



## MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, August 11, 2005

**Purpose:** Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting

**Distribution:** CAC Members, Project Development Team, public

**From:** Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

**Prepared by:** Pat Foley, RVCOG

**CAC Attendees:** Rowdy Bates, Irving Citron, Jay Eastwood, Alex Grossi, Janine Law, Deanie Manning, Suzanne Myers, Jim Rafferty, Randy Repp, Bart Van Syoc, Ron Wright

**CAC Absent:** None

**Project Team Attendees:** Jerry Marmon, ODOT Environmental Project Manager  
Eryca McCartin, ODOT Project Manager  
Brian Sheadel, ODOT District Operations  
Jason Sheadel, ODOT Roadway  
Dorothy Upton, ODOT TPAU  
Gary Leaming, ODOT Public Information  
Nick Forty, FHWA  
Angela Findley, Parsons Brinckerhoff Consultant Project Manager  
Connie Kratovil, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Vicki Guarino, RVCOG  
Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Other Attendees:** 6 members of the public

## 1. Call to Order/Review Agenda/Approve Minutes

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vicki Guarino called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. She reviewed the agenda. The CAC was asked if there were any changes to the June 9<sup>th</sup> minutes. The CAC approved the minutes with the following change:

Page 5, Paragraph 2, Sentence 3: He would like a right-in/right-out (~~westbound eastbound~~) and a left-in to accommodate ~~eastbound~~ westbound traffic at the north entrance.

Eryca McCartin gave an update on the Transportation Reauthorization Bill that was signed by President Bush. This project received an additional \$2M.

## 2. Update on June 10, 2005, Project Development Team Meeting

Irv Citron, CAC Vice-Chairperson

Irv reported that the June 10<sup>th</sup> PDT meeting basically followed the same agenda as the CAC did the night before. He explained to the PDT that when the CAC voted on its recommendations, they agreed that the recommendations were not cast in concrete and that changes could be made. This same comment was discussed at the PDT meeting. This left Irv with the feeling that more evaluation is needed on the recommendations.

## 3. Summary of West Segment Decisions

Jerry Marmon, ODOT

Jerry summarized the status of the West Segment alternative. The recommendation from the CAC to forward the West 6 concept was presented to the PDT. This recommendation included the modifications suggested by the CAC. Namely, a left-in for westbound traffic and a right-in right-out for eastbound traffic at the college's west entrance. The PDT voted in favor of forwarding this alternative to be studied in the EA.

At the last meeting the CAC voted to drop alternatives West 2, West 4 and West 7. The PDT also voted to drop these alternatives.

Discussion:

Deanie Manning asked for clarification the median barrier from Midway to Hubbard. How high will this median be? Brian Sheadel said the norm is a height of 42 inches which is the same as the viaduct barrier in Medford. Deanie said she would like the record to show that she can't support this for environmental and aesthetic reasons. Jason Sheadel explained that based on this section being a Freight Corridor "Tall" F-Shape Conc. Barrier must be used to prevent truck cross-over. This is the 42" variety. The barrier is something that can be worked out when the details of construction are being determined. The design, including color, was discussed. Again, this will be determined when construction details are being worked on.

#### **4. Fourth Bridge Consideration**

Eryca McCartin, ODOT

Eryca explained that there was discussion at the last PDT meeting regarding the Fourth Bridge. Two different perspectives were discussed. There were some participants that felt the Fourth Bridge would not solve the Purpose and Need and wanted to focus dollars on efforts that were less costly. Another group felt the Fourth Bridge could be a solution to the Purpose and Need and wanted it modeled as a solution. The Project Management Team agreed to address this issue and come back with a recommendation for the CAC and PDT to review. The PMT has added the Fourth Bridge as shown in the Grants Pass TSP as an alternative. This alternative is shown as East 6 and will be discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

#### **5. Review East Concepts & Traffic Modeling**

Connie Kratovil, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Dorothy Upton, ODOT

Connie started by reviewing the eleven (11) East Section concepts. She referred the committee to concepts maps already distributed at earlier meetings and the three revised maps distributed tonight.

Discussion:

In regard to the West Park alignment: CAC members were concerned that this project may be duplicating efforts as this portion of the project is already in the Grants Pass TSP. It was explained that this alignment may be in the TSP but is not a funded project.

In regard to the median that is currently scheduled to be installed on Highway 199 from the Les Schwab location to the Big Y: Is this a waste of money if the Team decided to do something that would not use this median? It was explained that this median can easily be removed without substantial cost.

A discussion on Section 4(f) verified that this ruling only applies if Federal funds are used.

Dorothy Upton explained that for modeling purposes the concepts with similar elements were divided into separate groups:

- 1) Union Avenue Slip Ramp – Concepts East PDT 1, East PST 2, East CAC 1A, East CAC 1B and East CAC 2
- 2) Additional Lanes on Highway 199 – Concepts East 4, East CAC 1A, East CAC 1B and East PDT 1
- 3) Frontage Road/Driveway Collectors – Concepts East 1, East 2, East 5, East CAC 2, East PDT 1 and East PDST 2
- 4) West Park Connector – Concepts East 2, East 3, East 4 and East CAC 1A
- 5) Fourth Bridge – Concept East 6.

Dorothy presented the modeling data using a traffic simulation program.

Modeling results:

1. Union Avenue Slip Ramp

This concept can help to reduce the volume of traffic on Highway 199 but it will have major impacts at the intersections located at Union Avenue/Ringuette and Union Avenue and Harbeck/Williams Highway. It will only help eastbound traffic through this corridor. In order for this concept to function properly, a traffic signal will have to be installed at Ringuette and Union Avenue and modifications would have to be made at the Harbeck/Williams Highway intersection. The road classification would need to be raised to a minor arterial and the traffic speed increased to 35 mph. When the committee is evaluating this concept they will have to take into consideration the impacts to local streets.

2. Added Lanes on Highway 199/

The modeling for these concepts does not show all interruptions in traffic based on driveway accesses. The modeling is based strictly on thru traffic and the public road intersections. The modeling shows that you have the capacity to reduce congestion in theory, but this is offset when you consider how multiple lanes are actually used because all lanes are not used equally. All of the concepts for added lanes on Highway 199 are modeled with a signal at Ringuette and Union Avenue.

3. West Park Connector

The West Park Connector model is based on 25 mph speed limit because the City has stated that the speed limit will not be raised. The model shows that this concept does not relieve congestion. Irv Citron said he always uses West Park to Ringuette. Dorothy responded that in the short term there may be some advantage but when more people discover this route it will not be an advantage.

4. Fourth Bridge

The model is based on a four (4) lane bridge with a 35 mph speed which connected Allen Creek Boulevard to Lincoln Road. The model shows that this concept pulls traffic off of the north/south route currently using 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Streets, but it adds more traffic into the congested area at the Highway 199/Allen Creek Road intersection. It has a neutral effect on Highway 199 congestion.

*10 Minute Break*

Based on modeling results Dorothy's summary and recommendations are:

- Union Slip Ramp helps reduce the volume on Highway 199. However, it has major impacts along Ringuette/Union and the Oregon 238/Harbeck intersections. It only helps reduce the volume on Highway 199 for eastbound traffic. It does nothing for westbound traffic.
- Although the added lanes on Highway 199 increases capacity, the large increase in weaving and changing lanes and interruption caused by the third lane offsets the increase in capacity.
- Frontage roads and driveway connectors help traffic flow by combining access points and funneling traffic down to fewer decision points. The difference amounts to access versus out of direction travel. Safety improves with reduced driver conflict points.

- The West Park Connector doesn't relieve congestion mostly because it is a local street and the Highway 199 businesses are not served by this concept.
- The Redwood Avenue Connector takes 90% of westbound traffic on to Redwood Avenue. This can be offset with improvements to Allen Creek intersection.
- The Fourth Bridge, as shown in the Grants Pass TSP with four lanes and 35 mph speed limit, begins to significantly affect traffic patterns. It adds traffic, since trips currently not using any of the intersections are drawn to the area. This would add a more volume to already congested intersections. On Highway 199 it does not help safety or reduce congestion.

Discussion:

The Fourth Bridge is an unfunded project. None of the concepts for Highway 199 would preclude the Fourth Bridge being built. The objective of modeling the Fourth Bridge was to determine the effect on Highway 199.

A member of the CAC expressed his opinion that the City has created a problem by allowing overdevelopment and that the West Park Connector may be a solution. He feels that the City may have to increase the speed limit to 35 mph and make the street 3 or 4 lanes. Jerry Marmon responded that the area is solidly residential and would be difficult to upgrade it to a 35 mph facility. It is mostly a city issue to determine.

Dorothy gave recommendations based on the Purposed and Need for improving safety and reducing congestion on Highway 199 which are:

- Do not forward
  1. West Park Connector
  2. Added Lanes on Highway 199
  3. Fourth Bridge
- Keep for further consideration
  1. Redwood Avenue Connector
  2. Union Avenue Slip Ramp
  3. Combination of Frontage Road and driveway collectors that need to be clarified more

## 6. Evaluation, Recommendations on Eastside Concepts

Jerry Marmon, ODOT

Jerry started the evaluation of the concepts by starting with the concepts TPAU recommended not forwarding. Using the Evaluation of East Concepts matrix each concept was reviewed.

West Park Connector (*concepts East 2, East 3, East 4 and East CAC 1A*)

Jerry pointed out that there may be elements of the concepts that can be modified and combined with another concept. When voting for a recommendation it is preferred to vote on all of the elements as a block.

Bart Van Syoc would like to see Tussey Lane closed on concept East 4.

Jim Wright would like to see concept CAC 1A on the table. The other West Park Connector concepts can be dropped. If we leave this on the table a little bit longer we can determine if it will work. In reviewing the evaluation criteria for CAC 1A it was

determined that there are considerable environmental, Section 4 (f), and residential impacts.

#### Added Lanes on Highway 199 (*concepts East 4, East CAC 1A, East CAC 1B and East PDT 1*)

Alex Grossi likes the CAC1B design (four lanes westbound to Redwood Avenue) coupled with elements from frontage road concepts and to dead end Tussey Lane.

Ron Wright is concerned with the design because of the truck traffic on Redwood Avenue. Details will have to be worked out.

#### Fourth Bridge

Jerry reviewed the evaluation criteria for this concept.

The concepts that were not recommended to be dropped by TPAU will be kept on the table for further study. Jerry asked the group for a formal recommendation from the CAC to forward to the PDT regarding the concepts that TPAU recommended dropping. It was decided that the committee would vote on the common elements rather than separate concepts with the knowledge that elements of different concepts may be applied to a preferred alternative.

The CAC recommendations for the following concepts are:

- |                        |         |        |             |
|------------------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 1. West Park Connector | 6 drop  | 4 keep | 1 undecided |
| 2. Added Lanes         | 1 drop  | 9 keep | 1 undecided |
| 3. Fourth Bridge       | 11 drop |        |             |

Discussion: Ron Wright would like to see the intersection at Allen Creek be designed to accommodate a future Fourth Bridge. He does not want to see money wasted building something that will have to be torn out in the future.

- |                           |        |        |  |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--|
| 4. Union Avenue Slip Ramp | 2 drop | 9 keep |  |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--|

Discussion: Suzanne Meyers asked how pedestrian and bicyclists would access the Union Avenue slip ramp area. It was decided that this is a design element that needs further study.

## 7. Next Steps

Angela Findley, Parsons Brinkerhoff

Angela explained that the next step in the process is to take the concepts, with the components that are recommended to move forward by the PDT, to the public open house. At the September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting the CAC will continue to work on the elements of the concepts that are forwarded.

## 8. Public Comment

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vicki asked if members of the public had comments.

Art Peary: Art asked: “Is the new Toyota dealership, which is scheduled to be built near Les Schawb, going to have a right-in lane?” Response: It will be difficult for Toyota to get a right-in lane.

## 9. **CAC Comfort Check**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vicki said this is the time for each CAC member let the project team know how they are feeling with the way things are going, and to ask questions.

Bart Van Syoc: Great

Randy Repp: Feels good about the process.

Suzanne Meyers: Okay

Alex Grossi: Happy to see that the committee, as a whole, is working in the same direction.

Jay Eastwood: Fine

Irv Citron: Expressed that he felt that more discussion is needed on the West segment. He doesn't want to see all of the problems moved up to where the project ends. One problem that has not been addressed is the fact that residents have to cross Highway 199 to access their mailboxes.

Rowdy Bates: I'm fine

Deanie Manning: I am feeling pretty good. We need to keep focused on what we are supposed to do and not get waylaid.

Jim Rafferty: Good

Ron Wright: I'm fine

Janine Law: Okay

## 10. **Wrap Up/Adjourn**

Vicki Guarino, RVCOG

Vickie gave details on the Highway 199 Open House. The Open House will be on Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Grants Pass YMCA gym.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.