



# Highway 62 Corridor Project

**Date:** October 6, 2005

**From:** Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Re:** **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) MEETING  
MINUTES for September 29, 2005**

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**PDT Members in Attendance:** Donna Beck, Delanie Cutsforth, Brian Dunn, Mark Gibson, Skip Knight, Rick Levine, Kelly Madding, Jerry Marmon, Dan Moore, Mike Quilty and Debbie Timms.

**Members Absent:** David Elliott, Nick Fortey, Mark Gallagher, Rick Levine

**Location:** Jackson Co. Public Works Auditorium, Mosquito Lane, White City.

**Guests:** Bern Case, Medford Airport

**Staff:** Gary Leaming, ODOT; Pat Foley, RVCOG; Nadine Lee and Terry Kearns, URS.

## 1.0 Introductions/Agenda Review/Minutes

Terry Kearns convened the meeting at 8:35 AM. Mike Quilty moved and Kelly Madding seconded the adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Terry reviewed the agenda and briefed the PDT on the CAC meeting held the previous evening. Bern Case's presentation on the Medford Airport Master Plan was well received. Southern Terminus constraints were discussed. The Out-of-Corridor alternatives were revisited with new easier to understand graphics.

## **2.0 Funding Highway 62 & South Medford Interchange**

Debbie Timms, ODOT

Debbie gave an overview in response to recent articles in the newspapers regarding the South Medford Interchange Project's anticipated construction costs. The estimates for construction have come in higher than anticipated. Based on the anticipated costs, ODOT went to RVACT to discuss options to help fund or find solutions for the South Medford Interchange Project (SMI). One of the multitude of options being looked at is to use some of the funds designated for the Highway 62 Project. If this project donates funds toward the SOMI, there are some expected additional bridge dollars that can be reallocated to this project. This project is on the state's significant list which is important for future funding.

## **3.0 The Airport Master Plan**

Bern Case, Medford Airport

Bern started his presentation thanking the group for inviting him to speak and to express his appreciation for the work that has been done in the past;

In order for airports to receive funding, FAA requires that they have a Master Plan which plans 20 to 30 years into the future. Work on the present Master Plan was started in 1999 and finished in 2001. Since that time several adjustments have been made. The Master Plan can be downloaded from the Jackson County website by chapter or a hard copy can be checked out at the airport with a \$100 deposit.

Bern went on by describing projects recently completed, that are presently in progress and those that are planned for the future. An extension of the main runway has been completed. We are currently working on the terminal. A parallel runway is planned for the future. This runway will be based on capacity needs. The new runway could affect this project. When the present runway was extended we had to move Upton Creek. The process for moving the creek was harder than extending the runway. In order to avoid having to move that creek again we have realigned the future runway more to the south and adjusted the airport boundary. Bern doesn't feel that this change will affect the Highway 62 project. He said the airport wants to work with this committee to make the project work. He gave an example of working with the community. Butler Ford has set up their business within the airport boundary. Instead of saying no to Butler Ford, all of the restrictions were laid out. Working together the plan was approved by FAA. One restriction was solved by placing the lights lower than the surrounding lights. This way the lights would not impede the incoming air traffic.

Using an overhead map Bern showed that a portion of the Medco Haul Road's bike path goes through airport property. One point in favor of the Highway 62 project is that the Medco Haul Road is grandfathered in. If a swap of lands is necessary, this could be worked on. Bern said that a trade is much easier than buying and selling land. In Bern's opinion if the conceptual road alignment is used and is not elevated, there is a chance of

getting it approved by FAA. There is a form that has to be submitted to FAA. FAA will evaluate the proposal and may make comments which may recommend changes. If the Highway 62 Project Leaders and the Airport submit this form together, the process will be shorter.

Bern gave some suggestions. If you are going to put in street lights you need to think about height. Another issue is the trajectory of car lights. I don't think this conceptual road alignment will cause a trajectory problem. If there is a problem it could be handled by having barriers to block the light.

Questions:

Skip asked what is the proposed increase in population for Jackson County? Do you feel the present foot print of the airport is adequate to handle the increase in population over the next thirty years? Bern responded by saying the Medford Airport owns 1,000 acres. This is more acreage than Reagan International and San Jose International. We expanded somewhat when we bought back 97 acres where the foreign trade zone is located. We now have the option to expand that area. If we make good decisions in the future, the present acreage will meet our needs.

Skip said that there was a proposal in the past to run a road from east to west under the southern part of the runway. That was pre 9/11. Is this still a possibility? Bern replied that this is a viable option from an operational point. The cost of such a structure may be a deciding factor.

What are the plans for the east side of the airport? Are there any access needs? Bern said that they do need access near where the Foreign Trade Zone is located.

Skip Knight was just at a conference in Iowa. A lot of communities are losing airline service. Do you project that the Medford Airport will continue to grow regarding airline service? Bern feels that the service at the airport will continue to grow. We are now using regional carriers which has worked well for this area.

Mike Quilty asked if the airport has looked at having a major air freight company locate in Medford. Bern said they are very interested in having air freight capability. We are looking at developing the area on the east side of the airport for this kind of operation.

Skip asked if we did not use the Medco Haul Road, would that be an expansion opportunity for the airport? Bern replied that it could be. If Highway 62 doesn't use that property the airport would certainly take a look at it.

Jerry Marmon asked, if we were to take some of the airport property, how much complexity would that add to the project? Bern replied that it is hard for the airport to sell land. What Bern proposed, if the project needs airport land, consider doing a land exchange.

Bern completed his presentation by stating that the airport plans on working with the team. This project is important to the airport.

#### **4.0 Constraints at the Southern Terminus**

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry began his review of the constraints at the Southern Terminus by stating that there are not a lot of options at the Southern Terminus because of space and the constraints that include vernal pools, wetlands, airport safety zone and the planned growth for the airport. Using three maps with the constraints overlaid, Terry went on to explain the possible impacts to the project. Vernal pools and wetlands have very strict specific regulations that govern whether they can be impacted. If a vernal pool or wetland has to be impacted, mitigation has to be provided. Mitigation can be done by either enhancement of an existing vernal pool outside of the project or payment in kind. There is a movement in the Rogue Valley by the regulatory agencies of a payment in kind for impacts to vernal pools because they are not easy to replicate. In regard to vernal pools, we are fortunate because the regulatory agencies in this area recognize that some of the vernal pools are isolated. The regulatory agency would rather preserve larger vernal pool complexes and are willing to give up isolated vernal pools.

Using the map prepared by Nadine Lee, showing a conceptual Medco Haul Road bypass alternative, Terry went on to show how this alignment could work. The area at the southern tip is very narrow. Basically, there are few options at this point of the alternative. Putting in a road will be like threading a needle.

Terry was asked if the PMT has contacted Lithia Motors to discuss their planned development in the area. Terry said that Lithia has not been contacted because we are still at the stage of selecting alternatives. When the range of alternatives are narrowed, that is when they will be contacted for discussion.

#### ***Break***

#### **5.0 Northern Terminus and Out-of-Corridor Alternatives**

Terry Kearns, URS

Last month the CAC asked for simplified maps for the Out-of-Corridor alternatives and information on destinations and origins studies within the corridor. Terry reviewed the results of the Origins and Destinations analysis.

Origins/Destinations Analysis:

Maps using three different intersections were prepared (Poplar, Vilas and Antelope) and used to explain the origins and destinations. The information on each map is based on, 2030 RTP, PM peak demand (4 to 5 PM). The data was extrapolated from Transportation Analysis District models.

Map 1           Origins for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Poplar

34% originated West of I-5, North of Stewart Road  
20% originated West of I-5, South of Stewart Road  
20% originated I-5/Highway 99 South of Talent  
12% originated East of I-5  
14% other

Map 2           Destinations for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Poplar

36% had a destination north of White City  
28% had a destination east of Highway 62 south of Vilas  
19% had a destination south of Vilas  
11% had a destination in White City  
5% had a destination Highway 140, east of White City

Map 3           Origins for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Vilas

15% originated West of I-5, north of Stewart Road  
31% originated West of I-5, south of Stewart Road  
23% originated I-5/Highway 99 South of Talent  
43% originated East of I-5  
4% other

Map 4           Destinations for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Vilas

61% had a destination north of White City  
20% had a destination in White City  
11% had a destination Highway 140, east of White City  
3% had a destination of Central Point  
5% other

Map 5           Origins for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Antelope

13% originated West of I-5, north of Stewart Road  
28% originated West of I-5, south of Stewart Road  
18% originated I-5/Highway 99 South of Talent  
38% originated East of I-5  
3% other

Map 6           Destinations for trips using Highway 62 northbound at Antelope

42% had a destination of Eagle Point

43% had a destination north of Eagle Point  
15% had a destination of White City

Terry went on to review the modeling results for the North Terminus Alternatives. He explained that there are some congestion issues that most likely can be made to work through design. All of the northern terminus options meet the Purpose and Need. The revised Out-of-Corridor Alternative maps were reviewed.

Terry went over what has been done by the committees to date: 1) Looked at “No Build” conditions, 2) Evaluated “Out-of-Corridor” Alternatives, 3) Evaluated “North Terminus” Alternatives, and 4) Evaluated “South Terminus” Constraints. At the October meeting  “In-Corridor” Alternatives will be presented. The CAC will be asked to make a recommendation to the PDT. The PDT will be asked to make a decision on what alternatives meet the Purpose and Need.

The November meetings for the CAC and PDT are cancelled. A joint CAC & PDT meeting is proposed for December. This meeting will be a longer meeting and is scheduled for either December 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>. The PDT will be notified by email as soon as a date is selected.

## **7.0 Comfort Check**

Terry Kearns asked each participant to share his/her reaction to the meeting. Members expressed their comfort with the meeting. A request was made to receive next month’s meeting materials early enough for the team to review before the meeting.

## **8.0 Adjournment**

Terry Kearns thanked participants and adjourned the meeting at 10:30 AM.