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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

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 23rd 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)

O-029-001 **John Charles:** I am President of Cascade Policy Institute in Portland and I'd like to make a couple of comments today that are in the spirit of helping you actually solve this problem in a fiscally feasible way. I think that what's happened is that this project has become a Christmas tree with a lot of ornaments hung on it and a \$4 billion price tag and no way to pay for it. I'd like redirect your attention to a stripped down project to remind you that you're trying to replace a bridge that has just 3 lanes in each direction. A bridge, that's all you need to do is replace the bridge. All these other things you have in the EIS can be thought of later so my suggestion is: go ahead and replace the bridge, no more than 8 lanes, plus bike and ped access, and I'll tell you in a minute why I'm suggesting 8, finance 100% through tolls collected electronically through open tolling technology with toll rates to be variable and designed to do 2 things: recover the cost of construction and operation and, to ensure the free flow of traffic at all times. And where this has been done elsewhere in the country, there are sometimes up to 14 different prices, people know what those prices are, they vary, they pay them and what they get in return is to go really fast all the time. That should be the goal. Now, when you do that, if you choose to implement that, what we know empirically from other projects is that the actual through-put for those same lanes will increase between 50-100% over gridlock conditions. So, if you have 4 new lanes, it's equivalent to 8 unpriced lanes. I think that's enough capacity. We also know that if you move from stop-and-go traffic to 50 mph your greenhouse gases per mile drop by 80-90%. So the sweet spot is 50 mph continual flow so you get more through-put and less gases. My final two points: spend the money only in that area of I-5. If you spend it only on the roads, it could be paid of within 20 years or less and of course, don't build light rail which would be a massive, massive misuse of money 'cause if you have 3,4 or 5 going 60 mph those are your de facto express bus lanes that allow you run to an infinite number of locations no just the Expo center which is the middle of nowhere. You could do all that for probably a billion or less and you wouldn't have to go the Feds. I think it's worth considering.

Jerry Oliver: I reside at 2004 SE 125th Ct in Vancouver. As a community activist, concerned citizen and minor elected official, I have profound reservations about your proposed solution. The fact that you want to spend \$3 billion to replace the bridge with the addition of access lanes and enhancing the freeway north and south of the crossing is of great concern to me. I would agree with the previous speaker that a scaled-down bridge solution could be had for perhaps as little as \$1 billion especially in light of recent major construction projects such as the Tacoma Narrows bridge which had such tremendous engineering issues. The light rail, as proposed, calls for a \$800 million to \$1.2 billion expenditure: this to serve by your predictions, only 7,000 riders the day it opens and perhaps 15,000 in 22 years. I can't think of a business on the face of this planet where some tradeoff of value would enter into a compact to spend \$1 billion to serve 7,000 people. Perhaps, tongue-in-cheek, we could instead send them a check and encourage them to stay home instead. I am not against high capacity transit and encourage perhaps dedicated bus or HOV lanes or something like that, not spending \$1 billion. Finally, the whole issue of funding in just the last few weeks has come into question. There is the suggestion that the federal funding has diminished resources and may not be able to provide the substantial \$700 million contribution that was suggested in your EIS and until the funding in certain I think it awkward to go ahead. I've learned that, perhaps, public officials can't afford to take a longer view and I would encourage you to pause and tie up some loose ends before you do develop an LPA. I just feel that this is the wrong solution at the wrong time at an uncertain cost. Thank you.

Edward Garen: For the last 2 years I've had the pleasure of serving on the Community EJ Group of this project and I'm the former co-chair the Hayden Island Neighborhood Network Association and today I am speaking on behalf of the Hayden Island Mfd Homeowners Assoc. Our president, Pam Ferguson, is caught in the traffic, she's about 10 minutes away. We on Hayden Island live with this bridge every day. We're the only people in Oregon who have to use it to get home. If there is an accident up I-5, we can spend 2 hours getting from Rosa Parks Way to our homes. There are 2 things that I'm asking you to consider. The first is our island has a senior population, many of us are over 55 and have disabilities. We currently have no parking available within 0.5 mile of the bus stop. So,

O-029-001

The project's Purpose and Need is based on extensive analysis of the existing transportation problems in the I-5 CRC corridor, and reflects extensive feedback from the public and stakeholder groups. Ongoing analysis has demonstrated that the Purpose and Need is best met by a multimodal alternative that improves highway, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and adds tolling to the highway river crossing. Please refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS for a description of the current plans for funding construction and operation of the LPA. This discussion provides an updated assessment of likely funding sources for this project, though it is not common practice to receive funding commitments until the alternative selection process is complete.

O-029-002

As described in Chapter 1 of the DEIS, the project's Purpose and Need reflects "previous planning studies, solicitation of public input, and coordination with stakeholder groups." This outreach, and prior planning studies, identified improving transit service along the I-5 corridor as an important element of this project. This need is included in the project's Purpose and Need. As such, any alternative (except No-Build) evaluated in the DEIS must address this need to improve transit service.

O-029-003

Thank you for the astute observations and suggestions regarding tolling. Since publication of the DEIS, we have studied numerous tolling scenarios. For more information on tolling, please refer to our online resources at: <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/CurrentTopics/Tolling.aspx>

O-029-004

Thank you for your comment. Traffic moving around 40 to 50 mph emits significantly lower GHG emissions per mile than stop-and-go traffic.

O-029-005

Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected light rail to Clark College as the project's preferred transit mode. These sponsor agencies, which include the Vancouver City Council, Portland City Council, C-TRAN Board, TriMet Board, RTC Board and Metro Council considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force (a broad group of stakeholders representative of the range of interests affected by the project - see the DEIS Public Involvement Appendix for more information regarding the CRC Task Force) before voting on the LPA.

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.