



MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 8, 2004

Purpose: Fern Valley Interchange Project
Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting

Distribution: CAC Members
Solution Team Members

From: John Morrison, RVCOG

Prepared by: Pat Foley, RVCOG

Date Prepared: June 9, 2004

CAC Attendees: Dack Doggett, Pauly Hinesly, Wendie Nichols, Harry Page, Mark Gibson, Joan Haukom, Dan Sauro, David Lewin, Bob Korfhage, Bill Rombach, David Lowry, George Cota

CAC Absent: None

Project Team Attendees: Greg Holthoff, ODOT Environmental Project Manager
Debbie Timms, ODOT Project Manager
Jerry Marmon, ODOT Environmental
Brian Sheadel, ODOT Senior Designer
Irene Toews, ODOT TPAU
Peter Schuytema, ODOT Engineer
Mike Arneson, ODOT Designer
Gary Leaming, ODOT Public Involvement
Nancy Reynolds, URS Corp. Project Manager
Emily Moshofsky, URS Corp. Deputy Project Manager
John Morrison, RVCOG
Pat Foley, RVCOG

Other Attendees: Jim Wear, Terry Helfrich, Betty Wheeler, David Deller, Craig Harper, Betty Hammond and Eileen Padilla

1. Call to order and Introductions

John Morrison, RVCOG Facilitator

John Morrison reviewed the agenda for the evening's meeting. John also reviewed the guidelines for developing the alternative concepts as follows.

What we want to accomplish by this exercise:

- Draw lines on paper that show ideas for interchange and local road (off-site) "fixes."
- Focus on how the Goals and Objectives and Purpose & Need can be accomplished through interchange and off system improvements.

Exercise Guidelines:

- Each working table will spend half of its time on each of two topics:
Session 1: Interchange Improvements
Session 2: Off System Improvements
- No restrictions or design limitations
- Think inside and outside the box
- There are no wrong ideas, opinions or stupid questions
- Everyone has an opportunity to present their viewpoint

Request for approval of May 5, 2004 CAC Minutes: The minutes were approved as written.

2. Summary of Project Development Team Meeting

Debbie Timms, ODOT Project Manager

The Project Development Team met on May 6th. They worked through two issues.

The first issue was a lengthy discussion on conceptual alternatives. They reviewed approximately twelve options based on geometric and spacing considerations. Development of conceptual alternatives was not limited by environmental or right of way constraints.

The second issue discussed revolved around planning. There are several components happening at the same time: 1) the modeling for the interchange has to be completed so that various built outs can be considered, 2) the city's Interchange Business Zone needs to be approved, 3) updates to the Regional Transportation Plan, 4) the environmental assessment (EA) process, and, 5) at the end of the EA process there will be an interchange management plan.

3. Final Approval of Goals and Objectives

John Morrison, RVCOG and Nancy Reynolds, URS

The draft Fern Valley CAC's Goals and Objectives were sent out to members for their review and comments. John asked if there are any changes needed before the members can approve the Goals and Objectives.

Changes suggested by CAC members are:

1. Goal 1, first and second objectives. Change to:
 - Provide a transportation system that allows capacity for economic growth as determined by the City of Phoenix Comprehensive Plan
 - Provide a transportation system that allows capacity for residential growth as determined by the City of Phoenix Comprehensive Plan
2. Goal 8, third objective. Change to:
 - Provide landscaping, structures and/or facilities that are visually compatible with the Greenway setting

With these changes made to the Goals and Objectives, the CAC unanimously approved the following as their Fern Valley Interchange Goals and Objectives.

GOAL 1

Ensure the project is compatible with the long-term land use plans

Objectives

- Provide a transportation system that allows capacity for economic growth as determined by the City of Phoenix Comprehensive Plan
- Provide a transportation system that allows capacity for residential growth as determined by the City of Phoenix Comprehensive Plan
- Work with city and county on future zoning
- Protect existing businesses

GOAL 2

Ensure project facilities provide for safe and efficient movement of emergency vehicles, school buses and freight

Objectives

- Design a transportation system to accommodate emergency vehicles
- Optimize movement of school buses through the project area
- Facilitate safety of school bus boarding/unboarding within project area
- Design a transportation system to accommodate freight movement

GOAL 3

Provide safe facilities that encourage alternative modes of transportation

Objectives

- Include bike lanes and/or other facilities that make it easy and safe for bicyclists to travel through the area
- Include wide sidewalks to allow for safe and comfortable pedestrian travel in the project area
- Design facilities that ensure safety for senior and disabled members of the community
- Include Park and Ride facilities within project area
- Design logical pull-out areas for transit (buses) within project area

GOAL 4

Provide for easy and/or safe access to existing and planned businesses and residences in the study area

Objectives

- Design improvements that allow for safe ingress and egress.
- Provide enough turn lanes which will allow through traffic to continue unimpeded

GOAL 5

Ensure the design of the project will not be such as to make its implementation cost-prohibitive

Objective:

- The cost of the project does not exceed anticipated budgetary allotments

GOAL 6

Enhance community livability and quality of life

Objective:

- Enhance connection between neighborhood areas located on the east side and west side of I-5
- Install signage directing travelers to area parks
- Design of new transportation facilities are visually pleasing and will last
- Include landscape design that compliments the project area
- Work with City to facilitate development of a community park on east side on interchange

GOAL 7

Protect and enhance the natural environment

Objectives:

- Allow for smooth flow of traffic to minimize air pollution from vehicle emissions
- Design to minimize noise impacts
- Minimize impacts to wetlands and fish/wildlife habitat
- Enhance riparian features – particularly wetlands, native vegetation, and water quality

GOAL 8

Protect the integrity of the Bear Creek Greenway Trail

Objectives:

- Provide safe and easy access to the Greenway for pedestrians and bicycles
- Design for minimal Greenway closures and access restrictions during project construction
- Provide landscaping, structures and/or facilities that are visually compatible with the Greenway setting

The Fern Valley Interchange Project Development Team and CETAS will review these goals and objectives.

4. Introduction to Alternative Concept Process

Greg Holthoff, ODOT
Irene Toews, ODOT
Brian Sheadel, ODOT

Greg Holthoff explained the Environmental Assessment Process is now at the point of developing the conceptual alternatives. Once the CAC develops their conceptual alternatives their ideas will be put into the system and merged with the ideas developed by the Project Development Team.

The next step is to find out if the conceptual alternatives meet the following criteria:

- Does it meet the Purpose and Need?
- Does it meet the Goals and Objectives?
- Does it meet geometry?
- Does it have environmental impacts that are unacceptable?

The conceptual alternatives will be reduced to two or three. A study will be done on the remaining alternatives.

Greg said he is meeting with CETAS next week. They will be discussing the FVI Purpose and Need and FVI Goals and Objectives.

Irene Toews said this is the CAC's chance to take the work they have done on their Goals and Objectives and apply them to conceptual concepts.

Examples of five different types of interchange designs were provided to CAC members.

5. Development of Alternative Concepts

CAC Members

Four tables with maps were set up. At three of the tables were four CAC members and ODOT and URS staff to assist and answer questions. The fourth table was open to the members of the public and was also staffed. Each table was asked to first develop alternative concepts for the interchange and secondly to concentrate on off site connectors.

6. Group Feedback

John Morrison, RVCOG

Following the alternative development exercise, each group was asked to briefly describe what conceptual alternatives they had come up with.

Group 1 - CAC members: Bill Rombach, George Cota, Dan Sauro and Wendie Nichols

- Summary of Concepts:

This group preferred the Single Point Urban Diamond interchange concept. The group moved the interchange slightly to the north. The I-5 overpass would connect directly to North Phoenix Road. Access to commercial/residential areas

and the RV Park on the west side of the freeway were discussed as well as another bridge over Bear Creek.

Group 2 – CAC members: Joan Haukom, Dack Doggett, David Lewin and Mark Gibson

- Summary of Concepts
First discussion centered on having the interchange moved to the south. They did not feel good connections to off site areas could be made. Second discussion involved keeping the interchange at the same location with a different alignment and different connections to North Phoenix and Fern Valley Road. If the interchange were to be constructed to the north, traffic would be pulled off of North Phoenix Road. In this configuration Fern Valley Road would be used for local traffic.

Group 3 – CAC members: David Lowry, Harry Page, Pauly Hinesly and Bob Korfhage

- Summary of Concepts
After discussion on different options the group focused on a Single Point Urban Diamond interchange at the present interchange location with an additional overpass at South Stage Road. This group would like to eliminate bike and pedestrian routes from the interchange area and create a separate overpass just for bike and pedestrian use.

Group 4 – Members of the Public: Terry Helfrich, David Deller, Jim Wear and Betty Wheeler

- Summary of Concepts
One suggestion included a new interchange 1.5 miles to the south, leave the current interchange and build another interchange to the north at South Stage Road.

Another concept suggested moving the interchange south with direct connection to Fourth Street. This concept would give the city connectivity to both the west and east sides of town. Moving North Phoenix Road to the east would help ease the daily commuter traffic and congestion near current and future planned business/commercial and nearby residential areas.

7. Public Comment

John Morrison, RVCOG

There were no comments from the public.

8. Summary/Next Steps

Debbie Timms, ODOT

There will not be a CAC meeting in July. The next meeting will be on August 4th. The alternative concepts developed tonight will be given to the Project Development Team at their July 8th meeting. The CAC concepts will be looked at from a technical point of view and melded with other alternative concepts. At the next CAC meeting the results of what was created tonight will be shown and discussed.

Greg Holthoff introduced Jerry Marmon who will be replacing Greg as the FVI Environmental Project Manager. Irene Toews also said she is moving to another position and will be replaced by Peter Schuytema.

The meeting was adjourned.