



DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

I-5 to 99W Connector: PSC Mtg. #9

Meeting Date: 4/11/07

Issue Date: 4/17/07

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Project: I-5 to 99W Connector Project
Purpose: Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting #9
Date/Time: Wednesday April 11, 2007 / 8:00 – 11:00 AM
Location: Sherwood Police Training Center
Attendees:

PSC Tom Brian Washington County (Chair)
David Cox FHWA
Cam Gilmore Clackamas County (PSC Alternate)
David Grant City of Sherwood (PSC Alternate)
Carl Hosticka Metro
Charlotte Lehan City of Wilsonville
Lou Ogden City of Tualatin
Jason Tell ODOT

Executive Management Team (EMT) Danielle Cowan City of Wilsonville
Rob Dixon City of Sherwood
Fred Eberle ODOT
Mike McKillip City of Tualatin
Lawrence Odell Washington County

Project Management Team (PMT) Tim Collins Metro
Amy Gibbons ODOT
Russ Knoebel Washington County
Tim Wilson ODOT
Leslie Howell Howell Consulting
Vaughn Brown Jeanne Lawson & Associates (JLA)
Angie Jones DEA
Jef Kaiser DEA
Scott Richman DEA

Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) Tom Aufenthie
Mike Feves
Dave Volz

Others Dan Ruediger
(including sign-in sheet)

Distribution: PSC, EMT, PMT, SWG

The meeting began at 8:00 AM. Agendas and other materials were provided prior to the meeting, and copies of these materials were provided at the meeting. The agenda items are represented in "bold" headings.

- **Welcome/Introduction**
 - Chair Brian welcomed the group and led introductions
- **Approve November 22, 2006 PSC Meeting Summary**
 - The PSC approved the summary of the last PSC meeting held on November 22, 2006.
- **Additions and Deletions to Agenda**
 - Mayor Lehan requested ten minutes on the agenda for a PowerPoint presentation.
- **Concept Elements Screening – EMT Recommendations and SWG Input**
 - Lawrence Odell provided an overview of the process to develop initial alternatives, including open houses and smaller work sessions held with stakeholder groups. He explained the types of alternatives that must be included, and others that may be included in the range of alternatives, and summarized the EMT's recommendations on concept design elements to eliminate from further study. The EMT added two elements to the list of 25 PMT recommended elements. He noted that the green, yellow, and red color-coding was simply used to categorize concept elements into three groups.
 - Jef Kaiser explained the matrix used through the concept screening process, and how it has been developed through the process, going through the PMT, SWG and EMT. He identified the elements recommended to be carried forward (color-coded green). He described elements that would not serve the project purpose alone, but could be combined with other concepts to serve as a solution (color-coded yellow). He noted a correction needed on the yellow-coded element map to show that Herman Road improvements (element #14) should extend south into Sherwood. He also noted that the slide showing the bike and pedestrian network is an illustrative representation of a more connective non-motorized network. Jef described the concept solution elements recommended by the EMT to be eliminated from further study (color coded red), and that PSC action on these elements is sought today.
 - Mayor Ogden clarified that yellow-coded elements that are identified as "programmed projects" (i.e., included in adopted transportation plans) does not mean that they are funded.
 - Several PSC representatives questioned how element #5 (improvements to I-5) that the EMT recommended to not study further, would differ from yellow-coded concept elements including element #17 (improvements to 99W through the project solution area) that are considered as existing system improvements warranting further study.

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- Jef responded that a project objective is to mitigate operational impacts on I-5 that would directly result from the project, and that element #5 represents improvements specifically focused on I-5 that is considered to be an entirely separate action. A distinction would be improvements to accommodate connections on I-5 versus improvements to 99W that could allow it to serve as a connector solution. Jef proposed that improvements to I-5 through the project area, similar to Element 17 for 99W, be added as a concept to be studied further in the ROA development.
- Chair Brian and Mayor Ogden acknowledged that improvements would need to be made to I-5 to accommodate potential new connections and that better east-west connection to I-205 is desirable. They also questioned how east-west travel could be improved by adding traffic to I-5.
- Mayor Lehan noted that if 99W were flowing freely through signal synchronization and potential added capacity, it would attract more east-west traffic away from I-5. She said that element #17 being confined to only extending through the solution area seems too limiting. She also would like to see ramp metering of I-205 and asked whether or not a new connector would be metered onto I-5.
- Jason Tell responded that ODOT recognizes the need to explore operational improvements to the existing system. No interstate-to-interstate connections are metered, and that it is premature in the project development process to determine at this very conceptual planning stage if a new connection to I-5 or I-205 would be metered. When we have more detailed traffic analysis for the alternatives to be studied further, we will get closer to that operational level of detail.
- Councilor Hosticka noted that 99W is likely to be addressed as a high priority corridor in the updated Metro Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He requested that an alternative be considered to allow travel directly between I-205 and 99W to be able to avoid I-5. He referred to a concept he had drafted that shows a new roadway connection between I-5 where element #1 (south alignment) would connect to I-5 and the I-205/Stafford Road interchange. While he recognized that a new connecting road extending east of I-5 would be beyond the scope of the I-5 to 99W Connector Project and he was not suggesting that a potential I-5 to I-205 "Stafford link" be studied through this process, he did request that this concept be open for further study.
- David Grant questioned whether impacts to a Town Center alone warrant eliminating a concept from further study.
- Lawrence Odell noted that some of the EMT recommendations were policy-based. He also noted that the EMT added a "hybrid" concept – element #27 – for the Tualatin-Sherwood Road corridor.
- Jef oriented the PSC to the ROA process and five types of alternatives that will be developed, including connector concepts that are located entirely inside and either partially or wholly outside the Metro Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). He reminded the group that we are at the end of step 3 in the process – report initial concept screening results to EMT, SWG, and PSC. The remainder of this spring and into this summer, the initial ROA will be developed, presented and

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discussed with the EMT, SWG, and other stakeholder groups. The EMT will plan to seek PSC adoption of a ROA by late summer or early fall.

- Vaughn said there will be another round of public forums when the ROA is identified.
- Councilor Hosticka questioned the inside/outside the current adopted UGB as a criterion when the project area could be entirely within the UGB in the future.
- Chair Brian questioned whether element #7 is a reasonable option, given it's likely major impacts to Tualatin neighborhoods.
- Mayor Ogden said he is okay leaving it on the table for now, but it seems to be an exercise in futility. He is confident that element #7 will not become a part of the ROA. It seems to him that I-205 continuity could be addressed with solutions that do not require a new connector located due west of I-205.
- Mayor Lehan agreed that element #7 is not practical, but she would like it to remain under consideration as it is the only direct connection to I-205. We need to analyze what happens with connecting directly to I-205 versus not connecting to I-205
- David Cox inquired about the yellow square symbols on the green connector element maps. Jef clarified these yellow boxes merely represent that one or more arterial connections could be made between I-5 and 99W. These squares do not accurately depict precise locations or impact areas of potential connections.
- Jef referred to element #21 (tunnel or below grade design) that may be considered as a potentially less damaging concept.
- Jason expressed concern about advancing an alternative that includes a tunnel or subsurface design component. He asked about the feasibility of collector/distributor roads along I-5 to connect to I-205, without crossing directly through extensively developed areas.
- David Cox thinks that a tunnel or cut-and-cover is not likely feasible, but he would hesitate to eliminate this concept without knowing relative impacts and comparable solutions.
- Mayor Lehan said we need an option that doesn't pile traffic onto I-5, and she also would like traffic modeling data to help compare options.
- Cam noted that element #7 seems to be the only one that directly connects to I-205, and he does not support eliminating it without additional traffic and design information to assess potential effects to I-5.
- Jef clarified that an interchange slightly south of I-205 could have collector/distributors that would not require merging traffic directly onto I-5, and which could provide a direct east-west movement onto I-205. Jef said that the EMT will return to the PSC with an initial ROA recommendation. If element #7 is not carried forward into the ROA, we will provide an explanation for this.
- David Grant said we are at a place in this process that we can eliminate options, and he made a motion to remove Element 7 from consideration. Councilor Hosticka seconded this motion.
- Mayor Lehan recommended that the PSC wait to vote on this until she gives her presentation and after the public comment.
- Jason inquired if element #7 is eliminated, could the issues raised by Mayor Lehan regarding impacts to I-5 and direct connection to I-205 be addressed?

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- ❑ David Cox suggested that the PSC should make sure we have enough information to drop element #7.
- ❑ Chair Brian compared element #9 which the EMT recommended to eliminate from further study to element #7. Mayor Lehan said she is confident that element #9 would not attract sufficient travel demand, and she would be okay keeping it on the table to be studied.
- ❑ Mayor Lehan and Cam Gilmore opposed the motion to eliminate element #7 from further study.
- ❑ Vaughn referred to a memo from the SWG to the PSC contained in the meeting packet, and he provided a summary of SWG input to the concept element screening process. He noted that the SWG discussed the EMT-recommended definition of "Connector" which was modified to allow greater flexibility to look at a wider range of facility types.
- ❑ Cam referred to a memo to the PSC from Clackamas County Commissioner Lynn Peterson. He and Commissioner Peterson requested that the Connector definition be modified to a "highway/high capacity parkway" to better fit within the community.
- ❑ Vaughn said that the SWG member who had suggested element #7 said he had suggested it with intention of doing a fly-over structure, or other alternative to plowing directly through an established residential area. Element #9 also generated discussion at the SWG meetings.
- ❑ Mayor Lehan opened her presentation by expressing concern about the long gap between PSC meetings. She feels that the PSC should be meeting more frequently. She also believes that the existing I-5/99W junction should be in the project area.
- ❑ She presented a PowerPoint slide show that compared travel distances and estimated travel times between a point on 99W south of the project area and the I-5/99W junction using existing and conceptual connector routes. With any of the potential routes, except for that represented by element #7, east-west travel that does not want to be there (i.e. I-205 to Nyberg Road) is forced onto I-5. With a new or modified interchange south of I-205 she does not see how I-5 would not fail. One goal should be to keep east-west travel off of I-5 and it seems in terms of travel performance, everything should be compared to what she identified as the "gold standard" for travel demand - to have a direct connection from I-205 to 99W like element #7. However, even this gold standard would result in 90 seconds of time savings versus the current route according to the travel distance and speeds she used.
- ❑ Cam noted that an average travel speed of 20 mph or less on 99W average is more reasonable than 35 mph as shown in Mayor Lehan's presentation.
- ❑ Councilor Hosticka said he did not recall discussion about travel in an east-west direction to Hillsboro as being part of the purpose and need for this project.
- ❑ Mayor Ogden said that assuming that travel demand analysis will consider influences of areas outside project area, it is clear that effectiveness of I-205 - 99W travel needs to be included in the evaluation criteria.
- ❑ Mayor Lehan suggested that the ROA comparison could be bracketed by no-build and a "gold standard" alternative that is likely closest to element #7. She wants to see traffic data to compare concepts before agreeing to a ROA.

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- Lawrence reminded the PSC that the next step will be to refine the remaining concept elements and consider the comparative impacts and benefits.
 - Chair Brian noted that in addition to money and time, impacts to the community and quality of life need to be taken into consideration
 - Councilor Hosticka also noted that right-of-way acquisition and associated costs will need to be considered.
- **Public Comment**
 - Dan Ruediger (Sherwood resident): He thanked Lawrence and Vaughn for what he is observing to be an open public process that is seeking and using input from stakeholders. He asked Councilor Hosticka if Metro is waiting for the updated RTP before taking a position on this project. He strongly feels the colors used in the element screening should be changed, because the red, yellow and green colors show a bias. A no build should also be shown in the screening matrix. To David Grant and Mayor Mays he requested that elements 7 and 27 not be dropped out. We should apply cost estimates to them. He pointed out that he will not shop in Tualatin due to the traffic issues. He commented to Mayor Mays and David Grant that it is a flawed philosophy to think that "anything is better than nothing".
 - Mike Feves (SWG representative of Far West CPO): He feels that element #7 is the only option that does not have an impact to I-5 and it should not be removed from consideration. He feels that a below grade design would greatly enhance Tualatin by allowing improvements to the town center livability. He challenged the project team to do some cost benefit analysis of a tunnel versus land acquisition, etc.
 - Stephanie Garrison (business owner and Sherwood resident): She agrees with Mike and Dan, and feels it would be a mistake to eliminate element #7. She said we should consider a tunnel option. This would improve conditions in Tualatin for shopping, freight travel, etc. Immediate relief could be provided by synchronizing the timing of the traffic lights on Tualatin-Sherwood Road. She made a comparison to the City of Yakima and how they implement that. The current poor synchronization causes slow down in travel including trucks acceleration.
 - Dave Volz (SWG representative of Tualatin CCI): he referred to page 3 of a document he had previously distributed. He agreed with Mayor Lehan about looking to population projections and traffic that will need to be accommodated. A long term solution is needed.
 - **PSC Consideration of Concept Elements:**
 - Jason Tell thanked the people who provided public comments. He has seen enough of these tunnel projects to know how they typically play out. However, he is comfortable with having element #7 moves forward for further study.
 - Chair Brian agreed with Jason, saying his intuition says it will not work out, but if it has benefits to study he is okay with not eliminating element #7.
 - Councilor Hosticka said he is willing to get more data. Sometimes what is overlooked in a cost/benefit analysis is who benefits. He would like to see where the benefits are received versus where the costs are.

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- Mayor Lehan reiterated that we need to have at least one concept that we are studying fully that does not put more traffic onto I-5. If collector/distributors are being considered, it needs to be clear where they could be, and she has not seen that information presented yet.
- Jef said we will be studying collector/distributors as a means to regulate traffic flow to I-5, but they have not been developed yet.
- Mayor Ogden said that elements #7 and #21 (tunnel) are not feasible options. He would love to not have Tualatin-Sherwood Road from I-5 to Teton to make Tualatin a more livable community, but this extensive action is not practical.
- David Grant moved (Mayor Ogden seconded) to eliminate elements 7 and 21. We need to consider the feasibility of construction more than a half a mile of tunnel.
- Chair Brian modified this motion to eliminate the elements on the list that the EMT had recommended removing, and also including elements 7 and 21.
- This motion failed.
- Chair Brian moved to eliminate the EMT's list of nine recommended elements to eliminate from further study. This motion passed. Councilor Hosticka opposed not including element 7 on this list.
- Chair Brian also reminded the group that after this meeting, the color coding that was used to distinguish concept elements through the screening process will go away as elements are considered to develop into alternatives.
- In response to Commissioner Peterson's memo, the PSC also approved a motion to modify the definition of connector to "partially or fully limited access highway/high capacity parkway".
- The next PSC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 27th. Chair Brian requested that the PMT provide the PSC at least 30 days notice of any meeting cancellations or date changes.