

**Fox Island Bridge
Open House Comments
August 2, 2016**

1. In your opinion, what type of improvement would be most appropriate for the Fox Island Bridge?

- 11% Rehabilitation
- 19% Bridge Rehabilitation and Retrofit
- 70% [Bridge Replacement](#)

2. There are four proposed conceptual bridge designs. Which style do you prefer?

- 19% Alternative 1 - Precast Prestressed Concrete Girder
- 53% [Alternative 2 - Haunched Precast Prestressed Concrete Spliced Girder](#)
- 19% Alternative 3 - Precast Concrete Segmental Box Girder
- 9% Alternative 4 - Composite Steel Plate Girder

Comments:

- *Cheapest option*
- *Shouldn't ask laymen*
- *Not steel*

3. On average, how often do you use the bridge?

- 85% [Daily](#)
- 14% Weekly
- 1% Monthly
- 0% Yearly

4. On average, how often do you use the boat launch on Towhead Island?

- 53% [Never](#)
- 21% Less than 5 times a year
- 21% 5-15 times a year
- 5% More than 15 times a year

5. How often do you use the sidewalk on the bridge?

- 68% [Never](#)
- 10% Weekly
- 18% Monthly
- 4% Everyday

6. Would you be more likely to use the sidewalk on the bridge if the sidewalk was widened and a barrier was added?

- 62% [Yes](#)
- 38% No

7. What do you think of the proposed option of installing a roundabout intersection at the Fox Island end of the bridge?

- 26% Like the idea
- 21% Indifferent
- 53% Dislike the idea

Comments:

Pros:

- Slows traffic down, bus stop on Fox Island end that is currently dangerous due to fast traffic
- Easier access to the boat launch

Pros:

- Not enough cross traffic to warrant roundabout
- People don't know how to use them, so they are dangerous
- Sound of heavy trucks accelerating out of them would be annoying
- Expensive

8. External project funding may not completely fund a replacement or rehabilitation of the bridge. What is your preference for covering the remaining funds? Please rank in order of preference: (1) most desirable to (3) least desirable.

- 38% Road/Transportation Improvement District (levy and collect special assessments against real property)
- 31% Bridge/road tolls
- 31% Make no improvements until all funds are secured from external sources
(Note: this may not be a feasible long-term solution)

Comments:

- I saw an apparent lack of interest on the part of Pierce County in regards to the funding of the project. It seemed to me that the decision has already been made to pass the exorbitant costs along to the resident. The county has spent a lot of time and money this year on shoring up Kramer Drive's west-facing hill, a project that helped a relatively few families. For something essential to the entire island. I believe the powers that be could try a lot harder to come up with some palatable answers.
- If the county is not involved in the funding of the project, where is the incentive to keep costs under control or to make sure everything is being done according to specs?
- Why not lower the weight limits further on the current bridge? Such a move might extend its life a tad.
- Last, once the project becomes truly active, I think it will have a deadly effect on property values. Many of us have lived here a long time and have invested a lot in our homes. Who would buy a home here if he knew he

- would be paying for two bridges (Fox Island and Narrows Bridge) either those tolls or levies and special assessments?
- If you decide to toll the island residents, the least you could do is free us from paying for Narrows Bridge as well. If the decision is made to assess us, every other assessment and tax we are currently paying should be removed until bridge payment is done!
 - The Fox Island Bridge is a county road and the county should be responsible for it.
 - One last thought. As I understand it, the decision on what is to be done about the Fox Island bridge will be made by the Pierce County Council, not one member of which lives on the island. Were this a really small project, I'd not be too concerned. But this is a very expensive project that will have a big effect on ± 1800 families. We can but wish we could vote on this. Our council member is one of seven.
 - 2 - Tolls, and trying also for grants and county/state funds. We should also consider starting to collect tolls prior to construction, once we have a plan to follow. This has been done with other bridges and projects in our state, and allows the community to begin building funds towards our new bridge. (1 Road/Transport Improv District) second choice. (3 no improvement) least desirable. I do not want taxes increased because I don't believe that the revenue from those funds would ever be released back to us once the bridge is paid for.
 - Get rid of the current politicians and replace them with people who actually have a fiscal clue of how to actually run something effectively. What happened to all of the tax dollars we paid on the Island? I am waterfront and I pay a lot! I get very little in return. What you will do is wait until it falls in and someone gets killed and you write the check for 100 million (with tax payer dollars). You put a bridge to the Island 60 years ago (which we paid for) and lured people to build. Pay some of the highest taxes in the county and then you do nothing to support its long term existence and then ask us how we want to pay for the new one? You should be glad I left early. (2) Bridge/road tolls, (3) Make no improvements until all funds are secured from external sources. (Note: this may not be a feasible long-term solution)
 - Lower the weight limits on the bridge would make the bridge last longer. The bridge work just fine the way it is. If you are a cyclist you have a sidewalk just walk it across.
 - What can proponents for bridge replacement do to help the funding/approval process??
 - Abandon the boat launch.

9. How did you hear about this meeting? Check all that apply.

- 37% [Postcard from Pierce County](#)
- 3% Pierce County website
- 1% Pierce County Public Works Facebook page
- 1% Pierce County Twitter
- 34% [FICRA Newsletter/webpage](#)
- 15% Newspaper article or TV news story
- 7% Bridge Sign
- 1% Email
- 1% Word of mouth

10. What is your zip code?

- 98% [98333](#)
- 1% 98335
- 1% Other

11. What are your concerns, if any, about the improvements?

- Cost, tolls, limited services on island, bridge crossing a necessity and tolls can be hard on residents.
- Too much traffic by launching ramp. Needs to be located where parking and low traffic. Too much erosion there.
- Money, access during construction.
- Cost and tolls.
- Cost.
- I am concerned mostly about the cost and structure in long term. If there are rehabilitations to the bridge, would spending that amount of money be more beneficial than immediately rebuilding the entire bridge? Sure, it may solve the issue in the short term, but in reality, the foundation of the bridge is deteriorating. If rehabs were to take place, it would cost billions, then on top of that, the bridge would need to be rebuilt anyway. Plus, from studies, inflation will occur, so it will cost more. Over time, how much money in total will be spent to rehabilitate and rebuild the bridge? How many years will it have taken? Pro rebuild, Ferry system.
- Cost to residents due to already having toll for Narrows. Access to mainland during improvements.
- Cost.
- How long and tolls.
- It was worked on eight years ago. Why again?
- Replacement would mean loss of property for some and devaluation for others due to negatives related to view, bridge noise, and traffic considerations.
- Long delays getting off and onto the island over the long term of the project.
- Traffic for daily work.

- They cannot happen soon enough.
- Money and timeline.
- Need to speed up process – needed now!
- We already pay \$1,000 each month for taxes. My family has been here since 1952. I'm afraid we will lose our heritage.
- Cost!
- Demolishing the existing bridge seems like more of a response to legal/liability issues, which is a shame. I say leave it until the “seismic event”... (I would indemnify Pierce County.)
- Timeline.
- Real estate yet to be built on _____. This will increase the use and traffic and it has not been studied yet; 500+ homes.
- They need to happen now! Waiting is dangerous and costs will increase.
- Cost, timeline. I like a ferry option.
- Multiuse lane needed for safety.
- How long it will take to get anything done.
- We already pay a significant toll for the Narrows Bridge. I am very concerned about additional tolls. I can see the costs becoming too high!
- Height of bridge 60 foot. Would obstruct waterfront views and devalue waterfront properties.
- Leadership needed to bring in Federal dollars.
- That the age and economic population of Fox Island will again vote against the community's best interest.
- Get it done.
- Cost overruns.
- It seems that the width/sidewalk assumptions have tilted the decision too much towards “new bridge” bringing width up to modern standards and accommodating boat traffic seems to have forced you into longer bridge with higher clearances and greater distance between bents and thus higher cost. Easy to spend more money that way, yes!
- That they be done soon before the bridge falls down.
- How long until finished?
- Cost.
- I think it's ludicrous to expect 1,800 households (current delivery service on island per post office) to pay for the cost of a new bridge, which will be more than \$2 million by the time anyone is ready to start. The bridge is a necessary county road and allows goods and services to reach us as well as fire and police support.
- What is the projected price for when actual project starts in five years? (Miss-led by June 2016 guess). What is the maximum population density projected for Fox Island and when? We don't need a Fort Knox solution.
- I live on Bella Bella and the impact the new bridge will have on traffic pollution, views resale value and expense to cross the bridge! I work in Tacoma and being double tolled is unfair! The bridge is the only access to the island and there are no alternative routes

that could be free to use! Essentially the population would be locked at home if we couldn't pay the tolls!

- How soon can the bridge be replaced and the speed in which the bridge can be built.
 - That we don't get going on the bridge replacement soon enough. We need to build a new bridge ASAP. This is something that is vital for Fox Island, and waiting too long leaves us in a vulnerable position for any disaster that may occur.
 - No toll.
 - The bridge has got to be either repaired or replaced. Due to the high cost of repairs, it seems more feasible to replace rather than repair. Either option creates a financial and time burden on Fox Island residents but it will only get worse and more expensive the longer we delay.
 - Will be able to cross during construction.
 - Cost of course and how long it will take.
 - Cost to island residents.
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- We are concerned that this process should have been started at least 5 years ago. The current bridge safety analysis and the existing instability of the bridge are concerning now, and yet we are looking at a 5-10 year time frame to build something new. We understand that there are a few other bridges whose safety rating falls below ours, but we're wondering if those are serving an island like ours, where the occupants will be cut off completely from services if the bridge goes out.
 - 1. Bridge traffic access options during rehabilitation and/or retrofit; 2. New bridge impact on adjacent landowners.
 - Lack of a plan and spending tax payers' money without a clue how it is all going to get paid for. Perfect example of the failure of government to provide the most basic of services. This has a way better chance of being privately built and funded than you clowns getting a yard of concrete laid in my lifetime. This is some politicians' wet dream who is looking at future job at the outside company who is raking in the cash off this project to nowhere. They got that bridge to nowhere built in Alaska with federal funds but our state has no clue how to make this happen. Great job.
 - Cost to retired individuals on fixed incomes. Loss of home value in sale of home. Size of bridge designs are extremely large for our small island. Coast guard needs to realize it is a short trip around the island for tall boats. 60' is too high. Pulling over and parking on bridge shouldn't be allowed. 5 years to get permits is ridiculous.
 - 1) Maintaining good, timely flow of traffic to/from throughout the improvement process 2) Keeping Fox Island desirable as a place to live with good strong property values and reasonable taxes compared to the rest of the county 3) Making sure the solution selected provides longevity and is cost efficient; not a short term patch-job that will require going through another, more expensive, process 10 to 15 years in the future.

- NOISE from traffic. If the bridge sides could be designed to dissipate/absorb noise vs reflecting tire noise back on the vehicles, which then reflects it back out to the community, that would be great.
- COST!!!! I don't want a huge bridge that is out of scale for the area! I don't want it to block the view or cause a problem for the boat launch access!
- Disruption to access on/off island; also, what cost to be borne by my family (soon to be retired).
- I believe my concerns are already coming to fruition...you are valuing our home more than it's worth now and this has been a 3 year trend. I believe this is to accommodate paying for the bridge and now you want more from us for this project down the road. You already know what you are going to do! Please at least give us the dignity to treat us like we aren't stupid.
- My concern is that all costs would be placed on the residents of Fox Island.
- Government should pay for bridge. Major taxpayers live on island, and they use little government services.
- Cost.
- I filled out a form after the meeting and turned it in at that time. I have since had a chance to reconsider the questions and have changed a few of my responses. As I noted in my handwritten notes on my hard-copy response sheet, my sense is that too much of the TS&L study has been affected by the urge (need?) to provide wider lanes, a sidewalk, and shoulders on the bridge. The added width dictated by standard features has forced the alignment further to the south and has thus added length to the bridge (and associated higher costs). At the community meeting, the HDR representative said that a wider structure would mandate a significant environmental problem on Towhead Island. Additionally, all of the new bridge options are designed around greater spacing between bents and a higher structure to allow for boat traffic. Again, these features would seem to be "nice-to-have" but not worth the additional cost considering that large/tall boats do not NEED to use Hale Passage - they have the option of going around the island via the Narrows. The TS&L consultant, HDR, mentioned that their analysis of the Rehab/Retrofit costs included \$13M for a temporary work trestle. I believe this to be an unnecessary cost factor that skews the economic analysis. I am an experienced marine contractor and have worked on many wharves, piers, and offshore structures. All of the work involved with construction of a new bridge substructure for this bridge can be performed using a "jack-up" barge that can position itself, then lower its "spuds" down to the bottom and then lock itself at a fixed elevation. At that point the jack-up barge is a solid platform from which a large drill can work to set the new shaft column. Jack-up barges are commonly used for this type of work and the cost of using one will be far less than \$13M (probably closer to \$1M in this case given the number of bents). I am a registered civil engineer and have worked in the field of heavy civil construction for 35 years. I have also been involved in waterfront rehabilitation projects using carbon fiber wraps, the largest of which was the rehabilitation of all of the caissons underneath Pier 2 at Fort Mason in San Francisco. The conditions on that project are very similar to the Fox Island Bridge in terms of

water depth, size of caissons, and age of structure. I think this option is definitely an economical way to repair and upgrade an existing structure. Without being critical of HDR's work, I would like to point out that it is HDR's best interest to push the argument for a new bridge. As the HDR point man stated many times in his presentation, "I'm a bridge guy." As a registered civil engineer myself, I know that it is far more interesting from a design standpoint to design a new bridge, especially one that will look good in a brochure. Perhaps more importantly, HDR will profit more by winning a design contract for a new bridge than they will make from a rehab contract that costs far less to build. I have significant "skin in the game" in that I will end up footing some of the bill for this work. This leads me to believe that the economic analysis of the "rehab/retrofit" option versus the new "structure" option needs to be analyzed more carefully by someone other than a company that stands to potentially be the successful offeror in the design competition. I am experienced construction estimator and I would be happy to perform a feasibility estimate for Pierce County at no cost if that helps. Very truly yours, Name provided.

- Cost and increased traffic.
- Urgency of repairs. Prefer a design with low visual impact (not 60' clearance) Inconvenience for commuting. Cost. Hope to have greatly improved boat launch on Towhead Island.
- I would really like to see the sidewalk added so that I can feel safe walking or biking over the bridge.
- Where funds would come from, congestion, road construction and lack of planning.
- Don't want to give drivers any reason or opportunity to drive beyond speed limit. Posted speed limit does not mean it's adhered to.
- Your ulterior motives.
- The double jeopardy of the cost will driving down property values at the same time property taxes will be increased to pay for it. Many will lose their home or have to move off the island because of the costs. You will never convince me that it will take 5 years to obtain permits. Get the politicians out of their fairyland world into reality. We won WW!! in 4 years!
- We need an updated/new bridge ASAP. I am very concerned about the low rating (7.3/100) of the bridge and the fact that it is not designed for a seismic event. If the current bridge is damaged or collapses, there are no alternative modes of transportation or back-up plans for Fox Island residents. We are at risk very day! I am also very concerned about the bureaucracy and length of time to get approvals (5+ years) and the lack of adequate funding.
- That the bridge will be too big and become more of a highway than it already is. The length of time to fund, plan and build or retrofit the bridge.
- Cost and how much per household Fox Island residents will be responsible.
- That it begin as soon as possible. The seismic vulnerability is quite concerning, and in a major event, many other infrastructure failures will also occur, and we will be a low priority on a long list.

- Funding. This should not cost the residents anything. The State and County waist enough money as it is. Quit the waist and you have the funds.
- I am concerned about the cost of the improvements, especially if the residents are to be charged an annual base fee. Also, the length of time required to improve the bridge is concerning.
- No tolls or surcharges. Fix the bridge.
- How are we going to pay for this? The way it will change life on the island.
- The improvements that the replacement bridge would provide are desperately needed; and replacement is the least expensive option.

12. Please share any additional comments below.

- No roundabout – that’s crazy.
- Too much traffic to have boat launch at that location – crazy busy.
- Keep bike path.
- Tolls would be the most fair.
- A new bridge is overkill for the relatively small population of Fox Island and would negatively impact properties on both ends (sides) of the bridge (Fox Island and Cromwell) in the following ways:
 - Views
 - Noise pollution
 - Traffic
 - Diminished property values
 - Toll costs (probable)
- One toll at a time (I have to pay Narrows daily already).
- Improve boat launch.
- Enforcement of current codes.
- We don’t want bigger, better, fancier. Why do you think we live here?
- Must be done soon before earthquake takes bridge down.
- I think ferry terminals should be built into or adjacent to the bridge termini to make it less difficult to create an alternate route in the event of long-term traffic interruptions.
- Thank you so much for the presentation.
- We need this repeated. Too crowded. Couldn’t see or hear.
- When or can the County repair the boat launch also?
- We need a new bridge!
- Groups like Jerry Gibbs and the Gig Harbor Tea Party and other groups will likely challenge this project. How much time will EPA challenges and court battles add to this process?
- The old saying: “You can pay more now or you can pay me later, but you will pay me.” A new bridge is lowest cost per year of service.
- The designs as presented represent overkill to me. Tall-masted boats can and do go around. The low profile is really great. The creation of dedicated bicycle and

pedestrian lanes is a good idea. However, I think the addition of two break down lanes and probably even one is crazy. People will use them to pass for sure and perhaps to stoop for photo ops or to watch boaters.

- Five years to plan bridge? WWII was won in five years!! Really?
- Funding ideas that we could start collecting now are: Have people pay to use and park at the boat ramp! We could look into the idea of having an outside company replace the bridge for free and give them all rights to all the hydro power they create under the bridge.
- Thank you for the informational meeting. I hope that we can get started on a new bridge as soon as possible. After hearing some of the comment from the audience, I better understand how diverse the community in Fox Island is and recognize that some of the older folk may want to postpone the new bridge process, but I feel that would be a mistake. We must plan and act now, for the future. Also, some of the folk seemed to get bogged down on the bridge height or conceptual alignment/location, and did not understand that these were just a basis to get a cost analysis.
- Given there are 3 public areas on Fox Island; fishing pier, park, and boat launch it would be unfair for Fox Island residents to bear the full property tax assessment if that were the source of funding. I also do not want to see a toll for the bridge.
- Create a nice looking bridge.
- Would like to be kept informed of progress. Email option would work.
- My main concern is that the council will choose to retrofit and rehab to save cost; sadly this in the long term will be worse due to inflation and general higher cost years down the road retrofit and rehab is only delaying the inevitable. I would choose for the more expensive short term option for a new 75 year life span bridge.
- There is a certain charm about the low profile of the existing bridge to the island. Is it possible to design a bridge that will keep the lower profile and still be earthquake sound, while providing us with wider lanes for safety?
- Obviously you had no clue of the level of interest of the people on the Island who actually use the bridge that has and will get more people killed. I watched a guy hit the guardrail by the boat ramp and almost die a few years ago. It's been hit many times since. Then let's not even mention the boat ramp which is sure to go away. All this water in the county and access for boaters is horrible! Oh and who destroyed the ramp we have? The US Government, the Navy! Who said they would fix it and did nothing! What did the county do? Not a dam thing. Because you don't care about our tax dollars. Times are a changing and people are sick of the mismanagement and lack of priorities to provide basic services.
- The residents of Fox Island are strong supporters of schools, community and Pierce County in general. There are a high number of law enforcement and fire fighter families on the Island (who risk life and go above and beyond every day for the betterment of the entire county). Accordingly this ultimately needs to be a looked at as county concern and be paid for collectively by the county as a whole. Fox Island tax dollars go toward the repairs and maintenance of roads, parks, and other public access

facilities in need, throughout the county, that many of us never personally get to enjoy / benefit from. It is only fair and right that the tax dollars paid by others in Pierce County be shared with the Fox Island community during our time of need. FI is not a private island; as a public access part of the county, it needs to receive its fair share of dollars already in the system without having to pay an unfair amount for the bridge replacement.

- Can you design a bridge that will straddle over the top of the existing bridge and connect in the same area?
- Long term solutions with initial heavy costs are far preferable to short term solutions that end up being more expensive.
- Where is the marijuana money that this state has been receiving?! Why do 1800 households on Fox Island more likely than not end up paying for a county road/bridge?! Why doesn't Jay Inslee answer to the people...?! Where are the Pierce County tax dollars going?! Definitely not to services out here!!!!
- Resurface and retrofit the existing bridge.
- Fix it and leave it alone.
- I don't like continued statements to the effect that a retrofit or new bridge, we'd be fine in ANY earthquake. I don't believe that's true. Or, will you guarantee that? It was said at the 8/2 briefing.
- Bridge cost projections have a foot note of 4% inflation - really?? Makes everything else noted in your report as suspect and unbelievable. Also, so far Fox Island has escaped out of control building taking place in Gig Harbor. A bigger bridge construction is obvious 1st step to bringing rampant construction to our island. Your dialogue is simply not trusted.
- Do this before inflation drive up the costs further? Have you anticipated the costs of possible legal actions by property owners with claims of obstructing their views and battles over eminent domain?
- I don't see the need for a bridge that is 60 feet above the water. A 60' bridge will be very aesthetically unappealing. I would prefer a lower height profile bridge.
- I enjoy the slower pace of island life and do not expect or want a larger bridge. I am dismayed with the thought that a new bridge would be so large, would accommodate two 12 foot wide lanes, plus a walking/bicycling lane and a barrier between the two. AND we would have an off-ramp for the boat launch. This would be a huge eyesore on our small island and would only speed up the rate of travel. While I agree a wider bridge would be a safety improvement, I think we could accommodate that by other means, such as speed bumps or stop signs at the ends of the bridge, at a fraction of the cost. I appreciate you seeing public input on this and hope we can agree on an appropriate resolution that meets the majority of island residents' needs. Thank you. Name provided.
- What about a barge to carry people and vehicles? Why did the county vacate the ferry landing? Isn't the county prohibited from vacating county roads that terminate at the water? Doesn't risk management idea say that the county has a duty to maintain the

safety of a county road? What are the county's plans if the bridge were to collapse -
(PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST)

- First off, thank you for taking the time and making it easy to comment on this. I was unable to attend meeting and it was easy to find the presentation. My main question is how much per year this would cost average family on Fox Island under the alternatives. Estimate is fine. May change my answer to question 1 above. Great job on presentation material. Overall very well done.
- I want the water currents/tidal changes to be as unimpeded as possible to help restore the ecosystem to its original function. Too many piers direct the water instead of the normal flow that should help keep sediment and organic material from filling in small bays or shorelines.
- Comment #8 only allows for one choice, not ranking. Roundabout idea is great. Thanks for the information and for facilitating input!
- This is a publicly used bridge and therefore the residents should not have to pay for its replacement! The County should work diligently to secure public funding from the State and Federal government to fund the bridge. I would offer my volunteer services to research this and write grant applications if needed!