

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors
July 1, 2014, Meeting Minutes**

I. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Jack Burkman on Tuesday, July 1, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center Sixth Floor Training Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. The meeting was recorded by CVTV. Attendance follows.

Voting Board Members Present:

Nancy Baker, Port of Vancouver Commissioner
Ed Barnes, Clark County Commissioner
Jack Burkman, Vancouver Council Member
Bill Ganley, Battle Ground Council Member
Jeff Hamm, C-TRAN Executive Director
David Madore, Clark County Commissioner
Tom Mielke, Clark County Commissioner
Larry Smith, Vancouver Council Member
Melissa Smith, Camas Council Member
Don Wagner, WSDOT Regional Administrator
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Alternate

Voting Board Members Absent:

Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor
Doug McKenzie, Skamania Co. Commissioner
David Poucher, White Salmon Mayor
Jason Tell, ODOT Region One Manager

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14th District
Norm Johnson, Representative 14th District
Charles Ross, Representative 14th District
Don Benton, Senator 17th District
Paul Harris, Representative 17th District
Monica Stonier, Representative 17th District
Ann Rivers, Senator 18th District
Liz Pike, Representative 18th District
Brandon Vick, Representative 18th District
John Braun, Senator 20th District
Richard DeBolt, Representative 20th District
Ed Orcutt, Representative 20th District
Annette Cleveland, Senator 49th District
Jim Moeller, Representative 49th District
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49th District

Guests Present:

Mike Bomar, CREDC
Eric Florip, The Columbian
Paul Greenlee, Washougal Council Member
Heath Henderson, Clark County
Lee L. Jensen, Citizen
Jim Karlock, Citizen
Laurie Lebowsky, Clark County
Dale Lewis, Rep. Herrera Beutler's Office
Sharon Nasset, Third Bridge Now
Jerry Oliver, Port of Vancouver Commissioner
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Mayor
Scott Sawyer, City of Battle Ground
Damon Webster, MacKay Sposito
Bill Wright, Clark County

Staff Present:

Mark Harrington, Senior Transportation Planner
Bob Hart, Transportation Section Supervisor
Matt Ransom, Executive Director
Dale Robins, Senior Transportation Planner
Diane Workman, Administrative Assistant

II. Citizen Communications

Lee L. Jensen of Battle Ground spoke about the bus rapid transit system and said the RTC plays a part of the system. C-TRAN will vote on the BRT system at their July 8 meeting. Mr. Jensen said a lot of effort has gone into the Fourth Plain BRT project and said this is an important quality investment for Clark County. He asked for support of the BRT system.

Sharon Nasset from Portland distributed information addressing the Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit project. Ms. Nasset noted problems and recommended solutions. She said there is no need to rush for this project this year.

III. Approval of the Board Agenda

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE JULY 1, 2014, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY BILL GANLEY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

IV. Approval of June 3, 2014, Minutes

Action on the June minutes was inadvertently overlooked. Approval will be requested at the August meeting.

V. Consent Agenda

A. July Claims

ED BARNES MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA JULY CLAIMS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VI. Congestion Management Process: 2013 Monitoring Report, Resolution 07-14-13

Dale Robins referred to the resolution included in the meeting packet with a summary attached. Also included was a copy of the 2013 Monitoring Report which contains a lot about performance measures.

The Congestion Management Process seeks to identify and provide a way to manage congestion. The goal is to provide a reliable transportation system to support economic vitality. The congestion management process is a federal transportation planning requirement for all metropolitan areas with a population over 200,000. Federal Highways requires that this process includes multi-modal system performance measures and strategies that can be incorporated into the Regional Transportation Plan and be implemented through the Transportation Improvement Program.

As part of the RTC's process, they developed an annual monitoring report. The monitoring report provides an assessment of regional transportation system operating conditions. It includes multi-modal system performance measures, informs the transportation investment decision-making process, and reports on the effectiveness of strategies.

Mr. Robins presented some of the key data from the report. He highlighted the top five corridors for each of the following indicators: volume to capacity ratio; lowest speed percentage; intersection delay; transit ridership; and truck routes. A map with the locations was provided for each.

Key findings of the Congestion Management Process Monitoring include the following observations. Technology such as traffic signal coordination is making a difference in the region. The region needs to continue to invest in these low-cost transportation system management and operational improvements. Capacity and multi-modal improvements are needed along regional corridors that have not been built to urban standards. NE 18th Street is a good example of this need. Trends indicate that additional roadway infrastructure improvements are not the only way to address capacity deficiencies. Low-cost solutions must be considered prior to high cost infrastructure improvements.

Approval of Resolution 07-14-13 includes endorsement of the Congestion Management Process 2013 Monitoring Report and its findings.

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 07-14-13. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DON WAGNER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VII. Vancouver Area Smart Trek (VAST) Program Report

Matt Ransom introduced the VAST Program topic. He said Bob Hart would provide this annual report on the VAST Program, its recent accomplishments and ongoing activities. Mr. Ransom said that RTC is the convener of the VAST discussion. This is where local agencies collaborate through the RTC's program management on traffic signals, intelligent transportation system reader board information, and data collection all geared towards collecting information and developing projects that are low cost more operation system management focused. The RTC began managing this program on behalf of all the participating agencies a decade ago. This update is provided before they obligate the next round of funding, which the Board approved previously. That is about \$150,000 a year to cover both program management responsibilities as well as hire consultants that do special studies like system management and data collection type studies.

Bob Hart said as Matt noted this is the annual report to the RTC Board on the VAST program. The program links ITS technology and infrastructure with implementation of operational strategies through collaboration and planning among the VAST agencies.

Mr. Hart provided a diagram showing the VAST Program and gave an overview. The VAST agencies are WSDOT, Clark County, City of Vancouver, C-TRAN, City of Camas, and RTC. There are three standing committees that work together on different aspects of the program. The Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) Steering Committee which is made up of planning and traffic operations staff and provides the overall operations vision for the region. The VAST Steering Committee is primarily traffic operations staff that work on developing, implementing, and funding for ITS and operations projects. The Communications Infrastructure Committee is a mix of transportation and IT staff that cooperate on sharing, maintenance, and standards for the communications technology to support operational projects.

The regional architecture is a federal requirement that defines how agencies collaborate to ensure the interoperability of communications technology and projects. The operations vision for the region came out of the TSMO Plan adopted by the RTC Board in 2011. Coordination between operations and the underlying ITS technology presents an integrated transportation operations program.

Mr. Hart said that since 2001 they have secured \$21.7 million in federal funding and \$32.6 million in total project dollars through agency collaboration. He highlighted some of the key accomplishments of the VAST agency collaboration such as the 2014 Target Zero Safety Award to Clark County Public Works which was listed on RTC's Web page; the Bi-State Travel Time Project, the Transportation Data Archive, and the TSMO Pilot Project. Mr. Hart also described the VAST agency projects programed in 2013 along with recent VAST activities for asset management and agency fiber sharing.

Mr. Hart said the upcoming VAST program will be similar activities as previous years. This will include coordination and management of the program, manage the VAST committees, and work with them to develop, review, and endorse funding of operations projects. They anticipate the future program will be essentially the same with the same program areas for both operations and ITS. The VAST program meets the federal requirements for the Congestion Management Process, the Regional ITS Architecture, and ITS projects. It's also consistent with the traffic operational efficiency goals in the RTP, TIP, and the UPWP.

Don Wagner thanked Bob for the update and said he wanted to emphasize some things that were mentioned. He said the VAST program is a joint effort of the cities, transit agencies, and the DOTs on both sides of the river. He said it truly shows that when we work together at the staff level and the policy level, we can get things done very well for our citizens at a much reduced cost. Mr. Wagner said if he were to have installed this only on the DOT system, it would probably have cost as much as it cost for the entire system including the city streets and county roads. A program that Bob didn't mention that is in effect in the maintenance section between the cities, the county, and the DOT called GEM. They share equipment and operators. The DOT doesn't have to purchase the urban equipment, because the urban partners have that equipment, and they don't have to buy the rural equipment, because DOT has the rural equipment. Mr. Wagner said it is not as formal as the VAST program. It is an agreement where if you need my equipment, you can borrow it, and if I need your equipment, I can borrow it. Mr. Wagner said this program came together at a supervisor level, not at an executive level. They figured out how to do things that truly are effective and don't take as much resources. He said they are working together and doing some good things. Mr. Wagner said he supports the VAST program.

Chair Burkman said there is plenty of data available. He said a question was asked about the data that is on an internal server that partner staff has access to. Mr. Hart said they would have to set up a way for them to access the server and get the credentials, but that can be done. The Portal site is accessible by anyone. There is also a link to the [Portal](#) site from RTC's Web page under VAST as well.

Jeff Hamm asked if the Portal would be feeding data to both WSDOT and ODOT who both maintain their own traffic conditions source. Mr. Hart said it is somewhat the other way around. The Portal is rather an archive system, and they are feeding it with data which is then used to provide what is requested.

Rian Windsheimer said these investments are not just for the DOTs to do their sites or archive. It is made available to the public so when you use your GPS they have a number of ways of accessing that site, but one of the sources of that data is the data that is provided by this archive.

VIII. MPO Metropolitan Planning Agreement

Matt Ransom said the MPO Metropolitan Planning Agreement is a requirement out of our duty under federal rules to have an agreement among the MPO, C-TRAN, and WSDOT to specify how we are going to work together, share data, and collaborate to ensure we are operating our system appropriately. Every four years, FHWA and FTA come to RTC to certify our program to make sure we are operating within the boundaries of the law. As part of the 2013 Certification Review, the report identified three corrective actions. The first was to update a Public Involvement Plan, which was done in January. The second was to update and endorse a Title VI Limited English Proficiency Plan, which was completed in May. The final action was to update the agreement. The original agreements were adopted in 1995; one with C-TRAN and one with WSDOT, about two pages each. The agreement now is much larger. They have asked that we take the two agreements and consolidate to make one agreement. The second component is to update the policy to be more specific about how we will coordinate together. That is why the document is much larger. There are very specific provisions in the proposed agreement that provide a more thorough description of agency responsibilities and performance timelines in order to promote transparency and collaboration. Since the current agreements were approved, there have been four updates to the federal transportation law. The proposed agreement is modified to reflect current federal policy provisions.

Mr. Ransom said this is the first review for Board Members. The intent is to return in August asking for endorsement of approval. Mr. Ransom said they have been working on this since January when he arrived. He said that Dean and staff were working on it late last year as well. There has been six to eight months of diligent work on this. Mr. Ransom has worked with C-TRAN, and their general counsel has reviewed it. This has been through the WSDOT review process, and their attorney general has reviewed it. RTC's counsel has reviewed it as well. There is general consensus that this is the recommended draft for approval. Upon approval and signatures by all, the agreement will be sent to FHWA and FTA and ask for them to release RTC from any further corrections. The next Certification Review for RTC will be in 2017.

IX. Transportation Improvement Program Call For Projects

Dale Robins referred to the memorandum included in the meeting packet. He said as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Clark County region, the RTC Board has selection and programming authority for regionally allocated federal funds. This includes the Surface Transportation Program (STP), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program, and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

Mr. Robins said the purpose of this agenda item is to ensure that the RTC Board is aware of the current call for projects. This call is for estimated funding in 2018. Years 2015 – 2017 projects are already selected and programmed in the existing TIP.

The regional project selection process began in June with a call for projects and will conclude with the adoption of the TIP at the October RTC Board meeting.

The estimated federal FY 2018 funding levels include the following: The Urban STP program will have \$5 million and the Rural STP program \$1.6 million. The CMAQ program will have \$3.1 million. The TAP program will not have a call for projects. This is a small funding

program, and RTC plans on making a call for TAP projects every other year with the next call in 2015.

Mr. Robins reiterated what was said at last month's meeting that RTC has met their federal obligation limit so they could potentially receive funds from other regions that have unobligated funds. There are a couple projects that still remain to be obligated this year that are required because of the Project Delay Policy that was implemented.

Chair Burkman said that agency staffs have been notified of this call for projects, but this was to allow members to be aware that this process is underway.

X. Results WSDOT – Moving Washington Forward

Don Wagner referred to the double-sided 8 ½ x 11 leaflet entitled Results WSDOT included in the meeting packet. This is WSDOT's Strategic Plan, which used to be 39 pages long. Listed were six goals and outcomes. They have particular enforcement on Modal Integration, Environmental Stewardship, Community Engagement, and Smart Technology.

Mr. Wagner said when you hear about the legislature talking about reforms for the organization (WSDOT), there are two types of reforms. One type is legislative reform, things that WSDOT cannot do anything about without laws being changed, such as sales tax on state projects. The other type of reform is about how to make an organization more efficient. What they are trying in their Strategic Plan is an attempt to get more efficient as an organization. It includes least cost planning type activities, applying lean processes to projects to solve the problem without being extravagant.

Mr. Wagner said at the last RTC Board meeting, there was conversation about some of the activities that can manage yourself out of congestion or if you have to build yourself out of congestion. The short video, Keeping Highway Traffic Moving Through-put Maximization One Grain at a time! (Rice and Traffic Congestion), that Mr. Wagner presented was crafted by the then Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald with a simple way to demonstrate what happens if you don't manage everybody that is on the system and try to build your way out of it compared with if you try to manage the input.

Mr. Wagner said the demonstration was started eight years ago as they were trying to figure out what was going on with traffic congestion. They ended up figuring out that there were certain things they could do as an agency to help some of this along. They looked at the congestion that was due to accidents. An accident would take two hours to clear with State Patrol, WSDOT, fire trucks, emergency medical services, and tow trucks. The State Patrol partnered with the Secretary of Transportation, and they told WSDOT regional administrators that they had 90 minutes to clear a major freeway accident. They were provided with some help with the Instant Response Vehicles and laws passed that allowed them in Washington to push a vehicle whether the driver wants them to or not. They receive a ticket if they don't. Mr. Wagner said they are generally making the 90 minute time limit, but some issues are just going to take longer. A more serious accident warrants more investigation time. They now have the cameras, the flow maps, and are encouraging people to drive differently. The next step is what they can do that is more solid. This could be some of the ramp metering techniques. Mr. Wagner said as was noted by Bob Hart, that this summer they will be placing the signs that will give people a choice of the

route they take by checking travel times between where they are and where they are headed. Mr. Wagner said there are choke points in the system. That is where we need to invest our money. You have to get rid of the choke points. Most of those are between on and off ramps in our freeway system here in Clark County.

XI. Other Business

From the Board

Commissioner Barnes noted that copies of the Congestion Management Process 2013 Monitoring Report that was presented were available and said it was a very good document. Chair Burkman said there was also an Executive Summary that he would be taking back to share with his Council and encouraged others to do so as well.

Don Wagner reminded everyone that it is the summer season and a time when a lot of people travel. He said they have an issue on I-5 in the Ridgefield area from the Fairgrounds up to the La Center interchange. In the last nine months, they have had six fatal accidents. They have not seen any commonality; it is not speed, not nighttime, not northbound, and not southbound. Traditionally, they may face one fatal accident a year in that stretch. Several of the accidents have been distracted drivers. He asked people to please not text and drive. That seems to be one of the biggest issues that they are seeing out there right now. Despite the laws of hands-free phones only, distracted driving is causing very serious issues on our freeway system.

Don Wagner said the 6th of July is the anniversary of the oil explosion in Quebec. There is a planned protest of oil crude by rail on the July 8. Mr. Wagner said there was a flyer put out for the protest, and they inadvertently used WSDOT SW Region's phone number. It should be the US DOT office. The state DOT does not have any control over interstate commerce on the rail system. Mr. Wagner wanted to warn folks of the possible congestion from a protest.

Chair Burkman said the RTC Executive Director has now been in position for six months. When he was hired, they had said at six months they wanted a performance evaluation conducted. Chair Burkman said unless there are other comments, his intention is to return back to the company that was used for the recruitment and ask them to conduct a survey process from the Board. The information would be put into a package for the Board to review at the August or September meeting during an Executive Session and then provide feedback as appropriate to the Executive Director. The cost was anticipated with the hiring process.

From the Director

Matt Ransom said at the June Board meeting he provided an update on the Highway Trust Fund status and had said he would provide any new information at the July meeting. There is none. Congress has not acted. Mr. Ransom said they hopefully will act before their August recess.

Mr. Ransom wanted to clarify that the regions in the state all work together to produce one invoice to the feds. So the state invoices the feds for all the funds throughout the state that are contributed or sought for reimbursement. So if the account balance goes insolvent and they have to pay on a cash basis, then we will submit our invoice to the state and it will go in and we'll see what happens from that standpoint.

Mr. Ransom noted that he sent to Board Members a review of RTC's eight year funding and also had copies available. He said as Dale had noted, we are going out for another call for projects,

usually averaging about \$10 million per year. The report highlights the projects between 2010 and 2017. During that time period, the regional federal funds distributed exceeded \$87 million in grant funding for over 120 projects. That is why the Highway Trust Fund is so important to us. Mr. Ransom said his experience in local agency work shows you can leverage federal dollars maybe 3-4 to 1. If you take that \$87 million and leverage it 3 to 1, you are talking about \$250 million or more in leverage. So for us in this region that are doing local projects and using the federal funds to boost your funding scheme, this is critical. Mr. Ransom said he hoped he would not have to report impasse in August.

Mr. Ransom said in an observation as it relates to this meeting, he said he thinks we are at the cusp of some innovative ways that we can use, manage, and collect data. He said the VAST presentation is a demonstration of regional collaboration and partnership. Those projects were all multi agency. The notion of big data, given technology and data collection and how it is being aggregated, stored, archived, and collected, he said he thinks if we look back ten years from now we'll be surprised. Mr. Ransom said we are really at this point where previously, most agencies collect data and store it in their data base. The movement in a lot of the VAST program is to shift that to a more shared database, so we can make better decisions. He said the power in this data is going to be the trend analysis that they can do. He said we heard about fixing the choke points but then managing the corridor. This trend data and trend analysis, the more we have robust datasets, the better decision making we can make. Mr. Ransom said that is why he thinks the VAST Program is worthwhile in its scope and collaboration.

Mr. Ransom noted C-TRAN Board of Directors meets on Tuesday, July 8, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. at Vancouver Library. JPACT meets Thursday, July 10, 2014, at 7:30 a.m. at Metro. He pointed out that the Bi-State Coordination Committee will be meeting on Thursday, July 10, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. at Metro following JPACT. The agenda for the meeting is primarily regional economic development workforce. While we are building the structures and designing the systems here, there are a lot of users (employees), so we need to get a sense of what the economy looks like and what the workforce needs are.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 5, 2014, at 4 p.m.

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR MEETING ADJOURNMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DON WAGNER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.