



## Task Force /Oversight Team Briefing

- ATTENDEES:** Task Force: Russ Beaton/Land Use, Mark Becktel/City of Salem Public Works, Anthony Boesen/FHWA, Tom Clark/West Salem businesses, Bob Cortright/DLCD, Scott Erickson/West Salem residents, Glenn Gross/City of Salem Community Development, Glen Hadley/Salem-Keizer Transit District, Fred Harris/North Salem Business Association, Mike Jaffe/SKATS, Sam Litke/City of Keizer, Cindy Schmitt/Marion County Public Works, Doug Parrow/BTA, Tim Potter/ODOT, Lorraine Pullman/Grant Neighborhood, Darlene Strozut/Highland Neighborhood
- Oversight Team: Sam Brentano/Marion County, Lloyd Chapman/Salem-Keizer Transit District, Richard Walsh/City of Keizer, Cathy Clark/City of Keizer, Eric Havig/ODOT, Jane Lee/ODOT, Tom Richey/Polk County
- STAFF PARTICIPANTS:** Julie Warncke/City of Salem, Rod Thompson/ODOT, Tim Burkhardt/CH2M HILL, Dave Simmons/CH2M HILL, Aaron Geisler/WH Pacific, Ed Chamberland/WH Pacific, Calvin Larwood/WH Pacific, Randy Johnson/PTV Associates, Linda Girard/CH2M HILL
- GUESTS:** Ron Comstock/PGE, Moya McKeehan/Highland Neighborhood Association, Pam Vorachek/A.C. Gilbert Discovery Village, John Gear, Don Works/American Storage, Nomi Pearce/Highland Neighborhood Association, Richard Schmid/MWVCOG, Dwane Brenneman/A.C. Gilbert Discovery Village
- DATE:** September 3, 2008
- LOCATION:** Salem Public Library (Anderson Rooms), Salem, Oregon

## Welcome and Agenda Review

Tim Burkhardt welcomed the group. He then reviewed the agenda which focused on the discussion continued from the July 23 meeting about refinements of Alternative 2 (Widen Existing Bridges).

## Public Comment

Tim invited the public audience to introduce themselves and any organizational affiliation and then address the group if they had comments. A number of members of the public were present and introduced themselves. No one wished to comment at this time.

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## Refinements to Alternative 2

Tim reminded the group that at the last meeting, the project management team had introduced a new Alternative 2 in response to concerns among the design team staff about practicality and constructability of the alternative as it was initially proposed. The staff's endorsement of the new alternative (2B) raised several questions among the Task Force (TF) and Oversight Team (OT) about traffic impacts and costs and concerns about not having adequate time to review it.

Tim said that the management team is now recommending that both alternatives (now called 2A and 2B) be studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

There was a lengthy discussion and questions from members of the Task Force and Oversight Team:

- With the new roadway along the river on the west side, what are access points to get into the large urban renewal area? The problem needs to be addressed or you'll just be throwing all the backed up trucks into the Wallace/Glen Creek intersection.
- 2A has had refinements (i.e., now no piers in the water) and shows a 25% decrease in cost from the earlier estimate. 2B shows about a 25% increase.
- What about staging - will it be difficult?
- 2A is at the lowest end of the performance and cost scale of the alternatives being considered for the DEIS.
- There is a PGE substation that 2B would go over the top of and 2A would be very close to. The implication is that relocation in either of the alternatives would be very expensive.
- What about Gilbert House - how close to their structure would 2B come? (Response was that impacts would be minimal).
- Why not throw out 2A? (Response: it is still a lot cheaper and it may be good to define the "low end." We want to have a range of solutions. Including it help to make an argument about what we get for additional money).
- Does adding 2A and 2B this eliminate another alternative from the study? (Response: no).
- Aren't we spending a lot of money to pick an alternative (i.e., 2A) that is possibly fatally flawed? (Response: no, we need to be certain that our process is defensible).
- 4B includes components of 2A so much of it would already be evaluated.
- Costs do increase for 2A and 2B if the substation needs to be relocated, so they are not as "low cost" but are still at the low end of the spectrum.
- I like the component argument of 2B - it may end up as part of a hybrid only with additional bike paths and Glen Creek. Plus this is the only one that can complete 4B.
- We need to plan for 50% growth. Eliminate 2A.

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- Question to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – are we endangering the full range of alternatives? (Response: don't think we should eliminate at this time. If we eliminate something too early we can get into trouble – need to prove legal sufficiency. We need more information economically and traffic-wise).
  - Would maintaining both 2A and 2B add cost to doing the EIS? We need to retain 2B – it is a decent alternative and fills in a gap on the spectrum. We need to clarify cost issues! Be aware of alternative “creep.”
  - Why add orange back in? (Response: both FHWA and Department of Justice say we need a reasonable range of alternatives).

## TF Recommendation and OT Decision

In summarizing the prior conversation, Tim proposed to the group that both Alternative 2A and 2B be included in the DEIS in the forms described at today's meeting, assuming that it will be a relatively low cost to include them. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff has agreed in principle to pay the assumed costs for additional analysis that would be required for the new alternative (2B). The project team will continue to watch for opportunities to pare down cost. ODOT wants to protect the process and the timeline. The group agreed, by consensus, to accept this proposal and move forward with the DEIS.

## Public Comment

John Gear said he wanted to commend the group on reaching the right answer and referred to the years-ago “WHOOOPS” debacle that was based on an unquestioned assumption about future electrical power demand. He also said he agreed with the comment that we need to revisit growth assumptions and questioned the term “maximum transportation benefits” as transportation implies cars and ignores bikes and pedestrians.

## Next Steps and Adjourn

Tim said that no additional meetings are scheduled during the time when the technical analysis is being conducted but that the management team will send occasional updates to the group. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.