

Staff Presentation Worksheet

Presentation Date: 11/09/ 2010

Time: 10:00 am

Length: 30 Minutes

Presentation Title: Sellwood Bridge Vehicle Registration Fee ("VRF") Ordinance Enactment

Department: Department of Transportation & Development - Engineering

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

POLICY QUESTION

Should the board adopt an ordinance to implement a \$5 vehicle registration fee that will be used to finance Clackamas County's contribution toward the replacement of the Sellwood Bridge?

ISSUE & BACKGROUND

Originally built in 1925, the Sellwood Bridge is 85 years old. The bridge 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 prevents buses and 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 70% of the users are travelling to, or from, Clackamas County commuting to jobs, shopping, and entertainment. With an average traffic count of 30,000 vehicles, this is the busiest two-lane bridge in the State of Oregon.

The preferred alternative identified in the Sellwood Bridge Replacement Final Environmental Impact Statement is estimated to cost \$330 million. This cost includes the west end interchange, which may be a future phase. This cost may be reduced should cost savings be realized with how the western interchange is constructed. The bridge design will conform to 500-year seismic standards making the Sellwood Bridge the only Willamette River crossing in Multnomah and Clackamas County that conforms to these stringent design requirements. Construction of the new bridge may begin as early as 2012. Though Clackamas County currently benefits by 70% of the vehicle trips travelling over the bridge, our County is being asked to contribute 7% of the total replacement cost. Clackamas County was asked to contribute \$22 million of the total \$330 million dollar cost.

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. The proposed ordinance was drafted in accordance with ORS 801.041 as required by HB2001. Per 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 types of fees. Our preliminary estimates of annual contributions from a \$5 VRF based upon population, for incorporated cities within Clackamas County, indicate that vehicle owners in the municipalities closest to the bridge (Lake Oswego, Oregon City, West Linn, and Milwaukie) will contribute the highest level of revenue toward the project.

Implementation of a \$5 VRF has been discussed with the cities within the Clackamas County jurisdiction. The two public hearings required as part of the ordinance process will allow the general public to comment on the proposal under consideration by the board. The proposed language has been reviewed by Cam Gilmour (DTD Director), Kevin Noreen (Development Review Supervisor), Scot Sideras (County Counsel), and Elissa Gertler (Public Government Relations).

QUESTION(S) PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Would the Board like additional information on the proposed ordinance?
2. Does the Board want staff to initiate the process to adopt the Ordinance as presented?

OPTIONS AVAILABLE

1. Take no action – do not adopt an ordinance to set a \$5 VRF to finance the Sellwood Bridge Replacement.
2. Ask for additional information before adopting an ordinance.
3. Accept the ordinance as presented by staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

County staff respectfully recommends that the Board of County Commissioners direct staff to initiate the process to adopt the proposed Ordinance.

SUBMITTED BY:

Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval  _____

County Administrator Approval _____

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Diedre Landon, Development Review Analyst, at 503-742-4677.

Approved As To Form


Office of County Counsel

11-2-2010
Date