INTERCHANGE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN (IAMP) MEETING MINUTES

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Meeting Date: October 3, 2007

Purpose: IAMP - Fern Valley Interchange Project
Citizen Advisory Committee, Project Development Team Meeting

Distribution: IAMP CAC Members, IAMP Project Development Team, Public

From: Sue Casavan, RVCOG

Date Prepared: October 2007

CAC Attendees: David Lowry, Lenny Neimark, Dack Doggett, Lisa Sandrock, David Lewin, Mark Gibson, Pauly Hinesly, Terry Helfrich, Tani Wouters

Project Team Attendees: Dick Leever, Project Manager, ODOT
John McDonald, ODOT
John Kelly, URS
Peter Schuytema, ODOT
Vicki Guarino, RVMPO
Pat Foley, RVCOG
Sue Casavan, RVCOG

Other Attendees: 11 members of the public signed in (sign-in sheet in file)

PDT Attendees: John McDonald, ODOT; Peter Schuytema, ODOT; Bruce Sophie and Bob Lewis, Phoenix; Vicki Guarino, RVMPO;

1. Introductions, Review Agenda, Approve Minutes

Pat Foley, RVCOG Facilitator

Vicki G. began the meeting at 6:33 and explained that this was a joint meeting with the CAC (Citizen's Advisory Committee) and the PDT (Project Development Team). She said that Pat Foley would be taking her place as RVCOG Facilitator and that she would be taking Dan Moore's place on the PDT representing the Rogue Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RVMPO).

2. Project Update

Dick Leever, ODOT

Dick L. said he is replacing Debbie Timms as Project Manager for the Fern Valley Interchange Project. He reviewed the purpose and intent of the project. He explained the regulatory requirements of the Fern Valley IAMP. He said the Environmental Assessment (EA) has started and they are currently working on the technical reports.

Tentative schedule:

- February 2008 - release draft Environmental Assessment (EA) - 30 day comment period
- May 2008 - intend to have a preferred alternative selected
- July 2008 - final draft of the EA and possibly a final draft of the IAMP
- Development process will follow - approximately 2 years of design for project
- Bid project – 2010
- Construction – 2011

Terry H. asked if there is any money available for improvements for the current structure in order to make it more livable between now and 2011. He said a lot of citizens have concerns and it is currently not working well. Dick L. said there was no money funded for improvements between now and then. Terry H. said that the facility is not acceptable now and will only get worse. Dick L. agreed with him but currently there is no funding set aside for improvements. Terry H. added that a citizen suggested installing left turn lanes (on the interchange) and coordinating traffic lights. He said the city is asking for some kind of relief. David Lewin said it would only take a couple feet of widening in order to get both left turn lanes on the interchange. Tani W. said she thought that idea came from Fern Valley Phase I. Dick L. replied that ODOT could have their designers take a look at it to see if it was possible, but there were no guarantees.

3. Introduction to Interchange Area Management Plans

John McDonald, ODOT

John M. briefly presented an introduction to the FVIAMP.

- An "Interchange Area Management Plan" – a plan for managing the Fern Valley Interchange and surrounding area through 2030.
- A joint agency plan expressing Phoenix and ODOT's management objectives.
- A plan to protect the function & capacity of the interchange – i.e. "managing the margin."

He said that people researching transportation have noticed that there are certain cycles that communities go through. There are improvements, improvements lead to increased access ability, lead to increased value, lead to land use changes, increase generation of traffic, deterioration of the traffic flow, leads back to arterial improvements. The IAMP will help develop management tools for the city of Phoenix when development occurs and generates an increase in traffic volume.

John M. showed aerial photos of the following to demonstrate why an Interchange Area Management plan is needed:

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Fern Valley Interchange ca. 1965

- No commercial development near the interchange.
- Residential (urban) development limited to west of Bear Creek.

Fern Valley Interchange ca. 1987

- Commercial development southeast of interchange.
- Residential (urban) development expands east to I-5.

Fern Valley Interchange ca. 2004

- Commercial development occurring in all corners of the interchange.
- Residential (urban) development expands to the east of I-5.

Fern Valley Interchange ca. 2030

- Further residential, commercial, and industrial development planned or possible – particularly east of I-5.

Proposed Urban Reserves

PH-5 Proposes:

- Primarily industrial
- Some residential and commercial

PH-10 Proposes:

- Primarily residential
- Some commercial

MD-5 Proposes:

- Primarily residential
- Some industrial and commercial

John M. said this will give some kind of idea of what to expect in the next 30-40 years, we know change is coming so what kinds of management tools do we need in order to best prepare so when change does occur we will be ready to deal with it.

Potential IAMP Management Tools

Transportation System Management (TSM)
- traffic control, lane striping, signing

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
- TDM strategies, transit service, multi-modal facilities

Land Use Strategies
overlay zones, modification of allowable uses, trip cap allocation ordinances, zone changes, Comprehensive Plan amendments. Incorporation of Phoenix Comprehensive Plan, zoning code, and development ordinances.

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IAMP Future Effects

- Increased quality in balancing LU&T: better planning leading to better management decisions.
- Recognition of the importance of Access Management to interchange area safety & operations: balancing mobility & access.
- Increased predictability among Local Governments, ODOT and developers.
- Protection of facility improvements through 2030.
- Responsible stewardship of public investments for interchange facilities.

David Lewin commented that more than half the traffic crossing the Bear Creek bridge and I-5 doesn't come from Phoenix. If the focus of the IAMP is Phoenix and growth areas, he is concerned that Medford urban reserves, located next to Phoenix, are not included in the plan. He wondered if there was any way to include those areas. He is concerned that the plan for the next 20 years would not be enough and Phoenix would suffer the consequences. John M. said that ODOT would try to account for the traffic coming in on Hwy 99 and North Phoenix Road.

Pauly H. said she had counted the cars coming from Phoenix Hills a year ago and was amazed that over 75% of the cars went to Ashland and never entered Phoenix. She thought that might be settled with the South Medford Interchange.

Peter S. said that businesses will locate here to in order to attract customers from the whole Rogue Valley. Phoenix will always have this issue of impacts from Medford. He added that as far as the IAMP goes they will do as much as possible to incorporate the land area into the IAMP study area that supposedly will impact the Fern Valley Interchange.

4. Technical Memorandum 1: Definition & Background

John Kelly, URS

John K. asked the committee for input and comments on Tech Memo 1. He said this memo describes what the process is trying to accomplish. This is the foundation for the IAMP and he wants to make sure it is correct. Committee commented on the following sections.

Purposes and Intent:

Lenny N. asked if there was a reason why the Purpose and Need was not the same as the Purpose and Need statement for the project. Tani W. asked if the IAMP should be consistent with the Purpose and Need of the project. John K. said yes, that it needed to be consistent. Lenny N. suggested attaching the original Purpose and Need statement as an appendix to the memorandum. John K. asked if they were referring to the Purpose and Need statement from the EA. Committee responded yes.

David Lewin asked if the Fern Valley Interchange was being looked at exclusively or were other projects underway and future projects in the valley were also being considered. He referred to past discussion about a South Stage overpass/interchange. John M. said they are looking at projects that are funded. Tani W. commented that they needed to be realistic in looking at the traffic studies and what is actually happening.

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Peter S. said this is a project-based IAMP. He added that they will be looking at the effects of land use/land use policies on the interchange within the scope of the alternatives as they exist in the EA. This is required before OTC releases funding for construction of the interchange. He said there is another type of IAMP which is not project-based which is looked at as a planning study. But in the Fern Valley case we are limited to the scope of the EA alternatives.

Problem Statement

Tani W. said she saw the element of freight missing. John K. asked if there were any specific concerns about freight with this interchange. Tani W. said keeping access to the truck stop, providing accessibility and preserving infrastructure were some things to consider.

Mark G. said currently, other than congestion, he didn't think there were other turning movement issues. He said there is a single lane turn into Pear Tree which creates congestion but as far as turn radius he didn't think there were any specific issues right now.

Lenny N. said the other component of freight that had been brought up in the past was the agricultural activity on the east side of Fern Valley.

Lisa S. said there are two lumber facilities on the west side that need access through the corridor, Norton Lumber and Norman Lumber.

David Lowry said that what he has heard from the officials of Phoenix is that they think it is vitally important for the city to have commercial development to support the revenue stream the city needs to operate. He thinks that if the interchange is not being designed to support commercial activity it could be a serious problem for the city of Phoenix. He said the message he was getting from this meeting is that the interchange may or may not support that and he feels that is in direct violation of the Purpose and Need for the new interchange.

David Lewin commented on number 5. He said that when the approaches to the interchange were revised back in 2000, the truck traffic was rerouted so that the trucks passed close to the residential area. Many residents have been concerned about pollution and he assumes it will be improved over the current situation.

Lenny N. said what we have here is a tremendous mixed-use situation. He thinks that a recap of the conflicting uses might be important to committee discussions.

Tani W. commented that it was unfortunate, because they are dealing with a situation where development was allowed to occur without proper transportation systems in place.

John K. presented suggestions for additional language.

Problem statement:

- Most existing and projected traffic on the interchange, Fern Valley Road, OR99, and North Phoenix Road passes through the interchange area so it is affected by growth and

development outside the IAMP. He said this is an attempt to acknowledge the problem outside the traditional scope. Committee agreed.

Interchange Function (Discussion):
Lenny N. suggested adding wording that said the function of the interchange is to serve statewide, regional, **local city traveling,** and freight mobility. He said it is all part of the complicated mix that we have.

David Lowry was concerned that the designated RPS areas for future development could be very significant in the traffic they generate. He said those growth areas have a future horizon of 30 years but he thinks it will happen a lot sooner.

Lenny N. asked if it was permissible for part of the function to include the concept of some level of reasonable growth within a jurisdiction if that was part of the interchange's function. John M. said generally they look at full build out and what is the most intense use under the comprehensive plan. Lenny N. said there was still no mention in the function language having to do with land use, development, or growth even within the comprehensive plan. John M. said they could add more concrete.

Terry H. said that when you talk about the Regional Problem Solving Plan you are not just talking about residential but a South Valley Employment Center. He added that he didn't know what part of this document it should be in but we need to look at the reality of it.

David Lewin commented that what we are saying is that we have to incorporate RPS into the comprehensive plan or we have left out a large segment of growth.

Tani W. added that the county has to adopt RPS and we are bound by what the city has for a comp plan and it is not complete.

Lenny N. asked, because of the unique pressure, interest, and desire to somehow incorporate this anticipated growth that we can't legally account for in the comp plan, can we, in the language of the IAMP, make a reference to serving current and anticipated growth, as a concept and as part of the discussion in the written documents.

John K. said I am hearing that the committee is in favor of language in the objectives for acknowledgement of the need of the city for more tax revenue and note the problem of traffic outside the interchange area. He will propose language in the objective to pick up on that.

David Lewin commented that if they don't put that in, it looks as if you are saying over the next 30 years you are only anticipating the limited growth. If you ignore RPS you are basically saying we won't grow at all in the next 30 years. John M. said this must be consistent with the comp plan but we will take as much into consideration as possible. He added that all concepts will be discussed at the next meeting as well.

David Lowry asked if the management area was part of this discussion. He said Figure 3, Zoning Interchange Management Area, is actually current city zoning and not the comp plan

zoning. He asked if they will be looking at a different map that is the comp plan zoning in the process. John K. said yes. In Tech Memo 2 there is a map that shows the zoning. He said he had been instructed to have the zoning be consistent with the comp plan not the current zoning,

David Lewin said that John M. indicated that he was considering Phoenix 5 and 10. Looking at the goals and objectives (Number 5) he wonders if the language is too restrictive. He added that if you are looking at the current Phoenix comp plan it does not include Phoenix 5 and 10. John M. said he understood what David was saying but was unsure of how it affects this process. David Lewin said if I understand what you are telling me, Phoenix 5 and 10 will be considered in terms of this project, but the goals and objectives I read literally the Phoenix comp plan as it exists today does not reference Phoenix 5 and 10.
John M. said the plan is for here and now and must be consistent with the comp plan. He added that ODOT would not take it any further right now. He said RPS plan needs to be adopted. The plan cannot be based on assumptions

Bruce S. said when RPS occurs Phoenix will then have to do a comp plan amendment to support it. He thought that would be the activity the city wanted to see rather than go through two different processes.

Lenny N. said he would like to reinforce the point about Number 5. He thought there might be a way to take that language to give room to consider things that will allow them to develop those 'what if' scenarios even though we know we have to deal with the comp plan restrictions. He commented that he would hate to see common sense thrown out; everyone knows certain activities will happen.

John K. said his posture was to be inclusive. In part we have to acknowledge what the impact statement says: "achieve all the objectives to the greatest extent possible". He said the fact was they would not be able to include all of these and they could use this for a reminder of what we are trying to accomplish.

Peter S. said we are looking at base case scenario today with its limitations but we could consider a 'what if' scenario with a sensitivity analyses on top of the existing base scenario. He said we could do what is consistent with the comp plan today and what would also be consistent with a possible future comp plan. John M. said ODOT will look at doing a contract amendment with the city. Currently they are doing one development scenario but he said they could certainly do a development scenario based on what we think RPS might affect and report back at the next meeting.

John K. asked the committee to look at the maps of the boundaries of the management area. Lisa S. said it looked like the land zone with single family development was excluded. John K. explained that the management area defines the area in which ODOT will try to have some influence on development and it is intended to cover the areas that generate a lot of traffic. John M. said there was a difference between a management area and a study area, we look at the area as a whole as a study area but would not necessarily manage it. John K.

added that retail generates a lot more traffic than a single family residential area so there is no need to include it in the management area because it does not create a lot of traffic.
Lisa S. said she found this scenario unique in the location of the fact that in Phoenix 5 and 10 with planned development considering the location of this exchange as opposed to the next exchange they are going to come this way not the other.

Lenny N. asked if the net effect of the circle on the map was to say that ODOT basically has final say on any proposed project within the circle. John M. said no, administrative rules suggest ½ mile radius for an interchange and this was put on the map.

5. Technical Memorandum 2: Review of Adopted Plans & Regulations

John Kelly, URS

John K. asked the committee for comments or changes to Tech Memo 2.

David Lewin said he was aware of changes in the MPO policies to make them consistent with federal regulations and felt there should be some reference to the pending changes.

Vicki G. said in reference to the periodic update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), we are scheduled to adopt the updated plan in February 2009.

Tani W. said in Appendix A as part of the interchange description she noticed on Page 2 it discusses the v/c ratio, very congested conditions versus moderately congested conditions and the year 2020 is used. She said in past discussions we talked about the v/c ratios beyond 2030 and she thought this contradicted the purpose and need of the project.
Peter S. said that was the condition before the year 2000, before the Phoenix Phase I project and it is the old interchange described in there. Tani W. asked if the committee was being asked to comment on technical information that is not current. Peter S. said the only other analysis that he had is currently under review at this point, which covers the analysis done for this project. He assumed he could give a copy to John Kelly and he could use as necessary.
John K. said that yes, the new information could be inserted.
David Lowry asked if there were any other sections out of date and John K. said he didn't think so.

David Lewin said at the beginning of Tech Memo 2, page 3, the valley is going through the process of RPS, hopefully close to conclusion and the city will be going through two public hearings one for the draft EA and another for comp plan amendment as a result of the RPS. He was wondering how much flexibility there could be so the city could have one public hearing for both. John M. said he could get hold of the Department of Justice and talk about timelines. David Lewin commented that it is quite a cost to the city and going through two hearings in a short period of time could confuse people.

Lisa S. asked on page 17, how adopting the IAMP into the comprehensive plan relates to this. John K. said one possibility is that the city adopts the IAMP; another is that ODOT asks the city to amend provision to the comprehensive plan.

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Bruce S. commented that on page 8, Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Oregon law has changed the safety corridor to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities and the plan we are looking at does not provide that. John M. said that has to do with the design process and we will have to investigate that. Bruce S. said people are pointing it out.

John K. said if you have further comments they could send them to John McDonald preferably by email a week from Friday.

Pauly H. mentioned the difficulty of the Bear Creek bridge holding up until 2011 and asked what could be done about it. John M. said that was a question for his managers and it was beyond his authority.

6. Next Steps

John McDonald, ODOT

John M. said he would like to have any additional comments by next Friday at close of business day. He said if comments go beyond simply refining what we have reviewed tonight, he would forward it on to the proper person and will bring back to the group.

He said he is working on Tech Memo 3, traffic provisions, future development scenarios, and will meet with city staff tomorrow to talk about potential land uses and the committee will be made aware of what is going on at that meeting. He said he will go back and talk to John and Peter about the contract for the development scenario that will go beyond the Phoenix comp plan so maybe we could look a little bit more into the future and see potential impacts of further development.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, November 7, 2007.

7. Public Comment

Pat Foley, RVCOG Facilitator

Don Mitchell said it was difficult to hear in the audience. He suggested that ODOT consider a frontage road that is northbound taking off of the city limits of the City of Phoenix serving the area including the truck stop. He said this would reduce the traffic to the people on the east side who object to the fumes and the noise. He said he didn't know why that would be impossible he thought 60 feet was room enough to make a divergence for a frontage road saving the traffic going over the overpass. He said frontage roads are all over the place and to please consider it. He commented that bicycles have been causing trouble in the intersections and should be brought up to task. He said anything that will be done to detract businesses from the City of Phoenix is a detriment; medians, widening Hwy 99, any of these activities will destroy businesses. He added that they can't wait for development on the other side of the freeway to supplement their income. He commented that the city needs input.

Jay Harland, CSA Planning, said he did not see a county planner in attendance and that some of the areas proposed for inclusion are outside the City of Phoenix UGB and the City of Phoenix does not have legal authority to adopt any comments affecting those areas. He suggested that at a technical level someone from the county planning department be elected

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to attend. John M. said he sent an email to Susan Lee from the county planning department about the IAMP as well as the technical memos and assured him the county is aware of what is going on.

Dr. Brian Lewis said he appreciated all the work that has gone into this process. He addressed the goals and objectives and acknowledged that there were challenges and problems.

- No interface coordination in the management plan with RPS or other bodies here in the valley
- Told we will just have to live with the bridge for 5 or 6 more years, encourage you to go sit on it sometime, if there is more than one semi it shakes
- The data used is 7 years old, by the time you build this it will be 12 years old, what is the interface of 20 year usage of that particular interchange
- The two interchange options on the east side are either going to hurt the residents of the Phoenix Hills Subdivision or they will hurt the businesses adjacent to I-5. There needs to be some kind of balance.
- What are the arterial functions of Fern Valley / Phoenix Hills north and so on? Looking at performance standards as Medford is engulfing us with their subdivisions on the east side and on the west side we are picking up that overload of traffic.

He said the plan does not interface with RPS and we can't get Medford or ODOT to listen to us. He added that perhaps Phoenix should think about not signing on until somebody starts listening to them. He said Phoenix is on the verge of going broke and on the verge of not being able to take care of their own needs in the community.

8. Comfort Check

Pat Foley, RVCOG Facilitator

David Lowry – Fine

Bob Lewis – Fine

Lenny Neimark – As far as being able to hear, we will all try to use the mikes a little more but we brought this up earlier at CAC meetings, encourage the audience to sit where they can see and hear better. Left turn lanes on the bridge, obviously that has nothing to do with this process now, there is a lot of merit to that, maybe there are some avenues that we could push, talking to our representative and on a different front politically is there some way to look at an interim solution, helping us between now and 2012 or when it gets built.

Dack Doggett – I second that, I felt maybe we should have a couple more ODOT people here to answer our questions and address them now. I would like to see it move forward more quickly, nice to see some answers

David Lewin – When you are exiting the bridge over I-5, the first change of light turns green, traffic from other direction and you want to make a left turn onto the interstate you

stop and everything behind you stops, one proposal was if you could stack a couple of cars in a left turn lane you could get the traffic moving. The other option was could we change the light timing, quite frequently it is backed up due to left turn holding it up.

Pauly Hinesly – The first comment I made do you think the bridge will hold up until 2011, isn't there some money somewhere, can you find it. I thought the meeting went very well.

Mark Gibson – I have got nothing to add.

Terry Helfrich – We need to get it out that we have a real safety issue also. I saw a fire truck for an emergency, took a long time for it to get through, there are some safety issues. It was a good meeting.

Lisa Sandrock – It was a good meeting and I am fine, thank you.

Tani Wouters – It was a good meeting, I made the suggestion that when we get the information next time if there is something we need to comment on if it could be put in a memo and made a little more clear. I don't think we were prepared or understood what you wanted comment on.

Bruce Sophie – The comments you heard about correcting short-term problems will make it harder for folks to look at the long-term in 2012, people that come to you complaining about existing conditions will have a hard time focusing on the objective that you want them to focus on. If you want to direct the comments as homework assignments I find it appropriate.

Peter Schuytema – It was a good meeting.

John Kelly – I'm happy.

Dick Leever – I agree that there are some problems concerning congestion and operations at the interchange and ODOT is willing to look at those problems and take the suggestions of the committee back for consideration to see if there are any adjustments that can be made to improve the existing conditions. I will take that back and discuss it with our Area Manager.

John McDonald – Always feel free to ask us any question, the worse thing we could do is tell you that we do not have the appropriate answer that we will find out who in the group does and we will get back to you. I am thankful that you are taking this seriously and I know with time it is only going to get a little better.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

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