January 6, 2002

Copies to: Mayor Lindsay Berryman
Jeff Graham, ODOT
Senator Lenn Hannon
Governor John Kitzhaber
Gary Leaming, ODOT
John Morrison, RVCOG
Rep. Rob Patridge
Sen. Gordon Smith
Rep. Greg Walden
Bruce Warner, ODOT
Sen. Ron Wyden

To: Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Mgr.
ODOT
1158 Chemeketa St., NE
Salem, OR 97301-2528

Please take the time to read this. It is not just another "NIMBY" crank letter. It is a rational request regarding the South Medford Interchange and future of Medford traffic.

The following observations and conclusions are not mine alone, but the opinion of countless drivers who are far better aware of local traffic conditions than the out-of-towners making the decision for us.

You've already heard the objections to routing freeway traffic onto Highland Avenue because of its proximity to our city park. This proposed routing is short-sighted for other reasons and would eventually lead to further complications.

All the vehicles now entering Highland certainly do not take a right or left at the Siskiyou intersection. Half (if not most) go through it, continuing on Highland to E. Main St., then turn west; the rest turn right onto Barneburg Rd. to E. Main St., then turn east.

Adding thousands more cars to these streets would soon require the need for a stop light at Main & Barneburg, as well as Main and Highland. What does this do to Main St. traffic? Surely you can envision how this would affect so many other streets that intersect with E. Main, and beyond.

Clearly, IF you feel you MUST spend $50,000,000, despite the governor's comments about the state's $850,000,000 shortage, and if you MUST placate developers and their desire for profit, and if you must spend even more money compensating homeowners for reduction in their property values resulting from this plan, the most prudent approach to accommodating additional cars would be to locate the new interchange where traffic could exit east to N. Phoenix Rd., then onto a north-south beltline. THAT is the area planned for housing development. 1

Please look at this option closely and seriously. It makes the most sense.

Jacquelyn A. Johnson
(Mrs. R. E.)

2200 Woodlawn Dr.
Medford Oregon, 97504
January 6, 2002

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
ODOT
1155 Chemeketa St. NE
Salem Ore.

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

I would like to voice my strong opposition to the elimination of the Barnett Road Interchange.

My alternative would be as follows and is based on my experience as a resident on the East Side for the past 28 years. My observations have been, as flawed as the interchange is, that it serves a great purpose with close access to the freeway in addition to an east west route for the city. Its greatest current problem arises around rush hours when the back up at the west side light occurs. It is compounded by the fact that cars trying to access the freeway south towards Ashland who are coming from the east are caught up in the line of traffic going to west Medford or the South Mall. They simply can not get onto the Freeway and only add to the traffic jam. My proposal would be:

1: Leave the Barnett Interchange. Eliminate the Sidewalk on the north side of the bridge and replace it with a traffic lane dedicated to the south or Ashland on ramp. Consider alternatives for the pedestrian traffic, such as a separate pedestrian bridge over the freeway, or a pedestrian wing off of the bridge. If a separate bridge is constructed, you could also eliminate the sidewalk on the south side of the overpass. 1

2. Consider an extension of the center lane at Barnett as an overpass over the traffic at the west side stoplight and ending a little farther down Barnett, allowing west bound traffic to miss the stoplight altogether. This is done frequently in busy intersections in large cities. 2

3. Build a 3rd interchange farther south with a connection to North Phoenix Road that would go south of the Manor Complex, thus allowing the interchanges to be better spaced and give a more circumurban character to the new interchange concept. This would allow shunting of some of the traffic from the proposed East Medford housing expansion away from the Barnett interchange. 3

4. Ashland has 3 interchanges. Scrapping Barnett gives Medford 2—it makes no sense!

Finally, I have been concerned that the Citizens Advisory Committee, made up of volunteers, is composed of many vested interests and also a number of people who do not even live within the city limits of Medford. Many of these people represent business

interests. Please listen to the people most impacted now by your decisions, especially those that presently live in the areas serviced by the Barnett Interchange.

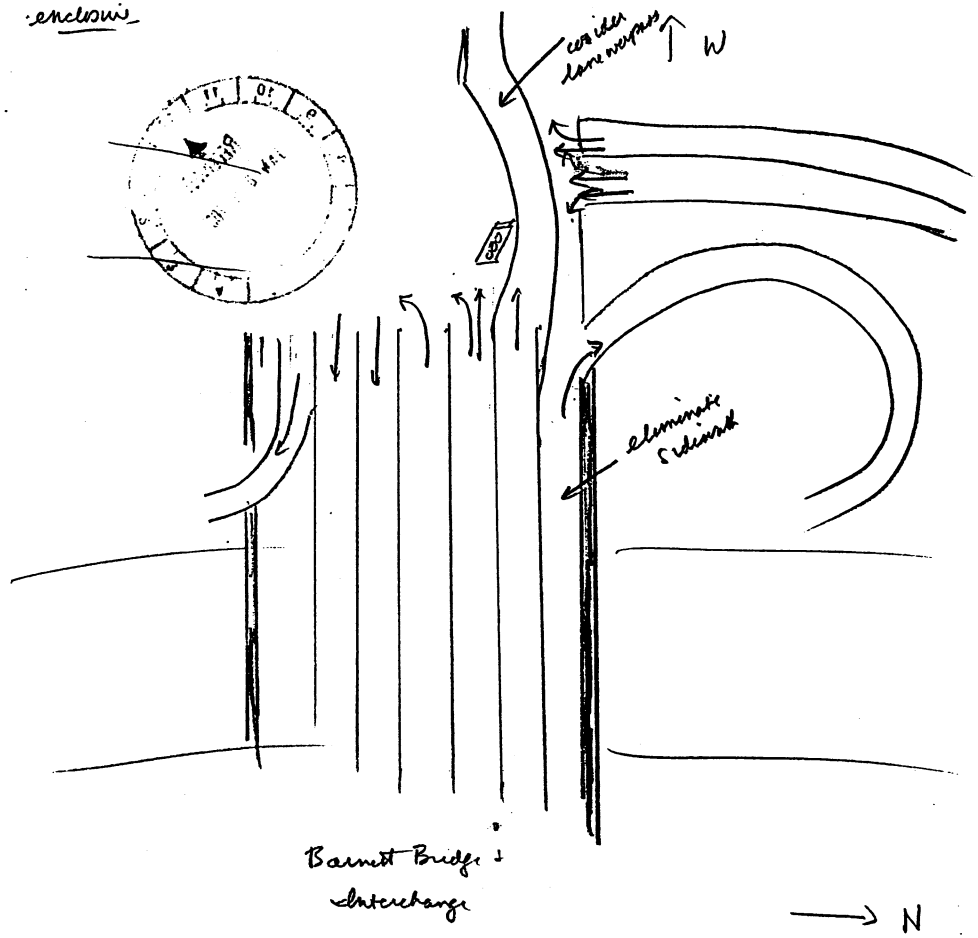
I realize that ODOT officials need to make weighty decisions based not only on present needs, but future growth. We have fortunately left the No Growth concept of Gov. McCall, but we do very much appreciate your careful consideration of all suggestions. Thanks for not barging ahead with a solution that would have had little popular support, since it is All of us who are funding these changes.

Sincerely Yours,

Thomas Tangeman, MD

Cc: John Morrison, RVCG, and Peter Noyes, MD

enclosure



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January 6, 2002

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Dept. of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa St., NE
Salem, OR 97301-2528

Dear Mr. Holthoff;

I live on Glen Oak Court in Medford, OR. Either of the proposed alternatives for moving the So. Medford interchange DEFINITELY impacts me and my neighborhood.

I do realize that the So. Interchange is a problem; however, it truly seems to me that very little thought has been given to how neighborhoods like mine are impacted. We've attended meetings given by ODOT and Medford City Council. But, frankly, we came away very discouraged. It seems that the decision has been made and so anything said at those meetings against the 2 alternatives being considered (Ellendale and Highland) fell on "deaf ears".

A community is made up of many facets; old established neighborhoods are one of those facets. Everyone and every town needs a history-I believe the sense of history in old East Medford will be lost if the Highland alternative is enacted and, obviously, the Ellendale alternative will cut through existing neighborhoods, also.

My husband and I have spent 15 years restoring our 1929 home and have always taken pride in our home and our neighborhood. A few years ago, several homes in this area were honored because they are Frank Clark Homes. One of the factors that made this so significant is that there are so many Frank Clark Homes n such a concentrated area. I've called the Dept. in Salem that handles Historic homes and asked about information regarding the preservation of Historic areas. It seems that this area definitely meets the criteria for such a designation. Has this fact been factored into a decision to run a freeway exit in this same neighborhood? I appreciate any time you and your dept. can devote to exploring another possibility for a different solution to the So. Interchange in Medford. 1

I, personally, think that adding another exit at So. Stage Road, would help alleviate quite a bit of traffic. Also, with all the building going on in the North Phoenix/Foothills Rd. area, this would help with future traffic, also. Much smaller towns than Medford have more than 2 exits-if Medford meets growth projections this topic of interchange exits will be "visited again", why not be pro-active now. 40 years ago a few people were so influential that the entire interchange was affected, please; help us not to repeat that mistake. 2

Again, I thank you for your time and any consideration you might give my letter.

Gal Nimmo
20 Glen Oak Ct.
Medford, OR 97504

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HOLTHOFF Greg

From: Dolores Scheelen [scheelen@internetcds.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 17, 2002 12:07 PM
To: HOLTHOFF Greg
Subject: South Medford Interchanges - please see note about date

Please note that this message was originally sent within the deadline but I goofed and left out a letter in the address so it was not delivered. We hope that you will still consider our input. Thanks

We appreciate the opportunity to make input on this issue.

Regarding the South Medford interchange, we strongly urge everyone involved to take a long view of traffic needs. Lack of adequate foresight resulted in the situation we have today with the elevated interstate going through the middle of town.

We foresee that the current ODOT proposal (closing of the Barnett interchange and building of a new interchange at Garfield) will prove equally short-sighted. Why not keep the Barnett interchange AND add another one further south, as proposed if that is deemed best? Roseburg and other cities have closely situated interchanges. 1

For a long time it has been apparent that we need a beltway or ring road around the city. We agree very strongly with a Guest Opinion by Jim Key of the Medford City Council (Mail Tribune, 1/10/02) that the longer this is postponed, the more impossible it will become. 2

Let's go for a true fix, not just a stop gap measure that will create future problems.

Robert and Dolores Scheelen
Medford OR

Your message

To: greg.holtoff@odot.state.or.us
Subject: South Medford Interchange
Sent: Sun, 13 Jan 2002 19:29:21 -0800
did not reach the following recipient(s):
greg.holtoff@odot.state.or.us on Sun, 13 Jan 2002 19:34:18 -0800
The recipient name is not recognized
The MTS-ID of the original message is: c=us;a=
;p=odot;l=EXSALEM10201140334C7ST0DXQ
MSEXCH:IMS:ODOT:SALEM:EXSALEM1 0 (000C05A6) Unknown Recipient

November 28, 2001

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

Dear Greg:

The traffic problem on the I-5 freeway South Interchange is being corrected by moving the problem one block east from the freeway into Medford residential neighborhoods. The Highland Extension "solution" merely takes it from a state problem and imposes it on the citizens of Medford. (1)

The "solution" impacts the recreational facilities of the young citizens of Medford by greatly increasing the traffic flow on Highland Drive. In order to get to the BMX park, the skate board park, the dog park, the outdoor theater and Bear Creek Park the young citizens of Medford will be forced to brave this greatly increased traffic thereby putting their lives in jeopardy. (2)

Senior citizens, who have lived in this area for many years and are presently being accommodated by rents they can afford, are to be displaced from their homes. Most are on fixed incomes and will have little or no selections of places to go at rents they can afford. No one seems to want to address this problem. In conjunction with this property values of those who own their homes in this area for many years will be negatively impacted. This problem also has been ignored. (3)

These and many other issues have been presented repeatedly to the Solution Team, ODOT representatives, and city officials but no one acknowledges that there is any problem. Some didn't even know that there was an elementary school in the area.

This "solution" to the problem is not a solution. It seems to me to be an accommodation to meet the wants of a few interested parties at the expense of many of the citizens of Medford. Unfortunately for the citizens those who could help solve the problem are turning a deaf ear to the pleas of the many. A South Stage Road overpass has been proposed and I think should be more fully investigated as to how it could help solve our problem. (4)

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,
Paul R. Avery

c: Governor, John Kitzhaber

Paul R. Avery
1701 E Main St.
Medford, OR 97504-7624

November 20, 2001

From: Barbara Griffin
10 South Keeneway Drive
Medford, Oregon 97504
541 773-3006

To: Greg Holthoff
ODOT Environmental
1158 Chemeketa NE
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Greg,

This letter is in regards to the South Medford Interchange Project Interstate 5, Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4 (f) Evaluation.

You will find the following:

A. My Statement
B. Questions for ODPT
C. Copy of Medford Mail Tribune Guest Opinion
D. Copy of presentation to the Medford Mayor and City Council

A. Statement

Our town will change forever if the I-5 Freeway Interchange comes in to Barnett Road at Highland Drive. I support the No-Build Alternative. If the City of Medford would build the Garfield/Highland overpass extension for in-town connectivity with no interstate freeway connection most of the traffic for South Gate, West Medford, and Phoenix would use the Garfield/Highland overpass extension. Barnett Road at the existing South Medford Interchange overpass would not have that local traffic that is going west or southwest.

The money to be spent on the Highland Alternative is a waste of tax dollars. (1)

The monies that would be saved could purchase the land to connect South

Stage to North Phoenix Road with an interchange at South Stage Road. This land needs to be purchased before a subdivision is in-place. The pear orchard has already been torn out. It is just waiting for a road

If you have read the Solution Team and CAC Meeting minutes, you would know that hardly a meeting went by with OUT South Stage being mentioned.

People who have lived in this area and have driven the city streets know more about the traffic flow than any traffic study done by a computer. Please listen to the local people. Please do not let the developers and the Manor dictate to you what should be done.

The Highland Alternative impacts the entire city. The people who use Bear Creek Park come from all over Southern Oregon. Why ruin the air quality, add to the noise and confusion with an Interstate coming into a neighborhood

If a traveler from the interstate is suffering from road fatigue, this driver will most likely go straight on Highland, eventually figuring that the turn should have been east or west on Barnett.

B. Questions for ODPT

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 11: Traffic, Transportation, and Safety
Street System; Highland Drive at Barnett Road becomes a four-leg intersection by adding approach for interchange. This increases travel options for vehicles with destinations from the interstate to Siskiyou Boulevard via Highland Drive.

Please answer the following questions. Since the Highland Alternative will impact the neighborhood, please do not tell me this is a City of Medford problem. For there would be no problem if there was No-Build.
1. Is Siskiyou Blvd. wide enough for increased traffic?
2. What will happen to the Siskiyou Blvd. parking used for the B.C. Park?
3. Where will the children cross the street to go to the park?
4. Will Eastwood and Siskiyou have a new signal? If so, when?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 11: Highway Traffic and Pedestrian Safety; Possible pedestrian

difficulty in crossing Highland Drive between the signalized intersections of Barnett Road and Siskiyou Blvd.

Please answer the following questions:
5. What will happen to the Highland Drive street parking used for Bear Creek Park? (This is the area that is in the footprint of the Highland Alternative.)
6. Where will the children cross the street to go to the park?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 12: Land Use
Existing Development; Infringes on parkland on the east and south sides of Bear Creek Park.

Please answer the following question:
7. How can loss of public parkland be compared to the effect on the Private Quail Point Golf Course's first fairway and safety netting area and the displacement of the driving range?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 13: Land Use
Future Development; Greatest impact is on lands designated for urban residential with 6.7 acres directly impacted.

Please answer the following question:
8. What land use laws will have to be changed?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 13: Land Use
Future Development; Relocated interchange would likely increase pressure for wider array of commercial uses and plan and zone changes to allow these uses generally along Barnett Road east of Highland Drive / Barnett Road intersection.

Please answer the following questions:
9. How will the Four Seasons and Highlander apartments be impacted if there is a zone change?
10. What land use laws will have to be changed?
11. Is it advisable to have commercial businesses across from the 'Crown

Jewel' City Park of Medford

Future Development; Increased traffic volume may improve success of business located at Siskiyou Boulevard and Highland Drive.

Please answer the following questions:
12. Who will be the customers at these business?
13. Will the customers be interstate travelers?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (11)
Page S — 14: Socioeconomics
Right of Way Acquisition and Relocation; Buffered footprint — One additional residence and up to 30 apartments in two complexes.

Please answer the following questions:
14. Many seniors live in the two complexes. What will happen to them?
15. Why were the people of these apartments not contacted as to the consequences of the Highland Alternative?
16. What study was done to determine if the people living in these apartments were of low income?
17. What is the approximate cost for this acquisition?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (12)
Page S — 15: Socioeconomics
Affected Workforce if Displaced Businesses; 60 people (16 additional for buffered foot print) will full or part-time jobs would be affected by businesses being displaced.

Please answer the following question:
18. What specific businesses?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (13)
Page S — 17: Socioeconomics
Access Management; Median on Barnett Road east of I-5 has greatest impacts on highway related business near I-5.

Please answer the following question:
19. What specific businesses?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (14)
Page S — 17: Socioeconomics
Changes in Neighborhood; Reduces neighborhood cohesion due to increased traffic volume on Highland Drive side of Bear Creek Park. Decreases access to the park by neighborhood users.

Please answer the following questions:
20. For the first time in Medford, we have a city park that can be enjoyed for multi-purposes. Why decrease the park access?
21. What good will come of decreasing the park access for the neighborhood?
22. Will this park be for the interstate traveler and transient?
23. Have you done a study to determine how the Highland Alternative will affect the value of the homes in the neighborhood? If you have not done a study, then why not?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (15)
Page S — 18: Cultural Resources
Pre-historic Artifacts; One potential pre-historic site needs to be investigated.

Please answer the following questions:
24. Why is there no monitoring required in area Highland area with historic artifacts.
25. Is this site more significant than the two on Ellendale?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (16)
Page S — 19: Noise
Noise Levels; Noise abatement not feasible or cost effective.
Without abatement, 12 of 29 modeled representative noise-sensitive receivers approach or exceed NAC for Activity Category B land uses.

Please answer the following questions:
26. Please identify the 60 residences or residential equivalents impacted.
27. If we are to continue using the park for Movie Evenings, how will you create less noise impacts?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative (17)
Page S — 21: Biological Resources

Threatened and Endangered Species; Length of stream channel disturbance — 173.2 feet or 193.2 feet for the buffered footprint.

Please answer the following question:
28. There is more disturbance and impact on the stream with the Highland Alternative. Why, then is this the best alternative?

Summary of Environmental Consequences — Highland Alternative
Page S — 24: If the Highland Alternative is selected, the intersection of Barnett Road and Alba Drive would be signalized and a U-turn for west bound traffic provided to mitigate for reduced access to businesses on the south side of Barnett Road between Bear Creek and Highland Drive... If the Highland Alternative is selected, the FEIS would address additional biological, hydraulics, and right of way acquisition impacts caused by the widening, as would processes required to obtain necessary regulatory permits.

Please answer the following questions: 18
29. Does this mean that the cost of the above has not been computed in the overall budget?

South Medford Interchange Project

CHAPTER ONE — PURPOSE AND NEED

Page 1 —1: Purpose
Consistent with the City of Medford's 1999 Vision Process, the project is being designed to reduce existing and future traffic congestion and operational problems at the South Medford Interchange, while seeking to minimize adverse impacts of the improvements on neighborhoods, businesses, and the environment.

Please answer the following question: 19
30. How does the Highland Alternative fit within this criteria?

CHAPTER TWO — PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Page 2 — 3: Build Alternatives
If the Ellendale Alternative were chosen the following would occur: Displacement of a senior, affordable housing development (thus triggering

potential environmental justice issues).

Please answer the following question: 20
31. Will the loss of senior housing on Highland Drive trigger potential environmental justice issues?

CHAPTER TWO — PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Page 2 — 6: Highland Alternative
Design Features; The Highland Alternative would move the South Medford Interchange approximately 1,902 feet south of existing facility. (Ellendale would move the Interchange 3,117 feet.) Barnett Road would widened in the area of its intersection with Highland Drive to a total of seven lanes, including both through and turn lanes.

Please answer the following question: 21
32. To accommodate the traffic of 2030, how can Barnett Road remain 4 lanes in the areas beyond the intersection?
33. If Barnett Road is widened from North Phoenix to the South Medford Interchange, how will this affect the businesses along Barnett Road?

Page 2 — 2: MAP For Highland Alternative. Five lanes
Please answer the following question: 22
34. The Ellendale Alternative does not show the footprint on Ellendale North of Barnett Road as does the Highland Alternative. Why do you not show a footprint on Ellendale North?

Please answer the following questions: 23
4-4: Inadequate sidewalk and bike paths on Highland Drive could create safety issues.
35. How will ODOT solve this problem?

4-6: Pedestrians may find it more difficult to cross Highland Drive between the signalized intersections of Barnett Road and Siskiyou Boulevard because of increased traffic. 24
36. How will ODOT solve this problem?

4-24: This could affect the ability of neighborhood users on the east side of the park to easily access the facility unless they travel first to a signalized 25

in intersection, thus potentially reducing accessibility for neighborhood residents to community facilities. Of particular concern would be unsupervised children and teens.
37. How will ODOT solve this problem?

Section 4 F Evaluation:
Page 27
For the Highland Alternative, the Highland Drive/Barnett Road intersection would require widening for turn lanes that could potentially encroach on the east and south sides of the Bear Creek Park. 26

Please answer the following question:
38. Is this against the Federal Guidelines about interfering with parkland?

Thank you,

Barbara Griffin

Barbara Griffin
10 South Keeneway Drive
Medford, Oregon 97504
541 773-3006

To: Gary E. Nelson
Editorial Page Editor
Guest Opinion

From: Barbara Griffin
10 South Keeneway Drive, Medford, Oregon 97504
541 773-3006

Say No to the Highland Alternative

I hear them first. Then they come into view. The young people of the neighborhood are heading to Bear Creek Park. As they race down the middle of the street, they are laughing, joking and horsing around as they ride upon their skateboards, bicycles and in-line skates. I love this sound of laughter. I am pleased that my town has a place for kids to go. I chuckle along with these happy-go-lucky kids.

I think, "How lucky we are."

That is until I read what the Oregon Transportation Department (ODOT) and the Federal Highway Administration is planning on doing to Old East Medford and Bear Creek Park.

They want the Interstate 5 Freeway Interchange to come into Barnett Road at Highland Drive.

I ask you, parents and grandparents, "Are the children going to be safe when this happens? Will Bear Creek Park ever be the same?"

In the South Medford Interchange Project Interstate 5, Draft—Environment Impact Statement — ODOT has stated in their Summary of Environmental Consequences, page S-11:Table 1, in the "Highway Traffic and Pedestrian Safety" row and under the Highland Alternative column: "Possible pedestrian and bicycle difficulty in crossing Highland Drive between the signalized intersections of Barnett Rd. and Siskiyou Blvd."

Is this what we want? If this is not your vision, you only have a few weeks to voice your complaints.

ODOT has this to say on Page S -11: Traffic, Transportation, and Safety/Street System row and under the Highland Alternative: "Highland Drive at Barnett Road becomes a four-leg intersection by adding approach for interchange. This increases travel options for vehicles with destinations from the interstate to Siskiyou Boulevard via Highland Drive."

At the ODOT meeting on Tuesday, October 30, I asked these question of Jim Hanks, JRH Transportation Engineering, Eugene, Oregon.
"1. Is Siskiyou Blvd. wide enough for increased traffic?
2. What will happen to the Siskiyou Blvd. parking used for the Bear Creek Park?
3. Where will the children cross the street to go to the park?"

Mr. Hanks answers, "It is just an 'option' for vehicles."

I asked Greg Holthoff, ODOT's Environmental Project Manager (he lives in Salem), if he knew there was an elementary school on Siskiyou Blvd. He did not know about Hoover School.

I asked Mike Gallagher, Senior Planner of the South Medford Interstate Project working for the URS Corporation of Corvallis, if he knew there was an elementary school on Siskiyou Blvd. He did not know about Hoover School, either.

What do they know about our town, our people and our Bear Creek Park?

On page S-12: ODOT states in their Summary of Consequences, "Land Use/Existing Development" row and under the Highland Alternative column: "Infringes on parkland on the east and the south." In Ellendale Alternative column ODOT states the following: "Would affect width of Quail Point Golf Course's first fairway and safety netting area and displace driving range."

What is for the greater good, I ask you? Speak up now or forever hold your peace!

The ODOT statement, page S-17, "Socioeconomics/Changes in

Neighborhood Cohesion": "Reduces neighborhood cohesion due to increased traffic volume on Highland Drive side of Bear Creek Park. Decreases access to the park by neighborhood users."

Is this your vision for the vicinity of Bear Creek Park?

If we, the citizens of Medford, do not act now, the vision of Medford as a community, with Bear Creek Park as a safe place for our kids will be only a long-ago memory.

For thirty years I have lived in the same house in Old East Medford. My children grew up in this house. They would have loved the park. I would have loved for them to have access to Bear Creek Park. I could have happily sent my kids over to the skateboard park rather than worrying about them skateboarding down Jackson Street by Hedrick.

If the Highland Alternative is chosen, who is going to send their kids to the park, then?

The Highland Alternative impacts the entire city. The people who use Bear Creek Park come from all over our area. As ODOT states in Section 4 (F) Evaluation, page 17. "The Ellendale Alternative will have no direct impacts on Bear Creek Park."

What do you choose? Write the Mayor of Medford, the Medford City Council, your Ward Councilman, and Greg Holthoff at ODOT. The time is short. YOU need to act now. Voice your concerns. After December 3 at 5:00 PM, ODOT will disregard anything you have to say. Save the integrity of Bear Creek Park. Say no to the Highland Alternative.

(11/15/01) Barbara Griffin, 10 South Keeneway Drive, 773-3006, Medford Ward 4

I am speaking tonight to ask the City of Medford to schedule a **public hearing** on the impact of ODOT's proposed South Medford Interchange. I would like this public hearing to include the statements and opinions of the citizens.

I talked with Reeve Hennion, the citizen designate of the Solutions Team for this Interchange project: My question to him, "How will Barnett Road handle all of this increased congestion brought by the 7 lanes of traffic that will either enter or exit at Barnett Road?"

His answer, "That is not our problem. That is the City of Medford's problem."

I talked with Cory Crebbin, public works director of the City of Medford. I asked, "If the Highland Drive Alternative is chosen can a NO TRUCK sign be posted on Highland Drive near Barnett Road?"

His answer, "Federally funded projects **can not** have a "No Trucks" sign on their roads."

I talked with Perry Caster. HUD Regional Director in-charge of Larson Creek and Quail Ridge. (Both are owned and operated by the non-profit arm of the Rogue Valley Manor.) I asked, "What do you know about the Ellendale Alternative?"

His answer, "I first heard about this project 9 months ago and then again 2 weeks ago. ODOT must have known that federally-funded low-income senior housing **can not** be disturbed. I wonder, then, why ODOT would choose Ellendale as one of the 3 alternatives?"

I asked Jon Deason, chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee. "What are you going to recommend?"

His answer, "No Build."

I have spoken out against this project since I started attending the CAC meetings in November of 1999. This project will erode the old east side neighborhoods and our wonderful Bear Creek Park.

Please, Mayor and City Council Members. Don't be the ones that do now, what was done to Medford 40 years ago with the Viaduct. Save our town. Assure us that our children will be safe as they travel to the Park. Keep the livability of old east Medford. Don't sacrifice us for proposed 10,000 houses east of North Phoenix road.

Stand up. Just say "NO BUILD". Take Medford's money away from ODOT's budget. Have the city build the Garfield/Highland extension for in-town connectivity with NO INTERSTATE FREEWAY CONNECTION.

Schedule a Public Hearing. Please let the citizens be heard. You represent us.

Mail Tribune, Sunday, November 4, 2001

OPINION

Highland interchange would damag

By BARBARA GRIFFIN

I hear them first. Then they come into view. The young people of the neighborhood are heading to Bear Creek Park. As they race down the middle of the street, they are laughing, joking and horsing around as they ride upon their skateboards, bicycles and in-line skates.

I love this sound of laughter. I am pleased that my town has a place for kids to go. I chuckle along with these happy-go-lucky kids.

I think, "How lucky we are."

That is, until I read what the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration are planning to do to old east Medford and Bear Creek Park.

They want the Interstate 5 freeway interchange to come into Barnett Road at Highland Drive.

I ask you, parents and grandparents, are the children going to be safe when this happens? Will Bear Creek Park ever be the same?

The Draft Environmental Impact

GUEST OPINION

Statement for the South Interchange Project notes the following consequence of the Highland alternative: "Possible pedestrian and bicycle difficulty in crossing Highland Drive between the signalized intersections of Barnett Road and Siskiyou Boulevard."

Is this what we want? If this is not your vision, you only have a few weeks to voice your complaints.

ODOT also has this to say about the Highland alternative: "Highland Drive at Barnett Road becomes a four-leg intersection by adding approach for interchange. This increases travel options for vehicles with destinations from the interstate to Siskiyou Boulevard via Highland Drive."

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1. Is Siskiyou Boulevard wide enough for increased traffic?

2. What will happen to the Siskiyou Boulevard parking used for Bear Creek Park?

3. Where will the children cross the street to go to the park?

Mr. Hanks answered, "It is just an option for vehicles."

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I asked Mike Gallagher, senior planner of the South Medford Interstate Project working for the URS Corp. of Corvallis, if he knew there was an elementary school on Siskiyou Boulevard. He did not know about Hoover, either.

What do they know about our town, our people and our Bear Creek Park?

Under the category of land-use consequences of the Highland alternative, ODOT notes, "Infringes on parkland on the east and the south." The Ellendale alternative, ODOT says, "would affect width of Quail Point Gc Course's first fairway and safety netti area and displace driving range."

What is for the greater good, I ask y Speak up now or forever hold your peace!

More from ODOT: "Reduces neighborhood cohesion due to increa traffic volume on Highland Drive sid Bear Creek Park. Decreases access tc the park by neighborhood users."

Is this your vision for the vicinity o Bear Creek Park?

If we, the citizens of Medford, do nc act now, the vision of Medford as a community with Bear Creek Park as a safe place for our kids will be only a long-ago memory.

For 30 years I have lived in the sam house in old east Medford. My childre grew up in this house.

They would have loved the park. I would have loved for them to have access to Bear Creek Park. I could ha happily sent my kids over to the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

I am against either Alternative for the South Medford Interchange. I am specifically against the Highland Drive Alternative. This Alternative would bring increased traffic into our residential area. It would degrade Medfords pride and joy, Bear Creek Park. Bear Creek Park would become the new Medford visitor center. Increased crime would be brought to this park and the surrounding community. The safety of all the children who use this park would be put in jeopardy. ① ②

I believe the No Build Alternative would be the best option with some minor improvements to the existing interchange. Widening the bridge to allow cars to exit to the highway sooner would solve the current jam-up problem. Removing the Shell gas station would also reduce the safety hazard by Barnett Road and Bear Creek Park. Cars making left hand turns into and out of the shell gas station are currently creating a safety hazard. At the least. It should be made illegal to make a left hand turn into and out of the shell gas station. I believe Medford has need for a third interchange, and one at South Stage Road would be perfect. With improvements to the existing interchange, and a new one at South Stage Road, the problems occurring today will be resolved. ③ ④

Above all, cities are not made up of highways and businesses alone. The people who live there, and the quality of life are number one.

Sincerely,

Denise Strejc
519 Oregon Terrace
Medford, Oregon 97504

1/9/02

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

Re: Highlander Apartments
Owner: Wallace G. Iverson
900 Siskiyou Blvd. D-2
Medford, OR 97504
541-772-6497

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

Claudette Moore and I wish to formally request consideration be given to the elimination of the planter strip between the street and sidewalk along Highland at the location of the Highlander Apartments. As you know, retrofitting older neighborhoods is a difficult process and this small measure of mitigation would be of immense value to Mr. Iverson, the owner. ①

This apartment building is rather unique and nearly all the tenants have been there for long term, some since the building was first built by Mr. Iverson thirty-six years ago. As elected city officials we merely request that consideration be given in the design process to accommodate the elimination of the planter strip should Highland be the selected alternative for the South Interchange.

In closing, I would note that this request has been discussed verbally with both Mayor Lindsay Berryman and Council President Bill Moore and they expressed support on behalf of Mr. Iverson as well.

Sincerely,

Bob Strosser
Medford City Council

Claudette Moore
Medford City Council

cc: Frank Stevens, ODOT
Wallace G. Iverson, Owner/Highlander Apartments

Attachment: Letter from Wallace Iverson dated 12/20/02

308

SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVES & SOLUTIONS

Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Public Comment Form

Comments must be received by 5 p.m., Jan. 14, 2002

Project Open House, Jan. 8, 2002, Medford Armory, Medford. You may use this form to comment formally on the project Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You may leave your written comments at this meeting, or mail comments to ***Greg Holthoff, Environmental Project Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation, 1158 Chemeketa St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301.***

NAME DAVE ROSS ADDRESS 113 VALLEY VIEW DR.
MEDFORD, OR 97504 PHONE 541.732.2715

Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
ODOT
1158 Chemeketa St. N.E.
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Holthoff,

As a city of Medford resident, I am in support of the proposed Highland Alternative for the South Medford Interchange. I think the design accommodates the long-term growth initiatives that would benefit our great region. (1)

I feel the opponents to any of the alternatives are mis-informed and are making judgment calls on little factual information. This alternative makes the most sense on how to deal with regional traffic congestion, which is only getting worse in our region.

Unfortunately, this is one of the problems with having significant public and political involvement in the design process for these projects.

Please help convince the opponents of these Alternatives that something must happen to accommodate the traffic problems at this interchange or daily gridlock in South Medford will become inevitable.

Dave Ross
113 Valley View Drive
Medford, OR 97504
541-732-2715

309

December 1, 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 Ginamarie Wilke ADDRESS 3338 Creek View Drive Medford, OR 97504
PHONE 773.3809

I am here to express my concerns on behalf of the student body at South Medford High. I attend school there & have become educated in this issue through my current issues class & various websites. It is my personal belief that development is a natural occurence in any town. We shall only embrace it. I understand that the options may cause safety hazards - but the pass in and of itself is already a safety hazard anywhere that attracts a large amount of traffic can be considered unsafe. So I hold to → (1)

Gary.W.LEAMING@odot.state.or.us
(541) 664.6676 (John Morrison) community development program manager
www.smedfordinterchange.org

a general standard that we should allow things to grow as they naturally should. This will be a good expenditure because, in the longrun, our town will benefit - taking the focus off the directly packed merchandise center of corporations and gas stations at the intersection with Barnett. If anything - this new plan will only decrease the amount of accidents because there will be less confusion and traffic for we highschoolers to fight through to get to school. Many of travel down Barnett to reach campus. So, in conclusion, I support (2) this plan to create a new interchange - and further, would like to propose that we even go as far as (3) to build another one. Why is it such a crime to allow Medford 3 freeway interchanges. This new development will be very fruitful. I am confident. Thank you for spending time considering the viewpoint & opinion of youth.

310

Dec. 1, 2001
2127 Halsey St.
Medford, Ore. 97504

To Mr Greg Holthoff,

In regards to the project proposal at Medfords south exchange, My husband and I believe the safest choice is the Highland Drive choic our observations being Highland has always been and will continue to be a collector street for east Main, Siskiyou Blvd. and other streets along the way, and no~~w~~ matter the choice made, Highland will still be the natural collector, obviously Ellendale goes nowhere, logically Ellendale will just create a new exasperating traffic problem, where traffic will still have to turn left to get to Highland via Barnett, then get to the correct lane to turn north on Highland to access Siskiyou, side streets, or east Main. 1

Of course the rediculous and dangerous intersection at Highland & Siskiyou needs attention and correction, Highland of course would need the added saftey features such as curbs sidewalks, turn lanes and of course an enforced speed limit. 2

Our opinions are; if it's not Highland, the next choice should be a no build decision. And actually we all know the most reasonable choice should be south Stagecoach... 3

Thank you for your time and attention...

Janice F Shyrer

312

12-27-01

Greg Holthoff
ODOT Manager
1158 Chemeketa St. N.E.
Salem, Ore. 97301-2528

Mr. Holthoff:

My name is Jeri Moffitt. I live in the Griffen Creek area of Medford, so i will not be affected by the proposed South Interchange. I implore you to reconsider your plan and find another route. I cannot understand why anyone would want to not only disrupt, but jepordize the safety of so many families and their children. This is an old established neighborhood, and i don't beleive the residents need pay for the growth of this city. 1 2

I know Barnett Rd. traffic is horrendous, no one dislikes it more than I, but if I can deal with it, so can everyone else.

I thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Jeri Moffitt

HOLTHOFF Greg

From: Don Moran [vivndon@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, January 14, 2002 1:00 PM
To: HOLTHOFF Greg
Subject: Comments on South Medford Interchange

After attending several public meetings and studying the alternatives, it is obvious to us that the only viable alternative being considered is the Highland Option.

Many of the issues raised by opponents to the Highland Option seem to be incorrect since much of the I-5 traffic (both north and south) will be diverted to the South Gateway shopping center or to Highway 99. ①

The Ellendale Alternative should not be considered because of extremely high costs and would exert a much greater impact on existing businesses, apartment building and single family residents.

Again, our preference is definately the Highland Alternative.

Donald & Vivian Moran
1024 Tamara Circle
Medford, Oregon
97504

Think before we grow

Your article by Melissa Martin on expanding the Urban Growth Boundary was for the most part right on target. It outlined many of the problems that we as a community are facing.

However, there are many sides to this issue, not just the farmer who cannot make a living on his land unless he sells to a developer.

The community needs to understand that high-density housing is a big part of preserving our resource land and open spaces. Housing needs to first be built upon the existing land now available.

According to the article, Medford needs between 2,000 and 4,500 acres to accommodate projected growth. That means there is enough land available within the current UGB to accommodate new growth well into the year 2050.

An example of the problems as a community we are facing is the proposed inclusion of Coal Mine Road in the UGB. This proposed change would include many farms (i.e. cattle ranches, hay production, an orchard, a horse ranch).

This land needs to be preserved as a buffer zone, which leads into more extensive and larger farmlands. Buffer zones can help solve some of the problems of farmland practices, which are often not compatible with housing developments.

It costs the taxpayers thousands of dollars a year when urban sprawl begins to take over. Who will pay for the infrastructures needed in a new suburban sprawled housing development?

Please, let us think carefully before we move ahead to add thousands of acres for the profit to developers and to the detriment of our community.—

Lynda Stevenson, Medford

12-29-01
Medford, OR

ODOT
Environmental Officer

Dear Sir:

Public Access TV here in Medford aired a program about the South Medford Interchange issue on which two Medford city council people and 2 or 3 ODOT people sicussed the South Medford Interchange.

It became clear to me that there is a disconnect between the ODOT people and the city wheb it comes to resoonsibility for the traffic snarl near Barnett Rd and the nearby neighborhood.

ODOT doesn't want to discuss anything except the interchange itself and the city council people seem like rubber stamps for ODOT.

IF ODOT washes its hands of responsibility and "walks away" from the people affected, there can be no satisfactory solution to traffic and safety issues.

Please read the enclosed letters to the Mail Tribune on this issue.

Sincerely,

Ron McKenna
20 Eastwood Drive
Medford, OR 97504

w/enclosures

OVER →

315

USA
Pete Leech
131 Highland Dr.
Medford, OR 97504-7505

To whom it may concern

Subject So. Medford interchange

I am beginning to wonder who's running the show? The manor would not be happy with Elendale route as they would close part of their golf course and driving range. The developers are elated with either route, see mail tribune Sunday, more houses to be built in the South east. Do we need all this building? the present traffic is sheer lunacy The only people who are not happy are the residence of this area

Copies: The Mayor Sincerely
Frank Stevens. Pete Leech
Patrick Armstrong

①

'Solution' just moves problem

The traffic problem "solution" for the Interstate 5 south interchange merely moves the problem one block east from the freeway into the Highland Drive residential neighborhood.

Many of us remember the Oregon Department of Transportation's "solution" to the north interchange, which was seriously flawed, and I cringe to think what will happen to the south interchange. The "solution" seriously impacts the recreational facilities of the young citizens of Medford and the senior citizens who have lived in this area for many years.

The young citizens could lose the use of the BMX park, the skateboard park, the dog park, the outdoor theater and Bear Creek Park due to the hazardous conditions created by the increased traffic. Senior citizens are to be displaced from their homes with no place to go due to high housing costs. I also hear that the Highland Avenue fire station is to be closed.

The proposed "solution" is no solution at all. It merely changes it from a state problem to a city problem. It also seems to me to be an accommodation to meet the wants of a few interested parties at the expense of many of the citizens of Medford.

A South Stage Road overpass has been proposed and I think should be more fully investigated. — **Paul Avery, Medford**

②

③

④

⑤

⑥

South Stage makes sense

I cannot understand why ODOT thinks adding the South Stage interchange-overpass won't help ease the traffic problem at the Barnett interchange. Medford needs at least two more freeway off-ramps and, with growth unfortunately spreading like wildfire, South Stage will have to be put in eventually anyway.

Do it now and update Barnett at a later date. I bet a South Stage interchange will be much more effective than they anticipate. — **Jim Walker, Phoenix**

Portland arrest a joke

RECEIVED
DEC 31 1 12 10 9 8

Beltline makes more sense

Because neither of the options open to us will solve the Interstate 5 interchange problem in its present form, I must opt for the third choice, which is "No build."

In my opinion, it is a sad commentary that, given the time and money spent since the inception of this plan, discussion was not steered toward a more logical solution, a beltline. — **Mrs. La Yobora, Medford**

⑦

OVER

316

November 21, 2001

Greg Holthoff, ODOT
1158 Chemeketa NE
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Mr. Holthoff

Concerning the South Interchange Project I am in favor of the No-Build Alternative. I believe both the Ellendale and the Highland Alternatives will create urban sprawl. It will not reduce traffic on Barnett enough to support either the Ellendale or Highland Alternatives. I also don't believe that Barnett will be able to handle the additional traffic of 409 more cars per hour in the next 20-30 years, even with widening Barnett to 7 lanes (4 traffic lanes and 3 turn lanes). The engineers say yes, but ODOT approved exit A & B at the Beltline in Eugene. In addition to the off ramps at the Beltline there are on ramps just car lengths between. This does not give me much confidence in their projects. There has been purposed 5,000 homes to be constructed in Southeast Medford off of North Phoenix to Coal Mine Rd Area in the coming years. Does it make sense to have this additional traffic coming down Barnett to enter the Belkamp location? For this reason I am recommending fixing the present interchange and put in service the South Stage Interchange. 1 2 3

My suggestion is to fix the present interchange by lengthening the existing on and off ramps as in the new proposed single point interchange with double lanes. Eliminating freeway failure. The present bridge deck could be widen to handle the traffic on Barnett. There could possibly be a spur off the off ramp coming from the north for traffic going to the westside. This could be accomplished by branching off at the vacant property just north of the Cedar Homes Business and continue onto Hwy. 99. Possibly continue on to Holly Street, which is being planned for expansion by the city of Medford to disperse traffic. Isn't one of the reasons this all came about is the **danger** to traffic backing up on the freeway. Won't this cure that problem? 4

By fixing the present interchange this would allow us to go ahead with the South Stage Interchange. I don't believe if we construct a new South Interchange at Belknap that the ODOT or the Federal Hwy. Dept. will approve an additional interchange at South Stage that close to the Belknap Interchange. Do we want to **jeopardize** the much needed construction of the South Stage Interchange? We have been told by various city councilman than if we fix the present interchange we could go ahead with South Stage Interchange. Do you know that 100% for sure? Do we have that in writing? If we don't get the South Stage Interchange we will see Urban Sprawl for sure. If 500,000 cars per year use the present interchange and 50% are going to Rogue Valley Medical Center it makes sense to have the South Stage Interchange and a spur road on Murphy Rd. and Golf View to RVMC. South Stage Interchange would eliminate a great deal of the traffic on Barnett. If ODOT's video is correct in saying 50% of the traffic is going to the RVMC and Medford Medical Center, then doesn't this make more sense? Presently South Stage Interchange would need an exception to build as Skip Knight stated. Rules and Regulations change and I would not want lose this opportunity because Ellendale or the Highland Alternative being located to close to South Stage.

Another reason I am in favor of the No-Build Alternative is that I want to see the South Stage Interchange, which is the ideal location for traffic going to Jacksonville. Jacksonville is a big tourist destination. By providing this exit out-of- towners could easily reach Jacksonville without wandering around Medford and getting lost and impacting our city streets. Would you like to be an out-of towner lost in a strange town wandering around? Is that visitor friendly? Do we want out-of-towners impacting our local streets?

I think our money would be better spent with the changes to the No Build Alternative. I would imagine it would be less costly. The money would be better spent else were. Do you want to spend 55 million on a project that does not best serve our community long term or short term? Wouldn't it be better to look ahead 10 years and have a better infrastructure? Wouldn't it be cheaper to purchase undeveloped land now and have a clean slate rather than trying to plan around existing development?

The Ellendale and the Highland Alternative impacts our existing neighborhoods and Bear Creek Park. With the Highland Alternative having 5 lanes merging into 2 lanes at Greenwood creates a dangerous situation. Presently we have the same situation on Delta Waters behind Costco. Drivers run out of road during peak periods. This is approximately the same location as the entrance to the entrance to the Skate Park and BMX arena. Highland will not be handle 70% increase. The on street parking will be eliminated. The park does have a new parking lot proposed, but they do not have the money for the project. With the lost of the on street parking on Highland, do we want to be responsible for denying our citizens of the most widely used park? 5

The present skate park is only 20 feet from Highland. If it is purposed that the 5 lanes are to be on the west side of Highland on the park side, then it only stands to reason when Highland is widen to Siskiyou, Highland will abut the skate park. I ask you can we be responsible for this dangerous traffic situation and for the danger to our children going to and from the park. 6

Rerouting traffic from Belknap Interchange location to Barnett is costly indeed. This brings the traffic from the overpass on Barnett 2/10 mile to the east of the present interchange. The only traffic it will be eliminating is the westside traffic. This accounts for only 20-30%.

I know everyone has dedicated long tiring hours to this project, but can't we all continue to work together as a community for a successful outcome?

Sincerely

Darla Jenkins

HOLTHOFF Greg

From: John [jmorrison@rvcog.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 31, 2001 2:59
To: HOLTHOFF Greg
Subject: FW: skipalgeo@qwest.net

Greg, More website comments, John
-----Original Message-----
From: griffith@vweb.mind.net [mailto:griffith@vweb.mind.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 30, 2001 3:04 PM
To: john@rv.cog.or.us
Subject: skipalgeo@qwest.net

Deward Algeo
351 Jeanette

Medford
Oregon
97501
skipalgeo@qwest.net
Submit Query

The real problem is that Barnett is the main artery across I5. Developement in East and West Medford has created this congestion, not I5 traffic. The solution then is not the interchange but the East west connectivity. There is no need for a new exchange just a better route across town which will divert traffic from the current interchange. A simple but eligant solution is to reroute stewart ave south along myers lane then due East in an alomost direct route to North Phoenix rd. No interchage is needed. Just an overpass. The benifits vs cost of this proposal far exceeds those of the grandiose schemes under consideration. (1)

Dec 24 01
MEDFORD. OR

O.D.O.T.
DEAR MR HOLTHOFF
Why CAN'T YOU HAVE THE FREEWAY AT LEAST 10 MILES (1)
EAST OF MEDFORD WE GET ALL THE SMOG FROM FREEWAY (2)
NORTH AND SOUTH 24 HOURS A DAY PLUS LOCAL TRAFFIC
MEDFORD IS BUILT DOWN IN A HOLE SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS
HOW MANY TOWNS IN OR HAVE THE FREEWAY RIGHT IN THE
MIDDLE OF TOWN? NOT MANY. I AM SURE.
WHY NOT EAST OF ROXY ANN?

Ellen M Harvey
2914 FARWEST RD
MEDFORD, OR 97501
PH 541-773-2075

Medford Urban Renewal Agency
Donald R. Burt, AICP, EDFP
Director

November 27, 2001

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

Dear Mr. Holthoff:

The Medford Urban Renewal Agency has completed its review of the Draft Environmental Impact and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the South Medford Interchange Project (Report), dated September 2001. It is neither the intent of the Agency, in submitting this response, to oppose, nor otherwise object to the Report, but to respond to areas the Agency believes need to be addressed regarding the South Gateway Center. On behalf of the Board of the Medford Urban Renewal Agency, I forward the following comments:

1. The South Gateway Center's design and development was based on an extensive market feasibility analysis prepared by Gruen/Gruen Associates to determine the best use for redevelopment of the South Gateway area. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the South Gateway area would best be developed as a "power" retail center (the South Gateway Center), with a minimum of three large-scale retailers, which in turn would support smaller pass-through and mixed retailers situated between the large-scale retailers. With either Build Alternative, the continued development of the South Gateway Center, as initially planned, would no longer be possible (Report pages S-13, 4-8 and 4-12).

   For the Report to be complete, it is necessary that it identify and address the positive and negative economic impacts, of both Build Alternatives, on the proposed design and continued development of the South Gateway Center as initially planned. (1)

2. On Report pages 4-19 through 4-22, *Effects on Businesses*, arguments are presented that state as a result of changes in traffic patterns, access, reduced congestion, and segmentation of vacant land parcels, business on Center Drive could be affected. The general impression is that the "affect" on the South Gateway Center is negative.

Medford Urban Renewal Agency
Donald R. Burt, AICP, EDFP
Director

The section, *Effects on Businesses*, needs to be re-written to specifically address impacts the Build Alternatives would have on the South Gateway Center, taking into consideration the loss of additional large-scale tenants, loss of pass-through customers, etc. (2)

3. On Report page 4-8, *Direct Impacts*, first paragraph, it is stated that the Build Alternatives would split existing parcels into non-contiguous properties "... potentially adversely affecting their potential for a large, single use development." Throughout the Report, further reference is made to the loss of large parcels at the South Gateway Center, and subsequently the ability, or inability, to attract large-scale retailers (Report pages S-13, 4-20 and 4-21).

   The term "potentially", as used, needs to be removed.

   There is no question that, as a result of the Build Alternatives, the potential for large-scale retail tenants will no longer exist. This needs to be clearly and consistently stated throughout the Report. (3)

4. On Report page S-24, it is noted: "Additional design would be initiated once an alternative has been selected. To account for future modifications in design, analysts have used a 'buffered' project footprint large enough to include future design needs."

   The Agency seeks assurances that a larger 'buffered' project footprint will be allowed for alignment options that may facilitate retention of the potential for large-scale retailers (Report page S-24) on the west side of I-5. (4)

5. The last sentence of the last paragraph of Report page S-24 states, "The redevelopment plan *(South Gateway Redevelopment Plan)* calls for retail development accessed by automobile, to avoid competition with the pedestrian-oriented retail uses in Medford's central business district." This sentence is inaccurate and has no relevance. Development plans for the South Gateway Center were based on an exhaustive market analysis, not on what would benefit the downtown.

   The above noted statement needs to be removed from the Report. (5)

Medford Urban Renewal Agency ▪ 45 South Holly Street, Medford, Oregon 97501 ▪ Fax (541) 774-2747
www.downtownmedford.com City of Medford: www.ci.medford.or.us
BOARD: Rachel Chartier,Bill Dames,Sue Densmore,Dick Entinger,Skip Knight,John Michaels,Skip Patterson,Gary Wheeler,Greg Yechout
STAFF:Don Burt 774-2700•Jackie Rodgers 774-2702•Lisa McKay 774-2703•Eric Iversen 774-2705
•Vicki Mansfield 774-2706•Linda Beauchamp 774-2707

Medford Urban Renewal Agency

Donald R. Burt, AICP, EDFP
Director

6. *Effects on the Tax-Base and Local Government*, Report pages 4-26, does not address the fiscal effects of either Build Alternative on the tax increment revenue of the Agency, as derived from the continued development of the South Gateway Center.

   The economic impacts to the South Gateway Center's continued development, and competitive position, as a regional retail center need to be identified, and the tax increment impacts to the Agency needs to be estimated. This estimate should include the loss in tax increment revenue, commencing from the date the Report preparation commenced. The Agency's financial commitment for construction of the selected South Interchange improvement is based on tax increment revenue generated from the continued development of the South Gateway Center. (6)

In setting forth the above comments, it is the Agency's objective to have the Report specifically address the impacts of both Build Alternatives on the continued development of the South Gateway Center as initially planned. The Agency appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Report, and through our financial commitment to both the Report and construction of the eventual South Interchange solution, has demonstrated the need to find a solution to the improvement of the South Interchange.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Burt, AICP, EDFP

cc: Mike Dyal, Medford City Manager
Sue Slack, Jackson County Administrator
Robert Kaczor, TRF Real Estate

DRB/jlr

G:LETTER ODOT REPORT HOLTHOFF 01_11_27

Medford Urban Renewal Agency • 45 South Holly Street, Medford, Oregon 97501 • Fax (541) 774-2747
www.downtownmedford.com City of Medford: www.ci.medford.or.us
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•Vicki Mansfield 774-2706•Linda Beauchamp 774-2707

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

1849-1999

ER-01/953

JAN 23 2002

Mr. Greg Holthoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa Street, NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Mr. Holthoff:

This responds to the request for the Department of the Interior's comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Section 4(f) Evaluation for the South Medford Interchange Project, I-5, in Medford, Jackson County, Oregon. We regret that we were unable to submit these comments within the timeframe established by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT); however, we trust they will still be of value to your department in preparing final documents.

Hydrologic Resources

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The proposed project consists of relocating the South Medford Interchange on Interstate 5 from its current location to a new location near Bear Creek, encompassing its floodplain. Because a detailed hydraulic analysis on the effects of the proposed construction of new bridges and associated piers in the floodway of the 100-year floodplain is not included in the DEIS, a supplemental DEIS that includes the promised hydraulic analysis should be prepared for the project and distributed for comment before the final EIS is released. (1)

SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

Page 4-58, Chapter 4 - Environmental Consequences, Section Hydraulics, Subsection Consequences Common to Both Build Alternatives, first paragraph:

"Based on preliminary hydraulic analysis, both alternatives would alter flood conveyance within the FEMA-designated floodway of Bear Creek, but the cumulative impact of either alternative cannot be quantified until detailed hydraulic modeling is performed."

Page 5-15, Chapter 5 - Recommended Mitigation/Conservation Measures, Section Hydraulics:

"4. Conveyance compensation measures will be designed in appropriate channel cross section locations where there are identified conveyance losses."

"5. Measures should be implemented to offset loss of conveyance capacity caused by proposed obstruction; these measures could include excavating channel overbank."

"7. If overbank excavation and/or other mitigation is inappropriate, bridges across the floodway may be designed to lessen hydraulic impact by decreasing or eliminating piers in the floodway."

"9. Mitigation for these impacts and those associated with floodplain excavation or local improvements of conveyance could include reestablishment of riparian flora in other nearby floodplain areas. Preliminary hydraulic analysis performed for the DEIS is insufficient to determine the extent of occurrence within this study reach. The next level of analysis performed after completion of the final bridge design determines where this could occur in the study reach without a net conveyance loss in the floodway."

The passages quoted above indicate that the preliminary hydraulic analysis is insufficient to determine the magnitude of the conveyance losses and the projected increase in flood height in the floodway along selected reaches of the study area as a result of the proposed build alternatives. The build alternatives will entail the construction of a minimum of 28 potential piers to a maximum of 60 piers in the floodway (pages 4-59), depending on the build alternative selected. Until reliable quantitative details on the magnitude of anticipated conveyance losses in the floodway can be determined, the extent and effectiveness of mitigation measures needed to reduce or eliminate the potential conveyance losses cannot be adequately determined. For these reasons, the detailed hydraulic analysis should be performed and documented in a supplemental DEIS before the final EIS is prepared and released. Additionally, an appropriate map figure that shows the 100-year floodway and floodplain in the study area as well as the proposed location and design of the new bridges and piers should be included in a supplemental DEIS. 2 3

Section 4(f) Resources and Section 6(f) Comments

The following are comments on the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation and Associated Section 6(f) Assessment:

GENERAL COMMENTS:

It is somewhat difficult to assess the overall recreational impacts of this project since the analysis jumps from affected park to affected park in each of the build/no build alternatives. It does appear that the ODOT has made a full effort to identify Section 4(f) impacts and to find ways to mitigate those impacts; nevertheless, we have several comments we would like to see addressed in the final analysis.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

Bear Creek Park - On page 2, Bear Creek Park is identified as a Section 4(f) property, but it is not clearly identified as a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) recipient that would trigger Section 6(f) mitigation. In fact, the City of Medford has received seven LWCF grants for the acquisition and development of Bear Creek Park. If any part of Bear Creek Park is adversely impacted by the South Medford Interchange Project, Section 6(f) of the LWCF Act requires that the ODOT provide replacement property of equal fair market value and recreational utility. 4

Bear Creek Greenway, in Jackson County – This Greenway is correctly identified as a recipient of assistance from the LWCF. The description on page 17 of the Bear Creek Greenway acreage that will be impacted appears to be understated with regard to the acreage that would need to be replaced under Section 6(f) of the LWCF. Please keep in mind that the National Park Service does not look at the 5

individual parcels acquired with LWCF assistance, but rather at how the highway project impacts the whole Greenway project. Section 6(f) requires replacement of all the impacted property within the project boundary, i.e., the entire Greenway, not just the LWCF parcels.

We have particular concerns because the City of Medford already has one outstanding conversion triggered by a previous ODOT project in Medford. The Hale property, proposed as a replacement property in that conversion, has not yet been submitted to the State Liaison Officer for review. Because of this earlier unresolved conversion, NPS policy precludes further LWCF funding. Therefore, we hesitate to recommend Section 4(f) approval for yet another conversion in the Medford area while this previous obligation remains unresolved. 6

With regard to replacement property, we would be happy to work with you to answer questions about the steps required to determine the adequacy and eligibility of replacement property. If you require more information please contact Ms. Gloria Shinn, in our Seattle office; she can be reached on (206) 220-4126. Proposals concerning replacement property must be submitted through the State's Liaison Officer to this office for evaluation as to the eligibility of the property. We would also mention at this time that it is our understanding that TEA 21 provides Federal money for recreational enhancement of highway projects, and we would question TEA 21 use in a dual role as mitigation for adverse impacts to existing recreation areas. 7

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Willie R. Taylor

Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

cc:
Ms. Lori Sundstrom, Manager
Environmental Services Section
Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa Street, NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-2528

Ms. Gloria Shinn
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104-1060

2475 Houston Rd.
Phoenix, Oregon 97535
January 8, 2001

Greg Holtoff
Environmental Project Manager
Oregon Department of Transportation
1158 Chemeketa Street, N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301-2528

Dear Mr. Holtoff,

I am writing regarding the changes to the south interchange. Although I empathize with the citizens in the east Medford area who will be effected by the Ellendale or Highland Road connection, I am opposed to their choice of the South Stage Road area. In addition to the South Stage connection not serving a large portion of Medford residents, it would also encourage sprawl into rural farm use areas that are already under attack by developers. (1)

I encourage you not to consider South Stage Road as an exit or connection to a beltway on the west side as proposed by the East Medford Coalition.

Sincerely,
Linda Ellebruch
Linda Ellebruch

c. Medford City Council

I'm appalled at the changes that are occurring in Medford
I, like so many people retired from LA and came here because it was beautiful, peaceful and moderate in cost; now prices have skyrocketed, taxes are making it hard for most people to survive, now we have to look forward to more traffic, more ~~accidents~~ accidents more speeding, not to mention more damage to the road surfaces.

Mary J Whitford
779 2110

Why don't these Californians stay South and stop trying to turn Medford into LA. (1)

SOUTH MEDFORD INTERCHANGE PROJECT
ALTERNATIVES & SOLUTIONS

Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Public Comment Form

Comments must be received by 5 p.m., Jan. 14, 2002

Project Open House, Jan. 8, 2002, Medford Armory, Medford. You may use this form to comment formally on the project Draft Environmental Impact Statement. You may leave your written comments at this meeting, or mail comments to ***Greg Holthoff, Environmental Project Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation, 1158 Chemeketa St. N.E., Salem, OR 97301.***

NAME Mary Woodring ADDRESS 727 Park St
Ashland, Or 97520 PHONE

I would like to see more consideration given to buses + public transit. We need 15 minute bus service ①

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NAME DAVID EICHAMER ADDRESS 317 Lynwood Ave
Medford OR
PHONE 770-1425

I live in the neighborhood near Highland. My Concern is not to degrade my neighborhood so that others who live away from Highland can have their lives and conveniences made easier at my expense. ①

I suggest PRIOR to adoption that comments + plans from the City of Medford be brought forward for Public Discussion.