FVI Project Development Team Meeting #9
Final Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2005, 9 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Jackson County Road and Parks Auditorium

ODOT Present: Debbie Timms (Project Leader), Jerry Marmon (Environmental PM), Brian Sheadel (Roadway), Peter Schuytema (TPAU), David Pyles (Land Use), Christina Fera-Thomas (TPAU), Gary Leaming (Public Relations)

Non-ODOT Present: Jim Wear (City of Phoenix), Jeannell Wyntergreen (City of Phoenix), Dale Petrasek (Jackson County Roads), Vicki Guarino (RVCOG), Dan Moore (RVCOG), Nancy Reynolds (URS), Jim Sharp

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1. AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

South Stage Road was added to the agenda.
The PDT last met in July 2005. The group approved the July minutes.

2. REVIEW OF CAC SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING

Vicki Guarino provided a brief overview of last night's CAC meeting (September 7). There was a large group of people (probably about 100) from Bear Lake Estates. They were very upset that there was a proposal for a 1st Street connection to Bear Lake Estates shown on the maps at the Open House on September 1, 2005. There appears to have been a misunderstanding that a decision on this had already been made, rather than an understanding that this was an option among several that had not yet been dismissed. The residents from Bear Lake Estates want to make sure that the CAC and PDT find a way to connect Luman Road.

Based on their concerns regarding the 1st Street connection, the residents of Bear Lake Estates submitted 176 petitions which stated the following: They want to keep Luman Road as their access; they do not want a new road at 1st Street for access; they want full access at Fern Valley Road; and they support the CAC Table 1 SPUI. (Additional petitions from Bear Lake Estates have been provided to the City of Phoenix. Jeannell will provide copies to ODOT.) Many residents of Bear Lake Estates indicated that they had not been informed about the project and its potential impacts to their park. A question was raised on how the project can be coordinated with the Regional Problem Solving (RPS) process.

A liaison from Bear Lake Estates (Lou Montoya) was appointed to attend CAC meetings to help keep residents informed on project actions. [Note: Subsequent to the PDT meeting, it was decided that Mo and Nancy (the park managers) and Murray (a park resident) will share that responsibility.]

The CAC should be commended for their openness and consideration of comments being received on the project alternatives. The CAC has a good grasp of technical issues associated

with the project, and seem comfortable with the direction of the project. They have expressed confidence in ODOT's technical data.

The CAC held off on recommending decisions on the preferred interchange type and on the four alternative concepts until the next meeting in order to give the City of Phoenix additional time for discussion of the alternatives under consideration.

3. 1ST STREET CONNECTION TO BEAR LAKE ESTATES

It is important for the public to understand that no decision has been made regarding access to Bear Lake Estates. The Luman Road connection to Fern Valley Road will be evaluated as the alternatives are refined. Jim Wear suggested changing the alignment of 1st Street to a connection northwest of Bear Lake Estates, with access to OR 99 at 3rd or 4th Street. Jeannell Wyntergreen said that the city owns property in the vicinity of a connection in this location and, if a bridge was allowed based on environmental considerations, their property could help obtain a road in this location. Peter Schuytema reminded the PDT that previous traffic analysis had indicated that an option connecting Bear Lake Estates directly west to OR 99 was not warranted as a stand-alone option. If Luman Road can be reconnected, additional access to Bear Lake Estates would not be part of this project. However, an access northwest of Bear Lake Estates could be considered if no other access for Bear Lake Estates were feasible. In addition, all alternatives and options need to be evaluated based on their ability to meet the purpose and need.

The type of development eventually proposed for the southwest quadrant of the interchange will be dependent upon the type of access that is provided. An Interchange Area Management Plan (IAMP) will also be done in association with this project, which could impact land uses and accesses associated with adjacent land uses. The IAMP will include the access management plan developed by the PDT in association with this project.

4. CITY OF PHOENIX PUBLIC MEETING, SEPTEMBER 8, 2005.

There will be a public meeting tonight hosted by the City of Phoenix. ODOT will be represented at the meeting, and will provide information as requested. The City has requested that ODOT provide large maps for people to be able to use to provide suggestions. Vicki will work with Gary Leaming to provide more copies of the Transportation Project Update handout for this meeting.

5. OTHER TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

Debbie Timms identified the major transportation studies/processes underway in the project area at this time: RPS, PH-5, the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Fern Valley Interchange project, and the IAMP. Though linked, these processes cannot all be tied closely together because of the timeframes involved. The EA process focuses on the project impact area; the RPS is outside the city; and PH-5 will focus on development in the N. Phoenix Road subarea. PH-5 will look at areas outside the city boundaries. However, regardless of jurisdiction, anticipated development will be the same. The IAMP will focus on land uses and access in the interchange area; the access management plan for the IAMP will be determined through the EA process.

There is still some question as to how the state-mandated IAMP fits into the EA process. Coordination with Federal Highway Administration, NEPA experts, and ODOT will be needed to help clarify this interrelationship. The City indicated some concerns regarding the Oregon Transportation Commission's role vs. the City's role in land use planning.

6. REVIEW OF OPEN HOUSE, SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

Gary Leaming provided an overview of what occurred at the Open House on September 1, 2005. The open house was advertised through newsletter mailings, an ad in the Mail Tribune, news coverage, and on ODOT's website. Over 100 people attended. The open house was a self-guided tour, with ODOT available to answer questions. Handouts of the Transportation Project Update and comment forms were provided. Besides the 176 petitions from Bear Lake Estates, 28 comment forms were turned in at or after the open house.

The CAC Table 1 SPUI received the most support of those commenting. The Lewin SPUI received the least support. Regarding the Bear Lake Estates, the comments indicated no support for a 1st Street access and there was a request to build a noise wall along I-5. Regarding the interchange, the following comments were received: Fern Valley Road should be the major through street; Luman Road needs better access; the Shoppes at 24 need full access from I-5; add a turn lane at N. Phoenix Road; and do not allow U-turns at the N./S. Phoenix Road crossing.

There was little comment on the Bolz Road connection. There was a request for more information about impacts to Bolz, and support for a signal at Bolz.

A summary of pros and cons for each alternative concept was provided. These are attached in the Powerpoint summary provided by Gary.

Suggestions were made to try to improve public notification of project activities. These included printing more copies of the Transportation Project Update and providing them at the Chamber of Commerce, Post Office, Library, etc. In addition, ODOT could consider printing post office cards to provide notification of the availability of information on the project; this would be relatively cheap and would reach most members of the community. There was importance placed on ensuring that notification reaches people in all four interchange quadrants who would be impacted by the project.

7. SOUTH STAGE ROAD OVERCROSSING

The PDT had not yet made a decision on the South Stage Road Overcrossing. Traffic analysis has indicated that there would be no significant drop on Fern Valley Road's traffic numbers if the South Stage Road overcrossing were constructed. It is too far away to draw enough traffic to make a difference. Therefore, the South Stage Road overcrossing would not meet the Purpose and Need for this project. However, it has been determined that this overcrossing will eventually be needed as the PH-5 area develops. Basically, this project is intended to address the capacity issues associated with the Fern Valley Interchange. (Note: PH-5 has been identified as an area to develop and will help alleviate pressure on Highway 62. It also is being considered at a state level to help provide employment.)

A motion was made and seconded to drop the South Stage Road Overcrossing from further consideration—with the understanding that South Stage will be needed for eventual development, but that it is not needed for this project. The PDT vote was 6 for and 1 against, with 1 City of Phoenix representative voting against. The South Stage Road Overcrossing is therefore dropped from further consideration.

8. INTERCHANGE CONFIGURATIONS

Christina Fera-Thomas provided an overview of the analysis results of the interchange types (diamond vs. SPUI), including the lane configurations needed and the resulting volume/capacity ratios. Her presentation is attached. The following is a brief summary of the analysis:

Diamond Interchange

- Would require 8 lanes across the bridge structure.
- V/C at the signalized intersections would be 0.67 for southbound and 0.76 for northbound traffic. (The maximum v/c ratio for ramp terminals is 0.75.)

SPUI

- Would not be as wide as the Diamond Interchange; would require 6 lanes across the bridge structure.
- Left turns would use the signal; right turns would be through movements.
- V/C would be 0.51 at the signal and 0.71 at the un-signalized intersections.

A SPUI is recommended because it meets v/c standards and it allows more flexibility for placement of connections because it is more compact than the Diamond Interchange. The PDT did not make a decision on the interchange configuration because the City requested additional time to provide input.

9. N. PHOENIX/FERN VALLEY ROAD INTERSECTION OPTIONS

Christina Fera-Thomas provided an overview of the analysis results of the various options for addressing intersections for the four alternative concepts. Her presentation is attached. The following is a brief summary of the analysis:

Baseline and Lowry SPUI Options

- 2-Way Stop: high v/c ratio (more than 2.0); very long queues on N. Phoenix Road.
- 4-Way Stop: v/c improves; long queues on N. Phoenix Road and along eastbound on Fern Valley Road.
- Roundabout: v/c would be 0.78 to 0.89 (with a maximum of 0.85 for roundabouts); good queues; includes adjusted volumes to reflect U-turn movements.
- Signalized: v/c would be 0.71; large intersection cross-section required; queuing issues west of the signal. This is the only acceptable option with the Lowry or Baseline Options.

Lewin SPUI

- Signalized: v/c would be 0.79; long queues along realigned N. Phoenix Road.

Table 1 SPUI

- Signalized: very good v/c (0.57); queues relatively short and evenly distributed.
- No access other than what's identified on the alternative map would be provided.

The Table 1 SPUI is recommended because it has the most acceptable queues and the lowest v/c ratio. It has the most flexibility in handling additional capacity, and thus more growth; it still would have good v/c even if land use becomes more dense.

10. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ISSUES

The neighborhoods east of I-5 need to be able to access the schools and libraries, that are all located west of I-5. A question was raised regarding whether a bike/pedestrian overcrossing could be included in the project. The resulting discussion indicated that it would be a possibility, but more details are needed. The new interchange can accommodate bike and pedestrian use, but it will have heavy vehicular use. Possibly bypassed portions of Fern Valley Road could be used in part as a multi-use path. Bike/pedestrian connectivity is one of the CAC goals. Possibilities to accommodate bikes and pedestrians will be evaluated as more information becomes available.

11. OTHER

In order to accommodate Home Depot, a stub connection west of N. Phoenix Road will be considered at the first access. A signal at that location appears to be warranted given projected traffic volumes. Home Depot is working with ODOT on its site development plan. Concerns regarding truck movements need to be considered as the designs are developed.

The intent is to try to have recommendations on the interchange type and the intersection options for the east side at the next CAC. The PDT should make these decisions in October. After the decisions, there will be design refinements and more access information developed. The current schedule assumes a late 2007 or possibly 2008 bid date. The environmental technical work should take about three months, and the Environmental Assessment another three months to complete. The PDT emphasized the importance of moving forward as quickly as possible because the Bear Creek Bridge is part of the cracked bridge list, and a load limit could be placed on the bridge in 2006. Monitoring for the bridge will continue.

Jeannelle said that the City feels ODOT and the CAC are doing a good job, are being responsive to citizen concerns, and appreciate ODOT's efforts.

NEXT MEETING:

The next PDT meeting is planned for October 6, 2005.

The goal of the next CAC and PDT meetings will be to make recommendations and decisions on the interchange type (Diamond vs. SPUI) and intersection options (Baseline, Lowry SPUI, Lewin SPUI, or CAC Table 1 SPUI) for the east side.