



MEETING SUMMARY

US 97 BAKER ROAD INTERCHANGE AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN (IAMP)

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #1

APRIL 5, 2021; 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

VIRTUAL

ATTENDEES

Project Advisory Committee Members

Chris Cheng (ODOT)

David Warrick (ODOT)

Jim Scholtes (ODOT)

Jenn Cline (ODOT)

David Hirsch (ODOT)

Peter Russell (Deschutes County)

Kevin Halesworth (ODOT)

Peter Murphy (ODOT)

Tyler Deke (Bend MPO)

Damian Syrnyk (City of Bend)

Marcos Romero (US Forest Service)

Rachel Zakem *for* Andrea Breault (Cascades East Transit)

Tom Kuhn (Deschutes County Health Services)

Henry Stroud (Bend Park & Recreation District)

Scott Edelman (DLCD)

Nathan Garibay (Deschutes County Emergency Services)

David Roth (Deschutes County BPAC)

Rory Priday (Riverwoods Country Store)

Colin Wills (Arnold Irrigation District)

Charlie Endicott *for* Joe Bales (Morning Star Christian School)

James Cook (Homeless Leadership Coalition)

Greg Bryant (Deschutes River Woods)

Not Present: Mike Tiller (Bend-La Pine School District), Bill Gregoricus (Central Oregon Coalition for Access), Greg Sublett (Abilitree)

Project Team

Don Morehouse (ODOT), John Bosket (DKS Associates), Kayla Fleskes (DKS Associates)

Other Attendees

Bob Stolle (ODOT), David Amiton (ODOT), Peter Schuytema (ODOT), Rick Williams (ODOT), Theresa Conley (ODOT), David Abbas (City of Bend), Phil Chang (Deschutes County Commissioner)

and MPO Policy Board Member), Barb Campbell (Bend City Councilor, MPO Policy Board Member), Richard Swart (ODOT), Whitney Hale (Deschutes County), Dave Miller (affiliation not noted)

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

- John Bosket opened up the meeting and noted that there would likely be a change moving forward to break the group into two separate groups given the size of the advisory committee. The committee introduced themselves and their role on the project or specific group they represent.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Don Morehouse provided some background on the project purpose, with John Bosket providing additional details.
 - US 97 Baker Road Interchange Area Management Plan (IAMP) will identify potential long-term solutions consistent with other County, City and ODOT plans.
 - US 97 Baker Road interchange has been included in prior planning studies such as the US 97 Parkway Plan and US 97 Bend to Lava Butte Refinement Plan.
 - The US 97 Baker Road interchange was constructed 30 years ago to serve rural traffic and truck bypass traffic. With urban growth that has occurred over the past 30 years and the additional growth planned in the future, improvements need to be identified to serve all modes of travel into the future (20-year planning horizon).
- John reviewed the project study area, area of potential impact and area of social impact. John reviewed the project schedule and noted that three additional PAC meetings are planned for the project, and the next one will be scheduled shortly after this meeting.
 - Damian Syrnyk asked if the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) would review Tech Memo (TM) #2 and TM #3 at the next meeting. John confirmed that TM #2, TM #3 as well as TM #4 would be reviewed in the next PAC meeting.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND DECISION MAKING

- John noted that the Bend MPO Policy Board is filling the role of the project's Executive Steering Committee, and will be the decision-making body. The PAC is in an advisory role and input from the committee will be shared with the Executive Steering Committee.
- Interest in participating in this project has resulted in a much larger PAC than desired, which may make it difficult for everyone to get an opportunity to ask questions and provide input. Therefore, to make participation easier going forward, we are going to divide the PAC into two committees: a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of agency representatives and a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) consisting of community representatives. These meetings will not be restricted to only committee members so you can sit in on any committee meetings desired even if you are not a member.
- One of our project goals is to create an inclusive planning process that encourages and facilitates participation by all community members. Some community members may not typically get engaged in projects like this and we are looking for ways to reach them and learn

what we can do to help them participate. John asked if there were any specific groups that the project team should reach out to in order to gather additional feedback.

- Damian suggested the neighborhood associations that represent Southwest Bend and Southeast Bend.
- James Cook suggested that it is more effective to send a project representative to group meetings rather than inviting folks to participate in project meetings. He elaborated that approach would allow for broader community input rather than relying on one individual to represent an entire community.
- Peter Russell noted that the Deschutes River Woods has a neighborhood group that represents the area. Greg Bryant confirmed he is the representative for that group.
- Jenn Cline noted that she has seen other agencies use NextDoor to advertise project meetings.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- John noted the goals and objectives help guide the development of the solutions and evaluate how the solutions meet the project purpose and stakeholder values. Initial draft goals and objectives consider the goals/objectives from similar projects with some of the same stakeholders such as the US 97 Parkway Plan and US 97 Bend North Interchange Study. The MPO Policy Board also provided feedback on the goals and objectives and those have been incorporated into the version that is under review with the PAC. No weighting is planned to be applied to the criteria and the order of the goals or objectives is not significant and does not indicate importance.
- John introduced the eight existing goals and discussed some of the objectives and evaluation criteria associated with each goal.
 - Goal 1: Provide for efficient travel through the interchange area based on existing and planned land uses in the area. (the efficient motor vehicle travel goal)
 - > John noted this goal is evaluated based on existing and planned land uses in the area. In addition, ODOT, City of Bend, and Deschutes County already set thresholds for allowable levels of congestion, so this goal can be quantified for future travel patterns.
 - > Nathan Garibay asked if there is space for emergency traffic management under this goal? Particularly, for the communities that are on the edge of the urban interface (such as the Deschutes River Woods neighborhood), wildfires are a concern and understanding wildfire evacuation is important. John noted this is covered in a later goal but he will confirm that Nathan's concern is addressed once that goal is discussed.
 - Phil Chang also responded that the MPO Policy Board asked about the smooth functioning of the fire station near the US 97 Baker Road interchange and noted that Baker Road/Knott Road is one of the few egress routes out of the Deschutes River Woods neighborhood in case of wildfire.
 - > James asked who the committee should send edits/additions to the goals and objectives to? John noted anything can be discussed in the meeting today or if additional thoughts arise after the meeting, to send comments/questions to Don Morehouse.
 - Goal 2: Improve safety for all modes of travel.

- > John noted this goal focuses on reducing the severity and frequency of crashes and meeting existing access spacing standards.
- > Jenn Cline asked if the project would consider a quiet zone request for the rail. John noted this is the second time the question has been asked and that conversation could happen as part of this project. Don Morehouse asked if Bob Stolle (ODOT Rail) had any thoughts on this. Bob noted that a quiet zone request would be coordinated through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), which has requirements for quiet zones. After going through the FRA process, ODOT would then coordinate with the railroad to make any necessary changes through a crossing order.
- > Rachel Zakem asked if ensuring safety for pedestrian and bicycle connections to the multimodal path between Knott Rd and Lava Butte should be added here. John noted that is incorporated in a separate goal.
- > Phil Chang noted that Councilor Barb Campbell had joined the call and that the two of them would both be interested in hearing the discussions of the committee.
- Goal 3: Support regional and local economic development.
 - > John noted this goal considers maintaining access to properties in a manner that supports existing and planned land use and considers freight truck movement and railroad movement.
 - > John asked the committee how many railroad crossings occur during a given day, noting that there was some discrepancy between data sources that were provided. Estimates from committee members ranged from 2-5 per day.
- Goal 4: Facilitate the use of multimodal travel options.
 - > John listed the objectives under this goal including providing low-stress biking and walking facilities, identifying where planned trails can be safely connected and accessed, including long-term connectivity to the south (such as the Lava Butte Multi-Use Path) and considering how to accommodate future expanded Cascades East Transit (CET) services.
 - Theresa Conley asked if under the multimodal goal it might be useful to call out specific objectives or evaluation criteria related to safe walking, biking or transit access? We can consider that although safety for all modes is addressed by Goal 2.
 - David Abbas asked on Goal 4A (grade separated pedestrian and bicycle crossings of US 97), is there a measurable/target number of crossings? There is not, but John noted a rule of thumb would be approximately a rough 0.5 mile-spacing (consider cost, surrounding land uses, and out-of-direction travel). The China Hat Road future overcrossing would be approximately 1.2 miles north of Baker Road so there may be an option for another crossing in between. John noted that the target area for an additional crossing could be around the existing railroad overcrossing of US 97.
 - Chris Cheng, responding to David's quantifiable crossing spacing question, noted that ODOT's Blueprint for Urban Design (BUD) includes target crossing spacing depending on the urban context. John's first reaction is that the Baker Road interchange area would fall under suburban fringe, which is listed as closer to 0.25 mile spacing. David Warrick noted that the BUD would not necessarily be applicable here given that US

97 is an expressway through this area. It would be something to take into consideration but something that does not control the design (Jenn Cline agreed).

- John noted that for this section of the Parkway, no additional grade separated crossings except for the China Hat Road overcrossing and improving the crossing at the US 97 Baker Road interchange were identified in the US 97 Parkway Plan. David Amiton noted that the BUD was not in place during the US 97 Parkway Plan but that the need for additional crossing was identified and that I-5 through Portland and Seattle was used as guides for crossing spacing. John noted that although the Parkway Plan did not recommend additional crossings beyond the China Hat Road overcrossing, the recommendation for an additional crossing could be included in future planning studies.
- Regarding Goal 4C, Peter Russell asked if there is a chosen alignment for the Lava Butte multiuse path? David Amiton noted that a preferred alignment has not been selected. He said from a technical standpoint the east side is likely preferred but there are two alignments on the west side under consideration.
 - Marcos Romero noted that from a forest service perspective they are focusing the effort on the west side of US 97.
- Theresa Conley asked for Goal 4D, is CET's preference for a stop on the west side of the Baker Road interchange (or near a future trailhead on the east side)? Rachel noted the ideal location is on the west side and located at or near the Country Store to avoid buses being stopped by the railroad and is a more central location than the current location. This has not yet been discussed with the Country Store. Rory Priday noted that he could facilitate a discussion about relocating the existing transit stop with CET. Theresa wanted to know if there were any multimodal safety considerations for the rail crossing locations. John pointed out that rail crossing safety considerations are included under Goal 2.
- Goal 5: Develop the project to support the community's value of equity.
 - > John noted that the first objective includes encouraging participation by all in the equitable decision-making process as a way to evaluate the project process. John noted that the second objective will be used to evaluate the solutions themselves and the outcomes. John also noted that just because something is not in the goals/objectives today doesn't mean it cannot be included later in the process if any issues are identified during concept development that would help distinguish between potential solutions.
- Goal 6: Practice good stewardship of the environment.
 - > John noted this goal was added after discussion with the Policy Board and while many of the supporting objectives are duplicated under other goals, the Policy Board wanted to explicitly include environmental stewardship as a goal of the project to make its importance understood. The objectives include reducing vehicle emissions and minimizing impacts on resource lands and wildlife. John noted that in the Policy Board meeting, wildlife collisions were identified as a concern on US 97.
- Goal 7: Develop solutions that are consistent with the established shared corridor vision and adopted state and local plans.

- > John noted that the land use and transportation system modeling assumptions used for this project are consistent with prior planning studies.
- > The objective related to considering the visual sequence of project elements as an entry/exit node to the City was used for the recent US 97 Bend North Interchange Study and promotes the idea that the interchange could act as a visual gateway to Bend.
- > John asked if goal 7D (support the Greater Bend Community Wildfire Protection Plan) addressed Nathan’s earlier comment on wildfire evacuation? Nathan agreed this addressed his earlier comment. Nathan noted that the Wildfire Protection Plan is set to be updated this year so this will be a good opportunity to align those documents. John asked if any evacuation routes have been identified and Nathan responded that routes have not been identified yet but that he could provide some. Damian noted that for 7D, he would suggest reaching out to Woodside Ranch Homeowners Association (due east and south of Knott Road) even though they are not included in the study area as they are particularly interested in addressing evacuation routes.
- o Goal 8: Develop implementable solutions for the interchange area.
 - > John noted that this is the “practical goal” to ensure that any solution is able to be implemented. Minimizing the impact on resource lands shows up under the environmental stewardship goal but John noted this would have a large impact on constructability and cost, so it was also included under Goal 8. Other objectives include cost effective, implementable in phases (similar to costs), constructable and reasonably maintainable. This would include minimizing the number of design exceptions and being easily constructable with regard to rail impacts.
- Damian asked when the goals/objectives would be finalized. John said likely shortly after this meeting but this document could continue to be modified/improved upon as the planning process progresses.
- Dave Hirsch asked if there is a way to tie in a mobility hub as noted in the Deschutes County ITS Plan. Rachel noted that adding a mobility hub at this location is not included in any of CET’s plans right now but it could be considered in the future. The purpose of the mobility hub would be to connect multiple modes and multiple CET lines but there is currently only one CET line in the area. David Hirsch also noted that he would want to see forward compatibility with electrification services.

John asked the PAC if they thought these goals and objectives (and considering comments received today) were complete and sufficient for the project, acknowledging they could be modified in the future as needed. PAC responses confirmed that they are.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No additional public comments were provided.

NEXT STEPS/MILESTONES

- Project team will refine goals and objectives based on discussion today to finalize Tech Memo (TM) #1.

- Project team will send out an email this week to set up PAC #2 meeting, likely to be scheduled the end of April to review TM #2, TM #3 and TM #4. The next set of PAC meetings will be broken up into two separate meetings (Technical Advisory Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee).
- Project team will begin to develop solutions shortly.
- There will be an upcoming public open house to review the proposed solutions, which could potentially be online and in-person. John noted there may be additional changes to community engagement to help engage more people and diverse groups with the project moving forward.