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**MEETING MINUTES**

**Project Name:** CRC **Project No.:** 2733012004  
**Location:** Clark County **Meeting Date:** June 24, 2008 **Time:**  
**Minutes by:** Katie Clements  
**Attendees:** **Company:**

**Subject: CRC Task Force Public Meeting: Hearing Testimony**

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**Henry Hewitt:** I'm Henry Hewitt, one of the co-chairs of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force and Hal, the other co-chair, agreed early on that we would alternate who was going to chair which meetings and we would alternate meetings between Oregon and Washington but as it's turned out, the last several meetings have been in Washington. He told me it was my turn to chair the meeting so here I am. I'd like to welcome everybody and we do know that there's some problem on the I-5 highway on the Oregon side that's causing traffic delays and that people will probably be late in arriving, particularly those people coming from that direction. The reason for getting started is that at about 4:15 Gov. Gregoire is gonna call in and has a few words that she'd like to give with respect to the project and where we are and I think we at least want to be attentive for that for those of us that are here. In the meantime we'll get started with some of the formalities. Please turn off your cell phones. I've turned mine off and it tends to cause disruption with the technology if we leave the cell phones on. As always, our meeting tonight will be broadcast on CVTV and in Portland on the community media. You can watch the Task Force meetings on the internet through the link to the project (LINK). We have materials that have been distributed and we have a lot of paper tonight. Hopefully everyone either has a copy or can share with somebody who does. By way of background, we began this process in I think the February timeframe of 2006. I was asked to be co-chair and was told it would be a year and a half or two years of meetings, once a quarter. Well here we are more than 3 years later and my notes tell me this is the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, so that's more frequently than quarterly and longer than 2 years. Tonight we will hear a project update, get public input received on the DEIS, there will be time for public comments

We have people signed up and once again I would ask that you to be as brief as you can be and in any event we'll cut you off or have you close down at about 3 minutes so that we can get all the people that we have signed up in the allotted time and excuse me if I mispronounce names. The first person we have is Steve Citron.

**Steve Citron:** Thank you. My name is Steve Citron and I am a Vancouver resident. I am a PhD Engineer and a fellow of the Society of Automotive Engineers. I am concerned and my comments reflect an interest in congestion over the new bridge compared to the No Build option. So, very simply, one of the statements from CRC is that

### Meeting Minutes (continued)

if you build this project, you've got to a parking lot in so that those of us who cannot walk a mile to the Max have a way to get there. The second issue has to do with tolling. For the rest of you in either Vancouver or Portland, you can go to the shopping center, dry cleaner, medical care, take your pet for grooming, or go to a movie without going very far. For us on Hayden Island, all of those things are closer in downtown Vancouver than they are in Delta Park. So most of go to Vancouver often and if you put a toll on that bridge, which frankly I hope you won't, hopefully you'll be able to wrangle a lot of money out the feds with the new administration so we won't have to but if you do, those of us on Hayden Island are politely asking that you figure out some way for us to be exempt from tolling because our street grid, part of it, is the state of Washington. When we go to the airport, we come across to the 14 and take it over to the 205. If you put a toll on that bridge we will be forced to drive twice as much to get to anything, except the Safeway. One last thing, people seem to be forgetting that this is a 90 year project. I hear a lot of talk about the expense of this project and yet I would like those people to look at pictures of this region back when the original bridge was built. My father used to say: Penny wise and dollar foolish. We're building a bridge for a century and when you amortize the cost over 100 years, it's really not that much money.

**P-0781-001** **Arnon Nasset:** It's good to see you all and stuck in traffic is the word. One bridge, one incident: it's closed. Even if it's a big bridge, one bridge, one incident: it's closed. I was actually out on 205 then I turned around but I didn't realize it was going to be backed up for 5 blocks. I would like to remind everybody, that I'm glad that you get to sunset today and won't have to do this anymore and I do appreciate the fact that this advisory group has had to sit through quite a pelting over this long time and I'm sure several of you are gonna think about it before you do this again. I would also like to remind people though that this is an advisory and all it does is give us a target and that is a target that we can look at and say, "It's the wrong place, wrong bridge, wrong, wrong, wrong." When you listen to the different agencies it shows that the NEPA process has not vetted enough of the problems and looked at enough of the issues when each of the advisory groups are coming out with their own list of things they would like: the Planning Dept., RTC, C-Tran. Every group is coming out with different things because it's not been vetted enough. I would like to remind you that EISs are for us to stop, look, and pause. The Milwaukie Light line has done it a few times, the Alaska Viaduct has, it does not kill things. It's not every 7 years we get money. The New Starts money for light rail is every August, every August the \$750 million becomes available. The appropriations refunding for authorization of transportation is almost a year and a half away. Both of those targets can be met. Right now we have sponsor council group that was supposed to be the oversight for citizens to go to with issues which is why they kept coming to you. The reason was the sponsor council was disband the first year of this project so citizens have had absolutely no place to go to which is why they've been wandering around with their problems and complaints. Now, at the end, as we're getting ready to put this together, RTC and other agencies have realized that for them to be heard, not the citizens who have not been heard the entire time and had their issues dealt with, are putting together a little group, they don't want to call it a sponsor council, so they can get their issues and needs heard. Kind of galling that they who sit at the table, are the elected officials, want to make sure their issues and needs are heard and met and yet are not going to go back over and look at the information that's been incorrect or the citizens who have had problems the entire process. Light rail, if it goes into Vancouver, will for the next 20-30 years, be stuck exactly where it lands. It's not that all the sudden in 5 years its going to shoot off branches in different directions. You do not have the population in Vancouver or Clark County to receive federal funding for light rail. So therefore, in the next 20-30 years when the population will be high enough if standards do not change for light rail to go anywhere but downtown. Which means your roads are going to clogged for the next 20-30 years while you're paying for this expensive light rail. Do not be deluded into thinking it is going anywhere but downtown. And you guys have a good day, I really mean it. Honest.



### P-0781-001

As described in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the DEIS, ODOT's Safety Priority Index System (SPIS) ranked two locations within the CRC project area, the Hayden Island Interchange and the North Portland Harbor Bridge, within the top 5% of the highest scored sites or, high crash locations, in the state for 2004 to 2006. Within Washington, five locations along I-5 in the project area have been categorized by WSDOT as high accident locations, as reported in the DEIS.

Improving safety and mobility of cars and freight using the bridge and highway is a part of the CRC project's purpose and need. As described in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the DEIS and FEIS, the replacement bridge and highway alignment, which was chosen as part of the LPA, includes a range of safety and design improvements. Some of those improvements include:

- A new bridge structure high enough for marine traffic, which eliminates the need for a lift span
- The addition of safety shoulders for stalled vehicles and incident responders
- Improved sight lines so drivers can see over the crest of the bridge, reducing the potential for rear-end collisions during congested periods
- Longer on-ramps and off-ramps to make it easier for drivers to merge onto traffic, and improve connections between interchanges
- Reducing congestion over the bridge compared to No-Build, by improving traffic operations, providing light rail and charging a toll to cross the river.

Additional potential safety measures, such as eliminating interchanges or reducing posted speeds, were considered during earlier phases of the CRC project but were dropped from further consideration because they

did not meet the accessibility goals of the project, did not meet highway design standards, and/or were not supported by the local jurisdictions.

**P-0781-002**

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the I-5 CRC DEIS.

**P-0781-003**

The NEPA process is designed to solicit input, including input from agencies and advisory committees. The fact that the CRC project has received such input is a sign that the process is working as intended.

**P-0781-004**

Thank you for your comment. The New Starts schedule has not prevented the CRC project from including extensive technical and public review and input into the development of the Draft and Final EIS documents and the LPA.

**P-0781-005**

Government agencies have been significantly involved in providing project guidance throughout the CRC project. The CRC Task Force - composed of 39 leaders from a broad cross section of Washington and Oregon communities – was tasked with advising the CRC project team and providing guidance and recommendations at key decision points. Public agencies, businesses, civic organizations, neighborhoods and freight, commuter and environmental groups were all represented on the Task Force. Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected a replacement I-5 bridge with light rail to Clark College as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). These sponsor agencies, which include the Portland City Council, Vancouver City Council, TriMet Board, C-TRAN Board, Metro Council, and RTC Board, considered the

DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force when voting on the LPA. Following adoption of the LPA, a 10-member governor-appointed panel of government agencies and institutions was formed to advise the Oregon and Washington DOT on project development for the CRC project. The Project Sponsors Council (PSC) was charged with advising the project on completion of the FEIS, project design, project timeline, sustainable construction methods, consistency with greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and the financial plan. The PSC made recommendations after considering technical information, receiving input from relevant advisory groups and reviewing public comments.

**P-0781-006**

Light rail has been endorsed by every Sponsoring Agency (Vancouver City Council, C-TRAN, RTC, Portland City Council, TriMet, and Metro), whose boards are comprised of the elected leadership of the region. Annual light rail passenger trips crossing the I-5 bridge in 2030 are projected to be 6.1 million, with daily ridership around 18,700. The travel time for the morning commute by light rail between downtown Vancouver and Pioneer Square in downtown Portland will be approximately 34 minutes. Light rail would travel on a dedicated right-of-way, with more reliable travel times than auto drivers dealing with unpredictable road conditions, traffic congestion, and parking challenges.

The CRC project planning for light rail incorporates and supports the principles of the Vancouver's City Center Vision Plan. Downtown Vancouver has seen recent growth in higher density mixed use projects from three to 12 stories in height. In addition, another 4,000 downtown condominiums are proposed or pending as part of new developments. The core of Vancouver has, along with many of the larger corridors such as Fourth Plain Blvd, medium to high density residential development and an urban mix of uses. Transit demand in these areas is quite high, and ridership will increase with the introduction of light rail.

Long-term operation and maintenance of the new light rail line will be funded through C-TRAN and TriMet. For its share of the operations and maintenance funding, C-TRAN plans on having a public vote.

As illustrated in the DEIS, and summarized in Exhibit 29 (page S-33) of the Executive Summary, light rail would better serve transit riders than bus rapid transit (BRT) within the CRC project area. Light rail would carry more passengers across the river during the PM peak, result in more people choosing to take transit, faster travel times through the project area, fewer potential noise impacts, and lower costs per incremental rider than BRT. Additionally, light rail is more likely to attract desirable development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver, which is consistent with local land use plans.