



# Highway 62 Corridor Project

**Date:** September 28, 2006

**From:** Sue Casavan, RVCOG

**Re: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TEAM (PDT) MEETING  
MINUTES for September 28, 2006**

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**PDT Members in Attendance:** Donna Beck, Brian Dunn, Nick Fortey, Mark Gibson, Skip Knight, Dale Lininger, Jerry Marmon, Dan Moore, Suzanne Myers, and Mike Quilty

**Members Absent:** David Elliott and Kelly Madding

**Location:** Jackson Co. Public Works Auditorium, Mosquito Lane, White City

**Staff:** Terry Kearns, URS; Debbie Timms, Chris Zelmer, Gary Leaming, Mark Thompson and Susan Landis, ODOT; Kim Parducci and Mike Arneson of JRH; Gary Shaff, Gary Shaff & Associates; Sue Casavan, RVCOG

**Guests:** 5 members of the public

## **1.0 Welcome and Approval of Minutes**

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry convened the meeting at 9:05 AM. The meeting objectives were reviewed: 1) Updates on CAC meeting and Open Houses, 2) Review updated Alternatives, 3) Review updated Evaluation Criteria and 4) Discuss which Alternative (s) provide the best long-term solution. He then asked if there were any changes or additions to the August 24, 2006 minutes.

Suzanne Myers requested change to minutes on top of page 7 from “Suzanne Myers was asked where Medford was on adopting the expanded UGB. She replied that the City has to prove a need for commercial and industrial lands. Having this done in three to five years is questionable, twenty years, yes.” be changed to “Suzanne Myers was asked where Medford was on adopting an expanded UGB. She replied that the City has to prove a need for commercial and industrial lands. The studies will be completed in one to two years.

Whether Medford will prove a need for expansion in this particular area along Highway 62 in three to five years is questionable, but in twenty years more likely.”

**On a motion by Suzanne Myers and seconded by Brian Dunn the minutes were approved with the adopted changes. Skip Knight abstained.**

## **2.0 Updates on CAC meeting and Open Houses**

Terry Kearns, URS

The CAC's last night's agenda covered the same items as the PDT's agenda. Terry K. was asked by the CAC to relay to the PDT their frustration as they were willing to make a motion to drop two alternatives. He said we have asked them to wait. Next week the City Council and County Commissioners will be given a presentation and provide comment. Additional comments are still coming in from the two open houses. Skip K. commented that he understands the value of the CAC but felt the PDT is being asked to adopt their recommendation without the benefit of the time frame of study available to other committees. He felt the committee needed further time for study before they make the final decision.

Brian D. asked Skip K. what information he needed to help make that decision. Skip K. replied that he needed a greater explanation in order to accept this. He is not comfortable with the process at this time. He said this project affects the City of Medford heavily and he needed more information for recommendation and explanation to the City. Terry K. said the CAC was informed that the PDT was not ready for deliberation yet. He said he would like the PDT to have a discussion about which alternatives present the best long-range solution for the corridor. He added that we have reached a point with the alternatives where we need to get direction as to what to move forward into the EIS. He was not asking for a decision today and waiting for further input from the public, City Council, and County Commissioners would be beneficial.

Terry K. updated the committee on the Open Houses and other upcoming public outreach.

- Two Public Open Houses were held
  - September 18, 2006 (south portion)
  - September 19, 2006 (north portion)

He said the public was asked to provide comments on the 4 alternatives.

Staff is expected to receive additional comments by mail, fax, or e-mail in the next 7-10 days. The numbers below reflect comments received as of September 26, 2006.

<u>Alternative</u>	<u>Expressed Preference</u>
Bypass	5
Bypass w/Split Diamond	20
Existing Build	1 (possible)
Texas Turnaround	1 (possible)

Detailed comments were available as handouts at the meeting.

Terry K. said he would provide a completed report of responses received at the October meeting.

### Upcoming Public Outreach

- Jackson County Commissioners
  - October 10, 2006 (10:00 a.m.)
- Medford City Council
  - October 12, 2006 (12:00 p.m.)

Suzanne M. suggested sending out background information to the City Council and County Commissioners prior to the meetings. Terry K. said that would be done.

### **3.0 Updated Alternatives**

Mike Arneson, JRH; Terry Kearns, URS

Mike A. showed a Power Point presentation of the updated alternatives.

#### **Highway 140 Freight Route w/Bypass**

Mike A. said a few committee members were interested in seeing how the truck route would operate. He explained the proposed truck route using the Bypass on Agate Road.

Dan M. asked if the route was all access limited. Mike A. responded that yes, it would be the new Bypass Highway.

Skip K. wanted to know if Agate Road and Avenue G were controlled intersection and Mike A. responded that Avenue G would be an underpass.

Mike Q. commented that one of the reasons we are doing this is to not cut White City in half and allow access back and forth across the current Highway 62 and now we are talking about taking freight movement off of Highway 140 and putting it back on the road we just took traffic off of. I don't see that working well for White City. He thought it would be better to go out towards Big R, angle over and make use of the underpass. Going right through the center of White City is what we were trying to avoid.

Debbie T. said ODOT is doing a jurisdictional change with the county to provide a truck route. She said there is a proposed project that will route trucks from Highway 140 onto Leigh Way to Agate Road to Avenue G to Kirtland Road to Blackwell Road which will connect to I-5's Seven Oak's interchange.

Mike G. commented that there are a limited number of trucks off of 140 because of the route going east and that is currently under study east of Lakeview which they are thinking about opening up. He thought one of the most beneficial things they could do is to provide a reasonably efficient route from Highway 140 to I-5.

Mike A. briefly reviewed the four updated alternatives. The alternatives were shown with the latest aerial photo, taken in July 2006. The aerial photo includes all highway improvements.

The four remaining alternatives are as follows:

- Existing Highway Alternative
- Texas Turnaround
- Bypass w/o Split Diamond
- Bypass with Split Diamond

Skip K. commented that there were a couple things about the split diamond that concerned him. He said the person that proposed it at open house was concerned about his particular business and the Texas Turnaround would take out his business. He added he designed something that wipes out two other businesses and preserves his and it concerns him that the

committee would consider this. He felt the refinement of the Texas Turnaround alternative was somehow designed to eliminate it.

Debbie T. replied that the person at open house who suggested the split diamond was Wayne Cooper and he leases the Butler Ford Center from the airport and the Bypass takes his business out.

Mike A. added that the split diamond concept had been around for about 10 years. It was a concept on the table the last time when the EIS process was stopped; it is not a new concept.

Mike A. presented updated area maps of the following:

#### North Terminus Options (All Alternatives)

- Land use issues need to keep boundary within the UCB
- VA Dom property, will affect their north entrance

#### Split Diamond Details

Mike A. reviewed Split Diamond traffic movements. He said the traffic team is still refining this alternative and need to run more traffic numbers.

#### Issues

- Bear Creek Greenway - Impacts need to be mitigated, can be worked through
- Floodway - Need more details on criteria and constraints/retaining walls, can be worked through

Skip K. asked if there was any other access to the Bypass once you get past the configuration.

Mike A. replied that once you head north on the Bypass there is a full interchange at Vilas.

Skip K. asked how you get to the Bypass if you don't have the split diamond.

Mike A. said you stay on Crater Lake Highway then take the overpass to Poplar, essentially Crater Lake Highway turns into the Bypass at Poplar.

Skip K. wanted to know what the financial impacts on the ground would be (throwaway).

Mike A. said that one improvement would have to be taken out; the new northbound I-5 ramp would no longer be needed.

#### Texas Turnaround at Delta Waters

Mike A. presented the 2006 aerial map of the Delta Waters intersection. He explained the traffic movements and access management issues.

Jerry M. asked if there were any ramifications of not sticking with the ¼ mile standard. "If we got an exception would it affect the operation of the new interchange?"

Mike A. replied that he thought it would really jeopardize the operation of the interchange for the design life. Moving the intersection closer to the interchange gives a real chance to back up traffic and increases risk for failure and investment.

Brian D. commented that one of the key issues for a long term solution is that if any one of the intersections fails and backs up on the mainline you have lost the whole deal. He explained that the Texas Turnaround and Existing alternatives use the existing line options and put forward that risk. He further added that if the committee goes with those options they have got to get the flexibility in there and get the intersections as far away as they can

reasonably do. It is a huge risk to shut the whole thing down, much bigger risk than it is with the Bypass options for the long term.

### Existing Build at Delta Waters

Mike A. showed a map of the Existing Build at Delta Waters. He explained the frontage roads and access management issues. He said it was very similar to the Texas Turnaround.

## **Alternative Phaseability**

### Problematic Elements for All Alternatives

- Route continuity
- Driver expectation
- Construction staging

### Texas Turnaround

- Could be constructed in 2 or 3 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- 3 phases would be from I-5 Delta Waters / Delta Waters to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Need to construct frontage roads and have logical termini for them as the mainline progresses northward
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)

### Existing Highway

- Could be constructed in 2 or 3 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- 3 phases would be from I-5 Delta Waters / Delta Waters to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Need to construct frontage roads and have logical termini as the mainline progresses northward
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)

### Bypass Highway (with or without split diamond)

- Could be constructed in 2 phases
- 2 phases would be from I-5 to Agate / Agate to Dutton
- Minimal throw-away, temporary directional interchange at Agate
- Interchange areas are difficult to build in phases (access management)
- Potential to build 1 travel lane in each direction initially and upgrade to 2 lanes as traffic demands

Dan M. asked how this was consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan which shows Phase 1 going to Poplar and Hilton and beyond that is Tier 2.

Brian D. replied that the regional plan has a placeholder to state we have something in there and now we are going in and finding out what that is.

Dan M. asked if this would require updating the plan at some point.

Brian D. responded that it would have to be done when we come up with an alternative.

Jerry M. added that Federal Highway would issue a ROD; the RTP would have to reflect the project and the appropriate termini.

## Alternative Range of Costs

These values are preliminary and represent a range of potential construction costs and do not include right-of-way.

<u>Existing Build</u>	\$230 - \$270 million
<u>Texas Turnaround</u>	\$210 – \$250 million
<u>Bypass without Split Diamond</u>	\$170 – \$210 million
<u>Bypass with Split Diamond</u>	\$200 - \$240 million

## 4.0 Evaluation Criteria

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. discussed the revised evaluation criteria with changes. He reviewed the project’s Purpose and Need and Problem Statement. He said to keep or discard an alternative, the committee must look at the alternatives that best meet the Purpose and Need of the project and use the evaluation criteria as a way to rank them. He reviewed Highway 62 problems.

- Traffic will double in the future
- 5 of the 11 signal lights do not meet current standards
- Several segments of the highway exceed statewide accident rate
- No multi-modal facilities

## Revised Evaluation Criteria

- Includes the Split Diamond
- Grade separation at Poplar
- Revised interchange at Delta Waters
- Design Options at the North Terminus

Terry K. explained the property impacts of each alternative with the following table of parcel takes.

		Whole Corridor (I-5 to Dutton Rd.)				North Terminus	
		Plain Bypass	Split Diamond Bypass	Existing Hwy Build	Texas Turnaround	N. Term. Bypass	N. Term. Existing Corridor
Partial Take	Residential (PR)	30	24	40	23	7	15
	Commercial (PC)	52	37	143	146	18	32
	Other/Vacant Lots (PV)	49	52	64	51	27	19
	<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>66</b>
Complete Take	Residential (CR)	1	3	17	34	0	18
	Commercial (CC)	13	10	33	34	2	16
	Other/Vacant lots (CV)	5	4	4	2	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>35</b>

Building	Residential (BR)	11	11	32	39		1	19
	Commercial (BC)	38	44	81	112		19	39
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>151</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>58</b>

Terry K. said the alternatives using the existing highway, or with modifications which include frontage and backage roads, the amount of buildings impacted doubled and in some cases was even greater.

He said one of the things the CAC asked was what is the ROW cost, still needs to be analyzed.

#### Other Revisions in the Evaluation Criteria

- Increases in new impervious surface
- Split Diamond
  - Possible Section 4f issues (deals with parks, possible encroachment into the Bear Creek Greenway)
  - Additional stream crossings (Bear Creek)
  - Increased riparian impacts

## **5.0 Long Term Solution Discussion**

Terry Kearns, URS

#### Characteristics of a Long Term Solution

- Addresses the basic traffic problem
- Adaptable
- Economical
- Ability to construct in phases
- Other

Terry K. said all 4 alternatives separate the traffic and address the basic traffic problem. He said the Bypass has more adaptability because ODOT would control access on the entire length of it and it could expand in the future with minimal impacts. The Existing and Texas Turnaround do not have that degree of adaptability.

#### Discussion:

Brian D. said that when Mike A. was talking about the Existing and the Texas Turnaround he wanted the committee to look at the higher risk. If one connection to those facilities fail that cannot be fixed, there is no other route. Suppose an incident (major accident) happens, with the Bypass you have two separate facilities; if something happens on one people can use the other. The Bypass gives people options with less risk associated. He said they have talked to Texas about the Texas Turnaround. They have built them tighter and they are not working well and we have learned from that mistake. We do not want to repeat that mistake and that is why the Texas Turnaround is laid out as it is.

Jerry M. said in his mind the adaptability is the big thing to talk about when thinking long term solution. When he thinks further out than the modeling can project where additional capacity might need to be added the Bypass would be easier.

Mike Q. commented that the RPS process will start looking at candidate growth areas in November and December. For adaptability it might be a good idea to overlay the maps of potential growth to see which alternative would serve best.

Suzanne M. said an important characteristic is how well the alternative integrates into the urban area and the future urban areas. If the solution presents a barrier to the development and function of that urban area is a huge characteristic concern to Medford in terms of land use planning.

Jerry M. asked if she saw one of the alternatives on the table that presented more of a barrier than another in regard to that criteria.

Suzanne M. replied that the Bypass presented the least barrier because the highway could become more of a city street.

Mike Q. said the existing Highway 62 would become a boulevard. He thought it was more than barriers, some of the proposed land areas provide options and opportunities rather than more barriers.

Terry K. added that with the Texas Turnaround and Existing Highway you are providing access to businesses so you would have less access control over what happens in the future along the access roads. With the Bypass it is strictly access controlled the entire way and would have more adaptability in the future.

Skip K. asked if there was an accident on the Bypass and the road was shut down if it would shut down the airport.

Terry K. replied that what he thought Brian was saying, such as with the Existing, if you have a big accident on the expressway portion of the highway and you have to shut it down traffic would go to access roads. If you had the Bypass with a major accident on Highway 62 you would simply route traffic to the Bypass or vice versa route to Highway 62.

Skip K.-would it shut down the airport \*\*\*\*I think I should take this underlined part out\*\*\*\*  
Terry K.-could not see why it would

Skip K.-the bombs they are making around the world these days 1400 ft is not very far they could blow down 2-3 story building, terrorists

Brian D.-not something we have looked at

Terry K.-all the alternatives are virtually on the same line, something happens down there it would happen with all the alternatives

Jerry M. said in thinking about the long term solution and the ability to construct in phases the reality might be that the first phase would simply be ROW acquisition. He added that when he looks at the Existing or the Texas Turnaround he thinks they are much more problematic in terms of securing ROW.

Terry K. commented that one of the things we have frequently heard at the public meetings is that people are concerned about impacts and they want to bring a degree of certainty to their lives. If it is viable alternative study it, if not move forward and dismiss it. It is really starting to affect their lives and businesses. He said we are at a point where there is not much more information we can give you unless the alternative is moving forward into the EIS. We are asking the PDT to tell us what you want us to study in the EIS, all four or reduce them further. He added that we are at about a 5% level of engineering study and we need to be at 15% level before the EIS.

Nick F. said some of the impacts are fairly significant and the question is are there sub-options we could look at. We might be able to reduce impacts and find some way to quantify what those impacts are.

Terry K. explained that we have looked at minimizing the impacts and used Delta Waters as an example and said they could do that at the next meeting.

Jerry M. added that we could minimize the impact by pulling in the spacing standards. He wanted to remind the group that the CAC had previously recommended dropping the Texas Turnaround and the Couplet to the PDT. This team concurred with the recommendation to drop the Couplet but asked for further analysis of the Texas Turnaround. He said he thinks the recommendation coming out of the CAC will be to drop the Texas Turnaround and then make a decision on how to move forward with the Existing.

Dan M. asked if they expected the City Council and County Commissioners to vote on an alternative that they would prefer.

Terry K. said he is going to ask them and we ultimately need them to support the project. The intent for meeting with them is to tell them where we are at and get some feedback.

Brian D. commented that what he would like to have back is more of a risk assessment. If we go with the Bypass we need to know if they are willing to take over the old facility. The City would have to take over the existing highway.

Dan M. asked if it would be possible to give the same presentation to the MPO Policy Committee and have them weigh in on it.

Terry K. said that could be arranged and added that this committee needs to come to some agreement.

Jerry M. added that he didn't see anything else that they could do at this point and does not see why the committee could not make a decision next month.

## **6.0 Public Comment**

Terry Kearns, URS  
None received.

## **7.0 PDT Comfort Check**

Terry Kearns, URS

Terry K. asked committee members if there was any further information that they needed.

Suzanne Myers: Input from the City Council will be a huge plus.

Jerry Marmon: I am thinking in terms of making the City Council presentation useful in terms of detail background and asked how much background you think they will be looking for.

Suzanne Myers: I think the focus should be where we are at now and leave time for them to talk and discuss.

Mark Gibson: No I don't think so. I am concerned with Highway 140 connectivity and truck movements, and the North Terminus, think I just need to study what we have.

Dan Moore: I heard Skip K. say he wanted more time and information, I feel comfortable with how things are going and maybe there is something you could do with Skip one on one to catch him up.

Terry K.: We have done that, he asked for the information we have presented today.

Donna Beck: I'm fine

Brian Dunn: inaudible

Jerry Marmon: I am comfortable next month with making a decision with two rounds of public open house and talking with the city and the county.

Dale Lininger: I do want to hear what the City Council and Board of Commissioners have to say but I think I am close to zeroing in on what my preference is. I do want to look through the information that was given to us for the public meetings. I think next month we should be able to make recommendations, I could not agree more with the comments of the people who say let's make a decision and get it going so we know what our future is.

## **8.0 Next Steps**

- November, 2006 – Review design details of the alternatives
- December, 2006 – Begin technical analysis
- Late Spring 2007 – Publish Draft DEIS

## **9.0 Adjournment**

Terry K. adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Next meeting October 26, 2006 at 8:30 a.m.