



Comments received by email and postal mail

DATE: January 24, 2007

2007

29. Comment - 1/24/07 12:06 pm

Thanks for your response.

While I understand there's been no definitive decision on the exact bridge location, I thought the recommendation was within the square defined on the maps exhibited at the City meeting presentations, which includes Pine/Tryon. I guess what is frustrating is that IF the bridge is located at the end of Pine the necessity of purchasing that property later could end up costing taxpayers more in the end. Once word gets out that the bridge will be at a specific location, property owners may be tempted to escalate the price to the county/state (similar to the property owner out at Keizer Station). If the property was purchased now at a fair price, and the decision was later made to put the bridge at a different location, the property could be resold later, presumably at a profit (which could go towards building the bridge). What's more concerning is that the prospective property owner of the Stars location may not realize that a bridge may be planned there (I doubt the sellers will disclose that information) - then they're left holding a property they don't want to develop to its full potential. Conversely, it is possible that someone may purchase the property gambling that it will be chosen for the bridge site and inflate the price to the county/state for the bridge.

Response – 1/25/07 8:57 am

I understand your frustration. But as a government entity, we have to rely on adopted plans that go through a required process. We do our best to communicate with property owners about future transportation projects, but they have to make decisions on what is best for them on their land. I will share your concerns with the Task Force and Oversight Team working on this project.

28. Comment - 1/23/07 8:39 am

Please substitute Cathy Clark for Richard Walsh on the oversight team listing on the web page representing Keizer. Thanks.

Response – 1/26/07 10:04 am

Thank you for the notice on the Keizer representative on the River Crossing Oversight Team. We will make the requested changes.

27. Comment - 1/17/07 2:43 pm

Your site probably answered the questions, but I did not find them: (a) Why not use the two studies that were done and the plan that (to my understanding) had been agreed upon? (b) With the congestion, etc. that has existed for several years, why is action on building an additional bridge taken so long to begin serious planning ... West Salem appears to have a very low priority with the City of Salem. I have resided in West Salem for 38+ years and have at times felt that we represent an unwanted step-child for the city officials.

Response – Not requested

26. Comment - 1/14/07 5:00 pm

Thanks for responding to my letter, I can understand that Federal money is hard to come by due to the expenses incurred by our beloved president's blunders. I suppose I can only say, "do your best in the unfavorable circumstances" and continue to grit my teeth with the rest of those using the inadequate bridges for another ten years!
Sincerely, a disgruntled

Response – Not requested

25. Comment - 1/14/07 10:56 am

All the discussion seems to center on where the bridge will cross the river. Equally important is how a third bridge will connect on the west side. If it simply connects to the existing Wallace Road, it will not solve the problem -- it will add to an existing one. The bridge should not be discussed without considering the impact on the west side. What about the planned Marine Drive? Where does it fit in this picture. How would this traffic reach Hwy. 22 and the coast, bypassing Wallace Road, Edgewater, etc. At one time the plan was to connect to Doak's Ferry Road and join the coast highway near the Eola Inn. That seems to have been eliminated as a possibility with the West Salem High School and multiple subdivisions approved by the city. A third bridge is not the answer without a plan for handling traffic once it crosses the bridge going west and east.

Response – Not requested

24. Comment - 1/14/07 10:12 am

Although we need at least 3 new bridges, please don't waste our chance of our 1 shot on a bridge that goes nowhere. Lockhaven would tie directly into the freeway and into Lincoln. This would take the pressure off the north bound traffic and off the current bridges. The next bridge after that should be Mission into Rosemont interchange. This would be very expensive, if there wasn't an elevated bi-pass to the freeway to take the pressure off Mission, this would be pointless. The last choice would be Pine St. This will take pressure off for the local traffic, but will not tie into any freeways. Polk County will not stop issuing building

permits, and the bridges will never keep up with people moving into that area. Think hard before we lose a great chance to do the Lockhaven bridge.

Response – 1/19/07 7:37 am

Thank you for your comment and I apologize for taking so long to respond. The preliminary analysis we have done to date confirms the results of a study conducted by the Salem Keizer Area Transportation Study (SKATS) completed in 2002. Both have found that a new river crossing located somewhere between the existing Marion and Center Street bridges and the area of Tryon Street (at the south end of Salem Parkway) does the most to relieve traffic on the existing bridges. A crossing in the area of Tryon or Pine Street (which was identified as the locally preferred alternative in the SKATS study) could be connected easily to Salem Parkway which is a direct connection to the freeway. We have also found that most traffic on the Marion and Center Street bridges has a local orientation - that is one or both trips ends are in the Salem-Keizer metropolitan area. A crossing which primarily addresses regional connections, therefore, would not do a very good job of solving the major traffic problem which is local trips.

I appreciate your comment and encourage you to stay informed and involved in the process through the project website and/or attending meetings of the Task Force and Oversight Team (meeting dates/times/locations will be posted on the website). We will also be holding additional public open houses in the spring or summer.

23. Comment - 1/7/07 7:14 pm

I prefer to remain anonymous. I have had actual conversations with actual people who have real control over federal funding for transportation projects. I was assured that it will be a cold day in a very warm place before Salem gets federal funding for a bridge over the Willamette before Portland receives such funding if money does become available. It was also emphasized that any money for Willamette bridge work is unlikely for anyone in the foreseeable future because the federal budget is expected to be under heavy pressure due to anticipated budgetary burdens as the result of costs associated with increased demands on social security, the costs of military adventures, and the overall competitive environment in the world economy. These are the political realities. The future, of course, is hard to predict and those who do so often receive a lesson in humility. Nevertheless, I think it is safe to say that a bridge project which depends on federal funding is extremely unlikely within 12 or 13 years, very unlikely within 20 years, and possible within 30 years. Another potential funding source is the State of Oregon. This may be problematic if one considers the proposed location of the bridge. If it does not act as an expeditor of commuter traffic and freight by connecting Bend to the coast by providing unimpeded traffic flow through Salem, then it would contradict the goals of the Oregon Highway Plan. The proposed crossing points north of the existing bridge would necessitate travel through downtown and a clear route would be impossible without severe disruptions and extreme costs. What to do. I think that, at the least, people who are contemplating a move to West Salem should get an honest evaluation about what the future seems to be. I also think that SDC's for developers should reflect the inescapable future costs of transportation which will in large part be a result of the increased population in West Salem. People who build in West Salem will primarily be skilled, white collar, or professional people. They will most likely need to cross

the river often. I propose 2 approaches to alleviate this anticipated demand. The first is a rather unique proposition. How about a Wal-Mart. Now that competition is basically outlawed and the sources of goods and services are becoming more and more centralized, small business growth is unlikely. A megastore west of the river would reduce the number of trips across the bridge significantly. The second proposal is to use the existing railroad bridge, with improvements, to provide mass transit from a parking area west of the river to a suitable location in the heart of downtown. I am not certain that this is feasible but from the testimony that I have heard, I think it is worth looking into.

Response – 1/25/07 8:44 am

Thank you for your comment and I apologize for my delay in responding. I'll address your concern about funding and your two suggestions below.

Funding: You are correct that both federal and state funding are likely to be very competitive. We will be developing a financial strategy as part of the Salem River Crossing project. This strategy will need to identify how we propose to fund the preferred alternative, most likely with a combination of local, state, and federal funds. As part of this, we will be exploring public/private partnerships and other alternative funding mechanisms.

"Wal-Mart": As we develop alternatives, we will consider how changes in land use could affect the transportation need. While we won't get to any specific use such as a Wal-Mart, we will look at assumptions about the amount of commercial land in west Salem. This analysis will build on the West Salem Neighborhood Plan.

Railroad Bridge: The possibility of converting the Railroad bridge to use by cars or transit was analyzed in 1998. While it would be possible, the railroad bridge does not integrate well with the existing street system. Taking this into consideration, the City Council made the decision that using this bridge for a pedestrian and bicycle transportation was the higher priority.

Once again, thank you for your comment and we will share your suggestions with the Task Force working on this project. I encourage you to continue to provide input throughout this process.

22. Comment - 1/7/07 6:07 pm

I'm wondering if the State will be proactive in purchasing the former Stars location at the end of Pine? Purchase now may be cheaper than later if a new owner purchases. In addition, if the Pine location is now used for the new bridge, then the State could resell the property.

Response – 1/24/07 10:33 am

Thank you for your comment and I apologize for my delay in responding.

The purpose of the federal environmental process we are involved in is to ensure that decision makers use a transparent and fair process to reach a decision about how best to address a significant transportation need. We are not at the point of knowing whether a new bridge will be supported or where it would be located. While we are building on the previous

planning process we cannot assume that the Pine/Tryon corridor will be the preferred alternative out of this process. In addition, the corridor from the previous planning process was broad; it was not refined enough to use as a basis for purchasing right-of-way. The conclusion of the Salem River Crossing project and adoption of a preferred alternative into the local and regional transportation plans will give us a basis for future acquisition of right-of-way. I encourage you to stay involved in this process as we work towards this decision.

21. Comment - 1/2/07 8:55 pm

We moved to West Salem in 1977 and had our home built in the Eola area of West Salem in 1978. During this time growth in West Salem has been constant; however, never more than in the last 2-3 years. The bridge is always crowded with people swerving around changing lanes when we cross over into Salem downtown. If we take Wallace Road when we return it is a mess. It is very frustrating and dangerous if there is an accident or incident blocking our one bridge over the Willamette. There has been nothing but talk of the need for another bridge ever since we moved here but so far, no other route has been definitely decided on so action can take place. I am beginning to wonder if there will be another bridge in my lifetime. I feel that road planning studies and committee meetings should surely be over by now. Land & construction prices continue to rise. Surely anyone who comes over the bridge must realize we need another route to West Salem. Please do anything you can to remove hurdles from the Tryon/Pine Street proposed new bridge route before constant gridlock sets in and it is too late.

Response – Not requested

2006

20. Comment - 12/30/06 9:23 pm

This bridge project has been moving too slow for too many years. West Salem is burgeoning with new growth and a new bridge across the Willamette is necessary ASAP.

Response – Not requested

19. Comment - 12/30/06 12:34 pm

As residents of N.W. Salem for the past 17 years my wife and I have become increasingly alarmed at the enormous growth of the area and the resultant traffic snarls due to convergence at the bridges. This problem will only get worse and demands a solution that only another bridge can solve. Any incident, however minor, results in intolerable back-ups throughout downtown and N.W. Salem. Police don't help when they close all lanes when one or two could be kept open.(Witness the threatened suicide a few months ago) The subject has been studied to death for many years and the cost will only increase so WE NEED THIS BRIDGE, any other proposal is only a band-aid. LET'S DO IT!!!

Response – 1/9/07 7:33 am

Thank you for your comment 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 the project web site - www.salemrivercrossing.org). As part of this process, we will also be evaluating options for funding the project. The good news in this is that we have never advanced this far in the development of plans, designs, and funding alternatives for a new Willamette River Crossing. 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. However, 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 response to your concern is that it will be 7-10 years before a new bridge could be completed. We recognize that the time it takes to complete these processes is frustrating, but be assured that all of the partners (City, County, State) in this process are committed to delivering the final product as expeditiously as possible.

I encourage you to stay informed on this project and continue to provide input.

18. Comment - 12/30/06 9:00 am

It is not clear to me why there is even a question that another bridge should be built and built immediately. With more and more homes being built the existing problems with traffic will only increase. The ferry is not even part of the solution. Money spent on a larger ferry

did not even make a tiny difference in lessening the traffic problems and the ferry doesn't run if the water level is too high or if it is too low. It is not dependable. Perhaps it could be considered a tourist attraction, at best. Because of such traffic problems connected with the bridge, the ability for people to get needed emergency services. We need another bridge and we need it now! Spend no more money on studies. Decades of study should suffice!

Response – Not requested

17. Comment - 12/30/06 8:58 am

I concur with the statement of Craig Hanneman that doing nothing is no longer an option for expanding the crossing of the Willamette River in Salem. Certainly several studies have been completed in the past two or three decades. It is time to make a decision and move forward. Merely check the development on both sides of the river as an indication of the high need for wider/safe bridges to connect Marion and Polk County. The Salem bridges not only provide access for commuters but also for the residents from other parts of the valley who wish to visit the Oregon coast or the ever popular casino. Personally, I have lived in West Salem since 1988 and recognize the increased volume of traffic on Hwy 22 moving into Salem at most hours of the day. Merging traffic and cars needing to move lanes to get to their destination create another safety problem with the present bridge design. In this year, it seems mute as to a bridge off Pine Street or a bridge with a connection to the south. Both areas have grown significantly to justify additional services. I submit this comment, along with hundreds of other citizens, advocating for a decision regarding the "bridge issue".

Response – Not requested

16. Comment - 12/29/06 7:18 pm

Where and when is the bridge being built? Have any of these decision making persons ever been in the Wallace Rd. traffic trying to get to work. I leave at 6:45 and have to wait to get onto Wallace Rd because there are so many cars driving in and out of town. If I leave at 7am, the traffic is backed up all the way to the Assembly of God church and takes me 40 minutes to get to my job which is on the corner of Meyers and Commercial. I really think there needs to be a light at Michigan City Lane, those poor school aged kids are having a horrible time getting through to the other side of the street to catch their bus. What's it going to take, someone getting killed before anything is done:::

Response – 1/9/07 7:22 am

Thank you for your comment 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 the project web site - 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 response to your concern 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.

I have also forwarded your comment about a traffic signal at Wallace Road and Michigan City Lane to the staff at ODOT and the City of Salem who are responsible for evaluating the need for new traffic signals.

15. Comment - 12/20/06 1:09 pm

Concern on Traffic Modeling As I stated at the scoping meeting I am concerned that data collected along existing roadways can only conclude that an additional span is required in the near downtown area of Salem, as the existing roads are set up to funnel vehicles to the existing spans. Thus, it is my comment that the study, as presented, is skewed to producing a result to support a predetermined bridge location. I'd like to recommend that during the EIS that traffic patterns be evaluated on multiple scales, local, city-wide, and regional in an effort to evaluate where one or more crossing(s) may be included for evaluation rather than the limited location of options north of the near downtown core. By placing an additional crossing in the downtown area, roads in the nearby area will quickly become loaded to capacity and the solution short lived. Clear understanding of which vehicles are transgressing the area, such those transitioning between I-84 and 22, would help myself and others understand why loading of downtown surface streets is viewed as a solution by ODOT's technical staff. The idea that more tractor trailer combinations could be placed downtown streets and arteries is not a solution that well recognizes the value statement geared toward citizen safety. As for commuters between West Salem and the downtown core, I'd recommend that the EIS include alternatives to single person vehicles and include the notion of expanded mass transit, construction of a dedicated automated "trolley" on the old railroad bridge with associated autocentric structures (parking for example), and other novel methods of moving people around. Getting citizens out of there cars and using other modes of transportation are longer term solutions, whereas construction of additional paved surfaces isn't. The EIS should include city and county level projections of population growth to include future development strains. As development continues west of the river and south of Salem, commuters from those areas would be constrained to using near downtown bridges which may tend to maximize their miles driven, if other more efficient options are not presented. Creating solutions the ultimately lead to greater volumes of fuel consumption are counterproductive and contrary to goals to limit the emission of green house gases. I'll close for now recommending that the strategic focus of the oversight team and project team include statements that include a conservation element embodied by the notion that fewer vehicles on the roads is the long term goal, reduced overall consumption of hydrocarbon fuels is critical, and that thinking outside the usual solution box is required, otherwise a context sensitive solution will not be developed.

Response – Not requested

14. Comment - 12/20/06 11:50 am

Regarding building a new bridge across the Willamette in Salem, please don't do it. It's time we stop building roads and bridges and promote alternatives. Take a look at central Salzburg: one auto bridge and a pedestrian/bicycle bridge every two blocks or so. A new auto bridge will promote more growth in West Salem and encourage continued and even more auto use. The money needed to build one auto bridge could build multiple foot/bicycle bridges, perhaps some with a superlight-rail crossing. In this age of global warming, disappearing farmland, wars over oil, and congestion, we need to act responsibly and look to the future. If an auto bridge is tragically built, think creatively and with incentives NOT to drive as we always have: carpools only, cars of certain weights only, a high toll, or something! Thank you.

Response – Not requested

13. Comment - 12/7/06 9:46 pm

So sorry I couldn't attend Wednesday's meeting on the 3rd bridge, and Thursday's was cancelled due to poor attendance. However, [name] would like to add his proverbial Two Cents.

1. Suggested Name: Peace Crossing. Reason: Salem is derived from the Biblical term for Peace. This is the season to celebrate the Prince of Peace. Modern touch: Have placques to honor all Nobel Peace Prize winners with years and their actual feats. That would certainly give us a unique urban personality. And most definitely this exudes multiculturalism.

2. Emergency Route: Let's not overlook the downside of having only the Marion St. Bridge as our solo channel to West Salem in the interim. Any fire truck or ambulance totally depends on the existing bridge. As a practical stop-gap, I urge the RR Bridge be equipped with an emergency middle lane for such vehicles when (1) rush hour ensues; or (2) a standoff sequel, truck accident etc. closes down our lifeline or substantially delays ER access.

If such planning saves even ONE LIFE, it is well worth the price. When we have a hearing, count on my voice for urgent action.

Response – By phone, 12/8/06

12. Comment - 12/6/06 9:19 am

I am opposed to building a third bridge over the Willamette in Salem, for several reasons. First, it makes no sense in terms of the trajectory we are on with regard to gas prices. There is no doubt that the price of gas will continue to go up, gradually inducing people to seek

other modes of transport than the car. The money which would go towards a new bridge would be better spent making alternate modes of transportation more accessible to more people--buses and bicycles particularly. Second, global warming is an undeniable fact. Encouraging the increased use of cars, or the continued wasteful use, is contrary to our ultimate goal of cutting greenhouse emissions. Building a third bridge encourages the current pattern of use of the individual automobile. Third is cost. The money which will be spent on all phases of a third bridge would be much better spent on improving our other modes of travel. Clearly the citizenry of the area are beginning to wake up to the fact that our only mass transportation system needs financial support. I refer to the recent ballot measure supporting our bus system, which failed by a much smaller margin than one would have expected even a few years ago. Right now, unfortunately few people (relatively speaking) use our bus system, but many non-users recognize that they may want the option of using buses in the near future. Our aging population, combined with the increasing cost of gasoline, will gradually push up bus ridership. That's where our transportation dollars should be going. One of the most absurd parts of the whole third bridge discussion is that the perceived need is based on "rush hour" slowdowns of traffic movement. However, if you assess the actual number of minutes a day when traffic is slowed, and the tiny percentage of total time that is, it makes no sense to throw so much money at the third bridge solution. So what if people have to slow down for twenty minutes of their day? Thank you for considering my comments.

Response – 12/14/06 3:00 pm

Thank you for your input and I apologize for the delay in responding to you. I will share your concerns with the Task Force working on this project. We will be developing and evaluating alternatives this spring and summer. We expect that alternative modes will be an element in one or more alternatives. Cost is also a factor that will be used to evaluate alternatives.

Thanks again for sharing your ideas on the Salem River Crossing Project.

11. Comment - 12/5/06 3:43 pm

I have lived at this address for the past 16 years. During this period traffic on the bridges and in West Salem has tripled or quad-tripled. What will it be in the next 5 years? Some thing needs to be done "yesterday". If there is a wreck or incident on either bridge, West Salem becomes isolated. If I needed emergency medical assistance via an ambulance to the hospital, I might die waiting to cross the bridge. If a major fire occurred in West Salem, we would get no assistance from The Salem Fire Department located on the east side of the river. West Salem is no longer that bedroom community on the west side of the river. West Salem has just started its growth; the population will probably double within the next 8 to 10 years. Help! Help!

Response – 12/14/06 9:33 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 are projected in spring 2009 (the schedule for the EIS process can be found on the project web site - 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 response to your concern 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.

10. Comment - 12/5/06 10:21 am

Are you following the SAFETEA-LU Section 6002 guidelines, or is this project exempt?

Response – 12/5/06 10:11 am

Yes, we are following SAFETEA-LU 6002 guidelines on this project.

Let me know if you have any further questions.

Thanks.

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.