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## Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2020

Remote/Webinar Meeting  
 6:30-8:30pm

<b>Members Attending</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Guests</b>	<b>Staff and Presenters</b>
Joel Huffman Andrew Holtz AJ Zelada John Russell Art Graves Clint Culpepper Greg Olson Michael Rubenstein Susan Watt	Carolyn Briggs - unexcused Ken Lanteigne - unexcused Caroline Crisp - unexcused Tim Roth - moving  Gary Purvine - excused Dean Derek - excused Sarah Erlund - excused	Valerie Schiller John Houle Eric Wilhelm	MaryJo Andersen Oscar Rincones Carrie Warren Mike Pullen Steve Drahota Megan Neil

### **Welcome & Introductions** **Land Acknowledgement**

MaryJo began the meeting with a Land Acknowledgement, and shared an interactive map that shows the tribes and their locations. link: <https://native-land.ca/>

Members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

**Public Comment** – there was no public comment

### **Chair Report**, Andrew Holtz

Andrew H and Susan W attended the proposed transportation budget. There is a revenue crisis and there is no money, so the focus for transportation will be to conduct basic maintenance and preserve assets, and no new projects. Andrew H did bring up that this could reduce or freeze the committee's safety and equity concerns. This may also lessen the political demands to find new revenue. Andrew H also met with Jamie Waltz (DCS Director), Nathan Clark (from Commissioner Stegmann's office), and Cary Stacy (DCS office). They are interested in how the BPCAC can be involved in trying to mitigate the damages and press forward to finding new revenues, beyond the gas tax.

**Meeting Minutes approval** – a couple corrections: middle of page 5, Andrew Campbell, not Andrew H, page 5, Lake – livable streets, bottom of page 6, buses not busses!  
Susan W – page 4, Michael R said Biketown membership, ... end as to how a membership might benefit from a membership – Oscar will correct

**Clint C Moved, AJ Z seconded, minutes approved.**

### **Earthquake Burnside Bridge Updates – Mike Pullen, Multnomah County**

Slide show presentation. Thank you to Art Graves, who also serves on the Community Task Force. This group just had their 21<sup>st</sup> meeting! His participation is appreciated.

Since the last briefing, the long span has been adopted by the Community Task Force, the Policy group, and the County Commissioners. We will need approval from the Federal Highway Administration, which will be in October 2021.

Tonight, we will focus on bicycle, ped, and ADA connections, on the legs of the bridge. These are at esplanade on the east side and on the west side at the Max station on 1<sup>st</sup> ave. The long span has emerged as the top choice because it avoids the unstable soils on land that are expected to liquefy during a major earthquake. It has the fewest number of columns and this allows the bridge to vault over the unstable soils. There are several options, including a tied arch, cable stay, through truss, and will have a moveable span. The movable span could be a lift or a bascule. Will be getting additional input in January and settle on a choice by May 2021. Design would start after that.

The next slide shows the different modes for travel. It will have the same number of traffic lanes. It has space to add a streetcar in the future. On the edges of the new bridge there will be bike lane, sidewalk on each side. It will be a generous amount of space.

Steve Drahota, from HDR engineering, who is working on the planning phase. We are also working with the City of Portland, since they own the infrastructure that would connect to the bridge.

Multi Use path connections on the east and west side. These are highlighted in the presentation.

At this time, both of these connections are stairs, so we are looking at options to improve the accessibility for bikes, ped, and ADA. Concepts include under bridge ramps, elevators, mid-block crossing.

West side of the river, on the south side of the bridge. The graphic shows a ramp that is somewhere in the vicinity of the current Saturday Market building. The original bridge severed the building and it is intertwined and fused with the bridge, so it will be demolished and it leaves a space to put something new multi use path in its place. On the north side of the bridge, it is more complicated. There will most likely be stairs, since there is not enough space to put anything else. Performed an origin-destination analysis to get to that conclusion in 2019. This analysis involves determining distance and travel speed for the different lay-outs.

West side – they are looking at other concepts that adjust the location of the ramp structure to another location on the south side of the bridge. Opportunities that tie into Naito Parkway. The first site is a prime location for redevelopment in the historic district. Looking at various options to optimize the connection with Natio Parkway and Waterfront Park.

East side – ideas include concepts that connect from the Bridge to the Esplanade. Currently there are stairs on the south side of the bridge. One option is to have a ramp facility that extends down. But, there is a substantial added grade, of about 50 feet, with the new bridge.

Other options include a series of different routes, with different points of origin and destination. Steve gave descriptions of the slides and the different routes. There are challenges if there is only one access point, for example on the south side of the bridge. So, they thought about how to create a more fully connected network. Came up with options.

One – a passageway under the bridge, from the north to the south side

Two – a signalized midblock crossing that would stop traffic on the bridge

Three – stairs and elevators

Each of these concepts was presented. The passageway under the bridge will allow users to avoid the bridge openings, and traffic delays, but is not a direct, or intuitive pathway. It also has a large visual

impact. It could have a negative personal safety impact, since it is out of sight. It also has a negative natural resource impact, since it adds columns in the shallower water, and is more expensive to build and maintain. Portland Parks is not in favor of this option.

Signalized midblock crossing would add building belvederes to provide waiting space for bikes and peds. It gives more visibility for personal safety, is cheaper to build, less impact to natural resources since there is not a large ramp structure.

It creates traffic delays, and needs signal timing. It would create perpendicular movement on the bridge which is not normal on the bridge.

Last concept has stairs and elevators on both sides, with undercrossing that is low to the ground, roughly at the platform that exists today. Good visibility for personal safety, and is the least cost with the smallest footprint for natural resources. Elevator has maintenance issues, but the County would take care of it.

We expect that the demand to use it could increase. Possibly an outdoor elevator that could accommodate both bikes and peds.

All of the options have pros and cons, so developed a series of critical success factors to get a comprehensive view of how to solve this issue.

Stakeholder feedback is also important.

Questions in the chat – switchback ramps are not great for all bikes, especially cargo bikes. Clint C - Steel bridge has the minimum amount of space, and he's gotten stuck at the Hollywood transit center switchbacks. Need a way to accommodate those who would not be using the elevator. Could put a tire gutter in the middle of stairs. Mike P – it will probably be either/or not both. Clint C – the elevator is good because it is universal design. AJZ – concerned with stopping traffic on the bridge, as it could slow transit. Susan W – with only an elevator, peds could get squeezed out at peak traffic times.

Any elevator would be in combination with stairs. Steve – there would be storage areas to hold those waiting to get onto the elevator. Currently, the stairs are used infrequently, so adding an elevator would increase the number of users, but they would need to do a study to get an idea of the numbers.

Andrew H – has there been a consideration to add a bike-ped bridge over I-5? Steve – This is outside the scope of the project, but they did look at a two-way bike path on the south side. This added a lot of cost to the project and additional impacts, with connectivity issues. Mike P – could we create something like the Steel Bridge, with another level for the bike/peds. Technically, this would not be feasible, primarily due to the number of times the moveable span opens and the profile of grade. Two separate bridges would have to be built. Andrew H – uses the Burnside to get from Sellwood to downtown, since it is easy to stay on the street grid through the central east side. He would like the plan to pay attention to the connections so that some of the bicyclists will stay on the street grid and not use the elevator and connect to the esplanade. This works going northbound, but not southbound to get from downtown to Sellwood.

Mike P – What are the thoughts for connections on the west side? Steve D – if the ramps are moved, the connection could create opportunities. There are some limitations, since there is not a lot of space, but it could increase connections for pedestrians.

Clint C – eastside – would like to see an elevator, but the biggest concern regarding a signalized crossing, is that there could be an increase in wrong-way riding. What about a two-way facility on the south side? He likes them. John R – also likes the two way facility, and does not like the mid-block crossing. What about connecting to Ankeny. Steve – they looked at this and the connections are very tight, are constrained with buildings on both ends, so it would take an entire lane. This was not deemed appropriate. They looked at how to connect to Ankeny, and even with taking down the AMR building, it would need a vertical ramp, switch back/spiral, and launch over the railroad and freeway. So, very expensive and part of the whole bridge design. There are the same constraints on the west side. It is unlikely to go forward, but is in the assessment right now.

Art G – elevators often do not work, so how has this been addressed? Mike P – TriMet has Max station elevators. And the County keeps the bridges moving every day. They will also need to stay clean as well. Art G – the ramps on the west side are taking up real estate on the side of the bridge, but can the ramps be designed to incorporate the ramp under the bridge? Steve D – they are looking into this as a

concept refinement. Art G – what is the priority? To get to the park or the transportation? Mike P – at first, the priority was to get users to the park, but the Parks Dept thought that would interfere with programming. Susan W – at the east end, what will happen with the skate park? Mike P – the skate park will remain. It will be closed for 4 -6 months during construction and the skate park board is happy with the long span design.

### **Speed limits – Carrie Warren, Multnomah County**

Presentation about speed zones and speed limits. Broad overview. They have requested a speed study request for Gillihan road.

Definitions and updates to the process. State and local agencies conduct speed studies. Basic rule is that a motorist will drive a speed that is reasonable and prudent at all times. In the past, speed studies were focused on getting people from A to B, as fast as possible. Now, there are additional users considered and local road authorities are trying to slow speeds to meet the needs of all users, creating equitable communities.

Statutory speed limit – set by state legislature and covers specific types of roads. These are often for low speeds and high speeds, so the middle range is where the speed studies come into play.

Posted speed limits are those that are posted and enforceable by law. Can be the same as statutory or set by local road authority.

Special conditions, such as school zones and construction zones.

Common misconceptions, per ODOT. The federal government does not set the speed limits. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is not the only factor. Engineers are now looking at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile for non-state collectors and local roads. Lowering the speed limit does not result in slower driving, and other measures need to be implemented.

Engineers choose a design speed when designing a road, then after construction they will evaluate/measure the operating speed.

Speed zone process – speed zone request from the City of Portland to have all the bridges posted at 30 mph. After the agency receives the request, engineer looks at the road type, geometry, crash data, traffic counts, signals, intersections, stop signs, development, bike-ped activity, etc. This data is collected by ODOT and they produce a speed zone report. A local agency may or may not agree with the ODOT report. Multnomah County usually agrees with ODOT, but if we don't there is a speed zone committee to review. A hearing is held, and that review panel will determine the final speed.

Speed studies can be done to re-evaluate a road due to new usage and development and to understand crashes. Anyone can request a speed study.

A speed study can result in the speed limit being increased.

Lowering the posted speed doesn't change the speed of the drivers and may result in greater variance and more crashes. Drivers do not always comply with lowered speed limits and they do not result in fewer crashes.

How do we get vehicles to slow down? How do we improve safety? Reducing the speed limit does not always address the issue of improving safety for all road users. There are many other design elements that can be incorporated into roads improvements.

Questions and answers.

Yes, there is an appeal process for unfavorable speed zone changes.

Slow streets that have been added during the pandemic. Are there new regulations or policies? Carrie does not know of any?

Clint C – misconceptions. Speed not the only factor in crashes. What are other factors? Engineers use through-put as a measure of success. Road classification, land use, crash rate, development, and other factors are now applied to speed studies. 85% and 50% percentile are not the only factors used now.

Complaint-driven system is inequitable, and that is now the process. Carrie – local agencies can look at this, but it is not currently in place. An opportunity to look at new methods, of being proactive, instead of reactive. Portland State University has great programs and Clint likes to connect students to real world projects. This is an opportunity to partner for a large review. Jon Henrichsen is the contact for this.

Ay-young is the contact for the Sauvie Island Speed Study.

Valerie S – how often can a roadway be investigated/studied? Is there a limit on it?

Carrie – three in one year, but we would want to do them for the best result for the community. It is better to talk with the local agency, and go through the appeals process.

### **Staff Report, County Updates**

#### **MaryJo Andersen, Multnomah County**

County updates – there are lots of staff changes. Carrie is leaving, Andrew Campbell has moved into a different position with the Health Dept. Still rolling through them, and it will be finishing up at the end of December.

Transit services that the County is providing include two shuttles for job connectors.

Rural transit – “Dial a Ride” has just started. This is for people who live outside the TriMet zone at the east and west end of the County. Residents can call to get rides to the Doctor, etc.

Michael – how does the dial a ride work? Do they get to go anywhere or to a specific location?

MaryJo – they get delivered to a specific transit location.

Susan – how has the County spread the word about the rural transit service? MaryJo – not sure, so will check into it.

Michael – can it get into the local neighborhood newsletters.

### **Open Share / Project Updates / Other Business (All)**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm**