

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors  
August 5, 2014, Meeting Minutes**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members**

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by Chair Jack Burkman on Tuesday, August 5, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center Sixth Floor Training Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. The meeting was recorded by CVTV. Attendance follows.

Voting Board Members Present:

Nancy Baker, Port of Vancouver Commissioner  
Ed Barnes, Clark County Commissioner  
Jack Burkman, Vancouver Council Member  
Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor  
Bill Ganley, Battle Ground Council Member  
David Madore, Clark County Commissioner  
Doug McKenzie, Skamania Co. Commissioner  
Tom Mielke, Clark County Commissioner  
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN Alternate  
Larry Smith, Vancouver Council Member  
Melissa Smith, Camas Council Member  
Don Wagner, WSDOT Regional Administrator  
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Interim Manager

Voting Board Members Absent:

Jeff Hamm, C-TRAN Executive Director  
David Poucher, White Salmon Mayor

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Paul Harris, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Ed Orcutt, Representative 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Liz Pike, Representative 18<sup>th</sup> District

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Norm Johnson, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Charles Ross, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Don Benton, Senator 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Monica Stonier, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Ann Rivers, Senator 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Brandon Vick, Representative 18<sup>th</sup> District  
John Braun, Senator 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Richard DeBolt, Representative 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Annette Cleveland, Senator 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Jim Moeller, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District

Guests Present:

Katy Brooks, Port of Vancouver  
Bob Carroll, Citizen  
Rena Cavallaro, Citizen  
Liz Cline, Citizen  
John Cole, Citizen  
Eric Florip, The Columbian  
Chuck Green, C-TRAN  
Heath Henderson, Clark County  
Carolyn Heniges, Clark County  
Roy Jennings, WA Transportation Commissioner  
Lee L. Jensen, Citizen  
Jim Karlock, Citizen  
Laurie Lebowsky, Clark County  
Brady Lewis, Citizen  
Dale Lewis, Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler's Office  
John Ley, Citizen  
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Council  
John McKibbin, Identity Clark County  
Scott Sawyer, City of Battle Ground  
Jeanne E. Stewart, Citizen  
Ron Swaren, Citizen  
Jan Verrinder, Citizen  
Damon Webster, MacKay Sposito  
Lynda Wilson, Citizen  
Bill Wright, Clark County

Staff Present:

Lynda David, Senior Transportation Planner  
Mark Harrington, Senior Transportation Planner  
Bob Hart, Transportation Section Supervisor  
Matt Ransom, Executive Director  
Dale Robins, Senior Transportation Planner  
Diane Workman, Administrative Assistant

## **II. Citizen Communications**

Chair Burkman said he had five cards submitted for citizen comment and asked for any further cards. This was the last call for submitting comment and no more were received.

Jan Verrinder of Vancouver, WA said the BRT means a lot to her. She is a bus rider, cyclist, walker, and car driver and uses the Fourth Plain bus route for all her travel activities. Ms. Verrinder said many people have needs and depend on the bus to get around. She said she is fortunate and does not have to use the bus, but chooses to in order to keep active cycling and making connections. Ms. Verrinder encouraged the approval of C-TRAN's BRT.

John Ley of Camas, WA said the people voted against the expenditure of tax dollars on light rail or bus rapid transit. He questioned moving forward with the BRT. Mr. Ley referred to the Highway Trust Fund and eminent bankruptcy. He said we do not need bus rapid transit or new buses.

Bob Carroll of Vancouver, WA referred to the presentation the previous Friday regarding a third bridge. He said he is in favor of a third bridge but not until the CRC is built or something like it to address the problems in the I-5 corridor. Mr. Carroll said in meetings and contact with politicians, the City and County in Portland and Multnomah County, and their message today is that there is no way that they are going to say yes to a third bridge as was presented. He said he felt Southwest Washington has lost all credibility in dealing with bi-state transportation.

Bob Swaren of Portland, OR said he thought the I-5 bridges could be seismically upgraded. He said perhaps Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research lab at UC Berkley could become a consultant on the I-5 bridges at a minimal cost. Mr. Swaren said it would be good to have someone who was on the CRC Sponsors Council to make a request to them. He also said there is a lot of growth and a need in the Beaverton / Hillsboro area for a western arterial. He displayed a sign he made that said "A Western Arterial Makes Sense."

Lee L. Jensen of Battle Ground, WA said the advisory vote for bus rapid transit keeps coming up. He said that BRT vote was a yes or no vote asking "Should the Clark County Board of Commissioners approve..." Mr. Jensen said the Clark County Board of Commissioners does not have that authority. They have authority on certain Boards that they sit on, but the BRT advisory vote was only for the County Commissioners. Mr. Jensen pointed out that all of the information concerning the grants to pay for 86% of the cost of the bus rapid transit was made public months after the advisory vote was taken. Mr. Jensen urged the Board to support the BRT project.

Chair Burkman said there were several communications that were sent by e-mail prior to noon today and have been forwarded to Board Members. They are also posted on RTC's Web site with the August 5, 2014, meeting materials [citizen comments](#).

## **III. Approval of the Board Agenda**

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 5, 2014, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**IV. Approval of the June 3, 2014, Minutes**

Action on the June 3 meeting minutes were inadvertently overlooked at the July 1 meeting.

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 3, 2014, MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**V. Approval of the July 1, 2014, Minutes**

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE JULY 1, 2014, MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND APPROVED. SHIRLEY CRADDICK ABSTAINED.

**VI. Consent Agenda**

**A. August Claims**

**B. MPO Metropolitan Planning Agreement, Resolution 08-14-14**

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA AUGUST CLAIMS AND RESOLUTION 08-14-14. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

**VII. 2014-2017 TIP Amendment: C-TRAN Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit, Resolution 08-14-15**

Matt Ransom said this is the programming responsibility of the RTC Board. This is largely a procedural action, not legislative in the sense that it is setting policy. In order for C-TRAN to obligate these funds, they need to be reflected in the Transportation Improvement program (TIP). This is the last check for consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan.

Dale Robins referred to the resolution included in the meeting packet for the TIP amendment for the C-TRAN Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit project. The TIP is a programming document that includes a list of regionally significant projects over the next four years. The current TIP years are 2014 to 2017. The RTC Board's responsibility is to ensure that the projects listed in the TIP are consistent with the regional planning process.

The Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit project will construct an enhanced transit route between the Westfield Vancouver Mall and downtown Vancouver along Fourth Plain, and it will include Fort Vancouver Way and downtown streets.

The Fourth Plain BRT project is currently programmed in the TIP for design. The action being requested by C-TRAN is to add the right of way and construction phases so C-TRAN can secure their FTA funds. The RTC Board action is to ensure the project is consistent with the long range Metropolitan Transportation Plan, that funding can reasonably be expected, and meets other federal programming requirements such the Congestion Management Process and air quality requirements and that public involvement has been provided.

The Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) has reviewed this TIP amendment request and has recommended adoption by the RTC Board. Action on the resolution would program \$38.3 million in Federal Small Starts grants, \$2.7 million in State Mobility grants, and

\$6.9 million in C-TRAN local match funds for the right of way and construction phases of the Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

Representative Liz Pike arrived at the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Chair Burkman recommended starting with a motion and then have discussion of that motion.

SCOTT PATTERSON MOTIONED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 08-14-15, THE 2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENT: C-TRAN FOURTH PLAIN BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT. LARRY SMITH SECONDED THE MOTION.

David Madore distributed a [letter](#) from Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler and asked that it be incorporated into the minutes. Commissioner Madore said they should not rush ahead without finishing a process. He said that C-TRAN has not completed the SEPA, NEPA or environmental assessment, or categorical exclusion. These are to be completed in order to identify any problems that need to be addressed prior to construction. Commissioner Madore also distributed a [letter](#) from Commissioners Mielke and Madore, saying Commissioner Barnes declined to sign the letter. The letter calls for a halt to the BRT project for 12 different reasons. Commissioner Madore said they are pro transit, but this is not the way. He said the solution is to implement the common sense solution that was presented to C-TRAN at the last meeting that doesn't cost anything and uses the existing buses. Commissioner Madore asked that no action take place to move forward on the BRT project.

Both of the noted letters can be found on RTC's Web page with the August 5 meeting documents with [member handouts](#).

Commissioner Barnes said it was noted that he did not sign the letter that was distributed and referenced. He said he saw the letter 20 minutes prior to the start of this meeting. He also said the letter from Congresswoman Herrera Beutler was dated with today's date. He said both of these letters are dated with today's date. If the RTC Board was going to take an honest look at the letters, they should have been in our hands a week ago. Commissioner Barnes said if Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's letter would have been written a month ago the FTA Administrator, she would have had a chance to answer the questions that were listed in the letter; there was no chance to react to the letter today. Commissioner Barnes said handing something out at the meeting does not allow time to read and go over the material.

Scott Patterson clarified that C-TRAN's construction schedule for this project is not going to commence until next year. This is not the final action; there are still some important steps that need to happen. The most notable one is the completion of the NEPA/SEPA work. He said it is his understanding that currently, not all of the projects listed in the TIP have completed the NEPA/SEPA process.

Mr. Robins said just over half of the listed projects have completed. The TIP is a programming document. Usually, the federal government will not let you execute the next phase, such as right of way or construction, until the environmental work is done, but you can program it ahead of time.

Mr. Patterson said in the case of C-TRAN, they will be completing the environmental documentation in the next couple months. The next step would be to sign the Small Starts Grant

Agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. That locks in the funding and the final design of the project. They would then be in a position to go into construction next spring or early summer, assuming the funding in the grant agreement is finalized appropriately.

Mr. Patterson said in response to Commissioner Madore's reference to the common sense alternative that was presented; there was some information that was provided at that meeting that clarified that. He said there is a lot of detail, and they would be happy to sit down with Commissioner Madore to go over it point by point. Mr. Patterson said it does very closely resemble the no-build alternative that was a part of the alternatives analysis process that was taken several years ago.

Representative Ed Orcutt referred to comments made by Commissioner Barnes. He said Commissioner Barnes is correct in that the letter from Congresswoman Herrera Beutler is dated today and does ask questions, which we don't have the answers. He said the prudent thing to do is to delay a vote until we have the answers. Representative Orcutt said the vote should be delayed. Representative Orcutt said he was told that BRT could be as simple as changing the lights so that they cater to buses allowing them not to have to stop at the lights. He questioned why this project would be done when a much simpler and cheaper option could be taken.

Representative Liz Pike asked what "Plan B" was if the federal Small Start money does not show up. Scott Patterson said the appropriations bill that is part of the House Transportation budget and the Senate Transportation Bill both have the full funding for the \$38.3 million federal share for this project. They are in both of those transportation budgets as well as the Administration's request. Currently, they are in a state with neither of those bills approved. They are expecting discussions to continue to the later part of this year, in hearing from Washington, D.C., until it is ultimately approved. There is a high degree of confidence given the fact that the House passed their transportation budget and there is full funding in both of the bills. If they don't receive the federal funding, then the Small Starts agreement will not be signed by the end of this year, and they would have to wait for the FTA to be in a position to move forward on the project.

Representative Pike said there is no absolute certainty to the funding from the Small Starts grant even though it is contained in both the House and the Senate federal budget. She said just because it is federal money doesn't mean that we should waste it on a project that could be accomplished with less funding on a more simple project. Representative Pike said she did not understand why some members do not listen to the voters who say that they do not want BRT and asked for an answer. She said we should put a straight forward yes or no ballot measure before all the voters of Clark County.

Commissioner Barnes said in response to Rep. Orcutt's comments, this same argument has been gone over many, many times over the last year along with Rep. Pike's and John Ley's comments. He said to come up with this letter at the last minute is ludicrous; to say that no one around this table is aware of what was going on. All of these arguments today of why this should be withheld are the same that have been raised for the past year. Commissioner Barnes questioned the Congresswoman writing the letter today when it could have been written six months to a year ago and the questions could have been answered.

Commissioner Mielke agreed that it is the same arguments that we have had over and over again. He said the people have said again and again that they do not want the BRT, and it is being

moved forward. Commissioner Mielke said we need to get answers to the questions that Congresswoman Herrera Beutler is asking of FTA and then come back and address this BRT.

Commissioner Madore said he would like to correct a point. He said these questions are being asked because we have not received the answers, and the answers that we have received say it does not work. Commissioner Madore said the four votes were before the people, and we said we would not misuse the funds. He said it was his understanding that the funds allocated for the local match for FTA cannot be used for that purpose and are to provide for current bus use. Commissioner Madore said from what he has seen, the operations and maintenance funds are not addressed for the higher system costs with the new transit buses. He said they need to stop and get answers and correct it before it moves forward. Commissioner Madore said he felt that some routes were not right and they could do so much better.

Melissa Smith said the C-TRAN Board passed the BRT project at their last meeting. She said she felt the RTC Board is being dumped on for the C-TRAN Board not working together and hashing out these issues. As Commissioner Barnes said, this has been going on for over a year. It is no surprise to anybody. Ms. Smith said the C-TRAN Board passed the BRT, and now it is on RTC, and if we pass it, you will blame RTC when it has already been approved by C-TRAN.

Commissioner Madore said the majority on the C-TRAN Board has pushed these things forward over the objection of the minority on the Board. He said this is to the point that the minority on the Board used to use a block veto to block at times the majority. It is a dysfunction that does not have to carry into the RTC Board. Commissioner Madore said he is not against progress, but the problem is you have to be able to listen to each other. He said we need to pause this and get some answers in order to fix it.

Scott Patterson said he would provide some overarching comments that would hope to be of benefit to some. This process goes back to 2008. In late 2008, the RTC Board adopted the Clark County High Capacity Transit System Plan. It went through the process to identify what corridors in Clark County could benefit from some form of high capacity transit. He said that study also determined that outside the CRC project, the other corridors were specific corridors: Fourth Plain, Mill Plain, Highway 99, and I-205 were good candidate corridors for a bus rapid transit type of application. C-TRAN took that in consideration as part of their 20-year plan that was adopted in 2010. They identified the Fourth Plain corridor because it was their highest ridership route as well as some other reasons that they wanted to take it through the process. They also wanted to maximize the potential for federal funding. That required them to follow the Federal Transit Administration's Small Starts process. While there have been comments to the effect that there are these unanswered questions, the reality is that when you look at the process that the FTA requires them or any agency to go through, it is very rigorous. There are studies on the operations and cost methodology that they use to demonstrate where the cost savings are going to come from. Those are all a part of the submittals that they made for the FTA and then provided to the entire C-TRAN Board as part of the decision making process. They looked at other alternatives from no-build to TSM Transportation System Management alternative which looked at things like doing just traffic signal priority on the Fourth Plain corridor. At the end of the day, the C-TRAN Board as well as the RTC Board and Vancouver City Council determined that C-TRAN's Fourth Plain Bus Rapid Transit alternative would be the most cost effective. Mr. Patterson said there has been a lot of talk about a ballot measure taken.

He said the primary reason that the C-TRAN Board has not done anything different is because they don't need new sales tax revenue in order to do this project. They can do it as last month's action demonstrated by using some uncommitted capital reserves to their cash investment fund at \$6.7 million. The federal grant that they will utilize throughout this project will be sufficient to pay for construction. The ongoing operations and maintenance cost are about \$878,000 annually lower than what they are seeing for the service that they pay for on the corridor today.

Larry Smith said he has heard these arguments back and forth for the last six months and has heard the same arguments at the C-TRAN Board. He said there is a motion and a second.

LARRY SMITH CALLED FOR THE QUESTION. MELISSA SMITH SECONDED THE CALL. Chair Burkman said that requires a 2/3 vote.

Commissioner Madore started to point something out. Chair Burkman said a Call for the Question has no discussion. Commissioner Madore stated a point of order. Chair Burkman said the question has been called and needs to be addressed first.

THOSE IN FAVOR OF CALLING THE QUESTION 11 AND THOSE OPPOSED 2. That calls the question.

Chair Burkman asked what the Point of Order was. Commissioner Madore said the last time they voted on the Bus Rapid Transit Project their attorney was present. He said he believed the attorney indicated that it was a Clark County project and the Oregon members would not be allowed to vote. Chair Burkman said he has looked into that with the Executive Director. The legal opinion is that because it is a major duty of the MPO to develop the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), this crosses both states so Oregon Members are included. A roll call vote will be taken by all voting members.

THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2014-2017 TIP AMENDMENT: C-TRAN FOURTH PLAIN BUS RAPID TRANSIT, RESOLUTION 08-14-15 PASSES WITH 10 YES VOTES, 2 NO VOTES (MADORE, MIELKE), AND 1 ABSTAIN (MCKENZIE).

Chair Burkman said the motion was approved with 10 yes votes; the motion would have still been approved by a majority of the Board even with 2 less votes.

#### **VIII. 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update**

Matt Ransom said through the RTP update this year, the RTC Board has participated and validated that we need to look more closely at policies such as economic development when we refresh our project selection criteria, and also to more fully examine funding opportunities that might be available to this region, whether that is local, regional, or also at the state level given that this is a major issue over the course of 20 years. Today's presentation is to look at some initial numbers in the finance forecast. Lynda will lead off with a recap with the project list and also what types of projects generally show up in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Lynda David referred to the **Regional Project List** memo included in the meeting packet. She would provide an overview of some of the Regional Transportation Plan elements they now have in process. She will address drafting the Regional Transportation Project list identified in the RTP.

Ms. David recapped stating that the Regional Transportation Plan is the long-range plan for the region's transportation system required as a condition for the receipt of federal transportation funding to this region. The Plan must cover a period of at least 20 years and the federal requirement is for the Plan to be updated at least every 4 years. The Plan must be multimodal; addressing for example automobile, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, system management, demand management, and freight and goods movement. The RTP is the result of a process that requires collaboration, coordination, and consultation to make sure there is consistency between federal, state, and local Plans.

Back in June, Ms. David highlighted the RTP's development. She provided a graphic that summarizes the RTP process: Development and Implementation. Currently, they are in the May through August timeframe dealing with capital facilities plans inputs, transportation networks and beginning to address the financial plan which they will continue to review through October.

Ms. David emphasized that the focus of the RTP is the regional transportation system. This regional transportation system, per the Growth Management Act, includes: all state transportation facilities; all local freeways, expressways, and principal arterials; all high capacity transit systems; and all other transportation facilities and services of regional significance, examples of air, marine, rail, transit, road, and any transportation facility or service with significant regional need and/or impact. Ms. David provided and highlighted the Designated Regional Transportation System map. She noted that this was the map as defined in the existing RTP, adopted in 2011.

One of the most important RTP elements is the list of identified transportation projects. Jurisdictions in Washington plan under the Growth Management Act and as such, local jurisdictions work with RTC to assess their transportation systems. Local jurisdictions come up with a list of projects to address transportation system deficiencies as part of local Capital Facilities Plans. RTC also compiles project information from local Transportation Improvement Programs and projects to be funded in-part with Traffic Impact Fees.

This means that the planning process builds from the local level up, with RTC compiling project information from local jurisdictions as well as from WSDOT and from C-TRAN. In turn, RTC uses the information to build transportation networks in the regional travel model. RTC also takes project cost estimates from local plans to use in the RTP's financial plan chapter. The RTP list of projects is significant because projects must be identified in the RTP before they can be programmed for funding in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Criteria for including projects on the RTP list include: purpose and need for the project identified through transportation system performance analysis which may identify needs such as safety, capacity, urban upgrade, system and demand management, preservation, and maintenance; projects should be identified in the plans of state or local agencies; projects must be financially feasible; and projects must be implemental within the 20 year timeframe. Project criteria reflect the policies of the RTP; they address mobility, congestion, support for economic development and so on.

Ms. David said the list of projects is, in essence, a list of solutions to address transportation challenges faced by this region. Per federal rules, in identifying transportation solutions, we must first look at the lower cost solutions such as implementing operational improvements,

addressing modal treatments such as walking, biking, and demand management techniques such as commute trip reduction. State rules require we look at changing our expectations with changed level of service standards. Then, if other solutions will not solve the problem, federal rules allow us to look to highway widening as a potential solution.

Ms. David said as they develop the 2014 RTP update, they begin their work on the list of projects and on the financial plan element by considering the list of projects that was included in the 2011 version of the regional plan. First, they identify those projects completed since the last Plan update back in 2011. Ms. David called attention to two draft lists attached with the RTP memo. The first draft list records all projects, regional and local, identified in the 2011 RTP that have been completed (or are very near to completion), and they amount to around \$293 million in investment. These projects will not appear in the 2014 RTP update, because they have been addressed. Many of these investments are the result of State Nickel and Partnership funding. Projects completed since 2011 include the SR-500/St John's interchange, the SR-14 widening and interchange through Camas, and the Salmon Creek interchange.

Also, there are a number of projects identified in the 2011 RTP that are now fully committed and funded. These amount to about \$172 million in investment and include: widening of SR-502 to Battle Ground and the south half of the I-205/18<sup>th</sup> Street interchange. Together, these two lists of projects amount to around \$465 million in transportation investment.

While we can applaud the investments made and projects completed, Ms. David said they do see that committed funds are reduced in the 2014 RTP when compared with the situation they faced back in 2011. This is reflective of the Nickel and Partnership funding coming to an end. The table on page 3 of the Memo provides more details of the comparisons between the 2011 RTP and the situation faced with the 2014 RTP.

Ms. David said although they have completed a preliminary list of RTP projects compiled from local and state plans, they continue to work with local planners to refine the list and will be able to bring the complete draft list of identified transportation project solutions to the RTC Board at the September meeting. At this point, the first draft list adds to \$2.8 billion in capital project needs for the regional and local transportation systems.

The next steps include using the draft project list to put the transportation network together as part of an updated Regional Travel Forecasting Model. They will review the fiscally constrained list of RTP projects and strategies with the RTAC members and bring the draft list to the Board at the September meeting. Another significant step will be completion of the draft financial plan including forecast revenues and expenditures. They will continue to seek public comment, and the concluding step will be to adopt the RTP update aimed for December 2014.

Commissioner Madore said he assumed that "constrained" means that we don't have the local means to fund it and asked if that was correct. Ms. David said that fiscally constrained means that there is reasonable assumption that there will be revenues available within the 20-year timeframe to complete the project that is listed. She said you have to look at what assumptions are being made as far as transportation revenue. Bob Hart will address some of those issues in his presentation that is next. Commissioner Madore said that this means that there is some optimism that some reasonable expectation that if it is put on the list, it will get funded. Ms. David said that if it is not on the list, it cannot get funded. It can possibly get funding if there is

revenue available. Chair Burkman said this is a continual conversation. He said we have often relied on the historical pattern, that there is reason to believe that it may happen.

Bob Hart would highlight the **Finance Plan** requirements, existing revenue sources, an outline of the forecasting approach, and future revenue trends. The RTP's financial plan element includes: financial assumptions, revenue sources and projections, and cost estimates for transportation projects, and transportation system maintenance and operations. The plan addresses federal, state, and local revenue sources. The plan must be "fiscally constrained" which means that there should be a reasonable expectation that revenues will be available for projects and for maintenance and preservation. This can be based on past history that there would be new revenue available. The plan includes costs for highway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements. It also includes costs for ITS, system management and operations, and transportation demand management.

Mr. Hart highlighted the current transportation revenue sources. The current federal gas tax is 18.4 cents, which has been unchanged since 1993. The pre-existing state gas tax is 23 cents. In 2003, the Legislature passed the Nickel Package which increased the gas tax by 5 cents. The Partnership Package in 2005 added 9.5 cents. Both those funding packages had a fixed set of projects. The last of these projects include the SR-502 widening project which is under construction and the I-205/18<sup>th</sup> Street interchange project that goes to construction next year. In 1999, the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) was repealed resulting in reduction of funding for transit service. C-TRAN was faced with a 40% revenue reduction for transit service. In 2005, voters in Clark County approved two-tenths of one percent sales tax increase to restore some of the funding for C-TRAN service. In 2011, voters approved two-tenths of one percent sales tax increase to preserve core bus service and maintain service for C-VAN, C-TRAN's paratransit service.

Mr. Hart highlighted the revenue forecast approach. He said the primary sources for revenue data are from the Finance Division of WSDOT and the Office of Financial Management. The finance division provides data on state and federal gas tax generated and spent in Clark County, while OFM looks at long range revenue trends for the state.

Representative Orcutt referred to the listed state tax in 2003 and 2005. He said the passenger vehicle weight fees that were added in 2005 are not listed. Mr. Hart said they could include that. He was not fully aware of what that specific element was.

Mr. Hart said the revenue forecast will need to consider how the gas tax is distributed to Clark County. The forecast will incorporate other variables such as population growth, debt service, fuel costs, and improved fuel efficiency of vehicles. Nickel and Partnership funds are dedicated to funded projects and debt service and are not available for new projects. The Finance Division also provides historical data on local funds generated and spent by Clark County and the local cities which will be used to forecast local revenue. They will work with C-TRAN to forecast transit revenue and costs.

Since the 2011 RTP update, a lot of capital projects have been completed including: the SR-500/St. John's Interchange project, the SR-14 Camas-Washougal Widening and Interchange Project; the Salmon Creek Interchange Project (opening this fall) and there are a couple more next year. The common thread for all these was that they were funded primarily through the

state's Nickel and Partnership packages. When they did the initial forecast for 2011, there was a \$471 million shortfall compared to projects listed in the RTP so the forecast assumed the equivalent of a 10 cent gas tax increase to fund the fiscally constrained plan. Given future revenue trends, there will likely be a need to pare the 2014 project list or to identify new revenues to make a fiscally constrained RTP.

Mr. Hart noted that not all revenues generated in Clark County are distributed back to the County. Recent trends have seen a return on investment of 79% in 2012. This is for all gas sources including federal tax. They will need to determine at what level to assume for future reference. Gas tax is the prime revenue source for transportation improvements. However, there are some problems with it; gas tax is a flat tax that does not keep pace with inflation. More fuel efficient vehicles result in a decrease in gas tax revenues. The 2011 RTP update assumed a federal fuel efficiency standard of 27.5 mpg. For this forecast, the fuel efficiency standard ramps up to 54.5 mpg by 2025. The existing federal act MAP-21 continues to be extended at current levels. Congress just extended to May of next year. One concern is that funding levels for the next six-year federal transportation act authorization could be limited to only gas tax revenue flowing into the highway trust fund. If so, funding to Washington could go from \$750 million in 2014 to \$500 million in the future. Preservation and maintenance costs are based on historical data; however, transportation agencies anticipate that these costs may require a greater share of transportation revenue in the future because of expanded road miles to maintain and deferred maintenance.

Mr. Hart highlighted colored slides with pie charts and graphs illustrating some of the revenue trends he described. Commissioner Madore referred to the Gross Gas Tax Revenue slide and said they have been told that the gas tax revenue is to fall each year and the slide shows an increase over the next 16 years. Mr. Hart said there are two issues; even though gas tax revenue is essentially flat, actual diesel fuel consumption goes up. The gross fuel tax includes both gas and diesel tax revenue. In the next 16 years, it shows a trend of increasing fuel tax revenue when diesel tax is included. Between 2011-2013 and 2025-2027, there is a total of 4.4% increase in revenue. Mr. Hart said because of the other commitments of the uses of the gas tax, to be mindful of what is available for projects.

The next steps include compiling the data for the preliminary financial plan with forecast revenues and expenditures. They will review with RTC staff and other agency staff, and put together a draft forecast of revenues and expenditures. If it turns out that they can't fully fund it with their forecast revenues, they will need to have a discussion of funding options.

Matt Ransom said this process of the project list and the financial plan is really the crux of developing the regional transportation strategy. The Board set policy earlier this year, refreshing where some focus needs to be, such as economic development. Mr. Ransom said he wanted to discuss how a project comes to be listed on the RTP and restate what Lynda said because it is important. It comes from two directions. Lynda laid out some very clear criteria. The most prominent of that is defined in the Interlocal Agreement that formed the RTC. It says effectively that projects come from local comprehensive plans as the basis, the starting point. They look at local comprehensive plans, state plans, and port plans. If a local agency has adopted it legislatively as a priority project, whether it is in an impact fee program, capital facility plan,

etc., that is the basis for the RTP. Mr. Ransom said about 90% of the discussion with Lynda and jurisdictions staffs is about validating project scope, numbers, cost estimates, etc. information.

The other direction is from the RTC. A good example of that would be the High Capacity Transit System Study. That was a study authored and developed by the RTC with some recommendations. Ultimately, those recommendations cannot become part of the Plan until they were incorporated into a local plan. It is a consistency check, a monitoring. The individual local Boards have to adopt that in their plan to make sure there is consistency and it is not one directional. This conversation is to ensure that there is that consistency, that the Growth Management strategies that are laid out in statutes that all governments in Washington State have to comply with are the basis where this all begins. If there is a regional strategy that comes forward, we need to make sure that also goes back down to cross check and get certification at the local level before it becomes part of the RTP project list.

Mr. Ransom said in regard to the finance strategy, he noted the last comment. He said there is reason to believe that “financially feasible” is a struggle for local and state funds. The finance discussion is going to be very important. He said the RTC Board does not solve that problem, but it might through the discussion help the region develop a strategy. That is where the reasonableness of the assumptions comes into play. Look for a strategy that we all can generally agree to that seems reasonable. This is what they will be working through this fall.

Commissioner Mielke said it was great that we look for other financial packages and ways to do things, but he said they still have not addressed the debt service. He also said they still have not done reform; no changes have been made in 20 years. Commissioner Mielke said he would like to see conversation about that.

## **IX. Other Business**

### From the Board

Chair Burkman said that Board Members should have received both an e-mail and a physical letter from Prothman with respect to the six-month evaluation of the Executive Director. Chair Burkman said it is a touch point evaluation asking for response (e-mail, paper copy, or fax) returns by August 15, 2014. There will be an Executive Session at the September meeting for Prothman to present the feedback and for discussion.

Don Wagner said the last week of August, WSDOT will have a joint ribbon cutting on the Salmon Creek Interchange project with Clark County; a \$130 million project.

### From the Director

Mr. Ransom noted the meetings listed on the agenda. He highlighted two areas of interest. He wanted to congratulate, as the opportunity arises, the different jurisdictions that are accomplishing major projects. The Salmon Creek Interchange Project, probably the most prominent. The details for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony are on Thursday, August 27 at 11:00 a.m., park on the west side near the park and ride location. The WSDOT or Clark County Web sites provide further information. The project began years ago, and it is good to get to the finish line.

Mr. Ransom also recognized the project that ODOT just recently opened at I-205 and Airport Way. This is a partnership project between Oregon DOT and the Port of Portland to make more

efficient some of the traffic circulation at the onramp to I-205 northbound. They have added some extra turn lanes going west and north, a whole new bridge structure, modified a bridge structure, and it is an amazing feat of engineering in terms of how they can take something existing and change it to make it better. Mr. Ransom said he rode by the project recently by bicycle, and felt it should be announced to the RTC Board. He thanked ODOT for their hard work and said those headed north in the p.m. will be happy and thankful as well. Rian Windsheimer added that the project started out as a \$150 million project to realign the ramps and expand the bridge. After a lot of refinement and work, they ended with a \$15 million project accomplished, and they were able to achieve the objective that was set by the FAA on what the capacity of that interchange is supposed to be. A good news story and glad to have it open.

Commissioner Madore said thanks to everyone that participated in the East County bridge presentation and the Q & A. He said if anyone missed it and would like to share it, it is on the County Website <http://www.clark.wa.gov/thegrid/> for July 29. There is a video and presentation available. Commissioner Madore said they do not have all the answers, but they want to engage with everybody to work together to move forward.

Commissioner Barnes thanked Commissioner Madore for earlier today encouraging people to vote by 8:00 p.m. today. Results will be provided in the Public Service Center.

Mr. Ransom noted that this is grant development and grant submission season for most local agencies. He said this is something that the Board does not see, but it is behind the scenes with Dale Robins and himself to support local member agencies in their grant pursuits. They were able to submit two letters on behalf of local agencies. He said good luck to the City of Washougal in pursuit of some funds for Evergreen at 32<sup>nd</sup> Street Reconstruction and to C-TRAN with some bus purchases. The goal is to bring federal and state dollars back to the region.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 2, 2014, at 4 p.m.

THERE WAS A MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT. MELISSA SMITH SECONDED THE MOTION, AND IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

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Jack Burkman, Board of Directors Chair