

**US 97 Bend North Corridor Project – Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)
Meeting Minutes
8/10/11**

CAC Members in attendance:

Michel Bayard	Linda Perelli Wright	Mike Lovely
Wayne Schnur	Neil Bryant	Tim Larocco
Jeff Speder	Doug Koellermeier	

ODOT & COIC Staff in attendance:

Jon Heacock, ODOT	Amy Pfeiffer, ODOT	Rex Holloway, ODOT
Andrew Spreadborough, COIC		

Others in Attendance: David Ditz, True Adams Company; Ann Marie Colucci, Patrick Real Property Services; Suzanne Butterfield, Swalley Irrigation District; Jerry Mitchell, True Adams Company.

ODOT Staff Update on DEIS Schedule/Public Process

Amy Pfeiffer said that the Draft EIS is now available, and confirmed that CAC members have copies. She said that the DEIS has been posted to the project website, and that paper copies are available at area libraries for review. The 45-day comment period has opened, and ends on September 12. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, August 24, at 5:30 PM at the Riverhouse Convention Center in Bend. She said that comments can be submitted individually to a court reporter at the hearing, or in the open comment period. Additionally, email and/or written comments can be submitted.

Amy said that once the comment period ends the project team will review comments. Based on the comments, they may choose to modify the alternatives. A preferred alternative will be selected after the comment period. ODOT will then announce the preferred alternative, followed by work with local jurisdictions to amend comprehensive plans and transportation system plans. The process will take about a year. She noted that additional environmental surveys may be needed if the alternatives change significantly. Then, the Environmental Impact Statement will be issued, followed by the Record of Decision (ROD). Amy said that the plan amendments and final EIS preparation will move forward concurrently. The entire process will take approximately one year. David Ditz said that a land use appeal is inevitable, which will extend the timeline. Amy agreed that the EIS could be appealed, and that an appeal period was not added into the estimated timeline.

Michel Bayard asked that the DEIS comment period be extended to 90 days. Amy Pfeiffer said that law requires a comment period of 45 to 60 days, so a 90 day comment period is not allowable. Jeff Speder asked if the comment period could be extended to 60 days. Amy suggested that this comment be submitted in writing, along with rationale for the request.

Questions about DEIS

Tim Larocco asked if detailed studies are planned in connection to the area management plans referenced in the DEIS. Amy Pfeiffer said that “interchange area management plans” ensure that investments in the system last as long as possible by looking at design elements and project engineering. The plans take six months to a year to complete. Jon Heacock said that the plans are a state requirement. Amy said that they are not required to adopt the plans before the EIS, though all land use actions contained within interchange area management plan must be completed before project moves forward.

Michel Bayard asked if the life of an EIS is seven years, when does clock start. Amy replied that the timeline begins at the Record of Decision. Michel asked when the preferred alternative will be selected. Amy said that it should be selected at some point in the winter. Jon said that the selection of a preferred alternative depends on the nature of comments. It is possible that additional design work will be necessary.

Michel asked when the Oregon Transportation Commission becomes involved in the EIS process. Jon Heacock said that the OTC has received several project updates and have an oversight role. The EIS and ROD are a federal action; updates are provided to the OTC. Michel asked if the OTC will be meeting before the end of the DEIS comment period. Jon said that they meet monthly, but that this project is not on their upcoming agenda. Michel asked how the project could be added to the OTC agenda. Jon suggested that he talk to ODOT Region 4 Manager Bob Bryant on specifics regarding OTC meetings

Michel asked if it is possible to get the exact location of homes and businesses that will be displaced by each alternative. Amy said that that level of detail by tax lot is not available to the public, though one can judge impacts based on the alternative maps. Jon said that they typically do not identify specific properties or individuals affected, in part because specific property-level impacts may change as alternatives are altered. Michel asked if numbers of properties affected can be confirmed. Jon replied that the numbers can be calculated in aggregate, but that they don't share specific property locations with the public. He offered to look at specific areas and provide approximate impact. Amy said that all property owners in the area are notified of project updates, and specific property owners will be notified once the project is set. Jon said that the businesses have received the best available information on the process and impacts, but that the information is not yet precise.

Michel Bayard asked if the project is started but not finished within the seven-year EIS lifetime, will another EIS process need to be conducted. Amy replied that the EIS would likely be updated. The update would include documentation of environmental impacts, and public involvement and comments.

Jeff Speder asked if mitigation measures are determined after the preferred alternative is selected, and if there is a chance that the measures would change the project and require additional environmental study. Amy said that they will take comments submitted during the DEIS comment period and incorporate them into the preferred alternative. If the alternative changes dramatically as a result, then ODOT would need to re-publish the DEIS.

David Ditz asked if ODOT's selection of a preferred alternative is subject to legal challenge. Amy replied that it is not subject to legal challenge until the Record of Decision.

DEIS Content Summary/Review of significant differences

Amy Pfeiffer reviewed alternative maps, demonstrating common and differing elements. She said that both build alternatives operate much better than the no-build alternative. The significant differences between East DS1 and East DS 2 are where access is located and the amount of access provided. She summarized notable differences in the two build alternatives:

East DS1: 3rd Street extends approximately 1.2 miles north from Cooley Road, and connects with US 97 through a full diamond interchange. East DS2: 3rd Street extends approximately .4 miles north from Cooley Road and connects with US 97 through a directional/partial interchange.

In terms of local road operations, both function well and relieve Highway 97 congestion. There are differences in how the local street system operates, how Highway 97 is accessed, and impacts to the local road system. East DS1 operates somewhat better than East DS2 from an overall roadway network standpoint, which is a direct result of providing better access and connections at the north interchange, as more out of direction trips are necessary for East DS2. Amy referred to a table of peak hour representations on the meeting handout document, and noted differences in speed, delay, network stops (less than 7 mph), and travel time.

Tim Larocco asked if the fuel consumption analysis was based on freight traffic along with cars. Amy replied that it did include freight traffic. Detailed data will be available at public hearing, including calculations of travel time on certain road segments. Jon said that modeling is a useful comparative tool, but can be imprecise in terms of actual travel time. Jon explained that models for East DS1 and East DS2 used different measures (60 minute simulations) than the no build alternative (30 minute simulation due to extreme congestion), and that the DEIS documents those differences. Michel Bayard asked what differences there are in phasing between alternatives. Jon said that there are elements that can stand alone that are common to the alternatives (including Cooley Road, the Robal Road to OB Riley Road segment, etc.). Michel asked for the cost estimate for the Cooley road fix. Jon said that the estimate is \$30 to \$40 million.

Neil Bryant asked if the Highway 97 “expressway” designation extends from border to border. Jon replied that certain US 97 segments are classified as expressway, but not the entire highway. Neil asked how the expressway standards affected the design of the project. Jon said that expressway designations have certain design standards like interchange spacing, but are more about access and operations. Neil asked about the highway’s designation prior to being classified as an expressway. Jon said that the previous designation was “state highway”. The expressway designation came about in the mid-1990s. Michel asked why this project is a higher priority than Redmond, when the south end of Redmond is a congested area. Jon said that the worst problems on US 97 in Redmond were addressed in the Re-Route project. A South Highway 97 refinement plan is underway for the south end of Redmond. Mike Lovely asked which of the two build alternatives are more conducive to phasing. Jon said phasing detail is not yet available, and that decisions will be based on the best investment of available funding.

Amy Pfeiffer summarized operations on East DS1, demonstrating on the projected maps the location of the backage road, access to the north interchange, and other operational aspects. She demonstrated where Cooley Road intersects with the new 3rd Street segment. She noted that the northern interchange type provides access in both directions. She reviewed the Empire Avenue area intersections. Wayne Schnur asked about access into the Juniper Ridge property on the north end, suggesting a northern access to Juniper Ridge would take pressure off Cooley Road. Jon said that this alternative provides potential for developing a Juniper Ridge connection over the rail line. Michel said that if Juniper Ridge is built out, there would be an increased usage of 3rd Street. He asked if the traffic study takes this into consideration. Jon said that the project studies cannot consider improvements that are not in plan.

David Ditz asked why a buildout of Juniper Ridge was not modeled. Jon said they did model the Juniper Ridge impacts, but the FHWA would not allow us to include something that was not in plan. He said that the traffic study included a sensitivity analysis of the road system if it was connected to Juniper Ridge in the future. It looked at the differences between 500 acres developed and 1500 acres. The 500 acres are included within the model, but the northern connection is not. The focus was on what happens if Juniper Ridge development increases to 1500 acres. A meeting attendee said that the traffic modeling looked only

at land within the Bend urban growth boundary and its current zoning. The UGB expansion or zoning changes were not taken into consideration. Jon said that they didn't want to make guesses on future actions. He said that the Bend MPO model accounts for upzoning in the urban reserve, so that might be included within the project model. The model contains reasonable assumptions on land use patterns over the next 20 years. Jon suggested that if CAC members had specific questions about the MPO model that they talk with Tyler Deke.

Amy summarized operations on East DS2. This alternative will create more out-of-direction travel, since there is no local access to the northern interchange. The backage road connects via Bowery Lane to Hunnell Road. Michel Bayard asked if these roads will be paved. Amy said that if East DS2 is selected, then a discussion on the local road network improvements would need to take place with the County. Jon said that we are assuming that these local roads will be built out, but that these improvements are not included in the current estimate. Michel said that the additional travel is detrimental to local users, though it does not impact highway functionality. Wayne observed that the East DS2 local road usage is not beneficial to neighbors, and would be difficult for trucks.

Amy demonstrated East DS2 directional connections on the north end, and operations at Empire Avenue. She noted that the local system operates a bit more poorly than East DS1. Amy discussed access and local connectivity for emergency services providers. East DS1 results in four corridors that are improved and two corridors that show a slight decline over the no-build alternative. East DS2 results in two corridors that are improved and four corridors do not improve and show a slight decline over the no-build alternative. The CAC discuss challenges with highway barriers and how they affect emergency vehicle movements.

Neil Bryant asked if the two alternatives were modeled for differences in emergency response travel time. Jon replied that they were modeled, and the results show differences between the no-build and both build alternatives. Neil asked if the Robal Road connection to OB Riley remains in place. Amy referred to the maps and demonstrated the Robal Road connection located on the build alternatives. She noted that the connection will require a land use goal exception because it is located outside of the UGB.

Doug Koellermeier said that the City of Bend will be commenting on the Draft EIS, so his comments will be submitted via the City. He asked if the Jamison Road connection to Highway 20 is eliminated in the alternatives. Jon replied that it is proposed to be eliminated, but that the City should comment on this access point. Jon offered to meet to review the specific connections for emergency service providers.

Public Hearing Logistics

Rex Holloway said that the public hearing will include an open house from 5:30 to 6:30. Staff with poster boards will be available to answer questions. Public testimony will occur from 6:30 to 8:00. He said a private testimony room with a court reporter will be available. He said the public hearing comments will be limited to approximately 3 minutes per person. Written comments will also be encouraged.

Rex said that staff will also be available at the Bend Public Library main branch from 4:30 to 7:00 PM on August 22, August 31, and September 7.

Next Steps/Action Items

The CAC agreed to a tentative meeting in October, after the comment period has ended.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.