

**I-5 to 99W Connector Project SWG #5
6-8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, 2006
Meeting Summary**



Location:

Sherwood Police Training Room
20495 Borchers Drive, Sherwood

SWG members in attendance:

Loretta Pickerell, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Tom Aufenthie, CPO 5
Mike Feves, Far West Association of Neighborhoods
Rick Ross, Friends of the Refuge (alternate)
Dave Volz, Tualatin CCI
Bob Adams, Tualatin Chamber
Tom Sullivan, Wilsonville CCI
Ray Phelps, Wilsonville Chamber
Jerry Renfro, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue
Adrian Emery, Sherwood CCI
Susan Rychlick, Sherwood Chamber
Ron Johnson, Washington County Farm Bureau

SWG members absent:

Jack Laverty, Oregon Trucking Association
Jon Reinmann, Westside Economic Alliance
Elliot Eki, AAA Oregon
Nick Storie, Metro

Guests:

Kristi Halvorson
Dan Ruediger
David Shettles
Ken Giering
Norm Duli
Sue Hart
Rion Windsheimer

Staff and consultants:

Vaughn Brown, JLA
Kristin Hull, JLA
Scott Richman, DEA
Leslie Howell, Leslie Howell Consulting
Jef Kaiser, DEA
Barry Hennelly, Washington County
Mark Turpel, Metro
Michael Ray, ODOT

Rob Dixon, City of Sherwood
Mike McKillip, City of Tualatin

1. Welcome and introductions – Vaughn Brown, JLA

Vaughn Brown welcomed the group and asked Rick Ross, Bill Shake's alternate representing Friends of the Refuge, to introduce himself. The SWG approved the summary from the last meeting without revision.

2. Statewide planning context – Michael

Michael Ray reviewed the statewide planning context for the I-5 to 99W Connector Study. He focused on the Oregon Highway Plan and other corridor studies like the Portland to Lincoln City Corridor Strategy in providing information about state policies related to the I-5 to 99W Connector Study. A copy of his presentation is available at www.i5to99w.org.

Michael agreed to provide copies of the Portland to Lincoln City Corridor Strategy to interested SWG and community members.

Q: Why isn't Highway 217 included as a project of statewide significance?

A: I am not sure but it probably has to do with the type of trip it carries.

Q: There are so many projects that are being considered and there is a tremendous lack of funding. How are these projects prioritized?

A: Projects are ranked according to how far along in the planning process they are and how quickly they could be moved into construction.

Q: Is cost-benefit analysis included in the prioritization process?

A: All federally funded projects are subject to NEPA analysis which requires careful analysis of the costs and benefits of each project in terms of financial, environmental, transportation and community impacts and benefits. JPACT, a regional committee of elected officials, makes project funding decisions for the region.

Q: Who is looking at the entire region in terms of transportation modeling?

A: Metro models the entire region's transportation system including areas of Clark and Yamhill counties that are not part of Metro's jurisdiction.

Q: Has analysis of how this project will affect the region been completed?

A: That analysis will be completed once alternatives are identified. The need for a project in this area has been established by regional modeling.

Q: Do we go back and evaluate how projects have affected land use?

A: Land use is being considered as part of the current project effort, and we are consulting the various community plans for all affected jurisdictions. These plans reflect both the past, current and projected land use patterns. In addition, the project will be developing a population/employment/housing forecast that will forecast expected changes in the next 25 years.

Q: Is the likely limited availability of oil resources in the future considered in regional models?

A: That is a total unknown at this point and isn't currently considered in regional modeling.

Q: The Wilsonville Mayor has been discussing the importance of the Boone Bridge. Will this study consider affects to the Boone Bridge?

A: Yes, the study will look at how each alternative effects I-5, including the Boone Bridge.

Q: It seems that ODOT has already determined that a four lane highway is needed in this corridor. Do we really have the ability to look at other solutions?

A: ODOT has identified a four lane highway as one way to meet the forecasted demand in the corridor. We can look at lots of different ways to accommodate the demand including improvements to existing roadways. The Westside Bypass is an example of a project that began with an identified need for a new highway but, after careful study, identified other ways to meet demand.

3. Purpose and need statement

Vaughn explained that he hoped the SWG could review their previous comments on the purpose and need and reach agreement on the feedback that the group should provide to the PSC.

Ray Phelps, Wilsonville Chamber, began by presenting recommended changes to the purpose and need prepared by his group. These proposed changes are attached. He explained that the study area goes to the north Wilsonville interchange which leads him to believe that the project is going to adversely affect Wilsonville but not serve it. The region always wants to push traffic south and with the Willamette at Wilsonville's southern boundary, there is no where to go making I-5 through Wilsonville a bottleneck.

Vaughn asked the group to consider concluding discussion of their initial input to the Purpose and Need by reviewing the EMT responses to the recommended changes.

The group engaged in a discussion about including the words "economic viability" instead of "viability." Some SWG members thought traffic was good for businesses while others thought that too much through traffic could harm a town center. Some SWG members felt that "economic viability" was too limiting since it did not capture other livability and community issues.

The group then turned to the purpose statement and discussed alternatives to the phrase "inadequate transportation facilities." Some group members preferred the phrase "address congestion" because they thought it pointed more directly at the problem. Other transportation inadequacies such as safety and inappropriate vehicle types on local streets were mentioned as important issues as well.

Some members thought that the purpose statement should directly refer to Tualatin-Sherwood Road. Other members thought there were lots of other needs in the area besides Tualatin-Sherwood Road that should be addressed in the study. Some committee members continued to be frustrated that the process was looking primarily at roadway solutions rather than at other solutions to the problem.

Some committee members were concerned that the purpose does not broadly enough define the problem which could be defined as a bottleneck from Sherwood to Highway 217. Committee members expressed concern that the Purpose and Need Statement does not include a forecast year or data to support the need statements. The committee discussed some alternative language, but the committee could not come to consensus around most of the proposed changes. A committee member suggested that the group vote to find out how many people agreed with the purpose and need statement.

Vaughn went around the table and asked SWG members to state whether or not they could live with the purpose and need statement as written. Six members said that they could live with it. Four members said they were not comfortable signing off on it and one member was not sure. Vaughn asked those with outstanding concerns to write them down and e-mail them to Kristin so that they can be documented and shared with the PSC.

4. Public comment

Dan Ruediger

Dan was concerned about the project being labeled as a regional problem where the problem is really local just to get federal funding for a project. The real problem is local traffic to industrial areas along Tualatin-Sherwood Road. Regional and interstate traffic is not the problem. Regional traffic is just a ploy to get federal funding. The project is being manipulated. He is concerned about the process and is concerned that the committee is being pushed forward without consensus.

Dan also told the committee that his recollection of the data does not support the idea that the problem is regional traffic.

Kristi Halvorson

Kristi attended the meeting because of the need statement that states that there is regional traffic on rural roads. She lives on Graham's Ferry Road and there is no regional or freight traffic on her road, just commuter traffic.

David Shettles

David referred to an Oregonian article that said that our population will grow by one million. He asked the committee to take the long-term view of the project and solutions. There are no perfect solutions and there is lots of give and take required to do what is best for the whole.