

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council  
Board of Directors  
April 3, 2018, 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 Ron Onslow on Tuesday, April 3, 2018, at 4:00 p.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center Sixth Floor Training Room, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington. The meeting was televised and recorded by CVTV. Attendance follows.

Voting Board Members Present:

Marc Boldt, Clark County Councilor  
Shawn Donaghy, C-TRAN Exec. Director/CEO  
Paul Greenlee, Washougal (alternate)  
Bart Hansen, Vancouver Councilmember  
Scott Hughes, Port of Ridgefield Commissioner  
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Mayor  
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Councilmember  
Mandy Putney, ODOT (alternate)  
Eileen Quiring, Clark County Councilor  
Jeanne Stewart, Clark County Councilor  
Kris Strickler, WSDOT Regional Administrator

Voting Board Members Absent:

Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor  
Jim Herman, Port of Klickitat Commissioner  
Tom Lannen, Skamania County Commissioner  
Melissa Smith, Camas Councilmember  
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Paul Harris, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Norm Johnson, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Gina McCabe, Representative 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Lynda Wilson, Senator 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Vicki Kraft, Representative 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Ann Rivers, Senator 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Liz Pike, Representative 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  
Ed Orcutt, Representative 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Annette Cleveland, Senator 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Monica Stonier, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District  
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49<sup>th</sup> District

Guests Present:

Ron Arp, Identity Clark County  
Edward Barnes, Citizen  
Al Bauer, Citizen  
Rian Davis, Clark County Assoc. of Realtors  
Carley Francis, WSDOT  
Sorin Garber, SGA  
Judith Gray, ODOT  
Jim Hagar, Port of Vancouver  
Abriel Johnny, Cowlitz Indian Tribe  
Larry Keister, Port of Camas-Washougal Commissioner  
Sarah Kohout, Rep. Monica Stonier's Office  
Diane O'Regan, C-TRAN  
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN  
Sean Philbrook, Identity Clark County  
Scott Sawyer, City of Battle Ground  
Robert Schaefer, Citizen  
Lindsey Shafar, Clark County  
Ty Stober, Vancouver Councilmember  
Ron Swaren, Citizen  
Marc Thornsbury, Port of Klickitat

Staff Present:

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

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

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 3, 2018, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY JEANNE STEWART AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **III. Call for Public Comments**

Ron Swaren from Portland provided several different bridge designs for new Columbia River bridge crossings along with a handout.

Edward Barnes from Vancouver expressed the importance of public transportation and the replacement of the I-5 Bridge.

Mandy Putney entered the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Robert Schaefer from Vancouver expressed the importance of the I-5 Bridge replacement.

Al Bauer from Vancouver thanked Board Members for their time and work for the community. He expressed the importance and urgency of the I-5 Bridge replacement and provided a handout.

## **IV. Approval of March 6, 2018, Minutes**

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 6, 2018, MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **V. Consent Agenda**

### **A. April Claims**

### **B. RTC Member Contributions (Dues) for YR 2019, Resolution 04-18-06**

### **C. VAST: Portal Transportation Data Archive Services Contract, Resolution 04-18-07**

### **D. Battle Ground Project Delay Request: Chelatchie Rails With Trails, Resolution 04-18-08**

Marc Boldt asked if the Battle Ground delay request was the second delay. Mr. Robins said it was the third delay request. Councilor Boldt asked if the third delay was the last time. Mr. Robins said they did not have a policy after a third request.

MARC BOLDT MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA APRIL CLAIMS AND RESOLUTIONS 04-18-06, 04-18-07, AND 04-18-08. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SHAWN DONAGHY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

## **VI. RTC Regional Competitive Grant Program Review**

Matt Ransom said related to administration of their grant program and TIP, they have a TIP Programming Guidebook. This was included in the meeting materials. In review of the grant program, the Guidebook has some adjustments to criteria and clarification to policy. RTAC has been working on this review. Mr. Ransom said the objective today is to elicit the Board's input and feedback and take it back to the RTAC committee. This item would then be brought back to the Board in May for approval and the release of the next round of grant solicitation.

Dale Robins said that almost every year they review their grant process to make sure it is consistent with what the local agencies would like to see out of the program. They have federal funds that are allocated to the region, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Staff is looking for input and would return in May for action.

Mr. Robins said the process that they used in this review began with creating an RTAC subcommittee, technical staff from local jurisdictions, that spent about five months reviewing the process. Their recommendations were then taken to the RTAC committee in March. Staff is now asking the Board for input. They would go back to RTAC in April and conclude with action before the Board in May for approval and a call for projects.

The grant program is very significant to the region. Mr. Robins displayed the grant program allocation from 2010 to 2018. This shows that \$96.6 million has been implemented. These are a lot of regionally significant transportation projects in the region. They come from a number of sources: ARRA, TA, CMAQ, and STBG. Also displayed was the grant allocation by mode over that same time period. Much of the money has gone to roads. They have strategies, and their strategies include the leveraging of funds. They want to build a multi-modal system. They have a growing community where they have two-lane rural arterials with ditches on each side. A lot of what their money went to was to build those arterials to current urban standards with sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and to accommodate transit. They have also invested a lot of money in the transportation system management (the signal system).

Mr. Robins said the purpose of this program is to implement the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is the overall goal of the RTP. Mr. Robins highlighted the grant process. They have a three-step process: 1) Screen projects to make sure they are eligible for the grant program and consistent with the long range plan. 2) Evaluate projects against a set of criteria. And 3) Select projects for funding based on the evaluation process.

The RTC Selection Criteria was attached to the memo included in the meeting packet. The criteria were shown with the proposed changes. Mr. Robins characterized the changes as those that enhanced project readiness. Those projects that have invested some time into scoping a project out and are ready to proceed are the ones that are going to do much better in the program. They made that clear with some criteria changes. Mr. Robins said gone are the days of just guesstimating what a project might be and then finding out it is going to cost you ten times more than what you thought it might be.

Mr. Robins said they have also enhanced transit criteria so that they are at equal footing with the road and other modes. They have enhanced regionally significant projects. Those projects that are really regionally significant will score much better in the criteria.

Mr. Robins said they ran a test against last year's projects. What they found was that it made one project that had more project readiness was able to jump over another project, but it made no change in what projects were selected for funding.

RTAC and the RTAC Subcommittee reviewed this and were confident with the changes.

Mr. Robins referred to the Guidebook that was also included in the meeting materials. He said the Guidebook is like the rule book on how they administer the grant program in the Transportation Improvement Program. It is a resource for local agencies, but it also lets them know how RTC staff will administer the program with certainty. The changes in the Guidebook include minor clarifying language such as changing the STP funds to the STBG funds to reflect the new federal grant program name. There were a number of policy changes. They have a strategy on preservation. It was a little unclear how that would apply to transit, in particular to transit replacement vehicles. They provided additional clarifying language on how that would apply to transit on pages 8 and 9 of the Guidebook. After the Smart Cities Workshop that RTC held, they realized that conduit is critical in operating Smart cities. They are now requiring that all projects using regional federal funds will include, at a minimum, conduit if they are opening up the road. They also changed the deadline before and after studies. They used to say the deadline was 18 months after the project was functionally complete, but there was no clear understanding of what functionally complete date was. They have changed that to when the project is closed. That is a date that Mr. Robins receives from WSDOT. It is a clear date, and they now say one year after that date, they have to complete their before and after analysis. Also, they changed the policy on project delays. It has always been that if a project is delayed, it is the next priority project in regional analysis that can go forward. It is not the city with the delay that gets to move their next project up. It is the next priority project over the entire region. That language was clarified.

Mr. Robins said staff would return in May for adoption by the RTC Board with the changes to both the criteria and the Guidebook. They will also issue a call for projects, which will be due in July. Projects are selected in October through the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program.

Anne McEnery-Ogle asked where the I-5 Bridge replacement falls in this entire piece. She also asked if it was broken down in different parts such as WSDOT for the roadway and C-TRAN for the transit.

Mr. Robins said that ultimately, the I-5 Bridge project is determined by the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). That determines the direction. It is up to the individual agencies to determine if they have a project that fits within the program. Mr. Robins said they have limited resources; they don't have a billion dollars in this program. They have about \$9 million a year. There might be elements to a project that could be implemented within this grant program. It may be additional transit service or possibly some sort of ITS technical changes that could be done that would help facilitate that future replacement.

Mayor McEnery-Ogle asked if they leave it up to C-TRAN and WSDOT to do it or does this Board give them direction to make it happen and put that proposal in for the May call for projects.

Mr. Robins said the reality is that it is actually left up to the local jurisdictions to determine which projects they want to present to the Board.

Bart Hansen said this goes into bus purchases, but he asked about leasing a bus.

Mr. Robins said he didn't believe that C-TRAN leases buses. They actually own the buses.

Mr. Hansen said the language states replacement of old diesel buses that emit significant pollutants with cleaner technology such as hybrid or electric buses. He asked if they were to lease an electric bus, would that still be eligible.

Mr. Robins said he didn't see why it wouldn't be eligible. They have never really decided the difference between leasing versus buying. If C-TRAN proposed that, they would have to have that discussion.

Paul Greenlee said the proposed changes made sense to him. He said he was thrilled to see the piece about the required conduit. This is something he has been working towards for over a decade.

Jeanne Stewart referred to the question Mayor McEnerny-Ogle had regarding the I-5 Bridge replacement. She said for both vehicular traffic and transit, it is the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) that determines what the path forward is. She said the RTP is determined cooperatively between the Portland Metro region and the SW Washington region. She said in most of the committees that she sits on that are Metro and SW Washington committees where she is representing Clark County, there is not an equal voice from SW Washington or Clark County that is an equal portion to the Metro district representatives. She questioned how we could have an equal voice.

Mr. Robins said they would have discussion today and most of this year on the Regional Transportation Plan, but the Regional Transportation Plan is for Clark County. Metro also develops their Regional Transportation Plan, and there is coordination between the two Plans. Through the Clark County RTP is the opportunity for this Board and its members to voice their opinions on what a priority for this region consists of.

Councilor Stewart said we each are doing our own transportation planning, but she said we are federally recognized as members of the MPO. She asked where our share of that voice was, if it was through RTC.

Mr. Robins said for RTC's RTP, it is this Board that will take action to adopt the Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County. That includes a Metro and ODOT representative on this Board.

Councilor Stewart said she did not see the equity piece that satisfies her interest in sharing transportation corridors. She said she thought this needed to have more discussion in the near future.

Scott Hughes added to what Mr. Greenlee said about the conduit. He thanked them for adding that. He said that is something that Ridgefield is looking at. He added to that saying to be sure when the conduit is put in, it is at open access, so it is not just one supplier going in and also to put a speed on it.

Mr. Robins said this is just the conduit; it is not the fiber itself.

## **VII. Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis – Project Update**

Mr. Ransom said they have invited Judith Gray, ODOT Project Manager, to provide a project update on the Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis. The second part of this agenda item will be about a memo that Mr. Ransom distributed to members this afternoon and was provided at the table. The memo would be posted to the website the following day along with other items distributed today. Mr. Ransom said the memo is in regard to this project and a framework for the Board to contribute input into the study process. The intent is for the Board to discuss and provide input in June.

Judith Gray is the ODOT Project Manager for the Value Pricing Study. She said she presented to the City of Vancouver the previous night and to Clark County the previous week. She said this is called the Value Pricing Project; other terms for that could be congestion pricing or variable tolls pricing. It is important to make those distinctions because traditional or historical tolling projects have often been for the purpose of generating revenue. This is specifically for the purpose of managing traffic congestion, and in several of the different kinds of federal policy programs that they might enter into, it would actually be required.

Ms. Gray said users of the freeway system experience congestion. When folks travel in the region, many go to Google Maps to check to see what the direction is for the best route right now and what the travel time would be. Google Maps tells them based on the current conditions what the travel time would be. It will also help you plan for the future. If you know that you have to arrive someplace at 5:00 in the evening, it will tell you based on typical conditions what that might be. Ms. Gray said she uses this for arriving at meetings. Given this scenario, the travel time to Vancouver was from 26 minutes to an hour and 15 minutes. The wide range of travel time is what she looks at as an indicator that there may an opportunity to improve traffic conditions through traffic management. Variable pricing or value pricing is a management tool.

This work comes out of House Bill 2017 that the Legislature in Oregon passed last year. It includes a wide range of transportation investments for freight, freeways, active transportation, and transit. It also committed \$5.3 billion in additional revenue. That includes increases in fuel taxes, vehicle registration, and many other sources. There is a small policy piece that includes some jurisdictional transfer, new standards and requirements for agency accountability and also this value pricing project. The legislature took a major step in transportation investment, but they are also requiring that they enlist new tools for how they manage the system. Within the House Bill, Section 120 is where value pricing is identified. It is very specific in that it directs the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) to seek approval from the Federal Highway Administration by the end of this year to implement congestion pricing. This means they will be submitting a report by the end of this year. They would expect it to take a few years to get to where they actually are turning on the tolling.

If the Federal Highway Administration does approve, the OTC shall implement. Legislation directs that the first place to look would be I-5 and I-205 between the interchange near Wilsonville to the Columbia River. However, it does allow that implementation could be in segments. It doesn't have to be the entire length of those freeway sections. It also specifically doesn't preclude other freeways or any other surface roads.

In looking at the timeline, they are at the early stage in this process. This summer is when they will be looking for the Policy Advisory Committee to make their final recommendation, and they will be preparing that report to Federal Highway Administration. The timeline for next steps depends on FHWA direction.

The OTC convened a Policy Advisory Committee consisting of 25 total members. There are three members from Washington. Ms. Gray said the PAC members are putting in a lot of work. Two members of the OTC co-chair the committee. This indicates the priority that this is for the OTC, and it provides good leadership and an opportunity to make sure they are hearing directly from the PAC members.

The Policy Advisory Committee will advise the OTC on three specific areas: 1) location(s) best suited for value pricing to reduce congestion, 2) the type(s) of value pricing to implement, and 3) Mitigation strategies to evaluate further.

Ms. Gray said the PAC has been in a learning stage. It is now going to be time for the PAC to start shaping their recommendations. The next meeting on April 11, they will be getting into mitigation strategies. This is really a policy discussion. They will be identifying the kinds of issues that can be identified now that can help inform the OTC as they move forward. In May, they will do another round of technical analysis findings of the five concepts. June 25 will be the final meeting. The OTC has scheduled a special meeting on July 12 for the purpose of hearing the final PAC recommendation and also hearing public comment.

Ms. Gray said among the top concerns that they have heard in all of their public engagement is the impacts on low income communities. She said equity is a broad topic. While usually they don't talk about the out-of-pocket cost which is very real, they want to think about it more broadly. They want to make sure that they are sharing the benefits. The folks who have lower wage jobs also have value to their time and also have obligations. They want to make sure that this is something that can improve mobility for all sectors. In the topic of equity, there are a lot of ways to think about this. They have an auto dependent system that is based on decades, even centuries of decisions and with that there comes an obligation to own a vehicle. That obligation has a cost associated with it. The housing and jobs imbalance is another serious consideration as the price of housing has gone up and a lot of folks have been pushed out to where more affordable housing is. They have a different calculation between housing and their transportation costs and the time that they have to spend on that commute trip. That is another equity consideration.

Ms. Gray said they have traditionally built most of their infrastructure using gas taxes. It is good to remember that often times folks with lower incomes have less fuel efficient vehicles;

therefore, they pay more in fuel taxes, and when they go for those traditional fixes or strictly with capacity, they are charging more, and they may be having a larger impact on low income communities. Ms. Gray said she was not suggesting that congestion pricing will solve that, but to say that they need to think about equity in a broad way. When it comes specifically to congestion pricing, they are focusing on sharing the benefits and a focus on how to mitigate the impacts of the out-of-pocket cost. They will be looking for some consideration of the broader context of equity and transportation.

Actions that other states have taken to mitigate the impacts and share the benefits with incentives and discounts include the following: discounted rates for HOVs, subsidized toll rates, toll credits for use of modal alternatives, toll credits by location, special access programs, and enhanced multi-modal investments. Ms. Gray said they can also learn from experiences from other agencies about what they are doing about diversion onto the surrounding street network. There are traffic calming and active traffic management tools, and restrictions or management of freight vehicles.

Their public outreach this winter has included three open houses, with one in Vancouver. They had a high level of interest, including 6700 visitors to an online open house, over 2000 completed questionnaires and 1100 emails.

Common themes that they are hearing from folks include: increased time spent in traffic; increased stress, anxiety, and frustration; unpredictable travel time; and adjusting route to avoid congestion. There are concerns about congestion pricing, in particular the impacts on low income communities and concerns of diversion of traffic onto surface streets and into neighborhoods. There were also questions and ideas about how revenue should be used. Ms. Gray said most recently they have been doing some focused discussion groups with environmental justice communities; with translated materials and presentations in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Vietnamese, as well as Native American and African American.

Ms. Gray provided a project approach. She said it is actually similar to RTC's grant program. Start with a screening level analysis to find out what is eligible, did in deeper to see what most matches your goals. That is similar to what they have done. They have done the first round of evaluation. Ms. Gray thanked Mark for attending their meetings every week and spending time with the modeling team who have been doing this analysis with them. The first round of evaluation was identifying what the main tools are. In their case, it is priced roadway; pricing all of the lanes or a priced single lane operating next to unpriced lanes. They were looking at those tools and getting a high level analysis really for the purpose of learning the overall effectiveness and feasibility to fund the kind of issues they might see. It was also a time for the consultant team to learn more about the traffic conditions, geometrics, and operations of the freeways especially around the interchanges. With that screening analysis, they advanced 5 concepts that they considered to be most warranted for more detailed evaluations, digging deeper into the performance of those different concepts. That is what they are currently doing, and they will be bringing those findings to the Policy Advisory Committee in May.

The baseline that they are starting with is 2027 from their Regional Transportation Plan for the Portland Metro Region. That means it includes the growth in population and employment as well as the planned investments for that 10-year time period. There are over 700 individual projects that include ODOT's projects but also projects from local agencies and integrated as well. The purpose of the baseline is to establish a reasonable basis to see what the effectiveness of these concepts.

The priced roadway and the priced lane are the two basic tools for freeway tolling. The building blocks were 1) to look at the priced roadway, 2) doing a priced lane by converting one existing lane, and 3) adding a fourth lane and pricing that lane.

Ms. Gray highlighted the key findings for priced roadways. When all lanes are tolled, it does turn out to be a very effective way to manage traffic. It is the most effective of the tools compared to splitting it. It is the most effective for freight, because in the State of Oregon, and most other states, it turns out there is a restriction of heavy vehicles using the left most lane, particularly a priced lane. That has to do not just with a policy choice, but really with operational and possibly safety choices. The vast majority of systems have that prohibition. It is important to note then that one of the benefits of a priced roadway is it also benefits freight. Equity is about tradeoffs. If you price the roadway, there isn't an unpriced lane, so there isn't that option. Because of its increased effectiveness, there should be the opportunity to operate the system with a lower overall toll and also to have more hours when it isn't tolled. That is one of the tradeoff considerations. It also generates significantly more revenue, so to the extent that the strategy includes a lot of investments for mitigation, that becomes more of an opportunity and it is less expensive to implement.

When converting an existing lane, one of the important takeaways from this is that in order to be operationally feasible, you have to have three thru-lanes. You have to have three thru-lanes, because you have to be able to maintain two unpriced lanes in order for it to function effectively. What that meant is that in the Rose Quarter where even though they have a project to add some auxiliary lanes which will improve operations and safety, it won't become an opportunity for a priced lane conversion, because there would only be one thru-lane. That is an important thing to be aware of. The rest of the freeway system, once they have the planned I-205 widening, would be three lanes and become an option. There is an equity tradeoff maintaining a three lane, but it may not share in the benefits. Also, single tolled lanes tend to generate limited revenue.

Constructing a 4<sup>th</sup> lane is clearly the most expensive and impactful due to construction. It does have also the equity tradeoff here that you can maintain unpriced lanes, you probably have a lot of traffic operations benefits; you also have a lot of impacts from the construction and the added traffic. Also, something they did not get into in this analysis, but many professionals in transportation know, the benefits of adding capacity tend to be short-lived unless it is really done as part of a comprehensive strategy. It is not just as simple as adding a 4<sup>th</sup> lane.

Ms. Gray presented the five concepts that they will be presenting in May. The first is Concept A the Northern I-5 priced lanes. That is in the location where there is currently HOV lane. In FHWA policy, there are four programs, but three programs that might apply for this project. One of them is to convert an HOV lane to an HOT lane. This project would be considered, and also the parallel southbound lane. There is a lot of congestion there. The key topics are some of the things that they are looking at, such as: how is the HOV lane operating currently? If it is operating optimally, then you don't want to actually degrade that operation. What would be the diversion effects on the local street system, and what would be the federal NEPA requirements for that? It would be very different from the northbound section where you are converting the HOV lane as opposed to the southbound section where you are converting a general purpose lane. Those are different federal highway processes.

The second Concept B is the I-5 roadway pricing. This is the one that goes through the Rose Quarter. The northern point is at the freeway on and off ramps at I-405. The southern point is the frequently congested area around the Terwilliger curves. This would be an effective traffic management tool, and also, it is the only pricing concept that would benefit freight, because of the two lane issue through the Rose Quarter.

Concept C is to toll all lanes on I-5 and I-205. This concept would be the most effective in improving traffic operations and would be expected to generate revenue to provide other mitigation strategies. It is relatively inexpensive to implement, but it would be a major order of magnitude to change in the way the region operates. There would be a lot to look at in terms of diversion, as well as the impacts of the bottle necks at each end; at the Boon Bridge to the south and I-5 Bridge on I-5 and the segment of I-205 as it approaches the Glenn Jackson Bridge.

Concept D is a new priced lane on I-205 around Oregon City. This would add a third lane. This is the only section besides the Rose Quarter that currently has two lanes. This area was identified by the region and the legislature as one of the three critical bottlenecks in the Portland Metro region. This would remove the current two lane bottleneck, provide some revenue, and relieve congestion in that section. It is also thought though that it may have very limited revenue potential just like most single lane tolls do, but also the nature of the congestion in this area is once the third lane in, there might not be that much more demand for the tolled lane. The issue with this concept is that it requires funding. The direction from the Legislature and as it is reflected in the Charter to the Policy Advisory Committee, is to primarily focus on pricing as a tool to manage traffic congestion. Secondly, it could also be to generate revenue to fix the bottleneck. Because they knew that while this concept does in fact improve traffic congestion, it is not a concept with funding. In keeping with the direction of the Legislature, look for a potential funding source; so they added Concept E.

Concept E is to price the Abernethy Bridge. The Abernethy Bridge is part of the three priority bottleneck areas. It includes a section of the freeway plus the Abernethy Bridge that are both two lanes and so this would price all the lanes of the Abernethy Bridge as a funding strategy to reconstruct the bridge and to also add that capacity on the section of I-205. At the May PAC

meeting, the question will be what the revenue potential is for this strategy to support that third lane expansion on I-205.

Ms. Gray listed the upcoming group presentations in April. They will be presenting two more in Clark County with Identity Clark County on April 11 and Columbia River Economic Development Council on April 30.

Ms. Gray provided a flyer listing the next four open houses. An online open house will also be launching on April 5. 1:04

Paul Greenlee said that not too many years ago people were complaining that fixing the bridge wouldn't fix anything because all of the problems were in Oregon. He said those very same people are now complaining about the Oregon solution. Mr. Greenlee said as an economist, there are some interesting tradeoffs here. He said currently if he wants to go to Home Depot for a \$100 item, he can go to the one at 192<sup>nd</sup> and Mill Plain or the one at Airport Way in the same amount of time and distance. So with an \$8 sales tax, the choice is clear. On the other hand, if there is a toll that calculation changes. It possibly does more for retail on this side of the river. Mr. Greenlee said if that money comes off the top of his net, he might not have the money to spend on discretionary items. Similarly, if you are thinking about economic development, the thing that drives economic development in new businesses is workforce. Mr. Greenlee said having to get back and forth across the river is a cost for the workforce. He said there may actually be economic development advantages for Clark County to have tolling in Oregon. It's a complicated problem. It's not just that it is going to cost Washington drivers a lot of money; it's a bit more complicated than that.

Shawn Donaghy thanked Ms. Gray for the presentation saying he was able to see the one at the County and the one at the City of Vancouver. Mr. Donaghy said he was somewhat concerned as a public transit person; he was trying to find the benefit for transportation within this tolling/value pricing package. He said he was having difficulty getting to that point. From C-TRAN's perspective, they are the fourth largest public transportation system in the state of Oregon. They are also the only agency in the Portland Metro area that has interstate express service, so they were having difficulty trying to get to the value for them when they really are the only agency that provides that service. Mr. Donaghy said in other areas that he has had the opportunity to serve, he really tried to find the business case specific to transportation. He said it is difficult when he looks at some of the options that are available and they really don't tie to any accountable sort of project or where the money will go, where it is allocated to specifically. Mr. Donaghy said in the I-5 corridor, as Mayor Dalesandro noted at the County meeting, they're not really addressing the congestion issue if they are focusing their efforts on tolling I-5 unless the benefit of the revenue is going to go toward a new I-5 bridge. Mr. Donaghy said the Abernethy option seemed the best option in terms of adding a lane and addressing a concern specific to that area, where the other options really don't provide that. One of the examples provided was the North Tarrant Expressway. Mr. Donaghy said he lived on the North Tarrant Expressway when he was in Texas, and he said that project was very specific to a calculated infrastructure rebuild, so when they talked about tolling that lane, it was very specific to what

other lanes they were going to add on to reduce congestion at peak time. He said it is difficult when looking at the layout of the Rose Quarter, I-5 north, and I-205 down to Abernethy, there is really not a lot of room for expansion of the interstate. Mr. Donaghy said under FHWA guidelines when they allocate money every year to the states or to cities or counties, there is a very specific Title VI provision that goes with that, and he was curious if ODOT has looked at specifically the Title VI provision of how it would adversely impact Southwest Washington citizens and not just the State of Oregon.

Representative Paul Harris said he has heard from several of his constituents that have the opportunity of working in the State of Oregon. He said about 40,000 of his constituents that he represents travel to Oregon every day to work. He said he finds it ironic that this Bill is called Keep Oregon Moving. What he is hearing from his constituents is on whose back is Oregon keep moving on. Representative Harris said he thinks the idea that literally, we are going to toll the citizens of the 17<sup>th</sup> District to come into the State of Oregon to work and to not identify that money to go to a project that would enhance their mobility to get to work, is sad and tragic. He said he would be mistaken if he didn't come and say that he doesn't hear a lot of equity for the citizens of the State of Washington or his constituents. He asked if this money was going to go toward improvement of the I5 and I-205 corridors.

Ms. Gray said what he was identifying were very real concerns. She said that is the kind of input that they want folks to give. She said they will be working with the PAC at their next meeting on these mitigation strategies. It does get to the impacts on the low income communities and impacts on the surrounding communities. The concerns or strategies or issues that you think are needed to make this successful are things that need to be identified now. That is what the Oregon Transportation Commission is looking for, that kind of input, including from C-TRAN. It is very important. The OTC is currently looking for the locations and the type of congestion pricing that they should be considering, and the kinds of mitigation strategies that should be considering. Ms. Gray said they can find the best way for him to weigh in on this whether it is through the RTC, Mayor McEnerny-Ogle, Councilor Quiring, or directly to the PAC or OTC.

Ms. Gray noted that Mandy Putney was in attendance. She is Ms. Gray's boss and very engaged with this project. She is also the alternate for Rian Windsheimer on the RTC Board.

Representative Harris said House Bill 2017 feels a little punitive to him as a State Legislator. He said the equity and what is transpiring here is very transparent that some of the Legislators in the State of Washington several years ago made a step that had impact on the I-5 Bridge. He said this is punitive that his constituents will not only not get an I-5 bridge, they will pay for transportation issues in the State of Oregon that will enhance the entire state of Oregon in some respect and not go towards our corridors. Representative Harris said he finds it ironic that the State of Washington as soon as you cross the bridge, the traffic moves, that we have been very forthright in our spending of our money, and we have added lanes. He said he worked in the State of Oregon for 15 years and drove the corridor with the Rose Quarter. He thought at the time of the two lanes on an interstate that the State of Oregon has not

addressed for years. That the idea now that we have been clamoring for years when looking at the I-5 Bridge that the Rose Quarter was a problem and it continues to be a problem and the State of Oregon should fix it just as the State of Washington has fixed their own transportation with their own dime.

Eileen Quiring said she agreed with Representative Harris that it does feel a little punitive. The observation that the bill is actually requiring this PAC to advise the Oregon Transportation Commission and that Commission is going to go to the Federal Government about how they are going to address this various tolling. She said they see all this public input during this time, and yet it seems that the bill is a done deal. It's going to happen; it's just where it is going to happen. Councilor Quiring said from the input that she has received, she said there was one person who was for tolling. She said this is about Oregon's roads and not Washington's; we are trapped. She said we don't have any other way to go. Washingtonians actually pay Oregon income tax when they work in Oregon. She said that when they talk about mitigation, and knowing that they can't free Washingtonians from paying tolls, but since they do pay income tax, if the tolling comes about and they are hit with tolling, she believed that there needs to be a mechanism for that to go against the income taxes that they are already required to pay in Oregon. Councilor Quiring said they don't have the total benefit from those income taxes because they only work there.

Mandy Putney said she wanted to go back and touch a little bit on House Bill 2017. She said it was a comprehensive approach to think about congestion which was affecting the region and the entire state, and to think about how to raise more money and new ways to provide that money for transportation. That was done through a gas tax increase, through registration increase, even a bike tax. There are multiple pieces now for funding to come into projects in the State of Oregon. There was also an employee tax to fund transit improvements. Value pricing is one tool to add to the tool box knowing that it is a tool that has been used effectively elsewhere. They are now exploring how it might work here in this region. Ms. Putney said they really do want input as they move forward. Along with that, there was funding that was provided for the Rose Quarter Project, over \$400 million, funding for OR 217, and funding for Active Transportation projects on I-205. There was also real money to continue to help work on the bottle necks

Jeanne Stewart said in hearing Councilor Quiring's questions and concerns, she said she thought they also needed to recognize for those people who sell their services in Oregon like being employed there; they do pay state income tax. There are all kinds of commerce that crosses the river going both ways. She said what that will mean is that contractors or all trades are going to be more isolated in their own area where we really are a region. If tolls get to be an issue, it reduces the return on coming to Clark County to do business, because it reduces your competitive ability. Councilor Stewart said it was healthy to have cross-state commerce. Tolling can eventually, especially as tolling will increase, it can reduce the competitive opportunity for other kinds of commerce as well.

Ms. Gray said all of the concerns that were raised are important if they were to be shared as they are or if they were to be shared more as a specific policy framework. At the City of Vancouver Council the previous night, they considered a general policy framework about how they wanted to weigh in on this tolling process. These are constructive ways to share their thoughts.

Paul Harris asked about the input given so far, and if it would be shared at some point, such as listed in a spreadsheet and at what point that would happen.

Ms. Gray said comments, at a pretty detailed level are available on the project website. A summary report was available:

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Value%20Pricing%20PAC/WinterOutreach\\_FeedbackSummary.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Value%20Pricing%20PAC/WinterOutreach_FeedbackSummary.pdf)

Anne McEnery-Ogle said for the City of Vancouver policy framework that Ms. Gray was talking about, they had five different points. They talked about the fact that the time line was very short and constricted, and they were requesting additional time. They also talked about the distribution of benefits within the area where the money was generated. They talked about the fact that the money should be used for the criteria that was listed in the congestion area. If they were talking about through traffic on single cars, then that is how the money should be used. They talked about bottleneck relief on the I-5 Bridge, and portions of the tolling if it was collected to be used for the replacement of the I-5 Bridge, but they were concerned that this tolling will impact our progress on the I-5 Bridge replacement. The other part was that they wanted an analysis of the entire region that is impacted by this. That talked about SW Washington and the diversion if put on I-205 and how that impacted SW Washington diversion to I-5 and vice versa.

Eileen Quiring referred to the Rose Quarter project that was said to be funded and asked what was going to be done to that area.

Ms. Putney said they are adding an auxiliary lane, a collector lane that goes between the I-84 and I-405 ramps and full shoulders on that stretch of roadway. Currently, there are not shoulders that cars are able to pull off on, and there is a tremendous amount of merging and weaving causing a high crash rate in that area of I-5. This project will reduce the crash rate and improve reliability in travel speeds in that section.

Bart Hansen said in reading about that project, it appears that it will begin in 2019. He asked how that was funded.

Ms. Putney said House Bill 2017 almost fully funds the Rose Quarter project. It is about \$420 million. They are currently working on the Environmental Assessment and will have a Cost to Complete Report to the legislature as they move forward. They continue to work on their cost estimate, which currently is \$400 million to \$450 million in today's dollars. There might need to be some additional funding, and they are continuing to work on what those options are.

Mr. Hansen asked when they are presenting this project, if they are telling folks that this is one of the improvements that you plan to do with this type of tolling and congestion mitigation.

Ms. Putney said yes, that there is more detailed presentation that has a list of the big projects that are included in the 2027 RTP scenario. It included the Rose Quarter project being built.

Mr. Hansen said that was great, because that would actually help as far as the value proposition. The presentations that he has seen haven't included much of that. Also, coming up with a nexus as far as what they are tolling as compared to it being directly with something that is going to improve the congestion in that area. He said a lot of what he is seeing is US 26 and I-84 are other areas that are experiencing congestion at the same levels as other parts of I-5 and I-205, yet they are not one of the options for reducing the congestion. That makes it almost seem somewhat punitive to the folks that are coming from Washington, because it is dealing directly with those freeways that are so heavily used by folks from Clark County.

Ms. Putney said the legislation directs the Transportation Commission to look at I-5 and I-205 right now. The Transportation Commission is the tolling authority in Oregon, similar to the Transportation Commission in Washington. There will be work as they move forward to think about how a toll on I-5 or I-205 would impact those other corridors; it doesn't preclude any future work to consider other corridors down the road.

Shawn Donaghy referred to the \$420 million for the Rose Quarter and asked if that was separate from any money that would be allocated from congestion pricing or is the congestion pricing the method for how you get the \$420 million.

Ms. Putney said no, that they are totally separate. That is what they are trying to figure out. Some of the scenarios might not raise much more than the cost to cover the operations of the tolling system. The goal is to figure out how to manage congestion on these corridors, so the revenue is a secondary conversation. She said some of the scenarios they think will raise additional dollars and that could be available for mitigation once operation costs are paid for.

Scott Hughes said for a freight mobility standpoint, he said without capacity increase he doesn't understand it. He said they are saying they are going to manage this for better. Commissioner Hughes said it is already managed; the freight companies are already doing that by trying to move around the peak hours, which is a long time. He said he doesn't know how the tolling then is going to manage this, when it is going to be done by itself the best it can. Commissioner Hughes said as far as the ports go, this has to be a capacity issue not just a tolling issue.

Chair Onslow thanked Ms. Gray and Ms. Putney for their presentation on this project. He said it is interesting. Mr. Onslow said the I-5 Bridge was built with tolls to begin with. He said in the '50s he was going to the University of Portland and worked in downtown Portland, and his kids were born in Portland, and he lived in Vancouver. He said he paid the toll both ways, sometimes four times a day at 15 to 20 cents which is about \$1.80 to \$2.00 right now. Mr. Onslow said he got to experience that so he isn't against tolls. He questioned some of the propositions listed, and he said there were three words that came out a lot. One was equity, one was sharing, and one was relief. He said he agreed that he was not sure that the tolling on this is going to give us relief; there is not a proposal, but maybe that is coming in the future.

Matt Ransom provided a few comments about a path forward in terms of comments from the Board. He said the Board needs to comment with this being a significant regional issue. Late last year and earlier this year, they made a commitment to bring forward both the discussion as well as a process for engagement. Mr. Ransom said like any review, this is going to evolve, and we need to be responsive.

Mr. Ransom noted that the next two agenda items are programmatic and informational so they can go through them quickly. He said he wanted to spend a five to ten minutes on this discussion, because it is active and they need to address it right now.

Mr. Ransom referred to the memo with attachments that he emailed to members that afternoon and provided copies at their table. He said he sent it out because he wanted to observe the Vancouver Workshop the previous night and hear some of the questions that were raised. Also, RTC staff attended Clark County's forum last week and listened to some of the questions from that meeting as well.

Mr. Ransom said they would provide comment by June or July if they hold a meeting. He said it is important to recognize that they're doing work concurrent with us evaluating work. We can't get too far ahead, because they are still evaluating and conceptualizing, learning, and gaining information. Part of RTC's responsiveness is to provide some feedback. Some of the feedback around the table today are things that might make their way into a recommendation to the PAC. What is important about both the speed at which their work is underway and also our concurrent review is that the short-term point of input would be, both to the PAC and the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), sometime in June to July, we need to provide some substantive input related to mitigations, types of mitigations, strategies, more programmatic things. However, he said he believed that not all of the information will be known by June.

Mr. Ransom said the question then is how to provide substantive input knowing that they don't have all the answers. That is a process dilemma, but it is something they need to recognize for their considerations. As Mr. Ransom understood the statute requirement, after the PAC completes their work, the Oregon Transportation Commission will take these elements and deliberate and review and put together a report by December to submit to FHWA. Mr. Ransom said they also need to allow themselves an opportunity to submit comments on what that report is. He said he is hopeful that the OTC would provide a forum or a process whereby they would elicit final comments. With that information, they will probably know what the proposal is. The proposal goes to FHWA and FHWA reviews it, and provides feedback.

Mr. Ransom said they have two milestones this year for input: Programmatic broad by June / July providing some clear direction or emphasis; more precision when there is actually a proposal. The information that is coming from the PAC and that the OTC will receive in July is not a proposal; it is programmatic. The proposal is what the OTC submits to FHWA by December. Mr. Ransom said he hoped that they would hear from ODOT what that process is.

Mr. Ransom referred to page 2 of the memo. This listed regional evaluation considerations that were presented to the Board at their January 2, 2018 meeting. These considerations are used

to help us with our Regional Transportation Plan. These goals that we have to achieve in terms of regional mobility, then ask the question if this moving us forward. RTC's Plan focuses on Clark County and they will be monitoring big picture things, perhaps a bridge for example. Does this move a bridge project forward? Perhaps does this move a transit project forward? The four key regional policy considerations include: consistency with the RTP, user equity, system performance impacts and benefits, and project funding.

Page 3 of the memo summarizes some of the big picture study related questions. These questions are those that the public or the Board as transportation administrators or elected officials might want to know the answer to before they can really say it is good or bad. If there is not an answer, then perhaps an answer needs to be developed or it is not right for moving forward. Mr. Ransom said they need to respect the process, which they are still evaluating, so some of the answers are in development. Some of the answers might be known by June some might be things that answers should come forward before submission goes to FHWA. It is possible that some of those may not be fully vetted until the NEPA analysis is done.

The final page of the memo provided an outline for RTC Board input for the Value Pricing project. They would write it to response to what the Board's statement is related to the best concept or concepts. Knowing that there are five concepts under consideration, they may need to weigh in on each of those and include some rationale that is their basis for the opinions that they put forward. Mr. Ransom said what is important, at least for the PAC point of engagement in the June/July timeframe, is the recommended mitigation projects. That is an area where they really need to say as a community and region that in order for this to work for them these are things that should be part of the elements in the final mix. Mr. Ransom said they could be very specific whether it is a project or an example of express bus service as an option for offset mitigation for people who couldn't pay a toll. Mr. Ransom said this is further complicated by the fact that there are two different statutes and state and federal laws with the two states. The more that they can be clear at the different stages of input, the better served they will be as a region.

Mr. Ransom said they should start to develop this in May, and by June put together a solid statement. Mr. Ransom said to contact him with any questions or issues that they can add to the list and have members come prepared to have a good discussion at the next meeting.

Anne McEnery-Ogle said she understood what Mr. Ransom said, but she was concerned with the timeline. She said as she is watching this process move forward, she is getting nervous about the fact that decisions are being made, and we are two and three weeks late. She wondered if they had the opportunity to bump that up. Also, she said City Council does not have a meeting on the fifth Monday of the month; she would like to work with the County on having an open forum on April 30 to again discuss what is going on and new information that they have as of the April 11 meeting to keep their citizens aware of how they are moving forward. Mayor McEnery-Ogle said they could do that at the library, the County, or the City. She said they would work with Councilor Boldt to see if there is an opportunity after the April meeting to bring their community forward on what's happening.

Paul Harris asked if RTC decided it wanted to take a look at pre tolling for the I-5 Bridge, and they put in a request to the federal government for pre tolling to build a new bridge, how would that impact the decision that Oregon is trying to make. With Oregon not knowing where the money is going yet and they are going to decide that, would that impact possibly the federal decision on that maybe some of that money should go toward the I-5 Bridge.

Mr. Ransom said he didn't know. He said that was a good question and that he would follow up on that.

Paul Harris said that was a consideration at one time that they looked at. He said since Oregon is moving ahead, and it is not known where that money is going, would it impact the decision that Oregon is trying to do, since half of the bridge is Washington's.

Kris Strickler said he would guess that there would certainly be impact for documentation purposes, NEPA purposes, all of those things as Oregon goes through their process. He also said that Washington law designates the legislative body as the authoritative body to authorize tolling on a facility. That would have to be dedicated as such by the Washington Legislature in order to do that.

Chair Onslow asked if that would require approval of the Oregon Legislature.

Mr. Strickler said the interesting connection and disconnect at the same time is that when you have a bi-state project or bi-state entity where the corridors intersect like they do in our region, each state have their own independent authorities. There are coordination responsibilities that the federal government puts on all, that is both MPOs, it requires coordination among the MPOs for consistency. Those conversations are part of the overall lens. As far as tolling authorization itself, when it has a state lens associated with it, it is fixed within each state.

Jeanne Stewart noted that Mr. Ransom had indicated that if people have feedback or concerns that they want to express to contact him. She said it will be important to keep a log of those communications so that everyone will know collectively what this group is saying and also if they are getting input from other sources. Councilor Stewart said it is critically important for the RTC Board to also be informed about the feedback that is received.

Mr. Ransom clarified his comment to that saying it was primarily related to Board input right now in terms of process over the next two months. He said as just noted, this is a fast process. There are different milestones of input, but certainly without a doubt there has to be short term input.

Eileen Quiring reiterated what Mayor McEnery-Ogle mentioned about timing. She said she is worried that waiting until the end of June and into July might be too late. She said she thought the RTC should have some input. Once they have more accurate data, etc. about what they are going to do, then they can input again. Councilor Quiring said she thought it was very important that RTC submit something before the PAC gives their advice to the Commission.

Mr. Ransom said he thought that they could structure some of the conversation at next month's meeting with more substance.

Marc Boldt said he agreed on that. Also, he said we are in a fragile kind of era. We need to get along and try to work together

Paul Harris said that he would reach out to the Governor and reach out to the chair of the Transportation Committee to get working on this right away.

### **VIII. Human Services Transportation Plan, 2018 Update**

Mr. Ransom said the Human Services Transportation Plan is a three county plan that RTC is mandated to update this year. Lynda David is leading that in Clark County and Dale Robins is leading that in Skamania and Klickitat Counties. They have a great partnership with C-TRAN engaging the special needs population. This is all about how the money at the state level is going to be distributed across the three counties, and they need to develop a priority list. That work will wrap up by the end of the year. A memorandum is included in the meeting materials.

### **IX. Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2019 – Draft Review**

Mr. Ransom said the UPWP is RTC's federal work program. They had a state federal review this last month, and they were good with it. A copy of the draft 2019 Unified Planning Work Program is included in the meeting materials. It will be brought back next month for adoption. This federal work program has to be adopted on their fiscal cycle, different from RTC's calendar budget, but they are consistent.

### **X. Other Business**

#### From the Board

Anne McEnery-Ogle provided a thought for members to consider and possibly discuss at the May meeting. She said Councilor Stober brought up an important issue at yesterday's council meeting. She said they perhaps need to consider a lobbyist for Salem. They could share the responsibility of the cost. Mayor McEnery-Ogle said things are happening in Salem that impact us especially in transportation, and we may want to think about how that might look and that whole function.

#### From the Director

Mr. Ransom said he had sent out a notice to Board Members that RTC has entered their annual audit process with the State Auditor's Office. This afternoon the RTC Chair and Vice Chair participated in an Entrance Conference, which is the initial meeting with the auditors. They will be onsite at RTC for the next two weeks. When they conclude the audit, Mr. Ransom will distribute the report.

Mr. Ransom will be attending a forum that is hosted by the League of Women Voters. He will be moderating a transportation panel, with several members around the table participating in the panel as local transportation experts. That is being held on April 15, and being broadcast on CVTV. He said the intent being to engage the community on broader regional 20, 30, 40, 50 year issues that are of interest to local elected officials, transportation experts, as well as citizens.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 1, 2018, at 4 p.m.

**XI. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

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Ron Onslow, Board of Directors Chair