EARTHQUAKE READY BURNSIDE BRIDGE

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

BETTER – SAFER – CONNECTED

October 2, 2020

Policy Group Meeting #7

Meeting information

Project:	Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge
Subject:	Policy Group, Meeting #7
Date:	Friday, October 02, 2020
Time:	10:00 a.m. to Noon
Location:	WebEx Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Policy Group Members:

Co-Chair ir Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County Chair
Co-Chair Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County Commissioner
Chris Warner, City of Portland
Councilor Cate Arnold, City of Beaverton
Interim Mayor Karylinn Echols, City of Gresham
Steve Witter on behalf of Doug Kelsey, TriMet
Grace Stratton, U.S. Senator Wyden's Office
Kari Herinckx, U.S. Senator Merkley's Office
Justin Douglas, Prosper Portland
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1
Liv Brumfield, U.S. Representative Blumenauer's Office
Al Bannan, U.S. Representative Bonamici's Office
Councilor Craig Dirksen, Oregon Metro
Representative Barbara Smith Warner, OR State Legislature
Phil Ditzler, FHWA Oregon

Additional Invites:

Susan Lindsay, Community Task Force Representative

Project Team Members:

Megan Neill, MultCo
Mike Pullen, MultCo
Heather Catron, HDR
Steve Drahota, HDR
Cassie Davis, HDR
Jeff Heilman, Parametrix
Allison Brown, JLA
Laura Peña, EnviroIssues
Sarah Omlor, EnviroIssues

Apologies:

Policy Group Members:

Senator Kathleen Taylor, OR State Legislature

Summary Notes

This online virtual meeting was held over WebEx and livestreamed to the public. Seven 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 Policy Group (PG). One letter received in advance of the meeting was shared with the PG 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 PG members through the WebEx chat function.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Allison Brown, JLA, welcomed everyone to the meeting, went over the virtual meeting protocols, took roll call and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Councilor Cate Arnold, City of Beaverton, Interim Mayor Karylinn Echols, City of Gresham, and Councilor Craig Dirksen, Oregon Metro all mentioned their upcoming retirements and that this would likely be their last PG meeting.

OPENING REMARKS

Chair Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County, welcomed participants to the first virtual PG meeting. She noted that much had changed over the past year, including the onset of a global pandemic, but the project team had continued to make steady progress on this project to identify a Preferred Alternative (PA) with public support.

Co-Chair Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County, seconded Kafoury's remarks and thanked everyone for their continued participation. She emphasized the importance of preparing the region for a disaster that could be even more impactful than the current pandemic. She thanked Councilor Craig Dirksen, Councilor Cate Arnold, and Interim Mayor Karylinn Echols for their input and involvement up to this point and wished them well in their retirement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brown noted a written public comment that had been submitted for consideration prior to the meeting from the Portland City Club Earthquake Resiliency Advocacy Committee expressing their support for the Replacement Long Span Alternative because of its high seismic resiliency, lower cost, and shorter construction time when coupled with a full bridge closure during construction. This was the only comment received and was distributed to members via email and will be available online on the County's webpage (attached to this meeting summary).

PROJECT UPDATE

Megan Neill, Multnomah County's project manager, reviewed the project timeline and range of alternatives. She noted that the project was currently halfway through the Environmental Review phase and that the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is on track to be published in early 2021. The bridge Type Selection phase is also starting this fall and will happen concurrently with the remainder of the Environmental Review phase. The PA will be updated with the recommended bridge type information in the fall of 2021.

Neill reminded the group that the Type Selection phase is happening concurrently in order to meet the new federal permitting timeline requirements as part of the current presidential administration's One Federal Decision order. After the EIS is finalized, the project will move into final design in 2022. The project is currently funded through the design phase by way of the County's Vehicle Registration Fee and is working to identify additional funding for construction. She also noted that the County recently completed a solicitation for the Owner's Representative team for the project and will be moving forward with David Evans and Associates.

Neill reviewed the PG's decision from their last meeting to remove the high fixed bridge alternative from consideration because of its high cost and disruption to connectivity and businesses. The four remaining alternatives were an Enhanced Seismic Retrofit, Replacement Short Span, Replacement Long Span, and a Replacement with a Couch Extension. The PG had also approved two construction options for further study: a full bridge closure during construction or a temporary movable bridge, which would have one vehicle lane in each direction as well as sidewalks and a bike lane in each direction.

COMMUNITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION REVIEW AND POLICY GROUP APPROVAL

Review Preferred Bridge Alternative

Mike Pullen, Multnomah County, reviewed the PA: Replacement Long Span. He noted that a long span bridge includes many possible structure types including a tied arch or cable-stayed superstructure as well as a bascule or lift option for the movable span. These decisions will be part of the Type Selection phase.

Pullen explained that the Long Span option was the best alternative for seismic resiliency. There are areas on either side of the Willamette River where the soils are likely to liquify during an earthquake. The Long Span alternative requires less support columns in this unstable soil and minimizes the amount of work it will take to build a stable bridge. The other three alternatives require many more columns in this area. Slide 13 shows the total number of columns in unstable soil for each of the alternatives.

Pullen reviewed some of the views of the alternatives looking east from Waterfront Park on slide 14. The Long Span option requires fewer columns allowing for much more open space. On the east side, the Long Span allows for the preservation of the Burnside Skatepark. Pullen reminded the group that a

member of the Skatepark's Board of Directors is represented on the CTF and strongly supports the Long Span.

The Long Span alternative will also have improved safety for all modes of transportation because of the crash-worthy barrier that would be built in with the superstructure. The Long Span, along with the other replacement options, will have a wider cross section in the middle of the bridge than what currently exists. This will allow 20 feet on either side for wider sidewalks and bike lanes.

Pullen recognized that the Long Span alternative requires a superstructure above the bridge to support the longer spans between columns. This will create new views and impact some current views that mean a lot to people. Of note, the views of the Portland, Oregon sign on the west side would be impacted primarily for drivers crossing the bridge. Views from the bike lanes or sidewalks on the north side of the bridge are not likely to change as much. The CTF has asked the project team to consider impacts to views carefully during the Type Selection phase.

Pullen summarized the reasons for the CTF's support of the Replacement Long Span alternative:

- Best for seismic resiliency
- Least cost alternative ($825 million compared to $950 million)
- Enhances/preserves community resources
- Improved safety for bicyclists, pedestrians and other users
- Least impacts to natural resources
- Explore ways to mitigate the Long Span's impacts on views

Review Preferred Traffic Option During Construction

Pullen reviewed the options for managing traffic during construction: a full bridge closure or construction of a temporary moveable bridge. He commented that during the Sellwood Bridge project, the team was able to use parts of the old bridge for the temporary bridge to save costs. That is not possible for the Burnside Bridge. The CTF recommended a full bridge closure with all modes of transportation detoured to neighboring bridges citing:

- Least cost – the temporary bridge would add $90 million to the project cost
- Shortest construction duration – the temporary bridge would add 1.5 to 2 years to construction duration
- Least in-water construction which reduces impacts to natural resources

Review Community Feedback

Pullen reviewed the summer public outreach efforts. He said that there was much higher engagement this year through increased news coverage, the online open house, project briefings, videos, social

media, and partnering with the Community Engagement Liaison Program. The project team held over 70 briefings, including 19 groups representing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion interests. The online open house saw more than 25,000 unique visitors and received nearly 7,000 survey responses including 355 surveys taken in languages other than English. The project team also sent out a printed mailer to nearly 42,000 addresses near the project area. Additional outreach methods are included on slide 22.

Results from the surveys showed that 88% of respondents agreed with the Replacement Long Span as the Preferred Alternative and 84% agreed that closing the bridge during construction was the right choice.

- Kafoury asked if there will be lights on the bridge.
    - Pullen responded that there will be.

Pullen thanked the Public Involvement team, including HDR, EnviroIssues and the CEL Program for their engagement efforts. He also thanked the CTF and particularly the Burnside Skatepark for sharing the online open house and survey with their communities, which drew a lot of participation to the site. Top themes from those commenting on the Replacement Long Span included:

- Support for cost savings
- Support for having the fewest overall impacts
- Support for increased safety and seismic resilience
- Support for preservation of Skatepark
- Concerns with the aesthetics of the conceptual renderings
- Concerns with losing historic resources

Top themes from those commenting on the full bridge closure included:

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

Listen to CTF Comments

Susan Lindsay, Community Task Force Representative, shared that the CTF includes members who represent about 20 different groups and communities. She began by noting that the temporary bridge option was never a front runner for the CTF. Members are dedicated to having an earthquake ready crossing as soon as possible and weren't in favor of having to extend the construction time to build a temporary bridge. She also said that the group was very conscious of cost. She did state that the group emphasized the importance of good traffic management in the surrounding areas during construction to mitigate congestion, especially in Old Town. The full closure option has widespread support from the CTF.

Lindsay told PG members that the Long Span alternative was a late comer in the process, but it solved many of the issues that were a challenge for the other alternatives including seismic resiliency due to unstable soils, impacts to Waterfront Park and the Skatepark, and it turned out to be the cheapest option. She commented that one of the only issues some members had, including herself, is the aesthetics of having a superstructure and its impacts to views. Lindsay commented on the openness and connection between the east and west sides that the current bridge provides. She remarked on the iconic photo of thousands of protestors gathering on the bridge in response to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis earlier in the year. Although she was initially hesitant about supporting the Long Span alternative, Lindsay said that she and other CTF members had been reassured that the project team would consider ways to minimize the visual impact of the superstructure as much as reasonably possible. The recommended Long Span alternative received unanimous support from the CTF.

PG Discussion

- Echols remarked on the thoughtfulness that had gone into both recommendations and that 25,000 hits to the online open house was impressive. She noted that the current bridge has four in-water piers and the Long Span has two. She asked if the new piers would take the place of current sites or if the river would be allowed to reclaim two of the sites.
    - Pullen answered that the new piers would be in the same general location as the piers that support the lift span. The other two piers would be deconstructed down to the "mud-line" of the river.
- Echols asked if there was a cost associated with the detours for the full bridge closure and if the other bridges will be able to support the additional traffic.
    - Pullen responded that the County is taking care to schedule maintenance on the other County bridges before construction on Burnside begins to avoid additional disruptions to traffic during the construction window. The County will also work with ODOT, Union Pacific, TriMet, and PBOT to do the same with their bridges and consider other ways to increase capacity through traffic signal timing and possible additional transit-only lanes.
    - Echols noted that the decrease in traffic due to people working from home during the pandemic might be a long-term effect.

- Arnold asked how the transit-only lane would work.
    - Pullen responded that the planned transit-only lane on the bridge would function in the same way as the current lane that has been in use for about a year. It is an eastbound-only transit lane. Although a westbound transit lane is not currently part of the project plan, it could be possible to adjust the striping and cross section in the future.
- Chris Warner, City of Portland, commended the team on a great presentation and noted the importance of having good pedestrian connections and access points on either side of the bridge. The City is working with the County to make sure those facilities are world-class.
    - Pullen agreed and suggested that this be an agenda topic at a future Policy Group meeting as well.
- Dirksen added that the next big crisis for local communities could very well be an earthquake and that it is important for this project to move forward quickly. He was glad to see there was strong public consensus with the CTF recommendations. He noted that he probably wouldn't be participating in the Type Selection phase and shared some comments for future consideration. Portland is a city of bridges and the new Burnside Bridge needs to be worthy of that moniker. He expressed his opinion that a tied arch design or a tied arch movable span flanked by cable-stayed spans on either side would be an opportunity to make an aesthetic statement that would mirror two other iconic Portland bridges: the Fremont Bridge and Tilikum Bridge. He noted that using the towers of a movable lift span as supports for the cables on either side could also be a way to maximize efficiency and minimize impacts on views.
- Steve Witter, TriMet, thanked Susan Lindsay for her continuous involvement and leadership on the CTF. He commended the group on their thoughtful considerations and expansive outreach that is setting the standard for other agencies. He noted that it can be difficult to incorporate public art programs into federal projects and encouraged the project team to consider them as culturally responsive measures instead. He shared that TriMet had had some success using that distinction. He also noted that while he didn't have a vote in place of Doug Kelsey, Kelsey is supportive of the recommendations.

PG Approval of Preferred Alternative

Brown reminded members that they had the option to vote in support of the recommendations, in opposition, or to abstain. She asked each PG member if they approved the CTF's recommendation on a Preferred Alternative: Replacement Long Span Bridge and full bridge closure.

- Co-Chair Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County – Support
    - Vega Pederson appreciated all the work done up to this point.
- Councilor Craig Dirksen, Oregon Metro – Support
    - Dirksen thanked the team for the extensive outreach conducted.

- Interim Mayor Karylinn Echols, City of Gresham – Support
- Grace Stratton, U.S. Senator Wyden's Office – Abstain
    - Stratton added that while federal offices abstain from final votes, they were impressed with the process and they saw no issues with Senator Wyden supporting the project.
- Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 – Support
    - Windsheimer thanked the group for their well thought out presentation and community engagement. He also applauded the full bridge closure as it will save money and allow ODOT to partner with the project team on detour opportunities.
- Liv Brumfield, U.S. Representative Blumenauer's Office - Abstain
    - Brumfield echoed appreciation for the work and collaboration as well as the community input.
- Representative Barbara Smith Warner, OR State Legislature – Support
    - Smith Warner appreciated the community engagement and collaboration with staff.
- Phil Ditzler, FHWA Oregon – Abstain
    - Ditzler noted that FHWA was a non-voting member, but will support the decision of the PG.
- Al Bannan, U.S. Representative Bonamici's Office – Abstain
    - Bannan thanked the group for their work and looks forward to future conversations.
- Steve Whitter on behalf of Doug Kelsey, TriMet – Abstain
    - Witter stated that he was unsure if he could vote in place of Doug Kelsey, but that TriMet is supportive of the recommendation.
- Councilor Cate Arnold, City of Beaverton – Support
    - Arnold commented that it was great to see that the solution that the public supported is also the least expensive and most seismically resilient.
- Justin Douglas, Prosper Portland – Support
    - Douglas thanked Susan Lindsay for her ongoing involvement and the project team for putting together materials that are informative and easy to understand.
- Chris Warner, City of Portland – Support
    - Chris Warner added that Portland Parks and Recreation is looking forward to continuing conversations with the team about the Eastbank Esplanade connection.
- Liz Smith Curry on behalf of Chair Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County – Support

Brown noted that staff from Senator Kathleen Taylor's office, OR State Legislature, were not present at the meeting and that Kari Herinckx, U.S. Senator Merkely's Office, had to leave the meeting earlier.

Vega Pederson thanked the project team and all the participants for their work getting to this point and congratulated the team on this milestone.

BRIDGE TYPE SELECTION PHASE OVERVIEW

Heather Catron, HDR, reviewed the Bridge Type Selection timeline and decisions. The Type Selection process will be very similar to the process to reach a Preferred Alternative. During this phase, the CTF will be working to recommend a bridge type for Policy Group approval in the summer of 2021.

Steve Drahota, HDR, went over the decisions that will be part of the Type Selection and Final Design phases. He shared a series of examples of bridges from around the world that showed a range of long span and movable span types (see slide 30). The images showed a variety of tied arch, cable-stayed, and through truss bridges along with bascule and vertical lift movable spans.

Drahota explained that the focus elements during the Type Selection phase will be the superstructure type, movable bridge type, and column size and locations. These elements set footprint and drive impacts analysis. Decisions that will need additional analysis such as precision on tower sizes, cable patterns, and cross frame type will be considered during the final design phase (see slides 31 and 32).

- Dirksen asked about the pier locations. He wondered if there is an opportunity to put the new piers in new locations in order to further open up the river and reduce the span length that goes over I-5. He also asked if putting the new piers in a different location could allow the team to work on them while the old bridge is still open and decrease the amount of time that the bridge will need to be closed for construction.
    - Drahota responded that all of these ideas are being considered during Type Selection. A lift bridge would allow the piers to be built further apart than the current piers that support the bascule span. There are also technical working groups that are exploring constructability, pricing risks, and bridge design parameters.
- Echols asked if there were any safety advantages to the through truss type for vehicles and to deter people who might be considering jumping from the bridge.
    - Drahota answered that all the superstructure types provide the opportunity to put a barrier between the vehicles and the pedestrians and bicyclists on the outside edges. Details around fall hazards and the bike railing heights will likely be reserved for final design.
- Arnold asked what will be required for the bridge to be able to open and close immediately after an earthquake.
    - Drahota said that this bridge is being designed with a higher level of seismic performance than any other bridge in the state. That means that this bridge will need to

be fully functional to vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians immediately after an earthquake. The CTF and working groups will be considering which movable span type is most seismically resilient for the least cost. The bridge will need to be able to close if the earthquake happens while it's in the process of opening or closing. Movable drawbridge operations are currently planned to be functional within one-two months after the earthquake because the river likely won't be navigable until neighboring bridges and structures are repaired and/or cleared. Seismic industry professionals are being engaged to assess if the design criteria are reasonable during Type Selection.

- Arnold asked if the other bridges are likely to collapse and impede river navigation.
    - Drahota noted that it was hard to say with certainty, but it is known that the other County bridges are extremely vulnerable to the earthquake that this project is being designed to withstand.

Catron explained the decision-making structure for the Type Selection phase. The CTF will bring major milestone recommendations to the PG for approval. Recommendations will be put together with input from the public, the project management team, and agency partners.

There will also be several working groups that will study technical topics that will help support the project team and the CTF's work. The Structural/Seismic/Geotechnical working group will continue on during this phase along with the Urban Design and Aesthetics group. These groups, along with others, will be informing the CTF and project team on technical issues as well as evaluation criteria and measures that the CTF will use to help come to a recommended bridge type.

To get to a preferred bridge type, the CTF will start with criteria and measures development, then decide on a range of feasible options, complete an evaluation and screening process, and finally, recommend a preferred bridge type.

Catron 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 and shared with the PG in late February. The CTF will reconvene in March to hear about the public feedback, go through the screening process, and have a recommended bridge type selected in April. That recommendation will go out for public input in May and will be finalized by the CTF and PG in June for approval. The Senior Agency Staff Group and the City's Technical Advisory Committee will also meet periodically between now and June 2021.

Brown noted that PG members were sent an updated charter that includes added language specific to the Type Selection phase. The PG's role will remain the same. She recognized that there may be some new members joining as others retire and encouraged everyone to read over the charter and get in touch with the project team with questions.

- Justin Douglas, Prosper Portland, noticed that the charter included mention of conflict of interest disclosure forms and asked if those had been distributed.

- Pullen and Catron answered that the PG charter should not include disclosure forms. The project team will update the charter and send out revised versions.

NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING REMARKS

Brown reviewed upcoming meetings:

- October 26: Community Task Force Meeting
- January/February 2021: Draft Environmental Impact Statement Publication
- January/February 2021: Bridge Type Selection Outreach – Range of Bridge Options and Criteria Topics
- February 2021: Policy Group Meeting –Approve Criteria and Range of Bridge Types
- June 2021: Policy Group Meeting –Approve Bridge Type

Vega Pederson thanked everyone for their input and involvement once again, especially those who will be retiring soon.

ADJOURN

Brown thanked participants and adjourned the meeting.

SUMMARY OF ALL ACTION ITEMS:

- **Action 1:** The project team will update the PG charter to remove mention of conflict of interest disclosures and send out revised versions.

Memo to: **Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Policy Group**
Mike Pullen, Multnomah County Communications Coordinator

Concerning: Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Preferred Alternative

We are members of the Earthquake Resiliency Advocacy Committee of the Portland City Club (CCERAC) and are writing you to strongly endorse the Long Span Bridge recommended by the Community Task Force on September 21. This alternative is supported by the recommendations of the City Club report "Big Steps Before the Big One" which were overwhelmingly approved by the Club membership in February of 2017. For the past five years, we have investigated and monitored plans for a Burnside Bridge that could withstand a great CSZ earthquake. We have done this through our membership on the City Club research committee that authored this report and the succeeding committee to advocate for the recommendations of the report that were approved by the membership.

Our primary reason for endorsing the Long Span Bridge is that it has the highest seismic resilience ratings of the alternatives, which was the main concern of the research committee. The recommendation of the task force not to build a temporary replacement bridge will lead to a shorter construction time, which was also an important part of research report recommendation, that urged haste in proceeding with a resilient bridge. The lower costs of the Long Span Bridge and discarding a temporary bridge are not addressed in the City Club recommendations but are obvious attractive features of the suggested plan.

For these reasons we recommend with enthusiasm the Long Span Bridge plan and urge you to press on with this critical work as soon as possible.

Please enter this memo as part of the current public input and comment process.

We commend Multnomah County on the excellent public process and pace of the Burnside Bridge project.
Sincerely,
Teri Martin, CCERAC Chair
Tom Dyke and Rob Fullmer, CCERAC Buildings and Infrastructure Sub-Committee
Portland City Club Earthquake Resiliency Advocacy Committee