

[View this email in your browser](#)**Better. Safer.
Connected.**

Board approves design option for future Burnside Bridge

Multnomah County, Ore. (September 12, 2024) — At its board meeting Thursday, Sept. 12, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution to move forward with the inverted Y design option for the future look of the new Burnside Bridge. The new bridge will deliver significant value for all users. At 17 feet, the new Burnside Bridge will have the largest bike and pedestrian space of all downtown Portland bridges.

This marks a historic milestone for the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project which began in 2016.



(Rendering of the Inverted Y bridge design for the east approach of the Burnside Bridge)

"This is an iconic, long-lasting decision for our community and a major milestone for this critical project," Chair Jessica Vega Pederson said. "I want to thank the overwhelming number of people who've joined this process and helped us take this next important step. Portland is shaped by our bridges and your energy met this moment."

The inverted Y design is a triangular-shaped cable stay tower that extends to a single column. The design will be on the east side of the bridge, serving as a gateway in and out of downtown Portland. The cables will cascade from the tower down to the bridge creating a cohesive transition from the east side to the remainder of the bridge. For a look at how the inverted Y will fit into the urban landscape, you can watch this [video](#).

"Deciding on a safe, sustainable bridge design is a critical decision of our Board," Commissioner Lori Stegmann said. "I appreciate the members of the public who took time to share their thoughts through the public survey, and the dedication of the CDAG and the effort they put into their informed decision. I supported the inverted Y design because of the importance of having a visual icon in the event that our community becomes unrecognizable during a catastrophic event and the lower maintenance costs in the long-term."

"Like Commissioner Stegmann, I look at bridges everywhere I go," Commissioner Sharon Meieran said. "They stand out, they do mean something. This bridge project has spanned my career on the Board and I am proud of the result."

"This bridge matters so much for our future safety and prosperity," Commissioner Jesse Beason

said. "That's why thousands of residents weighed in on what they hope for the new Burnside Bridge—and 20 volunteers from all walks of life spent hours diving into the details. No matter what my eyes may prefer, I have not studied bridge design for years nor spent months in meetings discussing the intricacies and debating the choices. This is why we ask the experts and volunteers to advise us. And I am excited to follow their advice."

"I'm supportive of moving forward with the recommended design because it is much needed infrastructure, and the design meets the most important criterion which is that it be earthquake resilient," Commissioner Julia Brim-Edwards said. "As an eastsider who has worked on the west side and who crosses the river often on a daily basis, this will be a vital transportation link between the east and west side of our County. I'll continue to monitor, engage and push for aggressive cost management and control, so we deliver this essential life line in a cost-efficient way for the community."

Commissioners weighed a number of data points before the vote: the project's public survey results, the Community Design Advisory Group's recommendation and the County staff recommendation.

On September 3, during a Board briefing, several Community Design Advisory Group members presented its bridge type recommendation (the inverted Y) and dissenting opinion to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners alongside project team members who presented an overview of the public survey data. This was an opportunity for the Board to learn about all of the project's extensive public outreach this summer and feedback the project team heard from the community.

On Thursday, Sept. 12 at the County Board meeting, Transportation Division Director Jon Henriksen presented the staff recommendation, which aligned with the recommendation from the Community Design Advisory Group.

Throughout the last year, the project worked to build a trusting relationship with the Community Design Advisory Group. Part of that trust is shared decision-making. The County provided the group with all information and technical expertise they requested to make an informed decision. Out of respect for that relationship and the public involvement process, the project supported the committee's recommendation.

[Watch animation of inverted Y](#)

Extensive community participation in summer outreach campaign

Thank you to everyone who participated in the online survey and summer outreach events!



(Photo collage of summer outreach activities)

This summer, the project launched an online survey, which asked for community input on the future look of the new Burnside Bridge. The County considered three cable stay and three tied arch options of various sizes for the east side of the bridge. Before taking the survey, the public had the opportunity to learn about all of the bridge type options by using interactive graphics and watching 3D videos that simulate the experience of being on and near the bridge. The survey closed July

During the input period, the County hosted several events to get the community involved and encourage participation in the project's online survey. Events included, A Night Out with the Burnside Bridge Team at OMSI. This special event gave the community an opportunity to hear from project team members and community representatives in an interactive live panel discussion. Guests enjoyed refreshments while learning about the project and design options for the future Burnside Bridge. The project also hosted Breakfast on the Bridge. The community enjoyed coffee and donuts while learning about the bridge design options from the project team. Ipads were on hand for those who wanted to take the survey on site. Throughout the outreach period, the County hosted two live webinars from the operator house on the Burnside Bridge. This gave the community a virtual opportunity to ask questions of project leaders.

In addition to briefings with multiple community organizations, focus groups were conducted with non-English speaking and underserved communities including Latinx, Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Chinese, Black/African American, Native American, Japanese, Arabic and Somali. At each focus group, participants were provided an overview of the project and design options and were encouraged to ask questions and share feedback about design preferences. That feedback was included in the overall survey data.

The County received more than 20,000 survey responses during the input period. Overall, the summer outreach campaign reached more than 150,000 people through press releases, news coverage, newsletters, emails and social media.

For a full look at all of the summer outreach events, [visit here](#). To learn more about what we heard in the Summer Outreach Summary, [visit here](#).

Educating our youth, EQRB facilitates iUrban Teen event at the PCC campus

On July 19, the project team hosted an educational event to get students involved and interested in civil engineering and the construction trades. The team partnered with iUrban Teen, a nationally recognized program that provides career-focused education to historically underrepresented teens.

The event, held at the Portland Community College Sylvania campus in southeast Portland, featured a hands-on activity where students explored the technical and scientific effects of earthquakes in our region. The team demonstrated the impacts of liquefaction during an earthquake, offering students an understanding of the challenges and needs involved in building a resilient Burnside Bridge.

In addition to learning about the project, students were introduced to various construction techniques and design concepts, giving them a glimpse into the complexities of civil engineering.



(Project team member provides a live demo of liquefaction)

Stay involved

Public participation is an essential part of a successful project. There are many ways to follow the project and stay engaged. We encourage you to regularly check the [website](#), [sign-up](#) for newsletters or [watch Community Design Advisory Group meetings](#).

If you would like the project team to brief your organization, or you would like to book an appointment during their office hours, please submit a request to: burnsidebridge@multco.us.

Get the newsletter

In the News!

[Oregonian](#): “**Multnomah County commissioners greenlight design for \$900M-plus earthquake-ready Burnside Bridge**” quotes Chair Jessica Vega Pederson, Commissioner Lori Stegmann and Commissioner Sharon Meieran; cites Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Portland Tribune](#): “**Name that shape: Inverted-Y design approved for Burnside Bridge replacement**” quotes Chair Jessica Vega Pederson, Commissioner Sharon Meieran and Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; cites Commissioner Lori Stegmann; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Daily Journal of Commerce](#): “**Right-of-way acquisition to start for Burnside Bridge replacement project**” quotes Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Bike Portland](#): “**Good news: County will reconsider connection to Esplanade from new Burnside Bridge**” quotes Chair Jessica Vega Pederson; cites Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[1190 KEX](#): “**Design Style Selected For New Burnside Bridge**” republishes County Communications release.

[Jam'n 107.5](#): “**Design Style Selected For New Burnside Bridge**” republishes County Communications release.

[KATU](#): “**Multnomah commissioners select inverted-Y design for new Burnside Bridge**” references the Board of County Commissioners.

[KOIN](#): “**Inverted-Y design approved for Burnside Bridge replacement despite public opinion**” quotes Commissioner Julia Brim-Edwards and Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[KPTV](#): “**Multnomah Co. Board approves 'inverted Y' design for Burnside Bridge replacement**” quotes Chair Jessica Vega Pederson, Commissioner Lori Stegmann, Commissioner Sharon Meieran, Commissioner Jesse Beason and Commissioner Julia Brim-Edwards; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[KGW](#): “**Replacement Burnside Bridge will use 'inverted Y' cable-stayed design**” quotes Commissioner Lori Stegmann and Transportation Division Director Jon Henrichsen; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Portland Tribune](#): “**Multnomah County announces Homelessness Resource Center in Gresham**” quotes Chair Jessica Vega Pederson and Commissioner Lori Stegmann; references the Board of County Commissioners and the Joint Office of Homeless Services.

[KPTV](#): “**New Design for Burnside Bridge decided**” features Communications' Sarah Hurwitz

[The Registry](#): “**Portland's New Burnside Bridge May Feature Inverted-Y Design**” quotes Communications' Sarah Hurwitz.

[DJC Oregon](#): “**Group recommends inverted-Y design for new Burnside Bridge**” quotes Communications' Sarah Hurwitz; references Multnomah County.

[Oregonian](#): “**New Burnside Bridge should 'look like no other' Portland span, committee says**” cites Multnomah County; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Portland Business Journal](#): “**Burnside Bridge committee selects design to replace 98-year-old span**” cites Multnomah County; references the Board of County Commissioners.

[Oregonian](#): “**New Burnside Bridge should 'look like no other' Portland span, committee says**”

[BikePortland](#): “**New Burnside Bridge won't connect to Eastbank Esplanade**”

[Oregon Artswatch](#): “**The new Burnside Bridge: Options and choices**”

[KOIN](#): “**Burnside Bridge earthquake-ready design survey closes Wednesday**”

[iHeart Radio](#): “**Burnside Bridge Survey Near End**”

[DJC Oregon](#): “**\$895 million project enters permitting process**”

FUN FACT:

Did you know how Burnside Bridge got its name? In the mid-1860's, Captain John Couch, who owned property from Ankeny to Kearney in downtown Portland, named his streets by letters of the alphabet, A Street, B Street, C Street, etc. In 1891, the streets were renamed with the names of prominent Portlanders with "B" Street becoming Burnside Street to honor Vermont native Dan Wyman Burnside. Burnside was a businessman who made his way to Portland in 1851 via the California gold rush. He started a successful flour business in Portland, served on the Portland City Council and volunteered as a firefighter. When the Burnside Bridge was built, it took on the streets namesake.

(Source: Historic American Engineering Record. Burnside Bridge: Willamette River Bridges Recording Project, Spanning the Willamette River at Burnside Street, Portland, OR. U.S. Dept. of Interior, National Park Service.)



(Image courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)



Copyright © 2024 Multnomah County Attn: EQRB, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

