

## **Greater Portland Landmarks Testimony on the Veterans Bridge (this is presented as information, not delivered exactly as worded)**

“My name is Hilary Bassett, and I am here in my capacity as executive director of Greater Portland Landmarks.

We were part of the stakeholder process. Our interest is in promoting the very best in new architecture, especially as it relates to the historic context of greater Portland area. We want to encourage Place Making -- that is a bridge with good quality design characteristics that celebrate – and are specific to – our area – not generic highway construction. As part of the CSS process, we ask for a meaningful discussion and adoption of an overall design concept for the Bridge.

This is a major construction project that will be a huge missed opportunity if it does not incorporate the best design ideas.

We believe that the bridge needs an overall design concept that will guide decisions on the supporting elements, such as lighting, benches, treatments of path surfaces, railings, etc. It is not good enough to select bits and pieces that have no relationship with each other and result in a hodgepodge of parts.

### **I ask you to envision three possible scenarios:**

**Gateway:** The bridge announces the arrival into the city of Portland, links to the waterfront, Commercial Street and views of the Fore River and the Western Promenade, part of Portland’s Park system. The experience is a transition from the highway into a vibrant city, and urban setting, complete with landscape,

residential, and commercial areas on a spectacular Harbor. The arrival points have distinctive design features that welcome drivers, walkers, and cyclists to the communities on either side of the river.

**Parkway:** The bridge is an urban parkway that extends the experience of the landscape along the Fore River to the waterfront. The bridge celebrates the natural environment that defines our Harbor. Plantings create natural link to the water, and beautiful trees are a living memorial to those who have served our country. There are links for cyclists and walkers to existing public art at each end (PD Merrill Memorial and the oil tanks at South Portland).

**Boulevard:** Entering the Portland and South Portland area by an ample, roadway that encourages a slower-paced transition into a new realm. The Bridge has well-designed details, including attractive lighting, railings that allow views of the Fore River basin, design elements made of high quality materials, including stone and metal, and plantings of a scale that enhances the driving, waling, and cycling experience.

Part of the request for proposals was to develop a design for a 100 year bridge, with a 100 year urban design. We do not want 2010 Generic Highway Off Ramp.

**Think Gateway, Parkway, Boulevard – an overall design concept that will make the Bridge a distinctive place we can be proud of for many generations to come.** We ask the Design Build Team to engage the public throughout the bridge development process and to seriously consider public input. Thank you.”