



Local Vehicle Registration Fee Proposal



Building the new Sellwood Bridge

The 83-year-old Sellwood Bridge is in serious need of replacement. The only Willamette River crossing in a 12-mile stretch of river, the bridge has a federal sufficiency rating of 2 out of 100, with 100 representing a bridge in excellent condition. Most trucks and buses cannot use the bridge due to its 10-ton weight limit. Despite being the busiest two-lane bridge in Oregon, the Sellwood's structural problems and narrow design make it obsolete for cars, trucks, buses, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Since 2006 Multnomah County has explored alternatives to repair or replace the bridge. The county has worked with its regional partners to find a long-term solution that meets the needs of the Portland metropolitan area, the local neighborhood, and diverse user groups. The Preferred Alternative recommended for a new Sellwood Bridge in February 2009 is supported by neighbors, businesses and the county's community and government partners. Developing a plan to fund the new bridge is now our challenge.

Funding Plan

The preliminary cost estimate for the Sellwood Bridge Replacement is \$330 million (in 2014 dollars, the middle year of the construction phase). The cost includes the new bridge, an interchange where the bridge connects to Highway 43, right-of-way, design, and mitigating impacts to protected resources.

The Jobs and Transportation Act enacted by the Oregon Legislature and signed by Governor Kulongoski in 2009 marked a major milestone in funding a new Sellwood Bridge. The legislation allocated \$30 million for the new interchange with Highway 43 at the west end of the bridge. The City of Portland plans to fund \$100 million of the project's cost with new transportation funds resulting from the bill. Finally, the new law allows several counties in the Portland metro area to adopt local vehicle registration fees to help fund a new Sellwood Bridge.

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Local Vehicle Registration Fee proposal (continued)

Elected officials in Multnomah County and Clackamas County have announced plans to consider adopting local vehicle registration fees to fund the new Sellwood Bridge. The Jobs and Transportation Act permits county commissioners in the two jurisdictions to enact such a fee.

Here are some details about Multnomah County's proposed fee:

- County Commissioners will consider a proposed annual vehicle registration fee of \$19.
- The Board of County Commissioners will consider adopting a fee in October 2009. A public hearing and briefing are scheduled October 8. First and second readings of a fee ordinance are scheduled on October 15 and 22 in the County Boardroom. (See below for details.)
- The fee will be in place for 20 years.
- If enacted by the county in October 2009, vehicle owners would begin paying the new fee in the Fall of 2010. Vehicle owners would pay the fee to the state when they pay their state fee.
- Multnomah County's fee is projected to raise \$127 million for the project.
- Multnomah County's fee will apply to 577,240 motorized vehicles registered in the county. Trucks weighing 26,000 lbs. or more are exempted by state law, since large trucks pay a weight/mile fee.

Clackamas County elected officials plan to consider enacting a smaller fee in 2010 dedicated to replacing the Sellwood Bridge. Many vehicles that use the bridge come from Clackamas County. The local fees combined with a \$40 million funding request to the federal government and funds already secured are expected to complete the project's funding package.

Project Schedule

The Sellwood Bridge Project is currently in the planning phase. A Preferred Alternative has been recommended by local jurisdictions. A Final Environmental Impact Statement will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration in 2010. Federal approval is expected in Summer/Fall of 2010. After approval, the county can use federal funds already secured to buy right of way and design the project. If funding is secured, construction can begin in late 2012 and be completed in 2016.

Preferred Alternative

The Preferred Alternative for a new bridge was approved by Multnomah County, the City of Portland, Metro and Metro's JPACT in early 2009. Key features of the new bridge include:

- A cross-section 64' wide at its narrowest point, ensuring room for a future streetcar line
- Two 12' travel lanes, two 12' shared use sidewalks, and two 6.5' bike lanes
- A grade separated and signalized interchange at the intersection with Highway 43 on the west
- Built in its current alignment, but widened to the south so that the bridge can be constructed in halves while remaining open to traffic

For more information

For Sellwood Bridge project information visit www.sellwoodbridge.org. For information about the proposed Local Vehicle Registration fee or to submit comments contact: Public Affairs Office, 503-988-6804, mike.j.pullen@co.multnomah.or.us. For public hearing and board meeting details, visit <http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/cc/agenda.shtml>.