



Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Public, Agency, and Organization Comment Summary

This memorandum summarizes the public and agency comments received during the Sellwood Bridge project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) comment period (November 7 through December 22, 2008). These comments will become part of the official project record and will be responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). Online survey results are summarized in a separate memorandum.

A total of 180 individuals, 8 agencies, and 12 organizations commented on the DEIS:

- **Public Comments**
 - 98 individuals submitted comments through the project website
 - 29 individuals gave oral testimony at the December 10 Public Hearing
 - 28 individuals submitted comments via mail to Multnomah County
 - 14 individuals submitted comments at the December 10 Open House
 - 11 individuals gave oral testimony at the December 10 Open House
- **Agency Comments**
 - 6 agencies submitted comments via mail to Multnomah County
 - 2 agencies submitted comments through the project website
- **Organization Comments**
 - 6 organizations gave oral testimony at the December 10 Public Hearing
 - 3 organizations submitted comments through the project website
 - 3 organizations submitted comments via mail to Multnomah County

Some individuals or organizations submitted their comments through two sources, such as the project website and public hearing. The summary reflects the full range of their comments, but if the same point was made more than one time, it is mentioned only once in the summary.

This memorandum is divided into three sections:

- **Summary of Public Comments** - A summary of comments submitted by the public
- **Summary of Agency Comments** - A summary of comments submitted by governmental agencies
- **Summary of Organization Comments** - A summary of comments submitted by non-governmental organizations

Summary of Public Comments

The summary of public comments is organized by alternative and by topic.

Summary by Alternative

This section summarizes public comments specific to the alternatives presented in the DEIS (No Build and Alternatives A through E). General comments unrelated to specific alternatives are summarized in the next section (Summary by Topic).

No Build Alternative

Eight individuals supported the No Build Alternative. The primary reason was its low cost and uncertain funding sources (5 individuals commented). Three individuals opposed the No Build Alternative because it would not be a long-term solution. Two individuals supported "doing nothing."

Alternative A

One individual supported Alternative A (no reason given). No comments specifically opposed Alternative A.

Alternative B

Two individuals supported Alternative B (no reasons given). No comments specifically opposed Alternative B.

Alternative C

Four individuals supported Alternative C. The primary reason was support for separating vehicular and bicycle/pedestrian modes on separate bridge decks (3 individuals)

A total of eight individuals opposed Alternative C because of its impacts to River View Cemetery, including the removal of cemetery access from OR 43.

Alternative D

A total of 12 individuals supported Alternative D. The primary reasons were:

- Requires no bridge closure (7 individuals)
- Has low residential and business impacts (5 individuals)
- Provides flexibility for the future (4 individuals)
- Supports the bicycle and pedestrian facilities (3 individuals)

A total of 13 individuals opposed Alternative D. The primary reasons were:

- Livability impacts (8 individuals)
- High number of residential displacements to Sellwood Harbor (7 individuals)
- Insufficient right-of-way information presented in the DEIS (6 individuals)
- Property value impacts (6 individuals)
- Geologic impacts on the west-side (4 individuals)
- Homeowner association financial impacts (4 individuals)

Alternative E

A total of 50 individuals supported Alternative E. The primary reasons were:

- Provides for future flexibility (16 individuals)

- Minimizes River View Cemetery impacts and maintains OR 43 access (15 individuals)
- Minimizes impacts to residences on the east-side (14 individuals)
- Does not displace any Sellwood Harbor or River Park condominium residents (12 individuals)
- Has a low cost (box girder option) (12 individuals)
- Relocates jobs rather than Sellwood Harbor or River Park residents (12 individuals)
- Maintains access across the river during construction (11 individuals)
- Provides the potential for additional parkland under the bridge (10 individuals)
- Locates the west-side interchange north of the existing landside (9 individuals)
- Provides dedicated transit lanes (8 individuals)
- Has a lower construction duration compared to other alternatives (5 individuals)
- Has low aquatic and water resource impacts (3 individuals)

A total of 16 individuals opposed Alternative E. The primary reasons were:

- Impacts to Oaks Pioneer Church (8 individuals)
- Impacts to Sellwood Riverfront Park (4 individuals)
- Impacts to views (3 individuals)
- Right-of-way impacts (2 individuals)
- Displaces a high number of businesses (2 individuals)
- Wide cross-section (2 individuals)

Summary by Topic

The following summarizes public comments that were not specific to one of the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS. Alternative-specific comments (previous section) also could have included non-alternative specific comments, which are reflected in this section.

Traffic

- Support maintaining SE Tacoma Street as two lanes (12 individuals)
- Oppose accommodating Clackamas County traffic demands (7 individuals)
- Concern about cut-through traffic (7 individuals)
- Oppose all alternatives because none have two vehicular travel lanes in each direction (4 individuals)
- Support for dedicated transit lanes (3 individuals)
- Oppose all alternatives because they maintain congested conditions (3 individuals)
- Support accommodating regional transit in the bridge design (3 individuals)
- Effects of the alternatives on the Tacoma Main Street Plan should be evaluated (3 individuals)
- Concern about increased traffic noise (2 individuals)
- Concern about traffic impacts outside of Sellwood (2 individuals)
- Support for keeping trucks off of the bridge (2 individuals)
- Concern about storage lanes on the bridge on the west-side (2 individuals)
- Oppose dedicated transit lanes (2 individuals)
- Oppose all alternatives because they do not provide a freight route (1 individual)

- Oppose citing cut-through traffic as a concern because there is no increased capacity (1 individual)
- Support for a new signal between SE 6th and SE 13th Avenues (1 individual)

Temporary Detour Bridge

A total of 22 individuals opposed a temporary detour bridge due to the following:

- Livability impacts (18 individuals)
- Property value impacts (11 individuals)
- Parking impacts (7 individuals)
- Cost (6 individuals)
- Business impacts (3 individuals)
- Potential to be in place longer than anticipated (2 individuals)
- Encourages transients (2 individuals)

No individuals specifically expressed support for the temporary detour bridge.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

- Separate bicycle/pedestrian bridge– Six individuals oppose, 3 support, and 3 recommend further cost analysis
- Concern for bicyclist and pedestrian safety for all alternatives (7 individuals)
- Separate bicycle/pedestrian deck– Three individuals were concerned about bicycle and pedestrian safety of a double-deck; 2 individuals support the separate bicycle/pedestrian bridge deck
- Support for separate bicycle lanes and shared sidewalks on the bridge (5 individuals)
- Support for separating bicyclists and pedestrians with a physical barrier (2 individuals)
- Support for minimizing construction impacts to bicyclists and pedestrians (2 individuals)
- Concern about access to the Springwater Trail (1 individual)
- Address bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Macadam Avenue (1 individual)
- Support for equally weighting bicyclists/pedestrians and vehicles (1 individual)
- Oppose bicycle and pedestrian facilities on both sides of the bridge (1 individual)
- Support for streetcar connections on the west-side (1 individual)
- Support for straight ramps rather than spiral ramps on the west-side (1 individual)
- Support for maintaining River View Cemetery access for bicyclists and pedestrians (1 individual)

Bridge Closure

A total of 27 individuals supported maintaining access across the river during construction to minimize:

- Economic/business impacts (22 individuals)
- Traffic impacts (7 individuals)
- Bicycle and pedestrian impacts (1 individual)

Two individuals supported closing the bridge to lessen construction time.

West-side Interchange

- *Roundabout*: Five individuals supported the roundabout; ten individuals opposed the roundabout (eight individuals for its traffic flow impacts and two individuals for its bicycle/pedestrian impacts).
- *Trumpet*: Seven individuals supported the trumpet interchange; one individual opposed the trumpet.
- *Signal*: Four individuals opposed the signal.

East-side Connection

- *Grand Avenue Loop*: Six individuals supported the Grand Avenue loop; one opposed.
- *Signal at SE 6th Avenue*: One individual supported the signal; two opposed.
- *Existing Conditions*: Three individuals supported existing conditions; one opposed.

Funding

- Support for the entire region to fund the project (6 individuals)
- Concern for adequate funding to construct the project (3 individuals)
- Support for all modes to fund the project (2 individuals)
- Support for tolling the bridge (2 individuals)

Residential Impacts

- General concern about livability on the east-side (4 individuals)
- Support for condemning all of the River Park condominiums under any Build alternative because of adverse effects (2 individuals)
- Oppose equal weighting for commercial and residential displacements (2 individuals)
- Concern about parking impacts under all alternatives except Alternative E (1 individual)
- Concern for homeowner association financial impacts (1 individual)

Bridge Type

- Three individuals supported a two-deck structure to separate vehicular and bicycle/pedestrian modes; one individual opposed a two-deck structure.
- Two individuals each supported the deck arch bridge types. One individual each supported the through arch, cable-stay, delta-frame, and box girder bridge types.

River View Cemetery

The primary comment regarding River View Cemetery was to preserve the access from OR 43 to the cemetery and the funeral home (7 individuals). One individual each was concerned about retaining walls with the Build alternatives and the need for access from OR 43.

Bridge Aesthetics

Five individuals commented regarding the importance of bridge aesthetics. Two individuals were concerned about the lighting impacts of the bridge structure, and three individuals supported lighting to beautify the bridge.

Oaks Pioneer Church

Four individuals supported moving the church if impacted by any of the alternatives.

Miscellaneous Comments

- Oppose the project process (7 individuals)
- Oppose the scope of the project or all alternatives analyzed (7 individuals)
- Support a regional and long-term solution (4 individuals)
- Concern about construction noise impacts (3 individuals)
- Oppose the DEIS findings because document does not meet the legal requirements (3 individuals) and because hybrids were not analyzed (3 individuals)
- Support options that address longevity and long-term solution (2 individuals)
- Concern about construction and long-term impacts to businesses and property owners (2 individuals)
- Support for the selection of a low cost alternative (2 individuals)
- Restoring bus service is the most important (2 individuals)
- Concern about property value impacts (2 individuals)
- Incomplete analysis of wildlife, air quality and noise impacts (1 individual)
- Concern about geologic impacts (1 individual)
- Concern about construction impacts to biological resources (1 individual)
- Concern for bicyclist and pedestrian safety outside of the project area (1 individual)
- Suggest removing the bridge entirely and not replacing it (1 individual)
- Suggest a life cycle cost analysis to compare alternatives (1 individual)
- Suggest bridge foundations include ferry docks for emergencies (1 individual)
- Oppose business and residence complaints of project (1 individual)
- Alternatives contradict the recommendation from the *South Willamette River Crossing Study* (1 individual)

Summary of Agency Comments

The following agencies, in alphabetical order, provided comments on the DEIS:

- City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
- City of Portland Bureau of Planning
- City of Portland Water Bureau
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Portland Office of Transportation
- Portland Parks and Recreation
- United States Coast Guard
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service

It is important to note that although the comment period ended on December 22, other agencies with permitting authority will be allowed to submit comments as part of the permitting process.

City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

The City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) stated they support the need for replacing the Sellwood Bridge. BES prepared specific comments on the DEIS,

provided text changes and proposed mitigation, and offered the following general comments on the selection of alternatives:

- Minimize in-water structures
- Minimize impacts in the Stephens Creek confluence habitat area
- Minimize impacts to parklands
- Minimize forest and riparian habitat impacts
- Ensure adequate mitigation for habitat impacts
- Demonstrate how the bridge design avoids and minimizes environmental impacts in the FEIS

City of Portland Bureau of Planning

The City of Portland Bureau of Planning supported the rehabilitation or replacement of the Sellwood Bridge. The Bureau identified six main issues:

- Consider long-term impacts of the width of the bridge
- Create a more rigorous analysis of greenhouse gas emissions
- Address the impacts of reestablishing an east-west freight route
- Re-evaluate the bicycle/pedestrian facility in Alternative C as a separate facility that utilizes the bridge for structural support, but is not located beneath the bridge
- Evaluate the risk associated with optimizing the west-side interchange to provide access to River View Cemetery
- Ensure the west-side interchange is designed to optimize streetcar service across the Sellwood Bridge

City of Portland Water Bureau

The City of Portland Water Bureau prepared specific comments of how each alternative could impact existing water facilities or infrastructure. The Bureau did not identify preferred elements or a preferred alternative. The Bureau stated that the location of the temporary detour bridge is above a submerged pipeline. If the temporary detour bridge were built, the Bureau would be required to reinstall this at a different location and abandon the existing line. The Bureau stated this would “require a lengthy permit approval process” and “add significant cost” to the project.

Portland Office of Transportation

The Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT) focused their comments on the transportation section of the DEIS. Comments generally address more detailed analysis of travel patterns, traffic operations, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and bridge cross-sections to refine design of the selected alternative during later project phases. PDOT did not identify preferred elements of the preferred alternative, but their preliminary analysis suggests the benefits of a bicycle/pedestrian-activated signal at SE Tacoma Street/SE 6th Avenue over other east-side connection options.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) detailed minor text modifications and recommendations for mitigation measures. ODFW did not identify preferred elements or a preferred alternative.

Portland Parks and Recreation

The Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R) identified preferred elements and ranking of alternatives, some with suggested modifications. The preferred project elements are as follows:

- Alignment: Existing
- West-side Interchange: Signal
- East-side Connection: Same as existing, but with a bicycle/pedestrian-only signal.
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities: The first choice is underneath the bridge deck if offset from the motorized deck. The second choice is on the bridge. The third choice is a separate bridge for bicyclists and pedestrians, although PP&R would prefer a new location for the bridge.

The preferred alternative as analyzed in the DEIS is Alternative C with a signal on the west-side, existing conditions on the east side with a bicycle/pedestrian path offset from the vehicular bridge deck. The second choice for the preferred alternative as analyzed in the DEIS is Alternative D with a bicycle/pedestrian only signal on the east side. PP&R does not support alternatives that impact or potentially involve relocation of Oaks Pioneer Church.

United States Coast Guard

The United States Coast Guard stated an independent evaluation will occur after the selection of a preferred alternative for the bridge permit application. No preferences for the preferred alternative were identified.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) supported Alternative C with the through-arch bridge because “it has the fewest impacts on the aquatic and terrestrial habitats in the Sellwood Bridge Project area” and “best balances the long-term environmental objectives of minimizing habitat removal and disturbance, minimizes the amount of new impervious surface needing stormwater management, and beneficially reduces the amount of bridge structures (number and volume) in the Willamette River which influences fluvial processes and fish passage.” USFWS states they will continue to work on the alternative specific environmental mitigation items through the Collaborative Environmental and Transportation Agreement for Streamlining (CETAS) process.

Summary of Organization Comments

The following non-governmental organizations, in alphabetical order, provided comments on the DEIS:

- 40-Mile Loop Land Trust
- Bicycle Transportation Alliance
- Brooklyn Action Corps Neighborhood Association
- Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Oregon Trucking Association and Portland Freight Committee
- Portland Business Alliance

- River Park Condominium Association
- River View Cemetery Association
- Sellwood Harbor Condominium Association
- Sellwood Moreland Improvement League
- Sellwood Playgroup Association
- Sellwood Westmoreland Business Alliance

40-Mile Loop Land Trust

The 40-Mile Loop Land Trust stated that the most important element of the bridge is a multi-use trail (12 feet wide), separated from traffic, and not limited to only sidewalks and bike lanes. The Trust did not identify a preferred cross-section or alternative.

Bicycle Transportation Alliance

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) recommended Alternatives A or D as the locally preferred alternative, and opposed the bicycle/pedestrian facilities in Alternatives B, C, and E as they are “too narrow” and have “problems related to safety, security, maintenance, transient activity, and lack of intuitive design.” The BTA recommended a signalized intersection on the west-side.

Brooklyn Action Corps Neighborhood Association

The Brooklyn Action Corps Neighborhood Association does not have a preferred alternative, but emphasized “that a closure of the Sellwood Bridge, whether temporary or permanent, would have a catastrophic effect on nearby neighborhoods and must be avoided.”

Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee

The Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee (BPCAC) focused its input on important design characteristics:

- An operationally safe and attractive crossing for bicyclists and pedestrians that encourages a growing use of these modes
- Full network access for non motorized travelers
- A secure crossing for bicyclists and pedestrians that gives users a reasonable feeling of safety from criminal activity or other nuisances
- Construction and phasing plans that minimize disruption to bicyclists and pedestrians
- Convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to transit on SE Tacoma Street and OR 43
- A visual asset that is attractive to the different user modes and complements the natural setting and community context

BPCAC concluded Alternative D most closely achieved the above desired characteristics.

Oregon Trucking Association and Portland Freight Committee

The Oregon Trucking Association and Portland Freight Committee (OTA/PFC) supported Alternative D for its cross-section that is flexible for the future, signal on the

west-side, potential for phasing, and because it maintains access across the river during construction. The OTA/PFC opposed the roundabout on the west side because it can be difficult for large trucks to negotiate. The OTA/PFC stated that the Sellwood Bridge is not a priority for the freight community.

Portland Business Alliance

The Portland Business Alliance (PBA) stated the following elements must be addressed in considering the alternatives:

- Cost
- Issues of structural adequacy, safety, seismic stability, and capacity
- Safety
- Minimize impacts on business and neighborhoods

After assessing the characteristics of the options presented, the PBA determined that Alternative D (unphased) came closest to meeting the decision criteria stated above. The PBA had serious concerns regarding cost escalation for the phased construction. For this reason, the PBA recommended moving forward with the full construction of Alternative D to minimize cost and maximize the efficiency of the construction process.

River Park Condominium Association

The River Park Condominium Association opposed the temporary detour bridge and stated they will seek legal action if the temporary detour bridge is included as part of the preferred alternative due to its livability impacts (congestion, construction noise, loss of parking, etc.) to residents.

River View Cemetery Association

The River View Cemetery Association supported Alternative E because it minimizes cemetery impacts, and supported the signal as the west-side intersection because it minimizes impacts and maintains cemetery access from OR 43. The Association opposed Alternative C because the trumpet interchange removes cemetery access from OR 43. The Association also opposed closing access across the river during construction.

Sellwood Harbor Condominium Association

The Sellwood Harbor Condominium Association supported Alternative E. The Association stated the DEIS did not include the following positive characteristics of Alternative E:

- Offers the most flexibility in the near and long-term
- Locates the west-side interchange outside of the existing landslide
- Returns right-of-way to public domain to expand parks
- Only displaces residences in a new building that was vacant at the beginning of the project process

Sellwood Moreland Improvement League

The Sellwood Moreland Improvement League (SMILE) stated they are committed to maintaining and achieving all aspects of the Tacoma Main Street Plan. SMILE stated the project must:

- Avoid increasing traffic on the two lanes of Tacoma Street
- Not increase neighborhood cut-through traffic
- Preserve the economic vitality, ambience, and prestige of Oaks Pioneer Church

SMILE has concerns that the above elements would not adequately be addressed in the project and the limited scope of the project (ending at SE 6th Avenue).

Sellwood Playgroup Association

The Sellwood Playgroup Association (Association) stated the DEIS did not address environmental impacts, positive or negative, that the different bridge options will have on children's ability to cross SE Tacoma Street and SE 17th Avenue, and therefore the Association concluded the DEIS insufficiently analyzed the health, safety, and quality of life of children. The Association requested an analysis of impacts of each of the alternatives on the safety of neighborhood children crossing traffic moving to and from the bridge.

Sellwood-Westmoreland Business Alliance

The Sellwood-Moreland Business Alliance (Alliance) supported maintaining access across the river during construction. The Alliance stated that business owners will not renew leases and property owners will be impacted if access is not provided across the river during construction.

Attachment A

Public Involvement Outreach Summary

Postcard and Briefings

A targeted postcard mailing was sent to individuals on the project mailing list that did not have an email address. Approximately 330 hard copy postcards were mailed on October 10, 2008. Recipients were encouraged to detach and return part of the postcard to order a copy of the DEIS, CD, or Executive Summary. A total of 18 cards were returned. The remaining mail list (5,016 email addresses) were sent the same information via an email on November 7 and 8, 2008. People were also encouraged to view the DEIS online to save project costs.

The public comment period and DEIS availability had been publicized through a mass mailing to 23,000 households in the project vicinity, via an email announcement to the project database, through the local media, including newspapers, radio, and interest group websites and blogs, through a display ad in *The Oregonian* (December 4, 2008) and via a banner over the bridge.

In addition, Multnomah County held consecutive one-hour project briefings on two different nights (November 10 at the Multnomah Building and November 13 at Oaks Park Dance Pavilion) to provide an overview of the DEIS findings and explain how to comment. A similar briefing was held with the Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League (SMILE) on November 6, 2008.

Open House

The fifth public forum for the Sellwood Bridge project (an open house with a public hearing) was held on Wednesday, December 10, 2008 from 6:00 to 8:45 p.m. at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). The open house was held from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. and the public hearing took place from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m.

The open house was held in OMSI's north lobby and was structured to encourage community members to visit a variety of informational stations staffed by members of the project team. Meeting participants were welcomed at a sign-in table by project staff. 145 people signed in for the meeting.

The purpose of the open house was to obtain feedback on the DEIS and preferences for a locally-preferred alternative. People were also encouraged to comment on hybrid alternatives if they preferred to mix and match elements of the five Build alternatives in the DEIS. The meeting was staffed by members of the consulting team and staff members with Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and Metro.

As community members signed in they were encouraged to view the displays and interact with project staff. The stations included:

- **DEIS Overview** - background information on the DEIS
- **Build Alternatives** - displays featuring the five alternatives studied in the DEIS, including repair or replace, alignment, cross-section, west end interchange type and east end connection

- **No Build Alternative** – display that highlighted the “do nothing” option
- **Key Differentiators** – displays that provided information about key distinctions in the way the alternatives would perform
- **Phasing & Costs** - displays about preliminary plans for project phasing and funding
- **Section 4(f) Impacts** - displays to help explain impacts to parks and historic/cultural resources
- **PowerPoint Stations** – a narrated, 23-minute looped overview of the DEIS was shown at one of the PowerPoint stations and a short “What We Have Heard” looped slide show presentation was shown at another station

The open house also featured a **Public Comment Station**, held in Classroom 1 adjacent to the lobby. The Public Comment Station offered a variety of ways for people to provide their feedback about project alternatives and the DEIS document:

- Submit written comments on paper forms
- Submit written comments via the project website at a station of laptop computers
- Provide oral testimony to a recorder taking transcription
- Participate in an interactive “Build Your Own Hybrid” exercise and complete the companion written form

Public Hearing Testimony

The DEIS public hearing was held in OMSI’s auditorium, which was set up to accommodate 275 people in theater-style seating (most of the seats were filled throughout the hearing). People wanting to testify signed up at a table near the door. A recorder transcribed the proceedings. Members of the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) led by Multnomah County Chair Ted Wheeler were assembled at a table on the stage to listen to the public testimony. The panel included:

- Ted Wheeler, Multnomah County Chair
- Jason Tell, ODOT Region 1 Manager
- Sue Kiehl, Portland Office of Transportation Director
- Lynn Peterson, Clackamas County Chair
- Debbie Runsfeld for State Representative Carolyn Tomei
- Robert Liberty, Metro Councilor
- Greg Chaimov, City of Milwaukie

A total of 35 people provided oral testimony at the public hearing. Each person was given two and a half minutes to speak.