



Highway 62 Corridor Project

Date: September 2009

From: Sue Casavan, RVCOG

**Re: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) / CITIZEN
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) JOINT MEETING
MINUTES for September 30, 2009**

CAC Members in Attendance: Mike Malepsy, Paige Townsend, Becky Brooks, Bill Blair, Wade Six, Richard Moorman, Mike Montero, Don Riegger, Nanci Watkins, Mike Gardiner,

CAC Members Absent: Curt Burrill, Susan Rachor, David Christian, Bob Plankenhorn

PDT Members in Attendance: John Vial, Mark Gibson, Brian Dunn, Suzanne Myers, Vicki Guarino, Al Densmore, Anna Henson, Chris Zelmer, David Elliott, Nick Fortey, Dale Lininger

PDT Members Absent: Mike Quilty

Location: Rogue Community College, Table Rock Campus

Guests: 43 members of the public

Staff Present: Tim Fletcher, Art Anderson, Dick Leever, Debbie Timms, Lisa Cortes, and Gary Leaming of ODOT; Terry Kearns of URS; Pat Foley and Sue Casavan of RVCOG

1.0 Review Agenda and Approval of Minutes

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. convened the meeting of the Highway 62 Corridor Project at 6:05 p.m. He asked committee members if there were any additions or corrections to the September 9, 2009 meeting minutes.

On a motion by Mark G. and seconded by Brian D. the committee unanimously approved the September 9, 2009 minutes as presented.

2.0 Project Update and Object of Tonight's Meeting

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. said there were two objectives to the meeting tonight: review new information based on questions asked at the last meeting and get a recommendation as to the South Terminus options.

He reminded members that the process of looking at the Hwy 62 corridor from White City to I-5 was still happening and the draft environmental document will be published toward the end of the year. Comments will be solicited and the community will be asked to make a recommendation on a selected alternative for the entire corridor. He said this was a very large project which is always built in phases and the opportunity has come up for ODOT to look at an interim phase of this project. He said graphics have been prepared to assist in understanding what the interim phase includes.

3.0 Overview of Hwy 62 Corridor

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. briefly reviewed and presented maps of the two alternatives for the entire corridor. He said the interim solution was a logical first phase of this project and the question for members tonight and in the near future is how the alignment will be terminated on the north and south. Subsequent phases will build on this phase in the future. He emphasized that there was much to be re-used and very little that would not be used in other subsequent phases.

4.0 Access Management

Tim Fletcher, ODOT

Tim F. said there were good questions raised at the previous meetings and staff had prepared graphics hoping to alleviate concerns. He added that regardless of the decision that will be made at the South Terminus it will not alter anything that will be done in later phases. He presented maps of the South Terminus, Poplar Drive and Bullock discussed the grade separation at Vilas Road. He informed the committee that costs for the Cut and Cover will be \$79-87 million and the At-Grade \$69-76 million for the Southern Terminus. He explained that the costs included construction and right of way. The section north of Vilas Road that will reconnect with Hwy 62 is approximately a mile and the total interim phase is a 3.5 mile long project. Costs for the Northern Terminus are \$45 million Cut and Cover and \$29-34 million for At-Grade. He added that the difference was closer to \$6 million between the two options instead of the \$10 million reported last meeting. He said staff had taken another look at business accesses and presented maps of the access management locations for the two options. He explained traffic movements and said there would not be any left 'ins', anyone southbound would not be able to make a

left. He reported that staff will look at accommodating u-turns at the intersection as part of the project. He added that the two options were extremely similar as far as access management.

5.0 Bike / Pedestrian Facilities

Tim Fletcher, ODOT

Tim F. presented maps showing bicycle and pedestrian movements through the two options. He explained traffic movements and how they would be handled on Hwy 62 and the bypass. He said the intent was to show people that ODOT recognizes the issue and staff will need to refine and work out design detail with a bike/ped committee.

John Archer asked where the pedestrians were coming from and where are they going. He has a business out there and never sees anyone walking or biking. Tim F. responded that this is a means to see how bike/ped facilities could be accommodated in the design. Wade S. asked if the width of the project stayed uniform for the entire phase and Tim F. said it did not stay constant. Wade S. asked if the right of way acquisition was the same for both options and Tim F. replied yes. Chris Z. added that all the line work shown on the maps is currently ODOT right of way.

John Vial said the maps showed 3 access locations towards the Poplar Drive end and asked if left turns will be allowed between Poplar Drive and Delta Waters and Tim F. replied that no, they would not be allowed.

6.0 South Terminus Presentation

Tim Fletcher, ODOT

Tim F. presented maps of the two Southern Terminus options and discussed the v/c ratios and said building the facility further to the north improves the v/c. He said questions came up of what portions of the facility would not be re-usable in the future and he showed maps for the different options overlaid on the two bypass options.

Nick F. asked if he could explain the signal operation with the triple left and Tim F. said the movement southbound on Hwy 62 would be triple lefts to make movement and the bypass coming into the intersection would be one lane in each direction but at this intersection there would be a build out of additional lanes.

Wade S. asked if there was much of a margin between the net acreage required for right of way for the two options. Tim F. right of way will be purchased that would be required for future build out.

Vicki G. asked if the dark blue area indicated pieces that will not be used in the final build out and Tim F. said the areas would not likely be used in the ultimate build out.

Dale L. asked what obstacles would there be for the possibility of u-turns at the intersection and Tim F. said currently they could not be accommodated because of the geometry and with reconstruction staff will have the opportunity to take another look at the location.

Don R. asked if the Cut and Cover was possible in front of the airport and Tim F. replied yes as long the facility is kept below the threshold. Terry K. added that in conversations with the Federal Aviation Administration they actually prefer a Cut and Cover box at that location.

Bern Case commented that the line through the area is called an imaginary surface and the structure has to be below the imaginary surface. He said they have had conversations throughout the project about not violating that surface and this plan is designed to avoid the imaginary surface.

Nanci W. asked with the At-Grade option if the signal would be too close to Delta Waters and cause traffic backup and Tim F. said traffic analysis showed it would not be a problem.

David E. commented that currently Delta Waters gets backed up all the way to Crater Lake Avenue when there are left turns going southbound on Hwy 62. He asked if other things were being considered to alleviate the congestion issue on Delta Waters. He added that if left turns were not allowed off of Whittle, Sky Park or any of those roads on Hwy 62 it will all be put on Delta Waters and there will be further issues to deal with. Brian D. replied that there will be more time given to that movement with the pulling off of other traffic going through and the signal will operate below capacity but will not fix everything.

Man from audience said he had an issue with the signal lights changing below the airport approach and he asked how far to the right of the centerline are the signal lights. Terry K. said that will be something staff will work with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Nick F. asked if bicycle/pedestrian connectivity and access points will be something examined both through the subcommittee and the document for this design as part of the process and staff responded yes. He asked if any of the options at the South Terminus preclude any of the options that have been looked at and Terry K. responded no, that all the options were compatible. Tim F. said the intent was that whatever we came up with it would fit within the existing footprint of the ultimate configuration.

Mike Montero commented that members were looking at two issues: the overall design of the project and the interim phase. He asked that whatever bike/ped connections are provided in the interim phase they will not preclude the application in the potential build out of the South Terminus. Terry K said they might have to relocate and Mike Montero thought that was the issue where bike/ped facilities were not memorialized and when they are moved later there is public criticism. He thought if that was a potential they should be memorialized in this discussion so years down the road it will not be new to people.

7.0 Public Comment

Terry Kearns, URS

Gordon Draper Biomass One: He asked if there would be a minimum speed limit on the bypass since there will only one lane both ways. He was concerned how that would be controlled if a slower driver was present. Tim F. said there would not be the opportunity to legally pass someone and the lanes will be separated by a median barrier as well. He added that it would take about \$5-6 million dollars to add a lane in both directions and ODOT would like to be able to provide that but at this point the intention is to post at 55 mph.

Jeannette Lawson: She thought the region fortunate for allowing left turns for so many years as this was not common in larger cities, u-turns and go back. She commented that when the project first started she thought this was supposed to be an expressway to make

things more direct and she was not sure where the bike/ped concerns came from and wondered if it was required by the state. Terry K. said the question came up at the last meeting with the Cut and Cover box, changing multi-levels how would you get across with alternate modes. She felt it did not make a lot of sense when there are other options going to the same location. Art A. added that ODOT is required with any modernization project (which is a project that adds capacity) to accommodate bicycles and on the bypass itself shoulders will be built but merging and crossing traffic will require some extra design for safety.

Bern Case: He wanted to clarify that past tense has been used in talking about the lease where the used car lot is. He said it is currently being leased and in good standing.

Jim Coombes, Fred Meyer stores: He was glad to see comments from the last meeting being incorporated. He said he was trying to picture southbound with the Cut and Cover if somebody was going to try to make a left turn into the south businesses at the light. He introduced Brent Ahren to discuss the issue.

Brent Ahren, Group McKenzie: He had a concern on the Cut and Cover if someone was on the bypass and they wanted to turn onto Poplar Drive they would have to merge across two lanes and he wondered if the distance would be sufficient to make the shift. Brian D. and Chris Z. explained the alignment in further detail.

Ron Brion: He asked why the bypass needed to go any farther than the interim, millions of dollars could be eliminated and it bypasses the area needing to avoid. He asked what would be accomplished by going to White City. He commented that there would still be a lot of problems with flooding where the interim solution will be. Terry K. said traffic studies show the farther north the solution is built the more traffic drawn off to the bypass and he added that the water issue will be addressed.

Dina Elliott commented that with the signal option the three lights off of Delta Waters, Owen Drive and Crater Lake Hwy when it comes to the light that traffic is going to be more on Springbrook which will flow into Delta Waters and asked if anyone had looked into that. Brian D. said that future year analysis assumed the new configuration and has addressed it and Terry K. added that the traffic analysis for the whole corridor does look at it.

Brent Ahren and Brian Dunn discussed turn lanes and alignments for the South Terminus.

8.0 CAC / PDT Recommendation

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. said the question for committee members was should ODOT go with the Cut & Cover or the At-Grade Signal option for the South Terminus. He said this was a recommendation only and that ODOT will make the final decision.

Wade Six – Cut and Cover, he added that there are properties that are very large retail centers and a lot of what the committee is doing was to prevent sprawl. He added that if

businesses had concerns about people not being able to make those lefts the committee is sensitive to it.

Mark Gibson – Cut and Cover

Becky Brooks – Cut and Cover

Dale Lininger – Cut and Cover

Brian Dunn – He said he was for the At-grade Signal because of the difference in costs and was concerned with some issues that Chris Z. was able to address, Cut and Cover.

Bill Blair – Cut and Cover

Mike Gardiner – Cut and Cover

John Vial – Cut and Cover

Suzanne Myers – Cut and Cover

Al Densmore – Cut and Cover

Chris Zelmer – Cut and Cover

Mike Montero – Cut and Cover for the following reasons: He thought it provided the best volume to capacity and that is going to have implications for Medford's economic development future. He added that the notion that there will be additional funding opportunities going forward is probably pretty remote in the foreseeable future. He thought the Cut and Cover will be the best long term and interim solution.

Paige Townsend – She said due to the better separation and safety for cyclists and pedestrians and providing preservation of facilities at full build out she chose the Cut and Cover.

David Elliott – Cut and Cover

Nanci Watkins – Cut and Cover, she thought it would keep the traffic flowing better.

Don Riegger – He thought the Cut and Cover would be the best option but would like to see a little more detail of how it will be handled at Poplar Drive.

Richard Moorman – Cut and Cover

Nick Fortey – He said he was a non-voting member but would recommend the Cut and Cover because it will be better in terms of long term operational and given the uncertainty of the funding it gives a longer time frame and more flexibility for long term

design. He was a little concerned about the triple left from an operational standpoint stating that it was an awkward movement for drivers and rarely done.

Mike Malepsy – Cut and Cover

Vicki Guarino – She chose the Cut and Cover for the following reasons: performance of roadway, gives useful solution for longer amount of time, more safer opportunities for bicycles and pedestrians.

Anna Henson – Cut and Cover

9.0. Next Steps

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. said the next meeting will be in two weeks, October 14. The group will discuss the North Terminus and what they feel would be the best options.

Al D. said he wanted to make it clear for the record that the Medford City Council and staff are supportive of the project and the concept outlined but there are still some significant technical issues that the city has and will need to work with staff to address to move the project forward comfortably.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.