Columbia River CROSSING

A RESOLUTION OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING TASK FORCE TO PROVIDE DIRECTION TO THE COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT ON KEY DECISIONS FOR A LOCALLY PREFERED ALTERNATIVE

WHEREAS, the I-5 Interstate Bridge is one of only two Columbia River crossings between Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon and approximately 150,000 people rely on crossing the I-5 Bridge daily by car, transit, bicycle and on foot; and

WHEREAS, the existing structures are aging and in need of seismic upgrade, and the closely-spaced interchanges are in need of safety improvements; and

WHEREAS, the movement of land and water-based freight is hindered by the current crossing, and

WHEREAS, high capacity transit does not currently connect Vancouver and Portland, and the bicycle and pedestrian paths do not meet current standards; and

WHEREAS, the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Final Strategic Plan recommended congestion and mobility improvements within the I-5 Bridge Influence Area in 2002; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing Task Force was established in February 2005, to advise the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Washington State Department of Transportation on project-related issues and concerns; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing Task Force advised development of the project's Vision and Values Statement, alternatives development, and narrowing of the alternatives to five that would be studied in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing project is committed to implementing the principles of sustainability into project planning, design and construction in order to improve the natural and social environment and the regional economy whenever possible; and to minimize effects related to climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon State Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Transportation, Metro Council, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, TriMet, C-TRAN, City of Portland and City of Vancouver have worked collaboratively on the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing project published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on May 2, 2008, disclosing the potential environmental and community impacts and potential mitigation of the five alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing project is seeking public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement from the Columbia River Crossing Task Force as well as the public through outreach events, working sessions and hearings with sponsor agencies, and through two open houses and two public hearings during the comment period; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia River Crossing Task Force has opted to confirm Key Decisions that will lead to selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING TASK FORCE MAKES THESE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT:

1. In regards to the river crossing selection, the CRC Task Force supports the construction of a replacement bridge with three through lanes northbound and southbound as the preferred option.
2. In regards to the high capacity transit selection, the CRC Task Force supports light rail as the preferred mode.
3. In regards to the alignment and terminus of the high capacity transit line, and based on the information provided to date, the CRC Task Force
    - Recognizes that the selection of the alignment and terminus options should be determined through a combination of:
        i. Federal New Starts funding eligibility**,**
        ii. Public and local stakeholder involvement,
        iii. CRC project evaluation and technical determination of the terminus that allows for the greatest flexibility for future high capacity transit extensions and connections in Clark County, and
        iv. Outcome of the Vancouver City Council and C-TRAN votes on July 7 and July 8, respectively.
4. Creation of a formal oversight committee that strives for consensus and provides for a public process of review, deliberation and decision-making for outstanding major project issues and decisions.
5. The Freight Working Group, the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Urban Design Advisory Group, the Community and Environmental Justice Group, and the newly formed Sustainability Working Group, shall continue their advisory roles for refinement of the LPA. These advisory groups shall report findings and recommendations to the local oversight committee.

6. The CRC Task Force understands that several project elements have not been finalized at the time of this resolution. These elements will need to be satisfactorily resolved through a process that includes public involvement, recommendations from governing bodies of the sponsor agencies, and recommendations by a local advisory committee. The CRC Task Force supports the consideration of the attached list of Supplemental Positions for Future Project and Regional Consideration.

Columbia River Crossing Project
Supplemental Positions for Future Project and Regional Consideration

For Project Consideration:
The Columbia River Crossing Task Force presents these supplemental positions for consideration during the post-Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) phase of the project development process. The Columbia River Crossing Task Force supports the following in association with the CRC project:

- The continued development of a mitigation plan, including avoidance of adverse impacts
- The continued development of a sustainability plan, including the formation of a sustainability working group
- Further study and analysis to determine the appropriate number of auxiliary lanes, necessary for safety and functionality in the project area, and consistent with minimizing impacts. The project should recognize that auxiliary lanes are for interchange operations, not for enhanced mainline throughput, and design the bridge width accordingly.
- The continued commitment to provide enhancements within potentially impacted communities
- As articulated in the final strategic plan of the I-5 Trade and Transportation Partnership, establish a community enhancement fund for use in the impacted areas of the project; such a fund would be in addition to any impact mitigation costs identified through the Draft EIS and would be modeled on the successfully implemented community enhancement fund of the I-5 Delta Park Project and subsequent Oregon Solutions North Portland Diesel Emissions Reduction Project.
- Continued work to design interchanges in the project area that meet the safety and engineering standards and requirements of the Federal Highway Administration, the departments of transportation for Oregon and Washington and the cities of Portland and Vancouver, in a way that is consistent with minimizing impacts.
- Continued work to ensure that interchanges are freight sensitive and provide enhanced mobility, in a way that is consistent with minimizing impacts.
- Imposing tolls on the existing I-5 bridge as soon as legally and practically permissible to reduce congestion by managing travel demand as well as to provide an ongoing funding source for the project
- A public vote where applicable, regarding the funds required to implement the light rail line
- The development of an aesthetically pleasing, sustainable and cost-efficient river crossing that provides a gateway to Vancouver, Portland and the Northwest

- Designing the project – river crossing, transit, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities – to be a model of sustainable design and construction that serves both the built and natural environment
- The development of light rail stations that meet the highest standards for operations and design. These stations would be designed to be safe and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities.
- Continued development of a "world class" bicycle, pedestrian facility, as well as the consideration for provisions for low-powered vehicles such as scooters, mopeds and neighborhood electric vehicles, as part of the construction of a replacement river crossing
- Ensure that the preferred alternative solves the significant safety, congestion and mobility problems in the project area while meeting regional and statewide goals to reinforce density in the urban core and compact development that is both pedestrian friendly and enhances mobility throughout the project area and the region
- Development of an innovative transportation demand management (TDM) program to encourage more efficient use of limited transportation capacity
- Independent validation of the greenhouse gas and climate change analysis conducted in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to determine the project's effects on air quality, carbon emissions and vehicle miles traveled per capita
- The inclusion of strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and reducing vehicle miles traveled per capita. The Oregon Global Warming Commission or the Washington Climate Action Team should advise the CRC project on project related aspects that will help achieve both states greenhouse gas reduction goals set for 2020 and 2050.
- The development of a more detailed draft finance plan after the LPA is selected to define the funding and financing sources for this project from federal, state and local resources, while ensuring financial equity locally, within the region, and between the states of Oregon and Washington
- Independent review of the project's feasibility and risks, including the project's relationship to funding other transportation projects in the region
- Continued study of project health impacts such as those identified in the report submitted to the Task Force by the Multnomah County Health Department

For Regional Consideration:

There are system-wide transportation concerns that can only be resolved on a regional level and not by the Columbia River Crossing project. The Columbia River Crossing Task Force supports:

- Revisiting the remaining recommendations outlined in the *Strategic Final Plan* of the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Study, dated September 2002
- Evaluating other bottlenecks within the system (e.g., I-405 / I-5 loop, Rose Quarter, etc.)
- Developing a regional plan for traffic demand management in the bi-state Portland-Vancouver region that promotes a reduction in vehicle miles traveled per capita

- Evaluating the effectiveness of a regional high occupancy vehicle (HOV) system
- Developing a regional plan for freight that considers the work of the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership and the CRC project's work with the CRC Freight Working Group
- Developing a web-based transit trip planning resource to plan transit trips in the Portland-Vancouver region