

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SALEM KEIZER URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY, SALEM  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLAN, AND A PROPOSED EXCEPTION TO STATEWIDE  
PLANNING GOAL 15 (WILLAMETTE RIVER GREENWAY) TO ALLOW FOR THE PROPOSED  
LOCATION OF A NEW BRIDGE ACROSS THE WILLAMETTE RIVER

Case File #CA 16-04

Date: October 12, 2016

TO: Salem and Keizer City Councils, Marion and Polk County Board of Commissioners, and Keizer and Polk County Planning Commissions

Thank you for accepting my comments in writing as I have another commitment and cannot attend in person. My name is Herb Shaw, and my wife Joan and I reside at 1930 Wallace Road NW, Salem, and we own businesses at 908 Edgewater Street NW (a CURVES lady's fitness center, and Joan's Health and Beauty suites). My background spans fifty years in the bridge and highway construction industry; including ten years as an engineering Construction Project Manager with ODOT, fifteen years as a Senior Construction Project Manager with David Evans & Associates, and the last six years as an industry consultant. I've managed the construction of a number of signature bridges throughout Oregon, including a bridge 3,800 feet in length. I share this only to assure you that I have sufficient experience and knowledge to adequately address the issues at hand.

Tonight I'm testifying on behalf of the West Salem Neighborhood Association Land Use Committee in support of the amendment to the UGB so the proposed Marine Drive can be constructed as approved ten years ago. I cannot, however, support efforts to include the proposed right-of-way for the third bridge crossing in the amendment.

Please let me explain. West Salem desperately needs relief for Wallace Road and OR 22 traffic congestion, and I clearly understand the need for additional crossings of the Willamette River in the Salem area, but the construction of a third bridge within the urban area is ill conceived and not supported by the majority of residents in West Salem. My experience tells me all of the proposals presented a few years ago by the City of Salem are overly expensive band-aides that would become antiquated upon completion.

The "preferred alternate" for the third crossing will not only severely impact all of West Salem, but will devastate the Edgewater District by eliminating as many as 50 businesses because of all the ramps and the widths required to meet Federal and State design standards. In addition, the proposed Second Street crossing of Wallace Road is equally ill conceived, only adding to the devastation of the business districts. I'm sorry, but these proposals will only exacerbate our problems and change the entire flavor of our community as the result of these major and obtrusive thoroughfares.

The citizens of West Salem understand the need to have long-range solutions to our traffic needs, but we shouldn't have the feeling that we don't matter; like, "We're going to fix it, and you're going to like it!" Given the fact that we have already spent huge amounts of money on non-workable proposals that are vehemently opposed by the citizenry, it is time to accept our losses and not pour more good money after bad. We must begin looking into concepts that will resolve the issues, and do it now. We must start thinking "out of the box" and become open to all possibilities. We have an amazing resource readily available to us in Oregon; the great minds in the engineering industry, both private and public sectors. It would appear the consulting engineers the City hired were commissioned to work within prescribed boundaries; if that is true, we cannot continue doing that.

There are a number of things that could be accomplished relatively soon that will provide immediate help while we're looking into long-term solutions. This could include consideration of earlier proposals to widen Center Street Bridge and provide a more efficient off-ramp to Front Street; construct a pedestrian/bike path over Wallace Road near Edgewater Street; look into possibility of restricting

movements at intersection of Wallace Road and Edgewater Street, and maybe eliminate the traffic signal; and construct Marine Drive as a local access only with access from Marion Street Bridge. Furthermore, all parties at the table tonight should be concerned that ODOT seemingly is not taking immediate action to upgrade the seismic needs of the existing river crossings.

I would further suggest the river crossing proposal should not on the shoulders of the City, but rather be of major concern to Marion and Polk County officials. The only viable solution to the river crossing issues is to separate the congestion on OR 22 from that of OR 221 (Wallace Road). A river crossing for OR 22 should be somewhere South of the City of Salem, and likewise, the solution for OR 221 is to the North, beyond the City of Keizer.

I understand the cost for the “preferred alternative” is proposed to be something over \$300 million; that’s typical of urban right-of-way and development costs, so why not consider rural land acquisitions that are less expensive and will actually have a chance of meeting the needs of all Oregon and national citizens. If we are serious about resolving a bad situation that will continue to escalate as our population grows, constructing new interchanges on I-5 is not an inconceivable option.

Respectfully yours,  
Herb Shaw