

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Staff Presentation Worksheet

Presentation Date: 06/08/ 2010 **Time:** 10:00 am **Length:** 30 Minutes

Presentation Title: Sellwood Bridge Replacement Project Update

Department: Department of Transportation & Development - Engineering

Presenters: Cam Gilmour, DTD Director
Elissa Gertler, Public & Government Affairs Director

POLICY QUESTION

Should County staff proceed with public outreach regarding the possibility of the Board of County Commissioners approving a county-wide vehicle registration fee (VRF) to support the Sellwood Bridge Replacement Project?

ISSUE & BACKGROUND

The 85-year-old Sellwood Bridge located in the City of Portland in Multnomah County, has a National Bridge Inventory sufficiency rating of 2 on a scale of 100. This rating indicates the structural condition of the bridge, and how well the bridge crossing serves the current traffic needs. The crossing has a number of deficiencies, such as poor structural condition, geologic instability, poor stopping distance and restrained line of sight for motorists. In 2004, a 10-ton weight limit was imposed on the bridge to preserve the structure. The restriction includes buses and prevents heavy trucks from using the bridge as a secondary freight route.

The Sellwood Bridge connects Oregon Highways 99E, 43 and 224. The bridge is the only crossing between Oregon City and Portland for a 12-mile stretch of the Willamette River. It is estimated that currently 60 percent of the Sellwood Bridge users are travelling to or from, Clackamas County to commute to jobs, shopping and entertainment. Forecasts indicate this number will increase to 70 percent. With an average daily traffic count of 30,000 vehicles, the Sellwood is the busiest two-lane bridge in the State of Oregon.

Replacement of the bridge is estimated to cost \$330 million, including the west end interchange, which may be a future phase. The bridge will be designed to 500-year seismic standards, making the Sellwood Bridge the only Willamette River crossing in Multnomah and Clackamas County that will conform to these stringent design requirements. Construction of the new bridge may begin as early as 2012.

Last year the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2001, which includes a provision, Section 40(1), for counties with a population of 350,000 or more to enact an ordinance establishing a Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) prior to 2013. In accordance with this legislation, the funds are dedicated to the Willamette River (Sellwood) Bridge replacement; therefore, a VRF enacted prior to July 2013 is not subject to the 60 (county) / 40 (city) split that is usually required of these fees. On October 22, 2009, Multnomah County adopted a vehicle registration fee through an ordinance. The funds collected from that VRF will help fund the Sellwood Bridge replacement.

Though Clackamas County benefits by having its residents make up 60 percent of the vehicle trips over the bridge, our County has only been asked to contribute seven percent of the total replacement cost or

\$22 million of the total \$330 million dollar cost. This money could be raised through a county-wide VRF charged on light vehicles registered in Clackamas County.

As the Board of County Commissioners moves closer to making a decision on a VRF, we will reach out to the public, agencies, business community and other interested organizations to discuss the request for the County to help fund the Sellwood Bridge project. So far staff has reached out to a number of rural cities and communities (Estacada, Sandy, Canby and Molalla). These meetings will be followed by meetings with cities inside the UGB (Lake Oswego, Milwaukie, Happy Valley, Wilsonville, Tualatin, Oregon City, West Linn, Gladstone and Damascus), transportation advocacy groups, business organizations, state legislators and other local jurisdictions (CPO's, Hamlets and Villages). We will use the media and other social networks to communicate with the general public and gather feedback.

QUESTION(S) PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Would the Board like additional information on the Sellwood Bridge replacement project?
2. Does the Board want staff to proceed with the public outreach as outlined?

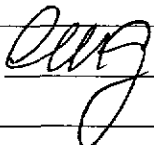
OPTIONS AVAILABLE

1. Take no action – do not conduct public outreach regarding funding options for the Sellwood Bridge replacement project.
2. Ask for additional information on the Sellwood Bridge replacement project.
3. Ask staff to proceed with outreach as presented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

County staff respectfully recommends that the Board of County Commissioners direct staff to proceed with public outreach on this topic.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____
Department Director/Head Approval  _____
County Administrator Approval _____