

**Minutes of the Bi-State Meeting
May 25, 2004
Vancouver, Washington**

On Tuesday, May 25, 2004 the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Washington State Commission and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) staff held a meeting at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver Washington beginning at 6:00 p.m. Notice of these meetings had been made by press release of local and general circulation in Oregon and Washington. Those attending included:

OTC Chair Stuart Foster	WTC Chair Aubrey Davis
OTC Commissioner Gail Achterman	WTC Commissioner Ed Barnes
OTC Commissioner Randy Papé	WTC Commissioner Dale Stedman
ODOT Director Bruce Warner	WTC Commissioner Elmira Forner
ODOT Deputy Director for Highways John Rosenberger	WSDOT Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald
ODOT Communications Administrator Patrick Cooney	WSDOT Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Operations John Conrad
ODOT Region 1 Manager Matthew Garrett	WSDOT Southwest Washington Region Administrator Don Wagner
ODOT Chief of Staff Lori Sundstrom	WTC Commission Secretary Jennifer Ziegler
ODOT Federal Liaison Jason Tell	WSDOT Mary Legry
OTC Commission Secretary Jill Pearson	Clark County Commissioner Craig Pridemore
Chris Warner, Gov. Kulongoski's Office	
Harry Bennet, Federal Highway Administration	
Metro Councilor Rex Burkholder	

- Washington State Chair Aubrey Davis welcomed everyone.

Oregon Department of Transportation Director Bruce Warner talked about the letter that was sent and the reason for the bi-state meeting. Both chairs want to deal with the I-5 corridor. They want the project well coordinated.

Director Warner said that Oregon and Washington share a common transportation choke point – the Interstate 5 Corridor highway and rail bridges that connect the two cities across the Columbia River.

These crossings are of strategic importance to freight transportation in the Portland-Vancouver area and the Pacific Northwest, but their ability to effectively support freight movement and the regional economy is threatened by growing congestion.

We know this – the duration of peak-period congestion at the I-5 Columbia River Crossing will double from 4 hours today to nearly 10 hours in 2020.

The congestion will spread into the midday period, which is the peak travel time for trucks. This will increase the cost of delay to trucks by 140 percent – from \$14 million in 2000 to \$34 million in 2020.

Congestion at the Columbia River crossing is not just a local problem; it is a Pacific Northwest problem. The region's economy is built on transportation-intensive industries. Agriculture, construction, transportation equipment and utilities, wholesale and retail trade and manufacturing make up 54 percent of the Oregon and Washington economy, but only 49 percent of the national economy. As a consequence, the Oregon and Washington economy is more dependent on safe, efficient and reliable transportation.

Congestion at the I-5 Columbia River Crossing is affecting business and industry across the region by increasing shipping and production costs.

The cost of congestion at the I-5 Columbia River crossing will become an even greater drag on the economy in the future as the region grows and the demand for travel increases.

The Portland-Vancouver area and the Pacific Northwest can expect freight volumes to grow at rates faster than the national average – between 1998 and 2020 import/export freight tonnage is forecast to grow 123 percent, and domestic freight tonnage 76 percent.

Put simply, the region must provide the capacity to handle this growth effectively or risk weakening our economy and quality of life.

The challenges and opportunities have been identified. The Departments of Transportation in Oregon and Washington along with the regional partners have embarked on a coordinated effort to act promptly, decide on a course of action, and identify sources of funding for Columbia River crossing improvements in the I-5 transportation corridor.

FOCUS OF THE CURRENT WORK [February 2004 – August 2005]

The current work is purposely limited to the "Bridge Influence Area" between Columbia Blvd. and SR 500, addressing how to improve the bottleneck at the river crossing through:

- a. Supplementing or replacing existing I-5 bridges;
- b. Providing high-capacity transit across the Columbia River

The scope of work focuses on those work elements that must be completed in order to advance a project as quickly as possible through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. We believe that it is substantially quicker and less expensive to

develop the structure for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) now before starting the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), by resolving:

1. Which promising alternatives to advance
2. Modeling and funding assumptions
3. Organizational and procedural issues
4. Intergovernmental issues

The scope reflects these objectives and includes:

- Tolling research and analysis
- Traffic: traffic diversion impacts of tolling only 1 bridge
- Finance: tolling revenues for single & two bridge; uses of tolling credits
- Conceptual engineering: identification of alternatives for DEIS
- Public Involvement/Communications

Director Warner concluded by saying the I-5 corridor is the most critical segment of the region and the Pacific Northwest's transportation system. The corridor provides access to many of the region's most important industrial sites and port facilities, and is a link to jobs throughout the region.

Worsening congestion in the I-5 corridor will have major impacts on the region's economy and the entire West Coast if left unchecked. I-5 is the primary economic lifeline on the West Coast, and the economy of the entire State of Oregon depends on this connection.

This effort allows us to take the next step in addressing the single greatest transportation challenge: congestion in the Interstate Corridor that threatens the movement of freight and the region's jobs and economic recovery.

From February 2004, to August 2005, the work will focus on the segment from SR 500 to Columbia Blvd. We need to supplement the old bridge. It is important to look at tolling and traffic research and analysis. The Departments of Transportation are working hard on identifying alternatives. I-5 is the critical link in the NW transportation system.



Secretary MacDonald addressed the commissions. The two sides of the river are linked. Secretary MacDonald gave his view of why this is so important. WASHDOT is blessed with \$6 million from the federal government at a time when it is desperately needed to plan for this project to move ahead. Secretary MacDonald is afraid that Washington will not have something to show for that money in a year or two. In order to guarantee that the project happens, it is very helpful for the departments to be talking with our leadership, the people whom we are accountable to, about what is going to be happening to the money and have an open and continuous and very structured process in order for the public to see.

Washington is very mindful of the work that has already been invested in the project by others, including constituencies on both sides of the river, going back many years. This is not the beginning of the process. It is a continuation of an effort that has received a lot of attention. The Bi-State Transportation Committee, the work of the Bi-State Task Force and the report which both commissions have accepted and endorsed has laid a strong and firm foundation for a need to go ahead with this project. There are still a lot of implementation steps for people to sort through. This effort will only work with a commitment from everyone, including public participation.

One of the experiences that WASHDOT has had that relate to this project is the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Project in Seattle. It is an expensive project surrounded by a lot of controversy. It has been a challenge for WASHDOT and they have spent a lot of time on it.

Over the last two-plus years, WASHDOT has teed up the process for the environmental impact process and taken the project through a lot of community participation. They are finally at the threshold of making some really important decisions. How successful those decisions are remains to be seen. Secretary MacDonald cannot yet claim success, he can only report on what has been done so far that has been useful. The sum of this is that while WASHDOT was thinking about the environmental kinds of issues presented in the traditional EIS type of analysis, they were also thinking very hard about the engineering issues, constructability issues and feasibility issues. In other words, the nuts and bolts issues of how that project will come together. This is all not to get ahead of the community process and the environmental process, but to better inform the public and to give people who want to watch it and involve themselves in the process something to get their teeth into; something that has had the benefit of strong engineering development.

WASHDOT believes that engineering is a very important contribution to citizen's abilities to come into the process and weigh in with effective involvement in shaping the way a project like this works. So far, WASHDOT had seen a very positive response to this in Seattle. WASHDOT wants to bring that same spirit to this project. They will do some of the hard detail work to give people substance as they move toward the corridor decision making, the modal decision making and ultimately the process of the EIS will culminate. This is all just one thing that WASHDOT is trying to bring from its experience in Seattle. The Oregon Department of Transportation is doing some exciting things in terms of project delivery and both agencies will bring important insights to how to do this project together.

ODOT Director Bruce Warner summarized. It is very important to note that for once we have consensus that we need to move forward with improvements in the I-5 corridor on both sides of the river. We have agreement that we need a multi-modal solution in terms of the approach. We know we need to work together to address all the issues, whether it's highway, light rail, high capacity transit or heavy rail. At the same time, we want to address issues of transportation demand management or how we work better

according to land uses. There are many facets to this I-5 corridor that we know we need to work together on.

Secretary MacDonald concluded. This I-5 corridor is a critical national transportation asset. We face challenges everyday on this corridor with simple matters of management (closing bridges) as well as security issues. We will be living with this corridor crossing for a long time.



Don Wagner, Regional Administrator for WASHDOT for South West Washington, and Matt Garrett, ODOT Region 1 Manager, gave a presentation.

Don Wagner described the current direction that WASHDOT has been moving and the key milestones to date. As described earlier, this is a corridor, which is slightly larger than the bridge itself. The good news is there are many things that are already being done to advance on the corridor. Examples of real projects include the Delta Park Section in Oregon, which is moving through the EIS phase. In Washington the Salmon Creek section is under construction from the state nickel fund. These are projects that were included in the strategic plan as needed items. The size is typical of projects in the \$30-60 million dollar range. The big project is the bridge. It will cost roughly a billion dollars.

This is an area that has national significance. It is a choke point because of the on and off points. In the State of Washington, over half the freight that is moving out of Seattle or Tacoma via truck or train, travels south over the I-5 corridor and across the Columbia River before reaching the final destination. In South west Washington there are over 10,000 trucks per day using the corridor.

There is also rail congestion as both of the mainline railroads have to use a single bridge crossing. All of the crossings are lift-spans. As the lifts are restricted, it affects the economy. Washington is the most trade oriented state in the nation. Both Oregon and Washington are above number 10 and exported \$34 billion of products between the two states. That is twice the national average. As stated above, I-5 is the backbone of the West Coast economy. The fear is that we will be losing jobs as well as goods and services if this crossing is not fixed.

Don Wagner gave a history on how Washington arrived at its strategic plan (the black book handed out). In 1999 a 14 member bi-state leadership committee was sponsored by WASHDOT, ODOT and the local partners to consider the problem of growing congestion on the highway and rail system on the I-5 corridor. The committee recommended that the Portland / Vancouver region initiate a public process to develop a plan for the corridor based on the following four principles:

1. Doing nothing to the I-5 corridor is unacceptable.
2. There must be a multi-modal solution to the I-5 corridor, there is no silver bullet.

3. Transportation funds are limited, paying for improvements will require new funds.
4. The region must consider measures to promote transportation efficient development.

As a result of this work, in January 2001, Washington Governor Locke and Oregon Governor Kitzhaber initiated the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership (also known as the I-5 Partnership). It was a 28-member task force established to guide the development of the strategic plan for the corridor. After working for a year and a half, hosting six rounds of public meetings to get ideas and feedback from the community, involving over 1,700 individuals on the list of people who actually participated, the strategic plan was published. On pages 9-46 of this document, there is a detailed explanation of their findings and recommendations. In short, the recommendations said that the plan needed to cover transit, Interstate 5, additional rail capacity, land use, transportation demand, and system management, environmental justice and financing. In the last half of 2002 and in 2003, the strategic plan was formally endorsed by each and every governing body of local governments here in the Portland and Vancouver area, as well as the two commissions. This forms a foundation for the future efforts.

Matthew Garrett, ODOT Region 1 Manager, added that what was discussed already this evening are the foundations of what we are jumping off from. Now we are taking all the hard work that was developed by the I-5 Transportation Partnership and building upon it. We were fortunate to have the leadership of our congressional delegation to bring home about \$3.5 million and we have matched it with some local funds from both states. The conversations are moving in to something tangible. The effort to spend the federal dollars is underway. The bottom line is the strategic plan that Mr. Wagner talked about and the list of recommendations. The effort for the next 18 months is replacing or supplementing the bridge. Also, we want to provide high-capacity transit across the bridge into downtown Vancouver. We are trying to work with our local partners, businesses and citizens. We are trying to move forward to analyze the various funding options we will make a financial plan of how we will construct these improvements and we will work to refine some of the alternatives that have played themselves out in this effort. ODOT is trying to move very quickly in order to complete a draft EIS by 2007. Using all the work done since 1999, namely the work done in the I-5 Transportation Partnership.

We will have an aggressive communications and public outreach plan. We will be engaging the communities and the business folks within those communities. We will be there early and often. We will be reacting to their visions of what the fix is and supplementing that with the technical knowledge. This is a project that is not only planned for the physical transportation structure, but also for the aesthetic, social, economic and environmental values, needs, constraints and opportunities within the community. This is a new approach for ODOT. We are actually seeing it play itself out to some extent on the I-5 / Delta Park Project. Many folks are watching how we do

business on this project. The intent is to provide clear and concise information. There needs to be a collective wisdom brought to the table. We will speak in clear language and avoid technical terms. There will be a significant effort regarding environmental justice and the compliance efforts that we need to engage as we move through the communities. We will try to avoid and mitigate any disproportionate or adverse economic, social or health related effects caused by this effort. We will ensure full and fair participation.

The second part is more technical and data collecting, like traffic forecasting, diversion and demand. This sets the stage for how the movement is across the bridges and how the bridges are affected as we get into a tolling analysis. We will look at the way the traffic flows now; we will look at various revenue options to fund this project. Some of the ramifications may have impact on traffic forecasting and demand. We will look at existing analysis and the new traffic forecast.

We will look at tolling structures, like the rates, the times you can toll, and the types of vehicles. There are various methodologies to consider and we want to make sure we have a good foundation to judge from. This is not saying that we will toll, but it is a vital option to explore and we need to be better informed about it.

We will move to the conceptual engineering and the environmental analysis. We need to understand the basic guidelines, and this comes down to the way Washington and Oregon do business as transportation departments and we want to make sure that both states are synchronized in the guidelines and standards in regard to our bridges and approaches. We will refine the alternatives that will play themselves out through this DEIS process. The environmental considerations are critical. We will analyze and understand who and how we need to engage the various resources and regulatory agencies. We will also look at the regulatory and statutory issues that differ at the federal and state level. This is an economic conversation, not just transportation. This project has economic ramifications not just regionally, but throughout the northwest. The next 15 months will better inform us of where we need to go. We need to be technically smarter to address some of the issues that will come before us. We are moving from abstract conversations into something that's tangible. We want to move aggressively, but also make good informed decisions with the data we are gathering to date.

QUESTIONS

Oregon Commissioner Randy Papé asked in terms of the various modes in this overall project, how does rail fit into the time frame?

Matt Garrett, Oregon Region 1 Manager – Specific to the scope of work that is underway, that is a concurrent conversation.

Washington State Commissioner Dale Stedman asked a question concerning public outreach. This plan involves so many forms of transportation that he is curious how the

public outreach program will address all of the forms of transportation in a timely manner. How is the plan going to materialize by 2005? What is the system?

Don Wagner, Regional Administrator for WASHDOT for South West Washington, answered Commissioner Stedman's question. We know that this is going to be difficult, but this region has been working together on many projects in the past several years. We don't currently have a system in place that will ensure success. That is why we are here today; and over the next year we will gather data to figure out who the players are that need to be engaged for any kind of an improvement to be made. We believe that by gathering all the appropriate data and actually having all the key stakeholders at the table to help us guide the process, we will have our best chance of success. Certainly we will not have a completed environmental document in 2005, but we will have the basic data to tell us who needs to be at the table to start this process.

Washington Commissioner Ed Barnes addressed the commissions. As co-chair of the I-5 Partnership, when you talk about public outreach, the most important part in this whole process is to make sure that we do like we did with the I-5 Partnership – that it is all inclusive – everybody that has an interest between the two states. This bridge just doesn't affect Portland and Vancouver it affects the whole state. It goes all the way to the Midwest and through Oregon into California. When we are talking about putting people in a position that will make a recommendation, we have to make sure that we have the right folks there that are going to go out and sell it to the public and also to reach a consensus of however many people who are going to serve. In the I-5 Partnership, we had 28 people. When the vote was taken to endorse that process, we had one individual who had a problem with it from an environmental standpoint, but everybody else was on board. It was voted the number one project of its kind in this area. We need to make sure the two governors, Kulongoski and Locke, have the right people appointed (with the consensus of the secretaries and the two chairs) and that those appointed people are there to get the proper players in place to ensure everybody is represented, i.e. - neighborhood associations, chambers of commerce, the trucking industry, regional transportation councils, cities and counties – everybody has to be in place in order to be able to do that. Commissioner Barnes felt that if we don't do that, it will not be a success from his standpoint.

Matthew Garrett, Region 1 Manager from ODOT, agreed. He said he thinks folks are committed to this project. He thinks it is extremely important to have the appointed people, the elected officials, businesses and industry, civic leaders and citizens all involved. It is critical to sustain the effort.

There has been a lot of work done already. The I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership was an 18-month, very aggressive, intense effort. For us to sustain the effort, we have to deliver a product. That is the bottom line. That is why we are running a very aggressive timeline and streamlining. Will we have all the answers? Maybe not. Are we going to shoot for it? Sure. That is our goal. We have to deliver something. That is the one thing that has come back to us from those good folks who did engage their efforts and energy on the partnerships, and prior to that, the business folks who sat on a blue ribbon panel – deliver something – show us something is moving. That is what is

critical – sustain the effort and keep the energy up. People are committed now, but you have to show them something tangible. That is what this effort is all about.

Washington State Commission Chair Aubrey Davis said that Matthew Garrett realized a substantial element of clarification when he said that the rail issue is a concurrent issue. In other words it's not a part of the immediate process that we are talking about. That takes away a lot of important problems and certainly it is to be dealt with, but not using the same resources, the same time commitment, or the same people. What is being talked about is still a multimodal bridge of some kind, but essentially highway/bus. The rail issue is being worked on separately and it might or might not include light rail. Ultimately, it clarifies that we are not trying to solve all the problems of getting across the Columbia River.

Matthew Garrett confirmed that the challenges are still formidable.

Don Wagner, Regional Administrator for WASHDOT for South West Washington, added that the two states have a track record of being able to build bridges across this river. In 1917, after some thought, the first I-5 bridge was built. In the early '60s the second bridge, and 25 years ago, the I-205 Bridge was built. Each bridge had its challenges. Certainly, there were different laws in effect at the time. We now need to do the next 25 to 50 year fix. We can build on that track record of success. We just don't exactly know how we are going to do it.

WTC Chair Aubrey Davis added that all of those bridges were two-state, cooperative plans, with citizen interest on both sides.

Don Wagner confirmed that statement and that one of them actually created a new interstate corridor through the area.

Mr. Davis added that the viaduct issue in Seattle was more comfortable than it may seem, because between the state and the city, there are two major contending parties in a way that cities are not quite involved here, because that was Seattle's front door. It's very essential vitally to them. It also was a transportation corridor so it is just as vital to the state, so there are two major public agencies that are working together and a pattern has been developed there. That is the kind of pattern we want to replicate here. Two major public agencies working together in concurrence, consistently with a lot of other people who were brought into the act.

Bi-State Presentation

Craig Pridemore – Clark County Commissioner, who also serves on a Regional Transportation Council, C-TRAN, Bi-State Transportation and now Coordinating Committee, J-PACT, I-5 Trade Partnership – He welcomed everyone to Clark County. In February of 1995 this region attempted a very large bi-state transportation package with a light rail proposal. There were a lot of things that went wrong with that proposal. One of the things was how it engaged the public and brought them along with the decision. There was a campaign that had organizations like Tri-Met and ODOT coming

to Clark County and representing things that citizens in Clark County don't respond well to. It is extremely important that citizens in Clark County believe that they are a part of the process and that they have buy in. Whatever project comes out of this, and whatever funding mechanism is involved, we have a resumption that there is going to be a lot of local support to step up and pay a significant share of this project. The hope is that we will develop a process that engages the community to support whatever project we come out with. Since that 1995 vote, we have been doing a good job in developing a lot of regional partnerships. Mr. Pridemore is pleased to work with Councilor Burkholder and a lot of other folks on both sides of the river to make sure that we are all coordinating our values and messages to our communities so we can bring everybody along with our decisions.

Rex Burkholder – Metro Councilor, Chair of the Bi-State Coordinating Committee – Metro is not the transit agency in the Portland area. It is a regional planning and service district. Metro is responsible for doing the transit planning in the region as well as other transportation planning in the area. We helped start the Bi-State Transportation Committee a number of years ago as a sub committee of our Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation, which is part of our MPO structure at Metro. The council is the other part of that. That has now morphed under the commission's guidance (under the provision of the Bi-State I-5 Strategic Plan) to become a Bi-State Coordinating Committee. As a quick introduction, the difference is the fact that this group will also be looking at land use actions on both sides of the river and looking at how that affects transportation on I-5, looking at land uses around interchanges and looking at major land use. This kind of information will be shared at the Bi-State Coordinating Committee and then the discussion will take place about how this will effect the transportation along both sides.

Mr. Burkholder pointed out the letter in the packet from Metro. Along the side of the letterhead there is the broad range of signatories to the new charter of this committee. It is an independent committee now, independently chartered by each of these signatory governments. It includes the counties on both sides, the major cities on both sides, as well as the transit agencies, the ports and then the DOTs on both sides of the river. It is a great forum to get together and talk about issues in an area that really is one region. Craig Pridemore and Rex Burkholder shared a podium at the City Club of Portland and talked about the shared future of both sides of the river. The river is actually fairly narrow. It is not a major divider in our region. We have people who live and work on both sides. That is who Mr. Pridemore and Mr. Burkholder represent; the residents on both sides of the river. Both are ready to talk about how the Bi-State Coordination Committee can help WASHDOT and ODOT reach the goals that are laid out.

We start with the I-5 Strategic Plan. To start with, this is a really wonderful job which had an incredible amount of public input and an incredible amount of work. This plan stretched both DOTs well beyond their usual areas of looking at something as projects into looking at how this is going to shape the community both economically and socially over time. Because it is not just a river crossing project, it is much more than that. It had great broad participation and buy in from all the participating governments as well

as both transportation commissions. It is a very strong base for this work. We should not forget it.

There are some very important goals and components and they are all linked. That is the understanding of the participants who signed on to it - that it goes forward. The river crossing is one piece. The other pieces are managing land use, which is why the Bi-State Transportation Committee became a Bi-State Coordination Committee, so we can talk about the land use issues in order to preserve mobility and protect industrial lands in this corridor.

Another piece is a commitment to multi-modal solutions. High capacity transit is an integral part of this project. It is not a concurrent project. We don't know whether it will be light rail, high speed rail or buses, we don't know. That will come out of the environmental assessment. Getting high quality transit across the river is a key component. It also includes this bi-state coordination involvement of the local governments in all aspects of the project.

Finally, the commitment to environmental justice in this document is groundbreaking. It goes beyond mitigating the effects of this project or set of projects that come out of this process, but goes into mitigating for some of the past errors that happened on both sides of the river. Mr. Burkholder said that he represents north Portland. North Portland is just south of the river. 5,000 low income residents were displaced by the Interstate 5 project 30 years ago. The problems have continued since then. Besides being displaced, it has the highest rates of childhood asthma in the corridor along I-5. These are some issues that continue from past decisions that were made by our predecessors. We need to look at this as an opportunity, starting with the Delta Park project, to set up what is called for in this strategic plan; an environmental justice fund to go beyond just mitigation, but to say what can we actually do to give some benefits back to these communities that have borne a huge amount of the cost of hosting this large transportation facility. We have to remember that both Vancouver and Portland were here before the highway.

The Bi-State Committee is very interested, and as you can see the cast of characters there, brings you all your local government people, who will have to be involved in the land use and transportation decisions. We recognize that we are not the be-all and end-all. We think that we are a key component that allows you to build a group that includes the business community, local citizens, and other interest groups that should be at the table. We are a good core group that now has a 5-year history of regional cooperation across the river. We hope you will take us up on our offer to be the place that you will come to and say let's build on this, create the proper local involvement process for this major undertaking that will shape the future of both of our communities. Our letter goes into more detail. Mr. Pridemore was very modest. He has actually been the chair of this committee until just two weeks ago.

QUESTIONS

Commissioner Dale Stedman – How much of the cross bridge transit is commuter traffic? I assume that people in Vancouver work in Portland, and Portland people work in Vancouver. What kind of numbers are we dealing with here?

I believe it is about 55,000 Clark County residents come to Portland every day. About 12,000 Portland area residents cross to the Vancouver side every day. About 90% of those are single occupant vehicles. One out of eight vehicle trips that start in Clark County cross either of those bridges. The percentage of the total traffic on I-5 is better than 50%. These totals are for I-205 and I-5.

Interstate 5 has about 60% of the above numbers. I-5 is still not the corridor of desire. I-205 is. If you are familiar with the geography, we have two towns along I-5, we have two ports, large industrial business areas in Portland, large business area, high tech area in Washington County. It's still the main corridor.

Chair Davis – I would suspect that if the peak hour is about 50% as you were getting to on commuter trips, that means that because of traveling people like me going from Seattle to Ashland, or people from British Columbia going to California, or thousands of others coming across this very narrow place, you must have a high preponderance of more distant travel altogether.

Well, we do. That is a choke point issue and one of the key issues around freight. When people move their travel times outside of those peak hours in order to get across, of course there are a lot of choices for those longer trips that people might not want. By the time we get to that future year forecast, we have lost that mid day slump that allows some of that freight traffic.

Rex Burkholder – One thing that we are recognizing is that it is not two corridors – it is one corridor, especially for through traffic. It is kind of like the Seattle question. When do you travel through Seattle to avoid traffic? We are beginning to understand that these things feed off each other and they relate to each other quite a bit, these two corridors, even though they are fairly far apart. You have to remember that Oregon does not charge sales tax. A lot of people who cross the river are shoppers. Our different tax structures create this huge movement over to the Oregon side to go shopping. The Costco out near I-205 is largest grossing retail store in the world, I've heard. The parking lot is mostly full of Washington plates.

Commissioner Dale Stedman – If you have a viable, high capacity transportation system, what kind of numbers would that system draw off of these numbers?

Rex Burkholder – As our system on the Oregon side has developed, it has gotten much more effective at carrying people. The best example is I-84, or Highway 26 where at rush hour, about 30% of the people moving through the corridor are on the light rail. If you said you had to widen the highway to accommodate that, you would add two or three lanes to move people through during rush hour to accommodate the same

number of people. As it has matured and as you add legs, each leg becomes more effective because you have more options and places to go. I assume the I-5 corridor would, depending on the connections on the north side, and where it goes in the Vancouver area, it would carry a similar number across the bridge eventually. But, again, it has to develop over time.

Commissioner Randy Papé – Earlier this evening we heard about the importance of inclusion and having a broad stakeholder representation in this process. Both of you represent the Bi-State Committee and are suggesting that you take a position as being the core. If that were the case, how would you suggest broadening the stakeholder involvement and who would be involved? The current stakeholder committee is pretty constrained to governmental and transportation folks.

Craig Pridemore – Under the charter for the organization, the committee can expand itself to include additional folks that want in. The original recommendation out of the I-5 Trade Partnership was that it include some business and neighborhood folks, etc. It also contemplated perhaps someone from the Federal Highway Administration and transit systems. We can constitute it how we feel best.

Commissioner Randy Papé - It has just not evolved, being a young committee at this point in time?

Craig Pridemore – That is fair to say. The sense was that we at the local area needed to coalesce on this. Fortunately, because of the actions on both sides of the river, we have moved a lot further ahead in being able to pursue this project than we anticipated.

Commissioner Davis, you said something earlier that I want to clarify. That was in regard to the City of Seattle and the situation with the Alaska viaduct. As you will find out tomorrow when Mayor Pollard speaks to you, this is of tremendous concern to the City of Vancouver. The highway winds right through the heart of their downtown and the heart of their historical reserve.

Commissioner Gail Achterman – The last page of the packet we received from you has a Columbia River Crossing Project Planning EIS Scoping Phase Communication and Decision Making Process chart. I was interested in the top box, which says Washington and Oregon Transportation Commission roles to be determined following May 25, 2004 meeting. If the two of you were to describe what our roles being, what would they be?

Craig Pridemore – For my part I would see you as the final decision making body. I don't see you sitting through hours of the public coming or yelling at you about whether light rail is a good thing or a bad thing. I see that being the role that we would fill. We will be the ones who will take in all the public testimony and boil down the issues and walk the communities through the process and getting their buy in for it, so that when we come to you, we can say we have it all worked out.

Commissioner Gail Achterman – with the notion that the departments would be actively involved in the Bi-State Coordination Committee. After all, they are signatories already. Is that correct?

Craig Pridemore – Certainly, and very active participants. Both Matt and Don are there all the time.

Rex Burkholder – The one other role that I would add would be that you be the guardians of the process. Especially, a process as complex as this is going to be. It is always tempting to cut off all the extra stuff and get it done. Being citizens yourselves and being cognizant of the fact that we need to make sure that we are inclusive and transparent in our process. Your commissions will have a particular, special role in that. We are elected officials and could fall prey to the fact that we need to deliver something for our constituents or meet some need of our agency, but that is the importance of having citizen commissions like your own, is that you can be the one to say, "did you do this right?", and we don't want to do it unless it's done right. The final decisions are with the commissions. We are here to help make sure the process happens on the local level and then mush it all up and try to make some form out of it and then pass it on to you for the final decision because you have the authority to do that.

Commissioner Elmira Forner – It seems to me that Oregon has had their growth management act in place a lot longer than Washington State. It is difficult for local officials sometimes to recognize the need to accommodate and support transportation in the comprehensive plan. How do you feel that your local commissioners are going to provide that support for the plan?

Pridemore – Right now we are doing our ten-year update to the plan. If you are speaking specifically to the light rail component, the City of Vancouver plan will have the light rail loop as part of the planning process and will incorporate the concepts of this. Hopefully, as we have gone through our land use planning, we have taken a realistic look at how can we meet our facility needs. We are certainly trying to do that. We will see what happens in the next couple of months as we finalize the plan.

Secretary Doug MacDonald – I want to take just a minute to talk about a delicate problem. That is the fact that at least at WASHDOT, we want to have more discussion about this chart. That the two of you are here tonight is enormously important to us. The contribution that needs to come from both the committee and from everybody it represents is indispensable to this project. It would be unfair to you if after we made the presentation and having had a warm response to the letter, you were to leave with the notion that everybody is aboard the letter. I really want to work with all of this, at least on behalf of our department, to put things in a framework that will guarantee success. We want to do some more work on that. I want to invite more of that discussion rather than give people the sense that the letter stands as the last word on the topic.

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary for Engineering and Regional Operations of Washington State DOT, and John Rosenberger, Deputy Director for Highways for ODOT – Mr. Conrad said the good news is that we don't have another presentation. As

we worked on this agenda, we wanted to leave some time for the commissioners to have some conversation about where they wanted to go and be available to answer any further questions and then give us your marching orders as to what you would like us to see as we come back to meet next quarter. Some of the things that John and I have talked about are more on the organizational sense that we have been working together for quite some time now and, as two different DOTs that have different cultures and different ways of doing business, we have taken a while to get to where we are, but we are working well together. We need to start formalizing some of the things that we are doing. I believe ODOT is about ready to hire a project manager. We have Dale Himes on Don Wagner's staff as a project manager on the WASHDOT side. We are talking about co-locating them and having a team of consultants report to the two DOTs as a single entity working together. As it progresses, there will be a lot of formal agreements that will need to take place, but at this initial stage, we are trying to put together an MOU that spells out how we work together to start carrying out the studies.

John Rosenberger – I would echo that. We have been meeting, at least our staffs have been meeting weekly, on this project for the last six months. John and I have been meeting at least quarterly over the last year moving this project forward. Our staffs have outlined what an agreement should cover. You have heard many of the issues today on funding, co-location, a variety of issues that need to be decided – what is the decision making process that we are going to use, how are we going to settle disagreements that could potentially come up between the agencies. A lot of work has been done. By the September meeting of this group, we should be much farther along in terms of addressing some of these operational issues.

Chair Stuart Foster – I view this as critical to the region, and it's critical to the two states. It's critical to the west coast and the nation. This is a huge and complex issue. My expectations are that we need to develop a collaborative approach that involves the departments, the commissions – I think the commissions ultimately should be the decision makers has been said, and our public and private stakeholders. It must be an open and transparent process that brings everybody along – the citizens of the State of Washington and the citizens of the State of Oregon, citizens of Clark County, Metro – at this stage, I don't want us to focus on the chart either. My expectation is that the departments will come back with recommendations of how we can structure this. I would like to start with a clean slate. Maybe it would be a structure like we have seen, but I don't want to prejudge, today, how we are going to put this together to move it ahead as a team.

Chair Aubrey Davis – Stuart, I think you are right. I think that we do want to challenge the two Johns to bring back a more comprehensive document as to a structure of this relationship. We have to recognize that it has to be managed. We have to recognize that whatever happens needs to be cleared by two MPOs, there are a lot of other stakeholders that are interested and need to be considered. It is a challenge to get together a structure which appropriately represents all of those interests.

Commissioner Ed Barnes – I agree with Chair Foster. One of the things that I see is that we have representatives from the Governor's office, Federal Highway

Administration, and Washington State Legislature. The process has to be laid out in such a way that we keep both the Oregon and Washington legislatures, Federal Highway Administration and all those folks that are going to be key players and help us get the money necessary to do what we have to do with the I-5 project. They have to be well informed all the time so that we make sure that whenever we go up there with a proposal, or down to Salem with a proposal for money, for the state's share, that they are aware and on top of what we are doing all the time. We don't want to leave anybody out of the loop.

Commissioner Elmira Forner – Does Oregon have organizations like our Cascadia Institute - private organizations that look at these corridors all the time? Does Oregon work with those kinds of groups?

Chair Aubrey Davis – The answer, I know is yes. They meet in Eugene, Portland as well as meeting in Seattle, Vancouver and other places around the states.

Chair Stuart Foster – We all agree that we must have a multi-modal solution, a highway solution as well as a high capacity transit solution. I understand and agree with what was said that heavy rail and passenger rail is a concurrent process. It is important to move those processes forward on a parallel basis to the greatest extent we can because they are integrated with these impacts. We need some thoughts of how we can keep those projects moving. I am becoming more and more convinced that they are going to be critical to our economic survival. Let's keep moving and develop a strategy to keep those moving and figure out who our partners and stakeholders need to be. I want to get to a conclusion here. I want to have a solution and construct a project. We have talked about this study for a long time. We need to start this with the expectation that we'll bring it to conclusion within a finite date and that we will approach it on an innovative basis from a management standpoint, design standpoint, construction standpoint and financing standpoint. At a risk of sounding like a visioning issue, I do think that whatever solution we come up with has to have a significant positive visual impact for these communities. This is the front door of both of these communities. I would like us to have a budget for a Quonset hut, constructed from a security standpoint like a bunker, but that really looks good.

Commissioner Gail Achterman – As someone who has spent most of my life living in Portland, I remember very well when the bridge opened in 1958 and remember paying tolls to cross the bridge. There is an acceptance of tolling on a new facility on this crossing that doesn't exist in a lot of other areas that, at least, our commission deals with. It is a unique opportunity to study and address the tolling issues. I was very pleased to see that as an element. Given that neither state has the money to meet critical transportation needs, we must be careful as we think about tolling for this bridge. It can't be viewed as the goose that will lay the golden egg simply because it happens to be the big pinch point in the system. The needs in the metropolitan area are huge. We need to resist treating it like a golden egg. The two times it was tolled before, it was probably a mistake to take the toll off. Still, the concept of tolling it to pay for the cost of the billion dollar project is quite a bite. We need to keep our eye on getting this problem fixed and be very resistant to making it the goose that lays golden eggs.

John Rosenberger – At the next quarterly meeting we can bring back to you some recommendations both on the committee make-up, formalizing an agreement operating between the states and also give a status report on federal funding and where we are with the project.

Chair Aubrey Davis – Could you also pick up on Stuart's idea? Could you tell us what's happening on the other bridge?

John Rosenberger – Yes.

Commissioner Gail Achterman – I agree with Rex Burkholder. It is really difficult to talk about the I-5 Bridge and not talk about the I-205 Bridge simultaneously.

Commissioner Ed Barnes – If one were printing up minutes or sending out communications like the one here that has Attachment A with the background on it, one of the things that people need to remember that the I-5 corridor was put in by President Eisenhower as a defense highway. If you realize what is farther north, and with everything that is going on with the defense of this country we need to keep that in context and keep that in the documents, so when we go back there and apply for money they understand that we are funding a defense highway that carries a lot of military people.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



