

MEETING: Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Task Force
DATE: June 24, 2008, 4:00pm – 8:00pm
LOCATION: Washington State Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT), 11018 NE 51st Circle, Vancouver WA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Adams	Sam	City of Portland
Armbruster	Grant	Portland Business Alliance
Haynes	Marion	Alternate for Rich Brown, Bank of America
Burkholder	Rex	Metro
Byrd	Bob	Identity Clark County
Caine	Lora	Friends of Clark County
Cogen	Jeff	Multnomah County
Collier	Corky	Alternate for Larry Pursley, Washington Trucking Association
Dengerink	Hal	Washington State University - Vancouver
Dodds	Marie	Oregon/Idaho AAA
Frei	Dave	Arnada Neighborhood Association
Fuglister	Jill	Coalition for a Livable Future
Grossnickle	Jerry	Columbia River Towboat Association
Halverson	Brad	Overlook Neighborhood Association
Hamm	Jeff	C-TRAN
Hansen	Fred	TriMet
Hewitt	Henry	Stoel Rives, LLP
Imeson	Tom	Port of Portland
Isbell	Monica	Starboard Alliance Company, LLC
Leber	John	Alternate for Karen Schmidt, Washington Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
Lookingbill	Dean	SW Washington Regional Transportation Council
Lynch	Ed	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Malin	Dick	Central Park Neighborhood Association
Metcalf	Ginger	Alternate for David Overstreet, Washington AAA
Osborn	Dennis	City of Battle Ground
Papsdorf	Ron	Alternate for Mike Bennett, City of Gresham
Paulson	Larry	Port of Vancouver
Phillips	Bart	Columbia River Economic Development Council
Pollard	Royce	City of Vancouver
Russell	Bob	Oregon Trucking Association
Schlueter	Jonathan	Westside Economic Alliance
Sheehan	Phil	Alternate for Bob Knight, Clark College
Strahan	Elson	Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust
Stuart	Steve	Clark County
Sundvall-Williams	Jeri	Environmental Justice Action Group
Tischer	Dave	Columbia Pacific Building Trades
Valenta	Walter	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Walstra	Scot	NW Natural / Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Zelenka	Tom	Schnitzer Group

Project Staff Present:

Ron Anderson
Megan Beeby
Kelly Betteridge
Audri Bomar
Danielle Cogan
Doug Ficco
Carley Francis
Frank Green
Heather Gundersen
Jeff Heilman
Maurice Hines
Alan Lehto
Ryan LeProwse
Margi Lifsey
Jay Lyman
Tom Markgraf
John McAvoy
Colin McConnaha
John Osborn
Peter Ovington
David Parisi
Anne Presentin
Mandy Putney
Lynn Rust
Carolyn Sharp
Kris Strickler
Megan Taylor
Claire Valdez
Rex Wong

Note: These are the meeting notes from the final meeting of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force.

Note: This meeting featured detailed information and graphics in the PowerPoint slide presentation and other meeting materials, available online at <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/ProjectPartners/TFMeetingMaterials.aspx>

1. Welcome and Announcements

Co-chair Henry Hewitt welcomed attendees and announced a traffic delay on Interstate 5 (I-5) causing several Task Force members to arrive late. Washington Governor Chris Gregoire will be speaking to the Task Force by phone at 4:15 p.m. The meeting will be taped and broadcast on Clark-Vancouver TV and is archived and viewable at www.cvttv.org.

Today's meeting agenda includes a project update, a public involvement update, time for public comment, and an opportunity to consider a formal Task Force recommendation on a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), including choices on bridge type, public transit mode, and transit terminus.

2. Meeting Summary Approval

Action: The Task Force approved the draft summary of the January 22, 2008 Task Force meeting.

3. Project Update

Co-chair Henry Hewitt welcomed Washington Governor Chris Gregoire via speaker phone. The Governor extended her appreciation to the Task Force for their hard work. She discussed the importance of the project's public education efforts, its transparency, and its efforts to move forward with as much consensus as possible. The Governor highlighted the project's purpose and need, including safety problems. The flooding of I-5 near Chehalis last fall demonstrates how important this infrastructure is, she said, and how vital the I-5 Bridge is to our regional economy. We are by no means finished, she continued, and must aim for consensus while showing the rest of the nation how to get the project done quickly, on budget, and in an environmentally sound manner.

Don Wagner, Southwest Region Director for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), introduced David Dye, Deputy Director for WSDOT, and Matthew Garrett, Region 1 Director for the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Wagner said the CRC project has passed a major milestone with the release of its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). He emphasized that the project couldn't have reached this point without the Task Force's time and input. He reminded the audience that the Draft EIS public comment period continues through July 1, 2008. Holding the Task Force meeting towards the end of the comment period has allowed the group to review public comment received to date, and also to submit their own recommendations as part of the official comment period. Project partners will use that input as they meet throughout July to take formal action on the Locally Preferred Alternative. Wagner announced that the Governors will appoint a Project Sponsors Council in the next 30 to 60 days to serve as an advisory group to the project and help complete the Final EIS. Wagner distributed a letter from Governors Gregoire and Kulongoski outlining the purpose and who will be represented on the group. The Council will include two citizen co-chairs and representatives from ODOT and WSDOT, the cities of Vancouver and Portland, C-TRAN, TriMet, Metro and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council.

4. Public Involvement Update

Danielle Cogan, Communications Manager, provided an update on public involvement efforts since the release of the Draft EIS, including open houses and public hearings held in late May and public comments received to date. She noted that the project took the initiative to develop and distribute new materials for the public that explain the Draft EIS, help navigate the document and provide tips on how to comment – something many other projects have not done. Cogan reported that the project has received over 700 comments during the first six weeks of the comment period, about one-fourth who identify themselves as living within the zip codes in the project area. Cogan described the commenters' relationship to the project – whether they work, live, commute or own a business in the project area – and what mode of transportation

they use. Not all commenters indicated a preference about the LPA decisions. Of those that did, more supported a replacement bridge and light rail. For the transit alignment options, Cogan said it is most important to look at the responses of those Vancouver zip codes within the project area. Each transit terminus had similar levels of support from residents within the project area. In addition, 78 percent of those expressing an opinion about tolling support tolling the I-5 bridge, though residents of Hayden Island have expressed concerns about local access tolls. A full report of public comments received during the Draft EIS comment period is provided in the meeting materials.

5. Public Comment

Steve Citron, a Vancouver resident and automotive engineer, expressed his concern with levels of congestion reported in the Draft EIS. He is uncertain if the amount of congestion predicted to occur in 2030 with the replacement bridge alternative warrants the cost.

Travis Haennekens said that he has advocated a 605 beltway option for more than two years. He was assured it would be studied and feels that it wasn't adequately addressed, violating federal guidelines.

Ed Barnes opted to forego his time until the end of public comment to allow others the opportunity to speak, since he has addressed the Task Force in the past.

Barbara Nelson has been a Jantzen Beach moorage resident for 17 years and represents the board of directors. She feels this decision has been hanging over the heads of residents and businesses. The sooner a decision is made, the better. She does not believe we need a "signature" bridge, but one that is functional and allows a view of the mountains. The Moorage prefers the replacement bridge with the adjacent transit alignment on Hayden alignment because it has a smaller footprint.

Joe Cortright, said that the Draft EIS fails to meet the letter and spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) because it doesn't look at all reasonable alternatives and has not adequately engaged the public. He also said that the modeling projections are not accurate because gas prices have risen and this affects driving patterns. He said that the land use projections are wrong and induced demand has been ignored altogether, biasing the analysis.

Fred Nussbaum, spoke on behalf of the Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates (AORTA), saying the project will fail because of the cost and challenges to the project over NEPA requirements. He said the importance of the federal funding cycles and tolling requirements have been misrepresented. He also said that the alternatives in the Draft EIS were inadequate and asked that a Supplemental EIS be pursued.

Bill Hidden, a property owner who lives in project area, is in support of a replacement bridge and commended the Task Force for their work. He plans to also submit a letter that provides more detailed comments regarding specific potential impacts to his property.

Larry Epstein represents Diversified Marine, a 30-employee tugboat building business to the west of the Marine Drive interchange. They are concerned about impacts to their property from the transit alignment and advocate for a realignment of Marine Drive to the south of the Expo Center. He suggested that planning for mitigation and "avoiding adverse impact" should be part of the Task Force's resolution.

David Rowe, Battle Ground resident, said he does not want a toll on the I-5 Bridge because it would add \$1,000 a year to his expenses. He urged the project to look at other options besides expanding the highway, such as improving rail service.

Beth Quartarolo, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of a replacement bridge with light rail as an important investment in transportation infrastructure, noting that the cost of doing nothing would be realized in further restrictions on freight mobility. She would like to see the cost to the public minimized.

John Charles, Cascade Policy Institute, urged the project to be more fiscally responsible and consider a smaller project. He suggested eliminating the interchange improvements and only replacing the bridge with an eight-lane structure with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, all funded by variable tolls. He also stated that express bus lanes would be more efficient than light rail.

Jerry Oliver, Port of Vancouver commissioner, said he has reservations about the alternatives in the Draft EIS and thinks a scaled back solution could be found. He thinks high occupancy vehicle lanes and dedicated bus

lanes would be more cost effective than light rail. Until funding sources are more certain, he feels it is ill-advised to proceed with the project.

Edward Garren, CEJG member and former Hayden Island Neighborhood Network co-chair, urged the project to consider a parking lot at the Hayden Island transit station so seniors or people with disabilities can access transit. He also asked the project to consider exempting Hayden Island residents from the toll. He closed by saying people should consider the lifespan of a new structure and realize that \$4 billion amortized over 100 years is not a bad price for the project.

Sharon Nasset said the Draft EIS is only advisory and that there is still plenty of time to revise the scope of the project. She believes that opposition to the project indicates that the project hasn't been thoroughly vetted. She is concerned that light rail will not be extended further for another 20 years because there isn't enough density in Clark County to justify the expense of light rail.

Mara Gross, Coalition for a Livable Future, asked for additional information on the process by which conflicting conditions of approval from various interest groups will be reconciled. She also would like more information about the process of independent analysis for the number of lanes on the bridge, induced growth and global warming.

Terry Parker said we need an equitable cost sharing plan in which users of all vehicles pay a user fee, including bicycles, pedestrians and transit riders. He believes this project should look at ways to reuse regional assets, such as using the existing bridges for local traffic.

Debbie Peterson does not feel she has been engaged in a meaningful dialogue by NEPA standards and believes more options should have been presented at recent open houses. She does not believe light rail meets people's transportation needs and thinks a disinterested third party should make the decisions based on research.

Jim Howell believes that the future will present a very different future for Vancouver as a more bicycle-friendly community with shops, beautiful parks, and light rail or streetcars. In the next Congress, he predicts a wholesale restructuring of the nation's transportation system towards rail infrastructure.

Roger Staver, chair of the Hayden Island Neighborhood Network (HINooN), reported that his board and residents support the replacement bridge with light rail, with the transit station adjacent to the bridge. He said residents need reliable ways to access medical facilities when the highway is congested. HINooN is eager to see CRC proceed.

Peg Johnson, Jantzen Beach Moorage Inc, said the floating homes on Hayden Island are those most affected by this project. The Moorage supports Alternative 3, replacement bridge with light rail, with a Hayden Island transit station adjacent to the highway. She believes the floating home community deserved more detailed discussion in the Draft EIS and does not want to be forgotten in the process.

Pam Ferguson, Hayden Island Mobile Home Owners and Renters Association, thanked Walter Valenta for representing Hayden Island interests in CRC discussions. The association prefers the replacement bridge because it improves access to Marine Drive. They support light rail and east/west transit on the island. They understand the need for tolling but ask for special consideration for island residents. She also advocated for a beautiful bridge with a park underneath.

Jim Karlock said that the process has been biased towards support for light rail and that gas would have to be much more expensive to make light rail cost-effective. He said he would like more information about the costs associated with each interchange to be improved by the project.

Henry Hewitt reminded commenters that if they would like their written comments to be part of the formal public record, they should submit those to a CRC staff person at the reception desk.

6. Discussion and Vote on Locally Preferred Alternative Decisions

A. Supplemental Positions for Future Project and Regional Consideration

Henry Hewitt began by making a motion to discuss the draft document titled *Supplemental Positions for Future Project and Regional Consideration*. He said the forthcoming discussion will allow the Task Force to add to, delete from, or modify the text in that document. Hewitt's motion was seconded and approved.

For any members who have to leave the meeting before the LPA vote, Hewitt asked them to share their vote prior to leaving. Marie Dodds said she supports the Replacement Bridge with Light Rail. Regarding transit terminus, she said her organization has no strong opinion but will go along with the consensus of the Task Force.

Jeff Cogen asked if the *Supplemental Positions* document is a list of conditions and wondered what assurance there is that these will be acted upon. Hewitt replied that the Task Force is not a governing body and that the document is the expression of the Task Force's collective judgment for the sponsor agencies to consider.

Proposed amendment 1 passed:

Motion by Rex Burkholder to add language to the end of bullet numbers 3, 4, and 6, so those sentences would end with "consistent with minimizing impacts."

Fred Hansen asked that the following text be added to bullet #3: "The project should recognize that auxiliary lanes are for interchange operations, not for enhanced mainline throughput, and design the bridge width accordingly." He said this is to address operational improvements rather than increased throughput.

Proposed amendment 2 passed:

Motion by Bob Russell to change the wording of bullet #6 to read "Continued work to ensure that interchanges are freight sensitive and provide enhanced mobility [in a way that is consistent with minimizing impacts]."

Proposed amendment 3 passed:

Motion by Jeri Sundvall-Williams to add a new bullet after bullet #4 regarding a community enhancement fund. The new bullet will read: "As articulated in the final strategic plan of the I-5 Trade and Transportation Partnership, establish a community enhancement fund for use in the impacted areas of the project; such a fund would be in addition to any impact mitigation costs identified through the Draft EIS and would be modeled on the successfully implemented community enhancement fund of the I-5 Delta Park Project and subsequent Oregon Solutions North Portland Diesel Emissions Reduction Project."

Some Task Force members had questions and concerns regarding the funding source, whether any additional tax would be needed, and whether funding would come from both sides of the Columbia River. ODOT director Matthew Garrett added that there has to be an appropriate nexus between the federal interpretation and the project definition of community enhancement for transportation funds. WSDOT deputy directory David Dye said Washington has not to date used a community enhancement fund model, which could require special legislation or a special source of funding. Jill Fuglister added that the Oregon Solutions project allowed them to work on some of the issues that didn't have the required nexus referred to by ODOT Director Garret.

Proposed amendment 4 passed:

Motion by Hal Dengerink to change bullet #1 to read: "The continued development of a mitigation plan, including avoidance of adverse impacts."

Proposed amendment 5 passed:

Motion by Steve Stuart to edit the second to last bullet to read: "...while ensuring financial equity locally, within the region, and between the states of Oregon and Washington."

Motion failed:

Motion by Dennis Osborn to amend bullet #8 regarding a public vote on light rail so that a tax increase would not be required for the maintenance and operations of light rail. The motion was not seconded.

Proposed amendment 6 failed:

Motion by Jeff Hamm to add the following two items adopted by the C-TRAN board on June 10 (see highlighted section of C-TRAN board resolution BR-08-015):

- "Capital financing of the HCT component of the CRC project shall be structured in such a way that C-TRAN is not required to ask voters for capital construction dollars."
- "Initiation of HCT service in Clark County should provide a net service benefit to existing C-TRAN patrons, without diverting existing revenues from C-TRAN's current operating and capital costs."

Proposed amendment 7 passed:

Motion by Jeff Cogen to add a new bullet reading: "Continued study of project health impacts such as those identified in the report submitted to the Task Force by the Multnomah County Health Department."

Proposed amendment 8 passed:

Motion by Jerry Grossnickle to amend bullet #12 regarding the pedestrian/bicycle facility to read: "Continued development of a "world class" bicycle, pedestrian facility as well as the consideration for provisions for low-powered vehicles such as scooters, mopeds and neighborhood electric vehicles, as part of the construction of a replacement river crossing."

Discussion included concerns that neighborhood electric vehicles might reduce the amount of space for pedestrians and bicycles; that mixing such user types could be dangerous and create confusion among users; and there could be a risk of enforcement problems. Some Task Force members insisted they could not support the amendment unless it is clear that neighborhood electric vehicle users will not be mixed with pedestrians and bicyclists. Still another member wondered if the inclusion of such electric vehicles means the project might rescind its commitment not to expand the number of auxiliary lanes in the future.

Proposed amendment 9 passed:

Motion by Brad Halverson to amend bullet #2 under "For Regional Consideration" to replace the word "split" with the word "loop" so it reads "Evaluating other bottlenecks within the system (e.g. I-405 / I-5 loop, Rose Quarter, etc.)"

Proposed amendment 10 passed:

Motion by Walter Valenta to amend bullet #2 under "For Project Consideration" to read "The continued development of a sustainability plan, including the formation of a sustainability working group."

Proposed amendment 11 passed:

Motion by Rex Burkholder to add a new bullet that reads: "Development of an innovative transportation demand management (TDM) program to encourage more efficient use of limited transportation capacity."

Proposed amendment 12 failed:

Motion by Steve Stuart to add a new bullet under "For project consideration" that reads: "Development of a potential phasing plan for construction of the LPA given potential funding constraints while maintaining the overall project integrity."

Discussion included concerns about phasing the project and facing the risk of some project components, such as high capacity transit, being delayed or removed.

Proposed amendment 13 failed:

Motion by Lora Caine to add a new bullet that reads: "If tolls are imposed, develop measures for impacted people such as low-income people and Hayden Island residents."

Discussion included concerns that imposing tolls early could make it unclear what the tolls will be used for; could exacerbate freight mobility problems; could burden Washington residents to a greater degree; might not be legal; could create more congestion; could be difficult to determine what's equitable and which specific groups should be exempted from paying tolls.

Proposed amendment 14 failed:

Motion by Brad Halverson to amend bullet #7 to read: "An ongoing funding source for construction of the project."

Motion passed unanimously:

To accept the *Supplemental Positions for Future Project and Regional Consideration* with the above passed amendments.

B. Resolution on Key Decisions for a Locally Preferred Alternative

The discussion below refers to the draft document titled *A Resolution of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force to Provide Direction to the Columbia River Crossing Project on Key Decisions for a Locally Preferred Alternative*.

Motion by Sam Adams to substitute item #4 in the resolution with language in a document he distributed titled *Substitute Resolve #4*. Adams accepted a friendly amendment to add two citizen representatives to the list of representatives on a local oversight committee (his term for the "Project Sponsors Council" proposed by Governors Gregoire and Kulongoski). Adams said he would like the Task Force to help shape the project and suggests that the local oversight committee / Project Sponsors Council should have the authority to "review and approve."

Matthew Garrett of ODOT replied that the two governors chose the words in their letter very deliberately, that WSDOT and ODOT are the project owners and would not like for the local oversight committee to have "veto power" but rather to act in an advisory role while striving for consensus. Henry Hewitt added, as former member of the Oregon Transportation Commission, that projects like this don't happen without the support of local jurisdictions.

Rex Burkholder would like to see language in the resolution that codifies the Governors' guidance to include the local oversight committee.

David Dye said he has received very clear direction from the Governors' to move this project forward with as much consensus while still getting the job done. The wording on this document won't change that commitment.

Adams requested a straw vote on his proposed resolution, which received a majority "no" vote. As a compromise, the following language was instead proposed.

Proposed amendment passed:

To replace item #4 with the following language:

4. Creation of a formal oversight committee that strives for consensus and provides for a public process of review, deliberation and decision-making for outstanding major project issues and decisions."

Proposed amendment passed:

Motion by Sam Adams to add a fifth item as follows:

5. The Freight Working Group, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Urban Design Advisory Group, the Community and Environmental Justice Group, and the newly formed Sustainability Working Group, shall continue their advisory roles for refinement of the LPA. These advisory groups shall report findings and recommendations to the local oversight committee.

Proposed amendment passed:

Motion by Steve Stuart to amend item #1 as follows:

1. In regards to the river crossing selection, the CRC Task Force supports the construction of a replacement bridge with three through lanes northbound and southbound as the preferred option.

Proposed amendment passed:

Motion by Royce Pollard to amend item #1 to be neutral regarding transit terminus and add other language as follows:

3. In regards to the alignment and terminus of the high capacity transit line, and based on the information provided to date, the CRC Task Force
 - Recognizes that the selection of the alignment and terminus options should be determined through a combination of:
 - i. Federal New Starts funding eligibility,
 - ii. Public and local stakeholder involvement,
 - iii. CRC project evaluation and technical determination of the terminus that allows for the greatest flexibility for future high capacity transit extensions and connections in Clark County, and
 - iv. Outcome of the Vancouver City Council and C-TRAN votes on July 7 and July 8, respectively.

Discussion and vote on resolution

Jill Fuglister said her organization believes something needs to be done to this section of I-5 and they support light rail and bicycle/pedestrian improvements, but will not support the resolution because making a decision before the public comment period closes is premature; public requests for information have not been met; they are concerned that CRC traffic analyses are based on outdated assumptions; they would like more information about induced demand and greenhouse gas emissions; and there are too many unanswered questions and too many holes in the process.

Jeri Sundvall-Williams said her organization is not supporting the resolution for many of the same reasons mentioned by Jill Fuglister.

Motion passed:

To accept the resolution with the above amendments (37 in favor, 2 opposed).

7. Appreciation and Closing Remarks

David Dye and Matthew Garrett expressed appreciation for the work of this group. Keepsake photos of the bridge, signed by the two Governors, were given to Task Force members as a token of thanks.