

US 101/OR 6 Alternatives Study Open House

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Overview

ODOT held a public open house from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, June 13, 2009 at the Tillamook Farmers' Market. The purpose of the open house was to:

- Share and gather input about the options that the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) recommends carrying forward for further study and the potential street cross-sections for Main and Pacific avenues.
- Share information about the environmental assessment and next steps.

The open house was advertised through an announcement on the project web site, notices sent to the "Headlight Herald" and "Coast River Business Journal" and a postcard mailed to all households in the Tillamook zip code. More than 100 people visited the booth.

The venue was a booth at the Tillamook Farmers' Market where members of the public had the opportunity to discuss the project with staff members, review displays and complete a comment form. The materials and web-based comment form were available on the project web site.

The following information was provided:

- Booth overview and project overview
- Project timeline
- All options considered
- Option C3 with annotation
- Option C4 with annotation
- Lane widening options - Main and Pacific avenues from 1st Street to 4th Street

Comment Summary

Attendees were invited to complete a written comment form. Twelve forms were completed (nine at the open house and three online) and one typed statement was submitted. In addition, the project team discussed the project with many people who did not complete a comment form. General themes from those conversations are reflected in the summary.

Concepts

The first question on the comment form asked respondents what they thought about two concepts the SAC recommended for further study which would add a new northbound lane over the Slough and change traffic flows on 1st and 3rd streets. They were asked if C3 and C4 each should be studied further: Most comment forms indicated support for further study

of concepts C3 and C4. Two people suggested not studying C3 and three people suggested not studying C4 further. Most visitors to the booth agreed that both C3 and C4 made sense to study further. There was a general preference for C4 because it provided an eastbound lane and might reduce truck traffic through downtown Tillamook. One business owner on 3rd Street expressed concern that customers would have difficulty reaching his business if parking on 3rd Street was eliminated.

Additional comments about the options included

- Reconfigure Main Avenue to remove parking on one side and provide angle parking on the other
- Provide a protected left-turn signal for traffic traveling east on 1st Street to north on US 101
- Remove parking on one side of Main and Pacific avenues from 1st Street to 4th Street
- Inexperienced RV drivers are the real safety issue not trucks
- Select the best road project with the least impact to businesses including parking

The owners of MarClair Inn noted that there will not be enough room for improvements if their businesses and the gas station are not acquired.

Respondents were then asked whether any of the 6 additional concepts that had been considered but not recommended should be studied further. Only one person said she'd like to see B1 and B2 studied further because she "liked those."

Street configuration on Main and Pacific avenues

Attendees were asked to comment on three possible street configurations on Main and Pacific avenues that widen the travel lanes to improve safety for people driving and indicate what they thought about each option. Generally, responses were fairly split and similar for both Main and Pacific avenues but more responses indicated a preference for widening the street on both sides than removing parking or widening the street on one side. Comments from visitors to the booth were also fairly evenly divided between people who preferred removing parking on one side of the street and people who preferred widening the street on both sides. Those who preferred removing parking said that there was plenty of parking available downtown and that the extra expense of narrowing the sidewalks was not cost-effective. Those who preferred narrowing the sidewalks said that businesses would not survive downtown without parking on both sides of Main and Pacific avenues.

	Definitely consider	Maybe consider	Neutral	Maybe not consider	Definitely not consider
Main Avenue					
No street widening; remove parking on west side	5	0	1	0	2
Widen street on west side	2	1	0	0	1
Widen street on both sides	4	1	0	1	0
Pacific Avenue					
No street widening; remove	5	0	1	0	1

parking on east side					
Widen street on east side	2	1	0	0	1
Widen street on both sides	5	0	0	1	1

Additional comments about street configuration included:

- Widening streets would hurt businesses; downtown is already struggling
- Proper room for truck traffic must be provided
- Remove buildings not parking
- If parking is removed, free parking needs to be provided elsewhere (possibly at MarClair site)
- Losing parking could impact business but increased traffic flow is essential
- Parking on at least one side of each street should be maintained

Other comments

Respondents were asked to provide other comments. The comments collected included appreciation for the opportunity to comment and requests for the project to move forward quickly. One person noted that access to the Hoquarten Slough trail needed to be considered as more detailed design was completed. Many visitors to the booth said that downtown businesses would benefit from public off-street parking, particularly if on-street parking is removed as part of the project. Several people noted that this project should be a lower priority than maintaining county roadways.

A written statement submitted at the event and scanned copies of the comment forms are attached on the following page.

To ODOT

It seems that a comprehensive course of action could yield good results?

Leave the traffic pattern as it is. It's working, with some tweaking. Work over the intersection of 6 and 101, creating more room for a better turning radius.

Build a bridge as close as possible to the old one. The station will probably have to go, but impact the other business as little as possible. Parking where the station is, would be good, if there are any business left on that side of the street to benefit. Thinking people would cross a busy street to get to down town is not realistic.

Remove parking from 1st st., at least a couple blocks east of Main

Easing the right turn onto 1st.west , remove parking on one side of first as there is a lot of heavy truck traffic and if you want west bound tourists to use it, better make it comfortable for grandpa in his behemoth motor home headed for the beach. There are empty lots on first that could be used as public parking. Are there physical perimeters to this job? The corner at the west end of first (and Birch) is too sharp and could be eased for better turning radius.

A lot of truck traffic headed south to west or the reverse, take Stillwell already, even with the stop streets and the school and the cramped turn onto third. Reconstruct the corner of Stillwell and 12th to give it a better turning radius.. Emergency vehicles headed for the hospital could just as well take that route as to go to 3rd and make a left turn if it was a better turn. A siren full blast gets your attention and the right of way, soon as you figure where it is. Restricted parking on Stillwell could be beneficial. Our streets are too narrow for the traffic we have now, and the size of the trucks and school busses. And Safety! More signage could encourage trucks and tourists to use the alternate routes and relieve pressure on Main and Pacific, even a little would help.

Either take parking off Main and Pacific or narrow the sidewalks or a combination of both. Do the same with first and third. Narrowing the sidewalks seems like a more permanent fix.

Consideration of a 'causeway' on north 101 has been mentioned. Given the economy and the vagaries of politics, government agencies thinking and the time spent trying to implement any fix to the flooding, does that warrant any weighty consideration? That seems like reinventing the wheel—there are 3 sloughs and a river in that stretch of road, they just need fix what needs fixing, not go looking for something else. That would not be a permanent fix anyhow, it would just fill up with silt as the river and sloughs have.

Lets make this project as simple, effective, economic and speedy as possible.

Respectfully, Alene Allen
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