



May 27, 2009

To: Ms. Vera Katz
Chair, Willamette Light Rail Bridge Advisory Committee

From: Capt. Dan Jordan
Vice-Chair, Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee

Re: Comment on South Corridor Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project; Willamette River Crossing

Dear Ms. Katz,

The Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee continues to attend meetings with members of the Willamette River Crossing planning group and appreciate their efforts to keep us informed and listen to our concerns.

There is a feeling among many of our members that their presentation justifies the proposed bridge height, but doesn't adequately address future navigational uses. Hopefully, the planning process will continue to look into ways to improve upon the proposed 77.36 foot vertical clearance that do not adversely affect the project. We appreciate the impacts that additional height has on landing the proposed bridge on either side of the river as well as the impacts of an increased grade on light rail and accessibility. The balance between navigational clearances and project feasibility is a difficult one.

We would like to offer a few suggestions to enhance navigational safety under the bridge:

1. Install a fendering system around the bridge towers to protect them from potential allisions.
2. Buoys on the both sides of each tower will make the towers easier to detect by radar.
3. A RACON on the center of the bridge span will assist vessels navigating under the bridge in the fog.
4. Lights in addition to the center span lights should mark the extreme edges of the charted height of the bridge span.
5. A real-time vertical clearance sensor will help a vessel know if it has sufficient clearance well in advance of passing under the bridge.

Thank you for your consideration. We stand ready to provide whatever support we can.

Very truly yours,

Capt Dan Jordan

cc: Mr. Dave Unsworth, Project Development Manager, Tri-Met Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project
cc: Austin Pratt, USCG Seattle