



French Prairie Bridge Project Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1

Draft Meeting Summary Thursday, January 26, 2017 9– 11 AM

Wilsonville City Hall
29799 SW Town Center Loop E, Wilsonville, OR
Willamette River Rooms I & II

Members Present

Tod Blankenship, Carrie Bond, Dan Cary, Gail Curtis, Rick Gruen, Vince Hall, Scott Hoelscher, Reem Khaki, John Mermin, Tom Loynes, Tom McConnell, John Mermin, Tom Murtaugh, Chris Neamtzu, Andrew Phelps, Kerry Rappold, Robert Tovar

Members Unable to Attend

Nancy Bush, Karen Buehrig, Terry Learfield

Project Management Team

Bob Goodrich, OBEC Consulting Engineers; Zach Weigel, City of Wilsonville; Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens Greene; Anais Mathez, Cogan Owens Greene

Conversation summarized by agenda item below.

1. Welcome and Introductions

9 – 9:15 am

City Project Manager Zach Weigel welcomed committee members. Facilitator Kirstin Greene asked members to introduce themselves and briefly describe their role or interest in the French Prairie Bridge project. She invited the consulting team to introduce themselves first.

- Bob Goodrich, OBEC: Consultant Team Project Manager.
- Zach Weigel, City of Wilsonville: Project Manager.
- Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens Greene (COG): facilitation and public involvement support services.
- Anais Mathez, Cogan Owens Greene (COG): meeting summaries.
- Carrie Bond, US Army Corps of Engineers, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Liaison.
- Tom McConnell, ODOT Region 1 Environmental Coordinator: handles the NEPA process.
- Tom Loynes, National Marine Services: provides Endangered Species ACT (ESA) consultations. Interested in running this project through a streamlined process.
- Tom Murtaugh, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW): interest in the effects on sensitive fish and wildlife.
- Robert Tovar, ODOT Region 1 Bridge Design.
- Gail Curtis, ODOT Region 1 Planner: Interest in aligning with the right land use processes.
- Reem Khaki, ODOT Local Agency Liaison.

- Chris Neamtzu, City of Wilsonville Planning Director: Led planning process that identified project as a need.
- Tod Blankenship, City of Wilsonville Parks and Recreation: Manages Boones Ferry Park.
- Dan Cary: Department of State Lands: permitting with ODOT, interest in trails.
- John Mermin, Metro: project funded through the Regional Flexible Funds (RFF), interest in connections to the Tonkin Trail system.
- Rick Gruen, Clackamas County Parks, Boones Ferry Marina Owner.
- Scott Hoelsher, Clackamas County Planner: acting as a staff liaison with the County's pedestrian/bicycle committee.
- Vince Hall, Clackamas County Engineer: represents bridge maintenance issues.
- Andrew Phelps, Oregon Office of Emergency Management: interest in increasing the ability to move people and resources over the river in the event of a seismic event.

Kirstin thanked everyone and reviewed the meeting objectives, to

- Receive a presentation on the project's history.
- Receive a presentation orienting the committee to the project roadmap.
- Review and consider adoption of the TAC charter.
- Contribute to the list of technical considerations to evaluate project alternatives.
- Receive a presentation on alternative bridge alignments.

Gail Curtis, ODOT, commented that the transportation use of the bridge, particularly the emergency component, should be clearly defined early on, as it influences the land use process. Gail commented that ODOT considers the project to be defined as a "transportation improvement" project with regards to land use requirements, rather than a recreational use. Clackamas County Planner Scott Hoelsher noted that Clackamas County has a staff planner looking into that question.

2. Project History and Outcomes

9:15 – 9:35 am

Zach Weigel gave a short presentation on the project's history including the following key dates.

- In 1847, the Boones Ferry Operations started in the project area. In 1954 the I-5 Bridge opened.
- In 1993, a need for a pedestrian/bicycle crossing over the river was identified.
- In 2006, several alternatives were evaluated for river crossing options. The preferred alternative resulted in a stand-alone bridge.
- In 2009 Metro awarded a grant for project development, with an emergency access component added to the bridge design.
- In 2013 the Tonquin Trail Plan was completed, showing the trail ending at the bridge.
- In 2014, a Tourism Development Strategy called for capitalizing on cycling tourism in the Willamette Valley. Listed French Prairie Bridge as a top priority.
- Wilsonville City Council directed the focus of the study area to the west of the I-5 bridge, due to topography constraints on the east side.

Bob Goodrich reviewed the project outcomes:

- Produce a preliminary 30% design with the following elements:
 - Bridge location and landings
 - Preferred bridge type and configuration (level of aesthetics)
 - Impacts and benefits (land use, environment)
 - Project Costs

- Inform regional partners on decision to proceed

Other project outcomes, objectives and comments:

- The funding application made by the City of Wilsonville recognized three distinct transportation components: pedestrian, bicycle and emergency use. Emergency use is anticipated as infrequent.
- The project anticipates to be classified as a documented categorical exclusion, and desires to strike a balance between stakeholder and public support, NEPA permitting and cost.
- The project study area is described as have a steep north side, and a flatter south side.
 - A comment clarified that the Scenic Bikeway currently ends at Champoeg Park, but in the future could connect through this area.
- The project objectives include listening to community values and priorities, identifying bridge land points, type, and configuration, as well as project cost and funding opportunities.
- The project’s Task Force is composed of regional and local stakeholders that represent community and its various perspectives. The Task Force is co-chaired by Wilsonville City Councilor Charlotte Lehan and Clackamas County Commissioner Jim Bernard.
- The TAC and PMT will provide technical horsepower to the Task Force. The Task Force is a body that will receive input from TAC and the public, and will make recommendations to City Council about all project items.

3. Project Roadmap

9:35 – 9:55 am

Bob reviewed the roadmap sequence and milestones.

- The first Task Force meeting is next week, with a public open house on February 22nd.
- In late spring/early summer, City Council will be presented with evaluation criteria and bridge landing points will be selected. Starting in the summer/fall, four bridge types will be narrowed from two to a preferred over the course of a year. Following selection of preferred bridge, the design will be refined, permitting challenges resolved and a cost estimate developed by late 2018.

Gail commented that the County may require a particular public process, and suggested plugging in the application and public process into the schedule. Scott noted that he will bring back information and research on what the County public process would look like. He indicated that the process would dependent on which zoning district the bridge points land in, and the bridge classification (transportation or recreational).

4. TAC Role and Charter

9:55 – 10:10 am

Kirstin welcomed latecomer Kerry Rappold, the City’s Natural Resources manager. He introduced himself and noted that he is currently working on an adjacent trail project (I-5 Undercrossing) that will ultimately connect to this bridge.

Kirstin reviewed the contents of the Draft Charter. The following meeting ground rules were added:

- Review materials in advance.
- Stick to the agenda.
- Silence cell phones.
- Actively listen.
- Avoid side conversations.
- Respect all perspectives.

Kirstin clarified that consensus means you can “live with it,” and suggested that any TAC members who do not support a recommendation can simply write an email or make a statement, effectively changing the Charter language to read “prepare a minority opinion” rather than “prepare a minority report.”

The TAC reached unanimous agreement on the changes to the Draft Charter.

5. Evaluation Criteria Discussion

10:10 – 10:50 am

Bob identified baseline work to date. The design team is currently pulling information into an Opportunities and Constraints Report, with a map that flags moderate and high constraints. The report will be available for distribution and review in early March. Bob presented the three alignment options, or corridors, with the following parameters:

- Avoid the Tauchman House (Wilsonville) and the Marina boat ramp and structures(County)
- Keep the bridge design roughly perpendicular to the river
- Try to avoid most of the River Vista neighborhood on the north side.
- Southerly connections should connect to the scenic bikeway via Butteville Road

TAC members made the following comments and questions:

- Kerry clarified the location of his I-5 Bridge undercrossing trail, noting the first phase widened and resurfaced the trail. The second phase will continue the trail west concluding near the newly purchased (by the City) Boones Ferry Park parcel.
- In Alignment #3, staff clarified that ODOT owns the majority of the property where the bridge lands on the south side.
- A TAC member raised about the preferred connection to the Tonquin Trail, and it was noted the alignment furthest to the west would be the most direct connection to that trail.
- One member recommended that the map identify and label all main features, including County/City boundaries, as well as current and future trails and the existing bike and sidewalk network. It was noted that these will be incorporated for the public meeting.
- Another member requested a public lands ownership map.
- Staff shared that a Boones Ferry Park Master Plan will be initiated in the next six months, they wanted to see this project underway first as it helps set direction for the master plan process.
- The opportunities and constraints memo will be available for TAC review on the project website once the report has been reviewed by the project team.
- Please describe the seismic stability of the bridge. Staff clarified that ODOT bridge design standards for seismic performance will be met. This includes a recent update to reflect bridges remaining serviceable after the Cascadia Subduction Zone event.
- Another TAC member asked whether an inquiry has been made into the future plan of the current railroad bridge, as it could provide a rails-to-trails if it were abandoned in the next 10-20 years. Bob was not aware of any intent to abandon, but would confirm this with a contact provided by Gail.

Bob identified the three steps in developing evaluation criteria. The PMT will propose an initial criteria list, which will be expanded upon and approved by the TAC. At the next meeting, criteria will be finalized and the TAC will move into technically scoring each alignment against each criteria. Weighing of criteria will fall on the Task Force, as they represent functional users of the bridge. The PMT will work with the Task Force and TAC to make a recommendation to City Council on the scoring on the alignment corridors.

- Kirstin noted the distinction between a design criteria and evaluation criteria weighting, in that the former encompasses current ground rules and the latter reflects values.

- One member asked if the Task Force would adequately consider and weigh the environmental perspective. Bob noted that he and Zach will help guide the Task Force in the consideration of environmental impacts.
- Gail suggested looking at the Clackamas County conditional use criteria because it sums up the state's intentions regarding impacts to resource lands. She noted that there will need to be agreement over language at the technical level so that is understood what the broader language means as it is communicated to the public.

Facilitated Discussion on Initial List of Evaluation Criteria

Kirstin asked members to identify what's most important to them.

- Historic resources, i.e. places that must be avoided (this may be more of a design criteria).
- Impacts to protected resources areas (Goal 5 – Willamette River Greenway (WRG)).
- Impacts to trees (based on species and maturity).
- Impacts of alignments on any potential park uses (Goal 12), whether active or passive, current or future.
- Limit impacts to fish in the river, wetland areas and streams. Avoid, minimize, mitigate. Tom Murtaugh will provide some input of resources present.
- Consider the ecological value and functional value of wetlands.
- Consider interpretive and recreational opportunities around these ecological resources.
- Directness to connections to the regional and statewide trail network.
- User experience (views, desirability, sound/noise).
- User comfort (safety of connections, slope)
- Directness of connections to major origins and destinations.
- Parks effects: Constraints on the future use (master planning) of adjacent facilities including current use, financial, capacity, operational, maintenance, visual.
- Level of access for emergency vehicles, both incident response and regional event (i.e. earthquake).
- Neighborhood impacts (visual, noise, traffic, emergency use frequency).
- Impacts to the Clean Water Act.
- Level of avoidance and mitigation of impacts during design process.
 - Clean Water Act
 - Federal Rivers and Harbors Act – navigable waterways
 - Endangered Species Act –. Consider functional floodplain.
 - Other Federal projects, i.e. channels and levees
 - Archeological resources, treaty rights, essential fish habitats, etc.
 - US Corp Section 408 Cary noted that she will look at the GIS layers for the study area to see if anything comes up.
- Effects on stream bank hardening, riparian habitats, channels, tributaries.
- Construction costs. Differences in bridge length and level of aesthetics.
- Impacts to utilities.
- Safety

Other comments:

- Tom McConnell made a recommendation to look at Section 6F of Boones Ferry Park and to consider early coordination with Michelle Scalise with the Land Conservation Fund of OPRD.

- Kerry noted that the bridge landing on the north side of Alignment #3 is currently by a manmade channel.
- Tom Loynes noted that building a bridge designed primarily for bicycles and pedestrians is easier to permit, particularly if the bridge landings occur in areas where there are few riparian impacts/land is already impacted (i.e. spans a built environment). This type of bridge can be programmatically approved through the FAHP to avoid a year-long report-writing process. To qualify for this programmatic approval the impacts must be demonstrated to be similar to a replacement bridge rather than new bridge
- Bob would like to confirm that if the project ends up outside of programmatic ESA consultation, the project can still achieve a documented CE. It was agreed this would be possible.
- A member noted that a bridge designed as a full span structure, while meeting seismic requirements, would be better for fish, wildlife, WRG, boating and recreation. Along the banks, a vegetated wildlife corridor should be maintained so animals can move up and down the river without being obstructed.
- Reem Khaki noted the importance of showing the public all the great benefits of a new bridge, such as lower commute times, trail connections, etc.

6. Wrap up and Next Steps

10:50 – 11 am

Bob thanked members for their time and announced that a key messaging document will be sent out to all TAC members. At the next TAC meeting, the initial list of criteria will be synthesized into a handful of overarching criteria, of which each will be defined.

A TAC member asked to know which Tribes were invited to participate in this process. ODOT has reached out to the following Tribes regarding notification of and possible involvement in this project:

- Confederated Tribes of Siletz
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

Zach provided directions for those members who were interested in participating in a site tour immediately following the meeting.

Kirstin thanked members and adjourned the meeting at 11 am.