



December 6 and 7, 2006 Open Houses

Public meetings were held on Wednesday, December 6, 2006 at Roth's Hospitality Center in West Salem and Thursday, December 7, 2006 at the Salem City Council Chambers in downtown Salem to present the Salem River Crossing project. The main purpose of the meetings was to present background information on the project including objectives, existing conditions and travel; present the draft Statement of Purpose and Need and solicit input from attendees; and offer a project web site demonstration. 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 the Statesman Journal as well as the West Salem newspaper. Notification in the form of the project newsletter was sent to approximately 1000 local residents, businesses, and community leaders. Three different email communications were sent to approximately 250 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 Monday, December 4 and a display ad promoting the Open Houses appeared in the Statesman Journal on Sunday, December 3.

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 project and issues surrounding it with staff members and members of the Task Force. Julie Warncke, 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. The 5:30 p.m. presentation on Thursday was broadcast by CCTV and made available on their internet archive of public meetings.

Attendees were encouraged to submit comments on the project by completing a form asking for input about important issues and for comments on the draft Statement of Purpose and Need. They were also encouraged to contribute to an "issues wall" which enabled them to build on comments made by others. Approximately 90 people attended the December 6th open house and 45 people attended the December 7th meeting.

The following items were on display at the meeting:

- ◆ A map on which attendees placed dots indicating where they lived
- ◆ Project schedule and graphic of participants in the project
- ◆ Existing traffic volumes, PM peak intersection performance (2006), Safety issues, PM peak future travel demand (2030)
- ◆ Recommended study area
- ◆ Explanation of what a purpose and need statement is
- ◆ Draft Purpose Statement, and draft Need Statements for the project.

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- ◆ Project website demonstration

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 “Issues Wall” and were offered during a question and answer period after each of the presentations.

Verbal Comments

- ◆ We’ve been going to meetings about a new bridge since the ‘60s. Is anything ever going to be built?
- ◆ What are you doing now and plan to do until a new bridge is built about traffic problems on the bridges?
- ◆ What happened to the beltline concept that had been discussed in previous studies?
- ◆ What about changing land use to make sure a new bridge is not obsolete in 20 years?
- ◆ Will there be alternatives that include other transit modes? People can adapt to alternative transit modes if they are provided – we need to change travel behaviors.
- ◆ Be sure to look at other alternatives, and ways to not need another bridge, i.e. pedestrian bridge, transit, incentives – get us out of our cars!
- ◆ Are we limited to crossings within the “box” (study area)? If so, why? It makes the process appear predetermined.
- ◆ Urgency of project: physician on his way to hospital when was stopped by a disruption on the bridge and he was unable to arrive in time to deliver a baby - would like to see a new bridge “move ahead” for safety – not just convenience!

Issues Wall Comments

1. Natural and Cultural Resources

- ◆ Bridge landings should be river/park use

2. Community/Quality of Life

- ◆ Pedestrian/bicycle bridge across Slough, linking Riverfront Park with Minto-Brown Park, eventually tying in Wallace Marine Park.
- ◆ Located away from residential areas

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- ◆ Negative impact on existing residential area along the river!
 - ◆ Dedicated bike lanes. “Amen!!”
 - ◆ Consider the impact on the homes/neighborhood on the east side of river

3. Transportation

- ◆ There is a bottleneck at the north bound off ramp of the Center Street Bridge: remodel exit ramp and add lane through corner of the skate park. Excavate 6 feet down for truck clearance.
- ◆ One land railroad bridge could carry trolley from W. Salem to state buildings with a side trip to downtown. Parking lot on west side of river.
- ◆ Or to connect West Salem and downtown bus system with expanding existing bus system. “You can’t pave away congestion.” Mass transit is the answer.
- ◆ Build new structure 1 km long linking Salem and West Salem and selling development/air rights above the river.
- ◆ The bridge needs to be north of the Brush College entrance onto Wallace to share the huge influx of people moving into the area – the ones going to Portland should be able to go left.
- ◆ Third bridge!
- ◆ Currently we need to plan our schedules around the amount of traffic congestion we encounter trying to get to and cross the bridge.
- ◆ Look at split between different traffic directions; should new bridge be North or South of existing?
- ◆ Edgewater/Rosemont on ramp to Hwy 22 (to Salem) is dangerous.
- ◆ Split the different functions listed in purpose statement.
- ◆ Apply flex hours to (state) workers.
- ◆ Extend Glen Creek to bridge across the river.
- ◆ Need a bridge west of Center Street to relieve traffic between W. Salem and Hwy 99W.
- ◆ I missed a baby delivery on a Saturday due to a truck spilling its load on the bridge and backing up traffic past the hospital.

4. Cost/Feasibility

- ◆ Highway 22 between bridge crossing and cemetery can’t handle the peak load traffic.
- ◆ Should run north of West Salem and route to 99W by way of Zena Road near Lincoln store.
- ◆ Where is the \$ and who pays?

- ◆ Fed = 0
- ◆ State = 0
- ◆ City = 100%
- ◆ Where is third bridge in Comp plan?

5. Regulations

- ◆ Deny any further 3-garage home permits in W. Salem/Polk County until such time as gridlock is eliminated.

6. Aesthetics

- ◆ An elegant and graceful solution to inspire admiration and pride!

7. Other Issues

- ◆ Why are we building more houses in W. Salem given today's congestion?
- ◆ Get more businesses in W. Salem
- ◆ Address the flood of new homes that increases traffic!
- ◆ Orient bridge so we don't have to drive into the sun.
- ◆ Protect flood plain.

Written Comments

Which issues do you think are most important as the City and ODOT consider transportation solutions across the Willamette River in Salem? (select one response per row)					
	Most Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Unsure
Access to local businesses and shopping	4	2	4	1	
Commuter access to and from downtown	8	3	1	1	
Access to neighborhoods	2	5	3	2	
Freight and delivery access	3	3	4	2	
Transit connections between downtown and West Salem	5	5	3	2	
Bicycle and pedestrian connections between downtown and west Salem	3	4	3	4	
Neighborhood livability	4	6	2	1	
River crossing options in the event the existing bridges are unavailable	8	4	1	1	

Cost and Funding	3	5	2	2	1
Private property impacts	1	3	8	1	1
Historic resources		1	7	4	1
Environmental impacts	2	5	6	1	

Do you agree with the Draft Purpose?	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
				(Please explain below)	
The proposed action would improve mobility and safety for people and freight for local, regional, and through travel across the Willamette River in the Salem-Keizer metropolitan area while alleviating congestion on the Marion and Center Street bridges and on the connecting highway and arterial street systems.	11	2			
Do you agree with the Draft Need?	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	No Opinion	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
				(Please explain below)	
Improve existing and future mobility and safety of passenger vehicles	12				
Improve existing and future mobility and safety of freight vehicles	7	4			1
Improve existing and future reliability of public transportation	4	5	1	1	1
Improve existing and future mobility and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists	6	2	2	1	1
Minimize traffic disruptions and enable emergency vehicle response in the event of restricted access to and/or closure of the existing bridges due to an emergency or other incident	10	1			1
Develop a financial strategy for implementation	6	4	1		1

Do you have any other comments? Or explain your answers from above.

- ◆ The congestion of getting from east to west of the river has been a concern of mine for 8 years since I have lived in W. Salem. Particularly since I have to cross during peak times of the day. I too, along with thousands of other commuters were affected by “the jumper,” and it is time to fix these problems. Also, not to exclude any possibility of a catastrophic event happen that a quick and safe escape might be needed. Thank you! Councilman Dan Clem – you are awesome! Thanks.



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- ◆ You need to look at where the volume is coming from to widen the scope at the area you are considering putting the bridge.
 - ◆ Concerned that west Salem is driving this project at the eastside's sacrifice/expense.
 - ◆ I missed a baby delivery several years ago when all of downtown Salem was grid locked after a truck spilled its load on the bridge. The usual 12-15' trip from my home to the hospital was nearly 45' and I had to go around the downtown area completely.
 - ◆ A beautiful bridge would be a source of pride for Oregon. An attraction to visitors with economic spinoff likely. Would likely appear on calendars, maps, and magazines thus promoting Oregon (lottery funds available?) Checkout Redding, CA fort bridge – Wow! Let's have one to rival that.
 - ◆ Improve the passage of traffic to and from Yamhill County locations from Salem as it passes through the Wallace Road part of west Salem. Bypass?
 - ◆ I have lived in west Salem 74 years. You have studied this since 1961. Nothing has been done.
 - ◆ Consider percent of west Salem to central downtown traffic. Will bridge to north really solve this problem? Most folks in morning want access due east of bridge . . .not to north. (3 lanes to downtown vs. 1 lane to north!!) Option(s) to include capacity increase @ extg. Bridges seems appropriate as north bridge may not take enough traffic load? I'd be happy to discuss more . . .
 - ◆ I am concerned about the thought before building Front Street bypass to west Salem. I avoid it except late at night or middle of day because to get to Wallace one must go across two lanes of traffic. Must protect land for Marine Drive bypass so development does not block future building of this road. Sooner the better to get traffic off of Wallace, anything would help.
 - ◆ I am a retired public school teacher and 18-year resident of west Salem. I will make my remarks brief, but first of all I want to say thank you for this opportunity to offer comment for consideration on this project, probably the largest public works project in this area during my lifetime. I hope many people will participate and that you will take all that's given into serious consideration to come up with a solution that is enduring and satisfying to many. Traffic studies will dictate the size and capacity of the bridge, I'm sure. My expectation is that, when it is first opened, the bridge will be sized to handle three lanes of automobile traffic each way and that provision for bicycle and pedestrian traffic will be made. Also, it seems prudent to have a design that may accommodate expansion of an additional lane each way in the distant future. Finally, I urge serious consideration for a design that will be a beautiful landmark. I feel strongly that it should be a bridge that goes beyond a basic engineering solution to crossing a river. I deeply hope it will be an elegant and graceful solution that the citizens of Oregon can be proud of crossing the greatest river in the Willamette Valley. This bridge will likely become a major gateway to the Central Oregon Coast and thus can be a great memory for travelers westbound from Salem, our great State's capital city. It should be worthy of this role by inspiring admiration. I thank you for listening. If I can be of any further help I will gladly do what I can.