

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY



Public Hearing: Proposal to Name New Willamette/I-5 Bridge the “Whilamut Passage Bridge”

Meeting Date: July 26, 2010
Department: City Manager’s Office
www.eugene-or.gov

Agenda Item Number: 3
Staff Contact: Beth Forrest
Contact Telephone Number: 541-682-5882

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

This is an opportunity for the public to provide testimony on a proposal to name the new Willamette/I-5 bridge the “Whilamut Passage Bridge.” This bridge is a state-owned facility and the council has been asked to make a recommendation to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). A presentation by members of the Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park (CPC) will precede the public hearing.

BACKGROUND

At a work session on May 19, 2010, the council expressed general support for a proposed naming policy that delineates processes and procedures for handling naming and renaming requests. Although the policy has not yet been formally adopted, councilors supported the core elements of the plan. One element of the proposed policy states that the process for vetting any naming request will include a well-publicized public comment period that provides at least one opportunity for testimony in front of the council, typically in the context of a Public Forum. The Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park has requested that this particular naming proposal be the subject of a dedicated public hearing. Action on the naming recommendation is scheduled for August 9, 2010.

A request for the council to endorse a proposal to name the new I-5/Willamette River Bridge the “Whilamut Passage Bridge” was submitted in May 2010 by the CPC. The City of Eugene has no jurisdictional authority over the decision; therefore, the council is being asked only to consider the proposal and send its recommendation to ODOT.

Financial Implications

According to ODOT officials associated with this project, the financial implications of the naming proposal would be minimal.

The naming of the bridge would cost virtually nothing, said Dick Upton, ODOT’s project manager for the bridge replacement. Small signs at each end of the bridge would include the names “Willamette River” and “Whilamut Passage Bridge” and cost between \$1,000 and \$1,500 for both. That cost would be part of the total \$187 million bridge price tag, ODOT spokesman Rick Little said. - *May 10, 2010, Register-Guard*

Public Comment

The opportunity to submit comments on the proposed name was publicized through a press release and an announcement on the City’s website. Twenty-three comments expressing a variety of opinions were received via email during the public comment period (as of 7/21/10).

Triple Bottom Line

While a formal analysis of this proposal using the City's triple bottom line tool was not done, several of its goals are relevant to the CPC's recommendation and may be considered before taking action:

Culture

1. Is this proposal culturally appropriate and how does this proposal affirm or deny the cultures of diverse communities?
2. How does this proposal create opportunities for artistic expression, cultural celebration or education of a cultural exchange?

Building Capacity to Advance Social Equity

1. What plans have been made to communicate about and share the activities and impacts of this proposal within the City organization and/or the community?
2. How does this proposal strengthen collaboration and cooperation between the City organization and community members?

RELATED CITY POLICIES

Adherence to the values and procedures set forth in a City naming policy relates to the City Council goal of "Effective, Accountable Municipal Government, a government that works openly, collaboratively, and fairly with the community to achieve measurable and positive outcomes and provide effective, efficient services."

OPTIONS

On August 9, the City Council will have several options:

1. Support the CPC recommendation and direct staff to prepare a letter to ODOT endorsing the name "Whilamut Passage Bridge."
2. Decline to support the CPC recommendation.
3. Provide other direction to staff.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager has no recommendation on this item.

SUGGESTED MOTION

No motion is suggested; this is a public hearing only.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Public comment received 6/14/10 – 7/21/10
- B. "Whilamut Passage Bridge" Information

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Staff Contact: Beth Forrest
Telephone: 541-682-5882
Staff E-Mail: beth.l.forrest@ci.eugene.or.us

From: Dan Bates
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Naming of Wil-whatever
Date: Tuesday, June 22, 2010 5:10:45 PM

People all over the country and even people in Eugene have problems with the pronunciation of Willamette Valley or river.. Whatever you do, don't make it worse by naming ANYTHING a name that is similar but not at all the same. It will not help anyone learn the history of the area.

It will just be a source of enormous confusion!

Clarice Bates, lifelong resident of Eugene.

From: phoenix53@fastmail.fm
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: whilamut
Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2010 8:55:11 AM

Yes on Whilamut Passage naming. Thanks.

From: stuart phillips
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council; PIERCY Kitty; BROWN George R; TAYLOR Betty L; ZELENKA Alan; POLING George A; CLARK Mike; SOLOMON Jennifer L; ORTIZ Andrea F; PRYOR Chris E; RUIZ Jon R;
Subject: Comment on proposal to name the new I-5 Willamette River Bridge the "Whilamut Passage Bridge."
Date: Thursday, June 24, 2010 7:49:31 PM

Why not name this new unnecessary monstrosity the "inane waste of money for oil addicted eugene". This seems more appropriate for such a waste of money, and complete intrusion into our "wild eugene" flavor, becoming increasingly noisy, polluted, loud and unliveable. Stuart Philips, Eugene, Oregon. Thankyou, how about NOT BUILDING THIS BRIDGE FOR WASTEFUL AND DEADLY CARS, NOR ANY OTHER AUTO BRIDGES or ROADS DEPLETING OUR PEACEFUL WILD EUGENE FURTHER! How about it, challenge, stop building bridges and roads that deplete our natural character further here in increasingly unpeaceful Eugene, further degrading our quality of life! Stop this insanity now.

The New Busy think 9 to 5 is a cute idea. Combine multiple calendars with Hotmail. Get busy.

From: scott hunter
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: A name for the new bridge
Date: Friday, June 25, 2010 6:20:20 PM

A name for the new bridge, how about the (duck land
bridge)
Scott hunter

From: mertzg@juno.com
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: no to "Wilamut" bridge name
Date: Thursday, July 01, 2010 9:10:02 AM

I, as well as many I've talk with, are against the name of "Wilamut" for the I-5 bridge over the Willamette River in Eugene.

Too confusing. Just a laugh.

The name Willamette is mispronounce by many, already. Now it's going to be the Wilamut bridge over the Willamette River in Eugene, Orygun. Bad, bad bad. We need to concentrate on being more "user friendly".

thx

Gary Mertz

mertzg@juno.com

From: Nancy Batchelder
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage
Date: Thursday, July 01, 2010 4:23:30 PM

I do not currently live in Eugene, but I was born there and am still a Lane County resident so I hope my comment counts.

I do not agree with the naming of the I-5 bridge over the Willamette River the Whilamut Passage because it will confuse many people. It is difficult enough for people to pronounce the river and the valley correctly, and this will make matters worse. That may be the way the name of the river was pronounced hundreds of years ago, but it is not the way it is pronounced today.

While I agree with naming the bridge something to honor the indigenous people, there must be many other choices that could achieve that goal without

Nancy Batchelder
Florence Oregon

From: T FRIZZELL
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: naming the bridge
Date: Sunday, July 11, 2010 2:14:13 PM

I personally do not like the name Willamut for the new passing bridge. The name *Willamette* is frequently mispronounced (travelers and visitors mostly), and Willamut will make it even more confusing on how to pronounce *Willamette*. I know there is history behind the name, (Willamut), but how many of us really know what that is, and the travelers/visitors probably won't know either, unless there is a plaque to read. And where along I5 will the plaque be placed to read? Maybe the closest rest stop to Eugene?

Name the bridge after the beautiful river it spans.

Thank You,

Teresa A. Frizzell
Native Oregonian
Eugene resident for 33 years!

From: Jack Turner
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Naming Our New Bridge
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010 9:14:09 AM

Eugene Mayor Piercy and City Council Members

As a Springfield resident for the past ten years, and before that a Eugene resident since 1969, I endorse naming the new I-5 bridge over the Willamette River the "Whilamut Passage Bridge."

I realize that perhaps some adults will dismiss the proposed name as a foreign-sounding contrivance. But I have taught elementary students for most of the past 40 years, and believe that I know better. We owe much of our love and respect for western Oregon's rich landscape to our Native forebearers, and it's not becoming of us to erase everything the earlier people called this land -- originally their land. They called the river "Whilamut", and we should honor that name as we create a bridge over it.

I'm confident that once our young people are told the story of "Whilamut" that they will embrace it as authentic, and some day everyone will assert that this naming was "obvious".

Thanks for your attention to an Important Cultural Matter.

Jack Turner
Mohawk, OR

90498 Sunderman Rd
Springfield, OR 97478

From: Elliot McIntire
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010 2:11:02 PM

There are few reminders of the cultural heritage of this area's first residents. Naming the new I-5 bridge Whilamut Passage Bridge will help to preserve this heritage. Because of its similarity to the more familiar Willamette, it will catch people's ear (and eye) and be a reminder of our area's rich history. I urge the city council to adopt the resolution, and recommend that ODOT designate the bridge the Whilamut Passage Bridge. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Elliot McIntire
Eugene

From: Arun Toke
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010 2:24:45 PM

Dear Kitty

Greetings. How are you?

I am wanting to see the city and community honor the indigenous people of this area by naming the new bridge as: Whilamut Passage Bridge.

Hope you and the council would favor the official naming of this new bridge with the kalapuya name, Whilamut Passage Bridge.

Thanks.

arun

Arun N. Toké, Editor
Skipping Stones Magazine
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Eugene, OR 97403 USA

TEL. 541-342-4956

email: editor@SkippingStones.org

website: www.SkippingStones.org

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From: Sue DeWhitt
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut bridge naming
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010 2:59:45 PM

I whole heartedly support the naming of the new bridge over the Willamette River as the *Whilamut Passage Bridge!* *I think it is fitting and refreshing to name the bridge after indigenous people and is honoring to them. Please do this! I care, I vote, and have contributed to some of your election campaigns.*

Thanks,

Sue DeWhitt

From: [charles biggs](#)
To: [*Eugene Mayor and City Council;](#)
Subject: Naming I-5 Bridge "Whilamut Passage"
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010 8:11:59 PM

Hello, Mayor and Eugene City Councilors,

I am in support of naming I-5 Bridge "Whilamut Passage".

Charles

The New Busy is not the too busy. Combine all your e-mail accounts with Hotmail. [Get busy.](#)

From: Margaret Springer
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: The new I-5 bridge
Date: Monday, July 19, 2010 5:58:37 AM

Hi --

Just wanted to say that I think the name Whilamut Passage is perfect for the new I-5 Bridge. It's beautiful and honors the Kalapuya who preceded us here. There shouldn't be any confusion between Whilamut and Willamette -- it's obvious that the former name was derived from the latter. Both names honor our collective history.

Margaret Springer, 1700 Jefferson Street, Eugene 97402

From: Margaret Hallock
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: support for Whilamut Bridge passage
Date: Monday, July 19, 2010 1:44:44 PM

To: Eugene City Council

I am delighted that you are taking public comments on the name of the new I-5 bridge over the Willamette River. I write in strong support of the suggested name of Whilamut Passage. This name has been discussed for several years, and it would be a fitting tribute to the first peoples of this river valley. The name derives from ancient traditions and activities and is associated with the riverfront trails next to the river and the Talking Stones exhibit. This name would do much to educate and inspire the residents of the Eugene-Springfield area, as well as those passing over the river, about those who came before us. I urge you to listen carefully to the testimony of Kalapuya elder Esther Kutzman and Grand Ronde member David Lewis. I wish I could be there to hear their testimony. Thank you,

Margaret Hallock
Margaret Hallock, Director
hallock@uoregon.edu
Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics
1221 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403
541-346-3699
fax: 541-346-3894
www.waynemorsecenter.uoregon.edu

From: RPettigrew@aol.com
To: [*Eugene Mayor and City Council;](#)
cc: [SONNICHSEN David \(SMTP\); kalapuya@centurytel.net;](#)
Subject: Support for Whilamut Passage Bridge name
Date: Monday, July 19, 2010 3:15:57 PM

To the Mayor and City Council of Eugene:

I wholeheartedly support the name, "Whilamut Passage Bridge," for the new bridge over the Willamette River. Public acknowledgments of the native people of our area are few and far between, despite the fact that they were here many thousands of years before the now dominant culture arrived here only 200 years ago. As an archaeologist with four decades of experience in the Willamette Valley, I feel strongly that this public naming is appropriate and will honor not only the many generations of native people who came before us and still are with us, but also the current generation of decision-makers who finally have recognized the importance of such an act.

Richard M. (Rick) Pettigrew, Ph.D., RPA
President and Executive Director
Archaeological Legacy Institute
4147 E. Amazon Dr.
Eugene, OR 97405
USA
RPettigrew@aol.com
www.archaeologychannel.org
541-345-5538
541-338-3109 (fax)
Skype: rick.pettigrew

From: Sharon Braaten
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
cc: braatens@hotmail.com;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 8:39:11 AM

Dear Mayor Piercy and City Council,
I am delighted at the proposed naming of the 1-5 bridge crossing the Willamette near Glenwood and heartily support your endorsement of said name to ODOT.

Thank you for being open and receptive to supporting this tiny piece of native language that reminds us that we "borrowed" this land from those before us.

Sharon Braaten
1712 Adkins St #3
Eugene, OR 97401

From: Ker Cleary
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 9:13:38 AM

Greetings, dear elected officials!

I would like to add my voice to the support for naming the new I-5 bridge the Whilamut Passage, to honor those who came before us, and whose lives were forever altered by our influx. We won't be here forever, either. Let us honor the ancestors as we would like to be honored in the future, and let us be worthy of honoring by those who follow us.

In peace and gratitude,
Ker Cleary

--

Ker Cleary, M.A.

ClearHeart Counseling

<http://www.ClearHeartCounseling.com>

and

Coaching for Counselors

<http://www.AuthenticPrivatePractice.com>

1679 Willamette St., Eugene, OR 97401

541-349-0595

<http://kercleary.blogspot.com/>

I am part of Eugene's Health and Well-being Guild <http://www.hwbguild.com>

Pain is inevitable; suffering is optional.

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From: Jose Soto
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: "Williamut Passage Bridge."
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 9:31:33 AM

I like it!

Jose E. Soto III B.Ed, QMHA
Resident Services Coordinator
ShelterCare
Garden Place Residence
3692 Hickory
Eugene, OR 97401

Ph: 284-7800
Fax: 284-7804

<http://www.sheltercare.org/>

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"The World you were born into is just one model of reality. Other Cultures are not failed attempts at being you; they are unique interpretations of the human spirit."

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From: JerryPJ@aol.com
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 12:06:42 PM

Greetings Mayor Piercy and Eugene City Councilors,

I am writing you to support the naming of the new I-5 bridge over the Willamette River *Whilamut Passage Bridge*. As a young boy, back in the early 1960's, I walked home from school up Birch Lane where I watched the construction of the first bridge, an uninspiring bridge just known as the I-5 bridge over the Willamette. To the west of the bridge was a huge landfill site. Now we have a wonderful open space where that landfill was, Whilamut Natural Area. And now we have the opportunity to name our beautiful new bridge over the Willamette River. What a grand proposal it is to name this new bridge *Whilmut Passage Bridge*, with all the meaning and history it stands for.

I urge you to recommend to ODOT the naming of the new I-5/Willamette River bridge *Whilamut Passage Bridge*. Thank you for this opportunity to comment and all the work you do for our community.

Sincerely,

Jerry Jacobson
4472 Shadow Wood Dr
Eugene, OR 97405

From: Susan Matthews
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage
Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010 12:42:12 PM

Please name the new I-5 Willamette Bridge the "Whilamut Passage" (Kalapuya - Where the water ripples fast) and help decrease the criticism that Eugene lacks diversity and Cultural Competency. There is a strong Anglo bias here that is very oppressive.

Make us proud of Eugene/Springfield as a welcoming and inclusive place to live.

Let's listen to the Kalapuya elder Esther Stutzman "...it would be the biggest, most giant step our culture has taken in a long time" (Springfield Times) and make this happen.

Many thanks, Susan Matthews

Get a new e-mail account with Hotmail - Free. [Sign-up now.](#)

From: ksaranpa@comcast.net
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage Bridge
Date: Wednesday, July 21, 2010 11:04:14 AM

Dear Mayor Piercy and City Councilors,

I am writing in support of the name "Whilamut Passage Bridge" for the new I-5 bridge. It is a fine way to pay tribute not only to the Kalapuya people who were here before European settlers, but also to the Whilamut Natural Area, which the bridge crosses. I also think we should honor the volunteers who have devoted many hours to the many bridge issues for several years. They are advocating for this name, and I think it is a good one.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
Kathy Saranpa, Eugene

From: Kate Kelly
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: bridge naming
Date: Wednesday, July 21, 2010 12:33:22 PM

Dear Mayor Piercy and Council,

I would like to go on record as being in support of naming the new I-5 bridge "Whilamut Passage" to honor the rich native heritage of our area as well as provide a "passage" between the 2 sister communities of Eugene and Springfield.

Respectfully submitted on July 21, 2010
Kate Kelly

From: bdmay1@comcast.net
To: *Eugene Mayor and City Council;
Subject: Whilamut Passage
Date: Wednesday, July 21, 2010 2:39:39 PM

Hello, Barbara May here. I strongly support the naming of our new bridge "Whilamut Passage"--I was very pleased to learn that ODOT favors this name as well. As a Kalapuya word Whilamut reflects the native people's value of this wonderful, life giving resource, and it underscores the past and present of our river as an organism as well as a vehicle of movement. Please put your stamp of approval on this name! Thanks, bye bdm (Barbara Dale May, Assoc. Prof. Emerita, UO dept of Romance Languages, & Board President, Willamette Riverkeeper).

I-5 Willamette River Bridge – Eugene and Springfield Naming Procedure

1. ODOT needs to receive information documenting support for a specific name from the City of Springfield, City of Eugene, Lane County and the Metropolitan Planning Committee.
2. Any name has to be approved by the Oregon Geographic Names Board. Information needed for OGNB approval will need to be developed by the naming advocates.
 - a. Name proposal forms and instructions can be found and submitted electronically online by visiting Website http://geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/name_form.htm
 - b. Or it can be mailed or e-mailed to:
Oregon Geographic Names Board- Oregon Historical Society
ATTN: Champ Vaughan, OGNB President
1200 S.W. Park Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97205
E-mail: Vaughan@molalla.net
3. Submit the request along with the supporting documents to:
Jane Lee, Region 2 Manager
455 Airport Rd SE, Bldg B
Salem, Oregon 97301-4989
4. Any name honoring the Kalapuya or any other tribal group must be acceptable to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde or other appropriate tribal organizations depending on the recommended name. Tribal coordination will be done by ODOT after local consensus is reached.
5. The name must be acceptable to ODOT.

Emerging Theme: Whilamut Passage

The theme for the Interstate 5 Willamette River Bridge project focuses on words, phrases and images that encompass the variety of users—past, present and future. Though the bridge is the central feature, the I-5 Willamette River Bridge project incorporates elements of many different places. It is an intersection in time, a confluence, a crossing.

This sense of place is represented by the river and its natural features and native animal and plant communities. It is also represented significantly by the first peoples, the Kalapuya, followed by white explorers, settlers, with the millrace, earlier commerce and crossings, other bridges, later arrivals, and current commerce and movement.

Today, as part of a park area that includes about three miles of frontage along the north bank of the Willamette River, the Whilamut Natural Area encompasses 237 acres of publicly-owned open space, linking the neighboring cities of Springfield and Eugene, Oregon. The Whilamut Natural Area honors the Kalapuya people and their language. To the Kalapuya it means, “Where the river ripples and runs fast.”

Hence: Whilamut.

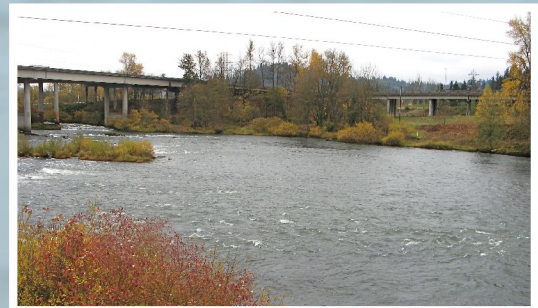
Though its primary impetus is to convey vehicles over the Willamette River as they travel north or south, the bridge encourages a flow of people and goods beside, under and through in a variety of modes: trains, cars, trucks, wheelchairs, bicyclers, walkers, boaters, and floaters.

Passage \Pas"sage\, n. [F. passage.]

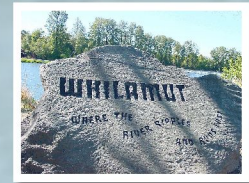
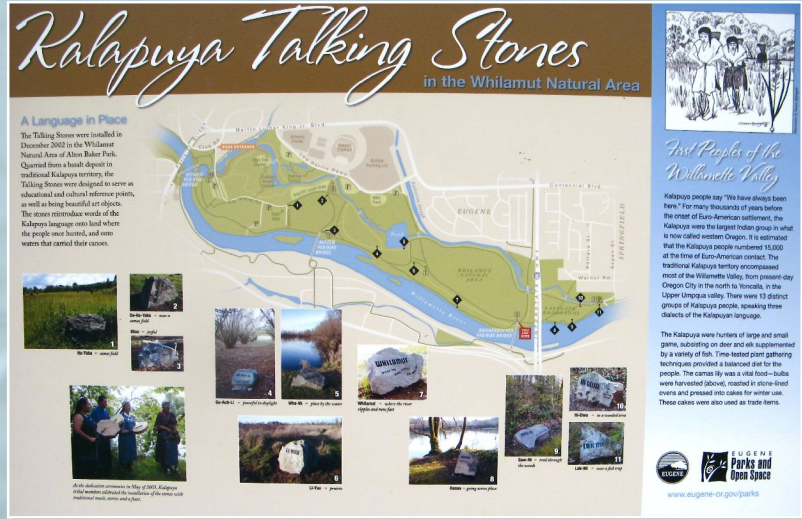
1. The act of passing; transit from one place to another; movement from point to point; a going by, over, across, or through; as, the passage of a man or a carriage; the passage of a ship or a bird; the passage of light; the passage of fluids.
2. Transit by means of conveyance; journey, as by water, carriage, car, or the like; travel; right, liberty, or means, of passing; conveyance. Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913)



Hence: Passage.



The emerging, proposed theme, *Whilamut Passage*, will guide design development, place-making, and shape a lasting identity.



Representative Terry Beyer

From: Rep Beyer
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 2010 4:21 PM
To: 'dreesor@ci.springfield.or.us'
Subject: Willamette River Bridge Naming

April 6, 2010

City of Springfield
225 Fifth Street
Springfield OR 97477

Dear Mayor Lieken and Council Members:

I am writing to encourage the Council to support the naming of the Willamette River Bridge in memory of the Native American History of the river and surrounding area. I have had contact over the last few years with members of the Citizen Planning Committee to discuss their interest and work in the naming of the bridge.

I was impressed with the committee's historical knowledge of the area and their desire to create a name that will remind us of our history for years to come as we gaze at the bridge and the river that runs beneath it.

It is my hope that the Council will look favorably at the request for support that is before you tonight.

Elizabeth Terry Beyer
State Representative

City of Springfield
225 Fifth Street
Springfield, Oregon

Dear Mayor Leiken and Council Members:

As ODOT's Area Manager during construction of the I-5 detour bridge in 2003-04, and as a lifelong Lane County resident until my recent move to Wyoming, I endorse the name "Whilamut Passage Bridge" for the permanent replacement bridge now under construction.

As part of our public outreach for the detour bridge, ODOT conducted weekly tours of the project. We worked with the Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park in giving these tours, pointing out to diverse groups taking the tours that we were caring for the parkland surrounding the northern anchorage of the bridge. I took particular pleasure in pointing out the nearby Talking Stones to school children. My father and grandfather were concrete contractors in Springfield from early 1920 until 1953 and left a talking stone legacy in the city. They placed large sections of sidewalk on Main Street, and many sidewalks today carry the stamp of "R.J. Pirrie and Son", with dates 1924 through 1930.

My father and grandfather worked on the construction of the Springfield Bridge, and our family home was located on West B street from 1925 until 1953. The family had many experiences with Willamette River flood waters during the winters, and learned to be very respectful of the power of the river. With grandparents buried in Creswell and the Laurel Hill Cemetery our family has strong lasting ties to the Willamette Valley and the River.

The Whilamut Passage name makes a connection both to history and to the contemporary movement of the vehicles that make our modern society possible -- and both names, Whilamut and Passage, address the river over which the bridge passes.

I think the name will generate pride in the descendants of those Kalapuya people who lived here for many centuries, and make us proud that this beautiful structure's graceful arches complement the river.

Robert J. Pirrie
Cheyenne, Wyoming