



# Highway 62 Corridor Project

**Date:** October 2, 2006  
**From:** Sue Casavan, RVCOG  
**Re:** **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING  
MINUTES for September 27, 2006**

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**Members in Attendance:** Bill Blair, Bob Plankenhorn, Mike Gardiner, Richard Moorman, Don Riegger, Nanci Watkins, Curt Burrill, Susan Rachor, David Christian, Wade Six and Mike Malepsy

**Members Absent:** Paige West, Mike Montero, and Becky Brooks

**Location:** Jackson County Public Works Auditorium, White City

**Guests:** 17 members of the public

**Staff Present:** Debbie Timms, Jerry Marmon, Chris Zelmer, Brian Dunn and Gary Leaming of ODOT; Terry Kearns of URS; Mike Arneson and Kim Parducci of JRH; Gary Shaff of GSA; Sue Casavan of RVCOG

## **1.0 Welcome and Approval of Minutes**

Curt Burrill, CAC Acting Chair

Acting Chair Curt Burrill convened the meeting of the Highway 62 Corridor Project CAC at 6:03 p.m. Curt B. reviewed the meeting's agenda and asked for approval of the August 23rd minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

## **2.0 Updates on PDT meeting and Open Houses**

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. updated the committee on the Open Houses and other upcoming public outreach.

- Two Public Open Houses were held

- September 18, 2006 (south portion)
- September 19, 2006 (north portion)

He said the public was asked to provide comments on the 4 alternatives. Staff is expected to receive additional comments by mail, fax, or e-mail in the next 7-10 days. The numbers below reflect comments received as of September 26, 2006.

<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Expressed Preference</u>
Bypass	5
Bypass w/Split Diamond	20
Existing Build	1 (possible)
Texas Turnaround	1 (possible)

Detailed comments were available as handouts at the meeting. Terry K. said he would provide a completed report of responses received at the October meeting.

Upcoming Public Outreach

- Jackson County Commissioners
  - October 10, 2006 (10:00 a.m.)
- Medford City Council
  - October 12, 2006 (12:00 p.m.)

**3.0 Updated Alternatives**

Terry Kearns, URS; Mike Arneson, JRH

Terry K. said last month the PDT was presented the same information as the CAC, primarily the Split Diamond and land use issues for the alternatives. A couple PDT members expressed a desire to have a discussion with both the CAC and the PDT about which of the 4 alternatives presented the best long-range solution.

Mike A. showed a Power Point presentation of the updated alternatives.

**Highway 140 Freight Route w/Bypass**

Mike A. said a few committee members were interested in seeing how the truck route would operate. He explained the proposed truck route using the Bypass on Agate Road.

Wade S. asked what the advantage would be to that route. Mike A. said it was the only route available without building other roads. The Bypass would be over the top of the current truck route. This would be the only way for trucks to get from Highway 140 to Avenue G. It would be the most direct route available.

Nanci Watkins commented that there are already 300,000 trucks a year that use this section. Debbie T. said there is a proposed project that will route trucks from Highway 140 onto Leigh Way to Agate Road to Avenue G to Kirtland Road to Blackwell Road which will connect to I-5's Seven Oak's interchange.

Mike G. wanted to know why Antelope Road could not be used instead of Avenue G. Debbie T. said the county has designated Avenue G as the truck route and they are doing improvements to it. Antelope Road is heavily developed with more driveways and numerous accesses.

Wade S. suggested a parallel merge lane. He said the committee has previously discussed preserving White City as a community. Jerry M. added that there would be improvements on Avenue G. Avenue G will not be left the way it is. Wade S. requested more detailed maps of the alternatives in the Highway 140 area.

Mike A. briefly reviewed the four updated alternatives. The alternatives were shown with the latest aerial photo, taken in July 2006. The aerial photo includes all highway improvements.

The four remaining alternatives are as follows:

- Existing Highway Alternative
- Texas Turnaround
- Bypass w/o Split Diamond
- Bypass with Split Diamond

Mike A. presented updated area maps of the following:

#### North Terminus Options (All Alternatives)

- Land use issues need to keep boundary within the UCB
- VA Dom property, will affect their north entrance

#### Split Diamond Details

Mike A. reviewed Split Diamond traffic movements. He said the traffic team is still refining this alternative and need to run more traffic numbers.

##### Issues

- Bear Creek Greenway - Impacts need to be mitigated, can be worked through
- Floodway - Need more details on criteria and constraints/ retaining walls, can be worked through

David C. commented that the businesses in this area are well-established. He wondered how they felt about the Split Diamond. Jerry M. said they did express their displeasure with this alternative at the open house. Mike A. added that we have looked at ways to minimize impacts but are not able to make it work. The cost to avoid some businesses is more than the business is worth.

#### Texas Turnaround at Delta Waters

Mike A. presented the 2006 aerial map of the Delta Waters intersection. He explained the traffic movements and access management issues.

A man from audience commented, several months ago this alternative was voted out and wanted to know what kept bringing it back. He said it has huge impacts, takes a lot of

land, and is really expensive. Debbie T. explained that some people on the PDT team wanted further study and thought this alternative could possibly have a lifetime longer than 20 years.

#### Existing Build at Delta Waters

Mike A. showed a map of the Existing Build at Delta Waters. He explained the frontage roads and access management issues. He said it was very similar to the Texas Turnaround.

### **Alternative Phaseability**

#### Problematic Elements for All Alternatives

- Route continuity
- Driver expectation
- Construction staging

#### Texas Turnaround

- Could be constructed in 2 or 3 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- 3 phases would be from I-5 Delta Waters / Delta Waters to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Need to construct frontage roads and have logical termini for them as the mainline progresses northward
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)

#### Existing Highway

- Could be constructed in 2 or 3 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- 3 phases would be from I-5 Delta Waters / Delta Waters to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Need to construct frontage roads and have logical termini as the mainline progresses northward
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)

#### Bypass Highway (with or without split diamond)

- Could be constructed in 2 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)
- Potential to build 1 travel lane in each direction initially and upgrade to 2 lanes as traffic demands

Wade S. asked, “When you say build one travel lane in each direction, are you talking from Highway 140 north?” Mike A. responded depending on the traffic analysis, the first phase of the Bypass could be built as a 2-lane highway with interchanges instead of a 4-lane highway all the way from I-5 to Agate Road. If, at a certain point, the volume demanded, a second lane could be added and built inside without redoing any of the interchanges. He said this could be a way to save money on initial construction. It gives this option more flexibility. Jerry M. added, another option in the initial phase could be ROW acquisition to secure the corridor and this would work particularly well with the Bypass. Debbie T. explained that if ODOT purchases ROW it is possible to lease back to the businesses until time of construction.

**Alternative Range of Costs**

These values are preliminary and represent a range of potential construction costs and do not include right-of-way.

<u>Existing Build</u>	\$230 - \$270 million
<u>Texas Turnaround</u>	\$210 – \$250 million
<u>Bypass without Split Diamond</u>	\$170 – \$210 million
<u>Bypass with Split Diamond</u>	\$200 - \$240 million

Susan R. asked if there was a formula used to calculate ROW. Debbie T. said that ROW has to be calculated using current prices. This figure is constantly changing so it hard to think of what it would be in the future.

**4.0 Evaluation Criteria**

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. discussed the revised evaluation criteria with changes. He hoped this would set the committee up for a discussion on what the long-term solution for the corridor is. He reviewed the project’s Purpose and Need and Problem Statement. He said to keep or discard an alternative, the committee must look at the alternatives that best meet the Purpose and Need of the project and use the evaluation criteria as a way to rank them. He reviewed Highway 62 problems.

- 5 of the 11 signal lights do not meet current standards
- Several segments of the highway exceed statewide accident rate
- No multi-modal facilities

**Revised Evaluation Criteria**

- Includes the Split Diamond
- Grade separation at Poplar
- Revised interchange at Delta Waters
- Design Options at the North Terminus

Terry K. explained the property impacts of each alternative with the following table of parcel takes.

		Whole Corridor (I-5 to Dutton Rd.)				North Terminus	
		Plain Bypass	Split Diamond Bypass	Existing Hwy Build	Texas Turnaround	N. Term. Bypass	N. Term. Existing Corridor
Partial Take	Residential (PR)	30	24	40	23	7	15
	Commercial (PC)	52	37	143	146	18	32
	Other/Vacant Lots (PV)	49	52	64	51	27	19
	<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>66</b>
Complete Take	Residential (CR)	1	3	17	34	0	18
	Commercial (CC)	13	10	33	34	2	16
	Other/Vacant lots (CV)	5	4	4	2	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>35</b>
Building	Residential (BR)	11	11	32	39	1	19
	Commercial (BC)	38	44	81	112	19	39
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>58</b>

Terry K. said the alternatives that using the existing highway, or with modifications which include frontage and backage roads, the amount of buildings impacted doubled and in some cases was even greater.

Other Revisions in the Evaluation Criteria

- Increases in new impervious surface
- Split Diamond
  - Possible Section 4f issues (deals with parks, possible encroachment into the Bear Creek Greenway)
  - Additional stream crossings (Bear Creek)
  - Increased riparian impacts

Terry K. said the PDT has asked if the CAC would like to take all 4 alternatives and study them in the DEIS, or rather based on revised evaluation criteria, reduce the alternatives on the table. The CAC has voted in the past to dismiss alternatives, in particular, the Couplet and the Texas Turnaround. The PDT tabled the motion to dismiss the Texas Turnaround because they felt there was not enough information available at the time. The PDT has asked, “What is the best long term solution for the corridor?” Terry K. asked the CAC to discuss the issue. He provided background information of what he thought were characteristics of a long term solution.

**Long Term Solution**

Characteristics of a Long Term Solution

- Addresses the basic traffic problem

- Adaptable
- Economical
- Ability to construct in phases
- Other

Terry K. said all 4 alternatives separate the traffic and address the basic traffic problem. He said the Bypass has more adaptability because ODOT would control access on the entire length of it and it could expand in the future with minimal impacts. The Existing and Texas Turnaround do not have that degree of adaptability.

Discussion:

Curt B. commented that with the Texas Turnaround or the Existing the whole structure would need to be built. He is concerned about traffic flow during the construction phase.

David C. wondered if the traffic doubled after the Texas Turnaround was built, would congestion once more become an issue. He thinks it would be good to look at the long term impacts. He feels the Bypass would be the best answer.

Wade S. suggested leaving the Texas Turnaround on the table and allows it to move forward for the benefit of the community. He feels it would prove to be something to compare other alternatives to. The cost for all alternatives is about the same but there are more property impacts with ROW for Texas Turnaround.

Mike Malepsy added that the impact of the Texas Turnaround is tremendously different with the frontage and backage roads.

Nanci W. asked the committee to look at the impact to businesses.

Mike G. asked Terry K. if it was a waste of resources to evaluate something that doesn't look like it is going to work. Terry K. said it is expensive and the designs as they exist today are at about a 5% level of completion. In order to study and really evaluate alternatives we need to bring it up to about 15%. We need to find out specific information and it is a significant effort.

Mike Malepsy thought it was time to get a few of the alternatives off the table and spend more time doing something that would work down at the interchange.

Mike G. commented that the committee has tried to drop the alternatives they feel would not fit in the past. He feels they are at that point now. He wonders if it is a duplication of resources to model all of the alternatives. Terry K. said it is a significant effort and we would have to do all 4 equally. He said the committee could look at the property takes and get some idea of what ROW costs would be. Susan R. added that ODOT does not pay for loss of business. Terry K. said there were numerous comments from the open houses from people who want some degree of certainty and want to know if and when they can move forward.

Members discussed making a recommendation and staff thought the PDT was going to want more information and was not quite ready for a recommendation.

David C. asked if the committee waited a month or two to make a recommendation how much more information would they have. Terry K. answered that at the next CAC meeting they would have feedback from County Commissioners and City Council members as well as the county planning team. With each one of the alternatives there is a land use avoidance issue and we need to refine. He said he would ask the PDT tomorrow which alternatives they wanted to move forward.

Mike Malepsy felt the committee should let the recommendation ride and said the committee's general consensus had been voted on a few months ago.

Debbie T. said the Texas Turnaround is still on the table because there are PDT members who think that it will last longer than the other options.

Don R. commented that 6 months ago this group recommended dropping the Texas Turnaround from further consideration and it is still on the table. Maybe as a group we could reaffirm that. What we are missing is the cost of acquiring all the property takes.

David C. thought the committee needed to articulate the reasons and just looking at the property impacts was not reason enough.

Susan R. said just looking at the lowest and highest construction costs she saw differences.

Wade S. asked if there was a difference in efficiency between the Existing and the Texas Turnaround and thought members were focusing too much on cost.

Terry K. answered that they are basically the same kind of facility.

Susan R. thought the committee should get rid of the Existing and the Texas Turnaround.

Curt B. recommended that the committee hold off until the next meeting and listen to City Council, County Commissioners, and additional public comment.

The CAC agreed holding off on making a recommendation.

## **5.0 Public Comment**

Curt Burrill, CAC Acting Chair

Gordon Draper: I appreciate the knowledge of the CAC and think they should let the PDT know there are alternatives that should be taken off the table. I don't know anyone who thinks the Texas Turnaround is viable. The Highway 140 project and this project are 2 different things and it is unfortunate that one doesn't know the other is going on. Avenue G is a huge safety concern. Trucks coming from the west are waiting on Avenue

G for a hole in the opposing lane so they can drive in the opposing lane to get on the scales. It will not take truckers long to figure out the shortest and fastest route to I-5 using Antelope. Antelope Road will be the way to go.

Terry Walters: Why take the trucks all the way to Medford. Why not take them across the middle area over to I-5 to relieve truck traffic on Highway 62. You could get a hold of that land through ROW. Wade Six responded that when the committee first started this process that was something they looked at. The modeling showed it took traffic off of Highway 62 but was not a significant amount to alleviate the problem. Debbie T. said there are a lot of accidents and congestion in the area between the North Medford interchange out to Vilas and if we just took the trucks off this would still occur.

David C. commented that the truck route alternative described didn't sound like it would take much traffic off of Highway 62. It would put 300,000 trucks a year back on Highway 62 and he does not understand why it couldn't go north of the interchange.

Larry Ziegelmeyer wondered if the partial diamond at the south terminus was studied regarding the impact of trucks turning slowly around the corners and backing up traffic. Terry K. said it would be one of the things we will study in the analysis; look at percentage of trucks versus vehicles and what the delays would be.

Dave Patterson: "Will long term and short term funding mechanisms be considered in the choice of alternative?" Jerry M. responded that the ROW issue will come into play but at this level it is hard to quantify. Getting through the EIS process sets this project up for the next round of federal funding.

Cal Martin commented that he had heard that years ago that several million dollars was given to the Portland area for the light rail system and that there was a payback to this area established over a 20 year period. He wanted to know if that was a fact ODOT was aware of. Debbie T. said no they were not aware of that and Jerry M. said they could look into it.

Jim Coombes with Fred Meyer said he had talked to a lot of south terminus business owners and they tended to agree that anything that destroyed their local access has a huge economic negative to the businesses. Now we see the construction cost is pretty similar for all and we hope you look at directing traffic through but not disrupt the local corridor business with backage roads or taking away partial or all businesses and hope you consider those costs as well. Curt B. responded that he personally takes that into consideration and he assumes everyone else on this committee looks at it that way also.

Bob Bobbett: You have 8 or 10 people here that want to vote for something. Why don't you make a motion and do something, why drag it out for more time? As business and property owners we need to make our decisions. At each meeting it gets put off for some reason and I would like to see some decisions. Terry K. responded that the committee agrees with him. He explained the CAC makes a recommendation to the PDT and the PDT makes the final decisions. He said he would make the point known to the PDT

tomorrow and that this was something they hear a lot; people want a degree of certainty in their lives.

Fred Eadie: I agree. I lease property and it can be difficult as they could have a limited stay. The longer this thing goes on our income will be gone. Terry K. suggested making their concerns known to the City Council and the County Commissioners.

## **6.0 CAC Comfort Check**

Curt Burrill, CAC Acting Chair

Wade Six: Great

Mike Gardiner: Little disappointed we didn't vote tonight, I don't think one month will make that big of a difference.

Richard Moorman: When you are trying to make a decision for your business you can go out and solicit information to make that decision. Basically we are waiting for the information to be furnished to us. When we feel we have all the information to make a legitimate decision that is when it happens.

Nanci Watkins: Second Mike's opinion

Don Riegger: I agree with Mike. I wanted to make a decision and I don't think it hurts to tell the City Council or the Commissioners what we think of these issues.

Bill Blair: I feel the same as Don.

Curt Burrill: I think we are moving forward. I feel it would be unwise to make a decision.

Bob Plankenhorn: I'm good

Mike Malepsy: I feel the public's frustration and I would have liked to have voted a long time ago. I appreciate and understand the process.

David Christian: I feel the same way as everyone else. I hope next month we can narrow this down. We have spent almost 2 years in this process.

Susan Rachor: One more month will not hurt us in case we have missed something. Certainly I would like to see us get it done this month.

## **7.0 Next Steps**

Terry Kearns, URS

- November, 2006 – Review design details of the alternatives

- December, 2006 – Begin technical analysis
- Late Spring 2007 – Publish Draft DEIS

## **8.0 Adjournment**

Curt Burrill, CAC Acting Chair

Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.