



Open House on EIS Alternatives August 16, 2001

Summary Report

Introduction

An Open House on Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives was held for the Eastside Corridor project on Thursday August 16, 2001, from 5:00–8:00 p.m. in the Columbia Room of the Red Lion Hotel, located at 1225 North Wenatchee Avenue in Wenatchee, Washington. The Open House was the fourth of five public involvement events to be held over the two-year course of the Eastside Corridor project. The purpose of the Eastside Corridor project, also known as the SR-28 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Study, is to prepare a detailed study that examines the environmental impacts of the concept alternatives under consideration for enhancing safety and improving North/South traffic flow between 9th Street and SR-2/97 and SR-28 intersection east of the Columbia River.

The purpose of the Open House was to present the final four alternative alignments that will be carried forward to the EIS for a detailed analysis. Information on the screening process, criteria, and the final four alternative alignments was on display and attendees were asked to comment on the information presented. Project and agency staff were available to answer questions and take public comment. The event was a public meeting attended by approximately 90 people.

A postcard announcing the open house was mailed to approximately 12,000 residents and businesses in East Wenatchee, Wenatchee and Rocky Island. These postcards were mailed to all postal customers residing in the 98802 and 98850 zip codes, and arrived in mailboxes during the week of July 30, 2001. In addition, a display ad was posted in the Wenatchee World Newspaper on August 8, 2001 inviting the public to attend the Scoping Meeting.

Participants were asked to sign in upon their arrival. As residents entered the Columbia Room, they were given a discipline studies comment form (Attachment A), and a copy of frequently heard questions and answers (Attachment B). After signing in and receiving handouts, participants visited three stations, each displaying information on a key component of the project:

- Station A: Background
- Station B: Screening Process
- Station C: EIS Alternatives

Participants had an opportunity to speak to members of the project team, to learn about the different components of the project, and also to express their thoughts, concerns, and opinions about the project. Participants' comments were recorded on flip charts located at each station. Participants were also asked to comment on the discipline topic areas via a written comment form. Comment forms were collected at the meeting, and could also be sent via mail, fax or e-mail.

All comments received from the public will be included in the project history and will be distributed to all project team members. These comments will be considered and will help guide the project's development. Following is a summary of public comment gathered from flip charts and written comment forms. Verbatim public comment and written comment forms can be found at the end of the document.

Summary of Public Comment

Sunset Highway/ Cascade Avenue Widening Alternative

Discussion regarding this alternative was diverse. Most participants felt that Sunset Highway should be improved, with increased access. Many participants felt that this was an economically feasible alternative alignment. While many participants were concerned that people would need to relocate, others felt that any route would cause relocation. Participants who opposed the alternative alignment felt that additional traffic lights and increased patrol would heighten the cost. Other participants were concerned about the mobility and presence of school buses, placement of new schools, safe access, and bottlenecks in the southern region. Some participants thought that it would cause major traffic confusion and sporadic traffic flow for residents and families.

The condition of Porters Pond was referenced by many of the participants. Some of the participants thought that the pond was a critical habitat for wildlife, such as bald eagles. While other participants thought that the pond was not a sanctuary because there had been a gravel pit and slaughterhouse in the vicinity previously.

Western Route Alternative

The Western Route generated a great deal of discussion both in favor and in opposition to the alignment. Some participants immediately identified the alternative alignment as the "riverfront route". Many participants felt that this route would be scenic, economical, and safe for vehicles and pedestrians. Some were concerned that the route would not alleviate traffic congestion from Fancher Heights. Many participants felt that the Washington State Department of Transportation right-of-way should be used to build the facility. Some participants suggested that this alternative alignment would be safe and convenient for school bus traffic.

Other participants felt that the waterfront and scenic loop trail is an integral component to the community and that a facility such as a highway, would be detrimental to the environment and the community. Some felt that the views from the trail were important to maintain. Many participants felt that noise would be a factor and potentially would divide the cities of East Wenatchee and Wenatchee. A few participants felt that the trail would be more difficult to access while others felt that the route would enhance access to the trail. Many were concerned that property tax revenues would be minimized and the peaceful atmosphere would be affected. A participant noted that over 4,000 people signed a petition requesting this route be eliminated from consideration. Many participants were concerned that a bench route would not be considered in the future if the Western Route were to be built.

One-Way Couplet Alternative

There was much discussion regarding quality of life issues, safety for children and pedestrians, and traffic congestion in regards to this alternative. Some felt that the couplet would improve

access and deflate congestion in the vicinity. A few participants suggested that the facility would have the least impact on the neighborhoods and would be the best alternative alignment. It was suggested by a participant that this route would have the least public opposition. It was important to many of the participants that the facility provide a long-term solution for congestion and safety.

Many participants were concerned that the couplet might interfere with their quality of life, by potentially disrupting the neighborhoods due to the type of vehicles, such as large trucks, and amount of traffic. Other participants shared concern that a highway in a residential area might endanger children and pedestrians' lives. Some participants were concerned that Porters Pond was a sanctuary for bald eagles and potentially Native American artifacts. Private view properties were an important factor to many of the participants and many were concerned that a state highway might affect views.

Sunset Highway Widening/Eastmont Avenue Extension Alternative

Most of the participants felt that this alternative would achieve the purpose and need of the project as well as the needs of the community. Numerous participants felt confident that this was the best solution to the problem. The majority of the participants agreed that extending the Highway and providing another major roadway on the outskirts of the Valley would alleviate the congestion on Sunset Highway. Many felt that since there is already noise pollution in this area, expanding the highway would not be detrimental. Some participants felt that the highway would not impact the quality of life for current residents and businesses on Sunset Highway. A few participants thought that this route would improve the congestion on 9th Street. Several participants felt that economically, this route is the best solution. Other participants felt that this alternative would potentially benefit residents on Fancher Heights.

Participants who opposed this alignment were concerned that homes would be relocated. Others who opposed the route were concerned that there would potentially be environmental constraints on Eastmont Avenue. A few participants were concerned that the intersections would be difficult to manage due to the amount of traffic.

Miscellaneous Comments

Some participants felt that the best solution for the Sunset Highway project would be one that met the needs of the residents. The Fancher Heights roadway access is a concern to many of the participants and was discussed to some extent at all of the three stations. One participant felt that an overpass for pedestrians is necessary for Sunset Highway in order to alleviate safety issues. Some participants suggested combining the widening of Sunset Highway and Eastmont Avenue with the Western Route. A few participants felt that the traffic congestion at the George Sellar Bridge should be addressed by the Eastside Corridor project. Others felt that the no-build alternative is the best option.

Some participants were concerned that the solutions proposed would only address current transportation problems, but should address future transportation issues. Other participants felt that the route should only address current transportation problems. Many participants mentioned the upper bench and felt that the route would satisfy the needs of the community.

Public Comments Derived From Flip Charts

The following comments were collected on flipcharts located at each of the stations. The comments are organized by station. In order to provide information to the project team, some of the comments were moved to the appropriate subject.

Background

All of the comments written at this station were relevant to the alternative alignments, and were moved to the appropriate subject header.

Screening Process

There were no comments written at this station.

Sunset Highway/ Cascade Avenue Widening Alternative

- ◆ This route is the best and probably the least expensive to tax payers! Build a bridge across the river at 19th Street!
- ◆ This route could be the cheapest method. It wouldn't be a long-term solution.
- ◆ I do not have a problem with any of the alternatives.
- ◆ For this alternative, because the thoroughfares exist already, widening Sunset Highway will remove half of the traffic.
- ◆ Sunset Highway is the most logical route.
- ◆ Widen Sunset Highway since it is already a highway.
- ◆ Widen Sunset Highway, but don't add another route to funnel more traffic to already congested East Wenatchee intersection. Make plans for a bench route.
- ◆ Widen Sunset Highway.
- ◆ Widen Sunset Highway; I use it all the time!
- ◆ Porters Pond lies on this route and there is an eagles' nest in the vicinity. The area is closed to foot traffic in winter and early spring.
- ◆ Porters Pond is a pond area, which was always created by the ebb and flow of river levels. Wildlife has always been abundant their prior to 1950. Any slaughterhouse would have existed prior to that time!
- ◆ Porters Pond is not a natural pond.
- ◆ The slaughterhouse at Porters Pond is old.
- ◆ Gravel was taken out of Porters Pond to build a bridge in 1949 and 1950.
- ◆ What would be the air quality for people whose houses are located between the two highways? Ask any pulmonary doctor - diesel fumes are tough on the respiratory system. This could result in lawsuits.
- ◆ Consider family units that would be disturbed above and below Sunset Highway.
- ◆ The highway is closer to schools and the business area.
- ◆ Why would they want to disturb that quality of life?
- ◆ Where are the new schools to be located?
- ◆ This alternative is too close to the community well.
- ◆ To put a highway on anything other than Sunset Highway will destroy so many neighborhoods. Cascade Avenue has some of the nicest view property and is quiet, peaceful, and has wildlife also. Why destroy a wonderful neighborhood?
- ◆ Residents who live near Cascade Avenue would not like this alternative.
- ◆ Consider the noise from big trucks, emergency vehicles and etcetera in residential areas.

- ◆ Land acquisition, especially along Cascade Avenue is going to be extreme.
- ◆ We don't want the highway in our front yard.
- ◆ Many homes would be impacted.
- ◆ Any route is going to take out expensive homes.
- ◆ Home values on Northwest Cascade range from \$200,000 to \$275,000.
- ◆ Northwest Cascade Avenue is view property.
- ◆ Home values on Northwest Cascade Avenue equal up to \$300,000.
- ◆ There is property waiting to have quality homes built on Northwest Cascade Avenue. The price range of homes is \$200,000 to \$300,000 along that area. This area is view property. Why put a main highway through that residential area? Consider school with children, school buses, and children playing near a five or three-lane highway. Would you put in safety control? These concepts are very much like a band-aid approach! We are growing faster than that!
- ◆ The grade on Cascade Avenue is too steep.
- ◆ Sunset Highway is used a lot for transporting fruits and vegetables.
- ◆ There is a high amount of traffic congestion and great truck impact on Cascade Avenue.
- ◆ A lot of traffic comes from the Eastmont Avenue area. There is too much impact to the homes and the trail.
- ◆ There will still be the same bottleneck when Sunset Highway and Cascade Avenue connect in south end.
- ◆ I don't like the Cascade Avenue route, because it doesn't allow access east of Sunset.
- ◆ Cascade Avenue should serve only its own 1,000 residents in the "Neighborhood" and should not provide through traffic route for the total valley population!
- ◆ If Sunset Avenue is widened to five lanes, it requires additional signalization, which impedes the flow of traffic.
- ◆ Traffic lights would be close together and on an uphill grade. Trucks would have to stop two times.
- ◆ 23rd Street is a steep street and the base of Cascade Avenue is only able to accommodate two lanes. It would require a lot of fill to build westward on Cascade Avenue.
- ◆ Traffic would be backed up and traffic would not flow smoothly.
- ◆ Traffic congestion can happen anytime, not just during rush hour.
- ◆ This alternative would cause major traffic confusion for residents and families.
- ◆ This alternative would cause incredible expense because of traffic lights and safety patrol for children that live in area.
- ◆ Using Cascade Avenue southbound does not makes sense, because traffic cannot circulate.
- ◆ There will be problems down at the bridge with traffic flow.
- ◆ South end will remain a bottleneck.
- ◆ This has to be all or nothing option. Cost should not be an excuse to build the highway in small parts.
- ◆ In terms of economics, why have expense of maintaining and patrolling two highways during snow?
- ◆ Don't do anything else until we need it.

Western Route Alternative

- ◆ The riverfront route is the best route.
- ◆ This route is the most desirable route!
- ◆ This route would be easier to police.
- ◆ The Western Route would be a great second route.
- ◆ The highway should be built along this route.
- ◆ The DOT already owns most of this property!

- ◆ This will be a beautiful route that the community can enjoy.
- ◆ It is also the safest route with the least cross-traffic.
- ◆ This is the most economical route. Consider the expense to taxpayers!
- ◆ If done with care this route would enhance access to the trail, upgrade the trail, and impact fewer people while adding to our riverfront.
- ◆ Over 4,000 people have signed petitions requesting this route for our N/S Highway.
- ◆ It does not meet the stated objective of relieving Sunset Highway.
- ◆ This will be a limited access highway!
- ◆ It will be more difficult to access the loop trail.
- ◆ This is the only alternative that will hurt the peacefulness of the Wenatchee parks across the river.
- ◆ This alternative will destroy our most valuable resource.
- ◆ This alternative will separate our community from the river.
- ◆ I do not want the waterfront route, it will destroy neighborhoods and waterfront access and the tranquility of the trail.
- ◆ Don't take away my house and other homes. If you want a scenic route, go walk on the loop trail. That was installed for the reasons above. The river will soon become trashed with a highway right next to it with careless people throwing things out. There will be no peace and quiet on a nice day and you won't get much scenery when you're going 70 mph for a 5-minute pass through town.
- ◆ There will be too much impact on the trail system and homes. This alternative does not offer a potential relief for Fancher Heights residents.
- ◆ Reduce impacts to recreational areas. This alternative destroys the potential for residential development on the riverfront.
- ◆ Consider the riverfront route. Don't take the scenic side of the Columbia River and make it another garbage pit like the Wenatchee side. Who cares about Fancher Heights?
- ◆ It impacts the environment on the existing loop trail.
- ◆ The DOT should sell 100' right of way for economic development, restaurants, and etcetera.
- ◆ Noise travels up, not down so this road will especially affect Wenatchee. All lower roads affect those above Fancher Heights and they will hear noise no matter where the alternative is built.
- ◆ This is the least desirable alternative.
- ◆ If the Riverfront is chosen will it be called the Clyde Ballard Memorial Highway?
- ◆ There will be huge loses of property tax revenues.
- ◆ The Western Route is a totally obsolete concept as a major freight corridor. Isn't that purpose of SR-28?
- ◆ The riverfront route is obsolete! Forget about it!

One-Way Couplet Alternative

- ◆ This makes more sense than the Western Route. There is better access.
- ◆ This alternative funnels traffic to the 9th Street and Sunset Highway intersection.
- ◆ The one-way couplet makes sense.
- ◆ I would prefer the couplet route alternative.
- ◆ E/W traffic circulation across couplet would need signalization. Cross streets would need to be upgraded and maintained.
- ◆ What impact would large trucks, fire trucks, and etcetera have on this residential area?
- ◆ Consider all the cross streets and congestion.
- ◆ This alternative would move major traffic off existing corridor into existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ It changes the connector road to a highway.
- ◆ It disrupts the truck route to fruit warehouses.

- ◆ What warehouses? The Durex and Stemilt warehouses are across the river.
- ◆ Couplets are an absurd “solution” for a prime residential area. Schools need to be sited in neighborhoods before sitting a major transportation corridor as solution for freight mobility!
- ◆ Why disturb residential neighborhoods with one-way streets?
- ◆ The noise impacts on residential neighborhoods should be considered.
- ◆ Consider the noise. Sunset Highway is a Highway. Cascade Avenue is an Avenue.
- ◆ There is concern for residential units along Sunset Highway and Cascade Avenue.
- ◆ Northwest Cascade is considered view property.
- ◆ Why disturb the quality of life for a residential area?
- ◆ What about all of the children in the areas below Sunset Highway? Pedestrians and school bus congestion is an issue!
- ◆ This alternative will separate and destroy the neighborhoods!
- ◆ The one-way couplets between Sunset Highway and Cascade Avenue would also destroy those neighborhoods in between besides destroying Cascade Avenue, which has some of the nicest views in East Wenatchee. There are too many children and bus stops in this area.
- ◆ How do you plan to ensure school children safety?
- ◆ The one-way couplets will separate communities from the riverfront.
- ◆ Investigate the impact to the pump station off of 19th Street on the west side of Cascade Avenue.
- ◆ The Cascade Avenue portion disrupts Porters Pond and potential eagle nesting.
- ◆ Native Americans have hidden artifacts south of Porters Pond.
- ◆ Consider the economics of maintaining the two highways. Patrol, snow removal, traffic lights, and speeding through residential areas are all issues.
- ◆ This is a temporary solution to a permanent problem! Do reconsider!
- ◆ This solution would not last ten years.
- ◆ I do not support the couplet concept because it will result in more traffic lights and it will destroy the two key principals of WSDOT, traffic mobility and economic development.
- ◆ This alternative would have too much impact on homes and trail systems. A one-way couplet is not a good idea for traffic movement through other streets.
- ◆ This is a terrible concept for the residential area and it is divisive.

Sunset Highway Widening/Eastmont Avenue Extension Alternative

- ◆ I like this route.
- ◆ This is the best option of the four alternatives.
- ◆ I favor the green route or the Sunset Highway Widening/ Eastmont Avenue extension alternative, because it allows a potential connector to Fancher Field bench. Sunset Highway would diagonally achieve traffic volumes N/S. Sunset Highway would more likely be a five-lane route.
- ◆ This route makes the most amount of sense. Everyone is already used to Sunset Highway as being the main traffic flow. A highway has already affected this neighborhood. It has the best traffic flow, location, and etcetera. It would not affect as many homes and neighborhoods.
- ◆ Eastmont extension is already marked for a street.
- ◆ This makes sense, especially widen Sunset Highway, which is already a highway.
- ◆ Sunset Highway is already mapped as a Highway. Widen Sunset Highway and do not disturb the quality of family life, children, pedestrians, school buses, and residential areas.
- ◆ Eastmont Avenue extension directs traffic to people’s destination. It is the most favorable route and Sunset Highway will accommodate the balance of traffic.
- ◆ This is the only proposal that deals with congestion at 9th Street.

- ◆ This is an excellent idea - Sunset Highway should be three lanes and extend North Baker to intersect Eastmont Extension. This proposal eliminates E/W gridlock and maintenance of cross streets.
- ◆ This route provides better traffic flow.
- ◆ The noise is already on Sunset Highway.
- ◆ The Eastmont extension would require careful design.
- ◆ Who would go uphill and use the Eastmont extension in the winter when they can stay level on Sunset Highway?
- ◆ The majority of people who go from the south end of East Wenatchee to the north end of East Wenatchee will not travel up hill (especially in the winter) to go back down the hill. They will continue to use Sunset Highway.
- ◆ Fix what you have and widen Sunset Highway, speaking from a resident who lives on Sunset Highway.
- ◆ The lower bench route has severe environmental problems. The unstable soil, water drainage, and sound can be appropriately and cost effectively mitigated. Lower bench destroys the quality of life in long established prime residential areas. There are ESA issues with the lower bench.
- ◆ The lower bench route might look good on paper, however it has major environmental issues and would severely impact the quality of life for surrounding neighborhoods.
- ◆ What are the economics of maintaining more than one highway?
- ◆ Sunset Highway widening would take houses.
- ◆ Keep Sunset Highway at three lanes and focus funds on the bridge intersection.
- ◆ The intersections and interchanges are difficult to handle. The intended traffic flows from Fancher Heights to B.M. Road, Eastmont Avenue, and Valley view. This is a poor land-use “plan”. It is expensive to build and mitigate problems.
- ◆ I would not want to see the green alternative or the Sunset Highway Widening/ Eastmont Avenue extension alternative due to cost.
- ◆ The Eastmont extension will not eliminate traffic on Sunset Highway. People and vehicles will not want to go up the hill only to come back down at the Odabashian Bridge. They will still take Sunset Highway.

No-Build Alternative

- ◆ I assume limited funding is available, so the no-build is the best alternative!
- ◆ I prefer the no-build option. Build the bridge interchange first!
- ◆ Keep Sunset Highway as a three-lane highway for now. Reduce the need for signalization to increase traffic flow.
- ◆ Don't take my house and others to build something we already have. Improve what we have now. We can already get around this town and we do not need drastic changes to make it better. Noise is especially a factor.
- ◆ Widen Sunset Highway since it is already considered a Highway. Besides, why disturb the quality of residential life by building three or five lanes where children play?
- ◆ Keep Sunset Highway at three lanes with intersection improvements (right turn lanes) and limit the total number of signals on Sunset Highway between the two bridges.
- ◆ Just widen Sunset Highway to five lanes.

Recommended Alternative Alignments

- ◆ There should be a Fancher Heights route.

- ◆ Fancher Heights cannot exist currently with one road. There have not been any improvements. Any alternative should at least potentially allow for a connector from Fancher Heights.
- ◆ This alternative fails because there is not a connection to Fancher Heights.
- ◆ There should be a Fancher Heights route.
- ◆ Build the with the Eastmont extension and improve Sunset Highway to three lanes for the entire length of the highway.
- ◆ The first priority should be to build the south-end bridge interchanges on both sides of Senator George Sellar Bridge!
- ◆ I only support three lanes on Sunset Highway with future road expansion to the upper bench, which the majority of the public also supports.

Miscellaneous Comments

- ◆ Building a highway higher up hill is better. The noise is worse lower down on the road and sound does not travel down.
- ◆ Engineers and decision makers should probably stand on Sunset Highway from 3:00–5:00 pm.
- ◆ There are only four alternatives and a no-build option?
- ◆ The strips along the highway do not tell you anything.
- ◆ There is a whole in the middle of 19th and it is difficult to get around.
- ◆ The bike lane on SR-2/97 has clogged up the bridge.
- ◆ Build an overpass for pedestrians where needed so they do not have to race across Sunset Highway (like they do in the “Big City” to the west of us)!

Public Comments Derived From Comment Forms as of October 2001

The following public comments are from comment forms that were distributed at the Open House on EIS Alternatives. The comments are organized by subjects presented on the comment forms.

Sunset Highway/ Cascade Avenue Widening Alternative

- ◆ The concept of widening Sunset is by far the most reasonable solution. There is already too much traffic in the East Wenatchee intersection. Why build a riverfront highway and funnel more congestion? It is a waste of taxpayer's money.
- ◆ Please use the Sunset Highway and Cascade Avenue alternative.
- ◆ I feel the only true solution is for all of Sunset Highway to be three lanes. The river route, or Western Route, should be a five or seven lane highway. This would take a lot of passing thru traffic out of the residential area, even for people in Wenatchee who travel from one end of town to the other end. This is a very popular area for recreation and we need a bypass to get from one end of town to the other and one, which does not go directly thru town.
- ◆ Sunset Highway should be four-lanes.
- ◆ Sunset Highway widening is a very expensive plan. It is not very practical to have a lot of traffic in a residential neighborhood. It would be very noisy, the air would be more polluted, there would be a greater number of accidents, it would be very expensive, and there would be greater impact to mankind.
- ◆ This alternative proposes eight traffic lanes, all within close proximity to each other, and two more than the couplet concept. The social impact would essentially be the same as alternative two on Cascade, but the impact would be considerably increased on Sunset.
- ◆ This alternative would likely have the highest accident frequency and severity potential of all the alternatives as well as the greatest necessity for traffic control. With eight lanes in relatively close proximity the ambient noise level imposed on adjoining properties would be substantially in excess of other alternatives.

Western Route Alternative

- ◆ The most practical of all routes, in my opinion is the Western Route. Every town needs a bypass route, where one can get through without a lot of slow traffic. It also would be the cheapest, less noise, more economical; and there would be less pollution in residential neighborhoods.
- ◆ Use the existing right-of-way, Western Route.
- ◆ I think that the best route is the Western Route to through lanes. The waterfront route has the challenge. You know a few people will take it to court. The answer is that no matter where you build, you will be in court.
- ◆ Our feeling is that the second most desirable choice would be the Western Route, which would bypass a substantial amount of already-developed areas and, from our information, includes some property with already-existing right-of-way.
- ◆ Building the river route with four to five lanes where it is much less congested would increase traffic to a steady flow, without having to deal with the school bus route. It also would be less costly because there are few private residents to buy out.
- ◆ I was told that there was a great deal of citizen input yet as of today I have not talked to a single person who supports the waterfront. If you are going to do it, do it and stop wasting money.
- ◆ I would prefer to see the western bench done.

- ◆ It is also important to note that this route has not been identified to the public as a limited access highway. Those few that do support this route believe that you will be able to pull off anywhere along the route to gain access to the river. That is misleading and the type of highway that is being considered should have been identified at the open houses.
- ◆ This route is not practical because it will not reduce traffic flow east of Sunset and it will generate E-W gridlock for N/S traffic (see light of 12th Street). This was a good idea forty years ago. Best of luck.
- ◆ Please do not disturb or ruin the trail and river corridor. It is the only relatively natural area left in area.
- ◆ Cherish our Columbia River and don't jeopardize it with pollution and noise from a freeway. Use common sense, forego politics and do the right thing.
- ◆ Building a riverfront freeway would put an end to community cohesion between East Wenatchee and Wenatchee that was created with the loop trail. Stop putting cars first! The Sunset Highway "neighborhood" is already ruined and undesirable – don't dissect more of the community. Buy out homes on Sunset from people would prefer to live elsewhere anyway, but can't sell their homes.
- ◆ I am against building the freeway along the riverfront. As a trail user, a freeway would be devastating to the appeal of the loop trail. In this day and age it seems backwards to ignore and abuse our natural resources. The loop trail captures Chelan and Douglas counties best asset – the Columbia River!
- ◆ Building another highway is an underhanded way to assure more traffic to the new mall stores. Building a riverfront highway would take away any change of a bench route, which we need.
- ◆ This route is the least efficient from the standpoint of providing connectivity and level of service to the local street system within the corridor area. I also suspect it may only serve truck and through traffic and the present Sunset Highway would continue to receive the preponderance of area traffic. A careful study and analysis of traffic generation and destination is needed to adequately address this concern.
- ◆ It is important to note that signatures of over 450 were already submitted prior to identifying any route selection that opposed any new highway west of existing SR-28 and more will follow. These signatures were gathered in just a few weeks to give WSDOT an indication of what might happen if they were to seriously consider a riverfront route. Now that we can see that those signatures weren't enough to sway WSDOT's consideration of this route, we will begin to press forward with gathering signatures in this community to show that your belief that the community is split down the middle is incorrect. How many signatures have you received in support of the riverfront route?
- ◆ Consider the air pollution, especially when the vehicles will be traveling next to pedestrians along the riverfront trail, many of which are children and seniors. Consider the noise pollution that will impact not only the riverfront trail in East Wenatchee and its residents but along the riverfront trail in Wenatchee and its residents because of the way sound travels over water. Consider the safety of children that are a large percentage of users of our riverfront. What will stop them from trying to cross anywhere along a riverfront highway to get to their residences?
- ◆ The area between Sunset Highway and the Columbia River consists primarily of residents and farmland. The farmland is slowly being converted to residential property. A major thoroughfare on Cascade will destroy current residential tranquility as well as reduce property values.
- ◆ A good example is the present Eastside Corridor controversy, it is quite obvious there are only a few people in East Wenatchee supporting a river grade highway, and applying political pressure on the DOT. All it will accomplish is the funnel of more traffic to a congested area.

- ◆ The DOT has already spent millions of the taxpayer's money fighting a losing battle for a route that makes no sense and takes away a valuable resource for the community. This effort to build a river grade route needs to be abandoned forever and you should get on with really addressing the needs of the area.

One-Way Couplet Alternative

- ◆ The existing Cascade grade profile, in the vicinity of 23rd NW may be somewhat in excess of seven percent, but can likely be regarded to meet maximum gradient standards.
- ◆ The one-way traffic flow would also provide the maximum public safety in the existing SR-28 corridor.
- ◆ After reviewing the available information, we feel that the most viable option is the utilization of the one-way couplet, making Sunset Highway and Cascade Avenue one-way roads. There appear to be a number of advantages to this. This plan would appear to require minimal displacement of existing property and would also have the advantage of greater safety by separating the directions of traffic flow. Additionally, noise and pollution impact would be minimized.
- ◆ I reside one block west of Sunset Highway and an equal distance from Cascade Avenue. I access my property from both NW Boston and Cascade. As opposed to the Western Route, this alternative would seem to offer the best level-of-service to the properties within the corridor area, particularly if 27th Street was extended and improved from SR-28 west to Empire as well as a few other local street improvements. With the exception of the Western Route, it is likely that the couplet alternative that would have the least social impact and dislocation is critical to the future of the corridor area. I also have the feeling, after talking with several neighbors on both Cascade and Sunset, that this alternative may have the least public opposition. Particularly if both Sunset and Cascade are widened symmetrical to the existing centerline.
- ◆ This route will generate E-W traffic flow and result in numerous stoplights impeding N/S flow. Please read VISON statement "mobility for N/S travel." There are wildlife sensitive areas between 19th Street and the sewer plant. There are archeological sites in this area. Watch out for the Colville Indians. N/S traffic will resemble N Wenatchee Avenue at Maiden Lane and Horse Lake Road traffic lights.
- ◆ The one-way couplet is also not a good plan. No one likes to go one way, plus it is still in a residential neighborhood. There is greater impact to mankind!

Sunset Highway Widening/Eastmont Avenue Extension Alternative

- ◆ Regardless of the traffic alternative chosen, we feel there is considerable merit to the extension of Eastmont Avenue northward so that it connects with the Odabashian Bridge. However, if Sunset Highway is widened, the addition of the Eastmont extension might create an excessive amount of traffic noise for the residents between Eastmont and Sunset Highway. This clearly would need to be considered. The advantage of extending Eastmont might also be to assist with access to and egress from the Fancher Heights area so that additional roads are not constructed through already-existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ This route is the most logical proposal. However make Sunset three lanes, not five lanes and extend Baker Street to Intersect Eastmont. This proposal will not generate E-W traffic and will eliminate the need for a traffic light. There will be minimum displacement of homeowners. There will be no problems with geology or environmental issues.
- ◆ The lower bench route slope is occasionally subjected to heavy short-term storm water flows. This could severely impact the "Eastmont Extension". The year 1972 was particularly significant. There was also an event about twelve years ago. Fancher Heights development

area has insufficient storm water retaining facilities. Canyon "B" often has substantial storm water flows.

- ◆ Why would you go uphill in winter when you can stay level on Sunset Highway?
- ◆ There will be the cost of buying out residents to make room for a large freeway on Sunset Highway and the congestion and getting residents from their homes on and off such a freeway.
- ◆ Depending on the actual alignment of the Eastmont segment, it may result in relatively high dislocation because I suspect all the residences on Valley View and some on Eastmont would have to be displaced as well as some of those in the vicinity of 23rd NE and Mountain View streets. Other considerations should take into account the storm water management and slope stability problems inherent with an Eastmont route segment.
- ◆ The Eastmont extension would likely have significant visual impact, particularly when viewed from the Westside of the river. We should avoid contributing to the already ugly landscape of the Fancher Heights rim.
- ◆ It seems to me, that the Eastmont Extension route segment really does not contribute materially to the corridor transportation objectives and the benefit runs more to local traffic mobility rather than the traditional function of a statewide highway network.
- ◆ The alternatives are to widen Sunset and provide needed separation. Those living adjacent to Sunset are already impacted and accustomed to the traffic. Eliminating a second highway would be less costly to maintain and for traffic enforcement.

No Build Alternative

- ◆ Making Sunset Highway into three lanes, with pullout places for school bus stops, so the buses do not stop the flow of traffic would be beneficial. The buses could have pullout stops on the east side and west side of the highway for the return trips to accommodate students living either on the east or west side of the Highway, thereby keeping the traffic flowing smoothly and protecting the children from having to cross the highway.
- ◆ In general I believe that the improvement of Sunset Highway represents the best alternative for many reasons and is the superior alternative on nearly every significant area highlighted in the comment form.

Economics

- ◆ The very most valuable, both in terms of dollar value and in uniqueness of location, of the areas in consideration is the riverfront, even 300 feet from the shoreline, due to fact that it is adjacent to the river. To use this unique area for a highway serves no real long-term benefit. A river front route becomes only a short-term fix and a cause for more expensive, higher impact and undesirable changes to the George Sellar bridge interchange in the near future.
- ◆ It is critical that all aspects of future development possibilities are weighted in making a final preferred route decision. Property tax revenues available for Douglas County and the City of East Wenatchee in the area West of SR-28 between 9th Street and Odabashian Bridge have enormous potential to provide an economic boost to our community through growth and development. A new transportation facility has the potential to move vehicles through quicker but at what cost. What has become the highest valued real estate in Douglas County would be lost if a highway facility were to slice through the center of it or if it were to border the Columbia riverfront. That would only discourage growth and encourage development away from this area.
- ◆ It is little wonder the legislature is having trouble raising the gasoline tax and fees to fix the transportation bottlenecks.

Environment

- ◆ As you know, the Avery orchard longhouse discovery is along the riverfront just off of Bellevue. This property is qualified to be a national historical property. It is critical that it is taken into consideration for the time that it will become listed on the national registry so that all requirements are met.
- ◆ Our riverfront and adjacent properties to the river support many forms of wildlife. We witness on a regular basis bald eagles, deer, coyote, pheasant, quail, geese, duck, herons, and cranes just to name a few. In fact, the variety and volume of wildlife appears to be growing in this area.
- ◆ The area from Porters Pond to the footbridge is a protected area for wood duck mating during the winter. In fact, that portion of the riverfront trail is closed to pedestrians during that period so that they aren't disturbed. If this area cannot support pedestrians during this time how is it possible that it could support vehicles?
- ◆ Porters Pond area is designated as an environmental sensitive area. There is a creek that runs from the Columbia River up to nearly SR-28. What will the implications be with a route through this area? Salmon can be seen in the Porters Pond area. Do they use this area now or have they ever used it in the past for spawning?
- ◆ The "Porter House" located on the NE corner of 19th and Cascade may have some "historic" designation. It is supposedly one of the first homes established on the eastside of the river. Porters Pond, a backwater of river has some kind of ecological significance.
- ◆ The glacial geology of the slopes over where the Eastmont Extension would be routed is quite unstable and highly erodable from both wind and rainfall. High cat slopes would likely require special consideration and treatments.
- ◆ On the Westside of SR-28 between about 11th and 13th there is a grave of Cottonwood, which is a roosting and perhaps, nesting area for American Bald Eagles. I do not think it has any legal significance, but the use of trail is restricted during a period of time when an area is occupied.

Future Schools

- ◆ It is important that prior to any new routes that future school needs are considered. We have been told by the school district that the area west of SR-28, from 19th to Odabashian Bridge, will support at least one grade school and one middle school, as that area is developed. A new route that will hinder that ability to have schools built in this area. Poor planning again will cause additional congestion with residents having to leave this district to get into another district for school.

Recreation

- ◆ The improvements of Sunset will minimize impacts on residents, since those who reside along the route are already impacted. All other alternatives have increased adverse impacts for those along the route.
- ◆ The riverfront alternative adversely affects recreation. A limited access highway along the river effectively cuts the river off from the community, as well as making the recreation that remains less desirable. It is rather ironic that directly across the river from the proposed highway, the City of Wenatchee is struggling to make the river more accessible, and in many cases all that separate the people from the river is a chain link fence not a highway. To destroy the access to the river would be a travesty for future generations who would choose to live in this community, and those who support it now would be remembered for their short sightedness and disregard for the real benefits that nature has provided this community. The

other alternatives do not adversely affect recreational uses which cannot be reproduced in another location, as would occur in the riverfront area because of the uniqueness of the water related adjacent areas.

- ♦ The Eastmont extension routing values will have some significant visual impact, particularly where viewed from west of the river. It will be less from the eastside because of the viewing angle. The existing Fancher Heights view can only be described as ugly and lets not contribute more.

Relocation

- ♦ It is often mentioned by DOT officials that a large part of the problem with SR-28 is the amount of direct access. No one seemed able to give exact figures at the open houses but estimates were nearly 150, which might surprise you. We did our own survey between 19th and Odabashian Bridge and SR-28 from 19th to 9th Streets and found the following results:

	Driveway Access	Connector Roads	Orchard Access	Total
SR-28 (19 th to O.B.).....	86.....	19.....	3.....	108
Cascade Avenue	118.....	22.....	14.....	154
SR-28 (S of 19 th)	26.....	7.....	2.....	35
SR-28 Totals	112.....	26.....	5.....	143
Cascade Avenue	118.....	22.....	14.....	154

As you can see, there is a larger impact from direct accesses on Cascade then SR-28 and in comparison, a much more severe impact because density of accesses from 19th to Odabashian Bridge is 43 % higher. Not only the impacts to residents will be much greater, but also there are 14 direct orchard accesses on Cascade (16 if Cascade were carried through to 16th) compared to only 5 on SR-28, hardly appropriate for a highway. Also, there are 4 established businesses on SR-28 that would be negatively impacted by moving the major traffic facility off of the existing corridor and no commercial bus inesses on Cascade. Once again this shows that moving the traffic facility to Cascade would impact new residential neighborhoods.

- ♦ I am particularly concerned about the two alternatives, which propose a five-lane travel way on the existing SR-28 alignment. A five-lane cross-section would likely cause the relocation of perhaps 90 percent of the existing structures, as well as significantly impact the approach grade cur of intersecting streets on the Westside of SR-28 (i.e. 23rd and NW Hadley).

Miscellaneous Comments

- ♦ Cascade Avenue to Columbia to Empire is another suggested route.
- ♦ It sounds like we are compounding an existing problem like the north and south end of Wenatchee mission and Chelan Roads. I feel that we don't need any more bottlenecks on our roads and highways.
- ♦ I think the effects of noise generation must be carefully considered relative to the various number of traffic lanes incorporated in the alternatives. For example, three-lane verses five-lane and proximity to the existing residential properties.
- ♦ To limit the scope of the project and exclude consideration of the bench route or at least tying the alternatives to the ultimate development of a bench route is not a real consideration of the transportation issues of the area. The bench route is the key to future transportation, flood control, and general growth in the Valley; it will be needed to provide access for the growing Fancher Heights area as well as ultimately to alleviate congestion in Wenatchee and East

Wenatchee. It would provide for through traffic, which does not have a destination in the valley.

- ◆ Thank you for your consideration of comments.
- ◆ As you proceed with the Eastside Corridor project, be assured that we will continue to relay residents concerns and issues. Our goal is to make sure that your final decision will be in the best interest of the community, both now and in the future. We look forward to continued involvement and appreciate the opportunity to share our interests.
- ◆ We would also like to call to your attention an additional need, which this project does not seem to address – namely, that of alleviating the traffic congestion in the area of the George Sellar Bridge. This is already a very troublesome spot, and any further traffic revisions and traffic increase will only make it worse.
- ◆ When the necessary improvements are made a serious study and plan for an upper bench route should be implemented so these shortsighted problems can be eliminated in the future.
- ◆ Moving traffic faster for a short time to the same congested area, like East Wenatchee, it does not accomplish any real benefit. It is more important to separate the traffic not going to the congested area by way of an alternative route.