



**NW Bethany Boulevard Improvements
Project Focus Group Meeting #4 Notes**

Meeting Date: October 7, 2010

Time: 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Location: Sunset Presbyterian Church

FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS:

Doug Alvarez	√	Paul Enriquez	√
Debra Ashe	√	Bob McMillan	√
Hal Ballard	√	Charles Murphy	√
Chris Biggs	√	Steve Murray	√
Ann Bryan	√	Jeff Oberst	
Robert Bueermann	√	Sandra Peterson	√
Stephen Collins	√	Norm Rose	√
Rob Saxton	√	John Hartsock	√

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Washington County			
Matt Costigan	√	Jan Wilson	√
Brian Irish	√	Magdalena Campuzano	√
Kim Haughn	√		
Howell Consulting			
Leslie Howell	√		
WHPacific			
Wayne Bauer	√	Ken Rehms	√
Sarah Heller, WHPacific	√		
Kittleson & Associates			
Wade Scarbrough	√		

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Approximately 40 others (see sign-in sheet for names)	

Welcome and Introductions – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

Leslie welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the night's agenda. (Copies of the agenda were made available for the audience). Leslie reminded the audience that this is a committee meeting with time available at the end for public comments. The audience is asked to hold comments until then.

Leslie asked the group for any corrections to the meeting notes from Meeting No. 3. No changes were made and therefore approved by the PFG. Meeting notes will be posted to the project website.

Items from the “issues bin” from the last meeting were reviewed.

- **Would a 3 or 4 lane improvement require a change to the TSP?** No, neither option would require a change to the County's TSP. A 3-lane improvement would be considered an interim improvement with to the ultimate 4/ 5-lane improvement shown on the TSP. A 4-lane improvement would meet the requirements of the TSP.
- **Source of traffic projections being used?** Wade discussed two handouts for tonight's meeting; “Metro Transportation Modeling” and “Metro Regional Land use Assumptions – Regional Transportation Plan”. These documents outline the trip generation and process used in the Metro modeling process. This also presents the information on the location of transportation area zones, or TAZ, as well as the growth predicted in each TAZ by 2035.

Question: What about the tree farm? That won't be redeveloped.

Answer: The Metro model is not that detailed. It does not isolate individual properties.

Question: Are these vehicle trips or person trips

Answer: The model takes into account all trips, including walking, biking, and transit trips. For the traffic analysis, we are using vehicle trips.

Question: Metro says there are 5.7 trips per household. Wade indicated 10 trips per household previously. Which is correct?

Answer: The 10-trips-per-household number was used as a reference and represents the number of trips generated by a typical single-family detached home. Other types of residences – such as condos, townhomes, or apartments – have lower trip rates. Also, the Metro model looks at origination-destination trips that enter or leave the TAZ. Some trips may be made entirely within the TAZ and therefore may not impact the external transportation system.

Question: Is 1 trip one-way?

Answer: Yes. The model's definition of a “trip” is a one-way trip. A single vehicle exiting and then returning counts as two trips.

Question: The analysis zone is 5 census tracts. The model does not seem to accurately represent the Bethany neighborhood. It may reflect a more dense build out of the area. Still not comfortable with where the numbers are coming from

Answer: The Metro model is a tool. The model is developed based on the future zoning and adopted plans within the area, and then analyzed to understand general growth. More detailed traffic analysis is then completed using actual traffic counts taken in the project area. This method is accepted in the industry and represents the best available source of future projections.

Question: Oak Hills numbers don't seem accurate. Does open space mean development?

Answer: The growth anticipated in the Oak Hills area is shown in TAZ #1130. This TAZ includes an area slightly larger than the residential neighborhood. There is not significant growth shown in

this TAZ. There is some commercial redevelopment indicated, but no new homes or residential growth.

Question: At the last meeting, 20,000 trips were indicated being added on NW Bethany Blvd. How does Bethany compare to 185th trips? Are trips being diverted to Bethany?

Answer: As shown on the figure from the last meeting, 185th is expected to carry a significant amount of growth and the total future volume on 185th will still be higher than that on Bethany. As an arterial providing a connection to Hwy 26 and the commercial areas south of Hwy 26, Bethany is also expected to receive significant growth.

Question: TAZ #1134 – 2000 households x 10 trips = 20,000 trips. Is that how to read the map and data?

Answer: Yes – in general, that can give a rough idea of the trip generation potential of a TAZ. The model output is then refined to reflect actual turning movements based on traffic counts, i.e. traffic from Spyglass is actually traveling to Bronson or West Union.

Items added to the “issues bin” for the next PFG:

Additional traffic counts have been taken, and the information is being reviewed and summarized.

- Updated traffic counts.

Initial Evaluation of Design Concept Alternatives

Leslie mentioned that the design concept maps shown at the previous PFG meeting are now on the website. Refinements to these will be presented this evening and the updated maps will be placed on the project website soon.

Design Concept Updates – Ken Rehms (WHPacific)

Ken presented updates in alignment which included adding right-of-way and easements, medians, retaining walls for each alternative. Ken explained the legend shown on the four alternative maps. Sections have been prepared for each of the four design alternatives also. One is a typical section County standard and one is a sample section at the same location on Bethany Blvd for each alternative (Section A-A).

Each alternative includes the same improvement at the connection to Bethany Blvd. to US 26, which is a five lane section. The design at NW Bronson Road intersection has also been refined, adding dual right turn lanes for eastbound to southbound traffic, and realigning the intersection slightly to the north. The lane configuration at Oak Hills Drive has also been changed to include a separate left turn lane and a thru-right lane westbound.

- **Alternative 1** – 5-lane section: This improvement includes five lanes from US 26 to north of NW West Union Road. There is a non-restrictive median from Avondale to just south of Emily Lane and a restrictive median from just north of Telshire to just north of Ridgetop (to prevent left turns out of Ridgetop). There are retaining walls on the west side near Bronson and Avondale, on the east side between Bronson and Oak Hills, and on both sides near Ridgetop. The typical section shows the County standard for a 5-lane section using standard lane widths. The assumed right-of-way is either the existing, or right-of-way acquisition to 45’ on each side of the centerline.

Question: Does this require widening for the additional westbound lane at Oak Hills Drive (at Bethany Blvd.)?

Answer: Yes, because of the short distance on Oak Hills Drive, there is currently not sufficient stacking area for outbound vehicles on Oak Hills Drive. The extra width is needed to have both left and right turn lanes at the new signal.

Question: Lane widths can be reduced. What is shown?

Answer: 12' travel lanes, 5' sidewalk, and 6' bike lane. Reductions could be to 11' travel lanes and 5' bike lanes (County engineer approval is required). The 5' sidewalk is the standard, which we are reluctant to reduce at this time.

Question: How accurate are houses shown?

Answer: The house outlines shown are based on an aerial image that was overlaid on the topographic survey, and houses were traced. The design team will be completing additional topographic survey work to increase the accuracy of buildings shown.

Question: What are the small numbers shown on the plans?

Answer: That is detailed information on average wall heights and potential cut and fill differences.

Question: Does the road go up or down?

Answer: Both, depending on which area you're looking at. Ken mentioned that this is getting into the details, and could be discussed further after the meeting.

Question: What is the A-A?

Answer: That is a sample section taken at the same place for each alternative.

Question: What is shown south of the NW Bronson Road intersection? Is that the ODOT project?

Answer: Yes, what is shown matches into the design proposed by the Moyano Leadership Group, with some slight modifications due to our traffic projections, such as dual rights on NW Bronson.

- **Alternative 2** – 4-lane section: This alternative includes Bethany Blvd. tapering from 5 lanes to 4 lanes past Bronson, back to 5 lanes for Oak Hills, tapering to 4 lanes past Telshire, then back to 5 lanes for NW West Union Road. Five lanes are shown at Oak Hills based on the traffic analysis. There are medians from Avondale to Oak Hills and at Ridgetop. The left turn from Bethany onto Avondale was added back into the design. Because of taper lengths, the areas of 4-lane section are from Avondale to Emily and near Ridgetop. The typical section shows the 4-lane section using standard lane widths. The assumed right-of-way is either the existing, or right-of-way acquisition to 45' on each side of the centerline. Retaining walls would be similar to the 5-lane section, but shorter.

Question: Is the right-of-way the same for Alternative 1 and Alternative 2?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What drives the 5 lanes at Oak Hills?

Answer: The traffic counts show that a left turn lane is required to handle the traffic. With medians at three intersections, traffic that would use those streets would move to Oak Hills, Bronson and West Union to access Bethany. If left turns are allowed to a side street, a left turn lane would be needed.

Question: What are the differences between Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 for accesses?

Answer: Alternative 1 has all intersections open except Ridgetop for safety reasons. There are additional medians at Emily Lane and Audrey Drive on Alternative 2.

- **Alternative 3** – 5-3-lane section: This alternative includes 5 lanes through Bronson north to Avondale and then start to taper to 3 lanes before tapering out to 5 lanes at Oak Hills. North of Oak Hills, it would taper back to 3 lanes between Telshire and Ridgetop, then taper out to 5 lanes for West Union. The taper lengths between Avondale and Oak Hills do not work out, as there is not enough room to taper between 3 and 5 lanes. Retaining walls would be similar to Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. The typical section is the 3-lane and 5-lane sections using standards lane widths. Right-of-way width is 45' on each side of the roadway, because most of the roadway would be wider for the 5 lanes. There are opportunities for medians, but they are not currently shown.

Question: What side streets are open for left turn access?

Answer: Ridgetop is closed for left turns; the rest are open.

Question: Why medians between intersections?

Answer: Median locations and lengths are not refined, but shown as possibilities

Question: Are medians decorative on the 5-lane section?

Answer: Medians can be landscaped or concrete. That is a design refinement. The maps are showing potential locations for medians at this time. Landscaping would need to be maintained.

- **Alternative 4** – 3-lane section: This alternative includes 5 lanes through Bronson, then tapers down to 3 lanes north of Avondale. There is a median at Ridgetop. Retaining walls along the east side are still needed and also near Ridgetop. The typical section shows the 3-lane section using standard lane widths. Right-of-way width is assumed to be 35' on the east side of the roadway, for the 3 lane interim condition. The right-of-way shown does not take into account potential alignment shifts. Standard lane widths are used, and they would not likely be reduced since this is already a narrower section.

Question: Are you shifting the centerline? There is allowance for up to 6'.

Answer: Centerline shifts have not been looked into yet to keep all alternatives similar for comparison.

Question: If the 3-lane is adopted, will the 5-lane right-of-way be acquired?

Answer: The County could only purchase right-of-way for what is needed for the project, i.e., could not purchase 5-lane right-of-way for a 3-lane project.

Question: There are no medians except at Ridgetop. Why?

Answer: The median at Ridgetop is required to improve safety for the insufficient sight distance looking to the north. Medians can be looked at in other places if the left turns are not conflicting.

Question: There is a median at Audrey shown on the 4-lane Alternative 2. Can that be shown on the 3-lane Alternative 4?

Answer: The 5-lane and 4-lane alternatives show options for either turn lanes or medians. Yes, medians at Audrey could be an option.

- After concluding the description of the alternatives, Ken asked if there were any other general questions.

Question: There are narrower roadway widths shown as options for the 4-lane and 5-lane cross sections. Why not for the 3-lane section?

Answer: If there is sufficient width available in the existing right-of-way, no lane width reductions would likely be allowed.

Process Chart – Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)

Leslie provided an update on the public involvement process.

- November PFG: discuss the noise analysis and possibly existing noise conditions, continue evaluation of alternatives
- December PFG: the preliminary results of the noise study are expected, and prepare for the Board of County Commissioners meeting
- Board of County Commissioners meeting: December 21st regular evening meeting
- January PFG: recap of the Commissioners meeting, prepare for the next Open House
- Open House: date has not been set, but is expected to be in January or February

Question: Who will present information to the County Commissioners?

Answer: This has not been done before. The PMT is still working out the details.

Question: When will we know which houses are impacted?

Answer: Once a preferred alternative is chosen, then we would move forward to look at specific potential impacts.

Review of Evaluation Process – Wayne Bauer (WHPacific)

Wayne explained that the “Alternatives Comparison” matrix handout is a tool to be used by the PFG member and design team to evaluate each alternative. There are four categories shown in no particular order: traffic and circulation, community impacts, project costs, and natural environment. The three columns describe the project issue, the design alternative number, and comments related to that issue. These issues were then described in more detail.

- **Traffic and Circulation:** This includes considering both direct access and street access; traffic capacity and signals; access for bicycles, pedestrian, and transit; safety; mobility; conformance with TSP.
- **Community Impacts:** This includes property impacts, right-of-way, number of parcels, number of buildings, retaining wall areas; cultural and historic resources are being reviewed; visual resources and tree impacts are looking at the number of trees impacted per alternative; recreational resources such as the park near Bronson.
- **Project Costs:** This estimates the right-of-way cost of the project based on County estimated square foot cost and easement costs. These will be approximate for comparison only. Construction costs will be estimated for what it will cost to build the alternative.
- **Natural Environment:** This includes review of air quality; noise; hydrology is looking at improvements needed to the stormwater system; water quality is considering treatment needs to meet standards; aquatic resources and ESA is fish and endangered species; wetlands considers impacts to near West Union; hazardous materials have no specific concerns at this time.

Question: Why is the matrix blank?

Answer: Information and data will be filled in as the design and evaluation occurs. If a space is blank, that topic may need discussion. This is a tool to use for comparison purposes. Information shown in the matrix at this time is based on the current alternatives.

Question: The numbers of properties affected include 3 on the west side. Which three properties are affected on the west side?

Answer: These were pointed out on the map. Comparisons are based on standard lane widths and have not been refined.

Question: Right-of-way looks like it is taking houses on the map. Is that right?

Answer: Accuracy of the location of houses has not yet been verified. We are in the process of completing survey of private properties to verify the location of houses, buildings and decks.

Question: What is the required distance between the right-of-way line and houses? Does this follow the Metro standard for livability?

Answer: It is up to the property owner on what they want to live with and be compensated for. There is not an exact standard.

Question: What happens to the house if it is acquired?

Answer: It depends on the specific circumstances. On the Saltzman Road project, as an example, a house was acquired due to its proximity to the road. The structure was torn down and the property used as a staging area for the Contractor during construction. Upon completion the property will then be sold as a developable property. On the Oleson Road project, there was a friendly acquisition and the County auctioned off the property.

Question: The letters that were sent out from the County regarding the survey crews, will they have access any time or only at a certain time?

Answer: The letters were sent to notify that the survey work would occur, but there is not an exact schedule. Notify Matt if you do not want to give access to the survey crews or if someone prefers to be home when the survey crew is present. If homeowners are concerned with people being in their yards, times / dates can be coordinated. Otherwise, right of entry is given. Survey crews are scheduled to start the middle of next week.

Question: Are the surveyors picking up information from both sides of the road?

Answer: Just the east side at this time because of the fences. On the west side, fences are set back further.

If there is anything missing on the evaluation matrix or if you would like different information shown, send a comment to Matt. At the next PFG, more data will be filled in. This tool will be taken to the County Commissioners.

Public Comment Period – *Leslie Howell (Howell Consulting)*

Wade Coykendall – He has lived out here for 45 years, the first 35 in Oak Hills and the last 10 in Claremont. He can see how traffic has developed over time. He thought the 800-pound gorilla in the whole design was the traffic counts and traffic model. Feels like the model needs to be refined for what the current traffic is and what it will be. Seems the 39,000 are fed from Laidlaw to Bronson. Counts are hard to understand and I know development. In the 1970's Oak Hills residents bought the commercial land and turned it into soccer fields, baseball fields, and tennis courts, so that can't be developed. Claremont has golf course, putting greens and restrictive open space. There is no commercial land. In between Oak Hills and Claremont are wetlands, which obviously can't be developed. Look at what Metro says in-building and development. Has a hard time understanding where any of this future traffic is going to come from. Can't emphasize enough that this thing needs to be studied and looked at.

Shirley Bates – Reiterated Wade K's comments. Claremont is a retirement community. There are fewer people in each household, fewer car trips, no teenage drivers, and most people are away in winter. That's

another aspect. There is another retirement area across from Bethany Village. A lot of those folks rely on a van. More things need to go into the model. I don't feel the traffic model reflects retirement activities.

Fran Bates – Commissioner Strader assured me that the North Bethany development traffic will not affect Bethany Blvd. Show me where the infill areas, blighted areas for tear-downs, and new development will be. Where are these? He also noted that if a homeowner objects to the people coming in backyards they should file objections with the County, and get the court to file a court order. There is recourse through the courts if you don't want surveyors on your property. If you don't object, it implies consent.

Joanne De Haan – Don't want to be redundant, but on the traffic model again. There are always “variables” with programs. When we keep asking where the numbers come from, it would be nice to know what variables you are using. A 5-lane road as a variable would add more traffic than if you told it a 3-lane road and what speed. Numbers for 5-lane alternative aren't realistic because at opening day the demand will go up. If numbers are right, why isn't the County negotiating with TriMet to add buses? If these people are going to Hillsboro or downtown, why not add buses to take them to light rail station at 170th, which is closest to Bethany. Look at how to move these people. There are other ways.

Charles Swartley – Lives in Oak Hills, lived in the west hills since 1984. Even though there's been a tremendous amount of growth in the west hills area, they still have 2-lane roads. Few 5-lane roads are going through huge developments. Asking why? Why do we need another 90' concrete canyon going from Sunset Highway to Skyline? I'd like to see how many homes you currently have, how many are projected to be built, and number of trips that will be made. How many homes built over the next 20 years and how many trips is that? Cars are getting smaller, lanes can get smaller over time. The 5-lane will ruin the quality of life for people living in this area. Take this into consideration. Probably 90% of the people are opposed to this. Washington County needs better roads, needs a lot more and better roads, more improvement to a lot of roads. Take into account what the people want. Why go with a 5-lane when there is opposition?

End of Meeting Notes

Next PFG Meeting: Thursday, November 4th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Future PFG Meetings: December 2nd, January TBD

County Board of Commissioners Meeting: December 21st