

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

The Dallas City Council issued a letter of support for a proposed "third bridge" over the Willamette River in Salem.

Dallas council supports bridge

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The Dallas City Council issued a letter of support for the proposed "third bridge" crossing over the Willamette River in Salem.

A public hearing on amendments to the Salem-Keizer Urban Growth Boundary, Salem Area Comprehensive Plan and Salem Transportation System Plan to allow for building the bridge was held on Oct. 12 in Salem.

The council voted on Oct. 3 to submit the letter for that hearing.

Dallas City Manager Ron Foggin said building the bridge as planned will provide a more direct route to Interstate 5 than the current bridges that run through downtown Salem. That could be good for business in Dallas and Polk County, he said.

"To us, the third bridge is a lifeline to I-5," Foggin said. "Where right now, one of the things we continue to run into when we talk to folks who rely on especially truck traffic is that we are a little too far off of I-5 to be of real significance to manufacturing."

Foggin noted that the bridges spanning the river now may not survive an earthquake of any significance. The new bridge could provide for transporting people and supplies in and out of Polk County in the event of that kind of emergency, he said.

The Salem River Crossing Oversight Team named the proposed bridge's location as the "preferred alternative" in 2014, following a decade of studies on possible options.

The joint public hearing was before Polk County Board of Commissioners, Polk County Planning Commission, Salem City Council, Keizer City Council and Planning Commission, and Marion County Board of Commissioners.

Julie Warnke, transportation planning manager for the city of Salem, said each government body must deliberate and vote on the planning requirements for the bridge. The Polk County Planning Commission is set to discuss amendments on Oct. 26 and the Board of Commissioners has the issue on its Nov. 9 agenda.

The city of Salem will take final action on the amendments.

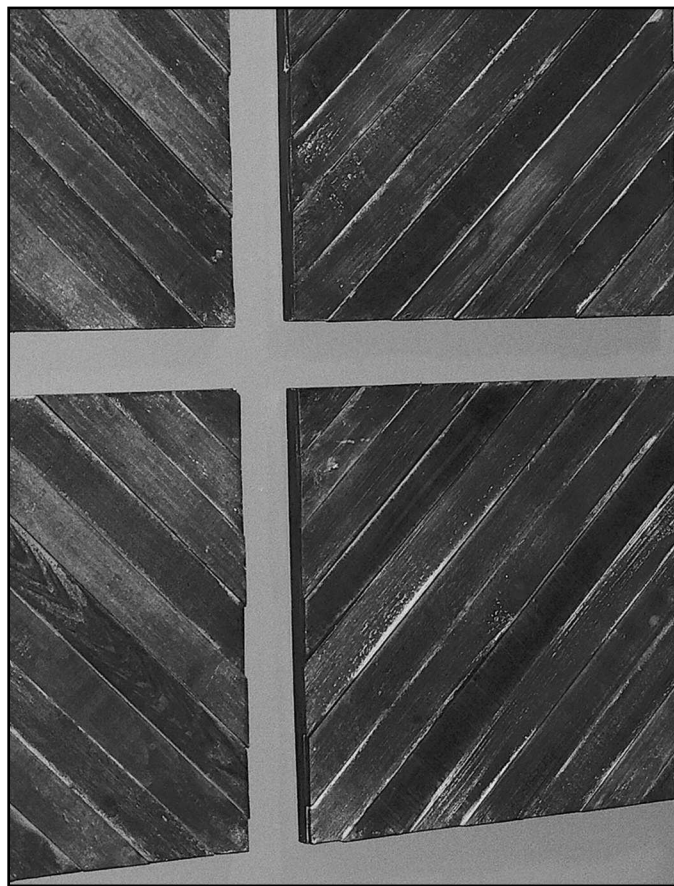
Warnke said on a related but separate track, the final environment impact statement on the proposed bridge is underway.

"Right now it is estimated to be published in mid-2017," she said.

Comments will be taken on the statement after it is released, followed by a record of decision that will finalize approval of the bridge proposal.

That doesn't give the project a green light yet. Designating funding sources, and design and construction phases would need to be final before building could begin, Warnke said.

"This is just all in the planning process," she said.



EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer

Erubiel Valladares will serve as Independence's community liaison.

Liaison: Valladares bringing the community together

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Valladares was born and raised in Queretaro, Mexico, the son of a merchant. The town is rural, and its location made it the perfect place for leaders to meet, making it the Cradle of the Revolution.

"I grew up in dirt — not on a farm, but on the outskirts of the metro from Queretaro," Valladares said. "Our brick walls and dirt backyards — it was really rural and rustic, and for me, it was fun, playing in the dirt."

After living in Oregon for 20 years — and working and raising a family here — he considers Oregon his home.

He came to Woodburn at the age of 17, and quickly joined the National Guard.

Valladares didn't speak a lick of English, but after

Meet Erubiel

What: Meet and Greet: Erubiel Valladares
When: 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday (today)
Where: Three Legged Dog, 250 S. Main St., Independence
Of note: Erubiel has been playing guitar since he was 10. He will play at his meet and greet, where people will also get to meet other city staff members.

basic training, his English was much improved — so much so that his high school teachers recommended he apply for the distinctive David S. Brody Scholarship: a full ride to Western Oregon University for bilingual, bicultural students. The scholarship is awarded once a year, Valladares said.

After graduating from Western, Valladares took an interest in getting back to his roots, and worked with non-profits such as Latinos Unidos Siempre, an organi-

zation out of Salem which focuses on coaching and mentoring Latino youths. Afterward, he helped build a community registration with PCUN, Oregon's farmworker union, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noreste.

Now he's taking his experience in working with the community to Independence.

"There's a lot in the Latino culture," Valladares said. "I can understand why it's a challenge to reach out to

them. I'm not here to tell them what to do. I'm here to help give them the tools so they can come out and participate."

Valladares said he hopes to show people, particularly those in the Latino community, how to get involved in everything from planning commission to organizing events. He even hopes to get some volunteers to cook for the fire department.

Even something as simple as giving an hour to read to children in Spanish can be helpful, Valladares said.

"When you have someone that's native from Mexico, and they want to help with the language, we have the schools, we have the library, there's lots of things we can do, it's just a matter of ideas and who can participate," he said.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Nearman protects fiscal values

The fiscal and social conservative values of Polk County are under assault and must be protected.

Mike Nearman, Republican candidate for House District 23, is known as a fighter, devoted to conservative principals, does not "reach across the aisle" in a vain attempt of reconciliation to the Democratic majority, which only waters down conservative principals.

If you want a man who stands for principal, who will fight to keep government out of your pocket-book and under control,

who is widely respected by his Republican base and fellow candidates, who means what he says and says what he means, vote Nearman.

Rose Bajorins
Falls City

Thompson cares about pollinators

I am an organic gardener of 50 years who is supporting Jim Thompson, who is deeply concerned with the loss of our pollinators, and will work with Legislators already working on a pollinator plan for Oregon.

In the interim, both gardeners and farmers can benefit by planting native flowers in strips beside their plants.

We are running out of water. Homeowners can help by planting Xeric, ornamental grasses.

Oregon is facing many serious issues, including clashes between farmers and residents. We need Jim back on the agricultural committee her served on for six years to deal with these prickly problems.

Jean Astrinsky
Buena Vista

Whitlow best man to move forward

Todd Whitlow, patrol sergeant, Yamhill County Sheriff's Office, is responsible for managing law enforcement services of four cities with a budget of over \$1 million.

He has worked in all divisions of the Sheriff's Office. With his management skills, the overall crime rate has significantly decreased.

With his broad experience, Todd will establish trust, improve relationships, bring creativity and problem solving solutions, and excellence in service for all citizens.

Todd will work with employees in moving the Sheriff's Office into the future, including strong training programs and using the most cost-effective technologies.

Elect Whitlow sheriff.

David Dunkin
Dallas

Sudoku solution

5	4	7	1	8	9	6	2	3
9	3	1	5	2	6	7	8	4
2	6	8	4	7	3	9	1	5
7	5	4	3	6	1	8	9	2
1	8	3	2	9	4	5	7	6
6	9	2	7	5	8	3	4	1
8	1	6	9	4	5	2	3	7
4	2	5	8	3	7	1	6	9
3	7	9	6	1	2	4	5	8

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