with overburdening neighboring bridges

Mike gave a shout out to Gabe Rahe, Burnside Skatepark, for the amount of survey responses generated from the Skatepark's social media outreach. Gabe explained that it started as one organic post which was then shared by many other pages. The Skatepark has followers all over the world which resulted in survey responses from many different areas.

Art Graves, MultCo Bike and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee, asked if the renderings of the lift towers had changed since the last meeting. He noted that the towers and bases looked bigger and wondered if that was a result of additional information.

- Cassie Davis, HDR, responded that there hadn't been major changes and that the renderings are still just examples and not indicative of final design. She said that she would check previous materials.
- Steve Drahota, HDR, added that there are 10-15 different concepts within the family of long span alternatives and the bridge depicted in the renderings is just one of those concepts. If the image had been updated, it is not reflective of additional information at this point.

Peter Englander, Old Town Community Association, commented that the image doesn't show the Old Town sign and it would be great if future views would include the sign.

Confirm/Modify recommendation:





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Allison reviewed the voting procedure using the thumbs up, thumbs down, or in the middle method. Allison noted that the voting process would be a little different tonight because of the transition between the new and old CTF members. The vote would not include the new members. She reminded the group that they were not chartered to allow voting by proxy, but two of the members who were unable to attend sent their votes to the project team prior to the meeting.

Susan Lindsay, Buckman Community Association, asked about the recommendations made by John Czarnecki in the public comment.

- Mike shared that the comment asked that if the retrofit option wasn't possible, then the long span should mirror the current bridge's elements as much as possible.
- Susan noted that many CTF members initially supported the retrofit option before all the facts were known about cost and other impacts, but that she echoed this public comment's request to maintain historic elements and try to preserve the openness of the current bridge.
- Stella Funk Butler, Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations, agreed. She said that restoring or finding a place for the towers either on the bridge or in Waterfront Park would be nice.

Ed Wortman, community member, expressed his interest in the letter and asked if it would be given a formal response.

- Mike commented that he thought the letter should be treated as a comment for the CTF to consider. He also added that the other 6,000+ comments received during the outreach phase did not receive individual responses and that he wasn't planning to provide a formal response to this letter.
- Ed agreed with Mike and noted that the letter didn't seem to be representing a group in an official capacity, but rather a personal opinion.

Peter Englander added that the Old Town Community Association Land Use Committee shared many of the same concerns around the impacts to views and hoped that the team would consider ways to keep them as unobstructed as possible for pedestrians.

Allison asked for a CTF member to put forth a recommendation for the Preferred Alternative. The official vote is as follows:

- Robert McDonald: I put forth the Replacement Long Span option as the Preferred Alternative.
- Art Graves: In the middle
- Ed Wortman: Support
- Fred Cooper: Support
- Gabe Rahe: Support
- Howie Bierbaum: Support
- Jackie Tate: Support
- Paul Leitman: Support



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- Jennifer Stein: Support
- Robert McDonald: Support
- Marie Dodds: Support
- Peter Finley Fry (Not present): Support
- Sharon Wood Wortman: Support
- Stella Funk Butler: Support
- Susan Lindsay: Support
- Tesia Eisenberg: Support
- Timothy Desper (Not present): Support
- Bill Burgel: Support
- Neil Jensen: Support

The recommended bridge alternative is the Replacement: Long span with 17 votes in support and 1 vote in the middle. The official vote on the traffic option during construction is as follows:

- Paul: I move to support the full closure during construction.
- Art: Support
- Ed: Support
- Fred: Support
- Gabe: Support
- Howie: Support
- Jackie: Support
- Paul: Support
- Jennifer: Support
- Marie: Support
- Neil: Support
- Peter Finley Fry (Not present): Support
- Sharon: Support
- Stella: Support
- Susan: Support
- Tesia: Support
- Timothy (Not present): Support
- Bill: Support

The recommended traffic option during construction is a full bridge closure with 17 votes in support.

Allison said that the recommendations would be presented alongside members' previous comments and asked the committee for two volunteers to attend the Policy Group meeting on October 2nd and present



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the official recommendation. Susan Lindsay and Neil Jensen offered to present to the Policy Group and Bill Burgel offered to be a backup.

MOMENT OF RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

After the official vote the project team took a moment to thank the CTF for their work.

Megan Neill and Ian Cannon, Multnomah County, thanked the group for their extensive work. Ian noted that this was the 17th meeting and member's continued participation showed real commitment. He shared that he's worked on several bridge projects with the County and has found that when you provide a diverse group of people with good information it really shows and results in a good recommendation.

Mike added that working with such a great group has helped make his job easy.

Heather, Cassie, and Steve, HDR, all agreed and thanked everyone for their collaboration and open minds and that they were excited for the next phase of work.

KICKOFF BRIDGE TYPE SELECTION PHASE

Overview

Steve shared the overall project timeline and welcomed everyone to the next phase of the project: Type Selection. He explained that the Type Selection Phase is embedded within the Environmental Review for this project. The end of these two phases will be marked by an Approved Preferred Alternative as well as approval of the bridge type details in 2021. The purpose of the Type Selection Phase is to provide enough design information so the NEPA permits can be secured in the second half of 2021. Over the course of the next six months, the CTF will work to narrow down all of the Long Span "form" concepts with the help of preliminary Visual Design Guidelines from the Urban Design and Aesthetics Working Group (UDAWG) and have an approved bridge type ready by June of 2021. Steve showed the group several example photos of different types of long span bridges around the country and reviewed the differences between the cable stayed, tied arch, and truss super structure bridge types as well as lift and bascule movable spans. Steve also reminded the group that aesthetic decisions would come after Type Selection during the Final Design phase.

- Bill Burgel, Portland Freight Committee, asked what the navigational clearance needs to be for a vertical lift.
 - Steve said that they would need 147 feet of clearance based on a cruise ship that came through the area several years ago.
 - Bill asked if the Coast Guard mandated that.
 - Steve answered that the project team conducted a survey of bridge operators asking about navigational clearance and sent it to the Coast Guard for confirmation.
- Gabe asked about the height of the current bridge towers.



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- Steve said that they are two stories high which is about 30 feet.
- Gabe asked about the height of the deck.
- Steve said that it's about 70 feet above the water.
- Gabe noted that a new Long Span bridge would essentially be adding 100 feet of structure height to the current bridge. He asked if that height would be comparable to The Yard building.
- Mike responded that the Yard building is probably closer to 200 feet tall starting from the bridge deck.
- Steve replied that those proportions would be provided in more detail in the next few meetings.
- Neil noted that the planned height would work for the current river traffic needs but they might change in the future.
- Peter Englander asked how many UDAWG meetings there will be.
 - Mike said that the UDAWG will meet about nine times.
- Art asked about the size of the piers.
 - Steve said that remains to be seen based on the type of bridge lift and how the bike and pedestrian paths connect around it. These decisions will impact the weight of the bridge and the size of the piers.
- Bill asked if the team was taking sea level rise into account or if that was considered trivial.
 - Steve responded that it was not trivial, and it is being considered. There is a study that shows about a 10-foot rise in the next decade.
- Fred shared that he had been looking for other examples of bascules in the US and there aren't very many modern examples. The most recent ones seem to be a "twin double leaf" design. He also shared concern that the weight of the wide Burnside deck will limit bascule options.
 - Steve said that the South Park Bridge in Seattle is a good recent bascule example. The current Burnside Bridge has one of the longest bascule spans in the world. Making it longer might not make sense. There are challenges with splitting bascule leaves because they require more mechanical elements and maintenance and they're heavier. There might be more drawbacks, but there will be more information about all these options at future meetings.
 - Fred shared that it seems like the bascule is becoming less viable but hoped that it is still an option.

Heather shared the decision-making process flow chart. She said the process would be the same as during the Preferred Alternative phase. The CTF will continue making recommendations to be approved by the Policy Group. The CTF will receive input from the public, the project team, and technical advice from the various working groups. The two major recommendations to the Policy Group during Type Selection will be around the range of bridge types and evaluation criteria and ultimately, a recommendation for the bridge type itself.



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Steve explained that the purpose of the working groups is to help the CTF make their decision more easily by providing guidelines and technical information. An overview of the working groups and the type of supporting information they will provide is available on slide 21 of the presentation. Steve also said that the technical team expects there to be some differences in seismic resiliency, constructability, natural resources and permitting between the bridge types which will require weighing those options against criteria and measures, similar to the Preferred Alternative process. Each of the associated working groups will provide information about the comparisons to the CTF.

- Jane asked if historic preservation falls under the urban design group or only permitting.
 - Steve said it falls under both and that there are also ongoing conversations with the City and Historic Landmarks and Design Commissions in addition to the working groups.
 - Jeff Heilman, Parametrix, added that the project team will coordinate with and get input from the State Historic Preservation Office.

Steve shared that the UDAWG will be thinking about how to incorporate the new bridge into the urban and historical context of where it sits. The roster includes members representing community interests, agency perspectives, and design professionals.

Heather explained that the CTF will go through a similar process to get to a preferred bridge type, starting with criteria and measures development, deciding on a range of feasible options, and going through an evaluation and screening process before finally recommending a preferred bridge type. Cassie told members that they are welcome to attend working group meetings. She will be following up with a virtual sign-up sheet for the various groups. The first UDAWG meeting will be September 29, 2020 from 1-3 p.m.

Workplan

Heather explained that the CTF will work to finalize evaluation criteria and measures as well as a range of feasible bridge types by December. That information will be shared with the public in early 2021. The CTF will reconvene in March to hear about the public feedback and will work to have a recommended bridge type in April. That recommendation will go out for public input in May and will be finalized by the CTF and Policy Group in June. Some meeting dates may shift around the holidays.

Charter

Allison shared a track changed version of the charter and reviewed the differences for Type Selection phase. She said this phase will be shorter than the last, but the goals are similar and include developing evaluation criteria and weightings. She reviewed the typical meeting times, meeting notes, the media policy, and conflict of interest sections. Mike will be reaching out to the new members to review the conflict of interest training.



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Typically, the project team would ask for each member to sign the charter, but because of the virtual meeting format, Allison asked for each member to acknowledge their approval with a thumbs up. All members approved the charter.

THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS

Allison congratulated the group on a new phase of the project and wished them a good evening.

Cassie noted that the next meeting invite has been sent out for October 26.

Multnomah County Department of Community Services,
Transportation Division-Bridges
Mike Pullen, Multnomah County Communications Office
mikej.pullen@multco.us
1403 SE Water Ave
Portland OR 97214

Date: 21 September 2020

C: Burnside Bridge Community Task Force

Re: Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project

Dear Mr. Pullen:

This written testimony strongly supports making the Willamette River crossing earthquake ready, yet strongly objects to destruction of the Burnside Bridge as the primary means by which this critical task of readiness and safety should be accomplished.

Introduction

I respectfully submit that removing constituent historic bridge elements runs counter to the intent of Title 33, Section 445.010:

"Historic preservation beautifies the city, promotes the city's economic health, and helps to preserve and enhance the value of historic properties."

The Burnside Bridge has been recognized by the County, trained scholars, the City, the State and the Federal Government as significant enough to warrant preservation and protection. More specifically, the bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its engineering, and for its role in Portland's political history.

The existing Bridge has other value beyond that easily measured by most economic models. Connections to ideas of the celebratory "City Beautiful Movement" are mentioned in both the National Register Nomination and in other publications. The Central Library, The Skidmore Fountain, The Fireman's Memorial, the Washington Park Reservoirs as initiated in the Olmstead Plan, and numerous other structures are among Portland's thus celebrated public works. Architectural elements of the bridge also celebrate the importance of transition from the east to the west sides of the city, indeed from the Oregon Coast to Mount Hood. The Bridge also marks Portland's East-West and North-South development. It is the historic and current Center.

The prime Location in the city, a physical scale and character that encourages people using multiple means of travel and aesthetic connection with other structures typifying ideas intended to beautify public works in the city with sympathetic architectural expression all make the Burnside Bridge essential to the unique character of Portland life.

The bridge itself refers directly to its view from the river and its relationship to the banks. The meaning we bring to its character is dependent not only on its artfully analogous qualities, but by their use.

I propose two alternatives to destroying the Burnside Bridge:

- *Implement Enhanced Seismic Retrofit* of the existing Burnside Bridge.
- *Implement the Long-Span Bascule option* for the Burnside Bridge, saving the existing control house and piers and employing the shape, material, character and architectural detail of the guardrails and related elements.

Historic preservation promotes genuine sustainability. It brings the valuable past into the present and supports its integration with future development.

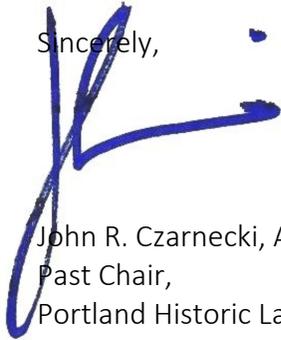
The following points may inform the development team's decision regarding the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project:

- *The bridge structure has not lost its architectural integrity.*
Even if partially demolished, the exterior can be repaired by understanding physical and photographic evidence of its original character and making strictly compatible improvements.
- *The comprehensively measured cost of demolition is outweighed by the economic benefits of historic conservation that support genuine comprehensive sustainability.*
Included are costs arising from energy consumption required for demolition and new construction. Also included are the long-term costs of an increased carbon footprint and the loss of embodied energy.
- *The value of the Burnside Bridge can transcend its individual characteristics*
With destruction of the Burnside Bridge, an essential element of understanding Portland's history and current useful significance through its interrelated resources is at risk. The structure consciously ties the aesthetic and physical experience of public amenities to the celebration of Portland's character. Public purpose will be well served by maintaining the Burnside Bridge.

We should treat historic resources as we would any other irreplaceable resources. We should understand their extent and qualities, conserve them, and use them wisely to enhance our future environment. We respectfully ask that “Earthquake Ready” proposals requiring demolition of the historic Burnside Bridge not be implemented. Please ensure that the bridge and its context continue to have value worthy of wise conservation and continued use.

Thank you for your stewardship and forward thinking on behalf of us all.

Sincerely,



John R. Czarnecki, AIA
Past Chair,
Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

REFERENCES:

- “National Register of Historic Places Registration Form-Burnside Bridge, Portland Oregon”
#12000931 National Park Service, US Department of the Interior 2012
- “Images of America-Bridges of Portland” by Ray Bottenberg- Arcadia Publishing, 2007
- “The Portland Bridge Book” by Sharon Wood Wortman with Ed Wortman – Urban Adventure Press 2006
- “Measuring Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation–A Report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation”
by Donovan Rypkema, Caroline Chong, Randall Mason PhD et al – U. of Pennsylvania 2011

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BURNSIDE BRIDGE



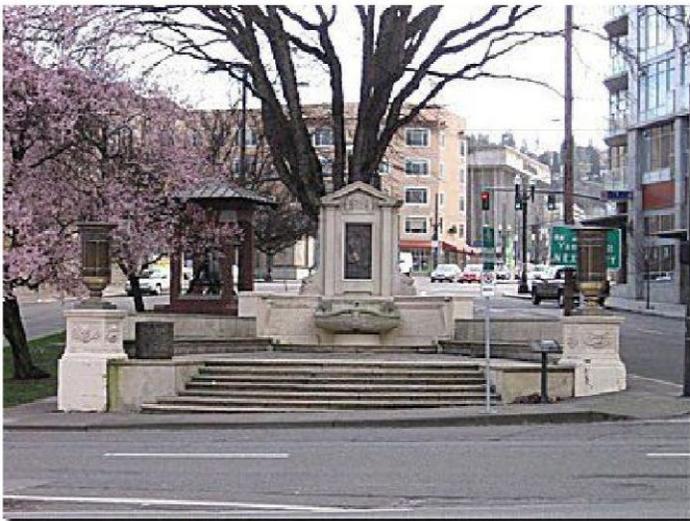
WASHINGTON PARK RESERVOIR



BURNSIDE BRIDGE



PIONEER COURTHOUSE



FIREMEN'S MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN
RELATED PUBLIC STRUCTURES



SKIDMORE FOUNTAIN



BURNSIDE BRIDGE



BURNSIDE BRIDGE