

**Meeting:** Columbia River Crossing Task Force  
**Date:** August 16, 2006  
**Location:** WSDOT SW Region Headquarters,  
 11018 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle, Vancouver, Washington

**Members Present:**

Last Name	First Name	Organization	Alternate Attending
Adams	Sam	City of Portland	
Ambruster	Grant	Portland Business Alliance	
Branch	Wayne	Clark College	
Burkholder	Rex	Metro	
Byrd	Bob	Identity Clark County	
Caine	Lora	Friends of Clark County	
Dengerink	Hal	Wash. State University- Vancouver	
Eki	Elliott	Oregon/Idaho AAA	
Frei	Dave	Amada Neighborhood Association	
Grossnickle	Jerry	Columbia River Tugboat Association	
Halverson	Brad	Overlook Neighborhood Association	
Hansen	Fred	TriMet	Alan Lehto
Hewitt	Henry	Stoel Rives, LLP	
Holmes	Eric	City of Battle Ground	
Lookingbill	Dean	Regional Transportation Council	
Lynch	Ed	Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust	
Morris	Betty Sue	C-TRAN	Scott Patterson Katy Brooks
Paulson	Larry	Port of Vancouver	
Phillips	Bart	Columbia River Economic Development Council	
Russel	Bob	Oregon Trucking Association	
Stuart	Steve	Clark County	
Sundvall-Williams	Jeri	Environmental Justice Action Group	
Valenta	Walter	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association	
Walstra	Scot	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce	
Wyatt	Bill	Port of Portland	Susie Lahsene

**Project Staff Present:**

Ron Anderson  
 Mike Baker  
 Ray Barker  
 Daniele Cogan  
 Doug Ficco  
 Frank Green  
 Heather Gundersen  
 Barbara Hart  
 Zach Horowitz  
 Ryan LeProwse  
 Jay Lyman  
 Tom Markgraf  
 Kay McLaughlin  
 John Osborn  
 Peter Ovington  
 David Parisi  
 Laura Reilly  
 Lynn Rust  
 Ted Stonecliffe  
 Audri Streif  
 Kris Strickler  
 Rex Wong

**Members Absent:**

Becker	Charles	City of Gresham
Brown	Rich	Bank of America
Cruz Walsh	Serena	Multnomah County
Fuglister	Jill	Coalition for a Livable Future
Hinsley	Brett	Columbia Pacific Building Trades
Isbell	Monica	Starboard Alliance Company, LLC
Malin	Dick	Central Park Neighborhood Assn.
Pollard	Royce	City of Vancouver
Pursley	Larry	Washington Trucking Association
Ray	Janet	Washington AAA
Schlueter	Jonathan	Westside Economic Alliance
Schmidt	Karen	Washington Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
Zelenka	Tom	Schnitzer Group

## 1. Welcome & Announcements

- **Video on-demand.** Recent Task Force meetings can be viewed on the Internet through a link on the project web site ([www.columbiarivercrossing.org](http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org) under the Task Force Meeting Materials page).
- **Welcome new members.** Larry Pursley will join us on behalf of the Washington Trucking Association. Grant Armbruster, from Columbia Sportswear, is the new Portland Business Alliance representative.
- **The purpose of the meeting** is to begin discussion of functional design issues, hear from the project team about how the alternative packages will be screened, and get a report on fuel costs and travel demand.

<p><b>NOTE:</b>        <i>Task Force questions and comments are in italics</i>                        (Staff responses are in parentheses)</p>
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## 2. Communications & Outreach Report

CRC Communications staffperson Barbara Hart provided a brief report on public outreach activities:

- Media Coverage Summary will be provided at future meetings
- Portland/Vancouver outreach has been going very well
- Community and Environmental Justice Group kick-off happens this week
- Initial Design workshop was held in Vancouver on August 10<sup>th</sup>
- Newsletter will be mailed out this month

*Are the neighborhood leaders seeing things that we (the task force) have not seen?*

(Yes, those that are most affected have been given a preliminary look at what we are doing.)

(We are always open to having people take a look at our design concepts. We would like to meet one on one or in a small group to go over the designs and maps.)

## 3. Other Announcements

**Doug McDonald, Washington State Secretary of Transportation**, was in the audience and was invited to say a few words. Highlights included the following:

We are hearing a lot good things about the progress being made. There's a recognition that this project is as important as any that are in the Seattle newspapers, and the forward progress is very welcome. I now work directly for the Governor, and can confidently say that Governor Gregoire understands the importance of this project and the needs of Clark County. People from this part of the state need to appreciate that the Governor has a lot of support for this project and for this area. Paying for this project will take us to some new places but that is ok because we need to get it done. .

**Commissioner Adams** gave an update about the Hayden Island moratorium:

*--Portland City Council vote on the development moratorium will occur Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> and I would like to request time on the agenda at the next meeting to discuss our findings and gather support. We don't know when we will be asking for support from individual jurisdictions.*

## 4. Meeting Summary Approval

- **Action:** Approved draft summary of July 12, 2006, task force meeting

## 5. Design Concepts – Part One

### Introductions- Jay Lyman

We have this meeting and next month to introduce preliminary design concepts. Tonight we will focus on one aspect of five alternative packages – arterial connections. This is an information piece only, to help you understand the scope and complexity of the issues related to local street connections on both ends of a new bridge. We have begun discussion of preliminary design issues with neighborhood and business leaders in Vancouver, and will soon be holding similar meetings with Portland neighborhoods.

### Slide Presentation by David Parisi:

- What is an arterial?
- What are the issues we will be considering when talking about an arterial?
- Alternative 3 details
- Alternative 4 & 5 details

--*Why will there only be two lanes on one span?*

(There needs to be room for shoulders, and be able to abide by good safety design standards)

--*Would you keep two bridges?*

(Yes, the other would be for high capacity transit. They with both be lift bridges as well.)

- Alternative 6 & 7
- Vehicle trip lengths across I-5
- Counts
- Potential Arterial Trips
- Summary

### Discussion

--*It seems to me that the numbers might be different if there was a freeway interchange on Hayden Island.*

(The numbers I used are with existing conditions)

--*My point is that if there is not an interchange on Hayden Island then there will be more traffic on the arterial.*

(Yes, that may be true)

--*Are these spans safe enough to be used for arterial use?*

(We do not know yet. For freeway purposes, they would need to be upgraded. For transit or arterial use, the affected local agency (city or county) would have to decide if they want the bridges without upgrades).

--*When is the seismic evaluation being completed?*

(Geotechnical engineers are already drilling on the Oregon shore. We should be able to provide seismic data at the Sept. meeting)

*--Is this data consistent with 60 – 70 percent of on and offs that we heard occur within the BIA?*

(Yes, it is. The trips we are talking about today are ones that get on and off in the BIA vs. on or off in the BIA)

*--Thank you for doing this extra data about Alternative 3. We do need to do modeling. Current use of freeways is not very useful when we do not have an arterial bridge. If we have a different type of facility then we will have different use. We need to evaluate it differently. Highway capacity tables are based on arterials without access management and with many intersections. Because we are talking about a bridge with few access points there would be more capacity than you think. We need more modeling to be sure that it does not work.*

(Good points. We do not know what an arterial would look like yet and what connection we would have. We did try to use worst case scenario and assume everyone who could use the arterial would, but it is true that it could produce more trips.)

*--Thank you for the reminder why we are doing this presentation. Will there be a second piece that will be on replacement bridges only?*

(We will have an in-depth discussion of design concepts at the next meeting.)

*--All the downstream options for a replacement bridge seem to have the same alignment of all downstream supplemental.*

(If we keep the current spans then we would have to make space for two parallel corridors to provide for right of way for both alignments. If you create a new crossing and eliminate the existing bridges, the right of way for the approaches to the existing bridges will be freed up for other uses.)

*--I look forward to seeing more designs.*

*--On the travel model you did, we have been concentrating our conversations on the BIA; will we get a better idea of what happens when trips go south of this area?*

(Yes, we are currently modeling down to the Marquam Bridge)

*--One of my concerns is that we can only build so much and there will be the same congestion because the parts south of the BIA are still small.*

*--Slide 7 needs translation.*

(For every trip that crossed the Interstate Bridge today, how far are the people traveling all together. The average trip length for people that travel across the bridge is 19 miles)

*--One of the most interesting points is that 8% are long haul trips.*

(The bridge is carrying very long regional trips)

*--How are the population projections calculated into the trip data and are they pinpointed for a specific point in time?*

(This data is based on 2005 data and we will be projecting based on this data out to 2030.)

*--Data will be updated?*

(Yes, RTC and Metro, who are running our traffic models, will be providing the data for 2030) (Upcoming presentations will be providing in depth detail and design. This is only the beginning of those presentations.)

## 6. Task Force 2007 Meetings Schedule

We are preparing the schedule of meetings for next year. Preferably, the fourth week of each month on Tuesdays. Will the fourth Tuesday of every month work for members as our scheduled meeting date?

--Yes, except during holiday season — Nov. and Dec.

## 7. Alternatives Screening Process

### Slide Presentation by Mike Baker:

- Introduction
- Process to date
- Key decisions
- Criteria to support decisions
- Upcoming task force activities

October meeting has been rescheduled from Oct. 11 to Oct. 25.

### Discussion

--How will we be evaluating the alternatives in January and February?

(We will present data and information on the alternatives in September and October. We are hoping staff can introduce a smaller set of results based on data, to the task force in November. We will begin public comment and outreach, and the results will be brought back to you to help you make a recommendation about the right set of alternatives in February.)

--Will these dates change to the fourth Tuesday?

(No, none of the dates already set will be changed. The change to the fourth Tuesday of each month will start in 2007 – although at this point none of the 2007 dates have been set)

(Please take some time to look at the criteria and make sure that they are all there. We can be nimble at this point at addressing how we do our analysis, so if you have any suggestions please contact Jay.)

--Can we have those criteria sent to us again?

(Yes, Barbara can provide you with a link to where they are on the internet.)

## 8. Fuel Costs and Travel Demand

### Introduction

Several meetings ago, some of you asked for a discussion about how the rising price of oil would affect the travel demands we are using for our models.

### Slide Presentation by David Parisi:

- Oil and transportation - where are we today, where are we going
- Fuel prices and travel demand -what is the history and relationship between these two

--Is there any indication that people drive less often in other parts of the world where the price of gas is higher?

(Yes, there is data that shows when gas prices are sustained at very high prices, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) decreases.)

--What is very high?  
(That is relative.)

--The utilization of household expenditures spent on transportation, did you look at it by sector? I think that in this area it may not be even.  
(That may be true.)

--Are fuel economy standards implemented by the government?  
(Yes.)

--They are not market-driven?  
(To a certain degree they are. When gas prices are high, then people want vehicles with higher fuel economy.)

- Short and long term affects - what are some short-term and long range effects consumers, industry and government do to mitigate higher gas prices
- Regional travel demand modeling - what do policy objectives of RTC and Metro mean, what does state of the practice mean to modeling

--What happened in about 1995, when there was a sharp increase in VMT?  
(We don't know.)

--The appropriate measurement for our data should be not VMT, but number of trips across the bridge.  
(Yes, we will have some information about that coming up)

--I think if you look at your issues, when looking at fuel (slide 9), we're not so ahead of ourselves yet to have the latest information. Knowing that we have gone through serious gentrification in our community and knowing our incomes don't meet our rents. People who are most affected by the BIA are not even wealthy enough to have cars. Some people are making choices between rent and buying a car. I would challenge the information you have presented.  
(Socio-economic data is being figured into the model.)

--Has inflation been factored out of the cost?  
(Yes.)

--The Vehicle Operating Cost slide is misleading because it does not factor in cost of living.  
(To the average consumer, most costs are fixed compared to gas prices, which can change daily.)

--The bottom line (green line in graph) is showing the improvements that are in technology related to car design. The blue line is driven by the cost of gas.

--Metro's approach supports that we should be looking at how fuel cost will affect the economy, but not so much how will it affect the number of trips across the bridge. The travel demand in the BIA will still be high, but how will the cost of gas affect us? As a public body, we need to think about how changes will affect industry, and those of low income communities. How do we maintain access to goods and schools? We need to look at future demand on the bridge, despite the possible rise in gas prices.

- Travel demand in the CRC project area – what does demographics and population tell us about travel demand

*--Has an elasticity model been done that demonstrates at which point congestion gets so bad that people will switch to transit? I'm sure there is a point at which people would switch their mode of travel, but what is it? Congestion is a good way to get people to switch travel modes. Could we get some data about that?*

*(I will have to get back to you about that. I do not have that information at this time.)*

## **Discussion**

*--I think there are studies and places to model the point at which congestion is so bad that people will take public transit. In New Jersey, the Lincoln and Holland tunnels show that traffic has forced people to switch to transit.*

*--Freight really isn't considered in the fuel economy data presented here. I have found that in the Pacific Northwest, although a lot of freight will move by rail in the future, we are so short on rail capacity large manufacturers will be bumping off boutique cargo and smaller businesses, which will then move to truck freight. Freight traffic on trucks is going to increase substantially in the next few years. VMT will increase when talking about trucks. This is related to fuel economy, even though there will be changes made in freight engines, freight travel will increase a lot.*

*(We are expecting almost a doubling in truck use of the BIA. Trucks, air, and transit account for 60% of fuel use.)*

*--The freight industry is looking at alternative fuel sources such as bio-fuel, hybrid trucks, fuel cells, and engine upgrades.*

*--Elasticity of the rail system: it is difficult to add capacity to rail, and so we will have to move to truck. As fuel goes up, value of freight movement goes up vs. single-occupancy vehicles. When will policy or consumer demand play into people's decision to drive their cars? Will that play into your equation?*

*--Regarding funding sources, is vehicle weight tax/miles being considered? Especially since more trucks will be on the road, it sounds like a great funding source. I hope that will be considered.*

*--Aggressive TDM in my mind is when I-5 allows only bikes, light rail, and trucks.. That is aggressive TDM. It includes options that we are not considering. It could be considered that eventually there won't be cars allowed in downtown Portland and light rail will be the only option. And if we want to get there we will have to take transit. Education needs to start here.*

*--Are we going to have the same sort of analysis of tolling as we had on VMT?*

*(Yes.)*

## **9. Public Comment**

**Ulysses Martinez:** *We are at a pivotal point in history because there are many different that we need to consider keeping this nation strong. Relying on oil is becoming a sticky situation. Light rail from Oregon to Washington would benefit everyone. Relying on transit would increase air quality. Other devices are available such as wave technology. I think light rail should be considered. We need to consider the environment because there are many others on this planet and no amount of money can*

save us from the detriment that could be caused from keeping cars on the road. We could be working on fuel efficiency, but there are those that are fighting that for profit. The environment should be something we are considering heavily. I have one thing in common with all of you, I breathe the same air.

**Jim Howell:** *When travel forecasting, the further out we go, the less accurate it is. Go back 50 years, I had driven across the country many times and gas was 23 cents a gallon and there was only one four-lane highway, all others were two lane. Eisenhower enacted a law to create the interstate system and by now we would have spent a trillion dollars on it. Pretend our new president would spend that much money on transit instead of on highway projects. What would happen? We have no idea. I know we have come up with a few \$2 billion solutions and the no build solution, but there needs to be a middle sized project being looked at in the \$200 million range.*

**Calvin White:** *I am a cancer survivor. I only had to come two miles to get here. If you wait long enough, everything will come to you. See Portland came here. Hayden Island is a pretzel or maze for bikes and pedestrians. I would like to see a foot bridge from the where the old K-mart was and the cement factory, or Expo Center. We are given a lot of priority for fast vehicles to go short distances. Why don't we go shorter distances in slower vehicles. We should make a bridge for slow vehicles and let the faster ones go around. You get more efficiency with a fast vehicle going long distances than a slow vehicle going long distances. Bicycle per passenger mile costs more than cars. Have you ever spent \$20.00 on a bicycle tire that lasts more than 500 miles?*

**Sharon Nasset:** *There is a difference between fear and reality. Fear is that we might have an earthquake in a few years. Reality is that we have only two bridges crossing the Columbia, less than any comparable urban area divided by a major river. We have just painted the existing I-5 bridge plus electrical upgrades. It has a 50 year life span left in it.. We need to do both sides of "the what if." If we build a third bridge, and then there is an earthquake and the bridge falls down – guess what will happen? The federal government will come in and build a new bridge, new roads, and a new hospital. If we play "what if" then we need to look at the positive "what if's" too. What if we have an earthquake and the bridge does just fine?*

*The location of this meeting is not acceptable. People can not get here without taking three buses. It is held in a governmental building, which is not comfortable for many people. And the time is not convenient. All this has been pointed out and nothing has been done. Next year's schedule needs to not just accommodate task force but also the public. It is not fair, and not one person on the Task Force is objecting.*

*We need a third bridge corridor. There is no reason to widen the bridge if we are just going to get caught in traffic on either end.*

**Jim Karlock:** *Building the MAX would cost as much as buying condos in the Pearl for the people who would switch to the rail. Ninety percent of the money came from the Federal government, but my understanding is that the money came from road users, not from transit users. Rail costs too much and does too little. National Academy of Science showed that there is plenty of oil capacity until 2015. Road users only pay a small percentage of the cost of transportation. Federal dollars that go to roads are paid by road users. Federal dollars that go to transit are taken from road users.*

(The federal dollars are generally tax payer's dollars.)

## Next Meeting Date / Location

Wednesday, September 27, 2006, 4pm – 8pm

WSDOT SW Region Headquarters, Room 102, 11018 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle, Vancouver, Washington