

Point Defiance Bypass Project Technical Advisory Team – Meeting Notes

Date: April 7, 2011
Time: 1 to 2 p.m.
Location: City of Lakewood City Hall 3rd floor Conference Room
Attendees: Andrew Neiditz, City of Lakewood
Brian Ziegler, Pierce County
Dawn Masko, City of DuPont
Kevin Dayton, WSDOT (Olympic Region)
WSDOT Project Team: Ron Pate, Dave Smelser, Larry Mattson, Melanie Coon

Welcome

Program Update

Recovery Act funding –

- FRA and WSDOT signed agreements for \$590m in late February and an additional \$145m on April 7.
- Submitted an application for \$120 million on April 4 for Florida's returned funding.

The [Cascades High Speed Rail program](#) is now 15 projects spanning the entire Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor. The added projects include corridor reliability upgrades between Seattle and Vancouver, new siding track in Blaine, a new middle lead track in Vancouver and funding to purchase eight new locomotives.

The first project to start construction will probably be Everett Storage Track this fall. The rest of the projects are in environmental review or design. Work is also underway in the Vancouver rail yard on a group of projects.

Community outreach is on-going. Members of the project team recently met with the Pierce County Building & Construction Trades Council, the Steilacoom Town Council and Lakewood's Pacific Neighborhood. The team is going to shift its focus to Tacoma, where there have been fewer instances of outreach.

EA Schedule

The "four-month look ahead" schedule was reviewed. This summer WSDOT wants feedback on the three discipline reports (Socio-Economic, Noise and Transportation).

Andrew Neiditz asked about mitigation ideas and if those would get vetted prior to publication of the EA. Larry Mattson responded saying that the first formal opportunity will be when the draft discipline reports are released in June and July, then the Technical Advisory Team would be brought in to review the potential impacts and mitigation measures cited in the reports. Local agency review of the "big 3"

discipline reports (Social Elements, Transportation, and Noise/Vibration) would happen in a workshop setting. In response to a follow-up question from Mr. Neiditz, Larry replied that the WSDOT project team is always willing to meet informally with our local agencies at any time prior to publication of the EA, to discuss specific impacts and mitigation measures in greater detail.

The team is still on track to finish the EA in fall 2012.

Greenfield Tech Memo and Shoreline Tech Memo

- Larry Mattson overviewed the two main NEPA concepts driving the process:
 - First, the number of alternatives should decrease as the NEPA process moves forward and some alternatives are found to be unreasonable.
 - Second, “unreasonable” under NEPA means an alternative is not practical or feasible from a technical or economic standpoint.
- The Greenfield Technical memo is getting wrapped up with final editing and “plain talking” occurring by mid-May.
- The major impacts noted in the Shoreline Tech Memo included curves, right-of-way takes, widening the tunnel under Ruston and the moveable bridge over Chambers Creek. The Shoreline Technical memo is still waiting on modeling information from BNSF which should be submitted in the next week or so.
- Final editing of the Shoreline technical memo will be concurrent with the Greenfield Tech Memo.
- The conclusions, eliminating the Greenfield route and the Shoreline route from consideration, will be presented to city councils and other stakeholders in June or July.

Traffic & Transportation Study

- Assumptions update: WSDOT is running two 2030 traffic models; one includes Cross-Base Highway as being built and one excludes it.
 - The Camp Murray gate will remain in its current location for the modeling. We are confident we can adequately address traffic issues without trying to model it at a new location.
- We are able to move forward with our process regardless of the outcome of the gate location decision.
- Brian Ziegler asked why we model the improvements without trains. Smelser responded that the “without train” modeling gives us a baseline to compare to when we model the “with train” scenario.
- Andrew Neiditz asked how we were going to factor in the growth at JBLM as an impact. Ron Pate responded that WSDOT used the Joint Base study and the Lakewood study and established a common data set. The EA studies at the impact of adding the trains, not added JBLM growth.
- Andrew Neiditz asked if we were involving JBLM on our advisory teams. Ron Pate responded that we have Thomas Knight from JBLM on our executive advisory team. Melanie Coon added

that Larry Mickel from JBLM Public Works has attended every one of the Technical Advisory Team meetings.

Next Meeting – 1:00 p.m. June 2 at WSDOT's Tacoma Maintenance Facility - 11211 41st Avenue SW