

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors  
October 7, 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, October 7, 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  
Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor  
Bart Gernhart, WSDOT, Alternate  
Paul Greenlee, Washougal Council, Alternate  
David Madore, Clark County Commissioner  
Doug McKenzie, Skamania Co. Commissioner  
Tom Mielke, Clark County Commissioner  
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Mayor, Alternate  
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN, Alternate  
Larry Smith, Vancouver Council Member  
Rian Windsheimer, Interim ODOT Manager

Voting Board Members Absent:

Bill Ganley, Battle Ground Council Member  
Jeff Hamm, C-TRAN Executive Director  
David Poucher, White Salmon Mayor  
Melissa Smith, Camas Council Member  
Don Wagner, WSDOT Regional Administrator

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

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

Guests Present:

Katy Brooks, Port of Vancouver  
Eric Florip, The Columbian  
Laurie Lebowsky, Clark County  
Dale Lewis, Rep. Herrera Beutler's Office  
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Council  
Sharon Nasset, Third Bridge Now  
Gavin Oien, David Evans and Assoc. Inc.  
Jerry Oliver, Port of Vancouver Commissioner  
Scott Sawyer, City of Battle Ground  
Patrick Sweeney, City of Vancouver

Staff Present:

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

**II. Call for Public Comments**

Sharon Nasset from Portland said we do not have enough capacity for our commerce and commuters, and not enough bridges. She said she has been recommending that they reunite our industrial areas and our Ports with new infrastructure that connects into I-5. This would provide jobs. She distributed a flyer with the information on a new third bridge with a new by-pass.

**III. Approval of the Board Agenda**

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 7, 2014, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY RON ONSLOW AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**IV. Approval of the September 2, 2014, Minutes**

ED BARNES MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 2, 2014, MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LARRY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**V. Consent Agenda**

**A. October Claims**

**B. Metropolitan Planning Agreement, Resolution 10-14-16**

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA OCTOBER CLAIMS AND RESOLUTION 10-14-16. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ED BARNES AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**VI. General Legal Counsel Service Consulting Agreement, Resolution 10-14-17**

Matt Ransom said that earlier this year he had addressed the Board saying it would be desirable and beneficial for the Board and organization to hire legal counsel. The arrangement that has existed at the RTC for a number of years has been an ad hoc arrangement with the Clark County Prosecuting Attorney's office. In inquiring with that office if they would be willing to enter into a contract with RTC, due to their workload and other transitions, they were unable to do that. This summer, upon the Board's consent, staff issued an RFQ. The RFQ was issued on two occasions, given that only one response was submitted the first time. With the resubmittal in August, two additional responses were received for a total of three.

RTC staff reviewed the submittals that were received. Each qualified based on minimum qualifications, including both a numeric review based on pre-identified rating criteria and questions, as well as an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. They came to a unanimous recommendation, which is before the Board for authorization. It is to hire the firm Ted H. Gathe, LLC. This has been reviewed with the RTC Chair for consistency with Board policy, and a contract has been negotiated, which was also included with the Resolution for authorization.

The general terms of the agreement are described in the staff report, such as attending the RTC Board meetings, providing opinion of law when requested, administrative functions within the organization, and attest to different contracts required by the federal government. Mr. Ransom said he felt Mr. Gathe was very qualified, and he was the most cost competitive proposal that

they received. Staff is recommending that this contract be approved and have submitted it for the Board's approval.

Commissioner Madore said there were three submittals. He asked if the other responses were public record to share. Mr. Ransom said yes, those names could be disclosed, and the files were open for public review. Commissioner Madore recommended that those records be a part of the public record.

Shirley Craddick said she wanted to be sure that they are comfortable with the firm having experience with transportation law, federal and local. Mr. Ransom said one of the questions in the rating criteria asked if the respondent had MPO experience directly. Mr. Ransom said none of the respondents had that experience. Most MPOs don't have in-house legal counsel. They were looking for a broad scope of experience in terms of interpretation of state law, federal law, as well as administrative law. Mr. Ransom explained the importance of the distinction in those areas. He said Mr. Gathe provided the deepest breadth in providing counsel to a governmental-type organization over the course of several decades. Learning the MPO rules is attainable.

Larry Smith said he assumed that this was a one-person operation. He asked if Mr. Gathe would provide that service himself or if he would contract it out to someone else. Mr. Ransom said the response indicated that he was the primary attorney responsible. Should Mr. Gathe be unavailable, he made a commitment to find a backup at his expense and not charge an additional fee to the RTC for backup services. If additional staff was needed for research or such, he would contract for that and seek qualified students at Lewis and Clark College of Law or others that could assist him.

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE GENERAL LEGAL COUNSEL SERVICE CONSULTING AGREEMENT, RESOLUTION 10-14-17. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY RON ONSLOW.

David Madore asked that the RFQ responses be included in the meeting minutes for the public record. *They are included with the [October Board meeting materials](#) on RTC's Web page.*

THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **VII. 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program, Resolution 10-14-18**

Matt Ransom referred to two documents provided to Board Members. The first is an Amended Staff Report/Resolution 10-14-18, reflecting the current dollar amount and the STIP to be amended accordingly. The second document is a memo from Mr. Ransom to the Board in response to a question raised by the Board at the last meeting asking who comprised the STP Rural Grant Committee. Dale Robins is the staff that leads that committee, and he provided information on the history of the STP Rural process, how much funding, and how many projects we have selected over the course of 24 years. Membership on the Committee changes yearly, but the jurisdictions participating were listed in the memo along with the current participating members.

Mr. Ransom said one of the major functions of an MPO is to distribute through a competitive grant selection process regional STP (Surface Transportation Program) as well as Congestion Management funds. Part of the action tonight is to select and award projects for the 2014 grant

selection cycle. The second function is for us to program these funds. This is a multi-year programming including projects that were selected in previous years, but each year it needs to be updated to reflect current process estimates, etc. and then delivered to the state. Mr. Ransom said it is important that this be considered tonight. If it is not approved tonight, there is at least a minimum of two month delay in project activity into next year.

Dale Robins said at the request of Clark County staff, the TIP documents were revised to remove their NE 78<sup>th</sup> Street/47<sup>th</sup> Avenue Intersection project, which will obligate funds this year. They determined that they can do that project this year rather than next year, so it comes out of the 2015 TIP now rather than come back in January with an amendment. This is about a \$1 million project and the only change that occurred.

The overall TIP is a four-year program of regionally significant transportation projects and indicates a commitment for funding the projects listed in the document. The regional TIP must be submitted to WSDOT by October 15 for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), or as Mr. Ransom stated, the projects listed will not be able to proceed in the first couple months of 2015. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization, RTC is required to develop a financially constrained TIP and is given selection authority for an allocation of federal funds.

At the September RTC Board meeting, the Board completed the first two steps of the regional selection process through their acceptance of the ranking of projects. Adoption of this resolution will complete the final step and program the highest ranking projects.

Mr. Robins said pages two and three of the resolution lists the regionally selected projects to be added to the TIP. He provided a slide with a summary of the overall selection. As a region we are adding \$9.7 million in projects including \$4.9 million for STP Urban projects, \$2.0 million for STP Rural funds, and \$2.8 million for CMAQ projects. The Board should note that the NE 18<sup>th</sup> Street project is recommended for additional funding even though it exceeds the regional funding limit. RTAC recommended funding based on the regional importance of this project including its deficient rating in the Congestion Management Process.

The next slide moves from the regional selection process to the full TIP document. The TIP represents a diverse list of transportation projects as indicated by the seven projects types shown in a pie chart with percentages. The 2015-2018 TIP includes a total of 38 projects totaling approximately \$146 million in transportation improvements. Mr. Robins said it is important to recognize that this is a four-year snapshot of project types and does vary from year to year.

A map is included on the last page of the TIP. The same map was provided in a slide. It indicates the diversity of project locations throughout the County, with projects located in various cities and unincorporated Clark County.

Action on the TIP by the RTC Board will: Select \$9.7 million in local STP and CMAQ projects as listed on page two and three of the resolution. These are projects selected by RTC, while other projects included in the TIP have been selected by other agencies. Adoption will program a total of \$146 million in transportation improvements. Selection of all projects for funding - this is a federal term that means any project listed in the four year program can proceed on a first come basis. Projects do not need to wait until the year they are programmed. This simple action

will help ensure that the region meets our obligation limits so we do not lose funds. The action on the TIP by the RTC Board certifies that RTC follows the federal requirements in the development of the TIP.

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee reviewed the TIP at their September RTAC meeting and is recommending that the RTC Board adopt Resolution 10-14-18 which includes the RTC Board selection of an additional \$9.7 million in STP and CMAQ projects and approval of the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program.

Commissioner Madore referred to the 2016 Summary of projects and the listing of the C-TRAN Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit-New Starts project. He asked if that was a typo, because he thought it was a Small Starts program. Mr. Robins said the Small Starts program is funded under the New Starts Program. It is a subset of the New Starts. Commissioner Madore said he wanted the record to show that the vote in 2012 to provide funding for this project failed. He said C-TRAN has not provided a finance plan to provide for the extra buses to be added to the system. He said that it presumes that each of the buses currently running that system would be removed from service. Commissioner Madore also said there was a problem with the definition, the incompatibility between the high capacity transit definition specified by the FTA and the State and C-TRAN's definition that says it is not high capacity transit. He said funding needs to be identified for the extra buses that will be added to this.

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE 2015-2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM, RESOLUTION 10-14-18. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LARRY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

### **VIII. I-205 Corridor Study: Findings and Policy Recommendations**

Matt Ransom said Bob Hart would provide a summary presentation. He said they are looking for Board Members' input. This is one step closer to a final recommendation on the I-205 Corridor Study. They will present draft recommendations in three primary areas: roadway and highway, transit, and operational policies.

Bob Hart said they are looking at both short term and long term strategies in the corridor. The long term projects are the core projects, and they will be a part of the Regional Transportation Plan update. During the interim period, they will look for operational strategies that are intended to help the transportation system operate more efficiently and predictably. In the short term, operational strategies help supplement or delay capital improvements in the I-205 corridor.

The consideration of operational strategies is consistent with Washington State Department of Transportation "Moving Washington" principles, a three tiered approach to mitigate congestion or add capacity. These are to operate efficiently, manage demand, and add capacity strategically.

As Mr. Ransom had noted, the three key findings and recommendations focus on: 1) Roadway Improvements including 2035 core projects, RTC capacity improvements for I-205, and short term operational improvements. 2) Transit Operations focusing the look on the feasibility of Bus on Shoulder. And 3) Operational Policies applied to I-205 including implementation policies for ramp metering.

Mr. Hart referred to the map with the 2035 Recommended Core Projects for the RTP included with the memo and also provided in a slide. This is the same set of projects adopted by the RTC Board in November 2012. The core projects identified the most critical set of improvements in the corridor. The projects have not changed; however, some have been refined based on further analysis and consultation and review between RTC and WSDOT staff. Mr. Hart highlighted those projects: I-205 widening (SR-500 to Padden); SR-14 Widening (I-205 to 164<sup>th</sup>); I-205 auxiliary lane from Mill Plain to SR-500; Padden Interchange improvements with 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue slip ramp; and I-205 Park and Ride at 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

Commissioner Madore referred to the SR-14 Widening from I-205 to 164<sup>th</sup> project. He said at last month's meeting, it was discussed to have WSDOT look at the appropriateness of having this project look at four lanes instead of three lanes. Bart Gernhart said they would look at that when the time is appropriate. Currently, they are at the RTP phase. When they go through NEPA and SEPA, they will look at that. Mr. Gernhart noted the cloverleaf at I-205 is the main restriction, regardless of the amount of lanes added. Also, the evening commute on I-205 north at the exit to SR-14 eastbound is also a major restriction. There is only so much that they can do in that area. One of the new policies that WSDOT has is called Practical Design Policy. This is something that they have been doing for quite a while, but they are now implementing it to a much broader degree. Mr. Gernhart said all of their projects now are mandated to review in a Practical Design of applicable solutions. He said they used to design highways projecting out 20 years beyond when construction is complete. They looked at the worst hour of traffic flow 20 years out, and that is what they designed for. Mr. Gernhart said that was fine when they had money, and the federal government was funding 90% of the Interstate construction. They cannot do that now; they do not have the money. The Department is looking at trying to get a better bang for the buck. They are looking if they can get 70% or 80% of the benefit of the project by spending 50% of the money. He said sometimes they can get 40% of the benefit of the project by spending 10%. The idea is to get a better bang for the buck. At a program level and across the state, they can tighten the belts here and there and focus on primary needs. They address just the primary needs for a lot less money. This allows them to either build more projects across the state or raise taxes to a lesser degree or do a combination of both. This is what the legislature wants to do.

Commissioner Madore said he hoped that the stretch of SR-14 just discussed is not built with restrictions that in 20 years need to be dealt with. He said he hopes they make provisions for the next steps.

Commissioner Barnes said his concern is that the bridges are never built wide enough to accommodate future lanes. He said he hoped that is something that they take into consideration.

Mr. Hart next referred to the map of 2022 Low Cost Operational Strategies. This is to help the system work better in the interim until they can get money for capacity in the corridor. The short term 2022 analysis assumed that the Mill Plain to 18<sup>th</sup> Street project is in place (construction begins in 2015) with no other improvement in the corridor. These are the "promising" short term strategies. This means that the strategy has a benefit to the corridor. Also in developing these, it also calls for further analysis and stakeholder consultation consistent with the proposed policy process. They consist of four ramp meters and one lane configuration. The total cost of the five strategies is about \$2 million. The ramp meters are intended to smooth merging at the ramp by

managing and breaking up vehicle platoons entering I-205. Each will require further study to determine the feasibility of side by side storage lanes, placement of the meter, as well as other details regarding the installation and operations of a “smart” ramp meter.

The ramp meters would be from Mill Plain to I-205 northbound; eastbound Padden Parkway to southbound I-205; 18<sup>th</sup> Street to I-205 southbound; and Mill Plain to I-205 southbound. The lane configuration option is at I-205 and SR-500. It would reduce I-205 southbound from three lanes to two lanes prior to the SR-500 overpass. Anticipated traffic demand will be evaluated for this section in conjunction with any upstream capacity improvements.

Commissioner Madore asked if the lane configuration option was just a restriping and could easily be undone in the future. Mr. Hart said that was correct.

Commissioner Mielke referred to the ramp meter at Padden Parkway and asked if a lane would be added first or the ramp meter added first. Mr. Hart said the ramp meter would be first. This is to say that it is not at capacity yet, so the ramp meter would help make it work better in the interim.

Mr. Hart addressed the Bus on Shoulder assessment. Both the RTP and the Clark County HCT System Plan called for several recommendations and Bus on Shoulder in the I-205 corridor was one of them. RTC consulted with C-TRAN and WSDOT staff to conduct a screening assessment of the HCT Plan recommendation for bus on shoulder. The assessment looked at several factors based on criteria identified by the Transit Cooperative Research Program. Mr. Hart provided a slide with the screening factors and the comments. Mr. Hart highlighted those findings which were also listed in the memorandum.

Based on the findings, bus on shoulder in the I-205 corridor may offer future opportunity for: improved transit reliability, travel time savings, expanded commuter ridership, and facilitate low-cost transit expansion in the corridor. However, further study is needed to examine in more detail the technical and policy details regarding implementation of timing of a project. Mr. Hart highlighted some of the issues the study would include.

Commissioner Madore said if the shoulder was upgraded to be thick enough to handle the buses and 12-foot wide, which is not much different than adding another through traffic lane for the freeway. He asked if in the evaluation there was consideration of having that lane be another travel lane. Mr. Hart said they had not considered that. Bus on shoulder is intermittent use as opposed to 2,000 vehicles an hour traveling on it. With bus on shoulder, buses only shift to the shoulder when they meet certain conditions. Buses may only travel on the shoulder for 15 minutes or 30 minutes a day, depending on the conditions that are occurring at the time. Bart Gernhart said this was correct. With FTA, WSDOT, and ODOT, if it is a travel lane, they require an additional whole shoulder for safety for emergency pull-off, flat tires, or enforcement, etc. Bus on shoulder would be an exception, because it is intermittent, short term use, high capacity use and would not require the extra shoulder to be built. He said there is quite a bit of difference in restriping and putting in a 12-foot shoulder than adding a whole new lane. On an Interstate, if there are three lanes, they need a whole 10-foot shoulder in addition. To be a general purpose lane or HOV lane for new construction, it requires a 10-foot shoulder.

Commissioner Barnes said he was recently headed back to Vancouver from Portland and at Jantzen Beach when a wreck occurred on the northbound I-5 bridge. He said it was a disaster watching the police cars, fire trucks, and aid vehicles trying to work their way through the traffic when there are no auxiliary lanes to use. People were not moving to the right side to allow passage for the assisting vehicles, and the frustration was evident on the police and fire crew drivers. Commissioner Barnes said auxiliary lanes are very necessary, and he is opposed to using them for other purposes.

Commissioner Mielke said the lanes on I-205 appear to be large 14-foot lanes and asked why they couldn't be reduced and restriped to make a 12-foot shoulder lane. Bart Gernhart said they are 12-foot lanes, the standard for an Interstate, so a substandard lane would not be allowed. Mr. Gernhart said a number of years ago a joint project with WSDOT and ODOT on the I-205 Glenn Jackson Bridge, they agreed to shift the striping over two feet toward the median keeping all lanes. This was in order to move the wheel ruts over to balance it out. This will allow 10-20 more years of life out of the bridge deck before they have to replace or overlay. That amounts to tens of millions of dollars to do that project. That is why they took two feet from the inside and added two feet to the outside. The inside shoulder went to 8-feet and the outside shoulder went to 12-feet. On an Interstate, they normally do not go to less than 12-foot. However, they do have some urban areas, where it is generally used for temporary conditions.

Commissioner Madore said he agreed with Commissioner Barnes that it is not smart to take away shoulders like they have on I-84 in order to build light rail. Commissioner Madore said the Transit Operations presentation referred to the Clark County High Capacity Transit System Plan. He said that is obsolete and out of date. It shows the CRC light rail into downtown Vancouver and HCT corridors. He said he assumes that we will revisit that and make sure we do not build on a foundation that is no longer valid.

Matt Ransom said the Plan referred to was adopted by the RTC Board in 2008. It is not part of the work plan projected in 2015 to update. Typically a plan like this, there is only one project that is nearing implementation, which is the Fourth Plain BRT project. There are several other corridors that are identified as priority corridors for future implementation, for example Highway 99 bus rapid transit, Mill Plain east bus rapid transit, and today's discussion of I-205 bus on shoulder. At this point, it is not on the work plan to update. Typically, that is done on a ten year interval or once you reach a point where it is determined by the Board that it is not relevant anymore.

Chair Burkman said once the RTP is complete, the Board could choose to add this to our work program and go back and visit it. Commissioner Madore said that is a big project that is no longer on the table, and we need to reconsider that. Also, how we are building on that foundation and referencing the high capacity transit along the I-205 corridor. He said he assumes that if the shoulders are changed to a dedicated lane for the bus rapid transit, it would require a vote of the people under 81.104. Chair Burkman said 81.104 would only require a vote if there was use of specific transit revenue options authorized in the state statute. . Bob Hart said the recommendations for I-205 involve additional bus service from Salmon Creek to the south, bus on shoulder where available, and transit stations on the freeway. They are relatively small capital projects. Chair Burkman said it is a possibility to come back next year and look at

that and be briefed on what the Plan did and did not say. It was predominantly bus rapid transit; the only light rail segment referenced was across the I-5 Bridge.

Commissioner Mielke asked if the high capacity transit needs to be addressed differently in the RCW, because that requires a vote of the people. He said he didn't think a bus rapid transit would. Chair Burkman said an Attorney General's statement says that if 81.104 money is used, then there are certain requirements, a vote and such. If that money is not used, then a vote is not required. We are not talking about 81.104. We are talking about a long range plan, and particularly about I-205 and what we do in a short segment.

Bob Hart said when they developed the operational strategies for I-205, they applied operational strategies in the I-205 corridor. The I-205 Study represents the first comprehensive assessment of low cost/low capital corridor wide improvements in the region and may serve as a model for how and when operational freeway improvements are addressed in other corridors within the region.

Operational Policies for freeways include: manage limited access freeways using operational strategies to address recurring congestion, bottlenecks, and incidents; consider corridors with high congestion and potential for improved flow, efficiency, and throughput; include incident management, ITS, ramp metering, expanded transit, and other tools; and design should consider ways to enhance person throughput and freight efficiency.

The analysis factors for operational strategies include: short and long term cost; short and long term life-cycle; positive impact on traffic flow, person/freight throughput or safety; delay, replace, or complement RTP capital improvement; and impact of future improvement on need for the operational improvement.

The implementation policies for ramp metering include: consult with affected agencies; consider mainline flow/reliability and impact on arterial operations; use smart meters for freeway/arterial balance; turn off when not needed; and consider ramp bypass where feasible for transit, freight, and person throughput.

Mr. Hart said as next steps they will: incorporate the I-205 core projects into the 2035 RTP; coordinate with WSDOT on strategy findings and develop approach for implementation; charter and scope interest in bus on shoulder feasibility study with WSDOT, C-TRAN, and Oregon agencies; and refine and draft recommendations on regional operational policies for limited access freeways.

Commissioner Madore asked if we are talking about bus on shoulder for the Washington side of the river only, is it appropriate to have Oregon agencies participating in the study. Mr. Hart said they are looking at the full corridor, so they would need to have Oregon participation. C-TRAN bus service goes from SR-14 south with stops at Park Rose and at Gateway to I-84. They want to look at the full corridor with bus on shoulder, so they would need Oregon participation as well. In order to get the maximum benefit for C-TRAN bus service, they need to look at the full corridor for bus on shoulder. Commissioner Madore said he assumed that study would compare that potential to express bus service. Mr. Hart said express bus service is there now, and they would add bus on shoulder with that when the times in the corridor are breaking down and speeds are low, then the bus can move from the main line onto the shoulder. It is only used at

the time when that need occurs. Chair Burkman said that needed to be clear. This is not about turning the shoulder into a sustained bus operation. The shoulder is only used under conditions of great congestion for buses only.

Councilor Craddick asked if there was ever any discussion on having a HOT lane and using congestion pricing. Mr. Hart said they did not look at that in this study. They looked at low cost, simple to implement ways to address vehicle delay.

Commissioner Madore asked if Councilor Craddick was suggesting tolling the I-205 bridge. She said she was looking at congestion pricing in the corridor, not necessarily the bridge, since congestion pricing can be beneficial to a system. Councilor Craddick said she had just been in Minneapolis and was very impressed with their system.

#### **IX. 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update**

Matt Ransom referred to the 2035 RTP Update memo included in the meeting packet. The matrix of the process was provided on the last page. They are currently working on the financial forecasts and project prioritization. Work is continuing with agencies' staff on the project list to ensure inclusion in the RTP list of projects. RTC is the assembler of the project list and not the proponent of the project list. The regional conversation first comes from the local agencies making recommendations for inclusion on the RTP list. RTC does not cut things in or out of the project list based on their discretion, with the exception that projects do need to meet criteria. Those criteria are listed on page 2 of the memo and include: A project must be listed in an agency long range comprehensive plan, capital facilities plan, Transportation Improvement Program, etc. There is consistency between plans. Mr. Ransom said at last month's meeting there was discussion of including a project in Clark County. He said they are working with Clark County staff to make sure it is on their Capital Facilities Plan before it's included. Mr. Ransom said the Board did make the motion, but they cannot include it yet until the County makes some validation that it going to be on their Capital Facilities Plan. Projects must also have a purpose and need. There must be a cost estimate, and it should be reasonable – something that could be implemented within 20 years. Bob Hart will provide information on financial forecasting.

Commissioner Madore said related to what was said, from last month's meeting, a document lists the CRC project. He said that is a very costly project. He asked if the RTC Board would be going through a vetting process to indicate if that was appropriate to be listed. Commissioner Madore said at this point it is not on a state list and asked how they remove it from the project list.

Matt Ransom said that project was given to the RTC by the Washington State Department of Transportation. That is a project on their Highway System Plan, regardless of the funding situation the project confronted a year ago. It is still on their master plan, and they submitted it to RTC for inclusion in this year's Plan. Mr. Ransom said the project has a regional need. It has a purpose and need and has a cost estimate they received. Councilor Craddick said it is still on the Oregon Plan as well. Chair Burkman said this is not our filtering of the information coming from the jurisdictions; this is an accumulation of the Plans that are rolling forward. Mr. Ransom said that was correct. He said once that list is assembled, the Board can certainly have the

discussion among members as to the merits of any given project. This is a regional coordination process. Chair Burkman asked at what point the Board would have the ability to go through the Plan and make determinations. Mr. Ransom said it would be appropriate when a draft Plan is issued. If there was an interim observation about the merits of the project and raise the questions, those questions would have to be given back to the agency that presented the project. Chair Burkman recommended moving forward with a draft and work from that draft Plan, so everyone is looking at the same list of projects.

Commissioner Mielke asked why the legislators have not made it clear that it was removed from the project list, yet the DOT is still moving it forward. Bart Gernhart said that is about funding for projects. The RTP list of projects is not about what projects get funding. It is about deficiencies that we have. We still have that deficiency that still needs to be addressed. Commissioner Mielke said the County has deficiencies that are not on the list. He said it needs to be made clear or we need to contact our legislators and have them talk with DOT.

Commissioner Barnes said recently the Federal Highway Administration said the funding and the process for the Columbia River Crossing would be still held in effect until the year 2019. He asked if that means WSDOT has been directed by the Feds to keep that in the process until 2019 to see if the state of Washington and the state of Oregon are going to have to pay back their money or be able to move forward and not pay back.

Bart Gernhart said his understanding of the letter Commissioner Barnes is referring to is that they agreed not to require repayment of the money spent on the project until 2019. At that point in time, it would have to be revisited.

Rian Windsheimer pointed out what had already been said, that the RTP is a planning document. It is a 20 year needs list and however to address those needs. There is a lot of time and effort work, studies, environments work and other things that went into producing what is listed today in both the Oregon and Washington Plans. This was an issue that was considered as part of the RTP update on the Oregon side, and the Bi-State Committee made a recommendation that the project remain in the project list until there is a time that there is something produced that helps us meet that demand. There are a couple letters that would be appropriate for that discussion at a future point.

Chair Burkman said they have a letter from Division Administrators of Oregon and Washington for the Federal Highway Administration. He said he has asked the Executive Director to distribute to Members. The letter refers to the extension of the funds. The last part of the letter states "...it is reasonable for FHWA to grant a time extension to WSDOT and ODOT until September 30, 2019, per the provisions set forth in 23 CFR 630.112(c)(2). During the extension period, we will continue to work with WSDOT, ODOT, and others on resolving the remaining challenges and moving forward with the construction of transportation improvements that meet the purpose and need underlying the CRC project." Chair Burkman said it is saying there is still a need in the corridor, and that is what this is about. Chair Burkman said there is also a letter from the Federal Transit Administration back to Representative Jaime Herrera Beutler about the definition of high capacity transit, and asked that that letter also be distributed to Members. Chair Burkman said it was well said that this is a planning process, and a long term process.

Commissioner Madore asked that the referenced letters be included with the meeting minutes as well. *The [FHWA letter](#) and the [FTA letter](#) are both included with the October meeting materials on RTC's Web page.* Commissioner Madore asked about process and asked who was driving? Is it the legislature that identifies the major priorities doing multi-billion dollar projects, or is it WSDOT that informs the elected officials of what they want?

Bart Gernhart said as he stated earlier, there is a difference between a planning level document and planning policy and funding. Clearly, the legislature has taken the reins on funding since 2003. They take the lead on what big projects they will fund. They do not make those decisions on paving projects, etc. but they have on the mobility of the Interstate projects in the state of Washington. They have taken that lead, and he said he assumed it would probably stay that way. The planning is still required by federal law and state law and has to be done at this level. This is the planning process, which is completely separate from the funding and taxation issues. It is two separate processes. They should mesh and link up in the end. It doesn't always work perfectly given the many levels of government.

Commissioner Madore said this indicates that this is not a rubber stamp Board, but we are a deliberative in a process to consider the appropriateness of whether or not it meets the criteria of probable funding in the future. Chair Burkman said this is a planning document. There is a project with a specific purpose and need. If we ask WSDOT what the cost of meeting that purpose and need is, it is that kind of cost that has a name of an old project on it. It could have a new project name on it, but the same purpose and need are there. The RTP lists the deficiencies that we must address over the next 20 years. The discussion now is around the financial forecast; what is reasonable to assume that we will have for money.

#### **A. Finance Forecast**

Bob Hart referred to the memorandum included in the meeting packet and said the RTP finance plan includes financial assumptions, revenue sources and projections, cost estimates for projects, and system maintenance and preservation. The RTP must be "fiscally constrained" or a reasonable expectation that revenues will be available for projects and maintenance and preservation.

Mr. Hart said RTC has worked with the Washington State Department of Transportation's Strategic Planning and Finance Division to compile historical and forecast transportation revenue information. Data is also being compiled from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) which provides support to the WSDOT's Finance Division. The primary data sources for the revenue forecast consist of historical state and federal gas tax and revenue generated and received by Clark County from 2003 to 2012, and receipts and expenditures report to the WSDOT Finance Division by Clark County and the Cities from 2002 to 2012. Methodology and assumptions were reviewed with WSDOT finance, RTAC, and Public Works Directors. A workshop was held on September 25 with jurisdictions' public works directors to discuss and share information on the approach for developing the local revenue forecast. Their feedback on future debt service obligation and preservation and maintenance needs resulted in refining estimates of local transportation revenue. A summary of the methodology is listed on page 2 of the memorandum.

Mr. Hart said a key element of the RTP is that it must be fiscally constrained, which means that the financial plan must show that there is a reasonable expectation that the forecast of available revenues will provide for the list of projects identified in the 20+ year time frame of the RTP.

Mr. Hart provided a slide showing the RTP Capital Costs by Mode, which was also shown in the memo. The I-5 corridor costs are separate from this, because they have their own finance plan. The chart represents all other project costs. Mr. Hart highlighted those cost estimates. Also presented was a chart of all the transportation revenues through 2035. The revenue forecast shows that additional revenue is needed to fund the 2035 capital projects; therefore, projects in the plan would need to be deleted or new revenues identified to make a fiscally constrained RTP.

There is a revenue need of \$164 million to fund the RTP capital projects. This forecast recognizes the need for new transportation revenue to fund projects in the RTP and assumed new revenue that would be equivalent to a modest state gas tax increase of 4.5 cents a gallon implemented in 2016. Future new revenue is consistent with historical trends for the state, which has increased the gas tax five times since 1984. Other state options include: sales tax on gas, gas tax linked to inflation, and mileage based fees. If state funding does not occur, regional options could generate \$8 million to \$10 million a year. Regional options include local fuel tax, sales tax, and license renewal fees.

Commissioner Madore asked if the local fuel tax is used to generate \$8-10 million, what is that within Clark County when translated to cents per gallon. Mr. Ransom said it is 10% of the state gas tax, about 3.72 cents. It is by statute restricted to 10% of the prevailing gas tax.

Mr. Hart said staff is working on final review of the preliminary forecast for the regional system and is currently in the process of developing the estimate of future preservation and maintenance costs for state and local roadways and transit facilities. Staff will also begin drafting the Financial Plan chapter of the Regional Transportation Plan

Chair Burkman said that a shortfall was shown of \$165 million. He asked if we need to dial back our project list to match that. Mr. Hart said we need to either dial it back or we can assume there is a new funding package of some kind. In order to make up that money over 21 years, if the state package came out at 4.5 cents a gallon starting next year and we got our fair share, we would fulfill that need. Chair Burkman said this would at a high level, assume historical revenue generation and that would not be enough so you expect there would be another piece of revenue come in equivalent to 4.5 cents of gas tax. Assuming all of that comes in over the next 20 years, all this meets the definition of a “fiscally constrained” plan. Mr. Hart said that was correct. The last two gas taxes are committed so we do not have access to those.

## **B. Travel Forecast and Transportation System Performance**

Mark Harrington presented information regarding the 2035 year travel forecast and transportation system performance for the RTP update. Most of the comparisons are between a base year of 2010 and the 2035 horizon year. The 2035 household and employment forecast used in the RTP analysis is based on the draft forecasts developed in the ongoing GMA update process being led by Clark County. Mr. Harrington provided a series of slides with information shown in graphs.

The first graph showed the growth in average weekday travel demand for Clark County residents measured in person trips. Person trips are individual trips regardless of mode – auto, shared ride, transit, walk, bike, school bus, or skateboard. Person trips do not include freight and commercial truck travel. Between 2010 and 2015, person trips grow from 1.5 million to over 2.3 million – about a 47% increase. As the county’s population grows, so does the county’s travel demand.

The next graph showed the amount of regional roadway lane miles within the county. Mr. Harrington noted that the measures do not account for every road; thousands of lane miles of local and neighborhood roads have been excluded as the focus in the RTP is on regional travel. The draft RTP list of projects increases regional lane miles by about 5.5% through the widening of existing facilities, the completion of gaps in the current system, and the development of new regional roadway facilities. Mr. Harrington said if person trips are thought of demand, the regional highway and roadway system can be considered as supply to meet the demand.

In addition to expansions of the regional road network, transportation supply can be expanded by increases in transit service levels. The graph shows the increase in transit service levels within Clark County. This represents about an 18% increase in fixed-route transit service levels within Clark County. Mr. Harrington said this raises the question of how the region’s transportation system performs given this increase in transportation supply and the 47% increase in travel demand.

One measure for system performance is to look at lane miles of congestion. The graph shown was for the p.m. peak hour of 2010 (base year), a No-Build 2035 future where the RTP draft list of projects are not in place, and a 2035 future that includes the full list of RTP projects. The graph looked at congestion across the whole system next to only limited access facilities such as I-5, I-205, SR-500, and SR-14. Mr. Harrington highlighted those results. He said while the increases in travel demand does increase the amount of congestion, the RTP results in reducing that increase by half for the entire system and by over one-third for limited access facilities. The RTP also results in fewer vehicle miles traveled and an increase in average speeds over the no-build case.

Mr. Harrington addressed transit use. He said while person trips by auto and walk/bike modes increase around 47% - person trips by transit increase by nearly 69%. This indicates an overall increase in transit mode share. In 2010, auto is 94.6%, transit is 1.1%, and walk/bike (half of which is school) is 4.3%. In 2035, auto is 94.5%, transit is 1.25%, and walk/bike is 4.25%.

Commissioner Madore said C-TRAN is moving less passengers than they were in 1998. He questioned if the forecast back then had a forecast such as this. Mr. Harrington said the forecast would depend on a couple of things: one would be what the land use looks like and what the service levels are. In 1998, C-TRAN had a greater amount of service on the ground than today. That is the main driver in their number of ridership. Chair Burkman said funding is also an issue. Mr. Harrington agreed, saying that is why C-TRAN’s service levels have come down. Commissioner Madore said they are increasing fares and continuing to lose ridership.

Mr. Harrington said a big part of transit use is related to access to transit. He said while there is an increase in transit mode share, the overall percentage of Clark County households and jobs that can walk to transit declines in the future. Households drop from 48% to 41% and jobs drop from 72% to 56%. The increase in transit usage is primarily due to infill and increasing urban

densities within existing transit corridors along with increased levels of transit service within those corridors, including the deployment of park and ride facilities.

Mr. Harrington would next focus on looking at travel across the Columbia River. This data focuses upon the cross-river travel of Clark County residents only. This is person trips. While the person trips across the river increase for work and for all trips, the increase is only 24% for work trips and 25% for all trips. This is considerably less than the 47% they are seeing countywide. Cross-river they are seeing a lower demand for travel across the river as they move forward, but percentage wise it is still getting higher. Commissioner Madore asked if there were records that would split that between the I-5 and I-205 bridges. Mr. Harrington said this is a look at the whole system with the land use that is forecast to be in place.

Mr. Harrington showed the growth in average weekday person trips by travel mode for Clark County residents traveling over the Columbia River. For all trips it is about 24%, on transit it is getting closer to 88%. The work trips more than doubles transit ridership. This is doubling transit usage for work trips across the river and nearly doubling all transit trips across the river. For net new work trips, about 17% would utilize transit. For all new trips across the river by transit is about 11%.

A 47% increase in travel demand is accommodated with a 5.5% increase in regional lane miles and an 18% increase in fixed route transit service levels. This indicates that in Clark County we have a robust, multi-modal regional transportation system that is able to handle significant growth in demand through transit use, ITS, operational improvements, and target capital investment in the road system that enable us to use the system we have more efficiently. This is vital to our region's economic vitality.

Compared to the "no-build case, the RTP has half as many lane miles of congestion; lowers the number of vehicle miles traveled; and increases average travel speeds. This demonstrates that lower congestion levels are good for the economy, freight movement, and personal travel. It lowers emissions, higher speeds, less fuel use, and better air quality.

RTC results show transit mode share increasing, both intra- and inter-county. Results also show it significantly increases cross river transit mode share for work trips from 4% to 7%, and nearly 11% of all net new cross-river trips are made by transit, as cross-river transit demand almost doubles.

Commissioner Madore said he was curious where the numbers were coming from. He said he did not see them coming from C-TRAN, because he sees those declining. Mr. Harrington said this is a forecast from 2010 to 2035 – 20 years from now.

## **X. Other Business**

### From the Board

Rian Windsheimer would provide an ODOT: I-5 Bridge Condition Update. Matt Ransom noted a memo from ODOT State Bridge Engineer regarding the condition of the bridges was distributed to members. Mr. Windsheimer said this memo is in response to the request of information that came from the discussion at the last meeting. The main question was around seismic stability. There is a Seismic Summary listed on the back of the memo.

Larry Smith had a question that he said has come up several times regarding a Federal sufficiency rating. The northbound I-5 bridge built in 1917 has a Federal sufficiency rating of 18.5 out of 100. He asked what that means and how it relates to an elected body to have concern and take action.

Mr. Windsheimer said there is a difference between functionally obsolete and structurally deficient. Bridges are not structurally deficient, but they are functionally obsolete. The talk has been around the current condition of the bridges not being adequate to serve existing uses. If you were to build a new bridge, what would you want - enough capacity to meet the demand and shoulders to address the emergency needs? The current bridge has narrow width, low vertical clearance and low design load. When the bridges were built, they met those demands. This says that the bridges are not meeting those demands/needs. Mr. Windsheimer said as for the seismic stability and if they are adequate, they are working now. They are continuing to maintain them and keep them operational.

Chair Burkman said the memo also provides an operational summary and a cost estimate of the needs to repair and maintain the bridges. He said it is working as long as there is not an earthquake, but it is going to take a lot of money to keep doing that.

Commissioner Madore said it states that both bridge structures are built with wooden pilings supporting piers. He said that may cause alarm that they will fall apart and rot. Commissioner Madore pointed out that FHWA still recommends wood pilings for submerged structures, because they last thousands of years. He said this is not very informative. It would be informative to compare this bridge to other bridges in the area. He asked how to find the health of the other bridges in the area.

Bart Gernhart said they have these ratings on every bridge. Chair Burkman asked for that information be distributed to Board Members. He also asked for an engineering assessment for correctness of the statement of pilings lasting thousands of years. Commissioner Madore said he put the reference to that on the eastcountybridge.com website. He also asked for a link to the bridge information for comparison. Mr. Gernhart said they have the State bridges; Clark County will have the information on their bridges.

From the Executive Director

Matt Ransom noted the listing of a Regional Project Showcase and copies were distributed to members. He said it was discussed several months back, and today's TIP presentation really brings home the mission of RTC under the statute of the MPO is to distribute regional federal aid funds. It is a competitive application process, each jurisdiction applies, they are ranked, and hopefully the best project comes to the top. As a region, the Board selects projects that are diverse in nature. He said he thought it would be appropriate on occasion when projects are completed, that we begin to document so we have a record as a region of the types of projects that we fund. He said we have a simple record, but as a regional body have something we could refer back to that has a picture and some comments from the jurisdictions as to what they achieved from the project along with the cost. This could be a useful tool for RTC staff as well as the RTC Board and the public. This would show how the money was being spent and the great things that we are accomplishing as a region. The first project to come out is not a major project; it's a crosswalk. These are the types of projects funded by this organization through the

federal aid process. This is a crosswalk in the City of La Center on Aspen Avenue at 18<sup>th</sup> Street. It was funded through the TAP fund process. This is an every other year competitive grant cycle. It used to be called the Federal Enhancement Program, which funds pedestrian, bicycle, trail type projects. It was renamed under MAP-21 to be the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Mr. Ransom highlighted some of the project information as listed on the handout. Mr. Ransom said most importantly, this project improves pedestrian safety across one of the busiest streets in La Center. Mr. Ransom said they will start to add these projects to an inventory. He said member agency staffs through the RTAC committee are being asked to help identify projects when they are completed. Mr. Ransom said they plan to use the tools they have and media to start to communicate to the public how the funds are used and the types of projects. They will be posted on RTC's Web page.

Mr. Ransom said the Clark County Transportation Alliance produces, and this Board adopts each year, an alliance statement, which becomes Legislative strategy. The organizers of that, Mark Brown and Identity Clark County organized tours, one last week and one forthcoming, with the State Legislative Contingent. Last week he assisted in guiding the tour for Senator Curtis King, Senate Transportation Co-Chair. Also on the tour was Senator Annette Cleveland. A couple jurisdictions had the opportunity to present. Mr. Ransom will also participate in a tour scheduled for October 30 with Representative Ed Orcutt, a Minority Member House Transportation Committee. Other local Representatives will be invited to tour as well. Mr. Ransom said this is to help focus our local delegation on the projects of regional priority. He said should there be a discussion in the 2015 Session about funding, this would help them be in tune and aware of our projects and advocate on our behalf. The legislative statement will come back to the RTC Board for ratification possibly in January.

As noted, JPACT meets Thursday, October 9, 2014, at Metro at 7:30 a.m., and C-TRAN Board of Directors meets at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 14, 2014, at Vancouver Library.

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

THERE WAS A MOTION AND SECOND FOR ADJOURNMENT. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

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Jack Burkman, Board of Directors Chair