

The Decision-Making Process



The Sellwood Bridge project is a 24-month planning effort to develop a locally-supported alternative to address the long-term transportation deficiencies posed by deterioration of the bridge. Much of the intensive work will take place throughout 2007.

A structured decision-making process has been established for the project. The aim is to create a logical path with major decision points along the 2-year project schedule.



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Next Public Meeting ▶ April 4 at Sellwood Middle School

A public workshop for the Sellwood Bridge project will be held on Wednesday, April 4, 2007, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Sellwood Middle School gymnasium, 8300 SE 15th Avenue (enter via the gym entrance on Umatilla Street). This meeting will have a different format from the October 2006 open house; this will be a workshop and participants should arrive promptly by 7:00 p.m. for the start of the meeting and a presentation to follow.

The goal for the workshop is to receive public feedback on the range of alignment and interchange/intersection concepts. We welcome your ideas for additional concepts to consider and ways to improve the ones we've developed. Maps showing potential alignment options for a new or rehabilitated bridge will be available for review and input. Presenters will explain how different bridge widths impact nearby properties and traffic levels. You are invited to attend the workshop, learn more about the study process, and share your ideas.

Reasonable accommodations can be made for people with disabilities. Please call (503) 988-6804 at least 1 week before the meeting.

¿Habla usted español? La información en esta publicación se puede traducir para usted. Para solicitar los servicios de traducción por favor llámé al (503) 988-6804.



the Sellwood BRIDGE

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Sellwood Bridge Study Moving Ahead

The Sellwood Bridge project has reached two important milestones with the adoption of the project's **purpose and need statement** and **evaluation framework**. Both are key elements of the environmental impact statement (EIS) and provide a foundation for the evaluation of alternatives for this vital Willamette River crossing.

After 80 years, the Sellwood Bridge has reached the end of its useful service life and must be either rehabilitated or replaced. Multnomah County is currently working with the Oregon Department of Transportation, City of Portland, and Metro to study potential solutions to the problem.

Project Purpose

The purpose is to rehabilitate or replace the Sellwood Bridge within its existing east-west corridor to provide a structurally safe bridge and connections that accommodate multi-modal mobility needs. The project will:

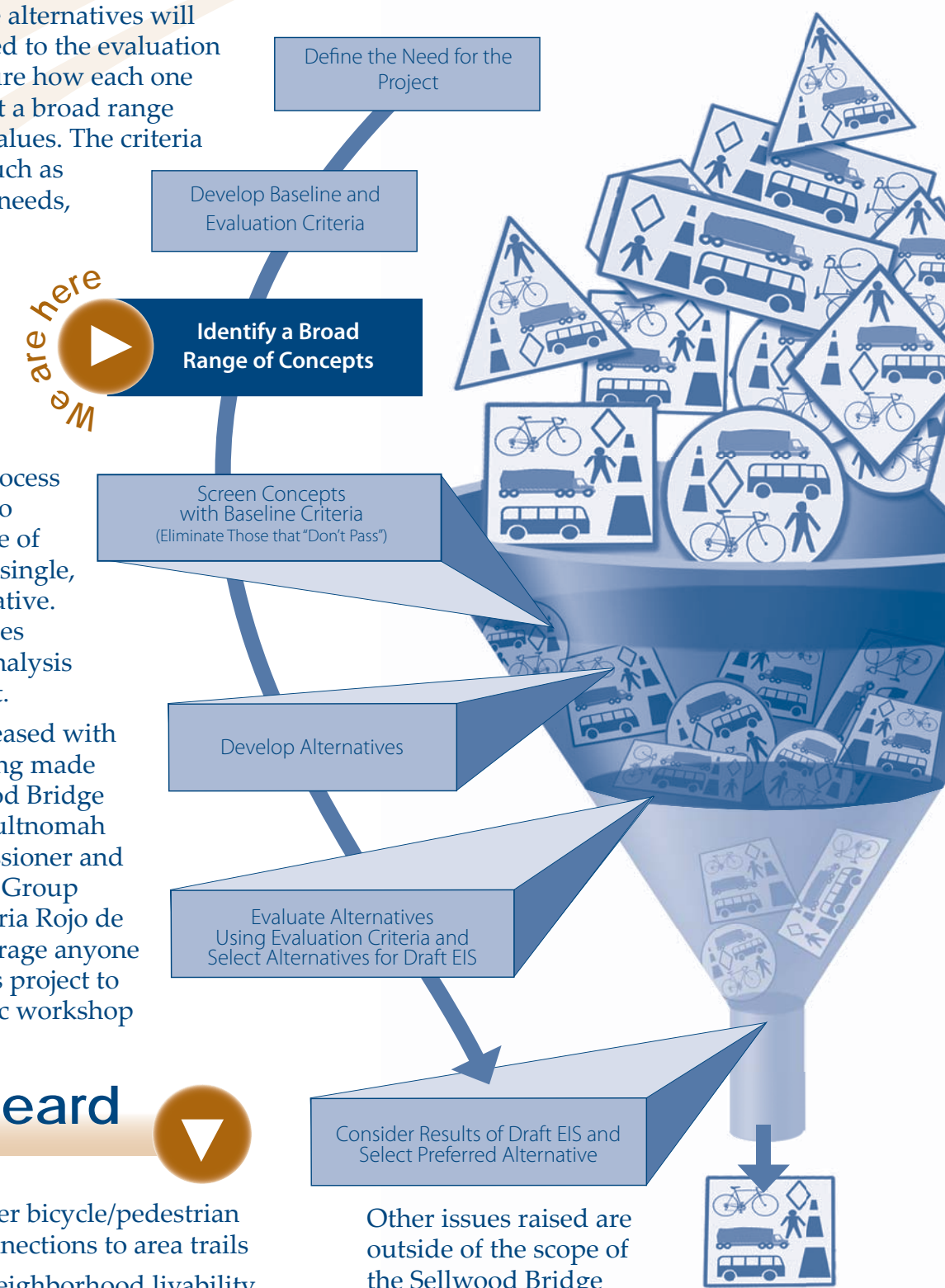
- Withstand moderate seismic events
- Provide for a safe and functional roadway
- Provide for existing and future travel demand
- Accommodate the weight of transit vehicles, trucks, and emergency vehicles (now restricted from using the bridge)
- Accommodate transit needs
- Improve freight mobility
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and access

Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework will be used to screen concepts against the baseline requirements and either drop them from further consideration or advance them into alternatives. The alternatives will then be compared to the evaluation criteria to measure how each one performs against a broad range of stakeholder values. The criteria include issues such as bike/pedestrian needs, community quality of life, automobile and freight mobility, public transit, and cost. The funnel diagram to the right illustrates the process being followed to narrow the range of alternatives to a single, preferred alternative. Each step includes both technical analysis and public input.

"We are very pleased with the progress being made with the Sellwood Bridge study," notes Multnomah County Commissioner and Policy Advisory Group chairperson, Maria Rojo de Steffey. "I encourage anyone interested in this project to attend our public workshop

on April 4th to share their ideas." See the back page for more information about the workshop.



First Open House – What We Heard



181 people attended the first open house in October 2006 at Oaks Park. Top issues of community concern

- included (in no particular order):
- Making the bridge and approaches safer for all users

- Providing better bicycle/pedestrian access and connections to area trails
- Maintaining neighborhood livability (largely defined as keeping the bridge 2-lanes, making bridge improvements compatible with the Tacoma Street Plan, and reducing commuter and neighborhood cut-through traffic impacts)
- Restoring bus transit on the bridge and/or accommodating future light rail/streetcar
- Building with the future in mind; ensuring adequate bridge capacity for all users
- Reducing congestion

Other issues raised are outside of the scope of the Sellwood Bridge study (meaning that this project is not designed to address them). These included:

- Building a new bridge elsewhere (between I-205 and the Sellwood Bridge)
- Making the Sellwood a bicycle/pedestrian-only bridge

Five River-Crossing Concepts Under Consideration

A first attempt has been made to create concepts for the rehabilitation or replacement of the Sellwood Bridge. Like a jigsaw puzzle, there are three pieces that need to be fit together: the alignment, the interchange, and the bridge width. Depending upon how these pieces are put together, there are potentially many different bridge concepts. Four new alignments (three north of the existing bridge and one to the south) as well as the existing alignment are being considered. For each of the new alignments, a range of bridge widths will be evaluated, including a number of 2-, 3-, or 4-lane options with a variety of bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

Two Highway 43 interchange options can be paired with any of the alignments. All of these combinations of alignment and interchange options have been recommended for additional study because they address the project need, meet design standards, and offer a clear benefit or advantage relative to other concepts considered.

Common Features

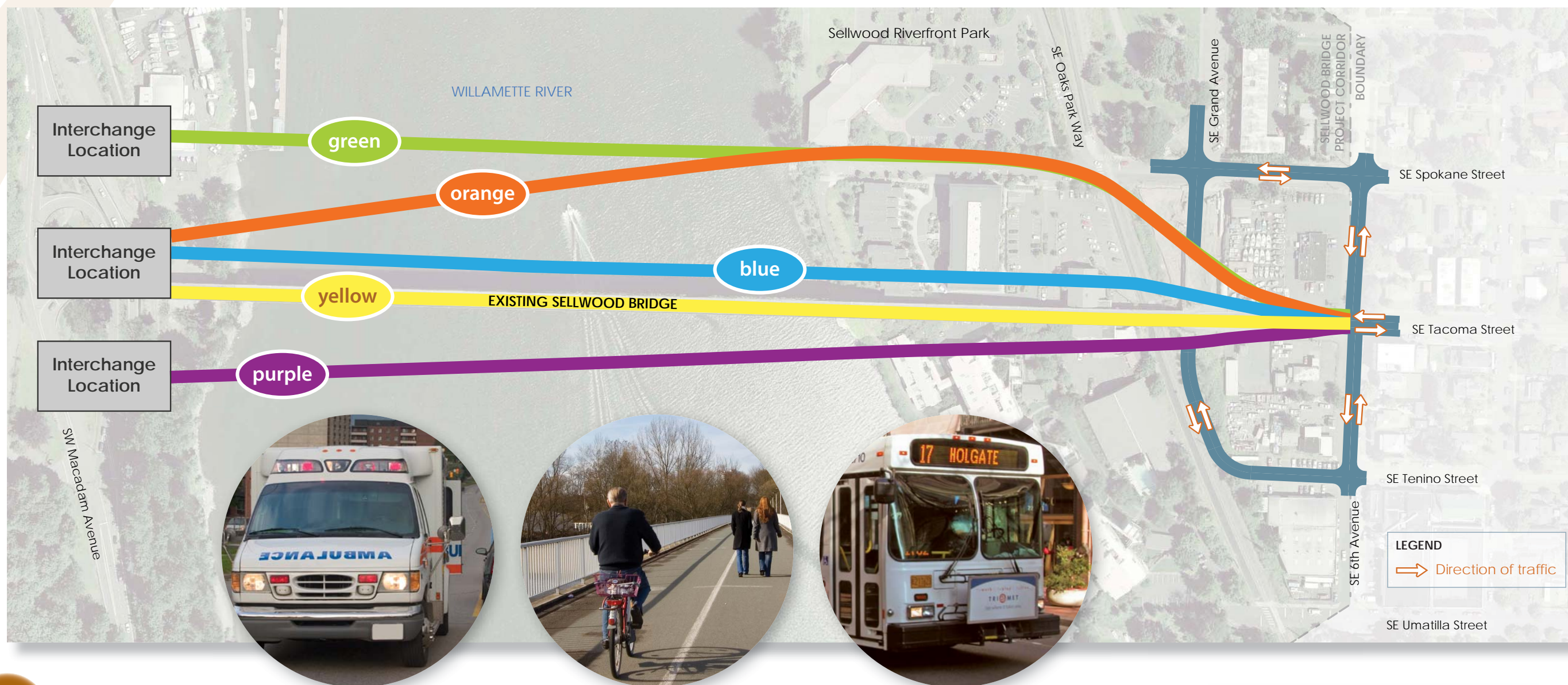
All of the new alignments would begin at Tacoma Street and 6th Avenue on the east and end at Highway 43 on the west. All of the options address vehicular turns on the east end of the bridge in the same way—left turns in both directions from Tacoma Street to 6th Avenue would be eliminated by providing a “loop” connection down 6th Avenue, Tenino Street, and a new road paralleling the Springwater Corridor Trail that ties into Spokane Street. All of the new alignments could be constructed while keeping the existing bridge open during most of the construction period.

For every concept being considered, bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be enhanced with wider, safer paths and better connections to area trails. Bicyclists and pedestrians would connect to the Springwater Corridor Trail on the east bank by using the street grid network. On the west bank, they would connect to the Willamette Greenway Trail from the bridge via switchback ramps.

Rehabilitation Concepts

Two approaches are being considered to rehabilitate the existing bridge in its current location. Both options would widen the existing travel lanes from 12 feet to 14 feet; however, options to widen the bridge any further are limited because of the configuration of the truss, the steel structure that supports the deck.

The first option would add 10-foot cantilevered, shared-use sidewalks on both sides of the bridge. The second rehabilitation option would be a two-level arrangement with vehicles on the bridge deck and a single 14-foot shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the truss below. The bridge would have to be closed to all modes of travel during reconstruction unless a temporary detour bridge is built.



Bridge Width To Determine Future Capacity

The tradeoffs among a range of bridge widths—from 31 to 92 feet—are being evaluated as part of this project. Generally speaking, the wider the bridge, the more options—and combinations of uses—can be accommodated to meet future travel needs such as additional vehicle lanes, flex lanes for public transit, shared-use sidewalks, and dedicated bicycle lanes.

If the existing bridge is rehabilitated, the maximum width would be 53 feet. The truss, which would be re-used, cannot support anything wider. This option maintains two travel lanes and adds wider bicycle/pedestrian paths.

Beyond the two rehabilitation options, a range of bridge widths up to 92 feet is being studied, including options with 2-, 3-, and 4-travel/flex lanes and a variety of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The 2-lane options are

consistent with the Tacoma Street Plan and Regional Transportation Plan. Wider structures would offer flexibility for more extensive bicycle and pedestrian facilities and additional multi-modal capacity, including streetcar or express transit. A wider bridge also would allow emergency vehicles to cross the river faster during periods of heavy traffic.

More detailed information about the bridge widths under consideration will be available at the April 4 public workshop at Sellwood Middle School.

Take an Online Survey!

The project home page has a link to a new online survey designed to gather your input about the proposed alignment and interchange concepts for the Sellwood Bridge. Public feedback on these preliminary concepts will be used to help focus the options into a reasonable range of alternatives that will be further evaluated in the draft environmental impact statement (dEIS).

The survey period ends on April 10, 2007.

www.sellwoodbridge.org

Interchange/Intersection Options

Two interchange/intersection options are under consideration for connecting the bridge with Highway 43. Either could be used in combination with any of the new alignments and both of the rehabilitation concepts.

