

CHAPTER 5. Project Coordination and Public Involvement

ODOT has conducted a variety of public outreach activities to gather the community's interest and concerns about the Highway 199 Expressway Upgrade project. This chapter summarizes the public outreach and agency consultation that has occurred during the time period from when the EA was released for public comment in January 2007 to when the Supplemental EA was prepared for public comment (October 2007).

5.1 Project Coordination

ODOT has coordinated with a variety of stakeholders internally and externally. Internal coordination has occurred across disciplines and with ODOT's managers and decision makers. External coordination has occurred at both the local and regional level and is described below.

5.1.1 Local Coordination

Local coordination has occurred throughout the project and involved the following entities:

- Citizen Advisory Committee
- Project Development Team
- Josephine County
- City of Grants Pass

Please refer to the EA (December 2006) for a description of public involvement and agency coordination that occurred from December 2004 to December 2006.

The CAC's specific responsibilities included:

- Assisting in identifying project and community issues
 - Discussing project activities with constituencies and neighbors and reporting back to the CAC
 - Discussing and evaluating potential solutions
 - Making recommendations to the PDT
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Citizens Advisory Committee

A CAC was assembled to ensure that the project considered the community's interests, issues, knowledge, and recommendations. The CAC consisted of residents, commuters, business owners, property owners, and special interest groups.

In 2007, the CAC met 3 times between June and August; two of those meetings were joint meetings with the PDT. Two meetings were held at the Rogue Community College and one meeting was held at the City of Grants Pass City Council Chambers. The CAC's role after the Supplemental EA is released for public comment will be to make a recommendation to the PDT on the preferred alternative.

Project Development Team

The PDT was assembled under direction of the ODOT Area Manager as a duty delegated by the ODOT Region 3 Manager and ODOT Director. The PDT was established to represent the interests of the public and make project decisions. The PDT voting members consisted of staff from the City of Grants Pass, Josephine County, Grants Pass Chamber of Commerce, Oregon State Police, the freight/trucking industry, ODOT, and a citizen-at-large. Non-voting members represented FHWA, the CAC, and other ODOT technical specialists.

When making project decisions, the PDT considered input from the CAC, ODOT, and the public through the public involvement process. In 2007, the PDT also met 3 times between June and August; two of those meetings were joint meetings with the CAC. The PDT's role after the Supplemental EA is released for public comment will be to make a decision on the preferred alternative. All decisions and determinations would be independently reviewed by the FHWA, which is the lead federal agency responsible for NEPA compliance.

City, County, and Other Coordination

In 2007, ODOT also coordinated with the City of Grants Pass and Josephine County through their representatives on the PDT as well as through participation on the City's Working Group. Additionally, as specific issues arose, ODOT coordinated with individuals from these agencies on a one-on-one basis. ODOT also coordinated with the Josephine County Fair Board, private property owners, the

The PDT's specific responsibilities included:

- Developing the purpose and need statement
- Developing and screening alternatives
- Deciding which alternatives to study in detail in the EA
- Deciding which alternatives to withdraw from further study
- Determining the preferred alternative

All decisions and determinations would be independently reviewed by the FHWA, which is the lead federal agency responsible for NEPA compliance.

ODOT has coordinated with the following state and federal agencies throughout the project:

- **State of Oregon:** Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon DEQ, Oregon SHPO, Oregon DSL, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.
 - **Federal Agencies:** FHWA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. EPA, USACE.
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YMCA, businesses, and Oregon state representatives to answer general questions and to discuss access and right of way acquisition.

For a discussion of coordination with other federal and state agencies, please see Chapter 5 of the EA (December 2006).

5.2 Public Involvement

For a discussion of public involvement activities from December 2004 to December 2007, please see Chapter 5 of the EA (December 2006).

In 2007, the EA was released for public review during a 30-day comment period that began on January 22nd and ended February 22nd. ODOT held a public hearing on February 8th to present information on the project and analysis documented in the EA as well as gather public input. During the 30-day comment period, ODOT received 85 public comments via letters, comment forms distributed at the public hearing, oral testimony that was recorded verbatim by Oregon-licensed court recorders at the public hearing, and e-mail. All comments were categorized into common topic areas, including:

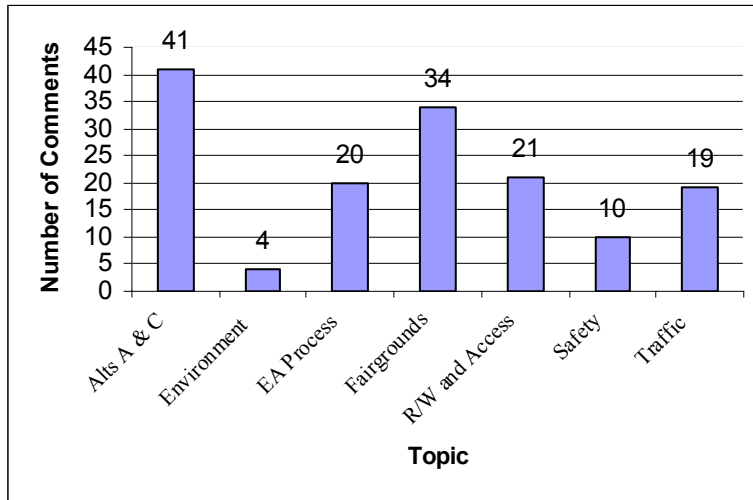
- Alternatives A and C
- Environment
- Environmental Assessment Process
- Josephine County Fairgrounds
- Right of Way Acquisition and Access Management
- Safety
- Traffic Analysis.

Most comments addressed more than one topic. The comments received during the EA comment period are summarized in Exhibit 5-1.

Highway 199 Public Involvement Activities in 2007

- Newspaper articles and advertisements, radio and television information broadcasts, and project website updates
 - CAC and PDT meetings: 3 meetings between June and August
 - Open House 3/Public Hearing: February 8, 2007
 - Open House 4/Public Hearing: November 2007
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EXHIBIT 5-1. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE EA



The fourth open house is scheduled for November 2007. There will be three main elements of this meeting: 1) Stations will be posted throughout the meeting room to update attendees on the project's status and to discuss how public and environmental issues are being considered and addressed; 2) There will be a structured public hearing component to this meeting where the public can give formal testimony; and 3) A comparison of impacts for Alternative A, Alternative C, and the Working Group Alternative will be presented for public review. Public comments will be solicited for Alternative A, Alternative C, and the Working Group Alternative. All comments received on the EA (December 2006) and the Supplemental EA (November 2007) will be addressed in a final response to comment memorandum. This memorandum will be included in the Revised EA, which documents the selection of a preferred alternative

Highway 199 Expressway Upgrade Website

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/h199e_index.shtml

News articles and ads about the project appeared in the *Grants Pass Daily Courier* and the free weekly circulation *Sneak Preview*. ODOT staff arranged to have information broadcast on local radio (KAJO) and on the public access cable television system (RVTV). ODOT has also maintained a publicly accessible project website.

CHAPTER 6. References

The Supplemental EA uses the same references as those cited in the EA Chapter 6 References (2006) with the addition of the following:

City of Grants Pass. 2007. Letter from David W. Frasher, City of Grants Pass City Manager, Grants Pass, to ODOT. August 2, 2007.

ODOT. 2007a. *Analysis of the ACCESS Proposal*. Salem, Oregon. March 30, 2007.

ODOT. 2007b. *Responses to Public Comments on the Environmental Assessment*. Salem, Oregon. March 30, 2007.

CHAPTER 7. Glossary

The Supplemental EA uses the following terms that were not identified in the EA Chapter 7 Glossary (2006).

Term	Definition
Add lane	A travel lane that is added to the main roadway after it merges with that roadway, and continues for at least half a mile.
Drop lane	A travel lane which abruptly ends, either by merging or by becoming a lane that must turn left or turn right.
Lane imbalance	This occurs where a higher proportion of vehicles may use one lane over an adjacent lane.
Lane utilization	A factor which shows whether or not a uniform percentage of vehicles would be using specific lane types (through lanes, turn lanes); where there is lane imbalance, the lane utilization factor should be adjusted to reflect instance where one or more lanes may be carrying a higher-than-expected share of vehicles, potentially due to lane imbalances or other downstream traffic factors.
Merge	The point where traffic from an adjacent lane, a ramp or intersecting road joins the main road, such as Highway 199, as the intersecting lane ends.
Metering	Metering is the timed or constrained flow of traffic leaving one facility and attempting to enter another. Traffic signals “meter” the traffic entering an intersection; ramp signals “meter” traffic entering a freeway.
Out of direction travel	Trips that must travel away from their intended direction of travel in order to then continue on their travel path toward their destination, as opposed to what would appear to be a “straight line” travel path toward their destination.

Term	Definition
State Implementation Plan	Required by Section 110 of the Clean Air Act, the State Implementation Plan (SIP) outlines adopted federally approved control strategies to minimize air pollution. SIPs generally establish limits or work practice standards to minimize emissions of the criteria pollutants or their precursors.
Trap lane	A lane which has been a through lane for some distance, typically at least one-half of a mile, and then either must turn left or turn right, or exit, at a succeeding intersection.
Weave	A short segment of roadway or freeway, typically less than half a mile, where some or all of the traffic must change lanes either to exit from the main roadway, or to enter the roadway and continue without exiting at the succeeding off-ramp.
