



Comments received by email and postal mail

DATE: November 20, 2006

9. Comment - 11/20/06 7:15 pm

When will the next bridge (or 2) be built, & why the delay?

Response – 11/29/06 8:15 am

Thank you for your question and I apologize for the delay in responding to you. We are embarking on a process to develop the federally mandated environmental impact statement (EIS) that will evaluate various alternatives for providing additional traffic carrying capacity across the Willamette River. Completion of the EIS and the selection of the preferred project is projected in Spring 2009 (the schedule for the EIS process can be found on www.salemrivercrossing.org). As part of this process, we will also be evaluating options for funding the project. Once the EIS is finished and funding for the selected alternative is secured, there are additional steps that must be completed prior to beginning construction such as project design and acquisition of right-of-way - depending on the selected project and the complexity of the design, these processes could take an additional 2-3 years. Due to all of these factors, the simple answer to your question is that it will be 7-10 years before a new bridge could be completed. ODOT, the City of Salem, and Polk and Marion Counties have placed a high priority on the completion of the EIS process and advancing this project toward construction.

I encourage you to stay informed on this project and continue to provide input. If you are available, please attend one of our community open houses scheduled for next week - either Wednesday, December 6th, 5 - 8PM at the West Salem Roth's, or Thursday, December 7th, 5 - 8PM at City Hall, Council Chambers.

8. Comment - 11/20/06 5:05 pm

I see this getting bogged down like turning the old railroad bridge into a pedestrian/bicycle route across the river, or the building of an overpass over the slough to connect Riverfront Park with Minto-Brown Park. Just because one commercial operator (the Willamette Queen captain) doesn't want, it shouldn't override the wishes of countless others that would like to see the overpass happen.

Response – 11/28/06 6:07 pm

Thank you for your interest in the Salem River Crossing project. I apologize for the delay in responding to your comment. The process that we are undertaking through the Salem River Crossing project is necessary to develop a solution to the traffic congestion across the Willamette River. This process will offer the opportunity for everyone to provide input into

defining both the problem and the solution. Our project timeline is included on the web site at <http://www.salemrivercrossing.org/Schedule.aspx>.

It is important to develop broad community support for a solution, recognizing that no solution will make everyone happy. Part of the current project will be to develop a financial strategy for implementing the preferred solution - whether that is a new bridge or something else.

The ability of the community to support a financial strategy is a critical component in implementing any solution. I encourage you to stay informed on this project and continue to provide input. If you are available, please attend one of our community open houses scheduled for next week - either Wednesday, December 6th, 5 - 8PM at the West Salem Roth's, or Thursday, December 7th, 5 - 8PM at City Hall, Council Chambers.

7. Comment - 11/11/06 11:29 am

Why doesn't the city of Salem put a moratorium on building new homes in west Salem until we get a new bridge over the Willamette? We already have too many people trying to get into downtown over the bridges we have every day.

Response – 11/15/06 3:13 pm

Thank you for your interest in the Salem River Crossing Project. You asked why Salem doesn't put a moratorium on building new homes in west Salem. State law governs when and how local governments can impose a moratorium on construction or land development. These laws can be found in Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 197.505 to 197.530. These laws limit the reasons a city can impose a moratorium, and limit the length of time a moratorium may be in place. Moratoria are primarily intended to address immediate threats to public health and safety. The maximum time limit a moratorium may be imposed is 6 months - with a maximum of 3 6-month extensions allowed. It is not likely that a moratorium could be justified based on either current or future predicted traffic volumes in the West Salem area. In addition, a moratorium requires a corrective plan - i.e., a plan to correct the problem creating the moratorium. After the corrective plan is adopted, the moratorium must be lifted after the 6-month period and any extensions have passed, even if the corrective plan has not yet been completed.

The environmental process we are currently working on is an important step to correct the traffic problems in West Salem, but we have not yet identified what the appropriate solution is as required by federal and state regulations. This will happen over the course of this project.

Part of the Salem River Crossing Project will be to develop a funding strategy. Once a preferred alternative is adopted, we will need to move forward with implementing the funding strategy to be able to start final design, right-of-way purchases, and construction.

Please let me know if I can provide further information on the Salem River Crossing Project.

6. Comment - 11/2/06 6:34 pm

Hi all, Today (Nov. 2) I wanted to try the public survey, but it said it was closed. Is this a temporary, or is it closed for good? There was no information on why it's closed

Response – 11/3/06 9:30 am

Thanks for your comment and interest in the survey. Unfortunately, you missed the closing date, by one day. You brought up a good point, that the grey box saying the "survey is closed," does not provide enough information. I have updated the survey page alerting readers that the survey closed on November 1st and that a new survey will be available in December.

Also, we are in the process of compiling the survey results and will be sharing that information within the next month. Please let me know if you have any other questions or comments. Thank you

5. Comment – 10/31/06 11:05 am

Today is the first time that I have ever seen the Polk County Commission put the Salem River Crossing Project on their published agenda. Is there some reason (other than the current election) that the Salem River Crossing is being listed in their public agenda for the first time?

Response – 11/8/06 5:06 pm

Thank you for your interest in the Salem River Crossing project. The question you asked regarding this being on the 10/31/06 agenda of the Polk County Board of Commissioners was forwarded to me. I went to the Polk County web site and excerpted the paragraph below from their minutes. Part of the federal Environmental Impact Statement process requires that the federal agency formally invite federal, state, and local agencies to be either "participating" or "cooperating" agencies.

This item was on their agenda to discuss their receipt of this letter. Please let me know if I can provide additional information - you can either contact me directly, or go through our project web site.

Excerpt from Polk County Board of Commissioners 10/31/06 minutes:

SALEM RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

Mike said that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is cooperating on the Salem River Crossing Project and Polk County has been asked to be a participating agency. He said that a participating agency has no authority whereas a cooperating agency does. He said that counties have the right, under Federal law, to be cooperating agencies if they request that. He suggested that we send a letter to ODOT making that request. Ron agreed.

4. Comment – 10/27/06 9:46 am

I am a stay at home West Salem mom who shuttles two kids to South Salem for 2 different schools. Three times a week I travel after school to Keizer for activities. I travel the bridges several times a day. I dread having to return home only to leave again at the 5 PM hour.

Wallace Street is a mess at that time (and 8 AM). Normal commute is 3 minutes from Orchard Heights to downtown. With traffic, make that 15 minutes...slow on Wallace, the bridge exits (especially heading north to Keizer)I think the Salem Parkway should be extended to Wallace (or a feeder road yet to be built). Removing the northern trips from the bridges would be great time saver. Salem Parkway seems already designed to handle the traffic to Keizer and I5. Unfortunately, this would also speed up growth in West Salem...something we really would like to see slow down until there is the proverbial "master plan". Until the bridges are built, let's get the local radio stations to broadcast better road info and more frequently when there is trouble on the bridges. That way, we'll find a friend's house or go shopping to keep from having potty accidents while waiting and waiting to move in traffic accidents or jumpers.

Response – Not requested

3. Comment – 10/17/06 4:12 pm

Please send several copies of the newsletter to me at . . . If you have an electronic version of the newsletter that is helpful too.

As the chairperson for the Salem Land Use Network I would like to Invite you or someone on your staff to attend one of our meetings to give a report to our members. The group is made up of all the land use chairs for each of Salem's 19 neighborhood associations. We meet on the last Wednesday of the month from 6 - 7:30 p.m. at Salem City Hall room 205. We will not meet in December, but the October and November agendas are still open for presentations. They close the around the 19 of each month, however.

I will refer your request for mailing addresses to Salem Community Services and see if you can piggy back on an existing Mailing to our board members.

Thank you for keeping me in the loop.

Response - 10/24/06 11:16 am

Your email to the Salem River Crossing web site was forwarded to me as the City project manager for this project. I would be happy to attend one of the Land Use Network meetings, however at this point I would need to request Wed. January 31st (the last Wed. in January). We have a Task Force meeting for the Salem River Crossing project on the evening of November 29th that conflicts with your Land Use Network meeting. We will be holding open houses during early December, and we will send out announcements of those in advance with the newsletter. Please let me know if January will work for your agenda. Thanks.

2. Comment – 10/19/06 2:58 pm

I would greatly appreciate it if you would put me on your notification list for updates and schedules for the subject project. Thank you very much.

Response – 10/23/06 9:44 am

Thank you for your interest in the Salem River Crossing project. Your contact information has been added to our mailing list and we will keep you informed of updates to the project. Have a great day,

1. Comment – 10/13/06 9:09 am

Is the citizen's forum on Nov 8? Where, when, time? Please advise ASAP

Response – 10/16/06 3:17 pm

Your question submitted via the project website regarding the date for our first public open house (citizen forum) was forwarded to me. The short answer is that the public open houses will not be held in November and at this point we hope to reschedule them for the first week of December.

The Project Management Team has reevaluated the timing of the open houses relative to some important new NEPA legal notification requirements that we must comply with. Working with FHWA, we are developing a new schedule for the open houses that we anticipate will not delay the overall project schedule. We feel that this change in timing of the open houses will provide more content to share and obtain feedback from the general public.

Thanks for your question and your interest.