



# Highway 62 Corridor Project

**Date:** January 26, 2006  
**From:** René Sjothun, RVCOG  
**Re:** **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING MINUTES for January 25, 2006**

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**Members in Attendance:** Bill Blair, Curt Burrill, Mike Gardiner, Mike Montero, Bob Plankenhorn, Don Riegger, Richard Moorman, Nanci Watkins and Paige West.

**Members Absent:** Becky Brooks, Wade Six, Mike Malepsy, David Christian and Susan Rachor.

**Location:** Jackson County Public Works Auditorium

**Guests:** 9 members of the public

**Staff Present:** Debbie Timms, Jerry Marmon, DeLanie Cutsforth, John Raasch, and Kent Belleque of ODOT; Terry Kearns, Kevin Berhardt, Hang Reede, Martha Richards and Nadine Lee of URS; Kim Parducci of JRH; Pat Foley and René Sjothun of RVCOG

## 1.0 Welcome/Approval of Minutes

Mike Montero, CAC Chairperson

Mike Montero convened the seventeenth meeting of the Highway 62 Corridor Project CAC at 6:00 PM. Mike made note of several personnel changes. Kathy Helmer who was serving as our committee coordinator has taken a position with the City of Medford Planning Department. Pat Foley will now take over as the committee coordinator. René Sjothun is here tonight taking the committee minutes. Mike asked for approval of the December 15th minutes. The minutes were approved as written.

## **2.0 Discussion on formation of Bike/Ped Study Committee**

Pat Foley, RVCOG

Pat said now that the alternatives are being narrowed down we are asking the CAC to formalize a subcommittee to study bike, pedestrian and transit issues. Paige W. has agreed to be chair of this committee. Pat along with Debbie Timms and URS staff will assist this subcommittee. Pat said that members from the CAC and PDT will be asked to volunteer to serve on this committee. A kickoff meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup> to be held prior to the next CAC meeting. Michael Ronkin, ODOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager, will be asked to attend this meeting.

Paige West said that there was a study done by the RVCOG titled “The Crater Lake Highway, Transportation and Land Use Study” which was completed in 2003. It was compiled in much the same way as this committee. Citizens met for a year and went through transportation options for Hwy. 62. This study incorporated transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation throughout Hwy. 62. The study will be a useful tool for the Bike/Ped Study Committee.

A discussion followed on how the subcommittee was formed and what the outcome would be. The committee will study different options on how to incorporate bike, pedestrian and transit uses with the Highway 62 Corridor project. These options will be presented to the CAC for discussion. The CAC will be asked to make a recommendation to the PDT.

Each member was asked to give input on whether a subcommittee should be formed. All were in agreement on formation of the bike/pedestrian/transit committee. On a motion by Nanci Watkins and seconded by Mike Gardiner, the CAC approved the formation of the Bike/Ped Study Sub-committee unanimously.

The three volunteers from the CAC are Don Riegger, Mike Gardiner and Paige West. When the specific date, time and location of the kickoff meeting are set, the committee will be notified.

*Note: Crater Lake and Transportation Land Use Study is on the RVCOG website located at: [www.rvcog.org](http://www.rvcog.org)*

## **3.0 Update on meeting White City Business**

Debbie Timms, ODOT

Debbie reported on the meeting which was held with the White City Industrial/Business Group. The group was given an overview of the project and the process. All of the alternatives, including the Northern Termini, were reviewed with explanations on how the systems would function. Some of their concerns, comments, questions and suggestions are:

1. Were roundabouts considered?
2. Concern regarding ROW along Agate Road.
3. Potential impacts (and possible realignments) to Boise Cascade and the Fire District property.
4. There were suggestions on how Hwy. 140 could connect to Highway 62 and or the proposed Expressway.

5. One alternative that they did not like included the interchange in the middle of White City.

Debbie went on to say that it was a good meeting. The group would like to continue to stay involved in this process and may meet again when the alternatives are narrowed down to two options. There are issues that we need to be concerned about, such as, buildings located in this area that the fire district needs to get to quickly because there are chemicals stored within. Overall this was a very positive meeting.

Mike Montero stated that he feels it is important to include the White City group in a future CAC meeting where they can explain some of their issues and to provide input to help this committee in their selection process.

#### **4.0 Evaluation Criteria**

Terry Kearns, URS

Handouts for the meeting included the Evaluation Criteria Draft Presentation.

Terry explained that staff had developed the rankings on the current alternatives. A lot of the criteria are subjective. Terry noted that at this stage of design, there are some questions on measurements that cannot be answered at this time. Terry explained that evaluation criteria are linked to the goals and objectives. As we go along in this process the number of alternatives will decrease and the number of applicable criteria will increase as more information becomes available. In the ranking if the answer was a quantity they just stated what the quantity was and the committee can make a decision on whether or not it meets, does not meet or partially meets the goal and objective.

Terry reviewed the Evaluation Criteria for each goal and the associated objectives. He asked the committee for questions or if they had comments.

Question: How are the regional emissions measured?

Answer: All regional emissions are measured by vehicle miles traveled.

Questions: Is storm water run off treated.

Answer: Yes, it is the law.

Correction: Line 65 reads 10's, but should be listed as 11's – Public Facilities.

#### **5.0 Recommendation Discussion**

Pat Foley, RVCOG

Pat F. asked for any further questions or comments on the Evaluation Criteria and if this committee agreed or disagreed with the summary.

Nanci Watkins: I went through the evaluation criteria and assigned a point factor for each rating.

I like to be able to use and see mathematical formulas, even though some of it is subjective, it gives me a basis that I can use for all of our goals. I will be able to review and decide what I feel will be the best alternative overall.

Mike had two questions for this committee:

1. Is everyone comfortable with this format?

Answer: Yes, by all.

2. Are there any alternatives on this list that are undesirable, or do we feel that it is too premature to dispose of any alternatives at this time if that is the will of the committee.

Pat F. said that she needed to bring up the fact the North Terminus options need more detailed research. If the CAC wants to make a recommendation to the PDT to drop any alternatives, it should be from the four main alternatives.

Nanci Watkins - I gave each criteria "key" a number and added them to come with a total for each alternative and she came up with a numbering system. Here were her results:

Bypass Alternative	19 pts
Existing Highway Alternative	19 pts
Couplet	9 pts
Texas Turnaround	17 pts
East bypasses Option	11 pts
Existing Highway Option	18 pts
West Bypass Option	15 pts

Terry Kearns - This leads to the next steps. If this group feels that they want to eliminate some of the alternatives tonight, that is fine. From a scheduling perspective we need to finalize our feelings at the next month's meeting on these criteria and reduce the set of alternatives. We are getting close to the process where we will begin the environmental analysis. This is a very labor and time intensive process and that is why we were waiting for the alternatives to be narrowed down. Now that we are nearing the process of narrowing down the alternatives, it is time to go back out to the public with an Open House to describe how this process worked and how the committee came to their conclusions. This should probably be done in March and April, one held in the southern end of the corridor and one in the northern end.

Richard Moorman: I agree with Pat in regard to the North Terminus. There is still information that we do not have on this alternative. He also said he does not see anything about a Southern Terminus on the Evaluation Criteria. Last month there was discussion on the North Terminus and nothing on the South. He believes that the South Terminus will have a large impact.

Terry Kearns: There is only one alternative on the South Terminus as it is very constrained due to the airport and does not have a range of solutions. As we discussed early on

this process, when we design something like this we have to offer it within a series of constraints and in the south end we are very constrained.

Mike Gardiner: After reviewing the evaluation and my own subjective review I see little use for the Couplet Alternative. The Couplet doesn't seem to work for more reasons than most of the other options. And also, the East Bypass Option, even though we need more information to see how it is going to work, it seems like there are better options by going to the west.

Pat Foley: Does anyone have any comments about the Couplet Alternative?

Don Riegger: I agree with Mike on the Couplet. I don't think that we should spend much more staff time or our own time on something that we probably can't support. It looks like the Couplet Alternative does not meet our criteria.

I always thought that the Texas Turnaround Alternative is another option that we are not going to be able to support in the end because I think that it is way too expensive and I don't think that it is politically possible to impact every business from Fred Meyer out to White City. I think that both of these alternatives should be dropped and the efforts should be put on the Existing Highway Alternative and the Bypass Alternative.

Mike Montero: I believe we should set aside the North Terminus Alternatives for consideration and just look at the four corridor alternatives. If someone wants to make a motion, we can then have a discussion.

Mike Gardiner made a motion to drop the Couplet Alternative from further review. Richard Moorman seconded the motion.

A vote was taken to drop the Couplet Alternative from further review and passed unanimously. A recommendation will be given to the PDT to drop the Couplet Alternative.

Pat Foley For the record would each person identify the reason why they elected to remove the Couplet Alternative.

Paige West: I would like to remove the Couplet as an alternative that we are considering because it is not safe or accessible for bicycles, pedestrians and it is very inconvenient for transit.

Nanci Watkins: I would like to drop it because it doesn't meet three of our seven goals.

Bill Blair: I would like to drop it too because it doesn't meet goals.

Mike Gardiner: Basically because of the circuitous files and also that from the review it couldn't be phased which I see is as main constraint to the construction.

Curt Burrill: In my opinion the air quality component, the additional ADT that would be created by this alternative, sends us in the wrong direction. It is not an area where we need to be going based on the constraints that we have in this valley. We need to look at reducing ADT not increasing it.

Don Riegger: I feel that it really doesn't meet the goals that we are trying to achieve.

Bob Plankenhorn: I believe that it doesn't meet our goals either.

Richard Moorman: By the information that has been provided to us, the Couplet Alternative does not meet our goals.

Mike Montero: I believe that it doesn't fit for several of reasons:  
1. Too much out of direction traffic.  
2. It raises vehicle miles traveled as Curt said earlier.  
3. The lack of ability to phase options.

For the record, the CAC has made a recommendation to the PDT to drop the Couplet Alternative.

Pat stated that the next alternative that had been mentioned was the Texas Turnaround Alternative.

Don Riegger made a motion to drop the Texas Turnaround Alternative from further review. Mike Montero seconded that motion

Pat F. asked for discussion.

Nanci Watkins: I think the Texas Turnaround impacts everyone along the corridor and it would wipe out all the businesses.

Bill Blair: I agree with Nanci. There are too many impacts to businesses.

Pat F. called for a vote to remove the Texas Turnaround Alternative from further review. The vote was 8 to drop the alternative and 1 to keep the alternative. The motion passed. A recommendation will be given to the PDT to drop the Texas Turnaround.

Pat Foley: For the record, would each person identify the reason why they elected to remove or keep the Texas Turnaround Alternative.

Paige West: The mobility to be able to navigate the Texas Turnaround for bicyclist would be very hard, and it is very unsafe for pedestrians. However, looking at the environmental impact, the Texas Turnaround has the least amount of impact on wetlands and that is a positive. I would like to remove it as an alternative.

Nanci Watkins: I would like to remove it simply because there are not design standards yet in the state of Oregon. I would think going through that process would be a very long process.

- Bill Blair: I agree with Nanci, it would take too long to complete and there are too many business impacts.
- Mike Gardiner: I think that it is an interesting concept. I am not ready to drop it.
- Curt Burrill: I have felt all along that the Texas Turnaround would be a good option if you were starting in an undeveloped area and you could then develop around it. I believe that is what has made it successful. But to implement the Texas Turnaround in an already established and developed area there would be too much right-of-way red tape involved and a substantial amount of businesses impacted. I have not been comfortable with this from day one.
- Don Riegger: I too have not been comfortable with it since it was first proposed. As it is drawn on the board, it has too many substantial impacts on business for me to really support. I think it would be way too expensive and I think the project would spend a lot of time in litigation because of its impact on the businesses.
- Bob Plankenhorn: The Texas Turnaround does not have a good impact on businesses. If you could start from scratch I think it would be a great idea. But to try and fit it in now, I can't see it working.
- Richard Moorman: I don't feel that it is within our goals and, as Nanci mentioned, there are a lot businesses at stake.
- Mike Montero: I agree with Curt. I don't think that this is a design that really works for the retrofit at this point. I think it seriously impacts our ability to maintain our inertia. It is simply too expensive and impacts too many businesses.
- Pat F. asked if anyone wanted to comment on the East Bypass Option in the North Terminus Alternative.
- Paige West: I do want to repeat what Mike was saying about the East Bypass Option. I know that it is not going to be voted on tonight, but based on this preliminary evaluation; it seems to be the least attractive of the three alternatives.
- Nanci Watkins: I believe that the East Bypass Option would have too much impact to White City and should not even be considered.
- Mike Gardiner: I have concerns with the existing highway going through White City. I believe that when the time is right for White City to incorporate, having the upgrade of the state highway going through and separating the residential and the historic commercial area in White City is going to create a barrier that will be very difficult to get around. For that reason I am comfortable continuing going down the road for both the East and West Bypass. I believe that both of them have some merit.

Don Riegger: I don't think that any of the Northern Terminus Alternatives are ready to be dropped at this point. I think that they require more thought.

Mike Montero: I think that if anyone had a chance to go out and reroute I-5 to some place other than through the middle of Medford, the vote would be unanimous. We have an opportunity to make a similar decision.

## **6.0 Public Comment**

Pat Foley, RVCOG

Pat opened the public comment session, inviting the public to speak.

Calvin Martin Calvin was curious if in the environmental assessment there was a numerical ranking for the measuring system.

Pat Foley: This is something that was discussed at the beginning of the process.

Jerry Marmon: The goals and objectives were made to have equal weight. Individuals wanted it to be a certain way, for example, socio-economic impacts, and to do it was appropriate to try and weigh from each other and that is how the decision came to this measuring system.

Calvin Martin: Asked about a timeframe for this project.

Terry Kearns: The environmental analysis should begin around April/May. At this time we do not know how much time it will take to refine the design. It could take six or seven months at the most. Then we will reconvene and go through the evaluation criteria again. The PDT and CAC probably will not be meeting this summer while this process is being performed. He has no control over the timeliness of the process. The Federal Highway has the final decision as to when he can release the document for public comment.

## **7.0 CAC Comfort Check**

Pat Foley, RVCOG

Pat asked for the CAC to express what their sense of the meeting was for tonight.

Paige West: I thought it went well. It was a very productive meeting. I think we left the staff with a few tasks to accomplish. I do appreciate the support of forming the sub-committees.

Nanci Watkins: I think it went very well and I appreciate Terry going through all of the Evaluation Criteria with us.

Bill Blair: It was a very good meeting.

Mike Gardiner: Curt asked Pat to email the information in regard to the subcommittees. I am fine with the meeting.

Curt Burrill: I think we are making progress and going in the right direction.

Don Riegger: I thought we had a good meeting.

Bob Plankenhorn: Very good meeting.

Richard Moorman: I am comfortable at this point, thank you.

Mike Montero: I am fine with things.

Mike Montero reminded the committee that the next regularly scheduled meeting is February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **8.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.