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AGENDA COVER MEMO

DATE: May 18, 2005
TO: Lane County Board of Commissioners
DEPT.: Public Works
PRESENTED BY: Bill Morgan, Senior Engineering Associate, Transportation Planning
Tom Boyatt, ODOT Senior Region Planner
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: DISCUSSION/Report by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
on I-5 and Franklin Boulevard Proposed Interchange

I. MOTION

None requested.

II. ISSUE OR PROBLEM

ODOT staff wish to acquaint elected officials on the system refinement planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes needed to consider grade separated ramp connections between Interstate 5 and Franklin Boulevard in the Glenwood Area. ODOT is requesting that the three local governments and ODOT provide a clear “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” decision in the second phase of the transportation system planning process to ensure local support for the Plan (Transportation and Land Use) amendments necessary to move a project concept forward.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Background

As background, please refer to Attachment A (the April 13, 2005 letter from Jeff Scheick, Region 2 Manager of ODOT, to the City of Springfield). This letter outlines the expectations by ODOT for local system planning of a proposed interchange. It also defines the funding commitment by ODOT for the upfront local planning and potential Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

A PowerPoint presentation can be given to outline the process developed to move forward with consideration of a new interchange at this location.

B. Analysis

The replacement of the I-5 bridge structure across the Willamette River is proceeding and is estimated to be completed by 2012 using Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA III) bridge funds. Original requests were made to ODOT to combine one EIS for both the OTIA bridge and Interchange projects. This is not a feasible option, but ODOT has committed that the bridge will be designed and constructed to accommodate possible additions of ramps, unless it is physically impossible.

In Phase 1 of the new interchange planning process, ODOT conducted an assessment of

the existing conditions and needs for the proposed bridge and ramp connections. A series of stakeholder interviews were conducted, and a project management team was developed, including staff from Eugene, Springfield, Lane County, ODOT, FHWA and Lane Transit District. (See Attachment B, summary of project area stakeholder interviews conducted during Phase 1).

ODOT, local jurisdiction staff and the project consultant, CH2Mhill, have developed a work plan for Phase 2 of the process. Phase 2 of the transportation system planning is proposed to be an open public process with appointed and elected officials, citizens, and stakeholder groups. Various Tasks include conceptual design evaluation, and preliminary traffic, environmental, and financial analyses. The work plan will facilitate a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” decision by the three local governments and ODOT before proceeding with more detailed analysis that supports amendments to local Transportation System Plans, and the federal Regional Transportation Plan (Phase 3).

The target delivery schedule is to reach a decision to move forward with plan amendments by the end of 2005.

C. Alternatives/Options

No action is requested at this time.

D. Recommendations

No action is requested at this time.

E. Timing

Estimated Phase 2 completion by the end of 2005

IV. IMPLEMENTATION/FOLLOW-UP

Further project updates and a Board work session to review and discuss technical material developed by the project team, as well as stakeholder and other public input.

V. ATTACHMENTS

- A. April 13, 2005 letter from Jeff Scheick, Region 2 Manager of ODOT, to Springfield
- B. March 4, 2005 Technical Memorandum of project area stakeholder interviews conducted during Phase 1



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Transportation

Region 2 Headquarters

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April 13, 2005

Mr. Mike Kelly
City of Springfield
225 Fifth Street
Springfield, OR 97477

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for your March 21 letter about an I-5/Franklin Interchange. I think all parties have been clear about their goals – ODOT must construct a new bridge by 2012 and the City of Springfield would like to include an interchange project. Less clear has been the steps we need to take together to accomplish both goals. I will be very clear in this letter.

We will construct a new I-5/Willamette Bridge by 2012 using OTIA III Bridge Funding. This will not be easy. While we are confident that a full Environmental Impact Study (EIS) will not be required for the bridge replacement, we anticipate the required environmental work will take two years, followed by two years of design and any needed right-of-way acquisition. Finally, we anticipate two years to complete construction of the new bridge.

I understand that you would like one EIS conducted for both the bridge and the interchange projects. The interchange will require a full EIS which will result in delaying construction of the bridge until the environmental work is completed. This is not a feasible option. The interchange ramps will have to be built after the bridge is completed.

The need to study and potentially build an interchange after the current bridge replacement should not be a major concern to the City. First, unless it is physically impossible, we will design and build the bridge so that ramps can be added. Second, ODOT remains committed to providing \$2.75 million to fund an EIS for a full interchange at Franklin Boulevard. Third, it is entirely possible that the interchange project will be ready to move forward within 3 years if the City and metropolitan area update their transportation plans and complete the necessary land use actions to include the full interchange and related improvements.

It is critical that the Cities of Springfield and Eugene and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) begin working to update their transportation plans, solidify their priorities, and secure any critical land use approvals as soon as possible. This work must be done before we will initiate the EIS for the interchange. We have learned through experience that a solid system planning foundation is necessary for projects to move successfully through the environmental and project development process. We have committed \$500,000 to your local planning effort and ODOT region staff is ready to provide the technical information, the needed transportation system improvements, preliminary cost estimates and documentation necessary for the metropolitan area to complete the required system planning. We will work closely with you to complete this task expeditiously.

ODOT has previously said we would fund an EIS for the interchange – and we will follow through on that commitment provided that the Cities and MPO do their part as well, including the transportation planning and land use work. I am optimistic that we can build a new bridge and position the interchange project to move forward if we work together towards both goals.

Sincerely,

Jeff Scheick
Region 2 Manager

cc: Congressman Peter DeFazio
Commissioner Bobby Green, Lane County
Mayor Sid Leiken, City of Springfield
Mayor Kitty Piercy, City of Eugene
Dennis Taylor, City of Eugene
Ollie Snowden, Lane County
Doug Tindall, ODOT

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

CH2MHILL

Franklin Avenue/Glenwood Area Interchange Study

PREPARED FOR: Willamette River/Glenwood PMT
PREPARED BY: Sam Seskin, CH2M HILL
DATE: March 4, 2005

The consultants conducted hour-long interviews in person with project area stakeholders. The interviews were conducted during the second week of February 2005. This memo includes the interview format and questions, interviewees, and summary of the interviews.

Interview Format and Questions

- Statement of interview purpose:
 - to obtain their input on problems, issues and decision making process related to a possible Franklin Ave/Glenwood Area interchange
 - to summarize ODOT's interests and their commitment
- Brief description of the anticipated work
- Indication that their input will be used in development of the scope of work for Phase 2, including both technical issues and public/agency involvement
- Open discussion based generally around the following questions:
 - 1. How would you describe the problem? What is the history of the problem (not the project) as you see it? What is causing the problem?
 - 2. What are the key issues related to solving the problem?
 - 3. How do these issues affect you and/or the constituency you represent?
 - 4. Do you feel the project scope as described is an appropriate way to address the problem?
 - 5. What types of activities would be most helpful in developing the best solution to the problem? What approaches have worked well in the past, and why? What approaches have been unsuccessful, and why?
 - 6. How do you (or the organization you represent) want to be involved in the project? What type and level of information do you want to receive?
 - 7. Who else should we be talking with (what other groups are affected, what organizations represents them, who are the appropriate contacts)?
 - 8. Are there any other questions you wish we would ask?

Franklin/Glenwood Interchange Area Interviewees

David Kelly, Eugene City Council
Allen Lowe, Eugene Senior Planner
Bill Dwyer, Lane County Commissioner
Rich Hazel, Laurel Hill Neighborhood Association Co-Chair
John Lawless, Eugene Planning Commissioner
Bobby Green, MPO Vice Chair
John Brown, Cal Young Neighborhood President, Real Estate Analyst
Kristen Taylor and Jeff Nelson, Fairmount neighborhood co-chairs
David Sonnicksen, Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park
John Lively, Lane/Metro Partnership
Chris Ramey, University of Oregon Architect
Terry Connolly, Eugene Chamber
Rob Zako, Laurie Siegel, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Steve Moe, Springfield Planning Commission
Sid Leiken, Springfield Mayor
Mike Kelly, Springfield City Manager
Greg Mott, Springfield Planning Manager
Steve Dignam, Lane County Planning Commission

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Introduction

This memorandum summarizes the remarks of 19 stakeholders who were interviewed by the project team during the period February 7-9, 2005. The interviewees were from the list of stakeholders made part of Project Management Team (PMT) meeting summary notes (January 12, 2005) for the January 4th meeting.

Stakeholders interviewed were: David Kelly, Eugene City Council; Allen Lowe, Eugene Sr. Planning Planner; Bill Dwyer, Lane County Commissioner; Rich Hazel, Laurel Hill Neighborhood Association Co-Chair; John Lawless, Eugene Planning Commissioner; Bobby Green, Lane County Commissioner; John Brown, Cal Young Neighborhood Association President; Kristen Taylor and Jeff Nelson, Fairmount Neighborhood Association Co-Chairs; David Sonnicksen, Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park; John Lively, Lane/Metro Partnership; Chris Ramey, U of O Architect; Terry Connolly, Eugene Chamber of Commerce; Rob Zako and Laurel Siegel, 1000 Friends of Oregon; Steve Moe, Springfield Planning Commissioner; Greg Mott and Sid Lieken, City of Springfield Planner and Mayor; and Mike Kelly, Springfield City Manager.

To maintain confidentiality, none of the remarks below is attributed to specific interviewees. The remarks have been combined to eliminate duplication and are grouped under the following categories: Attitude Toward Project, Issues/Constraints, Data/Information Needs, Outreach Process, and Other Stakeholders. Each category begins with an overview of the remarks.

Attitude Toward Project

All interviewees demonstrated an understanding of how the proposed project could improve access to the Glenwood area and simplify access to the Eugene downtown core and U of O. Neighborhood and environmental group representatives were especially wary of the impacts, however. City and County officials expressed the most enthusiastic support. Representative remarks follow:

- Wonderful idea in principle
- Questionable viability relating to need
- Replacement of existing city entrance would be a good thing
- Need to plan for access ahead of development
- People get lost very often--no good connections
- New interchange at Glenwood would create development environment
- Need a comprehensive Franklin Corridor study
- Concerned--project is driven by university

Issues/Constraints

Interviewees were concerned with potential for funds diverted from other projects, increased congestion on Franklin Boulevard, traffic circulation/cut-throughs, neighborhood and business access, land use and property value impacts, parkland impacts, river greenway preservation, replacement housing, bike path connections, noise, aesthetics, bus

rapid transit (BRT) construction and function, pedestrian safety, development of Glenwood, and U of O arena events traffic. Specific remarks included:

Consider egress from Laurel Hill (16th Street underpass now) with new configuration
 Connections from Laurel Hill to 30th--prohibited in Laurel Hill plan--has stopped other proposed developments
 Would like aesthetically pleasing bridge not marred by high flyovers, etc.
 Consider use of "quiet" pavement or noise walls on structures
 New subdivision of 200+ homes in progress (East Ridge Village) will need access to freeway at Glenwood
 Judkins Point--viewed by community as a natural feature
 Need City Charter Amendment to change Alton Baker Park
 ODOT doesn't maintain its property next to the Willamette
 Be clear about project objective (purpose and need)
 Need to put project in a regional planning context
 Need to look at metro area growth patterns
 Urban renewal district in Glenwood will result in new civic, mixed use and industrial growth
 Ferry St interchange overloaded
 Arena could encourage hotel/tourism development at Glenwood
 Exceptions required to meet state/fed policy (interchange spacing, etc.)

Data/Information Requirements

The most often mentioned need for data and other information was in regard to traffic. Interviewees recognized that the Ferry Street Bridge was inadequate to serve the needs of the area. Several interviewees wanted to know how much a new interchange at Glenwood would relieve the volume on the Ferry Street Bridge. Interviewees also wanted to know the traffic volume and circulation impacts to Franklin Boulevard. Specific remarks often centered on design details, and included:

Lane configuration, secondary road locations
 Capacity improvements
 Footprint--how far would impacts extend east and west
 Interchange forms
 Visual simulations
 Areas where access management might be required
 Need a comprehensive Franklin Corridor Study
 See prior study (done as part of Ferry St. project) -- South Bank Conceptual Study (City of Eugene, Sept. 14, 1994)
 See Option D of the Ferry Street Bridge Improvements Feasibility Study (1988?)
 Need better origin/destination (O/D) data
 Impacts of increased traffic and access on intersecting arterials (Orchard, Walnut, Agate)

Outreach Process

Interviewees all recognized that a broad community discussion was necessary for the proposed project. Neighborhood association and environmental groups may need their own special meetings. Those who were familiar with the public process for the I-5/Beltline

Interchange project cited it as an example. Meetings that would be held jointly by Eugene and Springfield officials (and Lane County) were encouraged. The use of outside facilitators was also encouraged. Generally, the message was, "do what has worked in the past." A rather comprehensive list of remarks follows:

Show and ask---here are our ideas, what do you like?

Provide irrefutable facts/constraints about design requirements (not overblown standards)

Use Mayors as conveners

Changes to TSP--need to create boundaries of alternatives, enough definition so elected officials can agree to move forward (e.g., no impacts to park)

Need to present a "replacement bridge project only" as one alternative, as well as 3 or 4 others--very conceptual, not engineering drawings

Simulations of some form very useful---what it would look like (height, placement, etc.--not detailed design)

Tie into two other Eugene planning efforts---Walnut Mixed Use Study (on Franklin to consider redevelopment options) and 6th/7th Street Project

Real players are in City Council---meet with them in a work session to lay out the issues before going to the public, involve the Planning Commission

Meet with executive board of neighborhood association first, then full community meeting

Website

Use LCOG list for mailing

Use process of U of O and Fairmont Neighborhood Association on consideration of East U of O Plan as model---coming together--at first very controversial

Neighborhood Leadership Council--good way to get word out about study before it starts, education about process, timelines, etc.

Use joint meetings of all the planning commissions--it has been done for other things

Use JEO meetings ---Joint Elected Official meetings of Lane County Commission and both City Councils

Send letters to 2 Mayors and County Board Chair (Anna Morrison)

Use meetings with small group discussions, not open houses---people won't understand it by just viewing posters

Hold events at schools and places where people are comfortable

Keep language simple

Media coverage is important---newspaper and TV

We had a good relationship with ODOT over the temporary bridge

We want the process to be inclusive, and take environmental issues into account

Find the broader voice by involving Glenwood, Fairmount, and Laurel Hill

Use recent planning process (East Campus Plan) with Fairmount as a model – listened to neighbors, while keeping institutional commitment to enlarged campus in mind

Beltline was a good model

Need to involve the metropolitan Policy Committee, but maybe involve them as elected officials rather than as a policy board, since the former would lead to more public involvement

Don't let [some neighbors] run the show--they have to be led

Beltline Decision team is the model for decision making...you have the model

Concern about ODOT's assertion that planning consensus must be complete in 6 months

Can we uncouple this project from the bridge replacement?

Keep the issue on ODOT's mind

It's hard to find out what ODOT's policy is [for NEPA studies]

Who speaks for ODOT?

Other Stakeholders

Many of the people who interviewees mentioned as other stakeholders to contact were already on the PMT's list, and some were interviewed. A comprehensive list of recommended names and organizations follows with names in *italics* of people that were interviewed. (We regret any misspellings and other irregularities.)

George Poling--Eugene Councilor representing Chevy Chase neighborhood (part of Harlow, north of park)

East Alten Baker Park Citizens Planning Committee (CPC)---682-4800--Parks Department can give us names of members

Jim Carlson ---Assistant Eugene City Manager, 682-5524

Jan Bowman--Eugene Community Relations, 692-5587

Chris Ramey--U of O campus architect and planner

Jim Werfelmann--Peace Health Medical Center Hilyard Campus

Railroad

Chamber of Commerce

Jerry Diethlem, Otto Poticha--architects who developed Glenwood plan

John Tamulonis--Springfield economic development

Peter Thurston--architect who developed Glenwood redevelopment plan (may be good source of data for traffic generation, projections)

Faye Stewart--County Commissioner who represents Glenwood

County Roads Advisory Committee

Steve Moe, a major property owner in Glenwood--very civic minded and long-time resident East Ridge Village/Son Blaze Development, Laurel Hill Valley neighborhood

Charles Biggs, ex-pres CYNA, (generally, growth and park impacts)

Neighborhood residents

Laurel Hill neighbors

Allen Lowe, Eugene Planning and Garry McNeal, Eugene Public Works Transportation

South University Neighborhood - Peg Peters, chair

Eugene Parks and Open Space

Glenwood Urban Renewal Board

Downtown Association, Russ Brink

Convention and Visitors' Ass'n., Kari Westland

Lane County Commission, Bobby Green

Hugh Prichard, Real Estate Broker

Sierra Club

Convention and Visitors' Assn of Lane County

Eugene Bicycle Coalition

Bill Dwyer

Peter DeFazio, U.S. Congressman

Nick Arnis, Springfield Transportation Planner