

I-5 Willamette River Bridge *Eugene & Springfield*

Summary of Open Houses • February 9, 2009

Summary

Two public open houses for the I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project were held on Monday, February 9, 2009 in Springfield and Eugene. The purposes of the open houses were to:

- Share current information about the overall project;
- View new images of the proposed deck arch bridge;
- Provide information about the proposed theme, Whilamut Passage;
- Request and share information about the existing Eugene millrace ruins; and
- Request feedback on which design elements are most important to citizens in the region.



The Springfield open house was held at the Springfield Library Meeting Room and the Eugene open house was held at the Eugene Public Library Tykeson-Bascom rooms.

Attendance

Members of the project team attending the open houses included the following:



Megan Banks, LCOG
Larry Fox, OBEC
Andy Howe, OBEC
Kevin Parrish, Hamilton
Kalin Schmoltdt, JLA
Steve Turner, ODOT

Jamie Damon, JLA
John Ferguson, TYLin
Tom Metcalf, OBEC
Suzanne Roberts, OBDP
Jyll Smith, ODOT
Dick Upton, ODOT

Various CAG and PDT members also attended the open houses.

The sign-in sheets recorded 42 attendees in Springfield, though an additional 10-15 attendees were estimated who did not sign-in. Sixty-two attendees signed in at the Eugene open house, although it is estimated another 15-20 visited the open house.

Notification and Publicity

The open houses were advertised by the following methods:

NEWSLETTER

- A four-page color newsletter was mailed to approximately 1,100 agencies, organizations, and individuals on the interested parties list with the open house dates, locations and topics (Appendix A)

E-MAIL

- Sent to approximately 700 people on the project interested parties list (see Appendix B)

NEWSPAPER DISPLAY ADS (APPENDIX C)

- *The Register-Guard* on February 2 in Section A, February 5 in the City-Region Section, February 5 in the Springfield Extra Section and February 7 in the City-Region Section (quarter page, 5.75"x10.5")
- *Eugene Weekly* on February 5 (2.3"x7")
- University of Oregon Oregon Daily Emerald on February 3 (3.3"x6")
- Lane Community College Torch on February 3 (3.78"x6")

PRESS RELEASES, NOTICES

- Community Calendar section of *The Register-Guard* on February 4
- Press release issued on January 16
- Eugene City Council newsletter published on February 4

ON-LINE

- Notice posted on the project website (www.willamettebridge.org)
- Notice posted on Springfield and Eugene city websites on February 3 and 4
- Display ad on *The Register-Guard* website on February 5 (300x250 pixel size)

POSTERS

- Distributed to 108 sites in the area on January 29 (Appendix D)



MEDIA FOLLOW-UP

- KLCC radio interviewed Dick Upton, ODOT Project Manager, at the Eugene Open House
- Mark Baker wrote an article in *The Register-Guard* published February 10, 2009 (Appendix E)
- Wayne Schmidt of Cottage Grove, wrote a Letter to the Editor in *The Register-Guard* on February 11, supporting the work done to date on the project (Appendix E)

Meeting Format

The format of the open houses was drop-in style. There were no formal presentations. A Powerpoint show ran continuously outside the open house rooms, with chairs available for sitting. Project team members from a variety of disciplines were available throughout the open houses to explain the displays and answer questions. Light snacks and beverages were available at both locations.



Introductory Materials:

- Entry sign
- Sign-in sheet (see Appendix F)
- Project overview looped Powerpoint show (see Appendix G)

Wall Displays

- Aerial photo with project boundaries, proposed bridge and on- and off-ramp locations
- Renderings of the bridge from two vantage points
- Aerial photo of the project area showing focused design areas
- Millrace
- Emerging Theme: Whilamut Passage
- Project Schedule
- Bike and pedestrian detour route

Willamette River Greenway displays were discussed because of the pending public hearing in Springfield but it was decided since nothing about the Greenway had been published as part of the open house advertising, it would not be included.

Handouts (Appendix H)

- Copies of January 2009 newsletter
- Past newsletters
- January 2009 project fact sheet
- Comment form
- Project schedule
- Millrace (display reduced to 8-1/2"x11)
- Emerging Theme: Whilamut Passage (display reduced to 8-1/2"x11)
- Aerial base with design elements focus areas

Comments

- A total of 23 comment forms were submitted at the event. A summary of comments is included in Appendix I.



Summary and Meeting Analysis

Based on attendance and comments received in writing and verbally, the open houses were successful. Because the Springfield open house was held during work hours (11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) at a centrally located meeting room at Springfield City Hall, many attendees were city staff in a variety of departments. More Eugene area residents attended the evening open house in Eugene (4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.). Having diverse technical and resource staff was invaluable to the success of the open houses since questions ranged from the timing and phasing of construction to why no off-ramps to Franklin Boulevard.

An area with tables and chairs for discussing and filling out comment forms was provided at both locations and frequently used. The flip chart and easel were used very little—only one comment was written.

Action Items

Follow-up on action items identified at the open houses includes:

- Generate a summary of comments related to design elements in advance of the design workshops.
- Conduct outreach to the bicycle and pedestrian community identifying detours on East Alton Baker Park paths and roads, including a possible forum for providing information.