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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 8, 2011
TO: Lisa Cortes
ODOT Region 3 Project Manager
FROM: Jennifer Danziger, Shelly Alexander
SUBJECT: Update on OR 99 Corridor Plan
PROJECT: ODOT0000-0711

This memo provides a status update on the OR 99 Corridor Plan and outlines the consequences of several changes in direction that will require scope amendments.

Summary of Issues and Requests

Four issues/requests related to OR 99 have come up in the course of the project:

1. The first issue relates to the analysis of the S Valley View Road intersection with OR 99. ODOT District 8 traffic raised concerns at the TAC meeting on May 23, 2011. The project has been held up while the differences between analyses were reviewed. TPAU has subsequently provided direction to DEA about how to resolve the differences.
2. The second issue relates to revisions to the RVMPO model as a result of land use changes initiated by the City of Medford. This issue was first raised by the City at the TAC meeting on May 23, 2011. The project was held up while TPAU reviewed the impacts of these changes. TPAU has subsequently provided direction to DEA about how to proceed with future conditions analysis.
3. In addition to the hold-ups described above, DEA was asked by TPAU to analyze a second future forecast condition. This request came in response to the drop in current (2010) traffic volumes in the corridor as compared with traffic counts from several years ago (2004) due to the economic downturn.
4. A final unresolved issue is whether or not to extend the boundary of the project area northward to Stewart Avenue in response to the City of Medford's request.

Additional detail about each of these items is provided below along with a more specific status update and a description of the consequences if the issue has been resolved.

1. S Valley View Road Intersection Analysis

At the May TAC meeting, comments from District 8 traffic indicated that there were inconsistencies between the analysis results of the OR 99/S Valley View Road intersection from the Ashland TSP and OR 99 Corridor Plan. DEA requested the conflicting data from District 8 and received a copy of a 2005 traffic count which was grown to represent 2010 volumes and a 2010 analysis model based on those estimated 2010 volumes. The results differ from the DEA analysis and the differences raised several

questions about the source of the differences. For example, the DEA analysis is based on 2010 counts collected by ODOT which show volumes with no significant growth since 2005. Furthermore, the traffic volumes were not grown uniformly but rather different growth rates were applied to different traffic movements resulting in a very different distribution of traffic from the original 2005 ODOT count and the 2010 DEA count. These points were recently raised with TPAU and DEA was informed that a 2009 count was conducted for the Ashland TSP and we were directed to obtain that count and review the differences.

Status: DEA is now working to obtain that traffic count from ODOT traffic counting services in Salem. When we obtain the count, we will compare it with the other count data and review a course of action with TPAU and District 8 traffic staff.

Consequences: The existing traffic analysis was completed and reviewed by TPAU and DEA received buy-off on our existing traffic volumes. DEA was subsequently provided with new data from ODOT and requested to revise our numbers to incorporate that new data. Consequently, we have been asked to perform additional work beyond our original scope and an amendment will be needed.

2. RVMPO Model Issues

After some research into the model results with the City of Medford revised land uses, TPAU directed DEA to use the 2030 RVMPO v1 model for the OR 99 project rather than the more current 2034 RVMPO v2 model. The 2034 model is not producing good results in the Phoenix and Talent areas. The 2030 model is also more consistent with the results used for the Fern Valley Interchange.

Status: DEA is working with TPAU to acquire the 2030 model outputs and confirm the methodologies to be used to extrapolate the 2030 model forecasts out to 2034 (our future analysis year).

Consequences: DEA had already developed future forecast volumes and run the preliminary analysis of future baseline conditions based on the 2034 model runs. We had been working with TPAU on the forecasting process and concerns surrounding the low base year counts when this issue was raised at the TAC meeting in May. Consequently, all of the work must be redone to utilize the RVMPOv1 model data in response to this change in direction and an amendment to the project scope will be necessary to perform the revised forecasting and analysis.

3. Additional Future Traffic Volume Scenario

A comparison of current (2010) traffic volumes in the corridor as compared with traffic counts from several years ago (2004) reveals that daily traffic volumes in the OR 99 corridor are down between 4 and 12 percent due to the economic downturn. Furthermore, volumes on I-5 may be down 16 to 17 percent around the Fern Valley Road interchange. When DEA first produced future traffic volumes using the existing data and the 2034 model outputs back in April 2011, TPAU raised concerns about the differences between the baseline volumes developed using the lower current counts versus those used in the Fern Valley Interchange EIS. In May, we discussed this issue with TPAU and we reached resolution with TPAU regarding the OR 99 corridor future baseline model. TPAU would like to see two baseline model scenarios (instead of the one scoped).

Status: Direction on this issue had already been provided by TPAU prior to the issues raised at the May 23, 2011 TAC meeting by the City of Medford regarding land use revisions.

Consequences: A second future analysis scenario will affect Task 5 (Future Baseline Conditions) and Task 6 (Corridor Concept Analysis). As a result, an amendment to the project scope will be necessary to perform this second forecasting scenario for the baseline and alternatives analyses.

4. Expansion of the Study Area

At the TAC meeting on May 23, 2011, the City of Medford suggested that the study area be expanded northward to where the City of Medford takes jurisdiction of the roadway rather than ending at Garfield Street. The section of roadway under consideration has recently been reconstructed by ODOT as a five-lane roadway with sidewalks on the northeast side of the highway, bike lanes on both sides of the road, turn bays at some access points, and median control at others. No sidewalks were installed on the southwest side of OR 99 because of the proximity to the railroad tracks and no sidewalks are likely to be installed in the future.

Status: A final decision about changing the study area boundaries has not been made.

Consequences: While no additional traffic analysis may be necessary to incorporate this section of OR 99 into the project study area, changes to some mapping and inventory data would be necessary for the existing conditions. An amendment to the project scope will be necessary if a decision is made to expand the project boundary.

Changes in Scope

As noted under the consequences associated with each issue, a scope amendment will be needed to address the issues that have been raised during the course of the project. A draft amendment with a breakdown of costs spreadsheet is attached summarizing the changes for the first three issues.

Additional changes would be necessary if the study area were to be expanded as well. The level of effort to implement those changes is 20 to 24 hours at an estimated fee of \$2,500 and would require changes to all figures and text in all three technical memoranda produced so far.

Attachments/Enclosures: Draft Scope Amendment and Breakdown of Costs