

Robert Liberty

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

**Robert Liberty
represents
District 6, which
includes portions of
Northeast, Southeast
and Southwest
Portland.**



The Columbia River Crossing Study: We Must Consider More Alternatives Than Just a New 10 or 12 Lane Freeway Bridge That May Cost Taxpayers \$2 Billion

There are very few regional decisions with greater consequences for us than whether to spend \$2 billion of taxpayer funds to demolish the current Interstate 5 bridges across the Columbia River and replace them with a 10 to 12-lane new freeway bridge.

After many months of study, this alternative (with light rail and bus rapid transit variants) and a no action alternative, are the only ones recommended for further analysis by the staff of the bi-state Columbia River Crossing Task Force. (More information: www.columbiarivercrossing.org.)

Spending \$2 billion on a huge new freeway bridge will shape the pattern of growth in northern Clark County, affect job growth throughout the region, have noise, air and water quality impacts in downtown Vancouver and North Portland, raise and lower land prices nearby and pose basic questions about how 10 or 12 lanes of traffic over the Columbia will merge into the 4 lanes of I-5 at the Rose Quarter. Last, but not least, it will use up much of the limited transportation funds that could be used on other projects in the region.

Does it mean this alternative should not be studied at all?

Of course not.

In fact, a big new freeway bridge is definitely is worth studying ... as one alternative among many.

The mistake is to continue the study with just one alternative. The only possible conclusion for that kind of study will be the demolition of the old bridge and spending up to \$2 billion on a new freeway bridge. I am very concerned that future generations may come to regard the bridge as a symbol of our generation's lack of imagination, our disregard for fiscal responsibility and our indifference to global warming.

This region, of all regions in the nation, deserves to be offered many more choices to study. These options should include many other alternatives that were not studied by the Task Force because they fell outside the narrowly defined geography and statement of purpose and need for the project. (Documents laying out some of my concerns about the Task Force study and recommendations as well as some suggestions for other alternatives that should be considered will be posted to my website soon: www.metro-region.org/article.cfm?articleID=12542.)

Because the Metro Council is part of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region, it will ultimately be called upon to pass judgment on this project. In effect, we are being asked at this early stage to perform \$2 billion worth of due diligence.

continued

Columbia River Crossing

continued from page 1

Metro Council President David Bragdon has created an opportunity for Councilors and the public to express their views on this regionally significant project.

On Tuesday, February 13 at 2 p.m. the Council will hold an informal work session on this subject and discuss possible resolutions expressing the views of the Council.

The results of that discussion, including possible resolutions, will be the subject of a public hearing and Council action at its meeting that begins at 2 p.m. Thursday, February 22.

On February 27 the Columbia River Task Force is scheduled to take action on the staff recommendation.

I invite you to attend Metro's work session and to use your opportunity to testify at the Council meeting on February 22.

— Robert Liberty

Metro Council makes first purchase with 2006 bond measure funds

The Metro Council's purchase of a one-acre parcel in Sellwood with frontage on Johnson Creek kicks off the program voters approved in November for natural area and water quality protection. Located directly adjacent to the Springwater Corridor trail and Johnson Creek Park, this purchase provides opportunities to restore native vegetation, enhance water quality and protect fish and wildlife habitat.

The area can be seen by users of the Springwater Corridor trail when they cross the recently opened bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Johnson Creek. The bridge is part of the Springwater Corridor trail's "Three Bridges" project completed this fall.

"In one transaction we are helping to protect and improve the quality of water in our streams, restore salmon and trout populations in Johnson Creek, and keep a part of nature in older neighborhoods as we grow," said Metro Councilor Robert Liberty, who represents the Metro district where the property is located.

Metro to hear public testimony on 2008-11 MTIP final draft list Feb. 13

The Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) invite the public to comment on the final draft list of projects to be funded in the flexible funding portion of the 2008-11 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). MTIP is the biennial program for federally funded transportation projects in the metropolitan region. The emphasis is on projects other than roads, such as paths and bike trails, boulevards, Green Streets, pedestrian, planning, transit, road modernization and construction, highway, and transit-oriented development.

Testimony is scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 13 in the Metro Council Chamber, 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland. To ensure the accuracy of testimony, participants are asked to bring a written version of their spoken comments, and to be certain that contact information and any affiliation are included.

For more information, and to see a full list of the proposed projects, visit Metro's website at www.metro-region.org, and search for "Transportation Priorities Process 2008-11."

Oregon Zoo hosts climate change lecture series

On Feb. 27, Steven C. Amstrup, research wildlife biologist with the Alaska Science Center, discusses polar bears in decline due to dramatic climate change. On March 27, Jessica J. Hellmann, assistant professor of biological sciences at Notre Dame, addresses the impact of global warming on insects, which are extremely useful for investigating the responses of biodiversity to climate change. For more information, visit the Zoo's website at www.oregonzoo.org or contact Krista Swan at (503) 220-2454.

Councilor Robert Liberty contact information

Address	600 NE Grand Ave. Portland, OR 97232
Phone	(503) 797-1552
Fax	(503) 797-1793
E-mail	libertyr@metro.dst.or.us
Assistant	Amelia Porterfield
Phone	(503) 797-1543
E-mail	porterfielda@metro.dst.or.us
Web	www.metro-region.org

About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

Your Metro representatives

Metro Council President
David Bragdon

Metro Councilors
Rod Park, District 1
Brian Newman, District 2
Carl Hosticka, District 3
Kathryn Harrington, District 4
Rex Burkholder, District 5
Robert Liberty, District 6

Auditor
Suzanne Flynn

February 2007 dch/final
Printed on recycled paper