

Meeting: Columbia River Crossing Task Force
Date: June 14, 2006
Location: Oregon Assn of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME)
 4134 N. Vancouver Ave, Portland

Members Present:

Last Name	First Name	Organization	Alternate Attending
Adams	Sam	City of Portland	Roland Chlapowski
Brown	Rich	Bank of America	
Burkholder	Rex	Metro	
Byrd	Bob	Identity Clark County	
Caine	Lora	Friends of Clark County	
Eki	Elliott	Oregon/Idaho AAA	
Frei	Dave	Amada Neighborhood Association	
Fuglister	Jill	Coalition for a Livable Future	
Grossnickle	Jerry	Columbia River Tugboat Association	
Halverson	Brad	Overlook Neighborhood Association	
Hansen	Fred	TriMet	
Hewitt	Henry	Stoel Rives, LLP	
Hinsley	Brett	Columbia Pacific Building Trades	
Holmes	Eric	City of Battle Ground	Adrienne Dedona
Isbell	Monica	Starboard Alliance Company, LLC	
Lookingbill	Dean	Regional Transportation Council	
Lynch	Ed	Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust	
Malin	Dick	Central Park Neighborhood Assn.	
Morris	Betty Sue	C-TRAN	
Ostrowski	John	C-TRAN	
Paulson	Larry	Port of Vancouver	Katy Brooks
Pollard	Royce	City of Vancouver	Thayer Rorabaugh
Russel	Bob	Oregon Trucking Association	
Schlueter	Jonathan	Westside Economic Alliance	
Sundvall-Williams	Jeri	Environmental Justice Action Group	
Valenta	Walter	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association	
Wyatt	Bill	Port of Portland	
Zelenka	Tom	Schnitzer Group	

Project Staff Present:

- Ron Anderson
- Mike Baker
- Doug Ficco
- Frank Green
- Heather Gunderson
- Barbara Hart
- Bob Hart
- Jay Lyman
- Tom Markgraf
- Linda Mullen
- John Osborn
- Peter Ovington
- David Parisi
- Ed Pickering
- Laura Reilly
- Lynn Rust
- Gregg Snyder
- Kris Strickler

Members Absent:

Becker	Charles	City of Gresham
Branch	Wayne	Clark College
Cruz Walsh	Serena	Multnomah County
Dengerink	Hal	Wash. State University- Vancouver
McCloud	Mark	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
Petersen	Steve	Portland Business Alliance
Phillips	Bart	Columbia River Economic Development Council
Ray	Janet	Washington AAA
Schmidt	Karen	Washington Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board
Stuart	Steve	Clark County
Walstra	Scot	Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce

1. Announcements

A reminder was given about an **environmental justice training** in July or August – to be scheduled to accommodate the schedules of Community and Environmental Justice Working Group members. It will be a four-hour session led by national environmental justice (EJ) leader Running Grass. He works with EPA and provides training on EJ issues for people from all walks of life. All will be invited to attend.

2. Meeting Summary (Approval)

Action: Approved draft summary of May 17, 2006, task force meeting.

3. Environmental Justice Presentation (Discussion)

John Ridgway of Washington State Department of Ecology gave a presentation on environmental justice (EJ) issues. He explained that government can make a difference in communities where EJ is a concern – in some cases directly, in other secondarily.

For background, he discussed the multiple layers of government, since no single entity controls the outcome of EJ issues, and described areas that each involves:

- **Local** – Zoning, neighborhood associations, schools, counties, regional air authorities, sewer districts, port authorities.
- **State** – Public health and natural resources agencies, governor’s office. Oregon has had two executive orders on EJ passed; Washington has had none. Washington has a Council on Health Disparities.
- **Tribal** – Government to government relations. There is not a single voice. Get a communications plan that reaches tribal council as well as tribal members (not the same thing). Don’t get hung up on the borders of the tribal reservation, since usual and accustomed lands are not always confined to borders of reservation.
- **Federal** – EPA is the lead on federal efforts, governed by the executive order on EJ. There’s a Community Right to Know law in Oregon. Federal government has a law on this, but it’s an unfunded mandate. The law does two things: (1) tracks where hazardous materials are stored; allows emergency management plan. Oregon adopted this law “and then some.” (2) Toxic Release Inventory (TRI): tells what kind of pollution is ongoing. Media is often interested in this. But TRI doesn’t track mobile sources.

Environmental Justice Checklist and Resources (*see five-page handout*) is a document Ridgway referred to this checklist touching on the subjects of location and impact, SEPA/NEPA, tribes, culture and language, public meetings, resources to overcome barriers, public health, sustainability, and zoning.

Questions and Discussion

NOTE: *Task force questions and comments are in italics*
(Staff responses are in parentheses)

- *Asked for more information about the Council on Health Disparities.*
--(Senate Bill 6197 passed in 2006 legislature; state board of health is the lead for this new law. They’re going to take the next year or so to figure out how to implement the new law.)

- *Asked if there have been attempts by staff to engage with state or county health departments.*
--(Not yet.)
- *Asked if there has been involvement on CRC project from tribal members.*
--(Project staffperson Heather Gunderson said that staff is formally consulting with eight tribes and that project notification was sent to about 29 other tribes. Staff has visited with one tribal council.)
- *Asked if there is any coverage of noise or ambient light issues in EJ.*
--(Absolutely. All those things you describe are examples of adverse impacts that have been raised by communities.)
- *No mention is made of retired citizens or people on fixed incomes.*
--(We care about equity and equal service to all sectors of the population to the best extent possible. Another example is children; they are disproportionately impacted. Certainly older citizens are also part of the package. Let the community define what their issues are and work with them.)
- *Asked if the speaker ever came across an Interstate Freeway project, and what was good or bad about it?*
--(Example of I-90 project in Seattle on Mercer Island, where wealthy residents won enormous concessions from government in mitigating impacts of freeway – trenching, noise mitigation, extensive landscaping, etc.)
- *Does the EJ analysis have a cumulative health impact analysis?*
--(Project staffperson Heather Gunderson said they're putting together a cumulative impact analysis, but can get back to you on that. Ridgway added that this is not an easy thing to do.)
- *Commented that diesel retrofitting was a good thing on Delta Park project.*
- *I'm a big fan of measurable results, and it sounds like there's no hope of that here. Are we trying to make the world better, or trying to just do no harm? It sounds like there's no measure of that.*
--(One impact that can be measured is how well are you engaging with the community? That's a tangible thing that can be measured. EJ means sharing the risks equitably along with the benefits.
You're not necessarily trying to make the world better, but spreading out the impact as equitably as you can.
- *Commented that with tribes, don't take "no news is good news". Face to face contact is more effective than emails/phone calls.*
- *Is it appropriate to look back at which areas were already overburdened and make decisions based on that?*
--(A great question. The community needs to answer that.)
- *Commented that the Community Enhancement Fund on Delta Park was created to go above and beyond.*

Linda Mullen of CRC project staff passed out two handouts and addressed community outreach efforts and the Environmental Justice Group.

Questions:

- *I assume you'll be doing EJ outreach in Vancouver as well?*
--(Absolutely.)
- *Where in process will we have performance measures?*
--(All those things that are measurable will be measured against the Equitable distribution of benefits and impacts measure by demographic group. We are taking the evaluation criteria and driving those down into the details to decide what does that mean and how do we measure it. We can bring those criteria to this group in August or September.)
- *Is there an end product for the EJ working group? In the Delta Park working group they had an end product.*
--(I don't know that it would be the same end product, but we'll have a summary of their work and their recommendations and what we were able to achieve of the recommendations and how they were achieved by the project.)
- *When are we going to pick up what the neighborhood groups want us to measure and be concerned about?*
--(We'll start working with neighborhoods and other groups with design ideas, hopefully in July and continue through August or September.)
--(The life of the working group is through the selection of the locally preferred alternative, through the end of next year.)
- *Are there any deal busters like Indian burial grounds?*
--(The tribes are telling us that it's a question of when, not if we find remains. Whether they're deal busters, we'll find out when we get there.)

Henry Hewitt asked who could not attend an August 16 meeting. Four people raised their hands.

4. Public Comment

Jim Howell asked what can be done in the interim, before any project is built a decade from now. He said it's up to TriMet and C-TRAN to step up and do more before this project gets started. If you had a Yellow Line MAX stop on Hayden Island, he said, and C-TRAN went to Hayden Island, you'd have a good solution that would cost a lot less than this project.

David Rowe said this task force should look at other parts of North America where transportation planning has been a success. Vancouver BC does transportation planning in a noncompetitive, everyone-wins way. Commuter rail, he said, is another solution. In Portland / Vancouver, he stated, each mode is competing against the others. He urged project staff to consult with Pat Jacobsen of TransLink in Vancouver BC to save time and money.

Sharon Nasset was called on to comment but was said to have already left for another meeting.

5. Components Proposed Not To Carry Forward (Discussion / Action)

Task Force voted on seven items:

F-3 Time of Day Freight Restrictions

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed.

F-4 Increase Truck Size

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed.

B/P-3 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path-Only Bridge

- *Asked if it is still a possibility to have a bike/pedestrian facility separate next to a new bridge?*
--(The options we will be describing all provide for bike/pedestrian crossing either by improvement of the existing bridge or on a new facility tied into a new bridge. We will consider not only the facility but how to connect to existing street networks and the existing bike/pedestrian systems on the other side of the river.)

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed. One abstention.

RC-1, RC-2, RC-7, and RC-8 Movable Span Options

- *Stated that we have FAA limiting us at the top and USCG limiting us at the bottom and that USCG does not weigh in until the end. Asked if the FAA and USCG meet in the middle, where will we be?*
--(USCG is doing all they can to guide us toward what they think will pass. They're holding a public hearing on this in September. We're confident we'll find a way to make it work.)
- *Asked do USCG and FAA get in the room together and work it out?*
--(There are advantages to letting their competing interests play out. They realize that compromises have to be made.)
- *Asked for confirmation of the intensity of belief that a solution will be found.*
--(We expect that we will find a solution that they will find acceptable.)
- *Asked what is compatibility of a fixed span bridge with existing movable span bridge if decision is made to keep existing bridge?*
--(Issues are more related to pier placement than whether there's a movable next to a non-movable span. Under the mid-height options, there's one supplemental mid-height option (downstream, mid height, fixed span). The issue isn't whether you can get it high enough but whether you can place piers such that you avoid problems for barge captains. If you were to have a fixed span bridge next to a movable span bridge, you would have to have a high enough point on the new bridge lined up in the same shipping channel. That has been looked at.)

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed.

RC-13 Supplemental Tunnel

- *Why is dredging the only option verses a bored tunnel?*
--(By the time you go that deep, your tunnel has to go virtually all the way north to SR 500 to come out again. In order to keep it as short as possible, you have to go shallow.)

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed.

TR-6 Streetcar

- *Asked why streetcar is the only option that requires a transfer among remaining options.*
--(It's possible to take the bus and run it to downtown Portland on the existing highway.)

Five finger vote: One opposed.

- *I don't like ruling out viability of it just because TriMet doesn't like it. By suggesting the only possible thru transit from Clark County to downtown Portland is going to be LRT, it sets up the rest of the discovery process.*
--(I don't think that's where we are.)
- *Commented that it isn't the case that TriMet "didn't like" the option, but that there are physical incompatibilities between the LRT and streetcar. Also, a criterion of having to transfer does not increase transit use.*

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed.

TR-11 Commuter Rail

- *I am uncomfortable eliminating this option because the current rail system is at capacity. If we accept staff recommendation, we ought to demand more by some other avenue.*
- *Asked what grade can LRT handle and what will be the grade of the new bridge? Are those compatible?*
--(Under a short segment, LRT can use a 5% or less grade. The new alignments over the river with the mid-level option are approximately 110 feet over the river and are approximately a 3.25% grade, so it is well within the parameter of LRT.)
- *Commented that commuter rail still has merit and I don't know how we make it move forward if not in this venue.*
--(I'm thinking of a statement that we give to ODOT, WSDOT, the two governors, members of Congress, senators, and the Secretary of Transportation to put it out there that if the issue does not get addressed, the whole corridor will not work. The goal is to give it real legs so that it will be considered.)
- *I like your idea about making a strong statement. Is the North Portland Junction in the Bridge Influence Area? If it were, maybe there could be investment in that area.*
--(It's not in the Bridge Influence Area.)
- *The two ports are heavily rail dependent. Adding commuter rail would have detrimental effects to the future of the ports.*
- *We're going to have to make additional investments in all the modes. If we were making a policy statement in support of that, I would support that 100 percent. But if we were going to do a technical analysis, I wouldn't be comfortable with it because I don't think staff has the expertise in it.*

- *I support your recommendation of looking to the future. I also support the staff recommendation not to move this forward and not to spend more money and time analyzing it.*
- *Asked what capacity/ridership levels can we get if current levels are at 5 percent use within the corridor.*
--(We can't tell you what's going to come out of this analysis, but Gregg can tell you statistics from the 2002 partnership study. On average, between 15-22 percent of person trips.)
- *When we closed down I-5 last time, commuter rail was a big solution to that. I know that was short term, but I want to make sure the spirit of keeping commuter rail alive is alive because that is an important part of how we are going to get people across the interstate bridge.*

Five finger vote: Two Opposed.

Action: Motion not to carry forward passed. Three opposed.

Co-chair Henry Hewitt has asked for a draft resolution from staff.

- *If existing bridges are not fixable seismically, why are we keeping them? Please expedite as much as possible the analysis of existing bridges so we don't waste time and money on studying an infeasible option.*
--(It's conceivable you could keep them for an arterial connection or for transit. There are two questions to ask: First, can it be done? Second, if not, what else could we use them for?)

6. Introduction of Alternative Packaging (Discussion)

Mike Baker, CRC staffer, led a presentation of the approach taken to package alternatives.

- *The I-5/Delta Park locally preferred alternative said they should not decide on lane configuration until the CRC project is finalized. I do not see any mention that this has been reserved as a decision for later.*
--(The reference may be absent, but it is certainly part of what we are planning to look at as part of the managed lane options.)
- *About specific alternative six- why wouldn't BRT lite work on re-stripped lanes?*
--(BRT lite would operate in both a managed lane and an arterial because it would pick up passengers in downtown Vancouver off the freeway before reentering the freeway.)
- *Currently the express buses don't do that, and that should be discussed with C-TRAN. Morris then summarized observations of C-TRAN board, to whom Jay Lyman gave a presentation the previous night. They are concerned with how quickly we're narrowing the range of alternatives to two. Also, money available has to be considered. C-TRAN would like realistic financing scenarios. Will it play a role in alternative packages from here on out?*
--(Yes.)
- *What about reversible lanes?*
--(They're still alive and will be part of the discussion. If they are not listed on your handout, it is a typo.)

- *With a supplemental bridge, who would be responsible to maintain an existing arterial bridge?*
--(If the supplemental bridge option remains, ownership and maintenance will have to be part of the dialogue.)
- *It's limiting to say that the only arterial solutions include keeping the green bridges.*
--(Alternative three is distinct in that it provides a new bridge for the arterial connection, while keeping I-5 traffic on the existing bridges. Alternatives four through seven (the supplemental bridge alternatives) provide for an arterial connection using one of the existing bridges. While the replacement bridge alternatives (8 through 12) do not include an arterial connection, we will be able to test the benefits and impacts of the arterial crossing by examining the supplemental bridge options).
- *There could be one bridge with more than one purpose. I just want to keep the framework more open and felt like it was being indirectly cut off.*
- *Are you going to give us the options of flexibility in the future such that we could go from BRT at first to LRT later?.*
--(Alternative packages five and ten would be set up so that they could be converted to LRT in the future, yes.)
- *I wouldn't support alternative packages 8-12 because they don't allow low-speed vehicles as an arterial would.*
- *For clarification, there will be no extra lane southbound to Alberta St, right?*
--(Right.)
- *To me the alternative packages make things blurrier. I think it's actually too early to go to packages.*
--(We've exhausted learning what we can learn from components on a stand-alone basis.)
- *Won't you be able to tell us the incremental benefits of any package at each layer?*
--(Yes.)
- *My concern is that if we get too far along with one alternative package, we may not end up with the best answer.*
--(You will all have your sleeves rolled up as we look at the pieces and will decide how we will recombine them take to the next level.)
- *I'm looking at it trying to understand the logic behind the freight elements that you put into each package. Can you help me understand why they are where they are?*
--(We wanted to have a representative range of packages to test the freight options without necessarily thinking that they had to be in each one.)
- *Slide number fourteen talks about packaging themes. Freight mobility is on the top of our radar screen as a major theme.*
- *Could you talk about staff assessment of package three? If putting these packages together is really an exercise to start to see how things perform together, why have you already made the assessment that some of those things won't work together?*

--(There are a number of design deficiencies on the existing freeway that have been discussed at previous meetings. Alternative three does not propose to address those design deficiencies, but to essentially make only minor improvements to the existing freeway. In contrast, all of the other alternatives will address those deficiencies and make major safety and capacity improvements to the freeway.)

- *When we start to get to the numbers, that alternative may perform a lot better.*
 - (Package number three is still on the table.)
 - (If it really does the job in terms of transportation performance then we're going to have a hard choice about do we leave the existing freeway as it is and make this, or do we not? But I think it's going to put it squarely on the table.)
- *I'm going to put in another request for peak fuel modeling.*
 - (On Tuesday, the agency reps from TriMet, C-TRAN, Metro, RTC, and the two DOTs talked about it. It's in the works.)

Next Meeting Date / Location

Wednesday, July 12, 2006, 4:00-8:00 p.m.
WSDOT SW Region Headquarters, Room 102
11018 NE 51st Circle
Vancouver, Washington

Appendices to Task Force Meeting Summary

Handouts from Public Commenters

June 14, 2006

To: Columbia River Crossing Citizens Advisory Committee:

The Columbia River Crossing Citizens Advisory Committee has been given a mandate to find solutions to move people and freight across the Columbia River. This panel could look at other comparable areas of North America where transportation issues are met with success. Last month I mentioned to the Committee that Calgary, Alberta has solved transportation issues similar to the Columbia River region.

Another great example of good transportation planning is Vancouver, British Columbia. In the last fifteen years Vancouver's population increased 33% to an estimated 2.5 million. Vancouver, B.C. is solving their transportation needs by approaching transportation as one problem. In 1999 TransLink was formed to manage public transportation, regional, suburban and urban roads. In this manner, transportation for people and freight is planned in a non-competitive everyone wins solution.

Part of the transportation solution in Vancouver BC is a subway called SkyTrain which passenger fares pay 100% of its operation.

Another part of the Vancouver transportation solution is commuter rail.

Vancouver's TransLink gets support from all the citizens because good transportation benefits everyone

In the present system for the Columbia River Region each mode of transportation is competing against other modes. Long range transportation planning and efficiency suffers.

I recommend Columbia River Crossing Citizens Advisory Committee consult with TransLink CEO Pat Jacobsen for some sound advice to save time and money.

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Interim First Phase of the Columbia River Crossing Project ??

- Extend MAX Yellow Line to Hayden Island (Elevated station at PUC site)
- Provide bike/ped lane on new MAX bridge over Portland Harbor
- TriMet provides Hayden Island feeder bus service to MAX Station
- Relocate C-Tran Transit Center to the Hayden Island MAX Station
- Allow C-Tran and emergency vehicles exclusive use of Hayden Island northbound I-5 on-ramp.
- Convert bike/ped lane on existing Portland Harbor Bridge to an additional northbound travel lane
- Discontinue #6 MLK bus service to Hayden Island and Vancouver

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