

# Meeting Summary



Washington County  
**Transportation Futures Study**  
Exploring options • Informing choices

## Study Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Thursday, October 8, 2015

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Beaverton Council Chambers, 12725 SW Millikan Way, Beaverton OR 97005

### Members Present

Andrew Singelakis, Chair

Loren Behrman

Meeky Blizzard

Mark Fryburg

Robert Kellogg

Steve Larrance

Alfonso Lopez-Vasquez

Deanna Palm

Marc SanSoucie

Kathy Stallkamp

Pam Treece

Mayor Jerry Willey

### Study Team and Staff

Chris Deffebach, Washington County

Dyami Valentine, Washington County

Mike Dahlstrom, Washington County

Erin Wardell, Washington County

Karen Savage, Washington County

Steve Szigethy, Washington County

Jay Lyman, DEA

Scott Harmon, DEA

Scott Richman, DEA

Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement

Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement

### Other Attendees

Rob Dixon, City of Hillsboro

Fran Warren, Cooper Mountain 175<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Neighborhood Association

Jake Mintz

Robert Bailey, Save Helvetia

Steve Hall

Deborah Lockwood

Andy Cotugno

Sam Louke

Raymond Eck, CPO-6

## Welcome and Agenda Review

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Andrew Singelakis, Washington County Director of Land Use and Transportation and SAC Chair, welcomed committee members. Jeanne Lawson, committee facilitator, reviewed the agenda.

Jeanne asked the group if they had any edits to the **August 13, 2015 SAC meeting summary**. Members had no edits.

Chris Deffebach, Washington County project manager, set the context for the discussion on transportation investment packages. In the next few weeks the Study team will refine the transportation investment packages and ask for public input. The SAC will see the refined packages at their December meeting. In early 2016, the study team will conduct evaluation of the packages.

Chris reminded members why this Study is important. The county faces many transportation challenges, such as increased conflicts on rural roads; many roads pressed to serve multiple functions; increased population and employment growth; and a shift in landscape to becoming more urbanized. This Study is an opportunity to be proactive in addressing these challenges, since we know it pays to think ahead. The Study should help us make better decisions. It is also an opportunity to look at new ideas and creative solutions because the Study is not constrained within the current planning framework.

## Land Use Scenarios

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### Staff Presentations

Erin Wardell, Washington County, made a PowerPoint presentation that reviewed two draft land use scenarios and their implications for land use in the region and Washington County

- **Scenario 1: Current Trends** – Scenario 1 looks at the future under current trends. It assumes that we will reach the midpoint level of population growth forecasted in Metro’s 2055 regional model.
- **Scenario 2: Rising Economic Tide** – Scenario 2 assumes greater population and employment growth and uses the high end of Metro’s 2055 regional forecast. It assumes that technology and manufacturing will increase (with corresponding employment growth in these areas), and a decline in retail jobs as more people shop online. It assumes a higher share of high income households. The scenario is built around these main **drivers of change**:
  - Increase in service- and technology- industries
  - Growth in metro areas
  - Emerging global middle class
  - Ease of lifestyle changes and domestic migration
  - In-migration
  - 3D printing
  - Increase in online shopping
- **Preliminary results:** The Study team has developed a preliminary understanding of what our future would look like under the two scenarios. County staff will be talking to staff from local jurisdictions to make sure the model results seem accurate.

Under both scenarios, we expect to see a high level of employment and population growth in the whole region. Increased density is expected in centers and corridors in both scenarios. Scenario 2 shows even more density in Hillsboro, Beaverton and along the TV Hwy corridor. Scenario 2 also projects increased growth in Cornelius, along Hwy 217 and some other areas.

Under both scenarios, new urban areas (i.e. Cooper Mountain, River Terrace, etc.) are assumed to be built out.

Both scenarios show employment growth in existing industrial areas, South county area, and along the Hwy 217 corridor. Scenario 2 shows even more intense growth in these areas.

## Committee Discussion

Members made the following comments about the land use scenarios:

- The projections show significant population growth and density in Tualatin/Sherwood. We will need good North-South corridors to serve that area.
- The results may underrepresent the amount of density in the urban reserves portion of South Hillsboro. County staff responded that they will check the model for this area.
- Building a new transportation corridor might alter where employment growth occurs. County staff responded that the model adds more jobs to existing employment lands. The assumption is that underlying land uses and zoning will stay the same.
- Members requested that the team send out all land use scenario results maps.

## Transportation Investment Packages

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Dyami Valentine, Washington County reviewed the **draft transportation investment packages**. He noted that County staff met with SAC members individually over the past several weeks to get ideas for transportation challenges and potential solutions to study. The Study team organized those solutions into two packages for testing: Concept A and Concept B. Both packages are multimodal; build off of the planned transportation systems; and include technology like autonomous vehicles, collaborative consumption, lighter and more fuel efficient vehicles, and a shared economy.

The general distinction between the concepts is that Concept A is focused more on accommodating people's needs on the *local network*, while Concept B focuses more on *express* service and improving regional/longer distance trips.

When the transportation investment packages are finalized, they will both be tested against both land use scenarios (Current Trends and Rising Economic Tide). Both packages will be tested using the same pricing schemes, which will be some combination of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fees, tolling, and congestion pricing.

Dyami made a PowerPoint presentation that presented each concept by mode. For each mode, the presentation included: future challenges for that mode, common elements between Concept A and B, and the different solutions included in Concepts A and B. Members then discussed concepts by mode.

## Transit Discussion

- A member asked if the Southwest Corridor high capacity transit project would remove a vehicle travel lane on 99W. Staff responded that it would not.
- It seems that if Concept B is focused on express service, then it should include **extending Bus Rapid Transit on TV Hwy**. Staff responded that BRT would travel in mixed traffic on TV Hwy, not a dedicated lane, so it is not considered true high capacity transit or express service.

- Some of the transit solutions, such as BRT on TV Hwy and wider use of transit signal priority, may reduce or **impact driving capacity**. We need to study solutions that will help us *so/ve* current transportation problems rather than putting us deeper in the problem.
- A **transit grid may be difficult to implement**. In existing neighborhoods it is difficult to convince people that a grid system is beneficial.
- **Concept B should think bigger**, be more futuristic and include more creative solutions.
- Some proposed investments may make sense in some local areas but not others.
- Suggest **adding Streetcar** as a solution to study (for example: include “street cars on all arterials” in Concept A). Streetcar allows for shared use and does not take up a travel lane. Staff responded that the detailed matrix includes a streetcar option in Hillsboro, but staff will look at the possibility of modeling more streetcar systems.
- Suggest including **procurement of future right of way** for transit.
- Include **transit on the I-5 Columbia River Crossing** as part of the “common elements.”

### Arterials and Collectors Discussion

- Suggest studying selective use of **roundabouts** on some suitable arterial intersections as an alternative to grade-separated intersections. Staff responded that the level of modeling for this Study does not include operational treatment of intersections. This could be modeled at a later date or as part of a different study.
- There are many ways to improve capacity without using increased right of way, like smart signals, turn lanes, and roundabouts. The Study should consider how we can use **smart design** to get capacity improvements. One difference between Concept A and B might be how intensively we invest in intersection treatments.
- The **99W Connector may need to be more than 2 lanes wide**. Staff responded that the draft TIPs assume 2 lanes initially with lanes added later as development increases. Instead, the Study could assume a 5-lane 99W Connector in “common elements.”
- There are **different kinds of grade separated intersections** that have different costs, right of way impacts, etc.
- A member asked how the TIPs account for **moving employees from outer areas** into Washington County. Staff responded that the TIPs look at improvements to Cornelius Pass Rd and Hwy 217 as main facilities to accommodate those movements.
- Suggest including **improvements to SW 65th** on the County line in one of the packages. A lot of future growth is expected in that area and will need to be accommodated.

### Throughways Discussion

- Suggest **widening Hwy 26 to 6 lanes from 185<sup>th</sup> Ave to North Plains** for both concepts. Staff responded that they will look into this idea. Current plans call for widening Hwy 26 to 6 lanes from 185<sup>th</sup> Ave to Brookwood Pkwy.
- Members discussed the **impact of where people choose to live in relation to their jobs**. On the one hand people with higher incomes and telecommute options may choose to live further away from urban centers. On the other hand rising costs will likely force low-income employees out of urban area, forcing longer commute trips.
- **Ramp metering** can have a negative impact to neighborhoods because it tends to backup traffic on local roads and encourages drivers to travel through neighborhood roads to find different ramps or access points.
- Suggest including **reversible lanes during peak hours**, for example on Burnside and Cornell roads.
- A member asked why **access management on TV Hwy** is not included in both packages. Staff responded that they want to be able to compare the effects of access management versus grade separation. A member suggested that Concept B include access management *plus* grade separation on TV Hwy.

## Freight Discussion

- **Increased rail freight** (Concept A) may have a negative impact to drivers on roads that bisect rail tracks.
- Using MAX trains to move freight seems problematic since the lighter cars are not designed to carry heavy materials. Staff responded that freight on MAX is not included in the concepts.
- **More widening of Hwy 26** should be included. There is an economy of scale to widening as much as possible all at once. Hwy 26 should be envisioned as 8 lanes to Brookwood Pkwy and 6 lanes to North Plains. Another member added that travel delay on Hwy 26 is a major obstacle to moving freight from Washington County to the airport.
- Members discussed the idea of **limiting freight access** to certain parts of the system during peak hours (California model). One member was concerned that this limitation would increase cost and stress to the freight and agriculture industries. If freight access is limited, there needs to at least be a parallel roadway that does allow freight at all times.
- Consider a **freight terminal in Washington County** that would make movement more efficient.
- **Freight movement should be the top priority for Concept B**, especially if we assume Scenario 2 will cause an increase in online shopping and higher incomes. Consider studying some **freight-only roads** to support the economy.
- The Study should take into account that an increase in online shopping will create a corresponding **increase in small freight moving through neighborhoods**.

- Consider studying a **greater investment on Cornelius Pass Road**, such as straightening out this road over the hill. Improvements in Cornelius Pass Road north of Hwy 26 will lead to improved East-West trips on Hwy 26.
- Take into account improvements around Wilsonville.

## Bicycle/Pedestrian

- **Regional trails** should be included as “common elements.”
- Suggest adding **two challenges**: 1) travel speeds *everywhere*—not just centers, and 2) many destinations are located too far apart (not walkable or bikeable).
- Suggest revising the wording in the Transportation Investment Packages memo:
  - Revise statement: “There is a high level of certainty that our streets will still need to accommodate people walking, rolling and using other forms of active transportation.”
  - Statement that begins “Providing more protection from vehicles...” implies warfare between modes. Instead, consider stating “Provide an enjoyable experience for...” The intent of Concept A should be that investments are geared towards achieving a pleasant user experience. Another member noted that the experience of the user is subjective.
- Members discussed whether the concepts should **assume 100% coverage** for sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure. One member suggested that Concept A assume 100% coverage (so that people can walk anywhere) and Concept B might not be 100%. Another member noted MSTIP funding requirements include a certain standard for complete bike/ped facilities. This standard might be included as common on both packages. Staff responded that “common elements” for both concepts is that all arterials and collectors will have bike lanes and sidewalks. The difference between the packages is the *degree* of facilities (ex: 8 foot versus 5 foot sidewalk). A member suggested modeling 100% bikeable and walkable coverage for *existing roads* as well.
- A member asked if there are any studies showing that as bicycle traffic increases, automobile traffic decreases. One member cited the Hawthorne Bridge study Staff noted that the County has been working on a bike model but it is imperfect. This Study will likely have to look at bicycle/pedestrian results more qualitatively.

## General Discussion on TIPs

- Members discussed the land use scenarios and how they relate to TIPs:
  - One member suggested developing a land use scenario that arranges jobs and housing in ideal locations to avoid long commute times (i.e., housing near jobs) and then figure out what transportation investments would support that. The two land use scenarios seem to simply be variations on the same projections. In order to really solve some of the transportation challenges, we need to **be more proactive about how we address land use**. Another member agreed and stressed the importance of exploring a public health model that looks at transportation, land use, health and housing together.

- Another member noted that, even if housing is intentionally located near jobs, it is not practical to expect everyone to live near their jobs. For example, high tech workplaces tend to move around geographically, and dual-income households have conflicting travel needs. It may make more sense to locate jobs and shopping in areas are not currently served. We should look at economic opportunities along new corridors.
- Another member expressed that the purpose of this Study should be to **work within current land use plans** (i.e., urban and rural reserves allocations) and figure out how to best enhance the transportation network so people can efficiently travel within the County. The land use scenarios should reflect the boundaries Metro has set.
- Andrew Singelakis reminded members about the parameters around the Study which were set at the beginning of the process based on public input. The parameters focused on developing transportation investment packages—not an intensive effort to reallocate land uses. Nevertheless, one recommendation that can come from the SAC is that there is a need to conduct a study on appropriate land uses. Staff will find a way to acknowledge this in the final report.
- The County is constricted from the standpoint of **density issues and development**. The transportation discussion needs to happen alongside the economic and development discussion.
- It will be important to determine **what role technology plays** in the two TIPs. One suggested way to differentiate between Concepts A and B is in the *aggressiveness* with which we pursue technology (range of technologies, dollars of investment, and speed at which we adopt it).

Andrew Singelakis invited members to request individual meetings with County staff and the project team to further discuss the TIPs over the next couple of months. SAC members will review the updated TIPs at their next meeting in December.

## Evaluation Measures

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Scott Richman, David Evans and Associates, provided a brief review of the updated list of community values and directed members to the matrix in their packets (*page 6 of Transportation Investment Packages memo*) that lists potential evaluation questions. The team will develop evaluation measures based on the values and evaluation questions.

At the December SAC meeting members will discuss the evaluation framework and talk about what they really want to learn from the Study.

## Discussion

Members made the following comments on the evaluation framework:

- The Study should demonstrate how the transportation investments affect quality of life. One recommendation is to change the question under the “equity” value from “How will X affect vulnerable populations...” to “Will investments improve quality of life for...”

Jeanne Lawson reminded members that the evaluation measures will be based on the community values that reflect SAC input on what is important to the community. She encouraged members to consider what it is they want to know about quality of life, so that staff can develop evaluation questions appropriately. It is also important to develop questions that can be sufficiently answered using existing tools and data.

- A member requested that the next SAC packet include the evaluation framework diagram for reference.
- A member appreciated including “stress” in the evaluation questions, since this is how the average person thinks of the transportation system.
- The main evaluation question should be: how can we best address gridlock issues? “Happiness begins with a job,” and the most important thing is to make sure people can efficiently get to jobs or else we can’t reach higher values like health and the environment.

Staff encouraged members to consider what questions they would like answered during the evaluation phase, and to forward ideas to the team before the December meeting.

Scott explained that the Study team plans to evaluate the TIPs on a corridor-by-corridor level. This approach will provide information on how the transportation investments effect different parts of the County, rather than just looking at totals and averages for the County as a whole.

## **Public Engagement on Transportation Investment Packages**

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Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement, provided an overview of the upcoming public engagement effort. The Study team will be seeking public input in the October-December 2015 timeframe to help shape the TIPs and to set the stage for the main public outreach effort planned for fall 2016.

Primary outreach activities will include an online open house, meetings with stakeholders and organizations, and media outreach using social media, email blasts, press releases, and web announcements. The Study team is also working with the Center for Intercultural Organizing to develop a strategy for targeted outreach to underserved populations.

Members are encouraged to provide additional ideas for engagement and names of groups and organizations that should receive a personal update at this time.

## **Committee Discussion**

Members provided the following ideas for public engagement:

- It is important to hear from millennials and younger people. One idea is to engage with education institutions, including Portland Community College.
- Place printed signs and posters in grocery stores and job centers and include announcements on ODOT reader boards. The majority of people that use the system are not involved in groups and organizations and we need to think of how to reach them.

- Use the contact lists from recent visioning projects such as the Beaverton project and Hillsboro 2030 vision project.
- Utilize Access TV.

## Public Comment

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**Steve Hall**, resident of Washington County since 1958 said that the major challenge in Washington County is west-east travel into Portland. This Study should focus on improving the Sunset tunnel, widening Hwy 26, and improvements around Cornelius Pass Rd to open up Hwy 30 into Portland. It is important to maintain good lines of communication with Multnomah County and State partners to discuss these improvements.

**Fran Warren** representing the Cooper Mountain 175<sup>th</sup> Avenue Neighborhood Association directed members to a handout that explains the “Around the Mountain” concept. She presented posters showing the topography around Cooper Mountain. A North-South corridor is needed and the “Around the Mountain” concept is the best solution because it has the fewest topographical challenges. The current Transportation System Plan includes plans to invest in 209<sup>th</sup>, which has a major topographical challenge. The vision should be to invest in one big project that provides a truly useful North-South connection.

**Jake Mintz**, Cedar Mill resident, expressed appreciation for this inclusive process. He encouraged members to focus on the community values, and particularly quality of life, which is important to all County residents. While jobs are important, millennials are driving less and working at home more; so travel for jobs is less of a focus. It is important to consider the “last mile” including last mile shared commuter opportunities. The Study should focus on new, innovative transportation tools.

**Robert Bailey** expressed that it is inappropriate to solicit a recommendation that would violate the good faith of local city and county governments to abide by the House Bill that establishes urban and rural reserves. It is also important to consider earthquake resiliency in the Study.

## Next Steps

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The next SAC meeting will be held on December 8, 2015. This meeting will include review and discussion of the refined transportation investment packages, as well as review and discussion of the evaluation framework and questions for evaluation. This will set the stage for the technical evaluation that is planned to begin this winter.