

Mt. Murphy Road Bridge Project Phase 1B – Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #2

SAC Attendees

Howard Penn
Kris Payne
Spencer Rubin
Melody Lane
Daniella Faita
Bill Center
Hilde Schweitzer
Mike Bean
Mark E. Smith
Jerry Griffin

El Dorado County (EDC)

Matt Smeltzer
Janet Postlewait
Adam Bane

CH2M HILL

Leslie Bonneau
Hans Strandgaard
Chris Benson
Hans Larsen

Don MacDonald Architects & Associates

Will Henderson

El Dorado Transportation Commission

Dan Bolster

COPY TO:

Attendees, Elena DeLacy, Alice Butler, Time Kulton

PREPARED BY:

Hans Larsen

DATE:

May 29, 2014

On May 28, 2014, from 5:30 pm to 8:05 pm, El Dorado County hosted the second Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting for the Mt. Murphy Road Bridge Alternatives Analysis project. The meeting was held at the Grange located in Coloma, CA. The purpose of the meeting was to review screening criteria developed from input received during SAC #1 meeting, and previous public comments on the project received by the County. The agenda also included brainstorming possible bridge and roadway alignment locations which will be evaluated using the screening criteria developed by the SAC for the project.

The “Mt. Murphy Road Bridge – Screening Criteria” will be revised per comments received from the SAC group during the SAC #2 meeting. The revised screening criteria and a copy of the meeting agenda are included as attachments to this meeting summary and will be posted on the project website at www.edcgov.us/MtMurphyBridge.

The following summary has been prepared to provide an overview of the discussions that took place during the meeting and is not intended to represent a verbatim meeting transcript.

Agenda and Project Update

Matt Smeltzer/ El Dorado County (County) Deputy Director of Engineering welcomed participants and talked to the importance of public input on the project.

Leslie Bonneau/CH2M HILL provided an overview of the meeting agenda and provided an update of the project development process to date. It was noted that comments received during the SAC #1 meeting were an important part of coming up with the draft screening criteria presented during this meeting. She noted that the design team is still working with Caltrans and the State Park to determine their “fatal flaw” criteria that will also impact the screening criteria and development of alternatives. One SAC member commented that the meeting summary from SAC #1 Meeting contained errors and should not be posted publically until the SAC has a chance to review and comment. Leslie said that all comments on the meeting summaries would be considered, and the summaries reissued if necessary.

Screening Criteria Review

Leslie presented the initial screening criteria to the SAC and explained how it was constructed. Each criterion was developed based on comments received during the SAC #1 meeting and then assigned to larger theme-oriented categories. The scores for each criterion within a category are added up for a total category score and is used for comparing how a category performs for a particular alternative. As currently envisioned, each criterion will have equal weight. The scoring of each criteria is a 5 for best meets the criterion and a 1 for worst in meeting the criterion, with a 3 being somewhere in between. She noted that the design team will do the scoring and report back to the SAC on how the alternatives scored.

Leslie pointed out that the “Mt Murphy Corridor” was defined in the screening criteria notes as being from the Lotus Road intersection up to the bend in the road at Highway 49 near the school house. The SAC agreed that this was an appropriate corridor in which to consider crossing alternatives.

Each category and corresponding criterions were reviewed in detail and the SAC group commented and suggested revisions that were discussed. Following is a summary of the comments and changes that were discussed during review of the initial screening criteria:

Historic, Cultural and Community Character Category

- Should have a new category that separates Historic (H1, H2, H3) and Community Character (C1, C2, C3). Community character is about the river and its community, which is separate from the park and the history.
- Suggest community character criterion relating to community cohesion. The pace and speed at which people cross the bridge is important to the SAC.
- H2: suggest moving baby beaches to new community character category. The design team will need help from the SAC to know where all the sensitive areas are.
- H3: It was noted that some places in the Park were probably more important than others. Leslie noted that the Park will be providing us with a list of those locations.
- It was suggested to contact Gold Discovery Park Association to get their input. Leslie noted that the Team is meeting with the Park to get their input.

Access and Operations

- Road condition on each side of the bridge needs to be considered. Hwy 49 is a State conforming design and is well maintained, but the condition of Mt. Murphy Road not sufficient for same traffic demands.
- Suggest adding criterion, “Improves service/usage at the bridge location”. This criterion relates to the services or area usage adjacent to the bridge and how that would change if the bridge locations changes or not.
- Location of the bridge is most important. It is hard to decide what criteria is needed without knowing the location first.

- Location outside the park limits would radically change the access and use of Coloma (Post office, businesses, residents).
- Suggest new criterion related to community character, “community connectivity” for this category.
- Noise criteria not included because it affects all possible locations for the bridge.

Construction

- Noise from construction activities is not a major concern because it affects all possible locations for the bridge. Suggest adding C3 criterion that considers noise levels detected at “receptor” locations throughout the corridor.
- Emergency evacuation during fire is a major concern. Emergency egress during and after construction must be considered for all alternatives. Regarding scoring for S3, Leslie noted that the design team will contact Emergency Services for their input on the alternatives that are developed.
- Suggest adding C4 criterion related to total time for construction. Construction time is affected by bridge location, length, type, construction staging.

Safety

- Bridge location could change the river flow and affect safety for river users or the navigability of the river. Issues such as the current, whether it is deep or shallow and whether there is a bend in the river will be important to evaluating this.
- Suggest adding criterion related to “maintain or improve safety for river user”.

Environmental Resources

- The team’s biologists are mapping the sensitive biological resources along the corridor.
- Need to separate viewsheds into effects of viewsheds from afar and from near or on the bridge. Suggest splitting E1 into E1 (afar) and E2 (near or on the bridge).

Right-of-Way

- Concern was expressed that property values may change depending on what happens to the old bridge and if the river crossing location changes. Maintaining the current alignment would minimize any property value impacts. Leslie noted that this is difficult to quantify in this preliminary planning phase, but the issue would be addressed in the formal PA/ED phase of the project.

Project Alternative Estimate

- This category was added as a check and balance to make sure the projected project estimate is fundable with the HBP budget. It’s used as a rough check to see if pricing ourselves out of a project.
- HBP funds will pay for an alternative that is more expensive than the lowest estimate if there is strong public support for it, within reason. Can attempt to modify details to help an alternative perform better in the overall score.
- A question was asked about weighting each of the criterion or categories. Leslie explained that weighted scores or prioritizing categories scaling is very difficult to do and often groups cancel each other out with a group averaged weighting. For this effort, all criterion are intended to be evaluated equally.

Bridge Locations Group Activity

Following review of the Initial Screening Criteria, the SAC broke out into three groups, each with a large plot from Google Earth of the corridor. Each group was asked to draw approximate crossing locations that the SAC would like the project development team to consider as potential bridge locations.

Following the group activity, a spokesperson for each group talked briefly about the concerns and desires the group had for locations they had identified on the plots. The following is a summary of those comments:

- Prefer current alignment or adjacent, constructed in stages.
- Rather than extend and connect Carvers Rd and Scott Rd, use the field along the north side of the river for the connecting roadway. (Area along north side of river between Carver/Scott Rd and the river edge). This avoids impacting Carvers Rd properties.
- Consider a location at the site of the Grange Hall, if they would be willing to relocate.
- Upstream locations have more issues with private property owners.
- Downstream locations would be best to keep within the park boundaries to minimize ROW issues with private property owners.
- Narrow river region, downstream from the existing bridge, may provide the shortest bridge length, but is at a higher elevation.
- Desire 2-way access for pedestrians and bikes.
- Prefer location just downstream of the existing bridge, right next to the Grange (by the Chinese workshops).
- Possibility to keep bikes and pedestrians off the new bridge to minimize the overall width of a new bridge. Could route pedestrians and bike traffic over the existing bridge, if it remains, and down to the river paths adjacent to the river?
- Could bikes and pedestrians be removed from the bridge (on separate paths) before getting to Hwy 49? This might allow a wider bridge to fit within the existing alignment.
- Do not want bridge downstream at North Beach.
- Possibility for connection with Mt Murphy Road just past entrance to the Coloma resort?
- Suggest downstream alignment from Hwy 49 to Carvers Road.
- Align crossing on west side with the location of the current Mill that is in process of being relocated.

Technical Design Criteria Review

The Technical Design Criteria was not reviewed with the SAC group at the SAC #2 meeting due to lack of time. Review of the Initial Screening Criteria and the Bridge Location activity on the large plots took up the schedule time for the meeting. The technical design criteria is a set of minimum “fatal flaw” design criteria that are a set of minimum provisions or constraints used to develop alternatives. They are prescriptive code requirements for any new bridge or roadway and must be adhered to in order to qualify for funding through the HBP. A formal review of the technical design criteria will be coordinated with the SAC group at a later date.

Parking Lot Comments

No new parking lot items were identified during the SAC #2 meeting.

The following are responses to parking lot questions from the SAC #1 meeting:

Q: Will realignment of Hwy 49 follow the route of the new bridge alignment?

A: Dan Bolster of the El Dorado Transportation Commission gave an overview of the Hwy 49 Realignment Study performed in 2009-2010. The study looked at 53 alternative alignments and considered use of 39 existing roadway segments to minimize cost and maintain use of existing facilities serviced by the existing roadway segments. Realignment of Hwy 49 to the north side of the river was one of those 53 alternatives. However, is not likely because any such plans for realignment are not included in the El Dorado County Regional Transportation Plan or the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Report (TCR).

Q: In the event of a disaster, what is the evacuation route for north side of river?

A: Adam Bane of El Dorado County and Project Manager for this project gave a brief update on existing emergency plans for the Coloma area north of the river. There is no specific plan or route identified for evacuation of Mt Murphy Road north of the river. The location of an evacuation is directly related to the location of the event and is therefore determined on a case by case basis. The Sheriff's office is the on-scene commander during an event and responsible for coordinating the responses of all necessary emergency services depending on the type of event.

Next Steps

Leslie concluded the meeting at 8:05 and noted that the next SAC meeting will be held at the Grange in a couple months with the date and time to be determined. A meeting summary with all materials presented will be distributed to members of the SAC. The agenda for the next meeting will be distributed to SAC members in time for members to prepare prior to the meeting.

The next SAC meeting will be scheduled for August 2014. Details will follow once the meeting date is set.