

# SR 432 Realignment Feasibility Study

## Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

### Meeting Summary #5

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**Meeting Date:** October 9, 2007

**Location:** Kelso Area Engineering Office, Kelso Washington

**Attendees:** *Technical Advisory Committee Meeting*

Gerald Smith – David Evans and Associates, Inc. (DEA), Consultant  
Neal Christensen - DEA, Consultant  
Karyn Anderson – WSDOT Southwest Region, Planning  
Rosemary Siipola – CWCOG, Transportation Planner/Manager  
Jeff Barsness – WSDOT Southwest Region, Planning Office Lead  
George Cress – Port of Longview, Planning and Development  
Gail Barber – Swanson Bark and Wood  
Jonathan Abuyan – WSDOT Southwest Region, Traffic  
Lisa Hendrickson – Cowlitz County  
John Bean – City of Longview

#### **Welcome and Introductions CWCOG, DEA & WSDOT**

Rosemary Siipola, Cowlitz Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG), thanked everyone for attending our fifth SR 432 Realignment Feasibility Study Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting, welcomed everyone and began to briefly describe the study progress. She shared with the group some of the involvement that's taken place and that another interest group meeting (Longview Transportation Club), was scheduled this week Thursday, at the Monticello Hotel. Rosemary was invited to speak on the study and opened the invitation to other TAC and Project Management Team (PMT) members. She planned to share some of the potential short and long term recommendations and modeling information. Rosemary commented that earlier, Karyn Anderson, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), mentioned that as a study progresses, it is not uncommon for attendance to drop off, not from a lack of interest; rather, most are simply agreeable with the progress and study direction. Rosemary concurred that it was not for a lack of interest, thanked everyone for coming and then turned it over to Karyn.

Karyn thanked everyone for coming and explained to the group that this could be the last Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting. That at the end of today's meeting; it would be up to the group to decide if another meeting was necessary. She then thanked David Evans and Associates (DEA – Gerry Smith and Neal Christensen) and CWCOG (Rosemary Siipola) for their hard work over the past year. She mentioned to the TAC that there was a full agenda planned for the day. She explained that DEA would share the developed list of potential short and long term

recommendations, based on input gathered from the TAC committee, Stakeholder Committee, Stakeholder interviews, traffic analysis, rail and highway modeling, and as Rosemary mentioned, from meetings with interest groups. Karyn thanked everyone at the table for attending, their involvement, and turned it over to Gerry.

**DEA Meeting  
Kick-Off  
Self  
Introductions,  
Progress  
Update**

Gerry thanked everyone for coming and opened the floor to self introductions. After introductions, Gerry gave a brief update regarding the agenda for today's meeting and provided an update on the study progress.

Gerry acknowledged that the study had been underway for a year and that the consultants were in the process of writing the Final Technical Report. Gerry commented to the group that he was inundating other PMT members with various chapters that he'd written. And, that these pieces would eventually be included in the Final Technical Report and available to TAC members by November. Karyn added that the review process can take additional time and that December may be more realistic for a final copy. Gerry added that the Final Report will also be available electronically and that other study materials are currently available to download from the project website: power point presentations, meeting summaries, project information, freight and commodity information.

Gerry explained that the commodity information for SR 432 Corridor, Rail Capacity Analysis and the recent Forest Product Study, are all in agreement. Gerry found it interesting, that our study findings have been confirmed with these other studies. The growth in carload rail traffic is 1 to 1.5 percent. Unit trains in the area are a big difference when compared to the 2001 RDP. The truck traffic is 2 % per year, normal growth in the area has been 1.5 for car traffic. As a result of stakeholder interviews, the truck traffic is 2% per year. A recent AASHTO document for reauthorization quotes FHWA traffic growth for the nation over the next 20 years at 2.07 % per year. Gerry reiterated that it was satisfying that our findings seem to be confirmed.

**Potential  
Short and Long  
Term  
Recommendations**

Gerry described that unit trains will use the extended Industrial Rail Corridor thus relieving street congestion caused by trains along the Reynolds lead. There will still be traffic disruptions from switching and local service trains along the Reynolds and Port leads, but the major traffic congestion caused by train traffic, crossing Oregon Way, would be eliminated. Therefore, a single point, urban interchange (SPUI) design is recommended at SR 432/SR 433 (Industrial Way/Oregon Way) and that this potential long term recommendation will separate rail and highway traffic on Oregon Way. Gerry then turned it over to Neal Christensen, David Evans and Associates, for the potential short and long term recommendations discussion.

Neal explained that they used the Vissim Traffic Simulation Program for the SPUI model. Following were various comments generated during this discussion:

- John Bean, City of Longview, asked Neal to zoom into the SPUI, looking for the dual left turns and mentioned that this supports the findings for the study DKS is completing for the City,
- Neal pointed out the extension of the industrial rail corridor (Port owned),

- Notice the train blocking the intersection of Industrial Way west of Oregon Way (2000-foot, 40-car train),
- John asked what the Level of Service was (LOS D now, LOS D 2030),
- George Cress, Port of Longview, asked about the grade,
- Jonathan Abuyan, WSDOT, mentioned that the grade is partly due to the close proximity of the Lewis-Clark Bridge,
- Neal mentioned that the grade was 5%,
- Jeff Barsness, WSDOT, suggested a signal for cars stacking up on the ramp, but that spacing is most likely limited because of rail,
- John suggested a short acceleration lane,
- Questions asked: Access under the ramp? Or is it behind the businesses?
- Neal, shared a couple other potential designs for this intersection (fly over and partial clover),
- All TAC members agreed that the SPUI is the best alternative for this location.

Realignment of California Way intersection discussion:

- Neal commented that the existing California Way could be vacated,
- Jeff and John commented that any business displaced could be moved to the neighboring property.
- Intersection operation will be better with improved sight distance
- (Note: at the Longview Transportation Club we heard that the intersection of Industrial Way and Old California Way (south side) will still need to be signalized to handle turning trucks.)

Neal then gave the TAC a hand-out listing the potential short-term and long-term improvement recommendations. Gerry explained that there were no surprises on the list. Gerry explained that the list represented some of the same recommendations from the 2001 study since they were charged with determining the feasibility of these options, that the SPUI was on the list and that the bypass option was not.

Gerry explained that increase in rail traffic west of Oregon Way demands that rail access be maintained and expanded. Developers west of Oregon Way want rail access and have indicated that this increase in rail will include unit trains.

Gerry explained that the stakeholder interviews pointed out one very important difference in the assumptions required in this study, versus those used in 2001. The type of industrial growth being planned today indicates a move toward rail for both in-bound and out-bound products, particularly an interest in unit train operations. In 2001, the expectation was more toward high tech industry served by trucks.

There was little need seen to continue the Reynolds rail lead if the Alternate Rail Corridor was constructed. The Alternate Rail Corridor, now called the Industrial Rail Corridor, was constructed; but stakeholder plans today indicate the Reynolds lead needs to stay in place to handle switching and local freight while the Industrial Rail Corridor needs to be extended west of Oregon Way to handle expected growth in unit trains.

This change indicates a need to preserve the Reynolds lead, which then makes the by-pass option, suggested in the 2001 study, much more difficult to build.

The by-pass option was to be located where the Reynolds lead is currently. With the rail in place there is little room for the by-pass option between the rail and the diking district ditch. Locating the by-pass between the rail and the ditch would involve major impacts to both. Karyn mentioned the geotechnical findings also didn't exist when the 2001 study was underway. Gerry explained that the by-pass would need to be elevated for its full length and because of very unstable soils (like Karyn mentioned) in that vicinity, making the by-pass option an extremely expensive improvement.

Gerry summarized that the feasibility of construction because of planned industrial rail growth, right-of-way needs, difficult foundation soils, and high cost is questionable and therefore is why the bypass option is not recommended in this feasibility study.

The TAC then reviewed the list of potential short and long term recommendations handed out by Neal. Neal also pointed out that the list was in no particular order and that the TAC could prioritize these recommendations, if they wanted to. The following are comments generated during this discussion:

- Jeff commented to the PMT, that if the Bypass option was not feasible partly due to soil conditions, how this affected the design of the SPUI option. The PMT explained that they had taken that into consideration and Gerry mentioned that Neal would also share cost estimates with the group shortly.
- Jeff commented that it would be worth looking at the bridge design in relation to the geotechnical report. All agreed. Gerry commented that he wouldn't be surprised if many of the businesses within the corridor, for instance, Weyerhaeuser, had some type of settling in their buildings. George, Port of Longview, responded that the Port did not have any settling in their buildings.
- TAC team members commented on the signal spacing at Weyerhaeuser
- The state will not signalize a private sector entrance. (Jeff, Jonathan)
- Gerry thanked the group for comments, Neal to look at the Weyerhaeuser solution closer. Gerry also mentioned that Weyerhaeuser was currently working on a Traffic Study; TAC agreed that since Weyerhaeuser was paying for their study, it would be okay if DEA consultants needed to communicate at this phase of the study.
- At 3<sup>rd</sup> & Tenant on ramp, Jonathan agreed that some accidents had occurred.
- Neal mentioned that at 3<sup>rd</sup> & Tennant Way, 9 truck accidents had occurred in 5 years,
- John mentioned that he's witnessed these accidents,
- George mentioned that it becomes difficult to move traffic through that area when a wind turbine is trying to negotiate that on ramp,
- John and Jonathan discussed the potential for a double left turn lane in that area and that geometrically there was not enough room,
- Neal said that maybe if they widened more to the North and he'll take a look at it,

- John said that they put 2 trucks through that location and he already knows it doesn't work. The city had received funding for this location, hired Parametrix to design it and then found out it couldn't be done,
- Gerry said we'll look at it and maybe it becomes a lower priority,
- George made a comment that during bad weather, the back up on Tenant Way is terrible,
- Karyn commented that when that occurs, usually there is heavy trucking on the ramp, and its backed up onto 432 (at times) back to the rail crossing,
- John said he'd check their video detection at that intersection,
- John asked about # 4 on the list, re-striping for left turn storage; he recommended removing it, and adding verbiage under access management and rear driveways to some of the businesses if it's available.
- Jonathan agreed, since the city is currently working to lengthen the left turn base they see no benefit of keeping it on the list,
- Jeff commented that he doesn't suggest anyone takes driveways away. The report should not recommend that, rather, it should recommend the development of an access management plan to address some of the driveways on Oregon Way and California Way.

Neal explained to the group that the list was still a work in progress and thanked everyone for their input. He then shared a few cost estimates for some of these potential improvements and added a caveat: that these were planning level 2007 cost estimates. The SPUI design, 65-70 million (does not include ROW, PE, Design, etc.), the flyover design, 95 million, and the partial clover leaf design, 90 million.

John suggested that the TAC prioritize the potential recommendations in a logical order. Most agreed that number 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> to Tennant Way on-ramp, should be removed since it is already being looked into. Neal commented that he'd spoken to Karyn and based on their conversation he believed this work to be underway. Jonathan confirmed that the work is currently underway. TAC agreed to remove # 1. The following was the order the TAC agreed upon for the potential recommendations:

- No 9 moves to No 2
- No 7 moves to No 3
- No 5 moves to No 4
- No 2 moves to No 5
- No 6 stays as No 6
- No 8 moves to No 7
- And, the SPUI is a great idea

Next, the group discussed the preliminary rail plans. The TAC members decided that if unit trains exist West of Oregon Way, then:

- First priority is extending the IRC across Oregon Way
- Second is the added "runaround" at Longview Junction,
- A third track on the IRC as unit train counts grow,
- Last priority is the second bridge across the Cowlitz River

Rosemary asked if sheet 4, Longview Junction “runaround”, was in addition to Kelso to Martin’s Bluff, and Gerry said yes, it is in addition to it.

John asked if anyone during the stakeholder interviews, when asked about unit trains, gave a timeframe. Gerry replied yes, that folks west of Oregon Way, said approximately 3-5 years.

John asked if they could add Kelso to Martin’s Bluff and unit train discussion into the Executive Summary or somewhere upfront. He thinks this discussion should be up front, early in the Technical Report. Many TAC members agreed with John and suggested the discussion is introduced early in the report.

The group also discussed the need for someone to champion the development issue of unit trains west of Oregon Way. Local development planning must be consistent with the developer ideas for this to happen. In addition there will be a need for public/private partnerships to finance the rail improvements needed.

**Wrap-up and  
PMT Staff  
Thanks TAC  
for their  
participation**

Gerry Smith, and the other Project Management Team members (Neal Christensen, Rosemary Siipola and Karyn Anderson), thanked everyone for providing their input based on their area of expertise in transportation and their on-going project involvement over this past year.

The TAC committee agreed that they did not need to meet again. Gerry mentioned that another Stakeholder Committee meeting would occur in late November. Gerry and Karyn reminded the group that the project website would be maintained with project information and contact information.

It is our goal to continue to maintain the website for approximately 1 year after the study is completed. Karyn shared that she’d like to distribute the Final Technical Report (hard copy) to each TAC and Stakeholder member, if DEA/WSDOT had money in the budget to do so. If not, the group was reminded that the Final Technical Report, once completed, will be available electronically to download from the project website.