



Highway 62 Corridor Project

Date: December 16, 2005

From: Pat Foley, RVCOG

**Re: JOINT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) AND
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING
MINUTES for December 15, 2005**

PDT Members in Attendance: Donna Beck, Brian Dunn, Nick Fortey, Mark Gibson, Kelly Madding and Jerry Marmon

PDT Members Absent: David Elliott, Skip Knight, Rick Levine, Dan Moore and Mike Quilty

CAC Members in Attendance: Bill Blair, Becky Brooks, Curt Burrill, Mike Gardiner, Mike Malepsy Mike Montero, Richard Moorman Bob Plankenhorn, Susan Rachor, Don Riegger, Wade Six and Paige West.

CAC Members Absent: David Christian and Nanci Watkins

Resource Technical Team in Attendance: Jim Collins, Susan Landis, John Raasch and Shirley Roberts, ODOT.

Staff Members in Attendance: Debbie Timms. Delanie Cutsforth, Kent Belleque and Gary Leaming, ODOT; Kathy Helmer and Pat Foley, RVCOG; Kevin Bernhardt, John Cullerton, Nadine Lee, Martha Richards and Terry Kearns, URS; Kim Parducci and Frank Stevens JRH

Members of the Public: Gordon Draper, Larry Zeigelmeier, Earl Wood, Mr. & Mrs. Wilson, Eric Leaming and Jim Bennett

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

1.0 Welcome/Introductions/Approval of Minutes

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry convened the meeting at 6:05 P.M. He started the meeting by asking the PDT and CAC members to introduce themselves. Terry asked for approval of the October 26, 2005 CAC minutes and the October 27, 2005 PDT minutes. The CAC and PDT minutes were approved as written.

2.0 Overview of all Alternatives

Terry Kearns, URS

Handouts for the meeting included: 1) Meeting PowerPoint Presentation, 2) 11 x 17 alternative concept maps, 3) In-Corridor Alternative Descriptions and Features, and 4) Alternative Configuration Graphs.

Terry started by reviewing the purpose of tonight's meeting which are to gain a better understanding of the design elements of each alternative and to gain an understanding of the issues and concerns of the CAC and PDT members.

Terry explained that the mapped concepts that will be reviewed tonight have elements that the CAC and PDT have not previously reviewed. The engineering team has included elements such as possible access points. He went on to say that the purpose of tonight's meeting is not to refine or redesign the alternative concepts.

Before starting his review of the alternatives Terry pointed out that because of the tight spacing at the southern terminus, a common feature of the alternatives is an at-grade intersection at Poplar Drive.

Terry reviewed each alternative and explained the primary design features.

1. Existing Highway Alternative

- Use existing Highway 62 alignment
- Frontage and 'backage' roads provide local access

Design features:

- 1) Existing Highway 62 would become a limited-access road. Lear Way and Crater Lake Avenue would provide local access
- 2) 3 interchanges located at Delta Waters, Vilas and Highway 140
- 3) Poplar Avenue grade-separated with connections to frontage and backage roads and no direct access to Highway 62
- 4) Design speed for Highway 62 would be 60-70 mph
- 5) Primary ROW impacts at Lear Way extension and interchange areas

2. Bypass Alternative

- Re-route through traffic onto a new road (Medco Haul Road)
- Existing Highway 62 is left unchanged for local traffic

Design features:

- 1) Bypass would be a 60-7 mph limited-access freeway
- 2) 3 interchanges located at south terminus, Vilas and Highway 140
- 3) Poplar grade-separated with ramp for southbound Highway 62 traffic
- 4) Existing Highway 62 would remain unchanged from Delta Waters to Corey
- 5) Primary ROW impacts at Bypass alignment (Medco Haul Road) and three interchange areas

Discussion:

There was a discussion regarding access to Highway 62 from the Poplar over (under) crossing and the number of lanes on the Bypass. Regarding the number of lanes, the present map shows 4 lanes but at the start there may only be 2 lanes.

3. Couplet Alternative

- Existing Highway 62 would become one-way northbound
- Medco Haul Road alignment would be developed as one-way southbound

Design features:

- 1) Existing Highway 62 and Medco Haul Road alignment would become one-way streets designed for 45 mph
- 2) No private driveways allowed on Medco Haul Road
- 3) No interchanges. At-grade intersections at all cross streets
- 4) Crater Lake Avenue moved east at Vilas to improve spacing
- 5) Primary ROW impacts at Medco Haul Road alignment, Crater Lake Avenue at Vilas and Lear Way extension

Discussion:

A question was asked as to why the speed limit was only 45 mph. The Couplet is designed for 55 mph but is posted at 45 mph. There are access points all along the eastbound and westbound 'expressways'.

4. Texas Turnaround

- Limited access road
- One-way frontage roads provide local access

Design features:

- 1) Limited access road; one-way frontage roads on either side would provide local access
- 2) 2 interchanges at Delta Waters and Vilas. Intersections at south and north termini
- 3) Poplar would be grade-separated with access to frontage roads only
- 4) Interchange ramp configuration would not meet ODOT spacing standards. This would require policy considerations
- 5) Primary ROW impacts along length of corridor

Discussion:

An explanation of the breadth of the alternative was discussed. There are two lanes in each direction plus two lanes for each frontage road. There are also allowances for shoulders on each side of the main arterial and frontage roads. Because the traffic analysis has not been done there is the possibility the lane configurations may change. If anything, more lanes may be needed, i.e. 3 lanes rather than two on portions of the roadway. The existing Highway 62 configuration is 181 feet wide. The Texas Turnaround configuration, with bike lanes and sidewalks is 286 feet wide.

5. North Terminus Options

In regard to these Options Terry pointed out the following:

- 1) Connection to Highway 140 is challenging because of interchange spacing
- 2) Need to avoid Denman Wildlife Refuge
- 3) May require access limitations

- There are six possible configurations for the Northern Terminus

i. Western alignment from Medco Haul Road

ii. Western alignment from existing Highway 62

Design Features

- 1) Uses Agate Road, would rejoin Highway 62 near Dutton Road
- 2) Local traffic patterns would be changed at Antelope
- 3) ROW impacts at interchange areas and SW corner of White City residential area

iii. Eastern alignment from Medco Haul Road

iv. Eastern alignment from existing Highway 62

Design Features

- 1) Would use Highway 140 to get east of White City
- 2) Interchanges at southern end, Highway 140 and Dutton Road
- 3) Significantly longer travel distance than existing Highway 62 route
- 4) Highway 140 would be located on Antelope through White City
- 5) Agate Road would not intersect with this system
- 6) ROW impacts at interchange areas and new roadway alignments

v. Existing Highway 62 alignment from Medco Haul Road

vi. Existing Highway 62 alignment from Existing Highway 62

Design Features

- 1) North of Gregory Road Existing Highway 62 would be a limited-access freeway
- 2) Diamond interchange at Highway 140
- 3) ROW impacts at interchange area and SW corner of White City residential area

3.0 Review and discuss mapped alternatives

Project Staff

Five stations displaying the alternatives were in place. Each station was manned by a staff member and a recorder to explain, record and answer questions about each alternative. CAC and PDT members were divided into five groups. Each group was instructed to proceed to a different station. Each group spent fifteen minutes at each station.

At the completion of this exercise a break was taken.

4.0 Focused discussion on alternatives

Kathy Helmer, RVCOG

Kathy started the group discussion by asking the recorders from each alternative station to give a brief summary of comments heard during the review of the alternative maps. After each summary the PDT and CAC are invited to ask questions or add further observations.

Northern Terminus

Staff: Kent Belleque

Recorder: Gary Leaming

Comments recorded and reported by Gary Leaming

Regarding the East Options

- Beltway hems in White City
- Restricts White City's ability to grow
- Roadways are located in residential areas
- Bisepts residential areas
- Long facility which would incur higher transportation costs
- Least disruptive to existing uses

Regarding the West Options

- Right-of-way impacts to housing along Avenue A
- Suggestion made to follow Medco Haul Road to East Gregory to avoid commercial development
- Concern regarding Agate improvements encroaching on commercial properties, I.E. Big R
- Good Highway 140 connectivity to Antelope Road and I-5. Better freight route
- The "existing alternative" which uses Highway 62 through White City does not have a good Kirtland connection for freight traffic. Therefore, freight traffic is directed to the bypass and on to Central Point

Group Discussion

Kathy asked the group if any of the West Termini options seem to be better or worse for the residents of White City.

Comments:

Several in the group agreed that because the West Option goes through the industrial area rather than the residential area, this would be better for the residents of White City.

Mike Montero Mike feels it is hard to know what kind of growth is going to happen in the Valley. The West Terminus Option would seem to be better if we can devise a means which does not create an artificial barrier in White City.

Kelly Madding, as a representative of the Urban Renewal Agency and Jackson County, was asked if any of the options would work better for White City.

Kelly Madding From an Urban Renewal or County standpoint, I believe they would prefer the West Options because of improvements that have been made in the residential area. She agreed with Mike Montero regarding hemming in White City. If the area does ever incorporate the highway could be a barrier. She added that if you are going to split residential from the industrial area you might as well leave Highway 62 like it is. One thing White City residents talk about is the demarcation between the residential and industrial areas. They would like to see that demarcation softened.

Kelly was asked what the status of incorporation for White City and if there is a Comprehensive Plan for the Urban Containment boundary.

Kelly The Urban Renewal Plan and the Agency will probably exist until 2010. After that it is up to the citizens of White City to decide what they want to do in terms of incorporation.

White City has urban density zoning now. The area is designated as an Urban Unincorporated Community with a boundary that cannot be changed easily. In order to change the boundary they would have to be in periodic review. The County probably would not change the boundary unless White City incorporates. In the past there were citizens who were looking toward incorporation. The

Legislature took actions in the last biennium that made it more difficult for White City to incorporate. I don't think anyone knows what will happen in the future. The current population within the boundary is approximately 8,000 and they are looking at a build out that would have a population of 18,000 to 19,000.

Curt Burrill The mapped drawings only show one east/west connection at Antelope. He suggested at least one more east/west connection be added, possibly at Avenue G.

Paige West Paige has concerns about the out-of-direction travel and area connectivity for bike and pedestrian users. A true effort has to be made to make sensible connections.

Overall the groups preferred the Western Options with future design adjustments.

Existing Alternative

Staff: John Cullerton

Recorder: Kim Parducci

Comments recorded and reported by Kim Parducci

- Pro for this alternative is that traffic moves well on Highway 62.
- Business accesses are compromised, especially at the south terminus
- Businesses would have to relocate on the east side of the highway, adjacent to existing Crater Lake Avenue
- Creates bottleneck at Delta Waters
- Many business and residential right-of-way impacts
- Creates more traffic on Foothill Road through local network system
- Creates disconnect to and from Delta Waters on east side of highway with new Skypark connection
- Confusing frontage road concept with separation on one side of highway but not on the other side
- Extremely disruptive to existing businesses.

Group Discussion:

Additional concerns were expressed because of the expense of building this alternative because of the right-of-way costs and construction costs which include the need to reconstruct Crater Lake Avenue and to construct access roads.

The group expressed their dismay at the impacts created by this alternative. A lot of businesses would be put out of business. The impacts at Antelope Road and Highway 62 are significant because of the Boise complex.

Bypass Alternative

Staff: Nadine Lee

Recorder: Martha Richards

Comments recorded and reported by Martha Richards

- Concern about the business access from the Poplar and Delta Waters areas.
- Concern about the Crater Lake Avenue/Delta Waters intersection and how it works.
- Concern about impacts to businesses on existing 62
- Questions about what will happen to Highway 62. How would it work and who would have jurisdiction.
- Concern about the movement of traffic from the bypass to existing Highway 62.
- Concern for limited access.
- Concern at the northern terminus. Major impacts just south of Gregory to new warehouses.
- Concern at White City interchange at Highway 140. Destroys too many businesses.

Group Discussion:

The group discussed the possible realignment of the northern portion of the Medco Haul Road. The group is in agreement that they want to avoid as many impacts to the industrial area and core businesses of White City as possible.

Mike Montero said that the industrial complexes in White City are important to the economy of the area. He feels that impacts to this area can have significant ramifications to the whole area.

Texas Turnaround

Staff: Kevin Bernhardt

Recorder: Pat Foley

Comments recorded and reported by Pat Foley

- Positive comment made about the Texas Turnaround Alternative was "It is a great concept, but not for this area.
- Significant right-of-way impact along entire length of roadway
- Cost prohibitive
- Confusing for drivers. Too many decisions to be made
- Too much out of direction travel
- Requires too much space
- Cannot be phased
- This concept has not been used in Oregon and may require an exception
- Most people stated that this was their least favorite alternative.

Group Discussion:

Jerry Marmon added that one pro for this concept is that it moves a lot of traffic.

Kathy asked the group as a whole how they would rank this alternative compared to the others. The group agreed that this alternative ranks at the bottom of the list.

The group asked if it was worth modeling. Wade Six added that in reality the construction of this alternative is politically unattainable. It would also pull the Central Business District of Medford to Highway 62. It would alter the way the City grows in the future.

Couplet

Staff: Terry Kearns

Recorder: Kathy Helmer

Comments recorded and reported by Kathy Helmer

- Concern about Poplar and how Poplar connects to the system.
- What is the pressure on surface roads if there is no access?
- The couplet system, with its interior streets, would open up access and create more development in that area.
- Concern about the changed impact to businesses due to traffic patterns.
- Questions on whether access control on Highway 62 would change.
- Concern for out of direction traffic
- Questions on how it would work for developers
- Bike routes would be dangerous due to so many access points
- Questions about whether or not you could turn left into a business if you are northbound
- Would need to develop Crater Lake Avenue because there are only two lanes and no bike lanes
- It does provide capacity even though it creates more vehicle miles
- Concern about pedestrians and bicyclist having the ability to cross over highway without having to travel long out of direction routes
- Question about being able to turn left into Big Box area
- Questions about the new Owens Road which runs between Costco and Wal-Mart – it is too wide
- Poplar is problematic. Should have direct access from I-5
- May have less impact on businesses than other alternatives
- At-grade intersections lower the capacity of that system
- It is not a long-term solution due to capacity issues and the fact that it is signalized

Group Discussion:

Concerns were raised about air quality because of the number of signals.

Access to business was raised as a concern. Jerry Marmon explained that it would be necessary to combine accesses (combined driveways) at intersection points along Highway 62.

There are no known couplets of this scale in the State that could be used as a model. There are modified versions used in urban areas.

Wade Six asked if acceleration and de-acceleration lanes are a component of this concept. Nadine Lee replied that this is something that would be taken into consideration during the modeling.

5.0 Public Comment

Kathy Helmer, RVCOG

Kathy asked for comments from members of the public.

Larry Zeigelmeier Larry would like to seek a complete bypass scenario. A bypass would free up this committee from having to worry about little things like stub roads in and off, left and right hand turn lanes. With a complete bypass scenario Medford, Central Point and White City would have to pick up the responsibility for the current Highway 62. He feels the plans for White City are great but would like to see a 4 lane highway (Highway 140) that would connect to I-5. He expressed his concern about the reaction from the citizens of White City when they see the alternatives.

Earl Wood Earl prefers the bypass alternative. He feels there is still a lot of work to be done on the south and north ends of this alternative. He is concerned about the impacts to businesses near Poplar.

Terry Kearns stated for the record that the couple asking questions at the beginning of the presentation was looking for specificity that we have not quite reached.

6.0 Next Steps

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry acknowledged that members have concerns on what is to be done at Poplar Drive. He went on to explain why alternatives cannot be dropped at this time. The alternatives on the table have to go through the Evaluation Criteria process. The alternatives have to be given fair and equal treatment. The Evaluation Criteria is the second sieve that is used to narrow down the range of alternatives. At the January and February meetings we will be using the Evaluation Criteria. Some of the concerns stated tonight will be addressed by using the Evaluation Criteria and decisions can be made.

After the alternatives are selected to forward into the Environmental Analysis the CAC and PDT will be taking a break. This will allow the staff to work on the Environmental Analysis.

7.0 CAC/PDT Comfort Check

Kathy Helmer, RVCOG

Kathy asked the CAC & PDT to express what their sense of the meeting tonight.

Bill Blair	I'm fine
Becky Brooks	Good
Donna Beck	Donna stated that she understood the reason for not dropping alternatives at this time. Namely the group has to document why an alternative has been dropped.
Curt Burrill	I'm okay
Brian Dunn	I'm okay
Mike Gardiner	I think evaluating all of the different alternatives helps to put into perspective the reasons why something fits better. I don't have a problem looking at the ideas that I don't like because it helps me focus on the good parts of different alternatives.
Mike Montero	Good meeting
Jerry Marmon	Great. He said he appreciates people taking the extra time to attend the meeting and hopefully the information has helped clarify the alternatives.
Mike Malepsy	Good meeting
Paige West	Good meeting. Paige has concerns on how the alternatives will meet the Purpose and Need Statement especially in how an alternative will provide a multi-modal system for transit and for bicycle and pedestrian users. She realizes there are ODOT requirements for providing facilities that will allow multi-modal trips. She made a request for the staff and the PDT to look contact higher ranking sources to understand how to accomplish the requirements.
Susan Rachor	I learned a lot tonight and I am comfortable. She expressed her dismay that certain alternatives could not be dropped

now so that the time and money spent could go to better uses.

Don Riegger Don agrees with Susan about dropping alternatives but he does understand that the process has to be followed. He expressed his appreciation to the staff for their hard work.

Kelly Madding Kelly also expressed her appreciation for all of the information presented tonight. She said she was surprised that she liked the Couplet Alternative as much as she does. After tonight's meeting she has a lot of information to take to the Jackson County policy makers.

Wade Six I'm great.

Nick Forety Nick feels that the time and money spent reviewing the alternatives are not great compared to what is spent on the overall project. Even though some of the alternatives seem unusual they give a bracket in which you can compare the different alternatives. The process is working.

Nick has concerns over the potential reaction of businesses and residents in the White City area. There is the supposition that there is going to be a lot of concern by the residents and businesses in terms of how this project is going to impact the future growth of the city. My thought is there a way, rather than have this project drive this process, to set up a study that will look at where White City wants to be in the future.

Mark Gibson I am positive.

Debbie Timms Debbie thanked the staff and the CAC and PDT for participating.

The staff will look into putting together a meeting with industrial/business leaders in the White City area.

8.0 Adjournment

Next CAC meeting will be on January 25th
Next PDT meeting will be on January 26th