

Idaho Transportation Board
Subcommittee on State Highway System Adjustments
April 25, 2024

The Idaho Transportation Board (ITB) Subcommittee on State Highway System Adjustments met remotely on April 25, 2024. Staff participated from the Chinden HQ.

Subcommittee Chair Julie DeLorenzo called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. ITB District 5 Member John Bulger, District 6 Member Bob Hoff, and District 4 Member Mitch Watkins were present.

Key principals present from the Idaho Transportation Department were Director Scott Stokes, Chief Deputy/Chief Operations Officer Dan McElhinney, Deputy Attorney General Gary Luke, Planning Services Manager Scott Luekenga, Program Manager Robert Beachler, Business Executive to the Board Lorraine Dennis, District 6 Project Manager Ryan Day, District 6 Engineer Jason Minzghor, and District 4 Engineer Jesse Barrus. Local Highway Technical Assistance Council Administrator Laila Kral was also in attendance.

Because the Study of SH-79/SH-25 extension across the Snake River item was changed from an informational to an action item after the agenda was posted, Madame Chair called for a motion to amend the agenda. Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Member Bulger, and the motion passed unopposed.

Meeting Minutes. Member Watkins moved to approve the minutes of September 21, 2022, seconded by Member Bulger, and the motion passed unopposed.

Review of Active Cases. Planning Services Manager Luekenga reviewed the list of active cases and provided a status of the five on hold and three new added entries – SH-44, SH-16 (US-26 to I-84) and SH-79 to US-93.

Relinquishment of US-26 to Bonneville County, District 6. District 6 Project Manager Ryan Day provided a summary to-date on the steps taken for the relinquishment of US-26, milepost 335.78 (Woodruff Ave.) to milepost 338.23 (Beeches Corner) to Bonneville County, and reviewed the Roadway Relinquishment Hearing summary held January 17, 2023.

The relinquishment will occur after the construction of the US-26 & 25th East (Hitt Road) project and the US-20/26 connector project. Bonneville County signed the Road Closure and Maintenance Agreement in March 2023 and passed an authorizing resolution in November 2023 supporting the transfer of US-26 from Woodruff Ave to Beeches Corner.

In response to Director Stokes question regarding the official transfer of ownership for US-26, DE-6 Minzghor stated the Hitt Road project is in the Statewide Transportation

Improvement Program (STIP) for FY26. The US-20/US-26 Connector project is programmed in FY29; however, anticipates it being delayed. ITD will maintain all of US-26 until these projects are complete.

Member Bulger made a motion that the Board's Subcommittee on State Highway System Adjustments recommends approval of the Road Closure and Maintenance Agreement to the Idaho Transportation Board for its consideration. The motion was seconded by Member Watkins and it passed unanimously.

Study of SH-79/SH-25 Extension Across the Snake River, District 4. CD/COO Dan McElhinney reported on considerations for studying US-93 traffic and a 3rd Snake River Bridge in Twin Falls that included current and future bridges and traffic conditions – without improvements and looking at the pros and cons. He stated the City of Twin Fall was not receptive to an additional Snake River Crossing.

DE-4 Jesse Barrus provided an update on the draft study goals, history of the Perrine and Hansen Bridges, existing daily traffic volumes, current and projected traffic congestion, commercial truck traffic trip data, and state/local planning consideration for the 2022-2050 traffic feasibility study. As a result of various stakeholder engagement meetings some findings included the City of Twin Falls opposed a new crossing in the city limits. The US-93 traffic study shows current level of service is good with potential needs by 2050. A west end crossing is a priority connecting south of Jerome to Twin Falls. Current needs are to improve the intersection on US-93 in Twin Falls and widening of SH-50/Hansen Bridge.

Next steps included presenting to the 3rd River Crossing Joint Powers Board this month and report on progress and a phased plan at the Transportation Board's May 2024 Outreach Workshop, and then present a draft report and seek funding for a study at the Board's May meeting. The three proposals that will be presented include a value engineering study for US-93/Blue Lakes intersection improvements, widen SH-50/Hansen Bridge design to 4-lanes (about 5 miles), and do a Planning and Environmental study in coordination with the new MPO for an additional bridge crossing considering SH-25, SH-79, US-30 and SH-46.

Madame Chair invited the City of Twin Falls officials to comment on the study. Twin Falls County Commissioner Brent Reinke stated a third river crossing has been talked about for several years and expressed his support. Twin Falls City Manager Travis Rothweiler, who attended on Twin Falls Mayor Pierce's behalf, expressed their concerns regarding an additional bridge and impacts with the Cities growth.

Member Watkins made a motion that the Board's Subcommittee on State Highway System Adjustments recommends the Idaho Transportation Board invest in a planning and environmental study utilizing ITD's recent feasibility study to consider options for an additional downstream bridge crossing with potential impacts to SH-25, SH-79, US-30, and SH-46. Member Bulger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 P.M.

Signed _____

Submitted by:

Lorraine Dennis

Business Executive

Idaho Transportation Board