

Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) Meeting #17

6-8:00 p.m. Thursday, August 9, 2007
Sherwood Police Training Center
20495 Borchers Road, Sherwood

MEETING SUMMARY

I-5/99W SWG members present

Barbara Shields (Friends of the Refuge)
Bob Adams (Tualatin Chamber of Commerce)
Mike Feves (Far West CPO)
Elliott Eki (AAA Oregon)
Dave Volz (Tualatin CCI)
Ray Phelps (Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce)
Jack Lavery (Oregon Trucking Association)
Debra Iguchi (Wilsonville CCI - alternate)
Jonathan Schlueter (Westside Economic Alliance - alternate)
Tim Aufenthie (CPO 5)
Loretta Pickerell (1000 Friends of Oregon)
Ron Johnson (Washington County Oregon Farm Bureau)

I-5/99W SWG members absent

Jerry Renfro (Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue)
Tom Sullivan (Wilsonville CCI)
Jon Reimann (Westside Economic Alliance)
Adrian Emery, Sherwood CCI

Project staff present

Russ Knoebel (Washington County)
Lawrence Odell (Washington County)
Jef Kaiser (DEA)
Scott Richman (DEA)
Vaughn Brown (JLA)
Kalin Schmoldt (JLA)
Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)

1. Welcome and introductions – Vaughn Brown

Vaughn Brown called the meeting to order. He said that the primary purpose of the meeting is to complete the SWG's guidance to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) regarding the range of alternatives to move forward for detailed analysis. He said that the SWG comments would be passed on to the PSC at their August 22nd meeting. The No-Build, TDM/TSM, and EESA categories will move forward, though a decision must be reached regarding corridor alternatives in category 4 and category 5. At least one corridor must be selected in each category.

2. Meeting purpose and agenda – Vaughn Brown

Vaughn explained that the range of alternatives will ultimately be resolved into a preferred solution and the input from the SWG will continue to assist the PSC in forming their decision. There will also be reports on what the PSC and Executive Management Team (EMT) have accomplished since the last SWG meeting.

Vaughn noted that the agenda was slightly different from the email version, with the addition of the "Draft evaluation criteria" item. Vaughn explained that the team wanted to make the first draft of the evaluation criteria available to allow the SWG time to become familiar with the content.

A SWG member suggested allowing time for public comments before the SWG comes to a decision with regard to the range of alternatives. Lawrence Odell noted that the public is already allowed to comment before a decision is reached.

Debra Iguchi introduced herself as the alternate for Wilsonville CCI.

3. Approve June 28 SWG meeting summary notes - Group

Vaughn noted that an attendance correction had already been made to the summary. A SWG member complimented the detail in the previous minutes and described them as superior to previous summaries. There were no other comments.

4. EMT report – EMT Chair

Lawrence Odell said that the EMT had acted unanimously to move forward corridor alternatives 4D, 4E, and 5B. He said that there had been a good discussion of the options and that the unanimity creates a nucleus of agreement. He noted that of the original seven corridor options on the table, the EMT had raised concerns about the practical costs associated with tunnels, and had reduced the options to include two alternatives within the UGB (4D, 4E) and one outside (5B), in addition to the No-Build, TDM/TSM, and EESA options.

5. Range of alternatives (ROA) - SWG discussion and input to PSC – Vaughn Brown, Scott Richman, Jef Kaiser

Process Overview

Scott Richman showed a diagram explaining the remaining corridor development steps for this phase of the project. He reiterated that tonight's meeting was intended to collect input from the SWG to pass on to the PSC. Subsequent steps will involve working with the SWG, EMT and PSC to establish the evaluation criteria under which the alternatives will be compared and assessed, looking for hybrid alternatives that could combine a variety of elements from each alternative, and presenting the resulting alternatives to the SWG, EMT, PSC, and the public through community forums. This will be followed by further refinements as needed. Scott said that while they did not have any specific dates, they anticipated arriving at the public hearings process within the next six months. He said that Metro and other local jurisdictions will have the opportunity to provide input before a preferred solution is adopted.

EESA detail

Scott noted that some members of the group had requested further detail on the EESA. Scott showed several slides that described specific roadway improvements, as well as a color coded map that indicated their locations.

I-5 and 99W connections

Scott said that at their July 11 meeting, the PSC had recommended dropping alternatives 4A, 4B, 4C, and 5A. The options were dismissed largely because of major costs and impacts correlating with few performance benefits.

Some members of the SWG, PSC, and EMT had requested illustrations of what a connection might look like. Scott showed a variety of schematic drawings illustrating traffic movements for direct

connections to I-5 and Highway 99W. He noted that a connector would not create a direct interchange at I-5, but would connect to parallel collector/distributor roads. Scott also showed photographic examples of flyover, underpass, collector/distributor, and braided ramp highway elements.

Parkway

Scott noted that “connector” has been defined by the PSC to indicate an expressway or parkway. He explained that an expressway would be a higher capacity and higher speed facility, while a parkway would operate at a slower speed. The design team is currently reviewing different parkway types, all of which consider a 45 mph design speed, but with variations in access points, grade separation and numbers of lanes. Scott said that they were hoping to gather enough information to form a recommendation regarding the selection of a parkway cross-section. He summarized that there is still work to be done to define the characteristics of a parkway. He said that DKS had performed the initial modeling and he noted the draft findings pertaining to how the use of a parkway would affect the corridor and study area.

A SWG member asked whether selecting a parkway or expressway would restrict the ability to incorporate other modes such as bicycles. Scott said that they would be analyzing the corridor at a broad level, and the multi-modal goals listed in the project goals and objectives will still impact choices about uses in the corridors.

A SWG member asked about the benefits to 99W from the use of a parkway. Scott said that the benefits involved drawing traffic to the connector from Tualatin-Sherwood Road and 99W to the north of Tualatin-Sherwood Road. Jef Kaiser said that an expressway would function similarly to a parkway in terms of drawing traffic.

Land use implications

Scott noted that a regional conversation is starting relating to the UGB and updates to the RTP. The conversation deals with growth in the Portland metropolitan area as compared to adjacent regions. He said that there is discussion of how the connector project could influence travel between Yamhill County and Portland. There has yet to be any formal coordination between Metro and neighboring jurisdictions.

Vaughn noted the initial comparison chart and said that the PMT had initially not recommended alternative 4D. However, the EMT decided that they did want to move it forward for more detailed analysis and assessment. Vaughn asked whether the group agreed with the recommendation.

A SWG member noted that the 4D concept is significantly out of direction. The member raised questions about the out-of-direction travel and the needs it serves. She noted that it appeared to serve east-west travel more than north-south. Jef Kaiser said that they were considering the project purpose and objectives in trying to protect the viability of key town centers while creating a high capacity portal route. He said that they were considering overall performance based upon a combination of directions instead of any one specific travel direction. He noted that alternative 4D was 20% less effective than the other alternatives because of the out of direction angle. The SWG member expressed concern about the 20% figure and said that it would be good to have more information about the assumptions being made about where people are going. The member said some numbers could be inflated for some travelers and it was important to consider the project area

and who travels where. Jef said that travel in the project area is considered and will be included in the analysis.

The SWG member expressed concern about the list of cons associated with the Initial Comparisons list. Jef assured the member that the list is a one time tool that won't matter for future considerations. He said that the options would be exposed to a thorough analysis. Scott said that similar questions had been raised at the EMT. Another SWG member noted that the evaluation criteria will get into the details, replacing the pros and cons from the Initial Comparisons list.

Vaughn noted that there had been discussion at the EMT meeting about the different markets using the corridors. Mark Turpel said that new findings may emerge in the course of the additional analysis. He said that including both 4D and 4E allows two opportunities for evaluation within the UGB and a more robust analysis.

A SWG member said that while he generally agrees with the EMT recommendations, it seemed indicative of the process that they had received conclusions without a lot of data to back it up. The member said that he hoped to see more numbers that would enable the committee to properly work with the evaluation criteria. He noted that there are inherent value judgments associated with "pro and con" designations.

A SWG member said that options 4D and 4E were out of direction and that 5B could see less use because of its southern location. He asked what would happen if none of the alternatives actually work. Jef said that it is unlikely that any one of the alternatives accurately represent what will ultimately be selected. He explained that they were trying to build a range of options and corresponding data that will allow for interpolation between each scenario and for elements to be drawn from each. For an alternatives analysis to be effective and to produce proper data, each scenario must be distinct, even if it doesn't always lead to optimum solution. Jef confirmed that the SWG would be involved throughout the process and that adjustments based on the alternatives analysis would be possible before the alternatives are carried to the public forums.

A SWG member asked about iterations of different assumptions and whether the modeling assumes that the EESA has been completed. Jef said that while the EESA is expected to include the components of the TDM and TSM alternative, the EESA improvements were not assumed for the analysis of categories 4 or 5. Jef said that they would be looking at the individual alternatives packages to see if they have the possibility of working by themselves, as EESA includes its own substantial costs. He noted that categories 1-3 must be explored before 4, and 1-4 must be explored before 5. The member said that he felt that various components of EESA, when added to the category 4 and 5 options, would yield the best solution. Jef agreed, noting that they would approach the process in iterations, trying the options under 4 and 5 on their own, then trying to compensate for their deficiencies.

A SWG member asked about the project goal and the direction of travel questions. Jef said that the goal was to fill a gap in the existing highway system by trying to get traffic to Highway 99W, I-205, and I-5. The member said that the traffic on Tualatin-Sherwood Road was "a dream" today, while traffic on I-5 was horrendous. She suggested consideration of I-5 traffic and said that a northern connection made sense.

A SWG member observed that since the formation of the SWG, Washington County had committed \$3.2 million to making improvements on Tualatin-Sherwood Road. The member asked how the improvements would affect capacity and other considerations. Lawrence said that, in terms of coordinating with the connector project, the next stage will involve specifying those benefits, and any improvements would be considered. Russ Knoebel said that the improvements were TSM oriented and would occur regardless of what happens with the connector. Jef noted that the PSC had already asked to look at a major capacity improvement to Tualatin-Sherwood Road, and that the Tualatin-Sherwood hybrid in the EESA option considered extensive improvements such as synching signals, closing access points, grade separated intersections and adding parallel systems. He said that they were trying to determine how many improvements are possible in the Tualatin-Sherwood Road corridor system.

A SWG member asked whether considerations for the interchanges would require an IAMP. Scott explained that an IAMP (Interchange Area Management Plan) is an ODOT access management policy that governs new connections to interstates and highways. IAMPs look at land use and involve affected jurisdictions. He said that IAMPs are required but would occur much later in the process after the RTP amendment and closer to the design level.

A SWG member questioned the transit portion of the EESA, noting that the use of bus appeared limited. The member said that she would like to see more creative thinking and a higher level effort to improve bus service and ridership. She noted the possibility of subsidizing bus travel. Jef noted that a very robust transit component is included as a part of EESA that includes the 2030 transit network, new routes – including a circulator route, plans for commuter rail, internal shuttle systems, new park and rides, and bike/ped improvements to access transit stops. The member said that the measures seemed to be the same as for other areas and would not be sufficient to get people out of cars. Scott noted that the transit improvements are significant and represent a big investment. He noted that while the project is limited by political and financial constraints other transit improvement ideas might emerge from the alternatives analysis. The member encouraged forward thinking regarding the cost of roads and vehicles and suggested pushing for long term comparison costs and demonstrating alternative investment opportunities. Lawrence said that he had heard similar concerns expressed in the course of the RTP update. He suggested that it would be most practical to focus those concerns at the RTP level, as it wouldn't be practical for the SWG to lead this particular effort.

Vaughn asked for public comments on the range of alternatives prior to the SWG finalizing their guidance to the PSC:

Gordon Root said that it makes sense to create the connection as far south as possible. He noted the substantial cost difference between a connector within the UGB or through farmland. He stated that communities further to the south would benefit from the connector's presence.

Richard Cavender said that he lives on Parrot Mountain and that alternative 5B appeared to pass through his area. He noted that he had presented a number of problem points with the 5B route at the fall open house. He said that the geography in his area includes an 11% grade, with a 6% grade from Brookman to Baker. By his estimates, consideration of ODOT grade standards would result in a 45-foot deep trench through the area. He noted that Parrot Mountain is a groundwater limited area, and was recently a critical groundwater limited area. He said that his well is already at risk of going dry because of previous groundwater use and that impacts to the shallow bedrock in the area will

affect the water table. He suggested that someone review the engineering of the route prior to putting it on the list. He said that draining his well would make his property useless. He noted the area recently absorbed into the UGB and said that fill would be necessary in addition to a ditch. He said that his concern is with the wells, and since Sherwood won't run public water into Clackamas, losing access to the groundwater would require miles of infrastructure. He asked what he should do if his well goes dry, or how he would prove it was the result of a connector. Scott said that others had raised the issue and it would be addressed. He said that they would gather as much information as possible for the alternatives analysis and that the SWG and others will be given the chance to say if something is missing.

Andy Peel said that he has been involved in the process as a spectator. He agreed that it made sense to throw out alternative 4D because it is out of direction. He said he was unclear why money was being spent to review an option outside of the UGB when the law requires looking inside first. He said that he strongly supported evaluating 4D and 4E before considering 5B. He said that he too felt the need for more data, and said that he could not take the project conclusions as fact without meaningful data as support.

Tracy Erway said that she supported alternative 4D. She said that she found the initial comparison of connector alternatives "funny," in that considerations such as "may conflict with utility corridor," were considered but "may wipe out 1,000 wells" (alternative 5B) was not. She said that people in other states look at the UGB as worthwhile, and outside options should not be casually considered. She said that maintaining the UGB should be the #1 passion to uphold throughout the process.

Larry McCart said that he has lived in the area his entire life. He said that the connector situation reminded him of similar efforts to connect Highway 217 to Milwaukie through Lake Oswego. Eventually the citizens said no to the connector and it did not have the consequences of stopping traffic. He questioned who the connectors were intended to benefit, noting that he had just heard reference to Tualatin, Sherwood, Yamhill County, and the coast. He noted that Sherwood has high livability, and asked whether that livability would be destroyed for the sake of people who don't live in the area. He requested a spreadsheet that assigned points so as to rank each proposal on concerns such as land use consumption and cost. He suggested that more work be done before putting in a connector for other people.

Dan Ruediger said that alternatives 4D, 4E, and 5B should go forward and the other connector options should be dropped. He said that while one option outside of the UGB is necessary for comparison, engineering feasibility should be considered before moving forward. He said that Jef Kaiser's claim that alternative 4D was 20% less effective was an overgeneralization and the result of cherry picking the numbers. He said that when he looks at the numbers, the 4D alternative ties or beats the other alternatives about 25% of the time. He asked Lawrence how far south the connector could reach and whether it could extend to Day Road. He noted that in a recent Wilsonville hearing Washington County had requested a seven-lane easement on Day Road. He asked why the SWG wasn't voting on the option if there is a possibility that the Day Road corridor might be used.

Lawrence said that the county has never discussed or suggested using Day Road as the connector and has no preconceived ideas about where a connector might be. He said that the Coffee Creek Plan violated an agreement with Washington County a regarding ROW for future traffic. He stated that the footprint as outlined in the 5B alternative is what is being considered, and that specific impacts won't be known until the alternatives analysis.

Dan Ruediger asked whether dropping the connector because of a seven lane easement would require going through the public process again. Lawrence said that he thought it would. He said that in not referencing the connector, there may be some infrastructure impacts that will be unknown until the footprint is identified. He noted that while Day Road is not on the table as a connector itself, it is included as an improved roadway under the EESA.

A SWG member said that he disagreed with Lawrence and felt that Day Road was competing based on a previous discussion of options. Lawrence took issue with the interpretation of his statement. Vaughn said that regardless, it was the blue footprint in 5B that is being considered.

A member of the public said that a new church and school by her house has not been considered in terms of traffic impact. Lawrence said that the county can't prohibit construction in the corridors at the current stage of the process. He said that after Aug 22nd, if the PSC moves forward, the county will be able to recommend that the planning division put out a notice to those who might build in the area. The member of the public asked how many lanes Boones Ferry would need. Lawrence said that it was part of the process to find out.

Vaughn asked whether anyone took issue with moving forward with 4D, 4E, and 5B.

A SWG member said that he agreed with moving 4D forward, with the added provision that the footprint be extended to Cipole Road. He agreed with Andy Peel's comment regarding consideration of the alternatives within the UGB first and he expressed concern at spending the money to look at an outside of UGB option before analyzing the inside UGB options. Russ Knoebel said that they had limited the 4D footprint because of proximity to the wildlife refuge. Jef said that they would review the area but would need to be considerate of a power corridor in the area.

Vaughn noted that the SWG appeared to be in general agreement with the EMT recommendation. There were no objections.

6. Draft evaluation criteria – Vaughn Brown

Scott explained that the goals and objectives were being used as the basis and framework for developing the draft evaluation criteria. The draft was developed by the PMT and consultants specializing in land use and natural resources. The EMT had the opportunity to review the today. Scott said he was hopeful that they would be able to introduce the criteria to the PSC on August 22nd. The criteria will be used henceforth in the comparison of the range of alternatives.

Vaughn noted that the goals and objectives had been listed alongside their corresponding qualitative and quantitative measures that would be used to compare and contrast the different alternatives. Scott encouraged the SWG to submit questions or comments before the September 13, SWG meeting. Ron Johnson asked for clarification on several acronyms. Scott said that HCS stood for "Highway Capacity Software," and LOSE meant "Level of Service E." Scott offered to redo the list and send the next version with the clearer language. Vaughn emphasized that the draft was very rough and said that it would be the primary discussion item at the September SWG meeting.

7. Public comment

A member of the public asked whether the elements of the EESA alternative were listed in order of their priority. Vaughn said they were not.

A member of the public asked whether the EESA improvements would be completed first so as to establish whether a connector option is even necessary. Jef explained that while the elements of the EESA option would not be built for the sake of the analysis, they would be modeled and would consider the effects of future growth. The member of the public suggested various improvements to Tualatin-Sherwood road and other improvements. Jef said that the improvements, among others, would be considered.

Richard Cavendar noted that it didn't take long to determine the apparent grade issues with Alternative 5B. He recommended having an engineer perform some actual measurements to determine the utility of the area, and encouraged attention to the groundwater situation in the area. Vaughn agreed that groundwater is a concern and said that while there has not been much design level work, the team is aware of the topography in the southern part of the study area.

Dan Ruediger described the evaluation criteria as a "live document," that could be adjusted to meet changing needs throughout the process. Jef agreed generally, but noted that it was important to come to general agreement on a core set of evaluation criteria. He noted that any new criteria will emerge as they conduct studies and begin to look at specifics, but they will not keep coming back to the SWG and PSC for new criteria.

Mike Feves asked about ballpark costs for performing an alternatives analysis. Jef said that it would be difficult to itemize costs by alternative. He noted that the Sunrise Corridor environmental analysis, a design-level project, is costing \$800,000-\$1 million.

A member of the public asked for the timeline until something is built. Scott said it could be about six years or so. Jef added that there were currently no funds allocated for any of the identified solutions. The member of the public asked for clarification about the required distance between interchanges. Scott said that the required distance was one mile. Jef noted that the use of the collector/distributor roads in the EESA alternative resulted in no net increase in ramps on I-5.

A member of the public thanked the group and complemented the progress being made. She asked whether the list of five alternatives would be worked through from the top down. Jef explained the process, noting that the no-build option was an analytical benchmark required for consideration by law if none of the other alternatives work. Alternatives 2 and 3 (system improvements) must be considered before Alternative 4 (a new connector within the UGB) can be considered, and Alternative 4 must be fully considered before Alternative 5 (a new connector outside of the UGB) can be selected. The member of the public had a question about freezing their lease once alternatives have been chosen. Jef said that a representative from Tualatin should be able to answer the question after the meeting.

8. Other business

The next SWG meeting will be held on September 13, and will involve reviewing the evaluation criteria.

9. Close and adjourn