



Public Comments Related to Project Needs

DATE: July 31, 2006

PRESENTED TO: Sellwood Bridge Community Task Force

The following list is a compilation of comments gathered by Multnomah County during its public outreach effort in the spring and summer of 2006, and from the July 6 Sellwood Bridge Community Task Force meeting. The comments listed below specifically relate to the project's purpose and need, and will be used in the development of the project Purpose and Need Statement. Comments related to community values, potential alternatives, and preferred solutions will be considered during the development of evaluation criteria and the identification of alternatives. The list below contains only unique comments – those comments recorded multiple times are listed only once below.

General

- Neighborhood needs must be weighed against regional needs. Some felt that the bridge needs to preserve the Sellwood neighborhood, while others felt that the bridge solution should prioritize the needs of the region.
- The result needs to be an asset to the community.

Bridge Deficiency

- The bridge is not stable in the event of an earthquake or landslide, and a bridge closure would cause traffic problems.
- The bridge has historic value that needs to be respected.
- The bridge needs to be a lifeline route. Design for appropriate seismic protection.

Road Deficiency

- The Sellwood Bridge intersection with Hwy 43 is problematic and unsafe.
- Access to the bridge from the east is poor.
- Eastbound access to Oaks Park is difficult.
- A new bridge should have better connections to Highway 224 and I-5.
- Eastbound traffic backs up on Tacoma at 17th because there is no left turn lane.

Bike and Pedestrian Deficiency

- People cannot walk and ride their bicycles safely and comfortably across the bridge.
- The bridge lacks adequate separation between bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
- A lack of bike lanes causes safety problems. Bicyclists use the narrow sidewalk, and passing pedestrians creates a safety hazard.
- Bicyclists feel safer riding in the travel lane than they do riding on the narrow sidewalk.
- The sidewalk on the bridge is too narrow, and the existing placement of light poles on the sidewalk creates bicycle and pedestrian safety problems.

- Pedestrian and bike connections to trails are inadequate on both sides of the bridge: Springwater Corridor, Westside Greenway Trail, and River Cemetery Road. Current access to the trails requires bicyclists and pedestrians to cross train tracks, which is a safety issue.
- People park their cars in the bridge area to access nearby trails. Parking is inadequate.
- Access to the river from the bridge is inadequate.
- The bridge lacks good bicycle and pedestrian connections to Terwilliger.
- The quality of the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Highway 43 south of the bridge (east side of Highway 43) is poor.

Travel Demand/Congestion

- The overall travel demand is between Lake Oswego and Milwaukie.
- The bridge and Tacoma Street are the biggest choke points for commuters who travel between this area and eastern Milwaukie and the Westside.
- There is excessive congestion on the bridge.
- The worst of the traffic is only 30 minutes at each rush hour.
- Several streets surrounding the bridge suffer from congestion problems: Hwy 43 (Macadam), Taylors Ferry, Terwilliger and Tacoma Street. The congestion causes safety problems.
- Major routes through the Sellwood neighborhood are choke points.
- Tacoma Street is too constrained and the street parking blocks traffic.
- Traffic signals on SE Tacoma at 13th and 17th cause traffic to back up across the bridge and to Taylors Ferry and Terwilliger during peak PM commute. Traffic diverts to side streets to avoid the lights at 13th and 17th avenues.
- Commuting to Sellwood from the Westside takes a long time.
- Local healthcare providers use the Sellwood Bridge for emergencies.
- Cut-through traffic in neighborhoods causes safety problems and reduces livability.
- Cut through traffic trying to access the bridge from 6th to 13th creates a bottleneck. Motorists cut through the cemetery parking lot to access the bridge.
- Hillsdale area roads impacted by cut-through traffic include Vermont, Barbur, Spring Garden, and Terwilliger. The Sellwood Bridge contributes to this cut-through traffic.
- Through traffic is focused through the Sellwood neighborhood.
- The bridge needs to accommodate future growth.

Transit

- Buses are restricted from going over the river, which worsens congestion problems. Mass transit needs to be improved to accommodate commuter traffic.
- Better transit connections, more routes, and more frequent service are needed. More transit routes need go across the bridge to serve Milwaukie, Brooklyn, the Westside, downtown, and Washington County.
- The bridge needs to provide connections to planned transit facilities, like the Lake Oswego trolley transit corridor, and Milwaukie light rail.
- Current pedestrian accesses to transit require riders to walk across the bridge, which is dangerous.

Freight

- The bridge needs to be functional for freight needs, including accommodating large trucks.

River Usage

- Consider the needs of river users.