



DRAFT Open House Summary

December 14, 2011 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue Training Center

Washington County held a joint open house for three transportation projects in the south area of the County. The event was held on December 14th from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue Training Center, 12400 SW Tonquin Road. Eighty-five people attended the event, not including project staff and consultants. Attendees were able to learn more about the following three projects, which are at various stages of planning in the SW Tualatin and Basalt Creek areas:

- SW 124th Avenue Project (Tualatin-Sherwood to Tonquin Road)
- Basalt Creek Transportation Refinement
- Boones Ferry Road Improvement (Norwood to Day Street)

The open house was advertised through a newsletter that was mailed to approximately 3,000 addresses, a press release, e-mails to various interested parties, and on multiple project websites. The meeting was covered by OregonLive, The Tigard-Tualatin Times, and the Wilsonville Spokesman.

Meeting format

The open house was organized into four stations; one for each of the projects and an additional area for information on other area projects, such as the Tualatin Transportation System Plan and the Metro Tonquin Regional Trail. There was also general information on the County's Major Streets Transportation Improvement Program (MSTIP). A County staff member who specializes in acquisition of private property for the County was also on hand to answer questions about that process for those who might be affected by a project. The three projects that were the focus of the event displayed general information on the project purpose, schedule, and general location or potential alignments. There was no formal presentation. Attendees were able to discuss the projects with County and consultant staff, specific to each project, and share their thoughts. Attendees were also asked to document their comments on forms. Few filled out comment forms, but the verbal and written comments heard are summarized in the following sections of this document. Staff and elected officials from the cities of Tualatin, Sherwood, and Wilsonville also attended the event and were able to talk with stakeholders and listen to community concerns.

Attendees visited the stations and talked with staff and consultant team members at the event. They often would view the stations in an order that was most relevant to them, i.e. location or level of planning detail. Many people appreciated being able to see how the projects, although at different phases, were related.

The following highlights information shared and public comments heard at the three open house stations.

SW 124th Avenue Project (Tualatin-Sherwood to Tonquin Road)

Project team members staffed the SW 124th Avenue Project and presented information on the purpose of the planning effort, schedule, the four conceptual alignments being considered from Tualatin-Sherwood Road to Tonquin Road to provide future access for the SW Tualatin Concept plan area, and two realignment options for Tonquin Road. A topographic model aided the discussion and helped show the physical constraints in the project area.

Most attendees understood and supported the transportation needs for the project. Many asked about timing of the project. The most interest was related to specific property impacts.

The project received five written comment forms. The verbatim comments have been documented in a separate spreadsheet and contain more detail. The following summarize the written comments:

- Suggestions to cross the railroad further south and connect the new road south at Clay (rather than Tonquin).
- Suggestion for connecting an additional bridge of I-5 to the new 124th project.
- Desire to keep traffic out of Tualatin neighborhoods.
- Concern about specific property impacts related to the Tonquin Road realignment options (see specific comment form.)

The displays from the open house and additional information can be found at www.124thproject.com. A preferred alignment will be recommended by Spring 2012.

Basalt Creek Transportation Refinement

Project team members staffed the Basalt Creek Transportation Refinement station and presented information on the purpose of the planning effort, the schedule for identifying a recommended conceptual alignment, evaluation factors that are being considered, and the elements of the project (a 45 mph major arterial with 4 lanes + center median with access spacing of about ½ to 1 mile and options for improving access to I-5 for this major arterial). Three general alignment concepts being evaluated were presented: Concept 1-Improving the existing roadways, Concept 2-New diagonal alignment, and Concept 3-New east-west alignment. The two new roadway alignments were not shown in exact locations, as these are not known at this level of planning.

Some people were familiar with the project to develop a new arterial in this area. Although it is in the Regional Transportation Plan, some were unaware of and surprised about the project. Many expressed interest in timing of the project, how it might affect property values (both during the planning process and also once it is in place), and how it might affect neighborhood livability and character. Many asked about the relationship to the I-5/99W Connector and questioned whether this road would link to Sherwood. While this planning effort will need to allow for future development of the Southern Arterial that was identified through that study and included in regional plans, this effort is not intended to identify a specific future extension alignment to the west.

Another open house will be held this spring for public comment prior to recommendations being made by decisionmakers from the various partner agencies. The public comments received will help inform the evaluation review.

The project received nine written comment forms, letters, and a phone call summarized below. Verbatim comments have been documented in a separate spreadsheet.

- Several expressed a desire to see any new arterial pushed as far south from the existing neighborhoods as possible.
- Concern about moving traffic congestion problems from Tualatin-Sherwood Road to a new corridor.
- Concern about losing rural character of the area.
- Suggestion that existing roads (Graham's Ferry/Boones Ferry) will also need to be improved, especially to improve safety as more traffic uses them.
- Specific comments (multiple commenters) about Concept 1 – Improve existing roads
 - Support Concept 1 because it would be less expensive, is more consistent with current and desired land uses, has less impact on neighbors to the north, and directs travelers toward I-5 (concern that the more northerly concepts don't have enough detail for access to I-5).
 - Dislike Concept 1 because it is not adequate for the future.
- Specific comments (multiple commenters) about Concept 3 – East-west alignment
 - Concern that the access to I-5 is not fully addressed
 - Concern that travel across the freeway has not been discussed thoroughly; moving Stafford area traffic across the freeway into residential areas on west side of I-5 is not desirable
 - Desire to see the alignment moved south
 - Support Concept 3 because it better addresses traffic
 - Dislike Concept 3 because of cost, neighborhood impact issues, topography, and other issues
- Concern about how the planning process affects current property values and how the new roadway would affect property values. Concern that the planning effort or the line on the map may hold up development potential on specific properties. Desire to avoid this.
- Specific comments on location of a roadway to avoid specific property impacts, i.e. skirt along the edge of a property rather than run diagonally through it.

The maps and other displays from the open house can be found at www.basaltcreek.com - click on the "Transportation Refinement" tab. More information and public review of the evaluation is anticipated for spring 2012, prior to any recommendations being made.

Boones Ferry Road Improvement (Norwood to Day Street)

Washington County Project Manager Abe Turki shared a map of the preferred alternative, discussed project issues, and responded to questions. The preferred alternative presented combines features of the two alternatives (of four alternatives) that neighbors and property owners had shown more support for earlier in the fall. The design team is further refining the design to better understand and minimize, as possible, property impacts. A meeting for Boones Ferry Road neighbors will be held in early 2012.

Most public attendees understood the purpose of the project, and many shared support for improving safety. The project will improve the road to two lanes plus center turning lane or median, bicycle lanes on both sides, and sidewalks on the west side (in addition to some completed sidewalk connections on the north project boundary near the church and school). The County assumes this road will be five lanes in the future. The three lane project, as planned for construction this fall, was generally supported, but several questioned the need for five lanes in the future. Several felt this would greatly change the neighborhood character, pose more property impacts for some, and increase traffic. Many were pleased that the project was funded and being designed, especially the addition of bicycle lanes and sidewalks. Property owners discussed the right-of-way acquisition process with County staff and had individual concerns and questions about compensation for partial property impacts. Many who lived directly on Boones Ferry Road discussed specific property impacts and livability with the project manager.

The project received seven written comment forms or letters summarized below. Verbatim comments have been documented in a separate spreadsheet.

- Do not see the need for a future five lane road.
- Would like impacts to be spread equitably for all property owners (east and west sides).
- Desire to see (specific) houses owned on Boones Ferry to remain rentable.
- Install a yellow left turn arrow for northbound traffic turning left/west onto Day Street.
- Support for the preferred alternative.
- There is an existing drainage problem from Boones Ferry Road to private property. Desire to have this addressed as part of project.
- Desire to maintain direct access to Boones Ferry Road (specific property)
- Would like to see tall evergreen hedges (specific property) remain for privacy.
- The area near Seely ditch was once dry, but has been a small lake for the past several years. Would like to see the water level go back to normal.
- Concern about cost of project when including frontage road.
- Move road slightly east and move northern curve slightly south (see specific comment form) to avoid property impacts, allow space for vehicles to make turns, and preserve trees.
- Would like to see the planter strip included on the west side, as has been shown on the alternatives, for neighborhood aesthetics, environmental quality, and pedestrian experience.
- Pedestrian safety.
- Please visit on-site.
- Consider emergency response times.
- Concern that the improvement attracts heavy industrial traffic that currently uses Nyberg to access Tualatin-Sherwood Road.
- Concern about truck traffic and noise in residential and school zones.
- Concern about loss of mature trees on west side of the road.
- Concern about property values.

The displays from the open house and map of the preferred alternative can be found at www.wc-roads.com and click on the project under "Construction Projects." The alternative map is currently being refined and will be updated in early 2012 (~February).