

Salem River Crossing Project

July 2008 Project Status Report



This status report provides a brief explanation of the major activities that were conducted for the month and what is scheduled for the following month, along with a review of the overall project schedule. Detailed information on the project activities can be found on the project website:

www.salemrivercrossing.org.

The project schedule is available online at www.salemrivercrossing.org/schedule.aspx. While some of the early milestones occurred later than originally scheduled, the project is on schedule to develop the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) through the end of 2008 and to publish the document during the early part of 2009.

Activities in July 2008

Project Management Team Meeting

A Project Management Team Meeting was held from 9:00 to 11:30 am on Wednesday, July 9. The primary topic discussed was the following:

- ◆ Tolling and the Use of Toll Revenues
 - Debrief on Discussions with FHWA and ODOT Leadership.
- ◆ TSM/TDM Subcommittee
 - Discuss Agenda Topics
- ◆ Engineering Refinement Status
 - Discuss process for Seeking Task Force and OT Endorsement of Alternative 2

Project Management Team Meeting

A Project Management Team Meeting was held from 9:00 to 12:00 am on Wednesday, July 23. The primary topic discussed was the following:

- ◆ Discuss Physical Infrastructure Assumptions for Tolling (Toll Booths vs. 100% Electronic)
- ◆ Discuss How Financing Options will be Addressed in Technical Reports
- ◆ Discuss Next Steps for Advancing Financial Plan Development and Engaging Stakeholders (Focus Groups, etc.)
- ◆ Joint Task Force/Oversight Team Briefing.
 - Review Agenda
- ◆ TSM/TDM Subcommittee
 - Review Agenda
- ◆ Review Bathymetric Survey Proposal

Joint Task Force and Oversight Team Briefing

A joint Task Force and Oversight Team briefing was held from 5:30 to 8:00 pm on Wednesday, July 23 at the Salem Public Library, Anderson Rooms. The primary topic discussed was the following:

- ◆ Project Updates

◆ Proposed New Alternative 2: Presentation and Discussion

**Notes From Meeting:*

Task Force and Oversight Team had some questions regarding the new and original Alternative 2:

- *What is included as part of Alternative 4B? – White plus existing bridge improvements. How does this work with the new Alternative 2?*
- *Are there things that we can include as improvements to the existing bridges? Is the original Teal “light” (original Alternative 2) fatally flawed?*
- *What is the cost estimate for the new Alternative 2?*

◆ Task Force Recommendation and Oversight Team Decision Regarding New Alternative 2.

**Notes From Meeting:*

- *The TF and OT wanted some extra time to digest the new idea for the existing bridges corridor and to get answers to their questions.*
- *A follow-up meeting will be scheduled for the end of August or beginning of September to inform them of our findings and recommendations.*

FHWA Briefing

An FHWA Coordination Meeting was held from 8:30 to 10:30 am on Monday, July 28. The primary topic discussed was the following:

- ◆ Update on New Alternative 2 and debrief on Joint Task Force/Oversight Team Meeting
- ◆ What Came out of the Joint Meeting: *See Above*

**Notes From Meeting:*

- *Recommendation is to see what we can do to the existing facilities. If it is fatally flawed, then document and eliminate it from being carried forward as an alternative. Looking at what we can do with the existing facilities (even if less than what was in the original Alternative 2) is required as part of Policy 1G analysis.*
- *Also look at constructability and staging issues – Is it constructible or cost too much?*
- *Assure the Task Force and Oversight Team that this is how the NEPA process works and that we are not in the document yet. So it is OK to refine alternatives at this juncture in the process.*
- *Regarding the new Alternative 2, Anthony Boesen (FHWA) requested to see the traffic analysis for how it performs.*
- *Project Team also needs to document and communicate what is in the No Build.*
- ◆ Discuss “footprint” for inclusion in DEIS – Potential/proposed tolling facilities - can this wait to be included in FEIS (Preferred Alternative)? (Since at this time we do not know what the funding strategy is going to be – but want to make sure we have the “project area or corridor” nailed down.)

**Notes From Meeting:*

- *Recommendation to identify potential tolling facilities (toll booth/kiosk) for each alternative and include it in the DEIS.*
- *Do not need a toll alternative(s) and a non-toll alternative(s) in the DEIS.*
- *However, impacts of tolling (e.g., footprint, economic, social, traffic diversion) does need to be included in the discussion in the DEIS.*

- ◆ Discussion on Funding Options (tolling, property tax, registration fee, and/or gas tax) – What is required to be discussed in the DEIS vs. the Financial Plan?

**Notes From Meeting:*

- *Will add complete answer to this in August Meeting Notes.*
- *Emily Lawton – To try to provide us with a good example of or at least an approved Financial Plan for us to use as an example.*

- ◆ Policy Direction Needed on TSM/TDM. Debrief from TSM/TDM Subcommittee Meeting. How much needs to be included in the project? What or how does it fit into the Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint? Issue has arisen since project lead agencies do not fund or have authority over most transit improvements. How should transit/TSM/TDM be handed in the DEIS?

**Notes From Meeting:*

- *Can use highway funds for park-n-ride lots and queue jump lanes – projects primarily within ODOT/CITY ROW limits. Any elements that are included should be ones that have utility even with today's transit service. Cannot use highway funds (including toll revenue) for transit operations or facilities removed from ROW limits.*
- *FHWA and DOJ OK with moving forward with separate but parallel projects – EIS on highway river crossing assuming some level of transit improvements in the traffic modeling and separate process to plan and analyze what those improvements would be, with assumption that local transit agency or others would be responsible for implementation.*
- *As ODOT/FHWA/CITY do not have authority over transit, need to focus on what we can do under our authority.*