



Oversight Team meeting summary

ATTENDEES:	Sam Brentano/ Marion County Commissioner	Dan Clem/ Salem City Councilor	Emily Lawton/ FHWA
	Cathy Clark/ Keizer City Councilor	Bob Krebs/ Salem Area Mass Transit District, Board of Directors	Tim Potter, filling in for Sonny Chickering/ ODOT
STAFF PARTICIPANTS:	Dan Fricke/ ODOT	Mike Jaffe/ Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments	Michael Hoffmann/ CH2M HILL
	Rod Thompson/ ODOT		Brandy Steffen/ CH2M HILL
	Julie Warncke/ City of Salem	Dave Simmons/ CH2M HILL	
GUESTS:	Public: Michael Rose/Statesman Journal; Calvin Larwood/WH Pacific; Gene Pfeifer; Roberta Cade; Chuck Fisher; Jim Scheppke, Cy Smith; John Gear; Peter Bergel; Kathy Lincoln; Sarah Deumling; Reuben Deumling; Dan Tompkins; Tom Andersen; Claudia Howells; Brad Swank; Keith Kohan; Mayann Beirne; Scott Bassett; Ed Regnier; Sandy Smith; Robert Hornaday; and Laurie Dougherty		
DATE:	Thursday, February 6, 2014 Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments Office		

Introduction

Dave Simmons welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending despite the snow. He then reviewed the agenda, noting that the purpose of the meeting was to select a locally preferred alternative and discuss the bridge type and funding processes. The Oversight Team (OT) members and staff participants introduced themselves. There were no changes to the October 31, 2013 meeting summary.

Statements from the public in attendance

Dave asked the OT if they were comfortable moving the second public statement period to the beginning of the meeting to accommodate the number public attendees; the OT agreed.

Dave reviewed the ground rules for the public comments, asking the public to respect the time limit of 2 minutes each.

The following public individuals provided comments: Gene Pfeifer; Roberta Cade; Chuck Fisher; Jim Scheppke; Cy Smith; John Gear; Peter Bergel; Kathy Lincoln; Sarah Duemling; Rueben Deumling; Dan Tompkins; Tom Anderson; Claudia Howells; Brad Swank; Keith Cohan; Maryann Beirne; and Scott Bassett

All comments were in opposition, in varying degrees, of building a new bridge; some were concerned about funding, interested in investing funds into transit, and delaying the decision until more information was available.

Select preferred alternative

Dave reviewed the Salem Alternative details, walking the group through the key elements. He reviewed the policy statements that were proposed by the group in October 2013.

He asked the group to go around the table and give an update on the process that has taken place since the last meeting, including any resolutions that have taken place in that time.

- ◆ **Cathy Clark:** The City of Keizer, in considering this alternative, took the information to the Councilors who then asked questions of the staff, and then held a public meeting, where public comments were collected. The Council met a month ago and reached a consensus to vote in favor of the Salem Alternative.
- ◆ **Dan Clem:** Salem went through the same process. Since this was developed by the Council, City staff and Council feel that this alternative is consistent with the one proposed by Council in June. There was a unanimous vote of City Councilors to advance this alternative and they were happy that the other jurisdictions have considered it. We have done a thorough job by holding numerous hearings and neighborhood meetings, then responding to public comments.
- ◆ **Craig Pope:** [Brandy Steffen noted that Commissioner Pope could not attend the meeting due to the weather, but he sent the following text: *“Polk County has submitted a letter of support to move forward and I will stand on that position, but will not support new transit language that requires additional resources be spent on the bridge project specifically for transit enhancements. I support language that reinforces the need to include multi modal interests in the planning phases of the project, but will resist any language today that requires any specific elements.”*]
- ◆ **Sam Brentano:** On January 15th, Marion County passed a resolution and it captures a few concerns such as including seismic features, reducing congestion, and supporting economic development. I like this design because there are fewer impacts and it has a less dominating feeling for the neighborhoods, as well as being less expensive and providing a connection to the coast. We need more facilities here and this is a long process.
- ◆ **Bob Krebs:** Cherriots passed a resolution on January 13th supporting this alternative since we are a small player and this is a road project, not a transit project. We ask

that public transit amenities be included in the design of the project to better utilize transit over the river and to help the transit district with other options in the region.

- ◆ **Tim Potter:** ODOT will help marshal the process along. We are anxious to support the local community and blend into the highway system. The Salem Alternative is working toward that process.

Dave asked the group if there should be an additional policy statement regarding transit. Many of the members expressed their support of transit but felt that the planning phase was too early to outline specific transit features, especially since it will be several years before the bridge is built and the transit system and needs will change in that time. Dave suggested that a general policy statement would provide flexibility for future design refinements. Bob Krebs said that he wanted to include transit in the planning process, so that the design is not completed in a vacuum that creates inefficiencies in the future. The OT members agreed to let staff draft a policy statement that reflected the group's discussion and the essence of the Cherriots resolution, to be discussed at the next meeting.

Dave asked the group for a formal agreement to recommend the Salem Alternative as the locally preferred alternative. The group unanimously voted yes to recommend the Salem Alternative as the preferred alternative.

Review bridge type process

Dave then presented a staff recommendation for the process to discuss bridge types. In 2008 the OT agreed that functionality was the primary goal and that a beam/girder bridge type was sufficient. Since the alternative has been modified and Salem City Council has requested a closer review of bridge types, Dave said a review would be warranted. Additionally, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) requires review of the pier locations, coordination with the Coast Guard, and bridge type cost estimates. Bridge pier locations need to be decided upon for the purpose of performing Final EIS work, but there would be flexibility afterward with regard to bridge design/aesthetics.

Staff recommends that they develop three bridge types that meet the project goals, then bring those back to the OT for review and a recommendation. During the engineering phase the OT can discuss design elements for the selected bridge type.

The group agreed to this approach and listed specific parameters for staff to consider when developing the three bridge types:

- ◆ An option with no piers in the water; it is ok to have piers on the island.
- ◆ Look at a range of costs.
- ◆ Minimum impact on the river and the year-round flowing part of the river.
- ◆ Minimum visual impact of the bridge; don't have the bridge compete with the natural beauty of the area. This could result in no, or a minimized, super structure.
- ◆ Look at one super structure option, with a varying span width.

Discuss funding process

Dave then reviewed the staff's recommendation for a process to discuss funding. A financial plan will be developed for the project, which will include phasing options. Dave noted that because the estimated cost of the Salem Alternative is less than \$500 million, it is not considered a "major project" with regard to FHWA requirements – FHWA will review the financial plan but the plan does not need to be approved by FHWA; Emily Lawton concurred that this was correct. Staff will recommend a logical first phase for the OT's consideration. Dave said that staff will refine the Salem Alternative this spring, work on the phasing, and analyze the alternative for the Final EIS. Dave asked each OT member consider the type of public input that will help them make a decision on a preferred financial plan. He recommended updating the funding tool and holding another funding workshop, to understand the trade-offs related to the various funding mechanisms. Mike Jaffe noted that one project component/phase would need to be in the financially constrained list of the Regional Transportation System Plan.

Several members expressed concerns for mechanisms that would not be equitable or that would compete with other services that are supported by the General Fund. A few members also suggested that the funding discussion include a worst case scenario where there is no federal funding available, as well as a scenario where some federal funds are available. One member suggested that funds from a bridge toll could be generated sooner rather than later, to help pay for the cost of the new bridge construction. Dave suggested that the group consider any parameters that they want considered in the tool and send those to staff.

Next steps

Dave said that the staff will work with stakeholders to make design refinements to the alternative's footprint, which is needed for the environmental analysis. The group has already started to refine the bike and pedestrian elements, as well as other multi-modal considerations, and will have more detail to share at the next meeting.

Dan Fricke noted that, in addition to the "next steps" actions on the slides, alternate mobility standards will need to be adopted by ODOT for the Salem area. Dan also noted that the Highway 22 Facility Plan would not start before July 2015.

The project team is also starting field work this spring/summer, which will go into the Final EIS. CETAS will be updated on the process and will provide the team with feedback. Finally, Dave added that local land use approvals will be taking place during this time.

Dave said that the group will meet again in six to eight weeks to talk about design refinements and bridge types.

Statements from the public in attendance

There was a request for a few more statements; the OT agreed to hear comments from Scott Bassett; Laurie Dougherty; and Maryann Beirne. These comments were also in opposition to the project and one comment suggested that the process hasn't been consistent with legal requirements. The Staff confirmed that the process is consistent with state and federal law

and has included FHWA throughout the process for verification. Staff also confirmed that the OT selected the Salem Alternative as the preferred alternative.

Dave thanked the group and the public for attending and ended the meeting.