

**US 97 Bend North Corridor Project – Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)
Meeting Minutes
3/31/10**

CAC Members in attendance:

Michel Bayard	Wayne Schnur	Mike Lovely
Tim Larocco	Jeff Speder	Linda Perelli Wright
Neil Bryant	Stew Bennett	Kim Curley
Dan Gilder		

ODOT & COIC Staff in attendance:

Rex Holloway, ODOT	Gary Farnsworth, ODOT	Bob Bryant, ODOT
Jon Heacock, ODOT	Julie Myers, ODOT	Andrew Spreadborough, COIC
Amy Pfeiffer, ODOT		

Others in Attendance: Nataalka Hamilton, Patrick Real Properties; Liz Dickson, Bend Associates

Welcome, Meeting Overview and Introductions

Rex Holloway opened the meeting and introductions were made. Rex reviewed the agenda.

Recognition of CAC Work/Debrief of Steering Team Meeting/Moving Forward

Bob Bryant expressed appreciation for the CAC involvement and three years of work on this project. The number of meetings demonstrates a huge commitment on the part of CAC members. He thanked the members for their hours of work contributed to the project. He acknowledged that this is a complex project. Even before this phase of work, there was an earlier phase refinement plan process. Through that effort, ODOT was not able to come to a deliberate conclusion on a solution, even conceptually. The project moved into this phase (NEPA) to reach conclusion on how to move forward.

Bob Bryant said that he wanted to take time to reflect on progress to date, and to hear from the CAC how this group should move forward. He said that the technical stage is the next project phase; focus will be on putting together technical reports necessary for an Environmental Impact Statement. This is a good time to talk about role of CAC moving forward, to determine if the CAC is interested in continuing, and to determine if we have the right CAC membership composition. He said that work remains necessary to refine and add detail to the alternatives, and it will be important for the project team to stay connected to the citizen groups to ensure an understanding of impacts and how to mitigate those impacts.

Bob Bryant said that it is important the CAC adequately represent the community. He said that it is important to have representatives from businesses and neighborhoods impacted, but that it is also important to have representatives from the broader community. He said that ODOT is interested in feedback to hear if the CAC thinks we need to add to this group. He again thanked the CAC members for their contributions to this project, and said that he hopes the CAC members are willing to continue on this process. Rex Holloway asked if the CAC had questions.

Neil Bryant said that Mike Schmidt was initially appointed to the CAC as a chamber of commerce representative. He said that the CAC has missed that connection. He suggested going back to chamber to determine who they would recommend to participate.

Michel Bayard said that the CAC represents the community, and that it would be a good idea to have CAC members present at focus group meetings to ensure information from the focus groups is carried to the CAC. Jon Heacock said that the focus groups were set up to touch bases with key stakeholder groups that could be impacted by the project. He said that the focus has been on neighborhood groups, emergency services, and businesses. The goals of focus group meetings are to raise awareness of the project and to ensure stakeholders know they can engage in the project. He said that how the project team engages with focus groups is a question for the CAC to address.

Liz Dickson talked about the business focus group, and said that engagement through the CAC makes sense. Mike Lovely said that a lot of work has been done to outreach to and involve the public, and he questioned the need for additional focus groups unless new input is needed. Neil Bryant said that he has heard that the larger public meetings are not all that helpful. He noted that a group of property owners that owns undeveloped land behind mall area has felt disenfranchised by the project. They contacted him about openings on CAC since they will be impacted by this project. Rex Holloway said that ODOT is in close contact with the land owners to the west of the mall area.

Next Steps in DEIS Process/Overview of East Corridor

Amy Pfeiffer reviewed the project timeline and noted that we are entering the technical phase. The project team will be studying project footprint and looking at environmental impacts for each alternative. Technical reports will include

- Traffic analysis and transportation
- Economic, social and environmental
- Archeological
- Historic resources
- Aesthetics and visual
- Noise
- Water resources/quality
- Energy
- Land use planning and parks
- Geology/geotechnical
- Wetlands
- Hazardous materials
- Air quality
- Climate change/greenhouse gas
- Right of way

Mike Lovely asked if stormwater will be studied. Amy said that this is a component of the water quality study. Kim Curley asked if the “transportation” study includes modes other than car and freight. Amy said that it also include bicycle, pedestrians, transit, transportation options, and other modes. Liz Dickson asked if it also includes an analysis of traffic on the highway and displaced traffic. Amy replied affirmatively.

Amy Pfeiffer talked about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will be produced from July 2010 to January 2011. Then, public hearing on impacts would occur during the Spring of 2011. Bob Bryant asked if the reports include impact mitigation. Amy said that the reports will likely discuss mitigation to some degree, but they may not be specific.

Linda Perelli Wright asked how engineering will progress on the alternatives during the technical study period. Amy said that some engineering will move forward concurrent with the technical study period, but engineering cannot be finalized until the technical reports are complete. She noted that design changes will occur during the technical report period.

Michel Bayard asked for clarification on the public hearing process. Amy said that a public hearing will occur in Spring of 2011. There will be a notice period, and opportunity for written comments will be provided. There will be a 45 day period for comments and a public hearing. Michel asked how the public will know the DEIS is published and the hearing schedule. Amy said that notices will be published in newspapers. Rex Holloway said that the project mailing list names (600-700 currently) will be notified directly. Other methods will include news releases, publishing in the federal register, and newspaper publishing.

Liz Dickson said that the alternatives are rough/conceptual at this stage. She asked if the alternatives will be better developed prior to the traffic analysis. She asked how the City and County will be involved. Amy Pfeiffer said that the traffic analysis will help the design by adding detail to the alternative such as traffic lanes, lights, etc. She noted that the design process is an iterative process. Liz suggested that trips will be displaced into the local system – City and County roads. She asked at what point the City and County are involved, since their roads will be impacted. Amy said that the traffic analysis will identify impacts to the local system, and what improvements are needed to make the local system work. ODOT works in conjunction with City and County staff during the design process, and will do the design work on the City and County roads affected by this project.

Jon Heacock noted that the downsized alternatives reduced the amount of work proposed for the local system. We are not sure that every road needing improvement will be included within this project. He said that the focus has been mostly on the arterials. Bob Bryant provided another example of the alternative refinement that will take place during the analysis phase. In the next phase impacts will be analyzed at another level of detail. He said that adjusting alternatives to reduce right-of-way impacts are the types of adjustments that can be expected as a result of the analysis.

Jon Heacock said that when we get to the point of design acceptance, we are usually 20-30% complete with the design. This would include most of the geometric work and the project footprint. However, we will have less detail than that during the analysis phase because we are still looking at environmental impacts. Stew Bennett asked if all types of studies are conducted on each alternative. Amy Pfeiffer replied affirmatively.

Neil Bryant said that the CAC can offer the most assistance before the technical reports are completed. He said that he senses that some technical areas will have more interest to the CAC, such as traffic impacts. He said that if the CAC can have technical report information prior to a meeting for review, the CAC would be better prepared to give good input.

Jon Heacock said that he expects impacts will need to be addressed as a result of the detailed traffic analysis and that added level of detail will be very helpful. Michel Bayard asked if VC ratios and traffic volumes will be assessed. Jon said that they are working on that right now, and that the traffic analysis should be completed in June. Jeff Speder said that he agrees that a CAC meeting before completion of the technical studies makes sense. The CAC can assist with identifying mitigation.

Liz Dickson said that she would like to have a business focus group meeting at some point in process where more detail is available, so that the business group can provide feedback prior to the DEIS. She noted that the Swalley Irrigation District is very interested in this meeting. Neil Bryant again noted that the west side businesses have an interest in participating in the CAC. Jon Heacock suggested a focus group meeting may be more useful so all could be involved, with a greater level of detail relevant to the businesses.

Wayne Schnur asked for clarification on the business group composition. Liz Dickson said that this focus group includes the businesses located between highways 97 and 20, primarily in the mall area. Jon Heacock clarified that there are a number of focus groups; this specific group is the Cooley-Robal triangle group. He said that there are other business focus groups. He said that any focus group meeting should be held if there is interest. Bob Bryant said that focus groups are useful for outreach. Rex noted that there are a lot of one-on-one meetings with interested parties as well.

Tim Larocco asked about the impacts of the proposed enterprise zone designation. Bob Bryant said that traffic analysis assumes certain things regarding future growth. One assumption is that over the planning horizon, vacant land will develop. Given the growth rates within this community, there are ways to estimate over the planning horizon what the growth rate will be; these estimates are then factored into the traffic model. Land in the proposed enterprise zone is already zoned for development, so will be included in the assumptions about the growth rate.

He said that when the Bend Parkway was being developed, the assumed growth rate was well below the actual growth rate. In the Parkway example, reality did not match the assumptions because the actual growth was much more than anticipated by anyone. So the question of how the enterprise zone would affect the model is a good one.

CAC Discussion

Rex Holloway said that he would like to get input and ideas about the future involvement in this project of the CAC and/or other groups. Bob Bryant suggested that as we add detail to the alternative, some areas of detail will be specific – e.g. aesthetics. He said that there may be an opportunity to bring in people with specific interest in those areas.

Kim Curley said that ODOT awarded a transportation grant for Juniper Ridge. Since they are interested in reducing peak trips, they may be interested in this project. Neil Bryant suggested that the Juniper Ridge group at least be invited to provide updates to the CAC. Issues such as connectivity to Juniper Ridge and where they plan to spend their funding are important to this project. Neil also suggested inviting Tyler Deke of the Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization to talk about growth projected within Bend. He noted that Tyler's written comments on this project were of interest.

Neil Bryant said that a summary of the technical studies distributed to the CAC a few days in advance of the next meeting would be helpful and allow the CAC members to do their homework prior to the meeting. Michel Bayard said that the HUNS group would like to review the technical studies to see if there are ways to minimize the impacts on the HUNS neighborhood.

Linda Perelli Wright asked if there is any interest in getting participation from people east of US 97 north of Cooley Road. Rex Holloway noted that Dan Gilder represents an east side business. Rex said that he has attempted to engage someone from one of the mobile home parks, with not much success. He said that he is still looking at ways to engage them, and that there is a large Spanish speaking population

residing in the mobile home parks. He said that a meeting was held last summer at the Juniper mobile home park, and that 70 people or so participated. A Spanish speaking ODOT staff member was there to engage the Spanish population. He noted his continued interest in involving one of the property owners in the CAC.

Jon Heacock noted that there are some areas where specific feedback from the CAC and/or the public would be beneficial, such as aesthetics and noise. He said that ideas on names and/or committees are welcome. Tim Larocco said that a Central Oregon landscaper group is active and meets once a month. They may be interested in the project design aesthetics.

Wayne Schnur asked for an email that includes the list of specific topic areas, so the CAC can put thought into whom to involve. Wayne suggested that the Bend Parks and Recreation Department may be interested in engaging about landscaping and development of small pocket parks. Liz Dickson suggested engaging them in trail planning as well.

Mike Lovely said that the property owners of land west of the mall area are welcome to attend the project meetings. He said that there are always going to be people unhappy after something is built. Rex Holloway stressed that CAC members have contacts in the community, and can encourage engagement in the project. If CAC members come across groups that need information on the project, let us know. Mike Lovely asked if there is a counter on the web site to keep track of hits. Rex Holloway said that he looks at the site visit report weekly; it typically runs between 90 to 130 per week. He said that traffic spikes around public meetings to 300-400 hits.

Bob Bryant said that the recommendation to steering team was to forward the East alternatives in the process. He asked the CAC if they had any concerns with the recommendation. Mike Lovely said that he felt comfortable with the Steering Team action, and that he understands the need for the downsized alternatives. Wayne Schnur said that he is concerned that we need to design and build something that makes sense for the longest amount of time, and that will take care of business community, residents, and the City for future growth. Wayne suggested looking at the required project horizon, and work to extend ODOT's ability to plan for longer term.

Michel Bayard said that he is not sure the downsized alternatives are the long term solution for traffic needs. Bob Bryant stressed that there is still time for that level of detail as we move forward. Kim Curley said that she is concerned that the focus is on single occupancy vehicle trips only; increased focus on other modes can lower costs and extend the lifetime of the project. Liz Dickson asked when the longer term detail work will take place. Bob Bryant said that alternative engineering will take place concurrent with the technical report phase. He said that documenting what needs to be done in the future can help shape the technical process. Long term items for consideration can be identified so we do not preclude future development or specific improvements.

Linda Perelli Wright said that the neighborhoods and Commute Options have some common interests: traffic reduction. Too many cars reduces quality of life. We do not want to see project reductions that reduce quality of life enhancements. She asked about mechanisms that can be built into this project to reduce travel demand. Bob Bryant agreed that more can be done to reduce travel demand; how to implement those measures is a challenge. Jon Heacock noted that a focus group has worked on TDM measures; there is limited ability to address TDM within the project. TDM is a community issue. Mike Lovely asked if there is an opportunity to develop underpasses within the project. Bob Bryant said that now is the time to begin thinking about community enhancements to incorporate; we are entering the

point in the process where this level of detail can be considered. Gary Farnsworth noted that one of the reasons we moved away from the West alignment was to avoid building another highway corridor barrier; the East alignment keeps the highway/rail corridors aligned.

Bob returned to his question: Are we on the right track in focusing on the East alternatives. Stew Bennett said that this is the best design for the amount of funding likely to be available. Linda Perelli Wright said that although she is not sure they saw every piece of data, based on what they heard the other alternatives were not practical. She supports the East alternatives.

Critique and adjourn

Rex Holloway said that the CAC will not meet in April. He said the meeting feedback was helpful, and affirmed the CAC interest in continuing their work. Gary Farnsworth said that although ODOT makes the decision regarding CAC membership, we welcome thoughts and feedback from the CAC. Jon Heacock asked if anyone wanted to leave group. Mike Lovely noted the amount of time already committed, and said that he is not going to leave now. Rex asked if there are any objections to filling CAC vacancies. No objections were offered.

Rex said that he would welcome suggestions on names or organizations that would be appropriate to add to the CAC. Additional neighborhood associations were suggested, since this project affects the entire city. Rex committed to getting an email out the week of April 5 asking for CAC feedback, and would like responses by April 16.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15.