



City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Land Use Services
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

Ted Wheeler, Mayor
Rebecca Esau, Director
Phone: (503) 823-7300
Fax: (503) 823-5630
TTY: (503) 823-6868
www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Briefing

DISCUSSION MEMO

Date: July 7, 2020
To: Historic Landmarks Commission & Design Commission
From: Arthur Graves, Design / Historic Review Team
Arthur.Graves@portlandoregon.gov
Re: Burnside Bridge Earthquake Readiness Project
Briefing Memo – July 14, 2020

For briefing materials, please see the Burnside Bridge Earthquake Readiness (BBER) webpage here: <https://multco.us/earthquake-ready-burnside-bridge>.

Representatives from Multnomah County and the BBER team will provide additional information and receive your feedback on July 14th. BBER was previously before both Commissions at a joint hearing on this topic on December 5, 2019.

This is the fifth briefing of the BBER to the Historic Landmarks Commission. The first briefing was on September 11, 2017.

This is the third briefing of the BBER to the Design Commission. The first briefing was on October 18, 2018.

In preparation of the conclusion of the Draft EIS (to be published in January 2021), and with criteria and weighting development by the Community Task Force (CTF), the “Preferred Alternative” was scheduled for a final discussion and vote on June 15, 2020.

June 15, 2020: The CTF voted on the “preferred alternative”, and the option for a temporary bridge during construction. Bridge options included: No-build (do-nothing); Retrofit the existing bridge; Replacement - Short Span; Replacement - Long Span; and Replacement - with Couch Couplet.

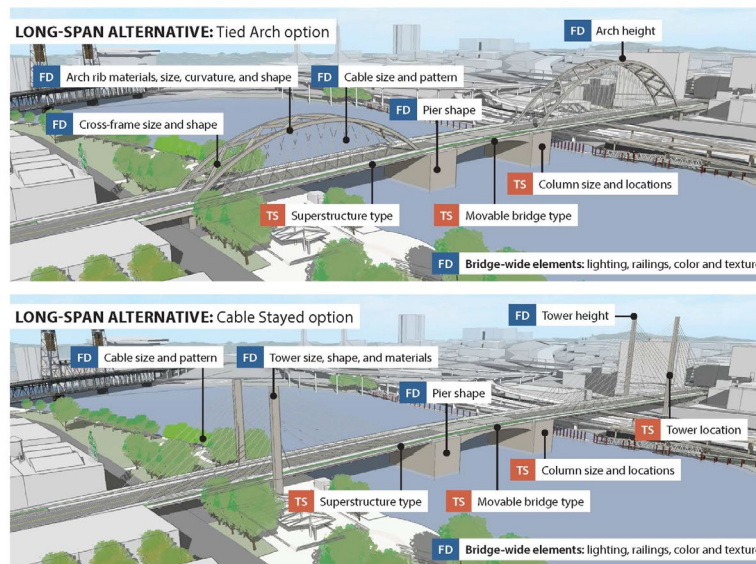
The Results:

- The **Replacement - Long Span** bridge type option was the overwhelming choice. This alternative was originally within the “Replacement Bridge” option and was given its own status due to the degree of design difference from the “Short Span” option. This option is the least expensive and quickest to build. In addition, it would allow greater openness below the bridge due to fewer necessary columns.
- **No temporary bridge** was the overwhelming choice. This was supported due to the added cost of a temporary bridge (about \$100M) and the added time to the project (1.5-2 years).

Staff requests the Commission's comments on the following:

- Comments on the removal of the existing Burnside Bridge rather than repair.
- Comments on the Long Span option. While it allows for fewer supporting columns below the bridge, providing increased openness below, it requires increased structural supports above the bridge resulting in a bridge typology that is not consistent with the existing bridge design and may impact views including those toward the landmark "Portland Oregon" sign which is a designated scenic view. Of the precedent pictures provided by the bridge team, long span bridges appeared to be used in connecting regions or districts, but not neighborhoods. From the CTF discussion on this, CTF member Peter Finley Fry proposed that wording be added to the record moving forward that the new bridge be a neighborhood bridge not a regional bridge (regarding design, scale, etc.).
- Comments on the temporary bridge. This alternative had the potential to impact adjacent buildings and historic districts so its removal alleviates a number of potential negative externalities.
- Comments on proposed possible mitigation for the removal of the existing Burnside Bridge by the bridge team: Portland Seawall/Harbor Wall; Ankeny Pumping Station; Central Fire Station and Fire Station Museum/Station No.1; Oregon & California Railroad (Union Pacific Railroad, UPRR); and Burnside Skatepark.

Note: Portland Historic Landmarks Commission had commented in previous briefings that mitigation for the removal of the Burnside Bridge and impacts to adjacent historic buildings and historic districts should be, "on balance with the extent of the project's impacts". Previous suggestions included assistance towards designated historic URM buildings and an investment in a renewed Historic Resource Inventory (HRI).



Currently the "preferred alternative" is being presented to the community for review and comment. This will conclude August 2020. After receiving community input the CTF will reconvene in September to review comments and possibly refine its recommendations before the recommendation goes to the Policy Group in October (2020) for a final vote.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Enclosures: Full sheets of the above image and precedents, Summary Memos.

The following is a brief synopsis provided by the applicant:

**Synopsis to share with Portland Design and Historic Landmarks Commissions
Before July 14, 2020 EQRB Project Briefing**

Project team will brief commissioners on the preferred alternative recommended by the community task force and ask for input. They will review when and how key decisions would be made on the bridge type and final design phases.

Multnomah County's [Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project](#) is in the environmental review phase. The project is developing an [environmental impact statement](#) for review and approval by the Federal Highway Administration. In June 2020, the project's [Community Task Force](#) recommended a Preferred Alternative that replaces the existing bridge with a [new movable bridge](#) in the same location, with no temporary bridge. Traffic would be diverted to other bridges during construction.

A multilingual outreach effort will gather public input in August on the Preferred Alternative recommendation, leading up to a recommendation by the project's [Policy Group](#) (of local elected and appointed leaders) on October 2, 2020.