



Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey District 1

501 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd.
Suite 600, Multnomah Building
Portland, Oregon 97214

Phone: (503) 988-5220
Fax: (503) 988-5440
Email: District1@co.multnomah.or.us

Release: October 2, 2007

Contact: David Martinez, Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey, 503-988-4435
Michael Pullen, Public Affairs Office, 503-988-6804

Options narrowed for future Sellwood Bridge

Options for a future Sellwood Bridge were selected by a group of elected and appointed officials known as the Policy Advisory Group yesterday. The alternatives, which will be studied in great detail over the next six months, include rehabilitating the existing bridge and building new bridges either adjacent to the current bridge on the south side or several blocks to the north.

In addition to choosing alignments, the Policy Group selected a set of cross sections for the bridge and westside interchanges with Highway 43. In the next few weeks, these components will be combined into a set of distinct alternatives which will be analyzed in the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

“Another milestone has been completed in the Sellwood Bridge Planning Project,” said County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey, who chairs the Policy Group. “The alignments and cross sections we approved will bring us closer to determining the future of the bridge.”

Alternatives selected for study include:

- A 57-foot wide rehabilitation option with two 11-foot traffic lanes, two 5-foot shared bike path/shoulders, and two 10-foot shared use sidewalks.
- A narrow new bridge option with a lower deck featuring a 20-foot wide shared facility for bicyclists and pedestrians. Lane and shoulder widths will be determined in the next few weeks. Possibilities for striping this cross-section for three lanes to accommodate a future streetcar will be considered. This option would be located on the Yellow, existing bridge alignment.
- A 64-foot, two-lane new bridge option with 6.5-foot bike lanes and 12-foot shared use paths on each side. This option would be located on the Yellow South alignment, which includes the existing bridge area and the area immediately to the south.

(more)

Sellwood Bridge Options - 2 -

- A 75-foot wide new bridge option with two 12-foot lanes for transit vehicles, two 12-foot lanes for other motor vehicles, a 16-foot shared use path and an 8-foot sidewalk. This option would be located on the Teal/Pink hybrid alignment north of the existing bridge that avoids residential relocations.

Three grade-separated traffic interchanges linking the bridge with Highway 43 on the westside were chosen for study, including a:

- Signalized interchange
- Roundabout with no signal
- Trumpet interchange with no signal

All of the interchanges would allow through traffic on Highway 43 to pass under the interchange on a lower level without stopping.

Another concept adopted for study was building a new bridge for bicyclists and pedestrians in combination with a separate Sellwood Bridge for motor vehicles only. The location and configuration of the bicycle/pedestrian bridge will be proposed after consulting with representatives of user groups.

When the EIS is completed next spring, the Policy Group can recommend one of the alternatives or combine elements from different alternatives into a new hybrid. The recommended Preferred Alternative will need to be adopted by the Multnomah County Board, Portland City Council, and the Metro Council, before being approved by the federal government. After those steps are completed, design and right of way acquisition can begin.

The Policy Group includes elected and appointed representatives of jurisdictions with an interest in the Sellwood Bridge Project. The group reviews recommendations of the project's Community Task Force and provides oversight and policy guidance.

The purpose of the Sellwood Bridge planning project is to identify a preferred alternative to provide a long-term fix for the bridge, which is reaching the end of its service life. Multnomah County maintains the Sellwood Bridge, five other Willamette River bridges and more than 300 miles of roads. For project information, visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.

###