



Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) Meeting #14

6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, May 10, 2007

Sherwood Police Training Center

24095 Borchers Drive, Sherwood

MEETING SUMMARY

Attendance:

Tom Sullivan, Wilsonville CCI
Dave Volz, Tualatin CCI
Grant Marsh, Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce (alternate)
Jerry Renfro, Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue
Loretta Pickerell, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Barbara Shields, Friends of the Refuge
Tom Aufenthie, CPO 5
Jon Reimann, Westside Economic Alliance
Tracy Erway, Far West Association of Neighbors (alternate)
Jim Haynes, Sherwood Chamber of Commerce (alternate)
Ron Johnson, Washington County Farm Bureau
Jack Laverty, Oregon Trucking Association

Staff present:

Russ Knoebel, Washington County
Amy Gibbons, ODOT
Tim Wilson, ODOT
Mark Turpel, Metro
Scott Richman, DEA
Vaughn Brown, JLA
Kristin Hull, JLA
Randy McCourt, DKS
Lawrence Odell, Washington County
Leslie Howell, Howell Consulting

Members absent:

Nick Storie, Metro CCI
Elliot Eki, AAA Oregon
Adrian Emery, Sherwood CCI
Bob Adams, Tualatin Chamber of Commerce

Meeting purpose

- Update on project progress.
- Discuss range of alternatives (part 1) and collect SWG input.

1. Welcome, meeting purpose and agenda – Vaughn Brown, JLA

Vaughn welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and materials that had been distributed to the group prior to the meeting. He told the group that this was the first step in reviewing the draft range of alternatives and that the group would have the opportunity to review the rest of the alternatives in the June, July and August meetings. The group adopted the March 22 meeting summary without changes.

2. EMT report – Lawrence Odell, EMT chair

Lawrence told the committee that they would review the EMT recommendation during the range of alternatives agenda item. He also told the group that he had testified to the state legislature about this project and why it should continue to be included as a project of statewide significance. He noted that it is critical to move forward with this project so it does not drop off the list of projects of statewide significance since getting back on the list would be difficult.

In response to a question, Lawrence explained that this project was not near the top of the projects of statewide significance. He told the group that he thinks this may be a result of this project's long history and lack of decisions.

3. Range of alternatives (Part 1) – Randy McCourt and Scott Richman

Scott and Randy reviewed a presentation entitled "TDM/TSM Alternative and Enhanced Existing System Alternative." Vaughn told the group that the PSC would likely approve a final range of alternatives late this summer and that the SWG will have several opportunities to provide input during the development of alternatives.

Scott began by orienting the group to the range of alternatives process. He reminded the group about the steps to developing alternatives and noted that the project is at the step of developing and presenting the initial range of alternatives. He noted that the Executive Management Team (EMT) reviewed the initial range of alternatives at their meeting last week. He told the group that the project team had already developed a baseline (no build) alternative. He explained that this presentation would focus on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) options and the Expand Existing System alternatives (EESA).

TDM/TSM alternative

Randy began by reminding the group that the group would review two alternatives at this meeting – both alternatives that look to get the most out of the existing system. He noted that TDM measures could include both measures that can be modeled and measures that cannot be modeled.

He told the group that for transit pass subsidies and parking management, the TDM alternative will assume the level included in the 2030 baseline and that it will look at increased transit pass subsidies and parking management in retail/employment centers like Bridgeport Village and Argyle Square.

Randy reviewed the enhanced transit service and noted that the TDM/TSM alternative will include bus routes from RTP preferred system improvements, commuter rail that is under construction, future park and ride lots from local transportation system plans, and four new bus routes that are not included in current plans.

Randy reviewed bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the TDM/TSM alternative that would complete the gaps in the existing system in the solution area. He also mentioned other TDM measures including TMAs, carpool/vanpool/rideshare programs and telecommuting/flex time programs.

He then discussed Transportation System Management including corridor traffic management measures that could be applied to the Tualatin-Sherwood Road corridor (I-5 to 99W).

Expand existing system alternative

Randy began by explaining that the EESA improvements would include TDM/TSM strategies, roadway improvements, commuter rail and bus routes. He told the group that the project team considered projects included in the RTP and local TSPs, projects suggested by stakeholders and projects that were identified through analysis. He noted that Saggert Road and 124th Avenue provided some relief in the corridor and that EESA includes a multiuse trail system.

Group discussion

A committee member asked if all these projects were things that could be quantified and modeled. Randy explained that all the things that were discussed would be modeled except changes to the bike and pedestrian system and flextime/telecommuting programs.

A committee member asked if the model is looking at the 2030 or current year. Randy explained that they looked at both.

A committee member asked how the team measured the outcomes of these strategies. Randy explained that these measures had not been evaluated, but they did consider what was likely to do the most good at serving east-west demand and that the evaluation would happen later this summer and in the fall. In response to a question, Scott explained that the project would not complete cost-effectiveness analysis for each alternative at this stage, but that they would be able to compare costs relatively. The committee member noted that he wanted to know how cost effective each project or measure is.

A committee member asked if Metro applies TDM and TSM alternatives in developing the RTP since the RTP already tells us that we need a connector. Randy explained that Metro does include TDM and TSM alternatives in the macro-level model but that this effort would look at project specific level analysis. In response to a question, Randy explained that through modeling the alternatives will be further refined in ways that could help the system perform better. Randy also explained that extensions of existing roadways were included in the existing system alternative, but that new roadways would be included in the new corridor alternatives and that the alternatives respect the constraints identified by the SWG.

A committee member asked Lawrence what was proposed in Salem – the whole range of possibilities or just a corridor. Lawrence explained that the funding Washington County is seeking could be applied to any improvement in the study area that meets the project's purpose and need. Several committee members noted that calling this a connector project continually implies that this project is seeking to construct a new connector. Scott noted that there are possible solutions that are not connectors and that the RTP does call for a connector but we first have to decide if a connector is the best solution to the problem.

Randy clarified that the project team would be completing analysis of each of the alternatives and that the 2030 land use assumptions include growth in jobs and housing. Scott clarified

that the group would not use the screening criteria again but would begin working with more specific performance criteria.

A committee member raised the following questions and concerns:

- She needs to know what needs we are trying to meet here – where are people coming from and going to. Randy noted that we won't know if the ideas are good until we complete the analysis, but that the project team is looking at demand as they develop alternatives. She still expressed frustration that she cannot evaluate the assumptions or the range of alternatives since she does not understand the inputs or travel demand.
- She noted that the transit options need to focus on reliability and efficiency of transit to make sure routes are worthwhile.
- She noted that it would be nice to know if we put as much money as we'd spend on a new connector into demand management and transit what would happen.
- She also noted that the compartmentalization of transportation study does not address the regional issues. The array of options is limited to the artificially designed study area which may preclude the best options. She encouraged the group to look at new, creative ways to make the alternatives to new roads work even if they cost more than a new road.

Randy noted that the options would consider a range of options from very expensive improvements to very inexpensive improvements and from one mode to all modes. He explained that, through the analysis process, we will learn more about the study area and the best solutions.

A committee member made the following comments:

- He noted that when we talk about costs we often don't consider the costs that are not easy to quantify in dollars and cents like impacts to communities and the natural environment. He asked if anyone has tried to develop a way to quantify non-financial costs.
- He suggested that big picture considerations be included in the analysis. He noted that the cost of gas might affect vehicle miles driven over time or that freight may shift to rail over time because of fuel costs. He asked if these things would be considered.

Randy explained that the NEPA process carefully evaluates the costs, impacts and benefits of alternatives across a range of considerations including community impacts and environmental impacts. He also explained that criteria were informed by concerns raised by SWG members as well as the technical team. Finally, he explained that the travel forecasting tools have done a reasonably fair job of evaluating travel patterns over the last 30 years and that modeling tools are becoming more sophisticated over time.

A committee member asked how the transit routes were selected. Randy explained that the team looked at where demand might exist but there were not transit routes today.

A committee member asked if the group could consider addressing effectiveness of existing transit system in addition to looking at new service. Randy explained that this was captured in the alternatives.

A committee member asked how much of the problem in the corridor is expected to be solved by these improvements. The project team explained that the analysis of the project will provide tools for judging the effectiveness of each alternative. Lawrence encouraged the committee members to get involved in the RTP process that is focused on filling gaps in the transportation system and focused on big picture changes in the region's transportation system.

A committee member asked about Tualatin's draft visioning action plan. He noted that it said that they would consider expanding Tualatin-Sherwood Road and an I-5 interchange at Norwood Road. Randy confirmed that these improvements would be considered as part of the system. He noted that the Norwood Road interchange would be pursued as part of the connector options but it was unlikely that a new interchange would be constructed anywhere on I-5 and that connector options will likely look at reconfiguring existing interchanges. Mike McKillip explained that the visioning action plan was a "wish list" of ideas raised by community members and that it had not been reviewed and evaluated by the city council and that it is not likely that all the improvements could be funded.

A committee member asked if the SWG would get a report on where the yellow elements were incorporated into alternatives. Scott explained that they did that in tonight's presentation. In response to a question, Randy explained that sensitivity analysis is an important step in developing and refining alternatives.

In response to a question, Scott reminded the group that the project team is working toward PSC approval of a range of alternatives in late August. The SWG will meet each month until then to review alternatives and provide input.

A committee member asked what the project team needed from the SWG at this meeting. Vaughn explained that we are looking to find out if the group thinks that this is a reasonable start to the range of alternatives. Ron noted that this is a good place to start.

A committee member asked why 124th extension was included in EESA when it did not meet screening criteria. Scott explained that it was included because it can work as part of a system but it could not meet the purpose and need on its own.

A committee member asked if there was a way to model the affect of diminishing commuter traffic into and out of Sherwood by providing additional employment in Sherwood. Scott explained that this study relies on the regional population and employment model that is built through local consensus. Mark further explained that Metro develops that population and employment forecast through review of local plans and coordination with local governments. He also noted that there is more employment in Sherwood in the 2030 forecast than today. Lawrence asked if citizens can influence the way land uses are assigned through work with their local cities on land use plans. Mark explained that in the long-term that would change the assumptions.

A committee member asked how these assumptions work – can the project force jurisdictions to adopt and implement these improvements? Scott explained that we are in the midst of an RTP amendment process and that the goal of this process is to have a regionally and locally adopted alternative. Vaughn noted that the Project Steering

Committee is the decision-making body and will make decisions by consensus. Russ noted that the alternatives are built around projects that are historically included in planning documents and that are doable.

Randy noted that the study's goal is to identify a solution and that plans will be modified to reflect the outcome of this process.

A committee member noted that she was concerned that the PSC would not allow robust alternatives to a new corridor be developed. Other committee members and staff noted that it was the role of the SWG was to ensure that the process remains transparent.

Lawrence shared some closing comments. He noted that this was one of the better discussions that he had heard at a SWG meeting since he started attending meetings in November.

4. Public comment

John Alto

John noted that he is really happy with some of the current proposals. He does not think this is a regional problem. He thinks local traffic causes peak hour congestion. He thinks solutions mentioned today begin to address this problem.

5. Close

Vaughn asked the group if they would be willing to add a half-hour to their agenda to see a presentation from Mayor Lehan. The next SWG is scheduled for 6-8:30 p.m. Thursday, June 14.