

## Community Task Force (CTF)

# MEETING NOTES

May 7, 2007

5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

SMILE Station

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Meeting Objective

Agree on range of alternatives to recommend to the Policy Advisory Group at its May 21 meeting.

Note: CTF members, staff and consultants toured the project area before the meeting.

### Key Points

Members generally agreed on alignment and cross-section alternatives.

### Action Items Completed

The CTF made the following recommendations:

- A Clackamas County bridge should be included in future regional transportation planning discussions as well as better east/west connections between Ross Island Bridge and SE McLoughlin on the east side and to US 26 and I-5 on the west side should be included in future regional transportation planning discussions.
- Advance to the next study phase: Purple, Yellow Middle (53' width or less), Yellow South, Blue, Teal, and Pink alignments
- Advance to the next study phase: cross sections A, C, C', D, E (all travel lanes); I, and K. C' is a 68-foot concept including a 20' shared path, 6.5 bike lane, 12' lane, 12' lane, 6.5 bike lane and 8' sidewalk.
- Advance existing bridge for bicyclists/pedestrians combined with a replacement bridge for motor vehicles on a separate alignment
- In addition to the Phase 1 seismic upgrade only rehabilitation concept, advance rehabilitation with Phase 2 seismic upgrade.
- In addition to a rehabilitation concept with no detour bridge, advance rehabilitation with temporary detour bridge.

### Action Items for the Next Meeting

Discuss results of screening of the alternatives.



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### Attendees

**CTF Members:** Barbara Barber, Jason Barbour, Gary Barth, Tom Brown, Bill Dickey, Elliott Eki, John Fyre, Dorothy Gage, Laura Jackson, Ken Love, Richard Marantz, Tina Nuñez, Lidwien Rahman, William Ross, Brian Wilson, Sharon Wood Wortman

**Staff:** Office of Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey: David Martinez; Multnomah County: Ian Cannon, Michael Eaton and Mike Pullen; Metro: John Gray; City of Portland: Mauricio Leclerc; CH2M HILL: Marcy Schwartz and Steve Katko; Cogan Owens Cogan: Elaine Cogan and Suzanne Roberts; Alta Planning and Design: Mia Birk,

**Guests:** Megan Adkins, Steve Adkins, Doug Allen, Carla Barron, Lynda Bridges, Mike Broder, Ruth Broder, Lisa Brown, Tim Cheadle, Steve Chown, Dan Gallagher, Pati Gallagher, Jean Helley, Jim Howell, Arlene Kavlock, Philip Krain, Jory Lakeman, Richard Lakeman, Jim Larpenteur, Donald Leap, Doug Lutz, Marychris Mass, Candace McElroy, Renee Morgan, Rich Morgan, Ed Murphy, Patti Murphy, David Noble, Eric Norberg, Charles Peake, Ann Pearson, Diana Richardson, Lynn Rogers, Kris Rowley, Sue Sandford, Susan Peters, Dick Springer, Tom Walsh, Frank Warren, Jr.

### Project Area Tour

Prior to this regularly-scheduled CTF meeting, some members, staff and consultants traveled by van to view the alternative alignments on both sides of the river.

### Welcome and Introductions

Elaine Cogan opened the meeting by reviewing the agenda. There were no comments on the summary of the previous meeting.

### Public Comments

Lynn Rogers, resident, Portland Rowing Club: *My neighbors and I would be very much affected by the Burgundy alignment and request that the CTF eliminate it from further consideration. When any one of our homes is affected, all of us are affected. We are proud of where we live, which is the home of the Willamette Riverkeeper. We have received many racing trophies, including one from Ulysses S. Grant.*

Dick Springer: *The recommendations made by the CTF, and subsequently by elected officials, will have an effect on nearby neighborhoods. Portland will have trouble building bridges in the future.* He reviewed the importance of the other Willamette River bridges and recommended rebuilding the existing Sellwood Bridge in its current location, saying this would meet the needs of future travelers at the lowest price and with the least disruption.

Diana Richardson distributed a written recommendation on behalf of several property owners in the project area. They suggest a light be installed at 7<sup>th</sup> and Tacoma Street. They also recommend rehabilitation of the existing two-lane bridge with the addition of a lower level pedestrian/bicycle bridge.

Tom Walsh: *The cost comparison between the tunnel and the bridge seems to overestimate the cost for a tunnel. My understanding is that it was based on the Laerdal Tunnel in Norway, which was relatively expensive. I would like to see data from comparable projects utilized and available to the public. Doing so and comparing a tunnel to a bridge would make the tunnel more competitive. A tunnel also would eliminate negative externalities, increasing the value of nearby real estate.*

Jim Howell, Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates (AORTA) distributed sketches of improvements to the signalized interchange option as well as a list of the benefits of these improvements.

Marychris Mass: *I support a double-deck bridge because I do not want the bridge to be widened. I am concerned about impacts to Umatilla Street and the unfinished portion of the Springwater Trail during construction. Losing the Dwyer auto shop would be bad, as would be losing the off-leash park land at Powers Marine Park, which is the one place residents can hike with their dogs.*

David Noble, Executive Director, Riverview Cemetery: *The building listed as a “caretakers house” in the project materials is actually a funeral home. It is a viable business. We are lobbying for an interchange option that provides good access to it. The latest proposed intersection answers many, but not all, of our concerns. We are continuing to talk with the County. Many bicyclists use the road through the cemetery. You will be impacting them.*

Discussion followed. Questions and comments by the public and the CTF are paraphrased in italics. Staff responses follow in regular print.

(Regarding “caretakers house” vis a vis funeral home): *It is important to use the correct terminology because it affects the way we value it.*

### **Response to Previous CTF Requests**

Michael Eaton said that impacts to truck traffic due to the implementation of the Tacoma Mainstreet Plan, as well as the numbers and types of users of Powers Marine Park, will be evaluated during the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) stage of the project. The amount of piers allowed in the river also will be determined during the EIS phase, assuming there is an alternative for which we will need to ask that question.

Michael then announced that he has been advised by County Counsel to say at the beginning of every meeting that, as this project involves various parties, it is important to reiterate the specific roles and

duties of CTF members. They are to meet approximately monthly; represent a broad range of interests; communicate with constituents and represent their input; and make recommendations to the Policy Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG is the actual decision-making body.

Michael added that if CTF members are contacted by individuals requesting information, this should be distributed to the entire CTF at its regular meeting or via the project team.

The purpose of the CTF is to gather and verify information in open meetings. The CTF makes recommendations but does not have authority to make decisions and should not predict that any decision is likely to be made, such as the disposition of private property.

*I'm not sure I agree. Everyone is free to have an opinion of what may happen.*

*Yes, and we all have different constituencies that we talk with. It is difficult to take the politics out of it.*

What you should not be saying is that something will or will not happen to someone's property.

*But we have seen potential impacts of various concepts.*

That is correct. However, we do not know what the PAG will decide.

*But I hope the PAG will take our work and recommendations seriously.*

When asked what will happen with the bridge, Marcy Schwartz said that she explains the process that will eventually lead to a decision. However, everyone is free to advocate and also to talk about decisions that have been made, such as not to advance the tunnel concept.

Michael added that the PAG has approved all the CTF recommendations so far.

Ian Cannon commended CTF members for nearly a year's worth of work thus far. He said the goal as the process moves forward is to pare down to what we really want to study. In the interest of moving forward and not wasting time, drop what doesn't make sense.

*I would like to see a study of the feasibility of a light at 7th and Tacoma Street.*

That is not a central element of the decisions we need to make tonight but we can leave those options open to consider when we get to that point.

*It may be relevant to discuss now if the widths of the alignments we choose affect what we can and cannot do at that eastern connection.*

We cannot design it until we know the alignment.

*It seems that an easy solution would be to rehabilitate the existing bridge and build a four-lane bridge at 224. Why can't Clackamas and Multnomah Counties talk to each other about this?*

### **Public Involvement Update**

Mike Pullen reported on meetings held with individual property owners since the last CTF meeting. Macadam Bay residents would be affected by the Gold alignment. They are concerned about their garages but not about changes to the access road. Aesthetics also are important. The freight working group meeting took place when there were just five alignments. They supported adding alignments with better pedestrian/bicycle facilities, intersection at the west side and a cloverleaf on the east side. Alignments with an “S” curve are not an issue for them. If it is decided to rehabilitate the bridge, they recommend a temporary detour bridge be provided. The manager of New Seasons said the detour bridge is important to their business that serves customers from the west side and also to provide access for their delivery vehicles.

Further analysis of the online survey shows that the highest percentage of respondents live in the 97202 zip code—Sellwood and surrounding areas. It is reasonable to conclude that these responses reflect the opinions of people near the bridge. Compared to respondents from other areas, they say a detour bridge is less important. They also are more supportive of a Phase 2 seismic upgrade in the rehabilitation options; a two-lane bridge and shared bikeways or dedicated bicycle facilities. More people from that zip code say they use the bridge for commuting than those in zip codes further from the bridge.

*The results seem to imply that people cross the bridge to catch a bus. Is that the case?*

No. It appears most pedestrians are walking for recreational purposes.

*There seems to be a low percentage of respondents from Clackamas County. Do you plan to conduct a survey only in Clackamas County?*

No, and we did have more participation this time (than the last survey) from people outside the 97202 zip code.

### **Continued Discussion of Range of Alternatives**

#### Alignments

Marcy presented the comparison tables of alignment characteristics. They were revised since the last CTF meeting due to additional staff and agency partner review as well as comments from members.

*I suggest re-labeling the Riverview Funeral Home title, as discussed earlier.*

Yes, we will change it, although the “caretaker house” name also is significant in terms of its historic value.

CTF discussion continued on staff recommendations of alignments to advance for further consideration and those to eliminate.

*Regarding the 224 to Highway 43 option, most traffic that crosses the Sellwood Bridge is from outer southeast Portland or Clackamas County that does not cross the I-205 bridge. Traffic will keep backing up. In the next four years, we will have the Milwaukie light rail along the Ross Island Bridge. To avoid all these impacts, it would not hurt to look at a four-lane highway at 224, at the south end of the golf course. It would require that Multnomah and Clackamas Counties talk to each other, but it seems like a win-win situation.*

This option is not consistent with the project Purpose and Need, which says the alignment should be within 500 feet of the existing alignment. Our data shows that there is much demand for a crossing closer in for this corridor and there will be more in the future. A bridge far away will not serve the same group of users. In addition, according to the Metro South Willamette Crossing Study, a 224 crossing would have high land use impacts. Tacoma Street is existing infrastructure that accommodates the bridge. Elsewhere, that infrastructure would have to be built, impacting the river. Highway 43 further south lacks capacity to accommodate the traffic that would occur.

We are not saying this bridge cannot be built in Clackamas County. Our project does not preclude any additional bridge in the future. However, we are just dealing with the rehabilitation or replacement of the existing bridge in its existing corridor.

The regional transportation system plan says this will be a transportation corridor and recommends an additional bridge in Clackamas County.

*A critical point of clarification is that these are regional issues that will need regional solutions. For many years Clackamas County was a bedroom community. That was a regional strategy. The county is now trying to change that jobs/housing balance. Maybe we could recommend that the PAG not eliminate the concept of an additional bridge in Clackamas County. Also, the Sellwood Bee suggests that as the Sellwood Bridge is a Multnomah County project, other users should not use it for free. Funding is probably from many sources.*

If there is consensus from the CTF, we can eliminate it from discussions of the alternatives for the Sellwood Bridge, but make statements such as another crossing should be considered to accommodate Clackamas County. There was general agreement.

*Add that there are other sets of movements not accommodated by the system, such as a connection from 99E further south and from McLoughlin.*

*I would suggest that impacts to the Portland Rowing Club not be the only reason to eliminate the Burgundy alignment.*

*The Burgundy alignment is a real stretch and we need to start eliminating options. This one is too far from the current bridge, as is the Gold alignment.*

*I like how the Gold alignment ends at Taylors Ferry, but not its impacts to the natural area and buildings.*

*I don't like it either, but there was a proposal to have it cross the river diagonally. Another option is to redraw it so it does not go through the park.*

*The Teal option could go straight to the interchange. Then, we could avoid the floating homes.*

*There is much traffic going east and west, but not a destination north or south, other than Taylors Ferry. People are stuck using Highway 43 and going in a direction they don't ultimately want to go.*

Having a connection to Taylors Ferry on the west side would create an east/ west route that would attract much more traffic into this corridor. It would overload Tacoma and Taylors Ferry which would lead to an increase in cut-through traffic through neighborhoods. The City of Portland would not be sympathetic because it does not support the roles of these two collectors changing to that of arterials.

*Traffic patterns are not going to change; we are just fixing the bridge. I think we should select the narrowest, cheapest way to refurbish what is there now to accommodate the neighborhoods.*

*But if we spend the resources to do that, maybe the rest of the region wants to allocate it differently. We have a whole system that needs fixing. Would your suggestion get us anywhere?*

*I have a hard time seeing how the Green alignment would have the 4(f) impacts listed, such as the Powers Marine Park.*

It would eliminate the entrance.

*We are trying to get to two north alignments. How interchangeable are they? I want to preserve options to have an interchange at Staff Jennings and go through the office building and parking lot to avoid the park.*

Each tries to do something different and still have a benefit.

*I would like to create a hybrid of the best options on each side of the river.*

*It seems we want to keep the west side landing. We need an east side alignment that goes through the office building to avoid the park, yet goes through Staff Jennings.*

The Green and Orange concepts were originally designed to minimize impacts to the condos and accept some on the office building. We heard from the public that those alignments would negatively impact the condos, and we should consider alignments further to the north (the Pink and Teal concepts.) The Teal concept is over the Sellwood Park parking lot to avoid impacts to the office building.

*I want something that goes through the office building but not at the current interchange option on the west side.*

*Regardless of what we pick, the preferred alternative could be a hybrid. I am hearing we need alternatives that look at the existing alignment and Staff Jennings.*

*The Blue alternative does not provide any additional benefits. The Yellow has a better corridor. I worry about the interchange going further north.*

*I agree; the Yellow alternative has much potential.*

*Can we get the same width with Yellow South?*

*I want to keep it in if we eliminate the Yellow North alternative.*

*What is our goal for the alternatives tonight?*

The goal tonight is to eliminate those that are clearly inferior for some reason. If you are not sure and want more information, we will keep them in the analysis and evaluate them further.

*What if we just stay with all the Yellow alternatives?*

*Then we would need a temporary bridge. The Blue option uses the existing bridge during construction.*

*I agree. Blue and Purple are closest to Yellow but keep the existing bridge open during construction.*

We could keep the existing bridge in use during construction even if the Yellow alignment is eliminated.

*Another thing about the Blue is that it does not include the cost of condemning the Wasson building. That is something to keep in mind.*

*Another reason for keeping the Blue is its potential for having a new bridge while keeping the old one for pedestrian/bicycle use.*

*With the Teal alternative, how easy is it to have access to the marina? Keeping Staff Jennings there or some other business for the community is important. We should keep that business as a viable operating marina on the river because the next closest one is in Oregon City. There are no others in Portland.*

The Teal alternative does not impact the Staff Jennings buildings, but it does affect their back lot. Some reconfiguration of the site would be necessary.

*All interchange plans would affect their access.*

*I am concerned about moving the interchange any closer to Taylors Ferry.*

By keeping it on table, however, we will better understand its impacts.

*Aren't the Orange, Pink, Teal, and Green options created to eliminate the Yellow and avoid all the condos? Do we need more than one of those?*

They affect property, such as the park and office building, differently.



*We are trying to build a list of potential alternatives. The interchanges and landing points have not yet been decided. To eliminate alternatives, we will have eliminated certain interchanges. I do not want to eliminate something from an interchange standpoint that could work out. I want to keep these as a limited group of alternatives for now.*

In summary, in regard to possible alignments, the CTF agreed to advance to the next study phase: the Purple, Yellow Middle (53' width or less), Yellow South, Blue, Teal, and Pink alignments

#### Cross-sections (Widths)

Marcy explained that the goal of this part of the meeting was to narrow down the range of cross-section options. After distributing information on 43 possible options, including double-decker bridges, Steve Katko of CH2M Hill and Mia Birk of Alta Planning and Design, reviewed the staff recommendations. CTF discussion followed.

*Options G and H (92-foot widths) tear up the most property and should be eliminated. In addition, they don't match up with Tacoma Street.*

They are listed because they represent options we'd have if all the stakeholders got exactly what they want.

*As a pedestrian, I support eliminating G and H.*

*If we have transit in a third lane, can it be run back and forth in that one lane? A streetcar, for example, would run long stretches on one lane, with cars changing at stations.*

*Frequency of service may be too great for that.*

TriMet does not favor that type of system—it would be unique to their systems.

*We do not have bus rapid transit in Portland, or a system of dedicated lane transit other than parts of light rail.*

TriMet representatives noted negatives from an operations standpoint and advocated for two flex lanes.

*I would eliminate the 80-foot width option.*

We are hesitant to eliminate it because it came out of CTF discussions favoring facilities that accommodate all types of bicyclists and pedestrians.

*What difference does three feet make?*

*We still would have buses, cars and pedestrians in the same lane.*

D seems like a good compromise.

*Another compromise might be C with a wider shared path.*

*We could eliminate F.*

*I am concerned about cutting down to two lanes, repeating what we now have in the future.*

*D and E have four lanes.*

*B has three lanes and does not add any benefit.*

*Eliminate D, because we already have an option with four lanes for vehicles plus two eight-foot sidewalk lanes.*

*If you keep it, we can look at a version with no bike lanes.*

*If there is a bike lane on the bridge or street, are bike riders supposed to use it?*

*It depends on the designation of the path. If there is an eight-foot sidewalk, then yes.*

*Bicyclists can use travel lanes if needed; otherwise they are supposed to be in a bike lane.*

*I was under the impression that D and E had four lanes of vehicle traffic and we are keeping these.*

*We can clarify that.*

*Is there a possibility for a wider flex lane for transit and freight, with narrow lanes for cars?*

*Our design criteria call for 11- to 12-foot lanes for transit, freight and auto users.*

*Trucks would be encouraged to go faster; as a pedestrian or bicyclist, I would not like that.*

*In addition, users would have to rush to get to the left turn lane, which is a safety hazard.*

*I just want to be sure there is enough width for a streetcar.*

*Regarding Option I, we have been hearing comments as to whether we can rehabilitate the bridge to wider than 28 feet. Can we get breakdown shoulders that would not make the bridge too wide?*

*The Bridge Working Group, including engineers from the County, City, ODOT and FHWA, and the consultants, developed the 28-foot concept. The project team will determine if we can provide a wider rehabilitation cross-section.*

*Why would we want to build a new bridge that is only four feet wider?*

*I propose a double-decker, with cars on the upper part and a breakdown lane that bicyclists can use. The underdeck would have pedestrian/bicycle facilities.*

*As a pedestrian, I don't like being under the bridge—I feel unsafe. I support analyzing it as a rehabilitation option, but I would not want a new bridge with that option.*

*I agree.*

*A double-decker would affect the condos, but I support keeping it in for analysis.*

*There does not seem to be a significant difference between options J and K, other than the double-decker feature.*

*I want to leave in K because it provides the functionality of four lanes at a narrower width.*

Marcy reviewed other concepts suggested by the public.

In summary, the CTF recommended that the following cross sections advance to the next study phase: A, C, C', D, E (all travel lanes); I, and K. C' is a 68-foot concept including a 20' shared path, 6.5 bike lane, 12' lane, 12' lane, 6.5 bike lane and 8' sidewalk.

Additional recommendations:

- A Clackamas County bridge as well as better east/west connections between Ross Island Bridge and SE McLoughlin on the east side and to US 26 and I-5 on the west side, should be included in future regional transportation planning discussions
- Advance existing bridge for bicyclists/pedestrians combined with a replacement vehicle bridge on a separate alignment
- In addition to the Phase 1 seismic upgrade only rehabilitation concept, advance rehabilitation with Phase 2 seismic upgrade
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### **Next Steps**

Mike announced there will be no June meeting. The next two CTF meetings dates have been changed from July 16 and August 20 to July 9 and August 13.

Meeting adjourned.

There were no action items to be addressed subsequently: