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November 23, 2021

Steven Fischer
Thirteenth Coast Guard District
US Coast Guard
915 Second Avenue
Seattle, WA 98174-1067

Subject: Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program, US Coast Guard Bridge Permitting
Process correspondence dated October 13, 2021

Dear Mr. Fischer:

We are in receipt of your letter dated October 13, 2021 regarding the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) bridge permitting process and requirements applicable to the IBR Program. The letter included copies of the 2016 USCG Bridge Permit Application Guide (BPAG); the 2014 Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and USCG Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and the 2014 FHWA and USCG Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are the co-lead federal agencies for the IBR Program National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. As the federal co-leads, we are committed to working with the USCG and the IBR Team to ensure USCG requirements and the processes and procedures outlined in the above referenced MOU and MOA are met. This coordination will include making sure the bridge applications submitted by the IBR Program Team address any changes in conditions and permit processes that have occurred since the last bridge permit was issued for the Columbia River Crossing project.

In accordance with the MOU, we will work with the IBR Program Team to develop a project plan for successful completion of NEPA and the Bridge Permit process. The Project plan will provide a framework for engagement and coordination of the NEPA process and bridge permit activities to ensure timely completion and compliance with established processes and procedures.

The project plan will include a timeline with key milestones for completing the bridge permit application and other related permits and approvals, including NEPA related milestones. We will prepare the plan in cooperation with the appropriate regulatory agencies, such as the Army Corp of Engineers. We will be requesting assistance from the USCG and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine milestone dates and will include them in the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard to assist with sequencing and timely completion of the milestones.

As the project federal co-leads, we look forward to supporting and coordinating with the USCG to ensure USCG concerns are addressed and any additional NEPA analysis that is necessary after issuance of the Preliminary Navigation Clearance Determination is completed. We acknowledge your request that the IBR Program apply for separate bridge permits for both of the proposed bridges over the Oregon Slough and the Columbia River. The IBR Team has shared a copy of the Navigation Impact Report with us prior to the IBR Team's recent submittal.

We look forward to working with the Coast Guard to ensure that all regulatory requirements are met. The FHWA point of contact for the IBR Program is Mr. Tom Goldstein, and he can be contacted at 503-316-2545 or Thomas.Goldstein@dot.gov. The FTA point of contact for the IBR Program is Mr. Steve Saxton and he can be contacted at 206-220-4311 or James.saxton@dot.gov.

Linda M. Gehrke
Regional 10 Administrator
Federal Transit Administration

Thomas D. Goldstein
IBR Program Oversight Manager
Washington and Oregon Division Offices
Federal Highway Administration

cc:

James (Steve) Saxton, General Engineer, Region 10 FTA
Sharon Love, Environmental Program Manager, FHWA Washington Division
Emily Cline, Environmental Program Manager, FHWA Oregon Division