Columbia River CROSSING

Meeting Agenda

MEETING TITLE: Task Force Meeting

DATE: January 23, 4:00 - 6:30 pm

LOCATION: WSDOT, SW Region Office
11018 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver

Note: Please turn off all cell phones, handheld devices, and pagers during the meeting as they can disrupt the audio and recording equipment. Thank you.

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
4:00 – 4:15	Welcome & Announcements Project Update	
4:15 – 4:20	November 29 Meeting Summary	Approval
4:20 – 4:40	Public Comment	Receive public comment
4:40 – 4:55	Progress Report on Open Houses and Outreach Activities	Presentation and Discussion
4:55 – 5:45	Staff Recommendation Discussion – Questions and Clarifications	Discussion
5:45 – 6:25	Economic Importance of the I-5 Corridor	Presentation and Discussion
6:25 – 6:30	Wrap Up and Next Steps	
	Next Meeting: **February 27, 2007, 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.** Oregon Department of Transportation 123 NW Flanders St., Portland	

BUS DIRECTIONS from PORTLAND:
From Downtown Portland (SW Salmon and 6th Avenue) take C-Tran Bus #105 (I-5 Express) or TriMet Bus #6 (MLK Jr. Blvd) to Downtown Vancouver (7th Street Transit Center). Then follow directions below from Vancouver.

BUS DIRECTIONS from VANCOUVER:
From Downtown Vancouver (7th Street Transit Center) take C-TRAN Bus #4 (Fourth Plain) eastbound to the Vancouver Mall Transit Center. Other buses to Vancouver Mall are #32, 72, 76, and 78. From the VM Transit Center, transfer to Bus #80 (Van Mall/Fisher's) eastbound to 49th and 112th Avenue. WSDOT SW Regional Headquarters is 2 blocks north of this bus stop.

Columbia River CROSSING

Meeting Summary

Meeting: Columbia River Crossing Task Force
Date: November 29, 2006
Location: WSDOT SW Region Headquarters,
11018 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver, Washington

Members Present:

Last Name	First Name	Organization	Alternate Attending
Adams	Sam	City of Portland	
Armbruster	Grant	Portland Business Alliance	
Burkholder	Rex	Metro	
Byrd	Bob	Identity Clark County	
Caine	Lora	Friends of Clark County	
Cruz Walsh	Serena	Multnomah County	
Dengerink	Hal	Wash. State University- Vancouver	
Eki	Elliott	Oregon/Idaho AAA	
Frei	Dave	Amada Neighborhood Association	
Fuglister	Jill	Coalition for a Livable Future	Scott Chapman
Grossnickle	Jerry	Columbia River Towboat Association	
Halverson	Brad	Overlook Neighborhood Association	
Hansen	Fred	TriMet	Neil McFarlane
Hewitt	Henry	Stoel Rives, LLP	
Isbell	Monica	Starboard Alliance Company, LLC	
Knight	Bob	Clark College	
Lookingbill	Dean	Regional Transportation Council	
Lynch	Ed	Vancouver Chamber of Commerce	
Malin	Dick	Central Park Neighborhood Assn.	
Morris	Betty Sue	C-TRAN	Scott Patterson
Osborn	Dennis	City of Battleground	Adrienne Dedona
Paulson	Larry	Port of Vancouver	
Pollard	Royce	City of Vancouver	
Schlueter	Jonathan	Westside Economic Alliance	
Strahan	Elson	Vancouver National Historic Reserve	
Stuart	Steve	Clark County	
Tischer	Dave	Columbia Pacific Building Trades	
Valenta	Walter	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association	
Walstra	Scot	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce	
Wyatt	Bill	Port of Portland	Susie Lahsene
Zelenka	Tom	Schnitzer Group	
Members Absent:			
Becker	Charles	City of Gresham	
Brown	Rich	Bank of America	
Hinsley	Brett	Columbia Pacific Building Trades	
Phillips	Bart	Columbia River Economic Development Council	
Pursley	Larry	Washington Trucking Association	
Ray	Janet	Washington AAA	
Russel	Bob	Oregon Trucking Association	
Schmidt	Karen	Washington Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board	
Sundvall-Williams	Jeri	Environmental Justice Action Group	
Wyatt	Bill	Port of Portland	

Number of guests present: 34

Project Staff Present:

Ron Anderson
Mike Baker
Danielle Cogan
Doug Ficco
Frank Green
Heather Gundersen
Barbara Hart
Bob Hart
Jeff Heilman
Leslie Howell
Ryan LeProwse
Jay Lyman
John Osborn
David Parisi
Ed Pickering
Anne Pressentin
Lynn Rust
Lynette Shaw
Gregg Snyder
Audri Streif
Rex Wong
Patti Oeth
Tonja Gleason

1. Welcome & Announcements

- **Welcome to new members**
  - **Bob Knight,** the interim president of Clark College is joining us.
  - **Elson Strahan** is replacing Ed Lynch as the representative for the Historic Reserve Trust.

- **Member Changes**
  - **Jeri Sundvall-Williams** is changing jobs but is not leaving us and will continue to represent the Environmental Justice Action Group.
  - **Ed Lynch** is now representing the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce in a position that has been vacant.

2. Public Comment

Ginger Metcalf, Identity Clark County. Invited Task Force members to Dec. 12 Tolling Forum and made flyer available. **(Appendix)**

Barbara Nelson, board member, Jantzen Beach Moorage Inc., floating home community. Spoke against downstream alternatives that would be built where floating homes currently are and instead encouraged consideration of upstream alternatives where rental floating homes and commercial development are located. Pointed out some of the alternatives destroyed the moorage community in four or five places. Strongly emphasized how tight-knit the moorage community is and the amount of investment it has put into the area, including new walkways and other improvements. Task force members were also encouraged to consider keeping the existing bridge as a secondary access route to connect Hayden Island to Portland (assuming the I-5 traffic is on a new bridge). Task Force members were also invited to visit the moorage for the Christmas Ships Dec. 8 -15 or any other time in order to see the community personally.

Sharon Nasset – Questioned the legitimacy of the process used to narrow down options at the March meeting on the grounds that only 19 Task Force members were present and that there were several errors in the document that was given out about the screening process. Recounted event five months prior in which CRC staff invited her to go over the issues she was concerned about-specifically that many things that were marked as "fail" should have been "pass." Referred to a document she handed over to staff three months prior which outlined information she identified as inaccurate and incorrect, and mentioned that the staff said they would do something about it. Asserted that staff has not studied the information provided and that this is not in keeping with NEPA protocol. Provided list of CRC's evaluations of a new corridor crossing **(Appendix)**, and included criticism of several of those listed. Reiterated that there was no reason not to study a third crossing option and argued such an option would not require removing any homes or businesses.

Joe Cordon, CEO of SW Washington Medical Center. Explained the three hospital, bi-state trauma system for the region and SW Washington Medical Center's position as the busiest emergency department in the states of Washington and Oregon. Demonstrated that the hospitals' ability to effectively manage high trauma volumes through transport of critical patients to other centers is being very adversely impacted by the current state of congestion on I-5 between Portland and Vancouver. Also mentioned similar adverse impacts on neonatal care. Stated that he was not advocating for any option, just that there be a quick decision so this problem can be addressed.

Jim Karlock – Referred to October meeting between C-TRAN Board of Directors and CRC project staff in which he heard someone from the project mention that an alternative needed to be selected before cost was discussed. Commented that it seemed backwards in terms of business sense and a possible way to slip in a high cost option without anyone noticing until it is too late. Commented that

the project should follow a suggestion that came up in the same meeting to start with express bus, then move to Bus Rapid Transit, and then Light Rail when ridership dictates it.

Jim Howell- Referenced a memo distributed by AORTA **(Appendix)** that argues for the inclusion of an alternative that retains the existing bridges in the EIS phase of the CRC project. Advocated for the viability, with some modifications, of the bridge proposal submitted by AORTA in February 2004. Described some aspects of the proposal, mentioned its relative low-cost and low-impact design, and maintained that staff had not yet seriously considered it.

Ron Swearin – Transportation committee member of the Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League and participant in the United Nations World Urban Forum. Stated that it is not likely the American economy will be able to continue to support large infrastructure projects in the future. Advocated for a problem solving approach that looked at all the region's transportation problems and needs as a whole and not just those facing this stretch of I-5 and the creation of the fewest number of solutions to the greatest number of problems. Mentioned that a Western route might be that kind of solution.

3. Meeting Summary Approval

- **Action:** Approved – Draft summary of October 25, 2006 meeting

Barbara Hart – A meeting on the performance measures took place as a follow up to the October Task Force meeting. A summary will be available soon.

4. Overview of Analysis Results

Presentation by David Parisi

Major Trends and Traffic Performance

Discussion

NOTE:	*Task Force questions and comments are in italics,* Staff responses are in plain text

--Hal Dengerink- You said five through lanes – you meant three through lanes with auxiliary lanes?

Dave Parisi- Yes.

--Henry Hewitt – If the problems to the south of the I-405 loop are dealt with, do these graphs showing the difference between North and South bound I-5 travel times change?

Dave Parisi – Yes.

--Dave Frei – How do we save 16 minutes of travel time savings across the region from saving four minutes in the Bridge Influence Area?

David Parisi – There is such a large amount of queuing going on now, we would improve conditions outside the BIA as well as within it.

--Lora Caine – Were you assuming high capacity transit on this modeling?

David Parisi – Yes. The same vehicular demand is seen on each high capacity alternative, both of which come up as running pretty full.

Presentation by Ron Anderson

River Crossing Recommendations

Discussion

--Brad Halverson – What is the cost for seismic upgrades? Would it be half for keeping one bridge?

Ron Anderson – $125 million to do a minimal upgrade, $265 million to do a full upgrade. The cheaper upgrade would mean the bridges would shake and not be usable, but would probably not fall down during a 500 year event. If you only leave one bridge, the price would be less, but not half as much because the foundations are tied together.

--Commissioner Sam Adams – Has any thought been given to leaving a portion of the bridge up on the Oregon side for tourism purposes – far away from river navigation?

Ron Anderson – We talked about something that could help preserve the historical value. It could be a pedestrian attraction or lookout that would retain historic context. We are not that far on a decision yet.

--Commissioner Serena Cruz – Could you go into more detail about the unrestricted bridge lifts? Why would there be greater right-of-way issues if you left the bridges there?

Ron Anderson – Austin Pratt, the Coast Guard regional commander out of Seattle, has said that because of the complexity of having three structures and the impact of the new bridge pier locations on the navigation channels, they would strongly recommend unrestricted bridge lifts.

Jay Lyman – We are also under the operating premise that any degradation to marine safety would result in a "no" at the end of this process from the Coast Guard. Adding piers in the channel may affect that decision.

--Commissioner Serena Cruz – If the piers are aligned, what would be the greater safety impact?

Ron Anderson – It looks like the new bridges would need to have five piers for the sake of navigation and height clearance. We are trying to design with a 600 ft clearance between piers, and we can't make that line up with the nine piers on the existing bridge. Even if we made the new bridge with nine piers, navigation would still be impacted because it would create a longer channel for ships to get through.

Jay Lyman – We can't get all three barge channels to remain clear in the supplemental design.

--Commissioner Serena Cruz – Why would there be greater right-of-way issues if you left the bridges there?

Ron Anderson – If we take out the existing bridges it creates new area for redevelopment immediately on Hayden Island. On the Vancouver side, arterial connections for the supplemental bridge option would also require takings.

--Jonathan Schlueter -Is the current $3 million operation and maintenance cost that was shown for the twin structures combined?

Ron Anderson – Yes, they have a centralized lift operation.

--Jonathan Schlueter - Once they are no longer highways, we lose federal support money for that operating and maintenance burden? Who owns it then?

Ron Anderson – That is correct that we lose the money. Who owns it becomes an issue.

--Jerry Grossnickle – It would be possible to have a supplemental bridge, leave the green bridges intact, and not have the Coast Guard rule them as not acceptable if the railroad bridge was modified. If there is any degradation to the way it is now, the tug and barge industry would ask for a Truman–Hobbes proceeding. If we had additional piers, we would ask to use lifts at all times.

--Brad Halverson – If we spend the $40 million to fix the railroad bridge that may take care of issues of lifts with the Coast Guard on the I-5 bridges.

Presentation by Gregg Snyder

Transit Recommendations

Discussion

--Scot Walstra – You mentioned that the Light Rail has the least operating costs. Do you have the costs in a per-rider-mile figure or something that would be meaningful in terms of actual ridership?

> Gregg Snyder – We have prepared preliminary work on it, but feel that information is better presented in DEIS.

--Neil McFarlane - I do have some of the numbers on the current MAX cost. MAX is $1.28/passenger whereas it is $2.00 – $2.50/passenger for a bus system for TriMet, which has pretty efficient bus operation.

Phone Call from Governor Gregoire

Governor Gregoire – The Task Force has made tremendous progress and I and others want to recognize you for all the time and energy you have put in. Thank you to Hal and Henry and the hard work of WSDOT and ODOT – the staff and the consultants who have brought us thus far. When this took off in 2005, I began sessions with Governor Kulongoski about a plan for economic development between Multnomah and Clark County as partners in global competition. We recognized that one of the barriers to make that partnership more viable is what you are working on now. This project is very important to the future of both states. We have to of course address the congestion problem, but also fundamentally address the freight mobility problem that is part of both states' economic development plans. I respect that you are going to be getting into the tough, decision making part now. Transportation has a way of being very emotional and includes a lot of difficult choices and decisions. I am very appreciative of your willingness to do this and I think it is absolutely in good hands. I am there to support you as you make these difficult decisions. Please stay the course, move ahead, and make the tough choices. Governor Kulongoski and I with our respective delegations will need to be working to make this a reality. Thank you for what you are doing and I am sure that if Governor Kulognoski was here, he would join me in saying thanks.

Continuation of discussion

--Sam Adams – If you were to add capital costs, how does the cost per rider for light rail change?

--Neil McFarlane – We are getting 40 years out of a light rail vehicle versus 15 out of buses. Need to think out not just the initial capital cost but the on-going lifecycle cost which is a burden to the transit districts overall. Light rail allows us to carry a large number of people at a low cost for a long period of time.

--Hal Dengerink – Isn't there a point at which the capital amortizes out?

--Neil McFarlane – Absolutely but I don't have the general formula. As the Federal Transportation Administration looks at the different alternatives for funding, it will look very hard at that cost effectiveness equation. To understand it we need to get to the next level of detail and put this on equal footing with BRT.

--Brad Halverson – Once you widen Delta Park, there is no managed lane?

> Gregg Snyder – We assume we would match the three south bound lanes south of the Victory Blvd. interchange. There would not be a managed southbound lane south of Victory Blvd.

--Brad Halverson – In reference to your "lessons learned" slide on transit reliability, all four of those are just about even in regards to importance. I hope they aren't played off of each other.

> Gregg Snyder – We recognize that, and it's clear riders want reliable, fast, frequent service.

--Brad Halverson – Is that three to four trains being backed up during the 17 minute delay from bridge lifts?

> Gregg Snyder – Our alternatives tested high capacity modes at a standard service of every 5 minutes. If a bridge lift occurred, that would mean three to four vehicles stacked up.

5. DEIS Alternatives

Presentation by Mike Baker

Discussion

--Hal Dengerink– The staff is recommending that these three options go forward for further study and not proceed with some of the others. We have to see if we are comfortable with it. Not a point of no return as there is a lot of other detail we still need. Not a decision to proceed no matter what, at this point.

--Lora Caine – In NEPA, is there a low cost option study requirement like there is for no action?

Jay Lyman – The only requirement is that we look at no-action and alternatives that are feasibly capable of addressing the purpose and need of the project. Our recommendation is that the minimum threshold required to addresses the purpose and need are a new bridge for the I-5 crossing itself and an investment in high capacity transit coupled with the other things we have talked about.

--Hal Dengerink– That does not mean that cost is irrelevant. Cost becomes an important criteria.

- **Motion:** to accept the staff recommendation the project team has presented tonight and put it forward to the public for comment - Rex Burkholder
- **Motion Second:** Walter Valenta

---Rex Burkholder – I would like to speak to the motion. We have a decision coming up in February. It would behoove us to put this out on the street and hear back. Some people are getting tired of the process and want to have a decision now. However I, like other government representatives here, can't vote yes on anything adopting a position without working with my council. I would agree to have this committee put this out on the street and have some more public comment. Part of this is recognizing that a huge amount of analysis that's been done and saying that we will probably come to a similar decision as this in February.

--Hal Dengerink – Along with that we would ask staff to ramp up its detailed analysis of these alternatives.

--Ed Lynch- Is work from this point on limited to within these three alternatives?

--Henry Hewitt – That is the outcome we are aspiring to at this meeting or the next. We are still being informed by further analysis, public input, and from groups such as JPACT.

--Walter Valenta – It is important that we are really clear on when we are deciding on decisions like this. We need to follow the process to the letter. That means notice of when the decision in front of us will be brought back to the group, a clear time on when we are going to decide, and a way for the public to comment in a meaningful matter beforehand. We want to have strong consensus on this. I would like some clarity on when exactly is the official time to accept this recommendation.

--Hal Dengerink – We said we would make this decision in February. We are narrowing the current activities of the staff by accepting this report, not necessarily approving it.

--Commissioner Sam Adams– Can we fast track some of the staff analysis by approving this motion?

--Hal Dengerink– Approving the motion would do that.

Jay Lyman –The motion would put us in the mode of working full tilt on refining these alternatives.

Doug Ficco – This will also give us a jump on our public involvement.

--Commissioner Sam Adams – Could you note my question about the reuse of the bridge as a pier?

--Brad Halverson – At what point do we have the discussion on uses of the old bridges, like bike and pedestrians? I don't think it's been proven that they have to come down.

--Hal Dengerink – Replacing the bridges does not say that we will take down all of the other two. The issue of what happens with these bridges is not yet determined.

Jay – The proposal we put in front of the group is that the existing bridges be taken out. Sam's suggestion is not inconsistent if only a part stays. The Coast Guard has said though that if they aren't being used for transportation, they would recommend that the existing bridges would come out.

--Hal Dengerink – When do we address the fact that it is a historical monument?

Jay – We are working closely with the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administration attorneys and we expect to have an informal opinion from them by February.

--Hal Dengerink – We have a motion on the floor to accept the recommendation, proceed for public comment, that we will go back to our constituencies with this, staff will proceed with the analysis as outlined for the DEIS, but our formal consideration and approval would not occur until February.

- **Action:** Approved - motion to accept staff recommendation as presented tonight and put it forward to the public for comment.

--Hal Dengerink – Commissioner Adams and Mayor Pollard have a motion. ***(Appendix)***

--Mayor Royce Pollard – The architecture of the bridge – its aesthetics and its impact - is very important to the future of our communities. We ask that this body create an Urban Design working group similar to the Environmental Justice group. The board can direct how it is organized, but we would like to be involved. The work and progress of the body would report back to this group.

--John Osborn – We recognize that this is important. It has been the intention of the project team to establish a working group for this when we got closer to knowing what it is we were going to build and are now at that point. We support Mayor Pollard and Commissioner Adams as being chairs for that group. We can begin working with you on membership needs. We do have some initial guidelines of what we think might be a good process, and certainly appreciate your input.

--Hal Dengerink – Does this require formal action?

--Tom Zelenka - I don't disagree with the basic tenet of what they are proposing. I don't understand the letter suggestion that they have the lead role. This is a bi-state issue and concerns more than just the two cities. What we are saying – would the two cities take over running that aspect of the review?

--Commissioner Sam Adams– The decision making on the overall project is very similar to the decision making on what it looks like and how it functions. The system is built so that no one can run away with any aspect of the project. My concern is that folks that were elected to positions and were appointed to this committee are given a space to deal with the way this thing looks. I am comforted that the staff has planned ahead but am still nervous that the design is considered a luxury. Discussions in a contemporaneous timeline help avoid that.

--Hal Dengerink – We do have criteria for this in our original evaluation criteria.

--Commissioner Sam Adams – The other reason to get going is that this bridge is going to have some very difficult constraints on design.

--Dean Lookingbill – I agree with Walter that this is an important issue that we work on as a group. We should take a formal position and vote to have this move forward.

--Hal Dengerink- We have already included it formally in criteria and have committed to it.

--Dean Lookingbill – I was looking for something to structure the process. That is what this group is about.

--Henry Hewitt – We should accept this letter and ask staff and others to come back to us with a proposal for creating an aesthetics committee and then approve that.

--Mayor Royce Pollard – I agree with that. We have bestowed a special recognition for the Environmental Justice Group and are looking for that with this group.

6. Upcoming Public Outreach Events and Opportunities

Presentation by Danielle Cogan – (Skipped due to weather concerns)

Barbara Hart – The Communications Summary is in your binder along with a schedule. We can send more information in lieu of the Dec. meeting. Consider taking part in these events so you can hear directly what people are thinking.

7. Overview of Budget and Schedule

Presentation by Doug Ficco – (Skipped due to weather concerns)

Doug Ficco – Look at what we have given you and let me know if you have questions. You are free to call me anytime.

8. Next Meeting

~~December 13th, 2006 meeting~~ (Cancelled)

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2007, WSDOT SW Region Headquarters

Is Tolling In Our Future?

Exploring Tolling Options in the Bi-State Region

Sponsored By
The Cascadia Center/Discovery Institute

Hosted by Identity Clark County and the Portland Business Alliance

Tuesday, December 12, 2006
12:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
EB Hamilton Hall at
Vancouver's Historic Reserve
Vancouver, WA

Discovery Institute's Cascadia Center is pleased to co-sponsor with Microsoft another forum as part of our Transportation and Technology Series - this time in Vancouver, WA. The forum is hosted by Identity Clark County and the Portland Business Alliance.

Local and national tolling experts will join a panel of local leaders on national and worldwide tolling trends and practices and explore the future of tolling in the Northwest. Featured speakers include:

Kamran Khan, Wilbur Smith, Chicago
Jack Opiola, Booz Allen Hamilton, London
Kary Witt, Golden Gate Bridge Authority, San Francisco
Harold Worrall, Former Director Orlando-Orange County Expressway, Florida
Don Forbes, HNTB, Salt Lake City
Fred Cummings, TransLink, Golden Ears Bridge Project, Vancouver, BC

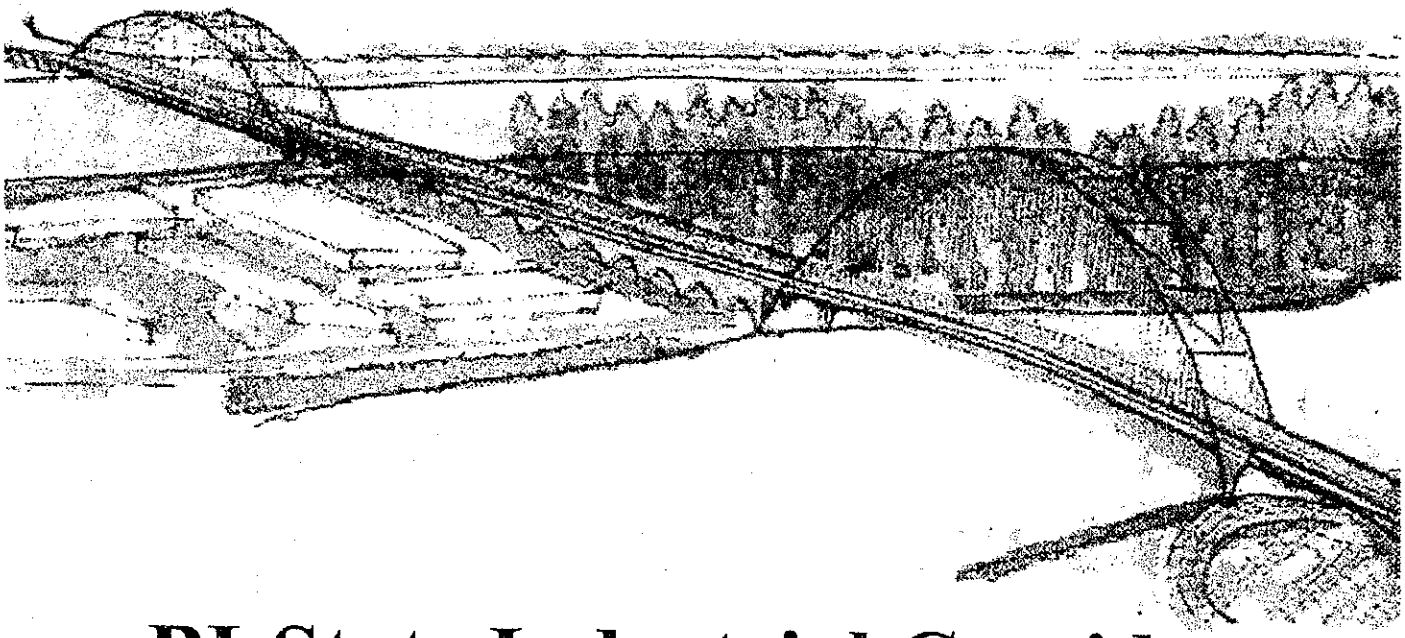
The event will be held from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at the EB Hamilton Hall at Vancouver's Historic Reserve, 605 Barnes Road, Vancouver, WA.

The forum is **free** and open to the public. A no-host reception will follow.

To register, please contact Kathy Davis at 360.695.4116 or email kathy@identityclarkcounty.org.

Space is limited - RSVP now!

For more details on the forum, visit www.cascadiaproject.org

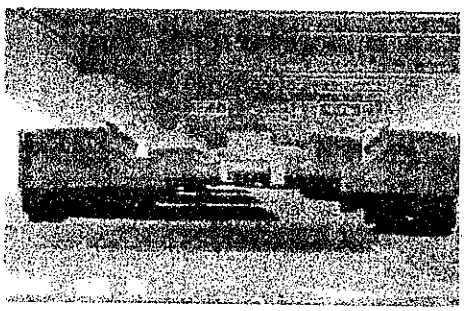


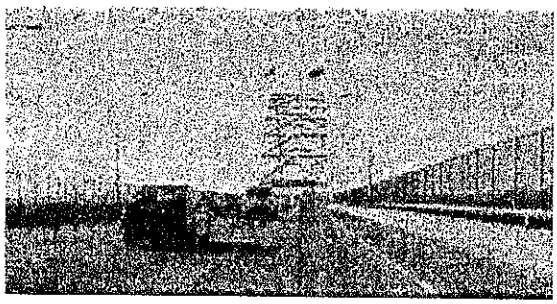
BI-State Industrial Corridor Reduces Congestion

Reduce Congestion on I-5 and connect our 20th century industrial areas with a 21st century transportation system. The proposed arterial would attract traffic off I-5 to a new BI-State Industrial Corridor. The "BIC" (BI-State Industrial Corridor) expressway built next to the BNSF railroad tracks uses mostly vacant and under utilized land. "BIC" will connect all of the major regional industrial areas on one continuous corridor. The current lack of direct access to I-5 from regional industrial areas cost businesses millions of dollars every year. The transportation infrastructure deficiencies cause congestion, pollution, and keeps businesses from locating or expanding in the Portland Metropolitan Area. The corridor's North end starts at Mill Plain and I-5 in Vancouver, has a Multi-modal (Train, truck, vehicle, light rail, bike and pedestrian) bridge from Vancouver to Jantzen Beach and Marine Dr. in Oregon. The corridor upgrades North Portland Rd. continuing to Columbia Blvd. Corridor. At the South end of the corridor is the North Willamette Bridge to HWY 30. The North Willamette Bridge can be reached by using Marine Dr. Corridor or Columbia Blvd. Corridor. "BIC" completes North, South, East and West existing transportation corridors and arterials.

BI-State Industrial Corridor

*Third bridge between Vancouver and Portland
*Port to Port connection
*Truck friendly direct access into regional industrial areas from I-5
*Reduced congestion on I-5 and in neighborhoods
*Light rail connection to Jantzen Beach and Downtown Vancouver.
*Bike and Pedestrian connection to Jantzen Beach, Vancouver and the 40-mile loop.
*No demolition of Jantzen Beach business district or residential area.
*Lessens air pollution and removers truck traffic from St. Johns, Kenton and Vancouver Neighborhoods.





Key Highlights

Road

*Port to Port connection

*Truck friendly direct access into regional industrial areas from I-5.

*Direct access from the NW industrial area, to Rivergate, Port of Portland and Vancouver's industrial area.

*Direct access to Marine Dr. Corridor, Columbia Corridor, St. Helen's HWY. and Mill Plain extension.

*Upgrading North Portland road to four lanes.

*Provides Columbia Corridor with a north I-5 freeway entrance.

*Provides I-5 with an exit from the north to the Columbia Corridor.

Rail

*A new heavy rail bridge across the Columbia River removes inadequacies in the current system.

*A new heavy rail bridge increases capacity for freight, commuter, and speedy(?) train.

Transit

*New bus routes into industrial areas, retail, and entertainment centers.

*Light rail connection to Jantzen Beach and downtown Vancouver.

*Commuter rail

Local connection

*Access to downtown Vancouver

*A second bridge to Jantzen Beach.

*Bike access from Vancouver to Jantzen Beach, Portland and the 40-mile loop.

*Pedestrian access from Vancouver to Jantzen Beach, Portland and the 40-mile loop.

Environment

*Removes truck traffic from St. Johns, Kenton and Vancouver Neighborhoods.

*Removes street level traffic from Vancouver's Mill Plain Extension

*Lessens air pollution in St. John's, Kenton, Vancouver and I-5 Neighborhoods.

*Built next to, not through, Jantzen Beach wet land.

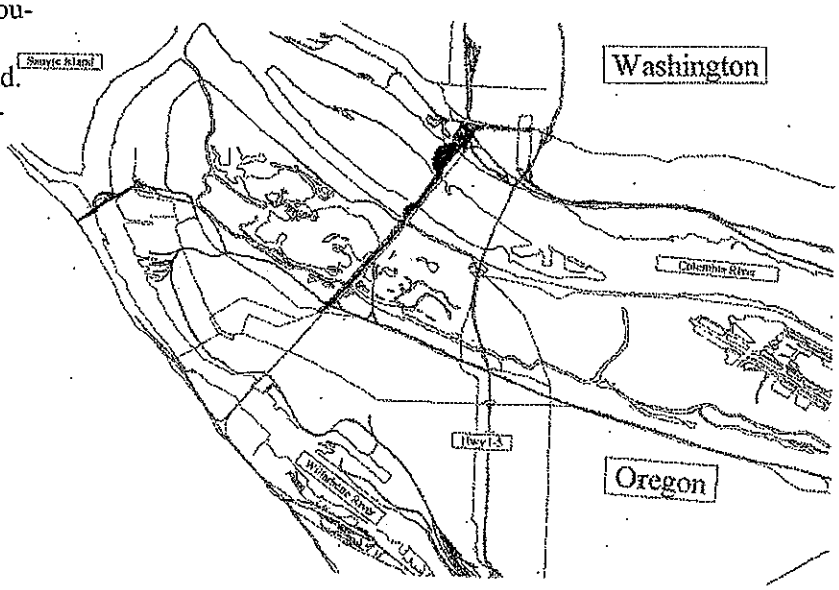
*No demolition of Jantzen Beach business' or residential areas.

*No encroachment to Historic Fort Vancouver.

*No construction or flaggers on I-5

Several studies have pointed out the damaging economic effects of congestion and pollution in the Portland Metropolitan Area. Transportation deficiencies affect the economy of our state and several nearby states. New businesses are not locating here, existing business are not expanding, and some are leaving. Thirty years ago, studies found that a new bridge needed to be built to the North peninsula industrial area to maintain the economic viability of the area. Not only has that bridge not been built but it isn't even in the planning stage. Oregon is losing a billion dollars or more annually from transportation congestion. It does not have the funding to build a transportation system to meet the needs of existing businesses, let alone build a stronger economy. The state of Oregon has decided to allow the creation of private-public partnerships to fund needed transport system improvements. With businesses losing more in congestion costs than the cost to correct the problems, private-public partnerships are a win-win process for the state of Oregon and for businesses

The Economic Transportation Alliance is proposing to raise funds to study, design and build the BI-State Industrial Corridor. This corridor includes multi-modal three tiered bridges with heavy rail on the bottom, truck friendly lanes on the second level and vehicle, light rail, bike and pedestrian lanes plus look outs on the top. The bridges across the Columbia and Willamette Rivers will join the region's major industrials areas on one continual corridor, using existing corridors and arterial connected by new statically placed bridges.



RC-14: New Corridor Crossing Near BNSF Rail Crossing

Staff Recommendation: Not Advance

Step A Question	Pass/ Fail	Reasons
Q1. Traffic	See note below[1]	Assuming construction of a new multi-lane tunnel under Mill Plain Blvd. and construction of high capacity interchange ramps between I-5 and Mill Plain Blvd., provides new Columbia River crossing that would serve up to 30,000 daily vehicles with most of these vehicles diverted from I-5. Some I-205 traffic shifts to I-5. By 2020, I-5 traffic demands still increase by at least 15% (by over 20,000 vehicles) over 2005 levels, resulting in 6-7 hours of afternoon/evening peak period congestion.
Q2. Transit	Fail	Does not improve transit service to identified I-5 corridor transit markets, nor does it improve the performance of the existing transit system within the I-5 Bridge Influence Area. Provides transit service along new corridor located approximately one mile west of I-5 to potential non-I-5 travel markets, but is out of direction for I-5 origins and destinations.
Q3. Freight	Pass	Results in 6-7 hours of afternoon/evening peak period congestion on I-5, however provides alternative route linking freight activity centers west of I-5.
Q4. Safety	Fail	Provides new Columbia River crossing located approximately one mile west of I-5 built to current safety standards, but does not address existing non-standard design features within the I-5 Bridge Influence Area. Traffic demands on I-5 within the Bridge Influence Area would increase by at least 15% by 2020 over 2005 conditions, resulting in 6-7 hours of afternoon/evening peak period congestion. Without added I-5 capacity and re-design of the Bridge Influence Area to meet standards, collisions would be expected to increase approximately 40 percent over 2005 conditions.
Q5. Bike/Ped	Fail	Provides new Columbia River crossing with modern bike/ped pathway(s). With a location approximately one mile west of I-5, it is out of direction for users with trip origins and destinations within the I-5 Bridge Influence Area.
Q6. Seismic	Fail	Provides new Columbia River crossing built to current seismic standards, but does not upgrade the existing I-5 bridges serving Interstate traffic and therefore the seismic risk of the I-5 bridges would not be reduced.

[1] May provide some potential benefit in congestion management relative to 2030 No Build conditions.

Note: A variation of this component was introduced at the 3-22-06 Task Force meeting. Staff evaluated the revised component and believes it fails for similar reasons as summarized above.

CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

OFFICE OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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November 29, 2006

Hal Dengerink, Co-Chair
Henry Hewitt, Co-Chair
Columbia River Crossing Task Force
700 Washington St., Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660

Subject: **Design Review Process for Columbia River Project**

Dear Co-Chairs Dengerink and Hewitt,

As Task Force members representing the two municipal jurisdictions on each side of the Columbia River along the Interstate 5 corridor, Mayor Pollard and I would appreciate your consideration and support of the Task Force to accelerate the urban design and aesthetics effort for the Columbia River Project. It is important and timely to immediately begin a concerted effort to address urban design and bridge architecture issues of the project.

It is our understanding that a draft work plan for "Architectural Guidelines and Aesthetic Assessment Framework" is being prepared to address vital project issues such as urban design and aesthetics. We are hopeful that this work would also include investigation of the development implications of upstream vs. downstream bridge locations, bridgehead area design impacts, multi-modal accessibility and user experience.

The urban design and bridge architecture aspects of the bridge present tremendous challenges and opportunities for Hayden Island and Downtown Vancouver livability and economic vitality.

For these reasons we suggest that the Task Force representatives from the two cities perform the lead role in a process in coordination with the CRC staff to investigate and prepare recommendations regarding bridge architecture and urban design.

We recommend that an Urban Design Working Group be established, in similar fashion to the Environmental Justice Working Group, to provide stakeholder involvement in this process. The work and outcomes of this process will be reported to the CRC Task Force.

We look forward to your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Sam Adams, Commissioner
City of Portland

Royce Pollard, Mayor
City of Vancouver

cc: Doug Ficco, Washington Department of Transportation
John Osborn, Oregon Department of Transportation

Columbia River CROSSING

Communications Summary
November 20, 2006 – January 14, 2007

What We're Hearing

The themes heard are a snapshot from this eight week period and do not represent a scientific survey. They are meant to provide Task Force members with a flavor of the comments the project is receiving. A more comprehensive summary of public comments received will be provided in advance of the February Task Force meeting in preparation for making a final recommendation on the choice of DEIS alternatives.

Comments were received from these sources:

Emails - 68
Short comment forms - 8
Meeting summaries - 14

River crossing generated about 46 comments with seven expressing support for a replacement I-5 bridge, one supporting a supplemental I-5 bridge, and two supporting a supplemental arterial bridge. One comment suggested retaining the existing bridges for tourism purposes. Many commentors advocated for river crossing components that have already been dismissed, especially a tunnel and a western bypass.

Transit generated about 42 comments with a greater number in support of light rail than other modes. Comments opposed to light rail included a mix of support for BRT or for "the most efficient option between BRT and LRT." There were also comments supporting transit options already dismissed, such as monorail and commuter rail.

Further transit comments included questions about what agency would operate a light rail system in Clark County, the impacts of closing Vancouver's 7th Street Transit Center, expansion of express bus service from Salmon Creek, the feasibility of a passenger rail corridor across the BNSF rail bridge.

Other comments included several questions about the right-of-way impacts of highway and transit alignments, highway design, cost/tolling, freight mobility, bike/pedestrian access, number of lanes, neighborhood impacts, and the historic nature of the existing bridge.

Others commented on the project's importance to economic growth, expressed disapproval of the current HOV lane on I-5 northbound in Oregon, and included a few statements on the need for more lanes than the existing bridges have.

Where We've Been

In the past four weeks, CRC staff has been to the following events. The number of people engaged is in parentheses.

Neighborhoods

Washington:

- Rosemere neighborhood group (13)
- Shumway Neighborhood Assn. (25)
- Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County (16)
- Esther Short Neighborhood (47)
- Arnada Neighborhood Assn. (25)

Oregon:

- Hayden Island Neighborhood Network (67)
- East Columbia Neigh. Assn. (8)

Other

- Division / Clinton Business Assn. (13)
- Kiwanis Club, Cascade Park, Vancouver (22)
- SW Washington Regional Transportation Council board (25)
- Metro Council (7)

- Kiwanis, Downtown Portland (25)
- Portland Planning Commission (8 – visited twice)
- Portland Transport Blog meeting (13)
- Cowlitz County elected officials briefing (RPACT) (20)
- Coalition for a Livable Future, CRC Forum (65)
- Jantzen Beach SuperCenter employees meet and greet (30 – visited twice)

The Totals

437 people reached in this eight week period.

4,186 people reached since March 1, 2006.

What else is happening?

Polling Results

CRC released the results of a public opinion phone survey conducted between Nov. 27 and Dec. 4. The poll surveyed 400 likely voters from Clark County and 400 from the tri-county Portland area. Questions touched on a variety of issues including congestion, transit choices, and tolling. Key findings include:

- People believe there are good reasons to take action to improve I-5;
- There is strong support for transit and highway improvements to address congestion on both sides of the river;
- People want a comprehensive and long term solution; and
- Opinions about tolling are mixed.

Outreach Leading up to Task Force's February Decision

The project team will continue to visit neighborhood and community groups to discuss the staff recommendation and gather feedback. From Nov. 20 to Jan. 14, staff have attended 19 events and are scheduled to attend an additional 21 events leading up to Task Force's decision meeting. Public comments will be shared with the Task Force in advance of their February 27th meeting.

Community and Environmental Justice Group (CEJG)

On January 13, CEJG members and CRC staff went on a bus tour of neighborhoods in the Bridge Influence Area. Group members led the tour of their communities to build understanding of areas potentially affected by the project.

Media Coverage

- The Portland Tribune – Dec. 4: Coverage of presentation to Metro on the Staff Recommendation.
- The Portland Tribune – Dec. 7: Story on the case made for tolling at Metro Council hearing.
- The Columbian – Dec. 14: Article on the results of CRC poll.
- The Oregonian – Dec. 14: Article on the results of CRC poll.
- The Oregonian – Dec. 15: Continued coverage of the CRC poll.
- The Columbian – Dec. 15: Opinion piece on Native American ancestral remains and the siting of a new bridge.
- The Columbian - Dec. 15: Editorial on light rail and the CRC poll.
- The Columbian – Dec. 16: Column about CRC media.
- The Portland Tribune – Dec. 22: Report on CRC public opinion survey results.
- The Portland Tribune – Dec. 26: Editorial in favor of tolling for CRC.
- The Columbian – Jan. 7: Editorial in support of CRC project and staff recommendation.
- Daily Journal of Commerce – Jan. 11: Potential effects of the CRC project on downtown Vancouver.

Outreach Materials

- The CRC **monthly email update** was sent to over 2,250 subscribers in December and again in January with a reminder about open houses.
- A CRC **traveling informational display** visited the Battle Ground City Building.
- Promotional flyers for the **January open houses** were produced and inserted into the January issues of Vancouver neighborhood newsletters.
- The fourth edition of CRC's **newsletter** *BridgeNews* is now available in four languages. More than 10,000 copies were mailed to the CRC mailing list.
- A variety of materials were created and distributed as a build up to CRC's January **open houses**. These include display ads, posters, and flyers. A total of 44,680 postcards were mailed to project area ZIP codes 98660, 97217, 98661 and 98663.
- A **storefront kiosk** of CRC information materials is planned to appear in the coming weeks at the Jantzen Beach SuperCenter indoor mall.

Submitting Public Comments

CRC encourages written comments to be submitted to the project office in these ways:

Email: feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org
Mail: 700 Washington St., Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660
Fax: 360.737.0294

If comments are received by **February 16th**, they will be included in a report submitted to the Task Force one week prior to their Feb. 27th decision meeting.

The public may also comment in person at the February Task Force meeting:

February 27th, 4:00 pm
Oregon Department of Transportation
123 NW Flanders Street
Portland

Public Outreach and Agency Meetings (Washington)

Focus on Staff Recommendation

AGENCIES	DATE	TIME	PLACE	ADDRESS
SW Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) board	12/5/06	4pm	RTC	1300 Franklin St., Vancouver
RPACT (Regional Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation), Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Counties	12/20/06	4pm	County Administration Building	207 N 4th Ave., Kelso
SW Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) board	1/2/07	4pm	RTC	1300 Franklin St., Vancouver
C-TRAN board of directors	1/9/07	5:15pm		
City Center Redevelopment Authority	1/18/07	12pm	Vancouver City Hall	210 E 13th St.
WSDOT Open House, Cowlitz County	1/18/07	4pm to 7pm	Cowlitz PUD room	961 12th Ave., Longview
Task Force meeting, Columbia River Crossing	1/23/07	4pm	WSDOT SW Regional building	11018 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver
SW Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) board	2/6/07	4pm	RTC	1300 Franklin St., Vancouver
WSDOT 2007 Design/Construction training sessions	2/8/07	1:30pm, 2:45pm	To Be Determined	
C-TRAN board of directors	2/13/07	5:15pm		
Federal Highway Administration - Western Federal Lands Division	2/14/07	10:30am	Federal Highway Administration Office	610 E. 5th St., Vancouver
WSDOT SR 520 Open House	2/22/07	4pm to 7pm	Battle Ground High School	300 W Main St,, Battle Ground
NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNTY GROUPS				
Kiwanis Club of Cascade Park	11/30/06	7:30am	IHOP	2900 SE 164th Ave.
Shumway Neighborhood Association	1/4/07	7pm	Vancouver School of Arts and Academics	3101 Main St.
Esther Short Neighborhood Association for downtown Vancouver (including Heart District Business Association, nearby residents of condominiums and apartments)	1/11/07	6:30pm to 8pm	Indoors farmer market by Esther Short Park	505 W. 8th St.

Updated 1/17/2007

Arnada Neighborhood Association	1/11/07	7pm	Vancouver Housing Authority	2500 Main St.
Cancelled due to inclement weather, will be rescheduled Neighborhood Traffic Safety Alliance (NTSA)	1/16/07	7pm	Glenwood Place Senior Living	5500 NE 82nd Ave, Vancouver
Cancelled due to inclement weather. Rescheduled Clark County location pending. **CRC Open House, Battle Ground**	1/17/07	5:30pm to 7:30pm	Battle Ground Police Department Training Room	507 SW 1st St., Battle Ground
Cancelled due to inclement weather, will be rescheduled Rotary Club, Vancouver	1/17/07	12pm	Red Lion Hotel at the Quay	100 Columbia St.
CRC Open House, Vancouver	1/20/07	9:30am to 12:30pm	Lincoln Elementary School	4200 NW Daniels St.
Rose Village Neighborhood Association	1/23/07	7pm	Memorial Lutheran Church,	2700 E 28th St.
Lions Club, Vancouver	2/1/07	6:30pm	Bill's Chicken and Steak House	2200 St. John's Blvd.
Shumway Neighborhood Association	2/1/07	7pm	Vancouver School of Arts and Academics	3101 Main St.
Neighborhood Associations Council of Clark County (NACCC)	2/12/07	7pm	Clark County Public Works Maintenance Center	4700 NE 78th, Vancouver
Retired Public Employees of Clark County	2/15/07	2 pm	Luepke Senior Center	1009 E. McLoughlin, Vancouver
Lincoln Neighborhood Association *(pending)*	2/19/07			
Kiwanis Club, Boulevard Chapter	2/20/07	7am	Elmer's Restaraunt	40 St. and Anderson
Carter Park Neighborhood Association *(pending)*	To Be Determined			
West Minnehaha Neighborhood Association *(pending)*	To Be Determined			

Public Outreach and Agency Meetings (Oregon)
Focus on Staff Recommendation

AGENCIES	DATE	TIME	PLACE	ADDRESS
Metro Council (work session)	12/5/06	2pm	Metro	600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland Planning Commission	12/12/06	2pm	City of Portland 1900 Building	1900 SW 4th Ave.
Portland Planning Commission	1/9/07	12:30pm	City of Portland 1900 Building	1900 SW 4th Ave.
NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNTY GROUPS				
Kiwanis, Downtown Portland	12/6/06	12pm	Benson Hotel	309 SW Broadway
Hayden Island Neigh. Network (HINooN)	12/12/06	7pm	Former Hayden Island Yacht Club	12050 N Jantzen Dr.
Jantzen Beach SuperCenter Meet and Greet	12/14/06	9am	Jantzen Beach Supercenter	1405 Jantzen Beach Ctr
Portland Transport Blog	12/14/06	6pm	Wynne's Bar	2002 SE Division St.
Coalition for a Livable Future – Community Forum	1/4/07	6:30pm	New Columbia Community Education Room	4625 N Trenton St.
East Columbia Neighborhood Association	1/9/07	7pm	East Columbia Bible Church	420 NE Marine Dr.
Jantzen Beach SuperCenter employees meet and greet	1/11/07	9am	Jantzen Beach Supercenter	1405 Jantzen Beach Ctr
Bridgeton Neighborhood Association	1/17/07	7pm	PAM at Columbia School	716 NE Marine Dr (at NE Bridgeton)
African-American Alliance Community Unity Breakfast (rescheduled from Jan. 18)	1/25/07	7:30am	Irvington Village ALF	420 NE Mason St.
CRC Open House, Portland	1/25/07	4:30pm to 7:30pm	Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs	4134 N Vancouver Ave.
CRC Open House, Hayden Island	1/30/07	6:30pm to 8:30pm	Former Hayden Island Yacht Club	12050 N Jantzen Dr.

Updated 1/17/2007

Piedmont Neighborhood Association	1/31/07	7:30pm	Holy Redeemer School, Clare Hall	127 N. Portland Blvd.
Hayden Island Neigh. Network (HINooN)	2/8/07	7pm	Former Hayden Island Yacht Club	12050 N Jantzen Dr.
Kenton Neighborhood Association	2/14/07	6:30pm	Kenton Firehouse	2209 N. Schofield
Bridgeton Neighborhood Association *(rescheduled from 1/17/2007)*	2/21/07	7pm	PAM at Columbia School	716 NE Marine Dr (at NE Bridgeton)

Columbia River CROSSING

Memorandum

January 16, 2007

TO: Columbia River Crossing Task Force Members

FROM: John Osborn, ODOT
Doug Ficco, WSDOT

SUBJECT: Letter from AORTA

COPY: n/a

The attached materials for your review include a recent letter from Jim Howell of the Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates. Included in his letter is a request that we provide the back-up information for our previously stated conclusions that his most recent proposal does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need. A summary of our analyses, also attached, is being provided concurrently to Mr. Howell and to members of the Task Force.

The memorandum from CRC project staff includes a lot of detail. If you do not have time to read it thoroughly, please note that it strongly confirms the conclusions from our November 27, 2006 memorandum that Mr. Howell's proposal does not address the project's Statement of Purpose and Need in at least four key areas: 1) growing travel demand and congestion, 2) impaired freight movement, 3) safety and vulnerability to incidents, and 4) seismic vulnerability.

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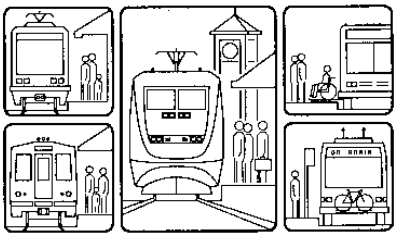
Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
AORTA • P. O. Box 2772 • Portland, Oregon 97208-2772
Also known as OreARP • Oregon Association of Railway Passengers



Memorandum

Date: **Jan. 2, 2007**
To: **Columbia River Crossing Task Force**
From: **Jim Howell**
Subject: **Response to Nov. 27, 2006 Memorandum from staff**

The Memorandum of November 27, 2006 to the Columbia River Task Force from Doug Ficco and John Osborn regarding Jim Howell's Proposal contains significant inaccuracies and omissions. In addition, the memo contains conclusions for which they provide no evidence. Last, but not least, going into the EIS with only two variants of the same high-cost freeway bridge proposal not only does a disservice to informed decision-making, but may not meet NEPA requirements for a range of alternatives.

The description of our proposed concept in the second paragraph indicated that the two-lane roadway extends south to Marine Drive. This is incorrect. We proposed in our revised version that it not connect to Marine Drive, but continue under Marine Drive to connect to Expo Road via a short road extension next to the Expo MAX Station. The last sentence in the fifth paragraph is also incorrect. We are <u>not</u> proposing the creation of "a new intersection just west of the interchange".

These obvious errors are a clear indication that the CRC staff failed to review our latest version with any diligence. Their review of our initial proposal was equally perfunctory.

Staff also failed to mention or, we suspect, analyze our proposed addition of a "truck only" bypass lane from Marine Drive and MLK Blvd. to I-5 north. We recommended that, unlike the general traffic lane, this lane should not be metered. This can be achieved by adding a ninth travel lane to the Portland Harbor Bridge by reassigning the lane currently used for bicycles and pedestrians. Bike and foot traffic would be relocated to the new bridge.

In addition, we recommended adding another lane to the SB off-ramp to Marine Drive and increasing the capacity of the Marine Drive Signal with additional turn lanes.

Our proposal **does** meet the project's Purpose and Needs.

<u>It will significantly reduce vehicle travel demand and congestion</u>. A new ten to twelve lane mega-bridge will do neither because it will induce more traffic, creating serious additional downstream congestion.

Our proposal extends light rail to Vancouver. It also replaces five congestion-causing ramps with two more efficient ones that will increase through capacity to match the rest of the

freeway. The light rail has far more capacity for commuters than I-5. What must occur to take advantage of this capacity is the development of an effective multi-destinational feeder bus system in Clark County and Portland's metro area. This type of feeder service has never been proposed or analyzed by any regional planning organization. An analysis of this option would have shown a significant difference in the outcome of the travel forecasting for this project. This type of system provides reduced travel time between many dispersed destinations, making public transit a more viable alternative for many more commuters.

Over time, the deployment of a truly multi-destinational transit system would also encourage the development of more compact and sustainable communities.

Travel forecasts are not always correct. The 1973 I-80 N Environmental Study for the proposed Mt. Hood Freeway stated that it would be carrying over 130,000 vehicles a day by 1990. The freeway was never built and, in 1982, TriMet established a grid bus system on the eastside that provided the essential feeder connections to the MAX Line when it opened in 1986, making it an instant success. Now, MAX carries more peak hour passengers than could be accommodated on an additional lane on I-84 and has the latent capacity of at least three more lanes in each direction.

Forecasting mistakes continue to be made, even with more sophisticated software and computers, because of similar wrong assumptions. If we have the wisdom to provide an effective bi-state transit system, the existing interstate bridges will never have to carry the currently projected 180,000 vehicles a day by 2020, just as the Mt. Hood Freeway never carried the 130,000 vehicles a day that were projected for 1990.

It will improve freight movement on I-5 by attracting commuter traffic to an effective public transit system. This leaves more space for trucks. In addition, the proposed ramp improvements mentioned above and in the original proposal improve truck access to and from I-5.

It will address many of the known safety issues associated with the river crossing and adjacent interchanges by removing the five substandard ramps and replacing them with two new ones. The staff memo states "…the proposed configuration of the freeway ramps on Hayden Island would exacerbate the congestion and safety problems for both the northbound and southbound weaving areas between Hayden Island and Marine Drive when compared with the existing ramp configuration." We strongly disagree with this statement and challenge staff to provide the engineering analysis of this configuration they used to arrive at this conclusion and submit it for an independent professional review. Furthermore, the staff should provide their analysis of the effect on safety and capacity of reducing the posted speed to 45 mph.

It will address the seismic vulnerability of the river crossing by providing new earthquake-resistant multi-modal bridges across the Columbia River and the Portland Harbor. The freeway bridges would not be changed or seismically upgraded but, in the event of a large earthquake, the local bridge with light rail would be a more effective river

crossing alternative. The freeway system in general would probably become dysfunctional because of its many vulnerable overpasses and bridges.

Furthermore, our proposal would replace the ancient, extremely vulnerable, railroad swing span with a new seismically stable lift span. Keeping the railroads in operation during a disaster is arguably more important to commerce than the freeway.

Although the memo did not mention bridge lifts, the prevailing assumption is that another bridge, with an opening span, as we have proposed, would be unacceptable because it would interfere with light rail operation.

Replacing the railroad bridge swing span with a lift span, aligned with the "hump" of the existing freeway bridges and the "hump" of a new multi-modal bridge, eliminates the need to open these bridges for all barge traffic at any time. The only time they would have to be opened is for the occasional high-mast sailboat or construction crane. Openings could be scheduled when light rail is not operating.

In addition, the visual impact of a high bridge over the railroad embankment in downtown Vancouver would be extreme. Views upriver to Mt. Hood would probably be blocked from the buildings in the redeveloping heart of Vancouver around Ester Short Park.

We posit that the Columbia River Crossing Task Force has a fiduciary responsibility to include, in the environmental impact phase of this project, an alternative with lower impacts and costs than replacement bridge alternatives alone. In addition, we question if having only two variants of the same new, high I-5 bridge proposal as the only build alternatives in the EIS will satisfy NEPA requirements. Whether the high capacity transit in the corridor is Light Rail or Bus Rapid Transit is a pretty minor issue, if both are built in the context of a parallel $1-2 billion freeway bridge.

The maxim "we can't build our way out of congestion" is becoming an accepted principle, at least among planners and decisionmakers in this region. Yet the only proposal on the table at the moment is an attempt to address congestion by building increased freeway capacity, in direct contradiction to this principle. The Multi-modal Bridge provides a viable alternative more in keeping with this principle and should be carried forward in the EIS.

Attachments:

- 11-27-06 Memo to: Columbia River Crossing Task Force From: Doug Ficco and John Osborn
- 11-29-06 Memo To: Columbia river Crossing Task Force From: Jim Howell
- Multi-modal Bridge Option Site Plan. Jim Howell, 11-08-06

Columbia River CROSSING

Memorandum

January 23, 2007

TO: Doug Ficco
John Osborn

FROM: CRC Project Staff

SUBJECT: Assessment of Jim Howell's Proposed Concept
(Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates)

After meeting with Jim Howell on November 8, 2006, where Mr. Howell presented AORTA's most recent proposed concept, Columbia River Crossing project staff spent two weeks evaluating the proposal. Your memorandum to the Task Force, dated November 27, 2006, outlined the various reasons project staff found that the proposed concept would fail to meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need.

This follow-up memorandum was prepared to provide even more detail on reasons CRC staff has concluded that AORTA's recent proposal would continue to fail to meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need and why no further action on his concept is justified. This memorandum is organized by the project's adopted Statement of Purpose and Need:

- Growing travel demand and congestion
- Impaired freight movement
- Limited public transit operation, connectivity, and reliability
- Safety and vulnerability to incidents
- Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Seismic vulnerability

The following information is attached to this memorandum for reference purposes:

- AORTA's proposed concept with annotations illustrating key deficiencies
- Our memorandum to the CRC Task Force dated November 27, 2006
- I-5 Columbia River Crossing Statement of Purpose and Need

As shown in the following pages, AORTA's most recent proposal, hereinafter simply referred to as "proposed concept", would fail to meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need in several key areas.

Growing Travel Demand and Congestion

Mr. Howell postulates that his most recent proposed concept "will significantly reduce vehicle travel demand and congestion." This claim is partially based on his assumption that the region's travel demand model is highly inaccurate and substantially overestimates future traffic volumes.

The Portland-Vancouver regional model is one of the most sophisticated travel demand forecasting tools in the nation. It is calibrated to existing conditions and considers adopted land use projections and planned transportation improvements in predicting future travel forecasts. This model has been used successfully for years in the planning of regional transit and highway projects.

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The travel demand model forecasts daily traffic volumes across the I-5 Bridge will increase from about 130,000 vehicles per day today to about 180,000 vehicles per day by the year 2030 if no investments are made in the I-5 Bridge Influence Area. Congestion levels at the bridge are predicted to increase from six hours today to more than 16 hours by 2030.

The proposed concept, primarily because it would provide an expanded light rail system, could reduce vehicle travel demand to some degree compared to a year 2030 No Build condition. However, because the proposed concept includes several highway features that would actually worsen traffic operations, it would be unable to significantly reduce traffic congestion (and therefore the proposed concept does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need).

This conclusion was reached by testing how traffic would operate under the proposed concept using existing traffic volumes. In other words, if the proposed concept results in worsened conditions compared to today's operations simply based on existing traffic volumes, the proposed concept would function even worse under increased travel demands expected on I-5 over the next 25 years.

For example, it was determined that the proposed concept would result in the following traffic impacts to **northbound** travel during the **afternoon peak period**:

- The removal of the northbound on-ramp from Hayden Island would shift the location of I-5's afternoon peak period bottleneck from the I-5 Bridge approach to the vicinity of Interstate Avenue on-ramp. The duration of northbound congestion would remain similar to the current level of congestion.
- Downstream of the relocated northbound bottleneck, the additional lane from Marine Drive would serve more weaving vehicles between Marine Drive and Hayden Island. Travel speeds in the weaving area would not improve, however. Due to the added capacity, the weaving area's level of service would improve from level of service "E" to "D" conditions.
- Due to the elimination of the on-ramp from Hayden Island to northbound I-5, a significant volume of Hayden Island traffic would first travel south on I-5 to Marine Drive, and then travel from Marine Drive to northbound I-5. As a result, Marine Drive's northbound on-ramp volume would increase from about 1,160 to 1,500 vehicles per hour. This 29 percent increase would exacerbate the number of vehicles queued on the ramp and throughout the Marine Drive interchange complex. Even considering proposed concept's increased local intersection capacities, Marine Drive's signalized ramp terminal intersection's volume-to-capacity ratio would increase from 0.69 to 0.94.

Under existing conditions, **southbound** traffic operations are acceptable along I-5 during the **afternoon peak period**. Under the proposed concept, the following traffic impacts would result:

- Due to the elimination of the on-ramp from Hayden Island to northbound I-5, Hayden Island's southbound on-ramp volume would increase from about 560 to 850 vehicles per hour, a 52 percent increase.
- The proposed SR 14/Downtown Vancouver on-ramp extension bridge would serve about 1,020 vehicles per hour. These vehicles would merge with the 850 vehicles originating from Hayden Island. Thus, a total of about 1,870 vehicles per hour would merge into one lane prior to merging onto southbound I-5.
- A single-lane on-ramp that transitions to two lanes at a metered signal generally cannot serve more than 1,400 vehicles per hour. Overcapacity conditions would result in back-ups along both the SR 14/ Downtown Vancouver on-ramp extension bridge and the Hayden Island on-ramp.
- Back-ups along the SR 14/Downtown Vancouver on-ramp extension bridge would impact local street operations in downtown Vancouver. Back-ups would also extend along westbound SR 14.
- Under the proposed concept, the Hayden Island ramp terminals would be moved north to North Hayden Island Drive. In addition, the arterial bridge would intersect with North Hayden Island Drive immediately to the west of the southbound on-ramp terminal. A number of closely spaced intersections would result, creating substandard conditions and affecting traffic capacity and local operations on Hayden Island. Thus significant vehicular queuing would result.

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- The existing I-5 southbound weaving segment between Hayden Island and Marine Drive is already substandard. Under the proposed concept, the weaving segment would be reduced by approximately 300 feet.
- Due to the elimination of the on-ramp from Hayden Island to northbound I-5, the volume of vehicles weaving on southbound I-5 would increase from about 1,380 to 2,550 vehicles per hour, an 85 percent increase.
- The increased weaving volume under the proposed concept would introduce turbulence to southbound I-5. The weaving area's level of service would degrade from "D" to "E" conditions.
- Due to the constrained weaving conditions, resulting travel speeds along southbound I-5 would decrease by 10 to 15 mph compared to existing conditions.
- Also, due to the elimination of the on-ramp from Hayden Island to northbound I-5, traffic volumes to the southbound off-ramp to Marine Drive would increase from about 830 to 1,350 vehicles per hour. This 63 percent increase would extend vehicular queuing along the off-ramp, even considering the proposed concept's addition of a second lane along the ramp, as well as ramp terminal intersection improvements. Marine Drive's signalized ramp terminal intersection's volume-to-capacity ratio would increase from 0.69 to 0.94.

The proposed concept would result in the following traffic impacts to **southbound** travel during the **morning peak period**:

- Relocation of the SR 14/Downtown Vancouver on-ramp's merge from north of the Columbia River to a combined merge with Hayden Island south of the Columbia River creates a new southbound bottleneck at the proposed SR 14/Downtown Vancouver/Hayden Island merging area.
- The duration of southbound congestion would increase from two hours today to more than four hours as a result of the new bottleneck.
- The number of vehicles weaving on southbound I-5 between the Hayden Island on-ramp and the Marine Drive off-ramp would increase from about 1,550 to 2,290 vehicles per hour, a 48 percent increase. The weaving area's level of service would degrade from level of service "E" to level of service "F" conditions.
- Also, due to the elimination of the on-ramp from Hayden Island to northbound I-5, traffic volumes to the southbound off-ramp to Marine Drive would increase from about 1,180 to 1,280 vehicles per hour, an eight percent increase.

Compared to existing conditions, no substantial traffic operational changes would be expected for **northbound** travel during the **morning peak period** under the proposed concept.

It should be reiterated that the above results are based upon application of existing traffic volumes. The analysis proves that the proposed concept would result in overall worsened conditions compared to today's operations. The proposed concept would function even worse under increased travel demand over the next 25 years.

Therefore, the proposed concept does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need related to growing travel demand and congestion.

Impaired Freight Movement

The proposed concept would provide a truck only ramp lane from Marine Drive to northbound I-5. This unmetered lane would improve mobility for trucks once they enter the on-ramp from the local street system. However, as discussed above, under the proposed concept the Marine Drive interchange complex would operate at higher congestion levels than are currently experienced, even with local intersection modifications he suggested. Overall truck mobility to and through the interchange complex would be substantially degraded compared to current conditions.

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In addition, due to the general traffic impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed concept as described in the previous section, freight movements would continue to be significantly impaired.

Considering that freight volumes moved by truck to and from the area are expected to more than double over the next 25 years and that vehicle-hours of delay for trucks is estimated to increase by more than 90 percent, freight mobility would be even further affected under the proposed concept.

Therefore, the proposed concept does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need related to impaired freight movement.

Limited Public Transit Operation, Connectivity and Reliability

The proposed concept would extend light rail from the Expo MAX Station to downtown Vancouver. Stations would be provided at Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver. The light rail line would cross the Columbia River on a new arterial bridge that includes a lift span.

Provision of such a high capacity transit system, supplemented with an extensive feeder bus system as proposed, would provide increased public transportation opportunities over existing conditions.

To minimize the occurrence of bridge lifts, on both the I-5 Interstate Bridge as well as on a proposed multimodal bridge, the downstream railroad bridge swing span would be replaced with a lift span, aligned with the "hump" of Interstate Bridge and the new multi-modal bridge. According to Mr. Howell, the only time the lift spans of either bridge would have to be raised is when an occasional high-mast sailboat or construction crane traveled beneath the bridges and that such openings could be scheduled when light rail is not operating.

In that case, bridge openings would only be allowed very late at night or very early in the morning. If navigational traffic needed a bridge lift during other periods, however, it is likely that such lifts would cause severe disruption to light rail transit operations by delaying trains, randomly interrupting schedules, impairing corridor signal prioritization and impeding the operator's ability to coordinate signalization at the Steel Bridge in Portland. These effects would not just impact the extended MAX Yellow Line, but would have cascading impacts to other light rail lines and on traffic operations.

In addition, each bridge lift would delay passengers, including those making time-sensitive trips such as commuters. According to a recent system-wide survey, transit passengers view schedule reliability as one of the top public transit attributes.

Safety and Vulnerability to Incidents

A comprehensive analysis of crashes reported along I-5 and its ramps over a five-year period shows that there is a strong correlation between the presence of substandard design features and the frequency and type of collisions.

Under the proposed concept, three existing substandard features would be eliminated by the following actions:

- Elimination of Hayden Island's on-ramp to northbound I-5: This action would eliminate a substandard acceleration ramp length.
- Elimination of Hayden Island's off-ramp from southbound I-5: This action would eliminate a substandard deceleration ramp length.
- Relocation of SR 14's westbound on-ramp to southbound I-5: This action would eliminate a substandard acceleration ramp length.

The following 11 new or worsened substandard design and safety features would result under the proposed concept:

- Relocation of SR 14's westbound on-ramp to southbound I-5, with Hayden Island on-ramp:

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  - This action would reduce the existing substandard weaving length between Hayden Island and Marine Drive by approximately 300 feet.
  - It would introduce a substandard length between the new Hayden Island and SR 14 merge point and the combined merge with southbound I-5. The proposed distance is 450 feet but the minimum standard for successive on-ramps is 800 feet.
  - The SR 14/Downtown Vancouver connector ramp, proposed to provide one-lane, should be two lanes to meet design guidelines for its length.

- Modification of Marine Drive's off-ramp from southbound I-5:
  - This action would decrease the existing substandard deceleration distance by approximately 435 feet.
  - It would reduce the clear zone distance between the traveled way and the west abutment of the Marine Drive overpass.

- Modification of Marine Drive's on-ramp to northbound I-5:
  - This action would violate lane balance standards needed to provide continuity in traffic flow.
  - Maintains the existing substandard weaving length, but when additional lanes are added as proposed, design standards require extending the weaving length.
  - Results in substandard recovery distance beyond the proposed lane drop.

- Provision of new arterial roadway across the North Portland Harbor:
  - The roadway curves shown on the proposed concept would enable a 20 mph design speed, likely translating into a roadway with a 15 mph posted speed. This is inconsistent with arterial roadway standards.

- Provision of a new arterial roadway across the Columbia River:
  - The roadway curves proposed on the proposed concept would enable a 20 mph design speed, likely translating into a roadway with a 15 mph posted speed. This is inconsistent with arterial roadway standards.
  - The intersection of the arterial roadway with North Hayden Island Drive would be located about 250 feet west of the relocated ramp terminal to southbound I-5. This violates minimum design standards that require at least 1,320 feet between ramp terminals and adjacent intersections.

Since the proposed concept does not substantially address existing substandard features, but in fact introduces new substandard design elements, it is unlikely that the proposed concept design would improve safety over existing conditions. The crash rate for the I-5 Bridge Influence Area is currently over twice as high as the average rate experienced on similar urban freeways in the Northwest. Projections show that without eliminating most of the existing substandard features and providing additional mainline and ramp capacity in the Bridge Influence Area, the number of crashes would increase by approximately 70 percent by the year 2020.

The comprehensive crash analysis for I-5 showed that crashes generally occur in proportion to prevailing traffic volumes, except during periods of congestion. During congested periods, when traffic volumes are near or at capacity conditions and travel speeds are relatively low, the number of crashes increases substantially.

During the morning peak period, traffic congestion and vehicular crashes in the Bridge Influence Area are prevalent along southbound I-5's approach to the Interstate Bridge. The average prevailing travel speed during the three-hour peak period is 36 mph.

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During the afternoon peak period, traffic congestion and vehicular crashes are prevalent along northbound I-5's approach to the Interstate Bridge. The average prevailing travel speed during the four-hour peak period is 19 mph.

The existing posted speed limit on I-5 in the vicinity of the Interstate Bridge is 50 mph.

A Federal Highway Administration study on the effects of raising and lowering speed limits on highways found that arbitrarily lowering speed limits has a minor effect on vehicle speeds. The study found that crashes at the study's 58 experimental sites where speed limits were lowered actually increased by 5.4 percent. According to the study, speed limit compliance decreases when speed limits are lowered.

Based on the above findings, the proposed concept's plan to reduce the posted speed of I-5 to 45 mph would likely have minimal benefits to safety.

For the above reasons, the proposed concept does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need related to safety and vulnerability to incidents.

Substandard Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

According to the proposed concept, a continuous pedestrian and bicycle pathway would be provided between downtown Vancouver, Hayden Island, the Marine Drive Trail, and the Expo MAX station. CRC staff agrees that if carefully designed, the multi-use pathway and its connections could potentially meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need.

Seismic Vulnerability

Recent studies indicate that the existing Interstate Bridges are vulnerable to failure in a significant seismic event and the cost for retrofitting the bridges to meet "no-collapse" or "serviceability" criteria range from $125 million to $265 million. These retrofit costs are high compared to available funding levels and therefore would be a low priority for implementation by either the Oregon Department of Transportation or the Washington Department of Transportation. Because of the age and condition of the existing bridges, replacement would be a better option than retrofitting the existing structures.

The proposed concept would not seismically retrofit the existing I-5 bridges, but would instead provide earthquake-resistant multimodal bridges across the Columbia River and North Portland Harbor. The bridges carrying I-5 traffic would continue to be vulnerable in the event of a significant seismic event.

Therefore, the proposed concept does not meet the project's Statement of Purpose and Need related to seismic vulnerability of the existing Interstate Bridges.

Attachments:

- AORTA's proposed concept with annotations illustrating key deficiencies
- Our memorandum to the CRC Task Force dated November 27, 2006
- I-5 Columbia River Crossing Statement of Purpose and Need

DP: bh
Cc: Project Controls

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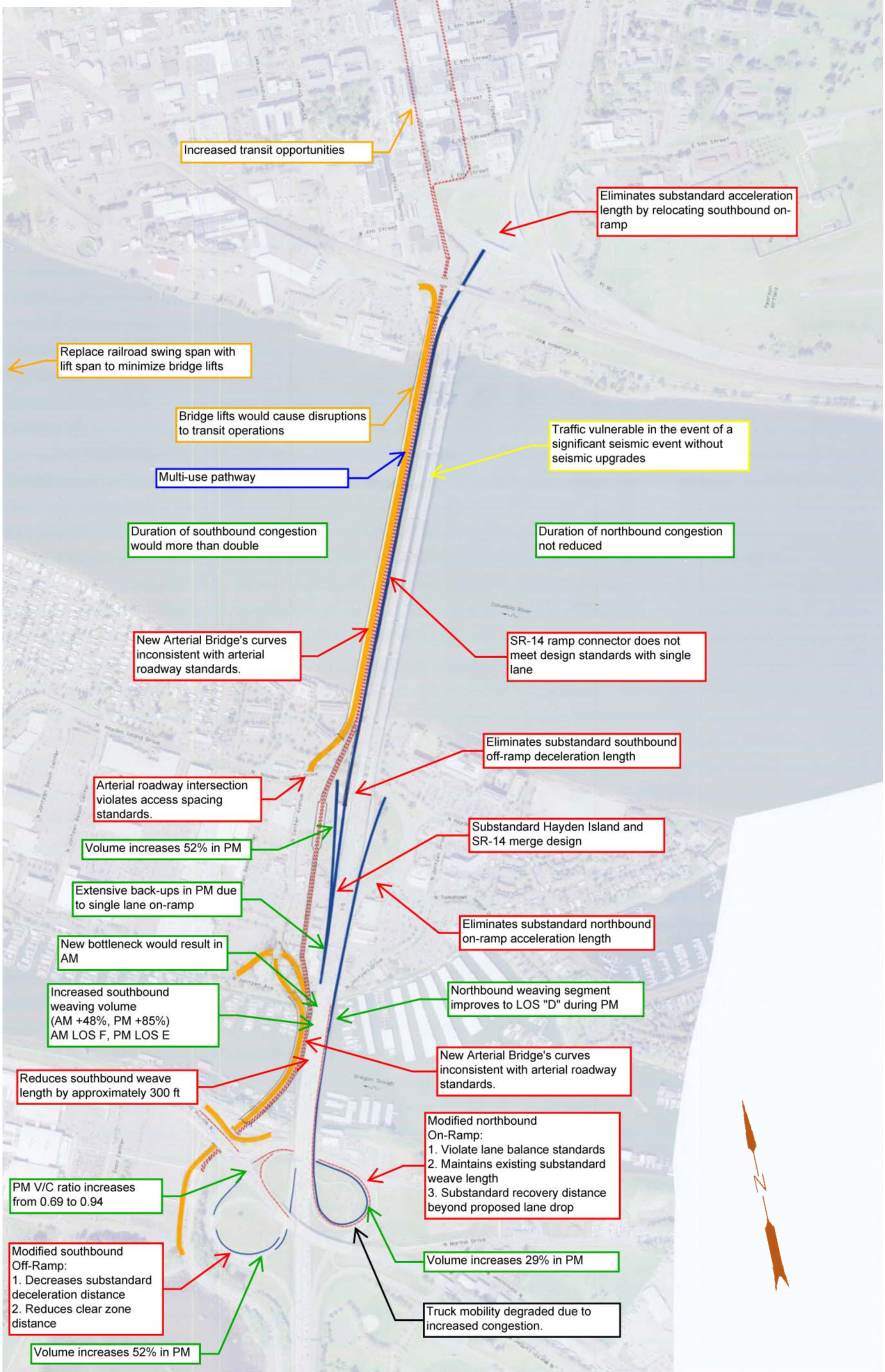
Columbia River CROSSING

Assesment of AORTA's Proposed 11/08/2006 Concept

LEGEND:

- Growing travel demand and congestion
- Impaired freight movement
- Limited public transit operation, connectivity, and reliability
- Safety and vulnerability to incidents
- Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Seismic vulnerability

*Background image provided by Jim Howell on 11/08/2006



January 23, 2007

Columbia River CROSSING

Memorandum

November 27, 2006

TO: Columbia River Crossing Task Force

FROM: Doug Ficco
John Osborn

SUBJECT: Jim Howell Proposal

COPY:

Following up on the discussion at the October 25 Task Force meeting, we have taken another look at the river crossing component that was identified as RC-22 in our component screening process *(*see *Draft Components Step A Screening Report, March 22, 2006)*. To be certain that we fully understood the author's intent, we invited Jim Howell to review his proposal with the project team as well as interested Task Force members.

A copy of the proposed concept is attached, including minor changes recently incorporated. In brief, the concept includes a new bridge just west of the existing bridges with two LRT tracks, a two-lane roadway linking Vancouver and Hayden Island (and extending south to Marine Drive), a new southbound on-ramp to I-5 from SR-14 that would bring the traffic onto the freeway on Hayden Island, and a bicycle/pedestrian pathway. The new bridge would be low-level and would include a lift span. Other elements of the concept would include an LRT loop through downtown Vancouver, and replacing the opening on the downstream railroad bridge with a new opening closer to the center of the river.

The concept is intended to provide a relatively low-cost crossing, and in that spirit includes some creative, although non-standard, elements (some of which would not meet federal and state design requirements). Although the concept has been updated since the earlier screening, the conclusions reached during the component screening phase are still relevant. The concept fails to meet the project Purpose and Need in several key respects. The concept does not:

- significantly reduce travel demand or congestion;
- improve freight movement on I-5; or
- address many of the known safety issues associated with the river crossing and the adjacent interchanges.

Furthermore, with I-5 traffic remaining on the existing bridges, the seismic vulnerability of the river crossing would not be addressed.

Our review of the concept also included a more detailed analysis of traffic operations and a comparison of the concept to the No-Build Alternative and to Alternative 3—the arterial/LRT crossing carried forward as part of the initial 12 alternatives. The concept would not significantly improve the daily hours of congestion when compared to the No-Build or Arterial alternatives, and would not improve travel speeds crossing the river. Moreover, the proposed configuration of the freeway ramps on Hayden Island would exacerbate the congestion and safety problems for both the northbound and southbound weaving areas between Hayden Island and Marine Drive when compared to the existing ramp configurations. It would also add traffic volumes to the currently congested Marine Drive interchange while reducing its functional capacity by creating a new intersection just west of the interchange.

CRC staff recommends that the prior conclusions and actions by the Task Force (and others) should stand, and that no further action on this concept is warranted.

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Nov. 23, 2006

What a Comprehensive Columbia Crossing package built around a new Multi-modal Bridge would do.(See attached illustration)

The Multi-Modal Bridge

- Would provide SR14 and downtown Vancouver an extended approach lane to a southbound I-5 on-ramp at Hayden Island.
- Would carry light rail
- Would accommodate local traffic with two arterial lanes.
- Would provide a safe bicycle and pedestrian crossing.
- Would provide clearance for safe barge movements without lifts.
- Would have either a vertical lift or bascule opening span aligned with the existing Green Bridges for the passage of an occasional tall vessel.
- Would have a low profile that would not interfere with air traffic.
- Would not be a visual eyesore in downtown Vancouver because it would not have to fly over the railroad embankment.
- Would be built to withstand a major seismic event.

The Freeway

- Would reduce traffic turbulence and improve safety on the freeway in the bridge area by eliminating five short dysfunctional ramps and replacing them with two long ramps on Hayden Island.
- Would increase freeway capacity by allowing the existing six lanes on the Green Bridges to function as through lanes.

- Would provide greater capacity and safety by reducing the posted speed limit in the entire influence area to 45 MPH.

- Would provide additional lanes in the Marine Drive Interchange.

- Would provide an exclusive unrestricted northbound queue-jump lane to I-5 for trucks coming from Marine Drive and MLK Blvd.

- Would provide Hayden Island direct access to I-5 south and access to I-5 north through an improved Hayden Island Interchange.

- Would greatly decrease the need to open the lift spans.

- Would retain the existing shoulders on the Green Bridges which is similar to those on the I-5 Marquam Bridge.

- Would retain the existing vertical grades which are similar to those on the I-5 Marquam Bridge. However the elimination of the SR14 and downtown on-ramp from the Washington side coupled with a slower posted freeway speed would greatly reduce traffic incidents in this area.

- Would provide a new bridge for local traffic and transit that would meet modern seismic standards. In the event of the "big one", I-5 through Portland and Vancouver would probably not be passable because many overpasses and other freeway structures would probably collapse.

Light Rail

- Would provide light rail (Yellow Line) access to Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver.

- Would provide the opportunity to integrate the Hayden Island station into a creative transit oriented development.

- Would provide frequent, high capacity, reliable and economical bi-state transit service that could seamlessly interface with the CTRAN bus system in downtown Vancouver.

- Would extend light rail only to downtown Vancouver but would not preclude the opportunity to extend it further into Clark County in the future.

Local Roads

- Would provide a two lane local road between Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver over the new Multi-modal Columbia River Bridge.

- Would connect Hayden Island Drive and N. Center Avenue on Hayden Island to Columbia Street in downtown Vancouver.

- Would provide Hayden Island with a local road connection south, over a new Portland Harbor Bridge that would carry two lanes of traffic, light rail, bikes and pedestrians.

- Would provide a logical connection to Denver Avenue via a Marine Drive underpass, a new road adjacent to the light rail station and Expo Road.

- Would allow access to Marine Drive via N. Force Avenue. A more direct access could be constructed through the Expo Center's parking lot.

The Railroad Bridge

- Would replace the old short unsafe swing-span on the Railroad Bridge with a longer and better-located lift span.

- Would reduce bridge opening time, thus increase rail capacity.

- Would be one of many infrastructure improvements in this rail corridor needed to provide more efficient freight and passenger service that ultimately would reduce traffic demand on I-5.

Navigation

- Would allow tug and barge tows to make a straight and safe maneuver under the "hump" to the new railroad bridge lift span during most river conditions.

- Would require highway bridge lifts only for the movement of an occasional tall vessel that could be scheduled during off peak hours.

Bicycles and Pedestrians

- Would provide wide and safe bike and pedestrian lanes separated from vehicular traffic.

- Would replace the bike/ped. Lane on the existing Portland Harbor Freeway Bridge with one on the new Multi-modal Portland Harbor Bridge.

- Would provide an uninterrupted bicycle and pedestrian connection between downtown Vancouver, the Marine Drive Trail and the Expo MAX Station.

Costs

- Would cost a fraction of a new freeway bridge and approaches and includes practical solutions to transit, rail, navigation and local traffic.

- Would allow for multiple funding sources. (Federal, state and local highway, transit, railroad and navigational programs.)

Jim Howell
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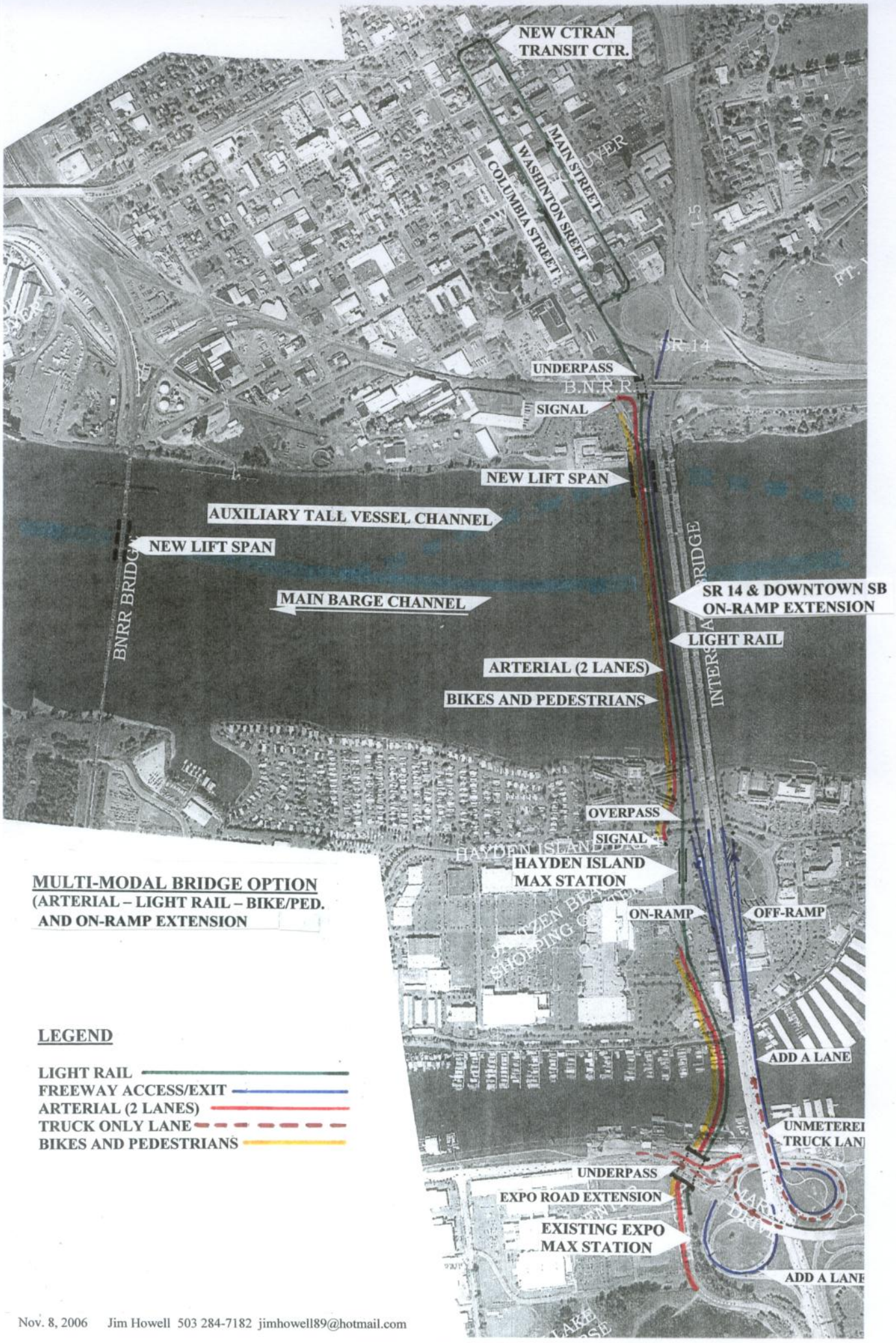
503-284-7182
jimhowell89@hotmail.com



MULTI-MODAL BRIDGE OPTION
(ARTERIAL – LIGHT RAIL – BIKE/PED. AND ON-RAMP EXTENSION

LEGEND

- LIGHT RAIL
- FREEWAY ACCESS/EXIT
- ARTERIAL (2 LANES)
- TRUCK ONLY LANE
- BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS

Nov. 8, 2006 Jim Howell 503 284-7182 jimhowell89@hotmail.com

Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
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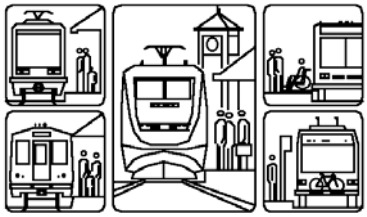

Nov. 29, 2006

To: The Columbia River Crossing Task Force
From: Jim Howell, Director
Re: CRC Environmental Impact Study

An alternative that retains the existing bridges, in addition to the mandatory No Build Alternative, must be studied in the Environmental Impact phase of this project.

AORTA has shown how such an alternative can address all of the significant problems associated with the current infrastructure. Our first proposal made almost three years ago in February 2004 is still viable with some modifications.

Our simple and practical proposal has been summarily rejected by this project team without even the courtesy of taking the time to understand it, as was evidenced by the inaccurate statements made by the consultant at the last Task Force meeting.

Briefly, our proposal would:

1. Build a Multi-modal Bridge with a lift span, immediately downstream from the existing bridges, that would carry an extended on-ramp from SR-14 and downtown Vancouver separated from two local traffic lanes, bikes and pedestrians by two light rail tracks.
2. Remove five existing dysfunctional ramps in the bridge area and replace them with two long ones on Hayden Island.
3. Build a Portland Harbor Bridge for light rail, local traffic, bikes and pedestrians.
4. Provide a local road connection from the Portland Harbor Bridge to Expo Road, under Marine Drive and through the Expo Center parking lot next to the MAX Station.
5. Provide a new unrestricted truck-only northbound I-5 access lane from Marine Drive and MLK Blvd.

I-5 Columbia River Crossing
Statement of Purpose and Need

Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve Interstate 5 corridor mobility by addressing present and future travel demand and mobility needs in the Columbia River crossing Bridge Influence Area (BIA). The BIA extends from approximately Columbia Boulevard in the south to SR 500 in the north. Relative to the No-build alternative, the proposed action is intended to achieve the following objectives: a) improve travel safety and traffic operations on the Interstate 5 crossing's bridges and associated interchanges; b) improve connectivity, reliability, travel times and operations of public transportation modal alternatives in the BIA; c) improve highway freight mobility and address interstate travel and commerce needs in the BIA; and d) improve the Interstate 5 river crossing's structural integrity.

Project Need

The specific needs to be addressed by the proposed action include:

- **Growing Travel Demand and Congestion:** Existing travel demand exceeds capacity in the I-5 Columbia River crossing and associated interchanges. This corridor experiences heavy congestion and delay lasting 2 to 5 hours during both the morning and afternoon peak travel periods and when traffic accidents, vehicle breakdowns, or bridge-lifts occur. Due to excess travel demand and congestion in the I-5 bridge corridor, many trips take the longer, alternative I-205 route across the river. Spillover traffic from I-5 onto parallel arterials such as Martin Luther King Boulevard. and Interstate Avenue increases local congestion. The two crossings currently carry over 260,000 trips across the Columbia River daily. Daily traffic demand over the I-5 crossing is projected to increase by 40 percent during the next 20 years, with stop-and-go conditions increasing to at least 10 to 12 hours each day if no improvements are made.

- **Impaired freight movement:** I-5 is part of the National Truck Network, and the most important freight freeway on the West Coast linking international, national and regional markets in Canada, Mexico and the Pacific Rim with destinations throughout the western United States. In the center of the project area, I-5 intersects with the Columbia River's deep water shipping and barging as well as two river-level, transcontinental rail lines. The I-5 crossing provides direct and important highway connection to the Port of Vancouver and Port of Portland facilities located on the Columbia River as well as the majority of the area's freight consolidation facilities and distribution terminals. Freight volumes moved by truck to and from the area are projected to more than double over the next 25 years. Vehicle-hours of delay on truck routes in the Portland-Vancouver area are projected to increase by more than

90 percent over the next 20 years. Growing demand and congestion will result in increasing delay, costs and uncertainty for all businesses that rely on this corridor for freight movement.

- **Limited public transportation operation, connectivity and reliability:** Due to limited public transportation options, a number of transportation markets are not well served. The key transit markets include trips between the Portland Central City and the City of Vancouver and Clark County, trips between North/Northeast Portland and the City of Vancouver and Clark County, and trips connecting the City of Vancouver and Clark County with the regional transit system in Oregon. Current congestion in the corridor adversely impacts public transportation service reliability and travel speed. Southbound bus travel times across the bridge are currently up to three times longer during parts of the am peak compared to off peak. Travel times for public transit using general purpose lanes on I-5 in the bridge influence area are expected to increase substantially by 2030.

- **Safety and Vulnerability to Incidents:** The I-5 river crossing and its approach-sections experience crash rates nearly 2.5 times higher than statewide averages for comparable facilities. Incident evaluations generally attribute these crashes to traffic congestion and weaving movements associated with closely spaced interchanges. Without breakdown lanes or shoulders, even minor traffic accidents or stalls cause severe delay or more serious accidents.

- **Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities:** The bike/pedestrian lanes on the I-5 Columbia River bridges are 6 to 8 feet wide, narrower than the 10-foot standard, and are located extremely close to traffic lanes thus impacting safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Direct pedestrian and bicycle connectivity are poor in the BIA.

- **Seismic vulnerability:** The existing I-5 bridges are located in a seismically active zone. They do not meet current seismic standards and are vulnerable to failure in an earthquake.

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City of VANCOUVER WASHINGTON

www.cityofvancouver.us

January 19, 2007

Dr. Hal Dengerink, Co-Chair
Mr. Henry Hewitt, Co-Chair
Columbia River Task Force
700 Washington Street, Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660

Subject: City's position on the I-5 Interstate Bridge

Dear Dr. Dengerink and Mr. Hewitt:

The decision to improve mobility within the I-5 corridor as specifically defined within the Bridge Influence Area (BIA) will have a profound effect on America's Vancouver. There exist two primary areas of focus that deserve comment. I would like to address each in this correspondence. The first is the bridge recommendations currently proposed by the Columbia River Crossing staff, acted on by the CRC Task Force, and the second is the remaining improvements to that portion of I-5 north of the BIA needed to implement improvements to the corridor.

A great amount of time was exhausted developing the Purpose and Need for this project and moving it forward to adoption by the CRC Task Force. Thus, alternatives destined to advance into the EIS phase of this project should strive to meet these criteria, and in our opinion minimize its impact on and add to the quality of life in the City of Vancouver. Alternatives not meeting this test should be dropped from the process, thus allowing a full review and analysis of facts and issues on the remaining alternatives.

The city fully supports the recommendation of the CRC staff as proposed and adopted by the CRC Task Force at their November 29th. 2006 meeting. While much work is needed to further investigate actual bridge alignments, the decision to drop from further consideration additional study on retaining the existing I-5 bridges and inclusion of a supplemental bridge as a solution is highly appropriate. The reasons for this position follow.

- findings from the seismic investigations;
- significant impacts to a future transit operation on the existing I-5 bridges;
- the structural integrity of the existing I-5 bridges;
- I-5 bridges' ability to be consistent with the "Purpose and Need" of the project; and,
- most importantly its potential significant impact upon our downtown.

The city rejects any further consideration of any proposal that would place unwarranted travel through our downtown. The City and many private investors are investing hundreds of millions of dollars to create a renaissance along the waterfront and to enhance its economic vitality. An arterial connection across the Columbia River would only serve as a by-pass to travel along I-5, with few trips destined within and to the downtown. This would consume valuable capacity and contribute to future safety problems. Downtown capacity must be preserved for future redevelopment and contribute to the accessibility of businesses and other recreational amenities.

Keeping the existing I-5 bridges and constructing an additional supplemental bridge requires determining the location for a "landing" of the new bridge. This "landing" would consume considerable waterfront land that would otherwise be used for economic development, thus reducing its precious limited supply. Additionally, connections to existing traffic corridors could create challenges and have negative impacts to circulation within our downtown.

A very significant transportation investment is being contemplated. Any investment made to the transportation system should include a transit component that will adequately serve the greater community for many, many years. Transit on the existing I-5 bridges would be subjected to ongoing bridge lifts, impacting transit operations and reliability. The United States Coast Guard has indicated that, if a supplemental bridge was constructed that was used for something other than interstate travel, bridge lifts would be deregulated. Thus, more frequent lifts should be expected. This would further jeopardize the reliability of the transit system. This is totally unacceptable.

The City of Vancouver has the opportunity to connect to and take advantage of an existing 44 mile system of efficient and reliable fixed rail transit system. Additionally, this system links to other systems within downtown Portland and beyond. It is acknowledged that this system by itself will not solve mobility needs through the corridor; however, it provides an effective alternative to the automobile which in turn and combined with other mobility improvements contributes to a more effective movement of people, freight and goods through the Portland/Vancouver region. Let us not forget that we are making a 50 to 100 year decision.

Maintenance of the existing I-5 Bridges would be of concern. If a new bridge of any kind was constructed and the existing bridges remained, the question of who would be ultimately responsible for operations and maintenance remains. The city has no interest in assuming any portion of this liability.

The alternatives for the alignment of the I-5 freeway north of the bridge landing and through the downtown must be carefully considered. Our strong preferences are:

- constructing a "cap" over the freeway beginning at the touch down point of the freeway to the north side of Evergreen;
- eliminating consideration of the high ramps potentially connecting I-5 and SR-14; and
- confining all improvements within the existing I-5 rights-of-way.

We are in receipt of the letter from the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust, dated November 21, 2006, that declares the Trust's opposition to any alignment that would physically impact the Post Hospital building in any way. Please be advised that while the Reserve Trust functions as the city's management and development agent for city-owned properties within the Reserve, the Trust will not be the property owner nor a signer on the EIS. The city is the legal lessee and will be the owner of the affected property within the Reserve when the I-5 improvements are constructed. The Reserve Trust's letter does not represent the city's position.

We request that the CRC staff team and the Task Force give serious consideration to the above. The City of Vancouver remains completely committed to the process and will work collaboratively to assure that a final product will enhance our city while fulfilling the goals established by the purpose and need for the project, as defined.

Sincerely,

ROYCE E. POLLARD
Mayor
America's Vancouver

cc: Vancouver City Council