LAWYERS

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December 3, 2001

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa Street N.E.
Salem, OR 97301

Re: ***Carriage Square Shopping Center / South Medford Interchange Project***

Dear Mr. Holthoff:

This firm represents Tom Becker, the property owner of the Carriage Square Shopping Center, located at Barnett and Ellendale in Medford, Oregon. Mr. Becker also owns the Hair Flair Beauty Shop, which is located within the shopping Center. The Carriage Square Shopping Center is effected by the proposed South Medford Interchange Project. This correspondence is intended to be Mr. Becker's comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which are due today, December 3, 2001.

It would appear from our review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that the Highland Alternative would have less effect on the shopping center than the Highland Alternative as currently proposed. The Ellendale Alternative will create significant impacts on traffic circulation and congestion for the shopping center and will impair ingress and egress to the shopping center on both Barnett and Ellendale Roads. Additionally, the Ellendale Alternative will create visual and noise impacts. (1)

We respectfully request ODOT to review our comments and address Mr. Becker's concerns through either redesign of the project or appropriate mitigation. We would also like the opportunity to meet with ODOT to discuss our comments and the impacts associated with the project.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to meeting with ODOT in the near future.

Very truly yours,

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

Gregory S. Hathaway

Gregory S. Hathaway

GSH:lkt
Enclosure
cc w/encl.: Tom Becker, Carriage Square Shopping Center

829 E 9th St. #C
Medford, OR 97504

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

Regarding the south Medford interchange - I strongly feel we do not need to close Barnett and put in a new interchange at Ellendale or Highland.

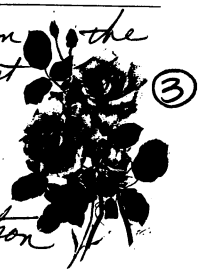
Instead, this community would be better served with available funds used to create another new interchange south of Barnett near where South Stage Rd intersects Highway 99 and small improvements made at Barnett. ①

This would be cheaper and cause alot less disruption while giving needed relief. ②

Years ago we were told this was planned. Why the change?

I live only one mile from the Barnett interchange. Both current proposals would be bad for the area and too costly! ③

Sincerely,
Kathleen L. Watson



SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVES & SOLUTIONS

Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Public Comment Form

Public hearing: Oct. 30, 2001, Scottish Rite Center, Medford. You may use this form to comment formally on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You make leave your written comments at the hearing, or dictate comments to a court reporter. Also, you may mail comments to Greg Holthoff, Environmental Project Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation, 1158 Chemeketa St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301. Comments must be received by5 p.m. Dec. 3, 2001.
Nov. 29

NAME Katy Olson ADDRESS 28 N. Barneburg

PHONE 773-2924

I recently moved to Medford over the summer, but for only living here that long, I have never seen traffic backed all the way onto the freeway, so I personally don't see why something needs to be done. Along with that though, I don't feel like we should touch Highland. Over the summer, my siblings & I would go down to Bear Creek Park. There is something there for all ages, making that Park extremely popular. I don't think many people would be happy about an increase of traffic on their street along with taking out their favorite park. Even if the Barnett exit does get backed up, you could save the money & time & just have people take the next exit, going just a little out of their way. So, I don't feel like anything should be done. ① ② ③

Mr. Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project MGR
ODOT
1158 Chemeketa St. NE.
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Comments on South Medford Interchange Project.

TO: Mr. Cory Crebbin,
Public Works Department
Medford City Hall
411 West 8th Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

This is my testimony to the OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
% SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE COMMENTS:

Since Barnett and Highland Avenues are city streets, I would like to send this comments to you too.

"RE: COMMENTS ON SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT, HIGHLAND ALTERNATIVE BY PORTER LOMBARD, MPO Advisory Committee.

The South Medford Interchange Project should be approved for the Highland Alternative because it would eliminate the off and on ramps on Barnett Avenue. The overpass could then be designed to improve the safety of pedestrian and bicycle travel on Barnett for students at South Medford High School and for children traveling to Bear Creek Park. ①

The project should include sidewalks, bike lanes, and limited access where possible on Highland and Barnett Avenues for safety purposes and maximize the amount of traffic movement on both of the streets. Improving multi-modal safety is one of the prioritization criteria adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission. Incorporating multimodal safety features will increase the traffic flow and the safety of this project. The middle lane on Barnett should be eliminated except for left lane turns and u-turns at intersections only. The 12 foot width saved from the elimination the center lane for pedestrians and bike lanes will improve multi-modal transportation on Barnett Avenue. This would be particularly important on the Barnett overpass after removing the on and off ramps. Biking and pedestrian traffic is considerable on the Barnett overpass now and most comes from school age children going to school or to the Bear Creek Park. ②

Sidewalks and bike lanes should be placed on both sides of Barnett Avenue to Black Oak from Stewart. Is it possible to tie in the Bear Creek Greenway Path to use the Barnett Overpass and then the on-ramp space to run the Bike Path south under the Barnett Overpass south next to I-5? The path could run parallel to I-5 over the Highland Avenue Interchange in order to keep the path on the west of I-5 and Bear Creek as it goes south toward Phoenix. " ③

Since Highland Avenue is a city street, I would like to add the following: Highland Avenue north of Barnett Avenue should be maintain as a 2 lane street with sidewalks and bike lanes besides parking on both sides to Siskiyou Avenue to restrict traffic flow next to Bear Creek Park. Hopefully, you will use a roundabout intersection at Highland and Siskiyou as planned. However, I hope that you can keep the Flowering Pear Tree as the center of the roundabout. The roundabout needs considerable education for the local travel for acclimation to this type of intersection. ④

Porter Lombard

Porter Lombard, 2425 East Main Street, Medford, Oregon 97504 e-mail address: plombard@jeffnet.org

cc. Barbara Griffin and Karen Smith, Jackson Co. Road, Parks, and Planning Services

513 Keene Drive
Medford, OR 97504
Nov. 29, 2001

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeteka St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Greg Holthoff:

I spoke to you in the Antelope Road office last month, and appreciated your accessibility regarding the plans for the South Medford Interchange. However, after reading the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I fear that all the work that the Department of Transportation has put into alleviating some of Medford's problems is merely a stop-gap, because Oregon keeps growing and we keep driving. ①

Why not follow the No-Build alternative at this time--a real stop-gap--instead of going with the more costly Ellendale or Highland alternatives? Making the existing Barnett interchange safer now will solve some of the problems, thus providing time to assess the inevitable traffic buildup and development of South Medford. Then an interchange can be built farther south where it will be needed, thereby easing the business and residential traffic of central Medford. ②③④⑤

Since I live near Highland Drive I was interested in reading the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and seeing that so much attention is given to properties and problems west of I-5 and so little given to the major problems that will be created by either the Highland or Ellendale alternatives. Both will steer traffic onto East Main Street; both will increase traffic through solely residential areas. The Ellendale Alternative, seemingly better for Highland traffic, would simply funnel cars from Ellendale via Greenwood Street back onto Highland. I spoke to city representatives at the DOT public hearing on October 30 and they said they have no plans to change the Ellendale-Greenwood connection, so Highland and East Main traffic will increase no matter which alternative is chosen. I realize these are city problems, but please acknowledge the part your decisions will play as you steer I-5 traffic into our city. ⑥

There are so many potential modifications that will be required if you decide on the Highland alternative, especially those concerning Bear Creek, nearby wetlands and Bear Creek Park, that I dread seeing the final project. You have a plan, but these unknowns are bound to require major changes, and additional tax money. ⑦⑧⑨

I repeat. Follow the No-Build Alternative at this time.

Sincerely,

Joan Carroll

Joan Carroll, homeowner
513 Keene Drive (second house from Highland)

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ALTERNATIVES & SOLUTIONS

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NAME Amysa Payne ADDRESS 1801 vivian St.
Medford OR 97501 PHONE 821-2464

As a student at South Medford high school. I am not happy about the South Medford interchange Project. I Like the idea of improving traffic flow but I dont like the idea of taking away Exit 27. At first I didnt really care what was done because I didnt really know what was going on and I didnt think that it would effect me. Then I started thinking about it and I did some research and it made me realize just how much this effects all of us. I Live about 10 minutes from Jacksonville and I go to Ashland about three times a week. It is a lot easier for me to get on the freeway OFF Barnett rather then taking a new entrance such as highland or ellendale. To Sum it up I would say that I am not totally against it. I Just want to keep the Barnette on ramp going Sorth. I would also Like the Neighborhoods to Stay Safe for the children. (1)

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NAME Jack Lynch ADDRESS 2212 Crestbrook Rd.
Medford, OR 97504 PHONE (541) 779-6861

To whom it may concern,

I am a senior at South Medford High School. I also live very near to where the new intersection will be. I understand that the intersection of Barnett & Stuart is often congested. I feel that moving the intersection one block down will not solve the problem. The Bellvue road will not provide enough room for cars (1) to get downtown, the environmental condition at Barnett & Stuart. I think the best idea is to take no action. This South Interchange is a temporary solution to a larger problem then just congestion. I would urge you to go back to square one & think of a more permanent solution. Perhaps taking that intersection out, or building a second overpass, one that connects to Stuart & one (2) that connects to Riverside. Thank you for your time.

November 28, 2001

Mr. Greg Holthoff
ODOT Environmental Project Manager
Technical Services Section
1158 Chemeketa St. NE
Salem, OR 97301-2528

Dear Mr. Holthoff:

Of great concern to many of us in Medford is the tremendous expense of the proposed new I-5 interchange project. At a time when every day brings another article about cutbacks in social services and education in Oregon, in this time of extreme uncertainty as to where the next dollar is coming from for many institutions as well as private citizens, it seems obscene to spend $50 million merely to replace an existing exit ramp. (1)

The traffic bottlenecks on Barnett occur only at peak travel times, for only a few minutes each day. Surely this does not justify such a huge project. It seems to me that traffic signals could be judiciously adjusted to accommodate the temporary changes in traffic patterns, and that would give a stopgap solution while a more sensible long-term solution is thought out. (2)

The suggestion many citizens have made (apparently to deaf ears) that a route around the outskirts of Medford, say at South Stage Road, seems to make much more sense. Traffic needs to be directed away from Barnett, not added to it. (3) Also, it is incredible to me to think that you are seriously considering Highland as the receiving street. (4) Highland has the most-used funeral facility and burial ground in Medford; it has the only park with tennis courts, play facilities, skateboard area, and open-air theatre. (5) I can't think of a worse street in Medford to put heavy traffic on. (6)

Please, please rethink this project with attention to all the inherent problems which citizens have brought to your attention.

Very truly yours,

Joanne R. Sorensen

Joanne R. Sorensen
2839 Honor Dr., Medford 97504
e-mail: jodysore@yahoo.com

Greg Holthoff
ODOT
1158 Chemeketa St.
Salem, OR, 97301

November 19, 2001

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

I would like to express my opinion for the official record regarding the South Medford Interchange. I strongly oppose the Highland option for the following reasons:

1. Dumping all the extra traffic onto Highland will seriously harm the quality of Bear Creek Park, one of the best family parks in Medford, because of increased traffic noise and exhaust fumes and by making access to the park dangerous for children. (1)

2. The increased traffic on Highland will degrade the neighborhoods to the north of Barnett Road which are some of the most established and desirable neighborhoods in Medford. (2)

3. The location of the interchange will compromise the planned development of the Bear Creek bike path. (3)

I would favor the Ellendale option for the following reasons:

1. There is adequate land available on the west side of Ellendale to widen the roadway as required without displacing any of the existing homes or retirement apartment complexes on the east side of the street. The west side land is owned by the Rogue Valley Manor which already is planning on removing the existing mobile home park for a possible business center. By definition mobile homes are movable. They could be relocated, and even if the interchange is not connected to Ellendale this mobile home park is likely to be lost because of the Rogue Valley Manor's plans. (7)

2. By having the interchange traffic enter at Ellendale, it will have dramatically less impact on the neighborhoods to the north of Barnett by spreading out traffic to the east and west of Ellendale. (8)

3. Choosing the Highland option might suggest that the Rogue Valley Manor has had an inappropriate amount of influence in the decision process since the Manor is one of the few organizations that would be negatively affected by the Ellendale option.

4. The higher estimated cost of the Ellendale option is a small fraction of the total project budget and should not be the deciding factor.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Kris N. Jacobson
1917 East. Main St.
Medford OR. 97504

SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT
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NAME Jolene Gibson ADDRESS 200 Garfield, medford OR.

PHONE 779-5482

As a student of South Medford High School the South Medford Interchange Project does ~~to~~ not effect me directly. So my opinion however effective, would be to take Ellendale. My reason being that the alternative is Highland, and Highland has a skate park located on it. I think it would be verry dangerous to push a highway overflow exit that close to a heavily pedestrian populated area. (1) (2)

However I believe it would be much more effective to just put in a second Medford exit and entrence - on ramp, off ramp. This could be just south of the now existing interchange #27. This would be less expensive and more practicle. At any rate, what ever the desision, don't take Highland, Its to heavily populated ~~[illegible]~~ with padestrians. Thank You for your time. (3) (4)

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NAME BRIAN KOENINGER ADDRESS 2349 STONEBROOK

DR. MEDFORD, OR, 97504 PHONE (541) 245-0482

I FEEL THAT THE NEW INTECHAMGE WOULD BE A GOOD PROJECT THAT WOULD MAKE MEDFORD SAFER. I DO NOT THINK THE CITY OF MEDFORD SHOULD TAKE OUT THE BARNETT INTERCHANGE. MEDFORD IS GROWING, AND NEEDS AT LEAST THREE OFF RAMPS. YREKA, WHICH IS SOUTH OF THE OREGON BOARDER, HAS THREE OFF RAMPS, AND ISN'T EVEN ONE TENTH THE SIZE OF MEDFORD. COMMING FROM A STUDENT AND A USER OF THE BARNETT INTERCHANGE, I FEEL THE NEW INTERCHANGE ALONG WITH KEEPING BARNETT INTERCHANGE WOULD CASE TRAFFIC AND MAKE MEDFORD SAFER. (1)

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NAME Shaun Olson ADDRESS 2756 Study Way

PHONE (541) 770-4693

As a Student At South Medford High School the decrease on the South Medford Interchange Project effect me greatly I have viewed the video as well as heard someone speak that is on the ODOT rooftop about the pros, and cons and different ideas on the proposal for the interchange. Now that I have heard this information I have enough knowledge to make my own After receiving this information I have drawn my own conclusion on what I think needs to happen. I think we need to make another on and off ramp at either Eleventh or Highland it doesn't matter But I think we need to keep the on and off ramp at Barnett because that would help ease congestion in both places. Which would in essence cut the traffic in half at both exits because people would have the choice of either exit or on ramp. (1) (2)

November 20, 2001

Greg Holthoff
ODOT, Environmental
1158 Chemeketa N E
Salem, OR 97310

I have several questions about the proposed "Highland Alternative" for ODOT's plans for the south Medford interchange.

What destinations are served by routing traffic onto Highland Avenue north of Barnett? It seems to me that trips to Medford's downtown area are better served by the Western feeder road from the freeway, and trips beyond that are best served by the North Medford Exit. What motivation is there for routing traffic north onto Highland Avenue? (1)

How was the foot traffic into the park along Highland Avenue between Barnett and Siskiyou considered? The park, which has a skateboard park and a large children's play structure, is presently a popular destination for young people on skateboards and on foot, and will soon have a BMX bicycle area, which will attract even more young people. With foot traffic increasing, how will the plan route higher-density traffic around that park without resulting in dangerous, even deadly, results? How seriously has this been considered? (2) (3)

That same corner (Highland Avenue and Siskiyou) hosts a fire station. Will the plans for Highland Avenue north of Barnett lead to complications and difficulties for emergency vehicles to access the routes that serve the citizens' emergency needs? (4)

It seems to me that Medford would be better served by routing traffic from the eastward feeder road west or east at Barnett, but not to the north. Why has no such alternative been considered? Aren't there junction formations that would be suitable for a connection between Barnett and the eastward feeder road without directing traffic northward? (5)

Thank you for your consideration of these questions.

Scott McKay
Ten south Keeneway Drive
Medford, OR 97504

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November 27, 2001

Attn: Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: South Medford Interchange Project Draft EIS
Pacific Highway, Jackson County, Key No. 07199

Dear Mr. Holtoff:

We are in receipt of the draft Environmental Impact Statement herein. We would withhold comment at this time.

We request to remain informed as an interested party and to receive a copy of the final EIS document. (1)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

James W. Spickerman

jca
cc: Bi-Mart Corporation

Gleaves Swearingen Potter & Scott

Phone:
(541) 686-8833
Fax:
(541) 345-2034

975 Oak Street
Suite 800
Eugene, Oregon
97401-3156

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Douglas R. Schultz
Malcolm H. Scott
James V. Shepherd
James W. Spickerman
Arlen C. Swearingen
Travis L. Sydow
Kate A. Thompson
Renée Wyser-Pratte

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NAME GARY W. BREEDEN AIA ARCHITECT ADDRESS 960 ELLENDALE STE. B, MEDFORD OR. 97504 PHONE 541-772-1244

I OBJECT TO THE ELLENDALE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE. THIS ALTERNATIVE WOULD HAVE A DISASTROUS EFFECT ON THE CIRCULATION OF TRAFFIC TO MY OFFICE AT 960 ELLENDALE. (1) ALSO, THIS ALTERNATIVE DOES NOT CONNECT TO A VIABLE TRAFFIC ROUTE NORTH OF BARNETT. THE HIGHLAND ALTERNATIVE IS PREFERABLE DUE TO DIRECT ACCESS TO HIGHLAND DRIVE (2) TO THE NORTH AND SISKIYOU FOR EAST WEST TRAVEL.

Gary W. [illegible]

11.29.01
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NAME Kathryn Panadis ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

I am a student at South Medford High school, and in my Contemporary Issues class, we are taking a personal look at the South Medford Interchange Project and how it will affect, not only those who live/work nearby, but all those in Medford and surrounding cities.

First & all, our teacher, Spence Webber, told us to write this letter from the view point of a high schooler. If I were to do that, write how the interchange would affect me as a student, I would have to say that taking out the on and off ramps at Barnett is not the brightest of ideas. You see, I work at the (4)

11.29.01

Bi-Mart in Ashland, and in order to get to work on time from South Medford High, I have to take the entrance ramp onto I-5. Now, I know it will take a while to close that area down, but say the "while" has passed, and we now have the future South Medford Interchange up and running. What about the other Katie, who is now, also a senior at South Medford High, and happens to get a job at Bi-Mart, in Ashland? What will she do when she knows to be to work by 4:05 and can't take the quickest way to work? She'll have to get on Riverside and cruise through all of the 3:30 - 4:00 traffic down to the interchange. (1)

That could be a problem.

However, the more we talked in class, the more our teacher leaned toward allowing us to write this letter, giving our opinion from the information we've been given.

So here is my opinion.

The new interchange should go through; for nothing more than the fact that the Rogue Valley is growing. Businesses need the development room, and land developers need the housing space.

I heard the negative viewpoint on this project, and I'm afraid I don't believe that bogus "acid rain" theory. I do, however, sympathize with people like Peter White/Hippy a young man in my class who wants to protect the enchanting memories of child-hood days gone by, for all the rest of the children who will soon be building

their own lives on the memories of their childhood days. That I can understand, and if it weren't for the good of the Valley, I would take a stand with Peter and guard the magic that comes with playing night tag in the neighbor's yards on a warm Autumn night with the neighborhood kids.

So when you do build the interchange, and have all those busy people in their hurriedly speeding cars, remember the neighborhoods those cars are going to zip by/through. Remember the kids who are going to be coming home from school or going out to play, or simply walking along the street. ②③

I ask that you take into careful consideration, the safety of all those who will be involved in this project and hope that this decisive act will not only benefit Medford, but the whole of the Rogue Valley by your responsibly supervised construction project.

Sincerely,

Katie Paradis

RECEIVED
DEC 0 3 2001

Frank Stevens 11-21

The South Medford Interchange decision will have a huge impact on the entire city. Since I am not directly affected I have put my faith in our city government to make the best decision. I am shocked to learn of the two proposals that are being discussed, Ellendale and Highland. I firmly believe the South Stage Interchange is the solution that best preserves the neighborhoods of East Medford. I can only believe that special interests, ie developers are influencing the decision! If you can't make a good decision, please don't make one at all. ①②

Kathie Rulon

RECEIVED
CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
NOV 26 2001
PM

Kathie Rulon
212 Valley View
Medford, Or 97504

Frances Teeters
2198 Crestbrook Rd. 120
MEDFORD, OR 97504

NOV. 27, 2001

GREG HOLTHOFF,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1158 CHEMEKETA N.E.
SALEM, OR 97301

DEAR SIR,

IN THE MATTER OF REALIGNING THE BARNETT RD. I-5 INTERCHANGE FARTHER SOUTH, I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT PUTTING THE CONNECTING PATH WITH ELLENDALE CAN BE OTHER (1) THAN ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE. THE STREET IS ONLY A TWO LANE FROM BARNETT TO GREENWOOD THEN TURNS TO JOIN HIGHLAND. THE CONNECTING ROAD WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH CEMETARY PROPERTY (2) WHICH WOULD ONLY GET IT TO SISKIYOU BLVD.

HIGHLAND DR. IS FOUR LANES FROM SISKIYOU BLVD. ADD TWO LANES WITH SPACE FOR EITHER SIDE TO WIDEN IT TO E. MAIN. THERE ARE VACANT LOTS ACROSS BARNETT WHICH WOULD ALLOW HIGHLAND TO BE EXTENDED TO THE SOUTH.

I HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION

THAT THERE IS SELDOM A PERFECT ANSWER TO CORRECTING A MAJOR MISTAKE IN DESIGNING ROADS AND EXITS AND INTERSECTIONS.

THE BASIC MISTAKE WAS ONLY PARTIALLY PLACATING THE DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS PUTTING THE FREEWAY THROUGH MEDFORD BUT ONLY ALLOWING AN EXIT AT EACH END.

THERE IS STILL ONE VITAL PROBLEM WHICH ACCORDING TO THE MAP OF THE AREA THAT NEITHER ELLENDALE OR HIGHLAND PLANS SEEM TO SOLVE AND IT IS THERE (3) IS NO DIRECT STREET OR ROAD WHICH GOES EAST FROM THE PROPOSED INTERCHANGE. THE ONLY DIRECT WAY TO GO EAST TO THE ROGUE VALLEY HOSPITAL IS BARNETT RD. PLEASE TRY TO MAKE WHATEVER PLAN (4) SOLVE THE PROBLEM WITHOUT MAKING MORE AND MORE EXPENSIVE CORRECTIONS

FRANCES R. TEETERS

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Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa St. N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301

November 30, 2001

Sir,

I'm writing on behalf of my husband and I to express our deep concern over the proposed South Medford Interchange Project. I must confess that we find it odd that we are sending this letter to you, someone who apparently is part of the decision making process but resides 200 miles away.

We live in southeast Medford, or old East Medford as it is known. As I hope you know, it is a lovely well established neighborhood of older homes and quiet streets. Many residents in the area have lived here for 30 or 40 years; others are young families who represent the next generation buying in, who themselves are starting their own 30 year journeys raising their children in this neighborhood. It is a neighborhood where people "know" each other, even though they may not know them directly. This neighborhood has an unusually large population of people of all ages who walk and bike and jog, because the streets are so amenable to those activities. From our picture window, we watch all these people pass by: the families, the older couples strolling more slowly, the kids, and the joggers. There are the "regulars" that we know, and those we don't recognize as easily. This neighborhood is an incredibly pleasant and peaceful place to live. There are several parks in walking distance to our house: Bear Creek Park, Holmes Park, and Ruhl Park. We have frequented all of these parks on foot with our four year old.

Obviously what we don't want is the increased traffic dispersed through our neighborhood that either solution alternative for the South Medford Interchange (Highland or Ellendale) would bring. We've noticed that ODOT has conveniently avoided discussing the obvious disruption of neighborhoods farther north for either the Highland or Ellendale alternatives. The Ellendale alternative has been presented wherein traffic from the freeway linkup with Ellendale is disbursed either east or west at the intersection with Barnett Road. Does anyone really believe that there will **not** be a significant amount of traffic desiring to proceed north on Ellendale, crossing Barnett, to gain access to neighborhoods further north? The obvious outcome of this increased northbound traffic would be a new link of Ellendale to Groveland Avenue across the undeveloped corner of the Siskiyou cemetery. Groveland Avenue would be dramatically impacted by the traffic from the freeway moving north through Medford. Groveland Avenue also ends at East Main Street. A northbound arterial across East Main would still be necessary to carry traffic further north, causing more disruption to this neighborhood.

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Similarly, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the South Medford Interchange does not completely discuss the impacts of the Highland alternative on points north. After Highland intersects Siskiyou Boulevard, it ends at the intersection with East Main Street just as Groveland does. Again a direct northbound arterial past East Main Street would be required..

We live on Ardmore Avenue which lies in between Highland and Groveland. We obviously do not favor either of the alternatives presented and desire the no build alternative. We do not want the increased traffic on our street and through the entire neighborhood that either alternative is sure to bring. It will absolutely destroy the character and atmosphere of this neighborhood. It will change this neighborhood from one that enjoys a high standard of livability to one that forces people into their cars to take their kids to parks and to seek exercise and relaxation away from this area.

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There are three separate neighborhood associations that have tried to battle the location of major arterials in this neighborhood. The Eastside Neighborhood group has been in existence for a number of years and has many residents of Barnenburg on their roster. The Citizens for the Preservation of Established Neighborhoods (CPEN) formed two years ago with residents from around Groveland and vicinity and has appeared at numerous ODOT and Medford City Council meetings. Lastly, a new group made up of residents of Keene Way Drive have joined this effort. Why does ODOT and the Medford City Council continue to ignore the voices of these citizens?

⑥

We have the sense that this "open process" is just playing lip service to including the public's input. Decisions have already been made regarding the solution to the South Medford Interchange; but the people have to be led to believe that their input was sought. If no decision has been made, why is the fence and the landscaping bordering the dog park on Highland already so far back from the road... so that it doesn't have to be moved once Highland becomes the conduit from the freeway?

This lovely established neighborhood should not have to pay the price for the retail and housing boom in Medford. Please listen to the people who are writing to you.

Sincerely,

Lynn M. Kirms

Lynn M. Kirms
Mark A. Kirms
300 Ardmore Ave.
Medford, OR 97504

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Technical Services Manager
1158 Chemeketa Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-2528

November 29, 2001

Dear Sir:

ODOT is getting really bad publicity in Medford due to its Barnett Road/I-5 interchange relocation proposals (plus a tree on ODOT land in Ashland fell on a house yesterday - front page news in the Tribune). As far as we know, taped comments at ODOT's public hearings have not been released. Would they further antagonize the public? Plus Medford's mayor and city council are laying all the blame for unpopular options at ODOT's doorstep (see Mayor Berryman's letter enclosed). (1)

How about ODOT becoming the "Good Guy" by delaying the decision for at least 90 days or asking the city to put the options on the primary ballot this spring? Two months for public input is entirely too short. (2) Virtually 100% of the people we've talked with wonder why a NEW interchange at South Stage Road is not the primary consideration (with the "No Build" improvements at Barnett a possibility). (3)

Medford still has the same two interchanges it had when I-5 was completed nearly 40 years ago, but the population has probably doubled, to 63,000 now with plans for at least 10,000 more in 10 years. Roseburg has about 20,000 people and FOUR full interchanges, two of them built since I-5 was finished. No wonder our interchanges are overloaded! (4)

Councilman Jim Key has sent you a valid alternative to moving the Barnett Road interchange, which would relieve the safety issues. Adding a third interchange at South Stage and connecting with North Phoenix Road would improve access to Rogue Valley Medical Center and a road from North Phoenix to Manor Hill would provide another badly needed access to that area. With 5,000 homes proposed east of North Phoenix Road, an interchange at South Stage would soon be very heavily used. However, minutes from a July 6, 1999 meeting of the Solution Team indicate that the possible impact to a proposed golf course is the primary reason the Team made the South Stage option "off the table". It appears the Rogue Valley Manor has more clout than improvements to I-5 do. (5) (6)

In regard to a different matter, Jackson County Commissioner Sue Kupillas said, "It's never too late to go back to the drawing board". How about adopting that philosophy before it is actually too late?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joan Simonson

Joan Simonson
139 Highland Drive
Medford, Oregon 97504-7505

1014 Black Oak Drive
Medford OR 97504
November 30, 2001

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

I am writing to tell you I think the ODOT alternatives for placement of a new South Medford I-5 Interchange are both unacceptable. I am a resident of South Medford, a few blocks off Barnett Road, and although it is unquestionably a rat's nest right now, I believe ODOT should leave the interchange where it is until a more practical and longer-lasting choice has been developed. Neither the Ellendale nor the Highland options look to me as if they will do that much to improve things (and the two year construction period will create an even greater tangle of tie-ups), and expecting either of them to be adequate until 2030 seems overly optimistic in view of the amount of development continuing out here. (1) (2)

One of the biggest problems the Highland option would create is the increased noise, pollution, and danger to people - especially youngsters - using Bear Creek Park. (3) (4) (5) This is a center of community not only of east Medford but the whole city - dropping a freeway interchange there makes no sense whatever. It is heavily used throughout the year and the amount of traffic around Highland right now is enough to be a worry.

The Ellendale option is more expensive and stands (6) to dislocate people and businesses in ways impossible for (7) them to cope with. The businesses are mostly small, with (8) a thin margin of security as it is; many of the people who will be forced to locate elsewhere are unlikely to find the reasonably affordable and comfortable housing presently (9) available around Ellendale, especially in this part of Medford.

November 18, 2001

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To Greg Holthoff, ODOT Project Manager
Salem, Oregon

RE: Barnett/I-5 Offramp change

Dear sir,

We live two blocks east of Rogue Valley Medical Center , just one block off Barnett Road. We have lived here for eleven and one half years. We have seen tremendous traffic expansion in that time. With the building of new subdivisions and shopping centers towards the North Phoenix Road, and the Southgate Shopping Center, traffic becomes hectic at times.

I have joined the Groveland Avenue Group who has protested for years the extension of a new offramp from I-5, on Ellendale, and eventually down Groveland residential area. We have attended ODOT meetings, I wrote letters to the newspaper, I have even tried to get the Perl Siskiyou Cemetery to become involved. (Until recently, with a new owner, they were unable to take a stand against a road through the cemetary to continue up Groveland.

At one of the ODOT meetings we were told that ODOT would take the new offramp to Barnett Road, period. Then the City of Medford would take it from there. Where ever it was to go....to relieve the traffic on Barnett.

I have yet to talk to anyone who can see a new long off ramp from I-5 to dead=ending on Barnett is going to relieve traffic problems. (1)
You could do that by extending the one we have now further on down I-5, there is room to make a longer exit road along I-5.

Both my husband and I have felt all along that the ideal situation (2)
would be to involve North Phoenix Road-Foothill Road as a belt-line (3)
road as Eugene has done. If you wish to spend our tax money on an expensive helpful project, that seems to be the way to go.

Barnett traffic is certainly a problem now due to poor planning in the first place...with only two exits off of I-5 for a town of this size. We think you are going to spend a lot of money, and still have the same problem. (4)

continued..

Neither do we believe trying to make a four lane road down a two lane road in a residential area. I particularly mean the Ellendale project, altho the Highland choice is not as involved, it does the same destroying of private property. (5)

It amazes me that the City of Medford is letting subdivision builders begin their huge project on the end of Barnett Road and North Phoenix Road. Where in the name of heaven do you people think all those people will be trying to get into town??? There is no way you can have something for everybody in the way of businesses and professional people in this "Village" type subdivision. But if this gets started, you may loose your chance to widen and make a decent bypass road in that area. (6)

Sometimes it just seems so disappointing that the state and federal government will take our tax money and build these huge bandaid projects that are not really going to relieve the problem. The City of Medford should not have allowed subdivisions on the end of their feeder roads out of Medford to the edges of town. They have left only a few roads leading the the outskirts of town. (7)

I wish I could take this letter to my neighbors to have them sign their names to it. We discuss it often, and we are all in agreement. I have an ill husband that requires a lot of my time now, and I have not been able to be active in disagreeing with the new plans.

You have been reliable in notifying us about meetings, even though they come when people normally are just getting home from work and want a hot meal for supper.....then we can come to a meeting.

I suggest you do nothing!! People can slow down a bit and not be in such a hurry. I know, I am retired, but if people have a choice of waiting a few minutes more at a stop signal, or having you spend this huge amount of money that does not correct the situation completely, it is better to do nothing. WORK ON NORTH PHOENIX ROAD, please. (8)

Sincerely,

Lorraine M. Storey
580 Golf View Drive
Medford, Oregon 97504
541-770-6749

Lorraine M. Storey

RECEIVED
NOV 20 2001

SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVES & SOLUTIONS

Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Public Comment Form

Public hearing: Oct. 30, 2001, Scottish Rite Center, Medford. You may use this form to comment formally on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You make leave your written comments at the hearing, or dictate comments to a court reporter. Also, you may mail comments to Greg Holthoff, Environmental Project Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation, 1158 Chemeketa St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301. Comments must be received by5 p.m. Dec. 3, 2001.

NAME Michelle Anderst ADDRESS 1632 Carrington Ave.

PHONE (541)776-5045

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to comment on the South Medford Interchang project. I believe something needs to be done about the traffic and the highway interchange, however, I am pushing for no action. As a student of South Medford High School, I drive over the overpass at least twice a day. I find the traffic very frustrating and do believe that something needs to be done. I am also a resident who lives very near Highland street and also Ellendale. I cringe when I think of I5 traffic emptying out onto a residential area with children and pets running around on the streets and near Bear Creek Park. I believe that there is a better solution for the problem on the interchange. Thank you for your time.

(1) (2) (3)

Sincerely,
Michelle Anderst

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NAME Beau Beemish ADDRESS 1225 Stevens St

PHONE (541) 732-0762

I am completely for the new intersection. I think that a new intersection would not only lower traffic, but would also spread the flow of business. I have had to wait for a good amount of time each time I drive through there. I do, however, think that it is a bad idea to get rid of the interchange 27, because it would just make the problem move to a new location. I think having the choice would be a better option. Any individual that opposes this is just selfish and want to keep there small town. But the truth is we need to be expanding and grow financially. Los Angelas didn't become the leader off the pack by worrying about little kids parks and skate parks and we shouldn't either.

(1) (2)