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High-capacity transit options getting fresh look

A multi-governmental, 18-month study of Clark County's high capacity transit options was announced today by **Dean Lookingbill**, transportation director for the Southwest Washington Regional transportation Council.

The study is prompted by the fact that population growth has clearly outpaced transportation investment, said Lookingbill. The study will identify a high capacity transit system.

The study, to focus on rail or dedicated right-of-way passenger vehicles, will complement other transportation studies currently underway, notably the Columbia Crossing Project, a C-TRAN 20-year study, and a 50-year look at transportation overall, when Clark County is expected to have a population of one million persons.

Lookingbill said he expects the study to result in identifying a handful of existing transportation corridors within the county as high-capacity transit routes. Corridors that will merit consideration include Highway 14, Mill Plain and Fourth Plain Boulevards and Highway 99.

In addition to identifying the kind of passenger vehicles, the study is expected to recommend the initial corridor to use them on.

A steering committee has been selected, which will forward recommendations to the Regional Transportation Council board.

Members of the committee are as follows: Clark County commissioner **Steve Stuart**; Vancouver city councilman **Tim Leavitt**; state Department of Transportation southwest regional administrator **Don Wagner**; C-TRAN board member **Jeanne Harris**; Battle Ground city councilman **Bill Ganley**; State Sen. **Joe Zarelli** (R-18th); State Rep. **Deb Wallace** (D-17th) and Port of Vancouver commissioner **Arch Miller**.

Extensive public comment will be solicited, according to Lookingbill. Further information is available on the study website, <http://rtc.wa.gov/hct>. Lookingbill suggests that website visitors participate by answering a questionnaire.

The kickoff study meeting is at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16, in the Clark County Elections office, 1408 Franklin Street. The public is urged to attend, according to Lookingbill.

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