



## Decision-Making Structure and Process

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This memo describes the decision-making structure and process for delivering the Sellwood Bridge Project as agreed by the Project Advisory Group on June 7, 2006.

### Underlying Premises

Multnomah County and its agency partners are committed to an approach that:

- Delivers a “transparent” alternatives analysis and environmental review process that provides ongoing, inclusive, and meaningful two-way communication between the project team and the public.
- Meets the regulatory requirements and intent associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Department of Transportation Order on Environmental Justice (EJ); and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).
- Encourages active participation of stakeholders – those agencies, interest groups, and individuals with particular “stakes” in the outcome of the project – in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Context Sensitive Solutions guidance.
- Results in completion of the NEPA process by mid-2008.

A key element of the approach is a structured decision-making process and well-defined decision-making organization. The aim of a structured decision process is to create a logical path through a complicated 2½-year project by establishing major decision points. Thorough and thoughtful consideration of issues at each decision point by all of the project stakeholder groups helps to ensure quality decisions that will not have to be revisited later in the project. The aim is to avoid going “back to square one” because something of significance has been omitted or improperly addressed. Structuring the process in this way enables the project team to explain to stakeholders where we are in the process, what we have accomplished, and what lies ahead. The clear identification of decision points creates an expectation in stakeholder groups for meeting the deadlines and staying on schedule as a way to avoid more and more meetings.

Defining the decision structure – groups that will be involved and how they will participate – provides a “level playing field” for all stakeholders and answers questions typically asked by stakeholders:

- Who will make the decisions?
- How can I influence the decisions?
- When will I have an opportunity to participate?
- Who will consider my input?

## Proposed Decision Process

The decision process will be organized into the following six decision points as shown on Figure 1 and described below:

- Decision Process and Structure
- Purpose and Need
- Evaluation Framework
- Alternatives Development
- Alternatives Screening
- Preferred Alternative

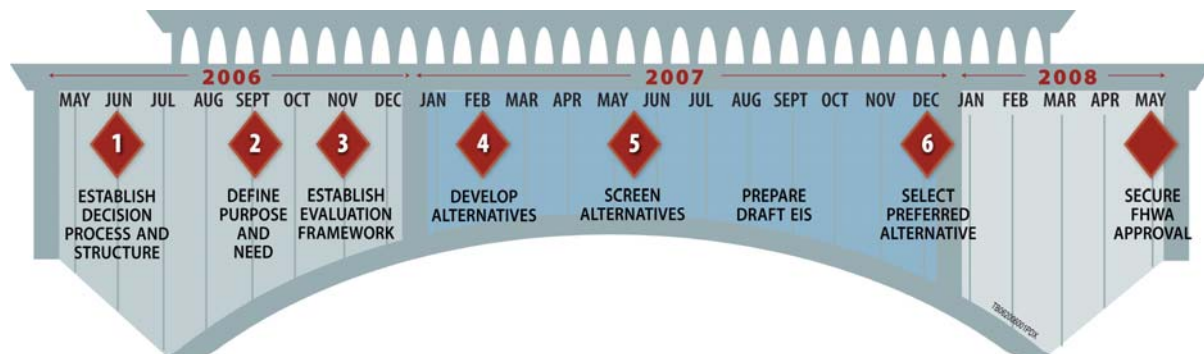


FIGURE 1  
Decision Process

### *Decision Process and Structure*

This first decision step ensures agreement about the process, and the roles, responsibilities, and membership of the various participating groups.

### *Purpose and Need*

The second decision step establishes the need for the project and defines the problems the project is expected to address.

### *Evaluation Framework*

The third decision step creates a tool to assist in evaluating alternatives. The evaluation framework will set criteria and quantitative performance measures for gauging the effectiveness of alternatives – how well they solve the identified problems and how well they perform against the broad range of stakeholder values.

### *Alternatives Development*

The fourth step in the decision process determines the full range of alternatives to be considered. The aim is to ensure all stakeholders have been consulted and all of their ideas get put “on the table” at this point.

### *Alternatives Screening*

The fifth step applies the evaluation criteria to the alternatives, screening out those that do not meet the minimum requirements and comparing the remaining alternatives to see which ones

perform better. A small number of alternatives is selected for detailed evaluation in the Draft EIS.

### *Preferred Alternative*

In the sixth step, detailed data developed for the Draft EIS is used to re-evaluate the remaining alternatives against the evaluation criteria. Results are used to support selection of a locally preferred alternative. The locally preferred alternative must be approved by FHWA.

Focused public outreach prior to each of these decision points will be used to achieve meaningful public involvement. People will be provided an opportunity to comment on issues that will shortly be decided, so it should be easy to understand why it is important to respond and to believe the input will matter.

## Proposed Decision-Making Structure

The proposed decision-making structure is shown on Figure 2. The composition, roles, and responsibilities of each group are described below.

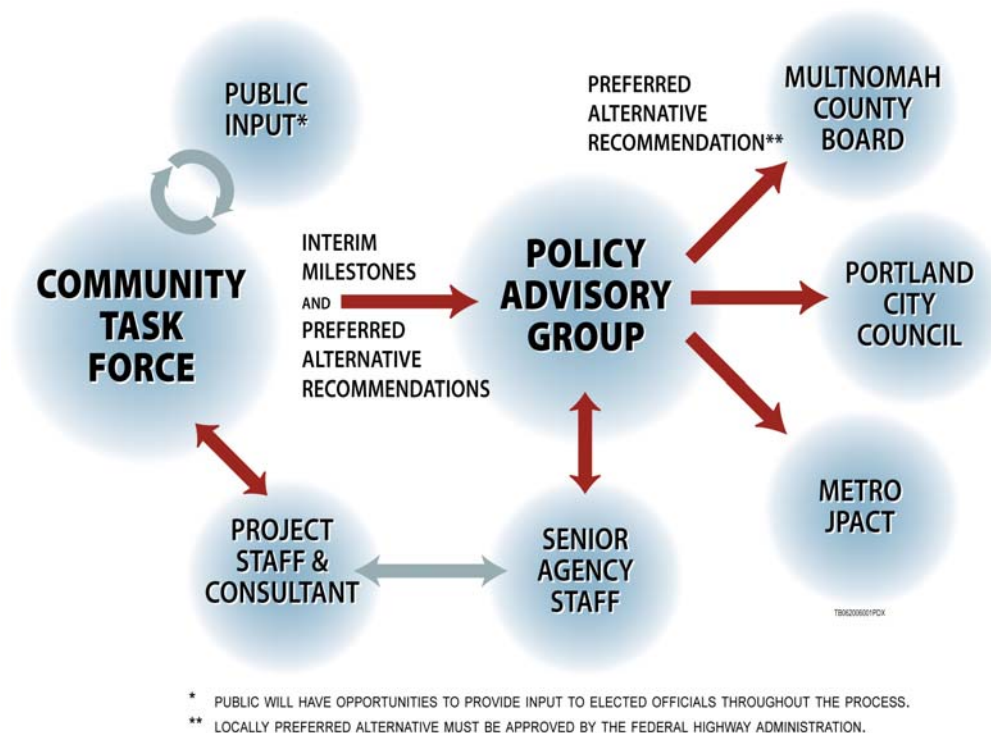


FIGURE 2  
Decision Structure

### *Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)*

The FHWA is the lead agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process that governs proposed actions requiring federal funding, federal permits, or federal approvals. FHWA will sign the Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision.

### *Other Agency Coordination*

**Collaborative Environmental and Transportation Agreement for Streamlining (CETAS).** CETAS has been established to coordinate and streamline the regulatory reviews and permitting functions of the participating agencies. Members include representatives from key national and state agencies responsible for protecting the region's air, water, wildlife, and cultural resources. This committee has chosen not to formally concur on Sellwood Bridge Project decisions, but the project team will meet with them to discuss the Purpose and Need Statement and perhaps during other decision points to obtain their counsel.

**Participating Agencies.** In accordance with requirements of the SAFETEA-LU legislation, letters will be sent to other local agencies that might be interested in participating in the project, including emergency service providers, housing agencies, and other agencies suggested by FHWA. Agencies that express desire to participate in the project development process will be provided opportunities to comment at each of the decision points.

### *Policy Advisory Group (PAG)*

The Policy Advisory Group (PAG) includes elected or appointed officials of local agencies and jurisdictions with regulatory responsibility for or strong interest in the project. Responsibilities of the PAG include:

- Set the policy framework for the project.
- Represent the interests of their agencies or jurisdictions in group deliberations.
- Communicate project progress to their fellow elected or appointed officials, and to their constituents.
- Prepare for and participate in six 2-hour meetings between June 2006 and December 2007 (and several additional meetings in 2008 during Phase 2 of the project).
- Review recommendations from the Community Task Force and other background materials and make decisions at the six decision points in the project.

Members of the PAG will represent their organizations in making the first five of these decisions. For the sixth decision point, the PAG will recommend a preferred alternative to the Multnomah County Board, Portland City Council, and Metro JPACT for formal approval. The group will be comprised of:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Chair, Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey | Multnomah County                    |
| • Councilor Sam Adams                       | City of Portland                    |
| • Councilor Robert Liberty                  | Metro                               |
| • Commissioner Bill Kennemer                | Clackamas County                    |
| • Mayor Jim Bernard                         | City of Milwaukee                   |
| • Fred Hansen                               | Tri-Met General Manager             |
| • Senator Kate Brown                        | Oregon State Senate                 |
| • Representative Carolyn Tomei              | Oregon State House                  |
| • Jason Tell                                | Oregon Department of Transportation |
| • David Cox                                 | Federal Highway Administration      |

### *Senior Agency Staff*

A senior staff person from each of these PAG organizations will be appointed by PAG members and kept abreast of project activities. The group is expected to meet about 10 times during Phase 1 of the project, between June 2006 and December 2007. This will ensure that decision makers have direct access to timely and accurate project information.

### *Community Task Force*

The Community Task Force (CTF) will provide a balanced representation of stakeholder interests, affected communities and geographic areas as well as a communication link with those interests and communities. Members will include leaders of neighborhoods on both sides of the bridge as well as representatives of local and regional business groups and advocates for different bridge user groups, including commuters, freight and transit users, pedestrians and bicyclists. Members will be appointed by the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners. Responsibilities of the CTF members include:

- Representing their constituents' perspectives during group deliberations
- Communicating project progress with their constituents
- Preparing for and participating in approximately 16 3-hour meetings between June 2006 and December 2007 (and one or two additional meetings early in 2008 during Phase 2 of the project)
- Attending three public outreach events between June 2006 and December 2007 (and one additional event early in 2008 during Phase 2 of the project)
- Working to develop consensus recommendations to the PAG at each step in the decision process

The CTF members will include Barbara Barber, Jason Barbour, Gary Barth, Gary Berger, Tom Brown, Bill Dickey, Elliot Eki, John Fyre, Dorothy Gage, Laura Jackson, Ken Love, Richard Marantz, Robert Mawson, Tina Nunez, Scott Thayer, Lidwien Rahman, Angela Timmen, Robert Wilhelm, Jr., Brian Wilson and Sharon Wood-Wortman.

### *Technical Staff Working Groups*

Technical staff from Multnomah County, Clackamas County, ODOT, Metro, City of Portland, TriMet, and other jurisdictions as appropriate will be consulted by the Project Management team for their technical expertise throughout the project. Consultations will be targeted to development of particular products. Staff will serve on ad hoc work groups as needed for the development of these products. For example, roadway engineers will be asked to assist the project team in setting design standards and developing project alternatives. Metro and City of Portland traffic modeling staff will assist the project team in establishing assumptions and methodology for modeling activities. Resource specialists from ODOT and the City of Portland will assist project team specialists in determining environmental analysis methodology, reviewing impact assessments, and selecting mitigation measures. Public involvement specialists will be asked to review the public involvement plan and monitor its implementation.

### *Project Management Team*

The Project Management Team (PMT) will be comprised of Multnomah County and consultant project managers, as well as key staff resources from Metro and the City of Portland. ODOT staff will participate during preparation of the Draft EIS. The PMT's responsibilities include:

- Management of project scope, schedule and budget
- Direction, production, and quality assurance of technical and public/agency involvement work
- Staff support to the PAG, Senior Agency Staff, and CTF

PMT members include:

- Ian Cannon/Multnomah County
- Michael Eaton/Multnomah County
- Ed Abramson/Multnomah County
- Mike Pullen/Multnomah County
- John Gillam/City of Portland
- John Gray/Metro
- Amy Gibbons/ODOT
- Elaine Cogan/Cogan Owens Cogan
- Marcy Schwartz/CH2M HILL
- Lwin Hwee/CH2M HILL

### **Public Involvement**

Planned outreach activities scheduled throughout the project will provide the public with meaningful opportunities to affect project outcomes. A mailing list will be developed and updated before each use. It will include all those who participated in previous related studies, as well as those who indicate interest in the current project. A series of newsletters will provide updates on project progress to those on the mailing list. Public open houses and workshops, an interactive project website, on-line surveys, and a speakers' bureau will provide opportunities for information exchange. Specifically, interested persons will be asked to provide input on the:

- Purpose and need for the project
- Alternatives evaluation criteria
- Alternatives to be considered
- Alternatives to be forwarded for detailed analysis in the Draft EIS
- Preferred alternatives

Public input will be actively considered by the CTF in making recommendations at each decision point. The public will also have opportunities to provide input to decision-makers throughout the project. Documentation of the public involvement process will be provided in a Technical Report, including discussion of ways public input influenced the project outcome.