



June 26 and 27, 2007 Open Houses

Public meetings were held on Tuesday, June 26, 2007 at the First Baptist Church in downtown Salem and on Wednesday, June 27, 2007 at Roth's Hospitality Center in West Salem to present the Salem River Crossing project. The main purpose of the meetings was to present preliminary concepts for crossing locations, improvements to the existing bridges and other ideas for handling congestion. Attendees were asked to suggest ways to improve the concepts presented as well as to propose new concepts. Each open house began at 5:00 p.m. and concluded at 8:00 p.m.

A meeting announcement was posted on the Salem River Crossing website and a press release was issued to local media, including the Statesman Journal. Notification in the form of the project newsletter was sent to approximately 1000 residents, businesses, and community leaders. Two different email communications were sent to approximately 375 people who had signed up on the website or otherwise indicated an interest in being on the distribution list. An article on the project which included Open House information was published in the Statesman Journal on Saturday, June 23, an editorial published on June 27th encouraged attendance at the open house that night, and a follow-up article appeared in the paper on June 28th. A display ad promoting the Open Houses was published in the Statesman Journal on Saturday, June 23 and Sunday, June 24.

A booth was staffed at the June 9th Salem Farmer's Market where newsletters, fact sheets, and postcards announcing the open houses were handed out. Posters advertising the open houses were delivered to the Fred Meyer on Broadway St. NE, the Salem Senior Center, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, Salem Alliance Church, Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, Iglesia De Cristo Ciudad De Paz, YWCA, YMCA, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Roth's Fresh Market in West Salem, and the Salem Public Library. Project managers Dan Fricke and Julie Warnke made presentations about the project and the open houses at a CAN-DO Board meeting, a Highland Neighborhood Association meeting, a West Salem Neighborhood Association, a Salem City Council work session, and in interviews on KBZY AM 1490 and on the Hispanic radio station KWIP. Julie Warnke also staffed a booth at the City of Salem 3rd Annual Public Works Day celebration at Riverfront Park on Thursday, June 21st. Brief radio announcements were broadcast the week prior to the open houses on KBZY AM 1490 (English) and on La Pantera KSND FM 95.1 and KWBY AM 940 (Spanish).

An open house format was used at the meetings, allowing members of the public to attend at their convenience and have the opportunity to discuss the preliminary concepts with staff members and members of the Task Force and suggest additional ones. Julie Warnke, City of Salem and Dan Fricke, ODOT made brief presentations each evening at 5:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. and were then available for questions and comments. Juan Carlos Torres, Mid-Willamette Valley COG, was available both evenings to serve as a Spanish interpreter.

Attendees were encouraged to submit comments on the project by completing a form asking for input about ways to improve any of the river crossing concepts presented and for

suggestions of other concepts or ideas. They were also encouraged to contribute to “New Ideas” comment charts which were placed by each of the concept graphics. Approximately 47 people attended the June 26th open house and 100 people attended the June 27th meeting.

The following items were on display at the meeting:

- ◆ Welcome, purpose of the evening, and why we are doing this project
- ◆ PM peak future travel demand, recommended study area, and common elements in the preliminary concepts
- ◆ Preliminary crossing concepts all on one graphic and also each represented individually (six new bridge concepts and one existing bridge concept).
- ◆ Transit and roadway efficiency concept
- ◆ Funding mechanisms, available funding, and potential sources
- ◆ SKATS station

Handouts distributed at the open house included the following:

- ◆ Comment form
- ◆ Project newsletter
- ◆ Project fact sheets in English and Spanish

The following comments were submitted on individual comment sheets, were written on the “New Ideas” flip charts, or were offered during a question and answer period after each of the presentations.

Verbal Comments and Questions

- ◆ What are you doing to assess the impacts of selected alternatives on greenhouse gases? *The evaluation includes an assessment of air quality and we must also comply with the congestion management program. We will also look at TDM solutions.*
- ◆ Where is the traffic coming from? *The majority of traffic, day to day congestion, is from people going to and from work. In the evening about 30% of the traffic using the bridge goes to points beyond West Salem. About 60% goes to West Salem, and a smaller percentage goes to the north.*
- ◆ There was once a suggestion for a more southerly route (i.e. Kuebler to Viewcrest) – will you still consider that? *It's not been discarded but the traffic models show that the most benefit now would be derived from a bridge north of the existing bridge as defined by the study area. A southern alignment may be considered in the future.*
- ◆ You mentioned impacts to Wallace Marine Park – please talk about impacts on the east side. *Every alternative has major impacts on the east side on established neighborhoods, elementary schools, parks, the north downtown planning area.*

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- ◆ The concepts now seem to end on Broadway or the Parkway – will there be further information about impacts on surrounding connector streets? And will you solicit input from the neighborhood associations. *We are running travel demand models now which should provide more information about connecting street impacts – there is still a lot of work to be done. We are currently meeting with neighborhood associations and will continue to do so.*
 - ◆ The Purple alternative is the furthest north – have you ruled out the Keizer area? *The study area that has been identified is the area in which we would realize the greatest traffic relief on the existing bridges – i.e. between the existing bridges and Tryon.*
 - ◆ Purple alternative does not relieve West Salem. *It does connect to Doak’s Ferry Road which provides connections into West Salem.*
 - ◆ What about Purple to Doak’s Ferry? Would it be less complicated? *The Purple concept does connect to Doaks Ferry Road via Brush College. The intersection of Wallace Road and Doaks Ferry Road is farther north and a connection there would require crossing existing developed properties. This impact can be avoided, and provide the same level of connectivity, by connecting at Brush College.*
 - ◆ Have you considered phasing? *Yes – we will look at phasing for all the concepts in connection with availability of funding.*
 - ◆ You show no connection in the Purple concept with Hwy 22 – will you consider that later to alleviate traffic? *It could be considered as a future improvement but it is not part of the proposed concept.*
 - ◆ When you make a choice will you consider how far people would have to travel to the next crossing if the other two bridges were closed? *Yes - the Purpose and Need statement recognizes this as an issue which requires contingency plans and the Task Force has identified connectivity as an evaluation objective. Those concepts which place a new structure closer to the existing bridges will rank higher in this category.*
 - ◆ How many lanes will be elevated on the west side to Hwy 22? *There will be one lane in each direction.*
 - ◆ Have you considered a bridge between the two existing bridges or perhaps widening them both? *We are developing concepts that incorporate improvements to the existing bridges but connections at the bridgeheads (in West Salem and downtown) will continue to be a problem.*
 - ◆ What happens if there is no financing? *If we can get a “location decision” funding has been identified for some right-of-way purchases (\$20 million in SKATS RTSP). Most of the new concepts can be phased and we would need to determine from which phase we’d get the most benefit.*
 - ◆ Why do four of the concepts go right through traffic? Doesn’t this just create more congestion? *There is a flyover ramp on the west side which connects them to Hwy 22. Red does not have a direct connection to the existing bridges.*
 - ◆ The Mayor of Dallas said that a large percentage of his city of 14,000 – 15,000 people drives to Salem and we need to consider the Salem River Crossing project as a regional issue. It is also important to remember that in a few more years that population could swell to 100,000 people so we need to think about a “pressure release valve.” *Traffic*

modeling shows that during the PM peak 37% of the traffic continues west after crossing the river. We will run an AM peak model as well.

- ◆ *Are you trying to control car or truck traffic? We're looking at all traffic. The percentage of three plus axle vehicles is only 9% - 10% a day on the bridges, much lower than most people think.*
- ◆ *We've studied this issue for 41 years. What assurance do we have that we will get a new bridge and not just another study? If we can figure out the funding then we can move forward. We're hoping to get a Record of Decision (ROD) in 2009.*
- ◆ *Why is there funding for mass transit and not for bridges? That money comes from federal and local commitments; ODOT has a fixed number of dollars to spend on maintenance and only a small percentage to go to modernization.*
- ◆ *Have you considered tolling? It is one of the financial strategies we are looking at.*
- ◆ *Do you have a plan to go to the legislature in 2009? You should consider working with an interim legislative bridge group so when the 2009 session opens there will be a working plan in place. We have plans to work with a lobbyist and Councilor Clem to proceed in that direction.*
- ◆ *What about extending the Purple and Orange concepts to Orchard Heights and Brush College then around like a beltline? Polk County had a conceptual agreement with the City of Keizer to have a second bridge and others had talked about a beltline with a second bridge north and a third south. We are trying to be realistic and get to a build decision and feel that can be best accomplished by looking at a single bridge at this point.*
- ◆ *It seems like the breakdown on peak PM traffic data is different from the numbers presented in December. That's due to the fact that we have upgraded our model.*
- ◆ *All you have to do is stand at the Eola end to see that the worst problem is West Salem.*
- ◆ *I've lived all over and tolls are a common highway financing mechanism. Why don't we have them here? They are beginning to be discussed in Oregon (i.e. on the Columbia River Crossing Project) and they will be a part of the funding discussion for this project.*
- ◆ *Pink, Orange, and Blue concepts seem to have a common "jump-off" - why not connect them differently? We could do this and create some hybrid concepts - we're looking for suggestions from you about how to do this.*
- ◆ *How high a priority is this at a state level? It ranks very high on the ODOT regional list of priorities but there are many other high priority money issues in the area as well identified by both the City and County. That being said, we have never gotten this far before (on the project) in the environmental process.*
- ◆ *Whether there is money now or not, we need to have a plan in place so that if the legislature identifies funding we will be ready to move forward (example: Rickreal).*
- ◆ *Are all roads crossing Wallace Marine Park elevated? Yes*
- ◆ *How can Marine Drive be phased? Will it be built before or with the bridge? An alignment for a future street is in the plans now and we are working to get right-of-way but there*

is no money to build it right now. It could be built in segments – the plans show it as a collector but it could become more of an arterial and perhaps connect to a new bridge.

- ◆ *What has been done regarding Front Street? The hold up is at the roads going onto and off of the bridge, not the bridge itself. The problem is at Glen Creek Road. The COG did a Bridgehead Study exploring what could be done with relatively low cost. There is some money for improvements to Center Street to northbound Front including a traffic signal. Eliminating the left turn from Edgewater to Wallace Road was a recommendation from the Bridgehead Engineering Study that has been implemented.*
- ◆ *Could the “suicide lane” on Wallace be used to ease congestion? We’ll take it back to the engineers – it could provide some relief but then the road does return to two-lane.*
- ◆ *Do you have a larger area map that could go out to Brooks when looking at modeling data? We are attempting to draw the largest numbers away from the existing bridges so, although a bridge further north would provide some benefit, the defined study area would provide the most.*
- ◆ *A lot of people going through Salem are not stopping in the immediate vicinity. Why not tie in with the Newberg-Dundee project and then cross on to Hwy 22? The COG studied 16 corridors in 2002 and the Wheatland Ferry Rd. crossing didn’t seem to carry a lot of people or divert traffic from the existing bridges.*

Flip Chart Comments – June 26th Open House

- ◆ Double deck the existing bridge.
- ◆ Park and Ride to leave more commuter cars in West Salem.
- ◆ Convert the old RR bridge to a 2-way P and R tram.
- ◆ A crossing that assumes fill is allowed – less structure across flood plain.
- ◆ Make improved bike paths N and S and from east to west Salem to encourage more favorable bike commuting.
- ◆ Pine couplet – high impact on livability of residential neighborhood: reverse curve through residential neighborhood to Hickory Street – adverse neighborhood impacts; positive due to connection at Pine and Fairgrounds; more positive than blue; consider stoppage at railroad tracks.
- ◆ Tryon – problem with long elevated ramp approach – tend to attract people who live under highway, poor aesthetics with ramp overhead; less impact on residential uses than any others.
- ◆ Make better connection from Portland Road (probably Pine and Broadway) to the orange concept.
- ◆ Improve multi-leg intersections on Portland Road if more traffic is channeled onto it from a new bridge. These intersections are dangerous now for all users, especially bike/ped.

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- ◆ Orange needs future connection to Wallace/Brush College.
 - ◆ Major interchange near Liberty and Parkway would significantly affect ped access to Fred Meyer, a major community shopping center in a neighborhood with many non-drivers.
 - ◆ Orange has least impact on residential.
 - ◆ Need to show what streets are closed.
 - ◆ Connect Hwy 22 to Parkway major movement; connection to West Salem minor movement.
 - ◆ Improve Marion Street to Wallace Road connection.
 - ◆ Existing bridge concept - add capacity by double-decking rather than widening.
 - ◆ Market Street interchange design would need to be changed to accept significantly more traffic.
 - ◆ Need to channel traffic from any new bridge onto arterials/major collectors and protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic as traffic tries to make connection to N-S routes.
 - ◆ Pine Street connection - hook it into the Liberty/Commercial/Broadway couplet like in the Academy example to reduce impact on neighborhoods instead of extending to Fairgrounds Road.
 - ◆ Riverbend to Tryon
 - ◆ Elevate with earthwork and culverts to reduce cost (less structure). Flows still met.
 - ◆ Staged construction - open bridge to northwest Salem before constructing 22 connection.
 - ◆ River Street - now narrow, non-standard, widening would have impacts.
 - ◆ Broadway/Academy - tennis court would be affected.
 - ◆ Highland Park - increased traffic would have negative effect.
 - ◆ Highland School - increased traffic would have negative effect.
 - ◆ Highland School and Park - center/heart of neighborhood.
 - ◆ Don't improve E/W vehicle capacity by compromising N/S bike/ped connectivity.
 - ◆ Blue route would put very busy intersections directly adjacent to Highland Park, Highland ball fields, and Highland Elementary - negative impact on neighborhood.
 - ◆ Difficulty of getting kids to Highland School across Broadway and Liberty

Flip Chart Comments – June 27th Open House

- ◆ Grade separate Glen Creek/Wallace – 11 lane cross-section excessive and large ROW impacts are greater than separation.
- ◆ Interchange on eastside of Blue – connect to Riverbend area on West side and North of rail on East side. Make Center to Front ramp free flow ramp.
- ◆ Establish a target date for funding/cost expectations.
- ◆ Introduce a bill to the legislature with a preliminary funding/cost plan (on the first day of the session).
- ◆ Committee on finance, cost, and selecting a route.
- ◆ Better bike/walk connection across river.
- ◆ Considered taking the bus from the West side to East side, but it only takes about 15 minutes to drive across at the peak of congestion and 45 minutes by bus because of the transfer.
- ◆ Need duplicate access to Wallace Marine Park especially with future expansion.
- ◆ Improve east-west traffic flow from downtown (or existing bridges) to I-5
- ◆ PINK – Concerned about disruption to residential and lower income housing impacts to the Highland neighborhood; concerned about closing Front Street which is a well-used N/S alternate route.
- ◆ BLUE – Concern for affect to senior housing near Orchard Heights connection.
- ◆ PINK/BLUE – Concern for affect of P & W Rail line to how blue and pink operates at their one-way couplet juncture points. Apparently the train operates 3 plus times a day (more than in the past). When the train operates traffic will back up on Commercial, Liberty and Broadway for many, many blocks.
- ◆ Interest in mass transit being merged with options.
- ◆ Orange route – west end – connect to Orchard Heights Road instead of Hope.
- ◆ Tryon to Doaks Ferry takes you directly to Hwy 22 avoiding most of Salem.
- ◆ Access to the north end of Wallace Marine Park (undeveloped part) from Marine Drive – NW alignment – Park access road.
- ◆ The further north the alignment, the more likely you pay a toll – to be able to avoid the railroad crossing and downtown.
- ◆ Have purple connect to Riverbend.
- ◆ Circle route around Salem-Keizer far out.
- ◆ Rezone in West Salem so no bridge needed (i.e. “big box”).

- ◆ Future condo at Hope north of Orange. 30 plus houses and condos under construction.
- ◆ Tunnel from Orange in east (Salem Parkway to Purple in west (Wallace Road).
- ◆ Orange east touch on west to Orchard heights like the Blue vs. Hope Street.
- ◆ Tie Rosemont into Parkway or possible College northward.

Written Comments

Do you have suggestions for improving any of the river crossing concepts presented tonight?

<p>The best of the five new bridge ideas is Tryon St. connecting the Salem Parkway to Wallace. This would relieve a considerable amount of traffic that now uses both the Center and Marion Street bridges and be least disruptive to existing streets and neighborhoods on both sides of the Willamette River.</p>
<p>My preference is for the Tryon Orange concept for a number of reasons, however, after a nights sleep the Market Street concept has become my second choice if the following is added to the concept: (1) Market from Bridge to Capitol become one way westbound, Belmont would be one way eastbound merging back into Market before the RR tracks, (2) Broadway be improved from the Parkway to Marion Street with an avenue type feel (similar to Front Street). It would also be better if Market could connect to Orchard heights.</p>
<p>No building – the only solutions are managing what we have.</p>
<p>We prefer the Tryon options, particularly the orange. Both the orange and purple divert traffic from congested areas and have minimal impact on neighborhoods. They also provide ease onto I-5 and to and from Hwy 22.</p>
<p>Like the Red concept of connecting south end of Marine Drive to Hwy 22 – at least on northbound lanes. Also, the yellow concept showing connection from Marion Street bridge to Marine Drive northbound. The orange concept of connecting the bridge to Marine Drive has possibilities. The purple concept of connection to Brush College Rd. is the best.</p>
<p>The purple concept has the opportunity to reduce traffic on Wallace Road in the area in the area of Glenn Creek Road and Orchard Heights Road. Also – smallest impact on existing structures on the west side of the river – somewhat larger impact on homes and businesses at the Tryon Street end of the bridge. But the interchange would enable a very good flow of traffic.</p>
<p>I purchased my property in June, 1999 and since then traffic on Wallace has increased dramatically. I suggest an origin/destination study is necessary to determine which of the proposed routes will actually address the congestion concerns.</p>
<p>The orange is my favorite. I would like to see orange connect directly with Orchard heights not Hope. Hope Street doesn't have the cross streets as Orchard Heights and dead ends. Move the traffic direct into "target" area. Thank you for all your work.</p>
<p>Purple is your best alternative of the ones presented. The other options put traffic where Wallace Road is already congested. Purple gets traffic from downtown and off Wallace.</p>
<p>Orange seems to make the most sense to me as a West Salem resident.</p>

Combine the Orange plan on the east side of the river taking traffic from Salem Parkway so traffic can miss downtown especially truck traffic. Then on the west side use the Blue plan connecting with Orchard Heights.
Like the Orange alternative except going directly into Orchard Heights.
You need to improve traffic flow THROUGH Salem from the bridge to I-5 – time lights, limited access, etc. so traffic does not back up. Traffic flow through West Salem should also be improved going N-S paralleling Wallace Rd. before it becomes another Lancaster Drive.
Being a resident of West Salem just off 22, also a city employee seeing and driving the area at all hours, the Tryon Street area is by far the most practical and most useful for both but connecting at Orchard heights.

Are there other concepts or ideas that you would like to suggest:

Has there been a thought of a bridge south of Marion at Rosemont connecting into Mission?
Having been a part of the bridges advisory committee for West Salem for the Salem Futures Project – with 15 possible locations mapped out, I’m surprised the Mission St. to Highway 22 crossing is not now being considered. It would remove a lot of I-5 traffic that comes downtown to cross the Marion Street bridge.
(1)Tax three-plus garage homes in West Salem (2) Stop building homes in West Salem, (3) Provide incentives to employers to provide jobs in West Salem, (4) More incentives to telecommuting, (5) Park & Ride from West Salem, (6) Buy houses and tear down – make parks, (7) Extra fee for vehicle registration for West Salem, (8) More shops in West Salem.
I find the Yellow and Green concepts to be unacceptable due to the crossing of the park and the connections on the east side of the river. The Blue and Pink concepts also do not have great connection on the east side of the river. The Marine Drive concept as a connection to the new bridge is a very important improvement.
It is shortsighted to just look at one bridge. Let’s think to the future and do the job right the first time. There should be a bridge at Tryon off Parkway and one south at Kuebler that hooks into Hwy 22 on the west side of West Salem. This again gets traffic out of downtown. If you do go with one bridge, shortly after it is built people will want another bridge and how long will it take for it given how long it’s taken for this new bridge?
Consider rail (light or medium) over the RR bridge from park and rides on the West side to the Capitol Mall. Encourage some large retail like Wal-Mart or Fred Meyer in West Salem. This would reduce West Salem residents’ trips east significantly.
A bridge in West Salem south of current bridge around Eola Inn that would tie into River Road, Keubler, etc. to bypass Salem.
Prefer Beltline concept: two bridges, one at Lockhaven and one at Viewcrest, linked to Cordon Road on the east side and Doaks Ferry Road on the west side. <i>(This suggestion made by two attendees)</i>

Is there anything else you’d like to tell us?

Not everyone that crosses the bridge wants to stop in Salem or West Salem. PLEASE – design better access to I-5!
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<p>I think Scott Erickson's point regarding getting a plan done ASAP and keep knocking on legislators' doors for some of the funding. He made great analogy regarding new overpass at Rickreall.</p>
<p>This bridge needs to be built right away not in 5 or 10 years. Why not look at another bridge to the south of the existing bridges?</p>
<p>I like and work in West Salem (work off Edgewater NW) and also do community activities in West Salem. Wallace Road traffic is difficult at 4:30 p.m. when I often am on my way home. Bridge traffic is difficult when I attend meetings downtown first thing in the morning or do business in town in the afternoon after 3:00 p.m.</p>
<p>It's been a long time in coming. Good luck on this endeavor.</p>
<p>All of the traffic crossing the Center St. and Marion St. bridges is not downtown traffic – a lot of it comes from Keizer and north, Lancaster St. and east, Commercial/Liberty Sts. And south. If this distant traffic can be channeled over another bridge, either north or south of the current bridges it would relieve the congestion on both existing bridges – especially if it also serves vehicles coming from the west.</p>
<p>I think the RR tracks on pine can be a big issue and therefore make the Pine Street location less effective for connectivity. In talking with a friend a question of just where east bound traffic is headed makes a difference as to whether Tryon or Market would be better for connectivity.</p>