

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors
May 6, 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, May 6, 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
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 Alternate

Voting Board Members Absent:

Jeff Hamm, C-TRAN Executive Director
David Poucher, White Salmon Mayor
Jason Tell, ODOT Region One Manager

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14th District
Norm Johnson, Representative 14th District
Charles Ross, Representative 14th District
Don Benton, Senator 17th District
Paul Harris, Representative 17th District
Monica Stonier, Representative 17th District
Ann Rivers, Senator 18th District
Liz Pike, Representative 18th District
Brandon Vick, Representative 18th District
John Braun, Senator 20th District
Richard DeBolt, Representative 20th District
Ed Orcutt, Representative 20th District
Annette Cleveland, Senator 49th District
Jim Moeller, Representative 49th District
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49th District

Guests Present:

Ed Barnes, Citizen
Katy Brooks, Port of Vancouver
Michael Derleth, Clark County
Eric Florip, The Columbian
Bart Gernhart, WSDOT
Paul Greenlee, Washougal Council Member
Lee L. Jensen, Citizen
Dale Lewis, Rep. Herrera Beutler's Office
Dick Malin, Citizen
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Council Member
Jerry Oliver, Port of Vancouver Commissioner
Ron Onslow, City of Ridgefield Mayor
Kelly Parker, Greater Vancouver Chamber
Bill Wright, Clark County

Staff Present:

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

II. Citizen Communications

Lee L. Jensen of Battle Ground voiced his support for C-TRAN's Fourth Plain corridor Bus Rapid Transit. He provided copies of his testimony that he also presented to the City of Battle Ground the previous night.

Ed Barnes of Vancouver provided copies of a letter from Senator Ann Rivers and Representatives Liz Pike and Ed Orcutt regarding a meeting on May 28 to form a new Bi-State Bridge Coalition (BBC). Mr. Barnes voiced his opposition to this private meeting. Mr. Barnes also provided a list of Columbia River Crossing Issues that he highlighted and noted his disappointment.

III. Approval of the Board Agenda

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MAY 6, 2014, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DOUG MCKENZIE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

IV. Approval of April 1, 2014, Minutes

MELISSA SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 1, 2014, MEETING MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LARRY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

V. Consent Agenda

A. May Claims

B. Title VI Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan Update, Resolution 05-14-08

LARRY SMITH MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA MAY CLAIMS AND RESOLUTION 05-14-08. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DON WAGNER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VI. Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2015, Resolution 05-14-09

Matt Ransom said that every year the RTC must adopt a work program that relates to the use of federal funds. RTC's operating budget includes the use of both the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration planning funds. In accordance with the use of those funds, RTC needs to prepare a work program. The action being asked of the Board is to adopt that work program. Mr. Ransom said FHWA and FTA also prepare Planning Emphasis Areas. When they develop policy at the federal level, they send that out to the regional planning agencies like RTC and ask that to be considered and factored into work programs. Lynda David will present what those were for this year.

Lynda David referred to the resolution included in the meeting packet along with the draft FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program. As Ms. David outlined at the March Board meeting, the UPWP is a federally-required document that describes transportation planning activities anticipated for the region in the next fiscal year. Development of the UPWP is one of the core metropolitan planning elements mandated in law required for the receipt of all federal and state transportation funds to the region.

Ms. David presented a slide that was shown at the March meeting providing a summary outline of the UPWP with its four major sections. After introductory information, the first three major sections describe RTC work elements. The fourth section describes Transportation Planning Activities of State and Local planning partners. The final page of the document is a summary spreadsheet showing revenue sources that will support each work element, including FHWA and FTA funds granted to RTC to carry out the required metropolitan transportation planning process. The UPWP outlines how these federal dollars will be used.

Ms. David said the UPWP needs to reflect transportation Planning Emphasis Areas identified by the US DOT and the State of Washington. These emphasis areas are described in the UPWP document. Since the RTC Board reviewed the draft UPWP in March, the only substantive change to the document has been in the section describing federal Planning Emphasis Areas. The changes resulted from guidance issued by the US Department of Transportation in mid-April, 2014, directing Metropolitan Planning Organizations to include work in three areas. Those new areas include MAP-21 Implementation, Models of Regional Cooperation, and Ladders of Opportunity, which Ms. David highlighted.

RTC Board action requested is to adopt RTC's fiscal Year 2015 UPWP. Adoption will allow RTC's Executive Director authority to file applications for federal funding, to execute grant agreements and to file any assurances or required documentation relating to the FY 2015 UPWP. Adoption of the resolution will also continue the MPO Local Funding Agreement that helps to provide local match for the federal funds.

BILL GANLEY MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF FY 2015 UPWP RESOLUTION 05-14-09. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LARRY SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VII. Skamania County Regional Transportation Plan, Resolution 05-14-10

Matt Ransom provided an introduction to the Skamania County Regional Transportation Plan along with the Klickitat County RTP. Mr. Ransom said most of the RTC Board discussions are around the Clark County Regional Plan, but he wanted to take the opportunity to remind the Board that the mission of the RTC also extends out to Skamania and Klickitat Counties. This agenda item and the following item are for the consideration of the adoption of each of those county's regional plans. Mr. Ransom said they invited Mayor Dave Poucher of White Salmon representing Klickitat County to attend the meeting, but he had a schedule conflict, which is the reason that he rarely is able to attend the RTC. Mr. Ransom said that Skamania Commissioner Doug McKenzie has been able to attend RTC and represent the work and effort on the Skamania Transportation Policy Committee. They have convened and reviewed the regional plan.

Dale Robins referred to the Resolution included in the meeting packet along with copies of the Skamania County Regional Transportation Plan. RTC, as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, by State law must review the plan every two years and update regularly. Skamania County has been working to update their plan over the last year and a half. At their April 2 meeting, the Skamania County Transportation Policy Committee recommended that the RTC Board adopt the plan.

The Regional Transportation Plan becomes the framework for continuing the cooperative process for identifying needs and solutions to the regional transportation system. The major updates include the following: updated population and employment figures, update to a horizon

year of 2035, updated needs, updating the financial forecast, and update of project priorities. The Plan includes seven chapters, which Mr. Robins highlighted.

There are a number of key needs identified in the Skamania Plan. First, there is the need to maintain and preserve the existing transportation system. This is the same for Clark County also. There is also a need to improve safety and support economic development. One of the largest obstacles is that the needs exceed the anticipated revenue. Given the demographics throughout the rural county in economic development, finding sufficient transportation revenues is difficult.

Mr. Robins highlighted some of the top priority projects. The top improvement priority in Skamania County is the SR-14, Marble Road to Salmon Falls Road. This is a corridor located several miles east of the Clark/Skamania County line in the National Scenic Area. The corridor includes many substandard curves as the highway climbs up over Cape Horn. Over the last several years improvements have been made, but the next phase is needed to correct additional safety deficiency at sharp curves. The cost of this improvement is approximately \$8 million.

The second improvement priority is the SR-14/Wind River Road Intersection. This is a skewed intersection that provides access to the Carson area for eastbound traffic on SR-14. Westbound access at this intersection is extremely difficult for passenger vehicles and impossible for commercial vehicles. Currently, westbound access is provided several miles to the east at the Hot Springs Avenue. However, Hot Springs Avenue is sliding into Wind River, and the road is only one wet winter from being closed down. WSDOT and Skamania County are preparing to begin design work to fix the skewed Wind River Road intersection, which has an estimated total cost of \$5 million.

Another priority is rockfall. Rocks falling off the steep cliffs onto SR-14 create a hazard for motorists. While driving on SR-14 in the Gorge, you can't help but see remnants of rockfall. SR-14 in the Gorge has some of the highest rated rockfall sites in Washington State. There are 17 priority rockfall locations in Skamania County. The cost to fix these is millions. WSDOT is systematically addressing these locations as funds become available.

The action before the Board is for adoption of Resolution 05-14-10 for the adoption of the 2014 update to the Skamania County Regional Transportation Plan.

Commissioner McKenzie thanked Mr. Robins for all the hard work along with Mr. Ransom for all the work that RTC, the RTPO, did for Skamania County. They have been a wealth of information. Commissioner McKenzie said as with Clark County, transportation is highly important to them. It not only affects them economically, it does for safety and other issues. In the second priority presented, they are losing Hot Springs Avenue due to a slide. If that road slides, it means that their second largest employer, Carson Hot Springs, will have to drive through the City of Stevenson to turn around to come back on Wind River Road, which is two to five miles out of their way. Not only will it impact the largest city in the county, it will impact their Mill, which is their largest employer. He said they are a distressed county. They don't have a lot of large employers, so they value the ones they have. Commissioner McKenzie again thanked Dale and Matt for all their help.

Shirley Craddick said the Metro and RTC are required to work together. She asked what responsibility Skamania and Klickitat have in working with the Oregon side of the Columbia River Gorge. Dale Robins said they have a similar requirement. On bi-state issues, they work together. With the SR-35 Study, they have worked closely with the Hood River area. They have

also worked with the Gorge Commission and ODOT on several projects. They have invited the Oregon representatives to participate. On bi-state issues there is participation from both sides.

Councilor Craddick said the reason that she asked is because the Oregon side is not referenced in the document and she wondered if that was a requirement. Mr. Robins said it is not listed in the diagram, but they have worked together over the years. Ms. Craddick asked if it needed to be documented. Chair Burkman said that may be a good practice to include if that is part of the cooperation.

Rian Windsheimer said he agreed with staff; that coordination is happening. ODOT, Hood River, and Cascade Locks more recently have been fairly active in their coordination, particularly around the bridges. This is because of the interdependency of the two economies, the communities, the staff employment, and trade that goes on. The links are critical to making sure that continues to function. There is reference in the document to the bridges, and making sure that those are serving the ongoing needs of Skamania County as well as the rest of the communities. Mr. Windsheimer said that the current bridges may last for some time under their current conditions, they are not ideal, and it does ask for them to continue to look at making something that serves the broader needs into the future. He said he was comfortable with this; the coordination is happening, and that is something to look for in a future update.

Chair Burkman said an option that he recommended would be to ask staff to add that portion in the document and return it next month as a consent agenda item. This would better document what is taking place. Rian Windsheimer asked if that is what Skamania County would be comfortable with. Commissioner McKenzie said they do have that cooperation and interaction even though it is not mentioned in the document. They have worked with the bridge situation and ODOT and the Port and had joint groups. He said a team-type of work came together to make it better even if it did not state that in the document.

Chair Burkman said this RTP may be used for federal application of something else and they may not know what is going on. If it is included, it just highlights the good work that is going on. Commissioner McKenzie agreed with that.

The Board concurred to bring the complete document back for approval with the additions under the consent agenda so no further discussion would be necessary at the next meeting.

Rian Windsheimer said he could have staff provide some additional information that ODOT has taken into consideration with their local communities and that their Plans are reflecting these goals as well.

Commissioner McKenzie said this additional information regarding cooperation would also apply to the Klickitat County RTP. The Board concurred.

VIII. Klickitat County Regional Transportation Plan, Resolution 05-14-11

Dale Robins referred to the resolution and Klickitat County Regional Transportation Plan. Mr. Robins said the Klickitat County Transportation Policy Committee has been working to update their RTP over the last year and a half. At their April 2 meeting, they reviewed the draft Klickitat County Regional Transportation Plan and have recommended RTC Board adoption.

The update is very much the same as Skamania County's Plan and has the same requirements. The Plans are similar, but each is more reflective of the needs of each of the individual Counties. The chapters follow the same format.

The transportation needs are similar to maintain and preserve the existing system. Klickitat County took a little stronger support of economic development followed by improving transportation safety. The obstacle is the same as everywhere else, needs exceed anticipated revenues.

The top improvement priority in Klickitat County is the SR-35 Columbia River Bridge. This is the replacement of the bridge over the Columbia River between White Salmon, Washington and Hood River, Oregon. The cost is \$10 million for design and to complete the final environmental impact statement. Mr. Robins said a number of studies have been conducted on this issue over the last 15 years. They have completed a draft environmental impact statement. A Type, Size, and Location Study has been completed as well. This is seen as the number one priority as far as economic development for Klickitat County. The current bridge has only 9.5 foot wide travel lanes; generally, 12 foot is standard. Also, there is inadequate width for river traffic between spans.

The second priority in Klickitat County is All Weather County Arterials. This would update countywide arterials to create an all-weather haul network. Several areas throughout the county rely on major county roads as the sole access route for getting goods to markets. Currently, these roads do not have the necessary structure to provide year-round service for the heavy trucks. The county is moving forward on making these improvements, but additional resources are needed. The additional revenue needed is \$20 million.

The third priority is to provide access into the Port's Bingen Point property over the rail line. This is of economic importance to the Klickitat County region. The proposed project will improve access to regional employers including Insitu (Boeing) custom Interface, and SDS Lumber. This is a grade separation project over the rail lines. The project will improve safety by providing an additional vehicle point that does not have a rail conflict. The cost of this project is \$20 million.

The action before the Board is adoption of Resolution 05-14-11, the 2014 update to the Klickitat County Regional Transportation Plan.

Commissioner McKenzie said Insitu is a huge employer and very important to the region. They are working hard to secure funding for the Bingen Point project.

As with Skamania County, the Klickitat Regional Transportation Plan will have additional language added on the bi-state cooperation and be brought back next month as a consent agenda item.

IX. I-205 Access and Operations Study - Update

Matt Ransom said this agenda item is a follow-up to the January Board presentation when an update was provided on the I-205 Study looking in the northbound direction to some of the current hot spots on I-205. Mr. Ransom said the current RTP has a capital improvement plan for I-205 that identifies some \$450 million of interchange related improvements. The purpose of this current effort is not to revise that work, but rather to say what can we do in the interim

should funding that \$450 million comes in steps and it may be an indefinite period of time before the next program project is appropriated. The last project that is in progress is the 18th Street half interchange. Once that is complete, no other work is appropriated for improvement. The operational look is an assessment of implementing what we have in policy in our Regional Plan, which is if we can do system management improvements that are very low cost that help manage a hot spot at this time; it is in our interest to look at that. At the conclusion of all of this analysis, we intend to bring forward to the Board an operational strategy. That strategy then could be considered for inclusion in the Regional Plan, not as a replacement per se, but as a shorter term hot spot improvement strategy. Today's presentation is to look in the southbound direction at a couple hot spots. This is not a simulation of cars like in January, but a video of the actual traffic conditions that might better orient you to what you experience if you drive I-205 or if you don't, what is actually happening. This is current day traffic.

Bob Hart said the key reasons that they are looking at operational strategies is that they offer a low cost approach to help the system operate more efficiently. They also recognize that if there is no funding for capital projects, operational strategies can offer an interim approach to manage the transportation system and manage performance. Mr. Hart said in some cases in the longer term, they can supplement capital projects or may be able to replace roadway expansion.

On arterial systems, operational improvements can consist of ITS, signal system upgrades, signal coordination, or traffic responsive signals. On freeways, they can be signing and striping, lane extensions, and ramp meters. This approach is also consistent with WSDOT's Moving Washington principles: operate efficiently, manage demand, and add capacity strategically.

Mr. Hart addressed the southbound operational issues at Padden Parkway and I-205. During the morning peak period, the traffic signal at Padden Parkway/Andresen Road results in high eastbound platoons of traffic to I-205 south which have difficulty merging with the high volumes on the right most freeway lane. Mr. Hart provided a video to demonstrate just how the problem looks.

Mr. Hart next addressed the southbound traffic operations at the SR-500 interchange and I-205. Eastbound and westbound on-ramp volumes from SR-500 that must quickly merge to a single lane ramp and merge left to the I-205 mainline causing congestion at the merge and queuing on the ramps. He provided a video taken the previous week to demonstrate the conditions. The video does a good job of showing that the mainline is not the problem. The right lane on I-205 at the merge has a lot of capacity. Under these conditions, the westbound ramp can back up to the SR-500 mainline.

RTC, in coordination with WSDOT and the I-205 TAC, has developed a set of southbound strategies based on the problems at the two locations shown in the videos. They also looked at 2022 model forecasts.

For Padden Parkway, there are currently two merge locations from Padden Parkway onto I-205, one merge from Padden westbound and a second merge from Padden eastbound about a third of a mile south of the first one. The first strategy would remove the westbound merge location to create a single merge onto I-205 for the westbound and eastbound ramps and meter both ramps. The second idea would maintain the two merge locations and meter just the eastbound to southbound ramp. A third idea would maintain the two merge locations and meter just the westbound to southbound ramp.

Mr. Hart provided the southbound strategies for SR-500 to I-205 south. These were developed for SR-500 to address the heavy eastbound and westbound ramp volumes and the ramp merges. The first strategy would take the three lanes that are on I-205 southbound from three to two lanes under the SR-500 overpass and allow the westbound SR-500 on-ramp to become an add lane. Additional strategies include a ramp meter on SR-500 westbound to I-205 south, a ramp meter on SR-500 eastbound to I-205 south, and extending the length of the southbound on-ramp from SR-500 to I-205 south.

Mr. Hart said they are in the process of looking at these ideas in more detail to develop some findings on the 2022 operational strategies. They will analyze the system performance with the 2035 I-205 core projects. They also will determine the effectiveness of the operational strategies in conjunction with the core projects.

Commissioner Mielke asked why there was not consideration on Padden Parkway of adding a lane for the eastbound and a lane for the westbound traffic that merge to I-205 south. Mr. Hart said that is part of the higher capital cost project. Chair Burkman said that is the preferred fix, but they are looking at lower cost alternatives to the \$58 million project. He asked the cost of some of the lower alternatives. Mr. Hart said the cost of a ramp meter is about \$250,000. A lane extension is in the range of \$5 million.

Commissioner Mielke said in discussions with Mr. Wagner about the cost per lane mile, he thought it was about \$2 million per lane mile. Mr. Wagner said the \$2 million a lane mile is for overlaying an existing highway. To build a new highway, it requires 12 inches of base and the layers after that. The \$58 million for the project is from the preliminary engineering work that was done four to six years ago. The costs have probably changed. *(It was later clarified the current amount is \$30 million. This is to do the one mile between SR-500 and Padden Parkway, both northbound and southbound. It does not include rebuilding the Padden Interchange.)*

Commissioner Madore said the cost for each of the incremental changes is important. He said he liked to see multiple options considered. He said not only the costs should be considered but also the overall direction. Commissioner Madore said if we are paying money to restrict traffic in order to solve a problem that should be minus points because that is moving backward instead of moving forward. Ramp meters are a low cost way to restrict traffic. He said we should instead take steps without restricting traffic allowing free flow.

Chair Burkman said he was confused. We have just seen the platoons of traffic, the clustering and then a big gap. He said his understanding is that the purpose of ramp metering is to allow people to feed out in a sequence so there is more free flow. Mr. Hart said metering helps the main line perform better so they don't all arrive at once. The purpose is to help the flow.

Don Wagner said for clarity, both are correct. It is an issue of priority, where you are trying to maximize the flow and safety. Ramp meters will maximize the capacity of I-205 in this case, and it will cost the people who are trying to enter in from the side streets. It is a safety issue of a low speed facility coming onto a high speed facility, and where you want those accidents and the priority. There will be some stacking, but they don't want that to be significant. Those details need to be worked out. They are looking towards active ramp metering that gauges what is actually happening on the interstate as well as what is happening on the side street to automatically by computer maximize the opportunity available. In these scenarios being

discussed and in Portland, it is storing traffic trying to create the highest flow on the freeway system, and it can back up. It is a science and needs to be managed well.

Commissioner Madore said if we are going to add ramp meters that we would add intelligence to them. Mr. Hart said that ODOT does dynamic metering. They have sensors in the roadway along the ramp and they assess what the queue is doing to ensure that it doesn't get that backed up. Commissioner Madore said he did not like meters, and if we move forward with some type of ramp metering that we use the intelligent meters or none at all.

Chair Burkman said we do have a lot of projects on our long-term list. This is illustrative of where we have projects and some are as simple as adding a lane, but it takes time and money. These are intermediate steps, and we will have more information brought forward because there are pros and cons on all of them and ways to help us get by until there is more funding.

Shirley Craddick said she understood this was to identify some lower cost opportunities that could help traffic flow when we are not able to add on to the freeway. In following Commissioner Madore's comment to add the intelligent metering system to one of the options, she asked what the cost is to add that to the project. Mr. Hart said the cost of ramp metering includes the dynamic metering and having an intelligent system in place.

Chair Burkman said the actual video works well in presenting what is happening. He said perhaps after construction, we could see the before and after.

X. Other Business

From the Director

Mr. Ransom said the Bi-State Coordination Committee met on Thursday, May 1 at the Vancouver Library. At the meeting the Committee decided that they would meet every other month. The next meeting is scheduled for July 9. The topic of that meeting will be about regional economic development coordination. The sense around the committee table was that that was part and parcel to infrastructure investment and regional bi-state transportation issues and how the economy is growing. They talked about inviting a few of the economic development districts covering both Portland and Clark County to discuss initiatives that they have ongoing. Mr. Ransom said they would notify members closer to the meeting date.

Chair Burkman reminded the Board that this committee was originally the Bi-State Transportation Committee. A few years ago, it changed to the Bi-State Coordination Committee, so it covers more than just transportation issues.

Mr. Ransom noted that earlier during the UPWP presentation, the feds are really emphasizing bi-state coordination. The model that exists here, not only in terms of joint membership on Boards of Directors, but also a committee that is a direct forum for convening dialogue and collaboration are representative of what the feds are asking. He said in some of the systems that we have in place, we are a bit ahead of the curve. Reinvigorating the Bi-State Coordination Committee and creating good content is in everybody's best interest.

JPACT meets May 8, 2014 at Metro at 7:30 a.m. C-TRAN Board of Directors meets at 5:30 p.m. on May 13, 2014, at the Vancouver Library.

Mr. Ransom referred to the handout at the table for members. At the last Board meeting during the Safety Management Assessment presentation, there was a question from the Board about

2012 collision data. Staff was able to go back and assemble that data. This is just the 2012 data. In comparing 2012 to the data that was presented in the report (2009-2011), the trends are tracking; there was no shift in 2012.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 3, 2014, at 4 p.m.

LARRY SMITH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY DON WAGNER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Jack Burkman, Board of Directors Chair