
WY 22 CORRIDOR PROJECT

Meeting Name Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Purpose Review Alternatives Screening Criteria

Date 12/11/2023 1:00 –3:00 PM

Location Microsoft TEAMS

Participants

PAC Members

Amy Kuszak
Amy Ramage
Andrew Salter
Charlotte Frei
Jared Smith
Melissa Turley
Renee Seidler
Ross MacIntyre
Samuel Petri
Tyler Sinclair

FHWA

Bob Bonds
Scott Stone

Flitner Strategies

Deb Barracato

WYDOT

Nick Hines
Bob Hammond
Stephanie Harsha
Kelly Cope
Jeffrey Brown
Katherine Bradfield
Peter Stinchcomb

Jacobs

Jim Clarke
George Woolley
Aaron Swafford

The third Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the WY 22 Corridor project was held December 11, 2023, at 1 PM via Microsoft TEAMS. Jacobs staff led the meeting with Jim Clarke and George Woolley as the main presenters.

Ten of the 12 PAC members were in attendance. Each member of the PAC was provided with a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda and the presentation is attached. All PAC members will be provided with a copy of the presentation and the meeting minutes.

1.1 Agenda Items:

Welcome, Introductions, and Housekeeping

Jim Clarke welcomed the group, thanked them for their continued participation, and asked if they would like reintroductions. No one felt that was necessary, so the discussion moved right into a recap of the results from the goal-setting exercise during the second PAC meeting in October.

Results: Goal-Setting Exercise

Jim reminded the group that the objective of the exercise was to focus on community priorities not already specifically addressed by the purpose and need statement, which was finalized after the last round of feedback during PAC meeting #2. The goals provide metrics to differentiate between alternatives.

He referenced the memo circulated to the PAC members following their goal-setting exercise, which clarified how WYDOT and Jacobs arrived at the final three goals. He asked the group if they had remaining questions about how the goals were being addressed or reflected in the alternatives screening process. A PAC member asked to circle back after going through the screening criteria, and Jim said they would preserve time for follow-up questions at the end.

Please refer to the “Goal Response Memorandum” for a detailed description of proposed goals and changes to the goals resulting from the PAC “goal-setting exercise.”

Refresher: Alternatives Screening Process

George Woolley referenced the draft “Alternatives Evaluation Process Memorandum” circulated to the PAC members at the end of November. This memo summarizes the structure of the alternatives screening process and how it will lead to the recommended alternative, which is the purpose of the Pre-NEPA process. He used slides to illustrate the difference between level 1, which assesses whether an alternative fully addresses the purpose and need elements, and level 2, when alternatives that pass level 1 are objectively and comparatively evaluated against the established screening criteria, developed based on the purpose and need and goals.

Level 1, he clarified, is purpose and need – it's a yes/no measurement; alternatives that do not meet purpose and need will not be carried forward into level 2. The No Action alternative would be carried forward into Level 2 even if it doesn't meet purpose and need as a baseline comparison.

1.1.1 Walk Through: Level 1 and Level 2 Screening Criteria

George explained the components of Table 1 in the evaluation process memo, including screening criteria. The first column contains categories that cover safety and mobility, the project's overarching purpose and need elements; fatal flaw criteria; and the identified project goals. The next column provides more detail about each category, then the final two columns contain the Level 1 and Level 2 screening criteria related to those categories.

George defined the fatal flaw consideration: if a project would cause irresolvable environmental impacts, would not be constructable, or would bear exorbitant costs, it would be considered to have a fatal flaw; a proposed alternative may meet purpose and need but if it contains a fatal flaw, it won't go forward to Level 2 screening.

PAC members raised some questions/discussion items:

Could a low-build or no-build option survive level 1? George Woolley responded that there's no way to say at this stage whether a low-build option would make it; it would need to go through the process to determine that, but NEPA requires a no-action option for a baseline comparison, so that will always be a possibility.

- 1) A PAC member noted inconsistencies in the language among the purpose and need statement, screening criteria, and goals, and asked that they all use “transportation” instead of “roadway”

linkage. Jim said they would make sure to use that preferred and more comprehensive term throughout.

- 2) Several people raised concern about how well the goals and evaluation criteria capture multi-modal as a priority. Jim reiterated that it's reflected in the purpose and need. Nick Hines noted that purpose and need trumps goals, and thus questioned whether it needs to be spelled out in goals. If an alternative didn't address multi-modal priorities, it wouldn't make it past level 1 screening for consideration at level 2, which is when alternatives evaluation looks at goals. Jim will edit the criteria to include maintaining pathway connectivity in Level 1.
- 3) Another question came up regarding the level of stress as it pertains to cyclists. The wording of the level 2 criteria indicates it will be considered at intersections, but cyclists can experience stress at any point on the links. Jim feels they will include level of stress resulting from proximity of the pathway to the roadway. (Ed note: To address this, "consider user experience" was added to the multimodal criteria).
- 4) Charlotte noted that some multimodal criteria wording focuses on bike/ped but not other modes. Charlotte will consider different wording of those Level 2 screening criteria to better capture full range of multi-modal transportation (not just bike/pedestrian).
- 5) A PAC member asked for clarity around how and when the number of wildlife crossings would be determined. George explained that wildlife crossings are a priority addressed in the purpose and need, and the number would be compared per alternative in the Level 2 screening process. Jim explained that before thinking too much about numbers of crossings and what they might look like, they need to get a handle on the impacts: will highways be widened and in which locations?
- 6) The wildlife crossings question led to a discussion about wildlife permeability. Bob Bonds questioned whether permeability could be used in the screening criteria. Generally it gets addressed during design. Bob Hammond explained that they could assess whether the design of an alternative would make it easier or harder to put in crossings at whichever locations ended up being identified as most appropriate. Jeff Brown reiterated that wildlife stuff usually ends up being a design element; rarely do individual alternatives preclude wildlife mitigations. Jim noted that deferring wildlife connectivity impacts to the design process probably wouldn't show how wildlife impacts are being mitigated during the NEPA stage, nor be satisfying to the stakeholders. He noted that the Jackson South EIS identified numbers and general locations of underpasses which were then refined during the design stage. **WYDOT and Jacobs will work on the criterion wording.**
- 7) A PAC member asked for clarification on how the screening process moves forward and whether the PAC will be involved. Jim confirmed the PAC's involvement and explained that in order to keep the process moving forward in a timely way, the project team did not have a planned touchpoint with the PAC prior to the next public meeting, which hopefully would take place in late January to introduce the range of alternatives. He suggested meeting with the PAC members in the hours just prior to the public meeting to update them on the alternatives progress. But the PAC expressed interest in receiving the range of alternatives for review prior to that time so WYDOT and Jacobs would be able to make any important adjustments identified by the PAC before the public meeting. Nick Hines mentioned we did something similar during the Snake River Bridge and WY 390 project. Allowing the group to see the public meeting slides

was beneficial to WYDOT. Nick was in favor of doing this again and said he would identify times WYDOT could add a meeting with the PAC prior to the public meeting. Jim noted that we could provide an opportunity to review the public meeting slides, including the range of alternatives to the PAC once ready then hold a meeting if the PAC members would prefer to meet.

- 8) After review of the screening criteria, Jim circled back with Melissa on whether her concerns about multimodal are being addressed and she indicated that they were.

1.1.2 Next Steps/Wrap-Up

1) Upcoming Meetings and Tentative Schedule

- The technical team will meet on December 20th for a preliminary review of the range of alternatives.
- PAC meeting #4 will be scheduled after the technical team reviews the range of alternatives and Jacobs prepares slides for the next public meeting.
- Public meeting to introduce the range of alternatives slated to take place in early 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Action Items

No.	Item	Responsibility	Status	Deadline
1.	Change “roadway” linkage to “transportation” linkage throughout all relevant project memos, including screening criteria and goals.	Jacobs	Complete	
2.	Include “maintaining pathway connectivity” in Level 1 screening criteria.	Jacobs	Complete	
3.	Propose different wording of Level 2 screening criteria to better capture full range of multi-modal transportation (not just bike/pedestrian).	Charlotte Frei		
4.	Discuss language addressing wildlife crossings and permeability and revise as appropriate.	WYDOT/Jacobs	Pending	
5.	Send alternatives to PAC members for review following technical team meeting.	Jacobs	Pending	
6.	Prepare and distribute PAC meeting #3 summary.	Jacobs	Complete	

7.	Add touch point with PAC on Public Meeting slides, including range of alternatives prior to next public meeting.	WYDOT	Pending	
----	--	-------	---------	--