



# Meeting Summary

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<b>Project:</b>	Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge
<b>Subject:</b>	Senior Agency Staff Group Meeting #5
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, October 11, 2018
<b>Time:</b>	1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
<b>Location:</b>	HDR, 1050 SW 6th Ave, Suite 1800, Portland

## Senior Agency Staff Members and Alternates Present

Ian Cannon, Multnomah County	Justin Shoemaker, Oregon Department of Transportation
Brian Monberg, City of Gresham	Greg Theisen, Port of Portland
Mark Lear, City of Portland	Dan Bower, Portland Streetcar
Mike Bezner, Clackamas County	Steve Witter, TriMet
Christina Deffebach, Washington County	
Malu Wilkinson, Metro	

## Senior Agency Staff Members Absent

Todd Juhasz, City of Beaverton	Shelly Haack, Prosper Portland
Mike Morrow, Federal Highway Administration	Ashley Clark, Representative Barbara Smith Warner's Office
Amanda Kraus, Senator Kathleen Taylor's Office	
Sam Hunaidi, ODOT	

## Staff, Consultants and Other Attendees

Megan Neill, Multnomah County	Steve Drahota, HDR
Mike Pullen, Multnomah County	Jeff Heilman, Parametrix
Joanna Valencia, Multnomah County	André Baugh, Group AGB
Jamie Waltz, Multnomah County	Aascot Bohlander, EI
Emily Miletich, Multnomah County	Art Graves, Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee
Heather Catron, HDR	
Cassie Davis, HDR	

## Meeting Purpose

- Reconfirm the purpose of the group and seek acceptance of the Draft Charter for the environmental phase
- Provide an update on the progress since the last Senior Agency Staff Group (SASG) meeting and share Feasibility Study findings and recommended options
- Discuss what should be studied in the environmental review phase

## Welcome

- Heather Catron, HDR, welcomed meeting participants and led introductions.

## Project update

- Heather reviewed the project timeline, available in the meeting materials.
- Jeff Heilman, Parametrix, led a review of the purpose and need statement for the project. He referred to the presentation available in the meeting materials.
  - Ian Cannon, Multnomah County: What is your elevator speech on the need for this project?
  - Jeff: First, highlight the need for a seismically resilient crossing over the Willamette. Mention the need for emergency response immediately after an earthquake and post-earthquake recovery. There are studies referenced in the needs statements that describe what happens in a region that has experienced a major earthquake when transportation infrastructure is lost. It affects physical health but also has a long-term effect on economic recovery through impacts on utilities, jobs, schools, the ability to return home, etc. Stated needs can be found in the local, regional and state plans for seismic resiliency. Lastly, mention the need for long-term multimodal travel across the river. The bridge is intended for resiliency but also everyday use by all modes and all people.
- Heather: There is also an agency coordination meeting scheduled for Oct. 15 which will include similar content. Attendees to today's meeting may join but are not required. We will discuss the details later in today's meeting.
- Greg Theisen, Port of Portland: How do we share agency interests? Can we use the meeting notes to share our thoughts?
  - Heather: We can share the meeting notes.
  - Jeff: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representatives will attend the Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> meeting and are available for questions at that time.
- Heather and Jeff noted that it is important to hear from agencies that they want to serve as cooperating or participating agencies, as required by FHWA, National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and state requirements.

## Feasibility findings

- Steve Drahota, HDR, presented the recommended range of alternatives, referring to the presentation.
  - Steve D.: The retrofit option maintains a narrow bridge middle; 86 feet at its narrowest point. Other options are about 110 feet wide. A width of 86 feet would mean less room to accommodate different modes of travel. The working assumption is 110 feet in width.
    - Ian: The current bridge is 110 feet wide. We can get that width without dramatic impacts to the existing built environment.
  - Mike Pullen, Multnomah County: We don't want to restrict Naito Parkway, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. or Grand Ave. The fixed bridge on slide 9, could restrict 4th or 3rd Avenue. Is that not a fatal flaw? We prioritized the other streets?
    - Steve D.: Yes. A possible impact for the fixed bridge is that it extends pasts the current bridge landings on the westside. We will look at refining the profile along the way as well. We will look at construction depth, or how "thick" the bridge is from top to bottom.
  - Ian: We should avoid locking ourselves into a future decision.
    - Steve D.: We are looking at tradeoffs within a set of solutions.
  - Mike P.: The freight community said semis don't go westbound on the bridge currently due to the S-curve that limits bigger vehicles.

## Preliminary project costs

- Steve D. made the preliminary project costs portion of the presentation.
  - Mike P.: Is the fixed bridge more expensive because of the extra length?
    - Steve D.: Yes; the fixed bridge is more expensive due to the extra bridge length and its associated impacts.
    - Mike P.: Will it meet a higher standard than the Sellwood Bridge?
    - Steve D.: The standard will be higher than any other movable bridge built at this point. We are digging into criteria. About 10-15 percent of the total cost will go to design across all alternatives.
  - Greg said he was surprised the fixed bridge option made it into the final options, considering the scoring. He said there is much to consider on the west side including equity issues, impacts to historic resources, etc.
    - Steve D.: There are two drivers: vertical clearance and seismic resiliency reliability. Regarding vertical clearance, a maximum 97-foot clearance was used an assumption, with a minimum clearance similar to that of

Tilikum Crossing (which is approximately 79'). A clearance reduction from 97' to 79' would reduce the bridge length and could shift the bridge's west end point approximately a block and a half towards the river.. Regarding seismic reliability, a fixed bridge is more reliable than a movable bridge. Because the overall scoring was close, and a shorter bridge would bring the scores even closer, we felt it prudent to further analyze the fixed bridge alternative during the NEPA phase.

- Art Graves, Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee: If the fixed bridge meets at-grade on the east side, then the west side is the issue. It's supposed to be 97 feet high to accommodate river traffic, but what would be the width of the functional channel? Can't we just slide that over a block?
  - Steve D.: The footprint can't be slid over two blocks to the east due to elevation constraints. The width of the water navigation channel is 205 feet.
  - Emily Miletich: The location of the channel is based on river topography and there is a shallow section to the east of the channel which would prevent it from shifting much.
  - Graves: Is it a fixed channel width? Can it be reduced?
  - Steve D.: There is a significant process needed to change the channel's permanent width. The Coast Guard can block it. The team is treating a 205-foot width as the standard. They will test with the movable options, which allow six feet on either side to build. Most bridges with a navigation channel should keep the same channel. It is a long process to approve a new channel with the Coast Guard.
- Mark Lear, City of Portland, said he struggles to see a benefit from accommodating ships under the structure.
  - Steve Witter, TriMet: The Portland Spirit has received mitigation in the form of alterations to their ships and docks. This may support the argument that the height of the Tilikum Crossing should be the standard. The Coast Guard will coordinate. The Rose Festival will be dealt with as well.
  - Greg: The topic of the immovability of the width of the channel in the context of the bridge's vertical clearance is its own agenda item later in the meeting.
  - Ian: There will be another 2.5 years of study before selecting a preferred alternative. Due to the two-year EIS timeline and declaring a preferred alternative in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), this occurs earlier than in other processes.

- Greg: Is there a real variation to the impacts on the east side when it comes to the Couch Street connection?
  - Steve D.: Yes.
- Greg: On the plus side, there is access for freight. We should look at potential diverted traffic from the bridge resulting from the couplet.
  - Jeff: Yes, we will evaluate that during the environmental phase.
- Greg: Will you consider effects on bikes and other active transportation?
  - Steve D.: Yes, we will evaluate that during the environmental phase.
- Ian: If we expect to use the bridge for rebuilding after an earthquake it should be usable by freight.
- Jeff: For bicyclists, I would like to look at bike network impacts in the no-build option. We should look at the existing bike network as the background for planning, and the future planned bike network.
- Chris Deffebach, Washington County, said she would like to mix and match the options. She suggested rebuilding on the east side as part of the retrofit option to have the best of each option. She said the project should rebuild the east part no matter what and improve only what's necessary.

## September engagement – What we heard

- Cassie Davis, HDR, presented the September engagement approach and findings, available in the meeting materials.
  - Dan Bower, Portland Streetcar: It seems there is no negative public sentiment?
    - Mike P.: Once or twice we ran into an earthquake skeptic, but that is all.
    - Dan: Was there a question about how the bridge looks?
    - Cassie: The question was whether they agree or strongly agree that we should move forward with the project. A few people disagreed that an earthquake would happen. Design continuously comes up, but we won't be able to get into those details until design. However, input received during the environmental phase will inform the design work.

## Committees and their structures

- Heather presented the committees, their relationships to one another, roles and other details. This information is all available in the meeting presentation. The committee structure is similar to that used in the feasibility phase. The SASG group will be responsible for keeping their internal teams informed about the project and representing their agency views and interests. She also requested that everyone review the draft charter that was handed out.

## Environmental Review Phase kickoff

- Heather reviewed the project timeline and Jeff presented the NEPA process overview to the group.
  - Mark: Does the County have all the money it needs for the environmental review phase?
    - Ian: Yes. Not the design phase, though.
  - Mike P.: Will the bridge type be chosen after the Record of Decision (ROD)?
    - Jeff: Yes. The ROD will decide what will be built (e.g., no-build, retrofit, movable, fixed) and identify environmental mitigations.
    - Mike Bezner, Clackamas County: The bridge type selection is outside the NEPA process.
    - Jeff: We want to know the range of movable structures, if that's desired.
  - Chris D.: There is a timeline for the funding strategy. The project is funded through the EIS. Is there a timeline for fundraising?
    - Ian: There is not a fixed timeline for funding. It is to be determined and we are working on it. We're taking it a step at a time. Our next step is getting the next phase funded. There are lots of moving pieces. We're going to be looking for ways to secure funding.
  - Mike P.: Is the funding plan needed at the time of ROD?
    - Ian: Yes.
  - Malu Wilkinson, Metro: Will the preferred alternative be conceptual? How firm are cost estimates with so many variables at the ROD?
    - Ian: Great question. The project must have a funding plan that meets the value established in the NEPA process. Then, as the design gets more refined, the estimate will become more refined. Either the project will give money back, find more money, or stay on budget.
    - Mike P.: The Sellwood Bridge was paid for using a vehicle registration fee. That might be part of funding plan.
    - Malu: The whole process doesn't require you to have a number, but reality requires you to know about how much you might be able to afford. There is a huge amount of needed work. The funding piece is a key component that is not on the chart.
    - Mark: Securing funding is on the timeline. More clarity is needed on how much and when. Each phase is funded individually.
    - Ian: It is a bit of a chicken and egg situation. You develop estimates to fund it and then you need to fund it. We need to keep both moving forward.

- Jeff presented the technical elements to be studied.
  - Greg: We should put freight under transportation along with rail, truck, and marine.
    - Jeff: 'River transportation' meant freight as well, but we could parse that out.
    - Greg: Sometimes different travel purposes are differentiated and sometimes they're not. 'Rail' has 'passenger rail' as well.
  - Dan: Are we assuming the NEPA process evaluates both the construction phase and final phase?
    - Jeff: Yes.
  - Chris D.: Are there cost/benefit efficiency requirements?
    - Jeff: A specific cost/benefit analysis is not part of this right now, but we will add it to the list. An economic analysis is included in the scope. The most likely impact is during construction and thereafter.

## **Next Steps and closing remarks**

- Heather presented a list of upcoming activities and meetings for the project, available in the presentation.
- Ian thanked everyone for their participation. The SASG representatives have added a lot of value to the process and the County appreciates that. There were a couple of sticky questions about funding. Those questions are understood and appreciated. The team is currently considering many variables and looking for opportunities. Ian expects the project will have funding from a number of different sources. Some are easier to project than others and the team will work hard to pull it all together.
- Ian asked that group members brief their Policy Group liaisons on what's coming up in the next weeks. Additional briefings will be provided upon request and the team will respond to any questions that come up.
- Ian said the County is excited by this important milestone and the opportunities this project presents to the community. Even more exciting are the challenges of the project. It is a great opportunity to reimagine the heart of downtown Portland. Ian is happy to have participants along on this journey.

## **Adjourn**

- Heather thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting.