Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors
May 1, 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, May 1, 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
Bart Gernhart, WSDOT (Alternate)
Bart Hansen, Vancouver Councilmember
Jim Herman, Port of Klickitat Commissioner
Scott Hughes, Port of Ridgefield Commissioner
Tom Lannen, Skamania County Commissioner
Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Vancouver Mayor
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Councilmember
Mandy Putney, ODOT (Alternate)
Eileen Quiring, Clark County Councilor
Melissa Smith, Camas Councilmember
Jeanne Stewart, Clark County Councilor

Voting Board Members Absent:
Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor
Kris Strickler, WSDOT Regional Administrator
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager

Nonvoting Board Members Present:
Paul Harris, Representative 17th District

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:
Curtis King, Senator 14th District
Norm Johnson, Representative 14th District
Gina McCabe, Representative 14th District
Lynda Wilson, Senator 17th District
Vicki Kraft, 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
Monica Stonier, Representative 49th District
Sharon Wylie, Representative 49th District

Guests Present:
Ron Arp, Identity Clark County
Ed Barnes, Citizen
Elizabeth Campbell, Citizen
Lori Figone, WSDOT
Carley Francis, WSDOT
Sorin Garber, SGA
Paul Greenlee, Washougal City Councilmember
Jim Hagar, Port of Vancouver
Larry Keister, Port of Camas-Washougal Commissioner
Laurie Lebowsky, Clark County
Dale Lewis, Congresswoman Herrera Beutler's Office
Sharon Nasset, Citizen
Christine Nulph, Citizen
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN
Sean Philbrook, Identity Clark County
Marc Thornsbury, Port of Klickitat
Carter Timmerman, WSDOT Headquarters
Neal H. Walker, Citizen

Staff Present:
Matt Ransom, Executive Director
Ted Gathe, Legal Counsel
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

ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MAY 1, 2018, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SHAWN DONAGHY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Marc Boldt entered the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

III. Call for Public Comments

Christine Nulph from Vancouver said she felt that tolls are unnecessary and expressed the need for more roads to relieve congestion instead of mass transit.

Sharon Nasset from Portland provided two handouts and expressed the need for a third bridge.

Ed Barnes from Vancouver expressed the need for RTC to connect more with the general public to make them aware of the region's transportation needs and a new I-5 bridge.

Jeanne Stewart entered the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

IV. Approval of April 3, 2018, Minutes

MARC BOLDT MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 3, 2018, MINUTES. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

V. Consent Agenda

A. May Claims

B. Unified Planning Work Program for Fiscal Year 2019, Resolution 05-18-09

BART HANSEN MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA MAY CLAIMS AND RESOLUTION 05-18-09. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Eileen Quiring entered the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

VI. RTC Regional Competitive Grant Program, Resolution 05-18-10

Matt Ransom said this is the culmination of several months of work with local agency staff. The material was reviewed at last month's meeting. Dale Robins would provide the report. This will put in place the rules of engagement and program policies for the grants that RTC distributes.

Dale Robins referred to the resolution included in the meeting materials. He said this process has been reviewed for about the last seven months. At last month's meeting, a presentation was provided. It then went back to the Regional Transportation Advisory committee (RTAC). RTAC has recommended the adoption of the changes in the policy by the RTC Board.

Mr. Robins highlighted the Grant Process. He said it all begins with local agencies submitting proposed projects to RTC. The projects are reviewed, and they are evaluated by the selection criteria. The selection criteria were included in the meeting materials. Projects are selected based on the highest priority.

The Urban STBG /CMAQ criteria were reviewed at last month's meeting. The same changes are being recommended. Mr. Robins said there were some questions last month, and he wanted to clarify one in particular. The question was if they could use CMAQ money to lease buses. Mr. Robins said the Federal Regulations state that that is not allowed. The changes that are being proposed enhance project readiness, enhance transit, and enhance regionally significant projects. The changes are listed by page number in the Resolution and highlighted in the Transportation Guidebook with the actual change that is occurring. The Selection Criteria are also included with the material. The changes are shown in red and listed in the Resolution. These are minor clarifying changes.

Action on Resolution 05-18-10 will modify the Regional Competitive Grant Process as outlined in the Transportation Programming Guidebook and the RTC Selection Criteria.

SHAWN DONAGHY MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 05-18-10, RTC REGIONAL COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VII. YR 2022 Regional Grant Program – Call for Projects

Dale Robins said now that the process was finalized, they are looking to make a call for projects for Year 2022. There is a range of dollar amounts that will be available; that total is approximately $7.8 million. With the passage of the Federal Transportation Act in funding by Congress, they are still working through the final numbers. The total could vary. Once RTC calls for projects, local agency staff will propose projects to RTC. Grant applications will be due July 13, 2018. Staff will bring projects back to the Board in September for project selection. In October, they will have the full adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Robins said this is an opportunity for local agencies to do local transportation improvements in the region.

ANNE MCENERNY-OGLE MOVED TO APPROVE THE YEAR 2022 REGIONAL GRANT PROGRAM CALL FOR PROJECTS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MELISSA SMITH AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

VIII. Regional Transportation Plan for Clark County – 2018 Update, Preliminary Project Review and Student Research Projects

Matt Ransom said this is a two-part item. Lynda will provide a process update, and present the first look at the list of projects that local agencies have each submitted for consideration in this four-year Plan update. She would also highlight accomplishments over the last several years. The second part of the presentation is where they have collaborated with Washington State University Vancouver and have engaged two students to do some research for RTC; one dealing with policy issues and one regarding public opinion. They have been invited to present their work following Lynda's presentation.

Lynda David referred to the memo included in the meeting packet along with the attachments. She said the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for Clark County is the long-range regional transportation plan that must cover a period of at least 20 years. The 2018 update to the RTP will have a horizon year of 2040. The federal requirement is for a plan update at least every

five years in areas such as Clark County that are air quality attainment areas. The plan must be multi-modal addressing multiple modes such as auto, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, demand management, system management, and freight and goods movement. Federal requirements are for a fiscally constrained plan meaning that forecast revenues and project cost estimates must be in balance. The RTP is a result of a process that requires collaboration, coordination, and consultation to make sure there is consistency between federal, state, and local plans.

Ms. David highlighted the RTP update process milestones. They began the RTP update in April 2017. They have confirmed federal and state policies/requirements. The growth forecast and allocation of population and employment was presented in September 2017. In October 2017, they reviewed trends in regional growth and demographics that influence regional travel demand, and in February 2018, they discussed with the Board the regional policy framework. They are now at the stage of addressing RTP elements and transportation needs.

The focus of the RTP is the regional transportation system. This system, per the Growth Management Act, includes all state transportation facilities, all local freeways, expressways, and principal arterials, all high capacity transit systems, all other transportation facilities and services of regional significance (air, marine, rail, transit, and road), and any transportation facility or service with significant regional need and/or impact.

Included with the materials was the Designated Regional Transportation System map. The map shows the regional transportation system as defined in the 2014 RTP. It will need some update for the 2018 RTP. The map shows the street systems, transit service routes, park and ride facilities, Port terminals, rail lines, and air fields.

One of the most important RTP elements is the list of identified transportation projects. Jurisdictions in Washington plan under the Growth Management Act, and as such, local jurisdiction work with the RTC to assess their transportation systems. Local jurisdictions come up with a list of projects to address transportation system deficiencies as part of their local Capital Facilities Plans. RTC compiles that list of projects from Capital Facilities Plans from local Transportation Improvement Programs, and projects to be funded in part by traffic impact fees. The planning process builds from the local level upward with RTC compiling the project information from local jurisdictions as well as from the Washington State Department of Transportation and from C-TRAN. In turn, RTC uses this information to build transportation networks in the regional travel model. They use the modeled output to assess future transportation system performance, and they analyze which should be the greatest needs and which solutions they should put in place to make the transportation system work as sufficiently as possible.

RTC also takes the project cost estimates from the compilation of projects from the local capital facilities plans, and they use it in developing the RTP's financial plan chapter. The RTP list of projects is significant, because projects must be identified in the RTP before they can be programed for federal and state funding in the Transportation Improvement Program.

Criteria for including projects in the RTP include having a purpose and need: project must be identified to address the preservation and maintenance, safety, capacity, urban upgrade, system management, and/or demand management. Projects must be identified in the plans of state or local agencies. Projects must be financially feasible, and they must be implementable within the 20-year timeframe of the RTP. Project criteria reflect the policies of the RTP. They address mobility, congestion, support for economic development, etc.

The list of projects is in essence a list of solutions to address transportation challenges faced in this region. For federal rules in identifying transportation solutions, they must first look at the lower cost solutions, such as implementing operational improvements, addressing modal treatments such as walking, biking, and demand management techniques such a commute trip reduction. Similarly, WSDOT is taking a practical solutions approach in identifying projects. If other solutions will not solve the problem, then federal rules allow them to look at highway widening as a potential solution.

As they develop the 2018 RTP, they begin their work on the list of projects and on the financial plan element of the Plan by considering projects that were included in the 2014 RTP, and they look at what progress was made between 2014 and 2018. The first draft of the project list was included in the meeting materials. On pages 1 and 2 are all of the projects on the regional transportation system that have been completed or are very near to completion. They amount to around $299 million. Some of those investments are a result of the state Nickel and Partnership funding package of years back. Projects completed since 2014 include the half interchange on I-205 at 18th Street, the widening of SR-502, the C-TRAN Vine Fourth Plain Corridor, and the Fisher's Landing Transit Center Expansion. Also, there were a number of projects identified in the 2014 RTP that are now fully funded and committed. These are listed on pages 4 and 5 of the project list. They amount to about $289 million in regional transportation system investment. These projects include WSDOT Studies, the I-5 East Fork Lewis River Northbound Bridge Replacement, Widening of SR-14 from I-205 to 164th Avenue, the I-5 179th Street Interchange, and Washougal Roundabouts. Some of these projects are the result of the Connecting Washington state funding package. Together the two lists of completed or fully committed/funded projects total $588 million in transportation investment on the regional transportation system over the past four years and into the next two years.

A map was distributed that shows the completed or fully funded projects on the designated regional transportation system. It does not show the local transportation projects that have been completed in the same timeframe.

Ms. David showed the capital transportation investments that are identified as needed in the draft project listing for the 2018 RTP Update. These are projects identified for completion between 2018 and the Plan's horizon year of 2040 and are not yet fully funded. The projects are listed on pages 7 through 30. The regional and local capital needs amount to over $2.8 billion over the 20-year period of the Plan. Page 4 of the memo summarizes the project cost estimates at this stage of the Plan development.

The primary focus of the RTP is the regional transportation system. It is the higher classified roadways and the transit system. There is a need to identify local projects so they can be accounted for in the financial plan chapter of the RTP. The local transportation projects amount to over $989 million in investment needed over the next 20 years. Ms. David said although they have completed a preliminary list of RTP projects, they continue to work with planners to refine the project list, and they will be able to provide updates on their work at future Board meetings.

Ms. David highlighted the table included in the meeting materials with a detailed overview of the RTP update process to develop the 2018 RTP as well as 2019 and beyond to the Plan's implementation.

Next steps include using the draft project list to input to the regional travel forecast model as part of the network of the model, and they can then analyze output from the travel forecast model to look at transportation system performance and challenges and deficiencies they will face between 2018 and 2040. They will also review the fiscally constrained list of transportation projects and strategies. They will be working with the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee members, members of local jurisdictions, C-TRAN, WSDOT, and Oregon representatives in the weeks ahead. One of the significant elements of the RTP is to complete a financial plan which must be fiscally constrained, so revenues and expenditures must balance. RTC will continue to seek public comment. Over the last few weeks, Ms. David has been out to some public meetings to engage the public to notify them of the RTP update and to solicit feedback from them. The concluding step is to ask for adoption of the RTP update in December of this year.

Marc Boldt asked if the SR-500 / 42nd and 54th Avenue intersections were included on the list of projects. Ms. David said the strategy that WSDOT is now taking is to have a study, look at what short term improvements can be made, and then ultimately, the long-term fix could be replacing those intersections with interchanges. All the stages are reflected in the project listing. The study is listed on page 4, and the future work is listed on page 7. Jeanne Stewart said that is listed for 2035 – 2040; that is a long time out at 17 years.

Ms. David said it is listed in several phases. They hope that short-term solutions can at least bide some time, but they are looking in the study that is currently underway as to what should be the short-term look and ultimately, there could be a long-term solution. Mr. Boldt said he wanted to make sure it is on the list.

Ms. David said it is currently on the list, but it could be subject to change. They update the Plan every four to five years, and in the interim period, there could be a different solution. At least there is a place holder on the list in case money becomes available for making a longer-term solution.

Bart Gernhart wanted to make a clarification. He said Lynda had mentioned earlier in her presentation that the federal government and WSDOT are following practical solutions. He said they are mandated to first look at lower cost solutions; that is what they are currently doing.

Sometimes their hope is that those lower cost solutions will push off indefinitely some of those long term capital projects, depending on how successful they are. They will go through a public process starting with the lower cost solutions. If those don't address the issues adequately, then they will look at those high cost capital projects.

Mr. Boldt said that was good to hear. If the lower cost options do not work, they need to be able to move to the next option.

Bart Hansen said on Thursday at 4:00 p.m. at Roosevelt Elementary School, WSDOT is having an Open House on the SR-500 intersections just discussed. People are invited to view the concepts and provide their feedback. Bart Gernhart distributed copies of the Open House flyer to Board Members and citizens.

Jeanne Stewart said there is an executive committee that is looking at SR-500 and those intersections and traffic. She said she would be interested in what the process would be if they wanted to expedite through some lobbying to get the legislature to maybe fund some of some of these critical corridors sooner than 17 years. Councilor Stewart said she would like to set up a meeting with the RTC Chair and Executive Director and a couple people who are working on that to see if there is some way that they can get effective relief sooner than 17 years out.

Matt Ransom said this is the first look at the project list that was compiled from projects submitted by each jurisdiction. He asked that members review the list over the next month and consult with their staff since the projects were submitted by them. Mr. Ransom asked that any questions, additions, or clarifications be sent to RTC staff. He said this is a work in progress, and they will continue to refine it over time. Mr. Ransom said when it comes to the estimated year listed, that is used to note an earlier time versus a longer term. If an opportunity arises where it could be funded sooner, that is always the objective.

Mr. Ransom said they would return in June with an initial look at the RTP Finance Plan. Also, at the recommendation of Councilor Boldt in January, they have invited the Washington State Transportation Commission to provide a statewide look at state finances and some of the trends that are occurring. A few of those have been discussed, with tolling in Washington being one of those trends. Their road usage charge project is evaluating a different way of assessing charges for use of roadway. Mr. Ransom said the expectation is to have a finance level discussion at the first stage next month. They will continue to work through the summer on the project list refinement, finance forecasting, and more. Ideally, this comes together this fall with a recommendation for the Plan to go forward.

Mr. Ransom invited two researchers with WSU Vancouver to present their research projects. As part of the RTP development this last fall, Mr. Ransom and Lynda David discussed engaging some local talent, and there were a couple topics that they had interest in pursuing. They partnered with WSU faculty, Dr. Carolyn Long, who is currently involved in developing strategic partnerships with local agencies and entities. She arranged for two very highly qualified individuals to do research for RTC.

Mr. Ransom introduced Zachary Johnson, a Senior Research Associate with the Initiative for Public Deliberation. He initiated and completed for RTC an Environmental Justice Policy Review. Since RTC is a federally funded agency, they must comply with certain provisions of Federal law. One of those is Environmental Justice. In planning, the question always arises as to how that is done at the metropolitan level. Zachary did some research for RTC to try to give some suggestions and best practices. In the end, he went out and asked affected communities how RTC should engage with them.

Mr. Ransom introduced Andrew Harris who is in a Master's Degree Program at WSU Vancouver. He is a big data specialist that works in applying analytical tools that are very advanced of how to evaluate data and public opinion survey. Andrew took a series of research that had been completed regionally over the last several years, like the Community Values Survey and the Voices of Southwest Washington, and applied analytical tools to evaluate the words. By doing so, helped bring out what people really mean and what their biases are. This is a way of analyzing data from a scientific standpoint.

Mr. Ransom said the two reports were distributed to members and would be posted on RTC's website with the May Board Meeting materials.

Zachary Johnson said he looked at the Environmental Justice Policy Review. He said Environmental Justice is about ensuring that projects do not have disproportionately negative impacts on low income and minority populations, as well as ensuring that projects benefit these communities as well. For the project, he first did some case studies of different MPOs, and then went out and did some stakeholder interviews for the affected communities. He then submitted the final report.

Mr. Johnson said environmental justice begins in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and any program or activity that receives federal funds or other financial assistance. This was added on to in 1994 by Executive Order 12898 by President Clinton. This directed federal agencies to design and implement environmental justice policies. In response to that was the Department of Transportation Order 5610.2 in 1997. This set out the Department of Transportation's Environmental Justice Policies. It would eventually lead to the requirements for MPOs.

The three requirements for MPOs in regard to environmental justice include: 1) Enhance their analytical capabilities to ensure that the long-range transportation plan and the transportation improvement program (TIP) comply with Title VI. 2) Identify residential, employment, and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs can be identified and addressed, and the benefits and burdens of transportation investments can be fairly distributed. 3) Evaluate and – where necessary – improve their public involvement processes to eliminate participation barriers and engage minority and low-income populations in transportation decision-making.

The first step to this, with regards to data and analysis, the RTC has done. For the Environmental Justice demographic profile, Mr. Johnson provided a sample of one of the maps

that RTC has produced – showing the percentage of Minority of populations in census tracks. There are many more maps and data in that report.

Mr. Johnson then did the State of Practice case study. He looked at 14 MPOs across the country; five were of similar population to RTC, five more were in the Pacific Northwest Region, and four more were those with innovative Environmental Justice policies that were really pushing the boundaries of that. Overall, there were two umbrella categories of different environmental justice policies. The first was a quantitative method, which really focused on developing models about trip time and using mapping to determine if transportation projects are benefitting these communities. The second was a qualitative approach, which really focuses more on community outreach, dialoguing with these communities, and forming advisory boards or task forces to do so.

After conducting this research, Mr. Johnson did some stakeholder interviews. He did interviews with representatives from the Human Services Council, Clark College Office of Diversity and Equity, Vancouver NAACP, Council for the Homeless, and Free Clinic of SW Washington. He asked them about environmental justice policy and public involvement methods and what they think can be improved.

The feedback lead to three recommendations that he has made. 1) RTC should create sustained dialogue with environmental justice communities. What came up over and over in the stakeholder interviews was that these communities may have a difficult time getting to existing public meetings that the RTC does. They wanted alternative ways of engagement. He recommended that RTC work with the interested groups to attend their meetings and provide an update on what the RTC is doing and to get feedback in that way. By having continuous dialogue with these groups, RTC can hear their perspective needed to have an effective policy in this area.

2) RTC should maximize the accessibility of its processes and materials. This is already being done, but continuing to make sure that all public meetings and all public materials are accessible to people in multiple languages, and that there is no communication barriers there. Also, work with those community groups to see if there are updates that can be made in that area.

3) Enhance environmental justice mapping and data. Stakeholders liked the mapping that had been done that showed the demographics by census track. They are also interested in seeing more data on those maps, including information about schools diversity of the student population or student bodies with a high proportion on free or reduced lunch. Other MPOs also map out service locations on their environmental justice maps.

In conclusion, Mr. Johnson said that RTC has demonstrated a commitment to environmental justice both through past efforts and to the creation of the review. By implementing the recommendations of the report, RTC can strengthen this commitment and ensure that needs are identified and addressed in an equitable manner.

Mr. Ransom thanked Zachary for his good work. He said his recommendations will be incorporated into their efforts both as part of this planning process, but also, Mark Harrington RTC staff that oversees the administration of these programs for the agency, has begun to incorporate several of those recommendations into RTC's standard procedures.

Andrew Harris said he will soon finish a Masters of Public Affairs at WSU. Professionally, he works with techniques to look at patterns in data and uncover observations similar to the ones that he is going to talk about. For this project, when they first spoke it became apparent that the real goal was to find a way to address elements of public opinion that might have been overlooked or ignored or pigeon-holed based on the nature of the survey or the way a particular finding was presented. They were seeking to quiet the agenda and look at what people were actually saying about transportation issues and the community as a whole.

Mr. Harris began by accessing the data. For this they considered Voice of Washington public opinion database, the Oregon Transportation Needs and Issues Survey, the transportation elements of the Oregon Values and Beliefs Project, and the 500,000 Voices project sponsored by the Community Foundation of SW Washington. He basically used any survey that he could get access to in which freeform public opinion was provided, a text box that people could freeform express what they wanted to express.

Once he had the data, he began by cataloguing each data point by basic characteristics. Going further, he inserted an analysis that allowed him to sectionally manipulate each individual component. Once you have tags done with individual words or individual phrases, you can format associations between particular ideas. Mr. Harris said you can look at a noun phrase such as bridge and the word new and determine what other words are used in relation to those. From there, you can assign a positivity score, ranging from zero to one, as to how this person feels: good about it, negatively about it, etc. It was also scored for lexical variation to determine commonalities in expressed themes. From there, it becomes possible to look at overall themes in the language.

Mr. Harris looked at a neutral response. He said 50% is about where you expect it to be. When a score is above that mark, it tends toward a positive spectrum. When a score is below that mark, it is tending toward the negative. When looking at neutral responses, in over half of the responses using the word "rail", the word "light", or the phrase "to Portland" was mentioned. Some of the most common words were "infrastructure", oil-transit", "traffic", and "the river".

Overall, when scored, 56% of respondents expressed positive responses, about 20% expressed negative responses, and 24% expressed neutral responses. Within the negative indications, there was not a strong peak of expressions. The negative response pool has the shortest average response when compared to the neutral and positive subgroups; this indicates a quick opposition, primarily to light rail transit.

The positive responses indicate a stronger sentiment in favor of some sort of bridge project. Mr. Harris said it comes in all sorts of flavors. Different people want different types of bridges, but the majority of people who responded to these things want something. The majority of

people that respond that mention wanting to advance the project and also mention paying for it, seem willing to pay for it. Over half of respondents mentioned "access". A lot of the positive responses spoke a lot about why they want a new project. For a lot of people, it is about quality of life issues; educational access, entertainment access, personal access, and employment access. Words like "jobs", "employment", "commute", and "opportunities" indicate a financial need for more options.

Mr. Harris said things like this are always subjective. This survey isn't here to tell anyone what to think; it is just here to point out some observations that might have been missed.

Mr. Ransom said the actual reports will be posted on the website. He encouraged members and the public to check them out. It is very interesting research. Mr. Ransom said he appreciated the contributions that both these gentlemen have made to our processes and the public dialogue about these issues. Mr. Ransom said there is an incredible amount of talent within this community, and this was an opportunity to showcase and partner with two researchers doing innovative work. He thanked them for their contribution.

Jeanne Stewart asked Zachary Johnson in determining who is affected by tolling and determining if we have environmental justice for certain minorities, lower income people, she asked where the nexus was between the determination that these same low income people or groups that may be identified are the people that would be crossing into Oregon and paying the tolls. Councilor Stewart asked how they could identify groups that they would want to be careful under no circumstances would be discriminated against financially.

Mr. Johnson said his particular research wasn't directly related to the tolling issue. It was just related to public involvement overall. He said he could not really speak to the nexus between that. It would maybe be just something that you would have to have dialogue with those groups about.

Mr. Ransom said with the analytical tools that they apply now, as well as perhaps some advancements that were researched here, they have the capability of measuring through census block groups where certain populations reside. Beyond identifying them, the question is how to engage those communities. The research that Zachary did gives RTC and other agencies a pathway - to go to them. That was the conclusion of one of the primary findings; go to them directly on their turf to engage and talk about issues as opposed to waiting for them to come and engage with us.

Tom Lannen asked Andrew when he did the research, if there was any potential for having conversation with individuals or a group and then having them do a paper assessment and compare what the linguistics brought back to their check box.

Andrew said that you could do that a couple of different ways. He said this sort of analysis has methodologies for that sort of open discussion or roundtable type. Andrew said you could take a recording of that discussion, transcribe it, identify the individual speakers, and from there create personas that indicate what sort of discussion was had from each of those vantage points. In terms of this project specifically, Andrew said a lot of ideas were tossed around, but

with the time constraints and the budget constraints, he did not get around to that. He added that it certainly would be of interest.

Mr. Ransom said one interesting factoid, as seen in the report and Andrew's research; they evaluated over 3 million words as part of the data set. It was a very comprehensive data set, big data analysis and very helpful.

IX. Portland Metro Area Value Pricing Feasibility Analysis – Consideration of Input

Matt Ransom noted the memorandum with two attachments that was provided to members. The memo was distributed to members by email and posted to the website the previous day. Mr. Ransom said he has been following this process closely and also had the opportunity to meet individually with most members to discuss their expectations and thoughts. This was following the last Board meeting's presentation from ODOT staff and a Board discussion about providing some input into this overall process.

Mr. Ransom said RTC is provided an opportunity in the short term to submit some formal input into the process that ODOT has underway, which is to study value pricing on freeways within Oregon. As a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), RTC has a unique role in the sense that they are a collection of agencies, and they come together and deliberate issues. They then try to find consensus as a collective, understanding that individual entities might have unique or more discreet perspectives. The regional MPO contributions generally, by definition and mission are big picture, long term, regional in scope, a sense of where they might need to be in 20 +/- years. Mr. Ransom said that was the tenor from which he put together the memo. He said the conversations that they have had leading up to this meeting and that they might have in the months ahead are about the context for tolling.

They began in January with a discussion about tolling as it exists in Washington State, a bit of history about the types of projects, and evolution of that tool of finance as it has been applied in the state, beginning with primarily project construction and evolving into both construction projects as well as managing traffic. Mr. Ransom said they had a brief discussion in March about the progression of federal policy. The current administration has proposed a new trend in policy which pushes the federal government further in recognizing that user fees and tolling and privatization is a long aim. He said a lot of that goes back to the fact that Congress has not raised or indexed the federal gas tax in nearly two decades. Mr. Ransom said they have had two updates from ODOT, in January and April.

One of the key questions for RTC as they consider input and engagement is their study process. Mr. Ransom listed the milestones for RTC input to the ODOT process on page 2 of the memo. A recommendation from the study evaluation that is currently underway from the Project Advisory Committee when they conclude their work will go to the Oregon Transportation Commission. That recommendation is to be by the final meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting on June 25 and no later than the joint meeting of the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) and PAC meeting on July 12. The schedule that was distributed shows the PAC recommendation at the July 12 meeting. After the OTC receives

that, there is a period of time where they deliberate with the department and develop what would be a final application. Mr. Ransom said they don't know what that process looks like. What they do understand is that the OTC submits a report to the Oregon Legislature in December, and by statute, they have to submit a final application by December 31, 2018. This indicates that sometime this fall the publication and presentation or submission of that final application will be available to us. That is another milestone opportunity for input. At that point, we will actually know what the proposal is as opposed to just a concept. After that, RTC as the MPO would most likely be afforded some role in the consultation process under a formal NEPA project review cycle. Some of that would most likely depend on the scope and area and impact zone of a proposed project. As listed in the draft input, Mr. Ransom said RTC will request a formal consultation as part of the future NEPA process.

Mr. Ransom said in regard to what they want to say for comment, draft input was listed on page 3 of the memo. Following the discussion and the input of the Board and considering what the most appropriate types of comments that a Metropolitan Planning Organization could submit, Mr. Ransom prepared five categories of input. He said the categories were generally described. The hope is to review those and have a sense attitudinally that all looks good. Mr. Ransom said over the next month as ODOT receives and presents to the PAC a recommendation, RTC will have an opportunity to refine this.

The first category listed is Partnership and Consultation. As a metropolitan area and bi-state region, they do work together. They have an obligation to continue to work together. As the MPOs, RTC and Metro, they have a mandate to coordinate their work together. In conjunction with that, an appropriate request would be that RTC receive formal consultation. This would mean directly talking with RTC in a formal process for engagement, not just receiving information at a meeting.

The second category is Regionally Significant Project Implementation. Mr. Ransom said as he listened to the conversation from the community and as those here in Washington State have experienced it, there is real value in having a project improvement plan developed. That plan should be inclusive of the highway, transit, and perhaps other modal projects that would be funded from toll proceeds. The general spirit being there is clearly a trend as well as a nexus relationship between congestion pricing tolling and what projects would be a result of that, or what improvements would be made to achieve the performance goals that were set. More specifically on the I-5 corridor, they regionally, in bi-state terms, had agreed on, at least conceptually, a project that was not funded at the Legislative level, and that is the replacement of the I-5 Bridge. Presumptively, that project is as evidenced in the RTP, still a regional priority. Whatever strategy that may be manifested on I-5, that there is some consideration and accounting for how that might interrelate to the I-5 Bridge specifically. That is a regional bi-state bottleneck and should be a part of any type of project discussion.

The third category is Regional Mitigation, and there are two aspects to that. Mr. Ransom said he believed there was value in this, and he thought the PAC was moving in this direction. The OTC would actually propose a mitigation strategy, the types of the things that would be

targeted initially for mitigation. Further, Mr. Ransom said in this bi-state region, there may be need for legislative remedy where a mitigation strategy could actually occur here in Washington in order to fairly address bi-state impacts or avoidance of non-mitigatable impacts should be pursued. An example of this was provided: A mitigation response to a northern I-5 congestion pricing project could be expanding I-5 express bus transit services provided by C-TRAN, thereby providing improved transit for affected Clark County stakeholders.

The fourth category is Regional Systems Monitoring. Mr. Ransom said regional corridor outcomes and performance metrics should be defined prior to beginning a congestion pricing pilot project. Through monitoring, propose corridor specific project mitigations and programs to ameliorate social/economic impacts created by a congestion pricing project.

The final category is Decision Making. In the desire for engagement and input as well tempering response to the appropriate time, Mr. Ransom said there is value in the disclosure of future project decision making milestones, and input opportunities should be communicated to regional and bi-state governmental agencies and the public at large.

Mr. Ransom said timing is important. He said following the May 1 RTC Board meeting, and upon review of the ODOT Project Advisory Committee meeting materials of May 14, RTC staff will prepare final comments for RTC Board input at the June 5 RTC Board meeting.

Anne McEnerny-Ogle distributed a document from the City of Vancouver. She said the city councilors have been studying the Portland Area Value Pricing Feasibility Study issue for quite some time. They had a workshop on it the previous month. They came up with five items that they feel reflect the concerns of the potential impacts to the residents of Southwest Washington and the concern about equitable distribution of benefits for our citizens and commuters. Mayor McEnerny-Ogle said many are similar to what Mr. Ransom just shared with the Board in his draft. She said the first item is the Extended Timeline for Value Pricing Study. She said they felt the timeline was insufficient for this type of decision-making process.

The second item, User Equity, refers to the fact that any revenue generated by congestion pricing should be spent on improvements within the area where it was generated, so that those paying the toll also receive the benefits of reduced peak-hour congestion, increased vehicle /person throughput, increased travel time reliability, expanded multimodal capacity, and / or improved operations on existing roadways. Mayor McEnerny-Ogle said this is one of their big concerns. This falls under the third item that Mr. Ransom shared about regional mitigation.

Item three is Interstate Equity. Mayor McEnerny-Ogle said as they have attended the different workshops and open forums that ODOT has held in our area and in Oregon, it is the opportunity, as Mr. Ransom had pointed out; is the money generated in Oregon transferable to Washington. She said they received no, yes, and maybe answers. In looking at that, they feel it may take a Legislative remedy for that. They feel that any tolling plan that disproportionately impacts Vancouver's residents and does not provide for the listed benefits should not be accepted if it can't transfer into Washington.

The fourth item talks about Infrastructure; funding relating bottlenecks. Their hope is that nothing negatively impacts the future of the I-5 replacement project. Mayor McEnerny-Ogle said this is similar to Mr. Ransom's second item.

The last item listed is System-Wide Impact Analysis and the diversion impact analysis. This relates to the first item on Mr. Ransom's list.

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle said they are looking at similar items and similar concerns. The City has put it in a slightly different format.

Eileen Quiring said in looking at some of the proposed ideas, specifically mitigation, a lot of members around the table represent individual people that cross the river and pay Oregon income tax, and in addition, they would then be required to pay tolls. She said she understood that in order to transfer any money to C-TRAN, it might require Legislative action. It might be the Federal Government that prohibits it, but she believed that the state government probably prohibits it, and the Oregon constitution prohibits it, unless that was changed legislatively. Councilor Quiring said she would like to propose that if this actually does go through, and they are going to toll our commuters who are paying income tax, they need to create some legislation that would mitigate those tolls against the income tax that they are already paying. Councilor Quiring said she understood that they are using the roads, and maybe a portion of those tolls if they create some additional speed and address some of the congestion, that would be fine and good, but if what is going to be done is use the funds for projects on the other side of the river, specifically the Abernethy Bridge on the south side of I-205 at the I-5 intersection, she didn't think that would affect our commuters that much. One of the plans would really affect Washington commuters, Plan A. Plan A starts at the I-5 Bridge and goes to Going Street. Councilor Quiring said the RTC Board needs to consider the needs of the commuters from our region. She said many of these people can't take transit because of their type of job, even if money was spent for C-TRAN.

Tom Lannen said he saw on the news that there are several projects going on for interchange and upgrades on I-84 and I-5. He asked if there was a plan that all agree on for more lanes on the I-5 crossing, and those projects go forward, would those projects be an impediment to the I-5 crossing project if they were completed in the short term.

Mandy Putney said those upcoming projects are definitely happening this summer and will move forward. She said this planning work is on a much longer horizon. Ms. Putney said the other projects that were shown on the map that Mr. Ransom provided are operational improvement projects and safety improvement projects that will be needed regardless of the concept(s) that move forward with Value Pricing.

Mr. Ransom said he included the map in the meeting materials, because he thought it was useful to see just what projects are funded that they are currently working on. Mr. Ransom said on a given corridor, should a value pricing scheme be implemented, a project improvement plan could look something like the map with additional lines, projects, and mitigations.

Chair Onslow said that he thought that they needed to step forward, and that there needs to be at least a letter in preparation for the next meeting. The proposed items are pretty general right now, because we don't know just exactly what is going to be suggested. For example, he said one of the things he asked the Oregon folks that were at the Open House the previous night, if they had checked with the political elected in the area of the Abernethy Bridge (for example). He felt there could be some back pedaling. Chair Onslow said he felt the RTC Board should prepare something similar to what the City of Vancouver had that talked about timing and the benefits and to whom they would go. As a Board, Chair Onslow said they should come up with something that says we are interested and that the project coordination should include us in the regional process. There should be a project improvement plan and who the improvement is for; the direct and indirect impacts that it has; and the regional corridor outcome prior to the beginning of the implementation. The decision needs to be announced well in advance to all of the public in Washington and Oregon, not just Oregon. Chair Onslow said he would like to see the Board recommend something like this to Matt to come up with something fairly general so that we are included and we do have an opinion on the matter.

Mr. Ransom said he will take that guidance and the tentative points, and he will be attending the May 14 Project Advisory Committee meeting to observe and take stock of what their Project Team and Consultants might be recommending. He will report back in June with a draft proposal recognizing that we are trying to keep it high level and strategic and also trying to lay clear the need for some of these matters: bi-state mitigation, project improvement plan, etc. Mr. Ransom said that he understood through his communication with the ODOT Project Team that members of the Project Advisory Committee will be afforded an opportunity to weigh-in directly as their organization. In this case: Clark County, City of Vancouver, and WSDOT weigh-in with their final response to the recommendation going to the OTC. Mr. Ransom also said that he has been invited to attend the three Port (Vancouver, Ridgefield, and Camas-Washougal) meeting to provide them a briefing the afternoon of May 14 on the matters under discussion. They may be considering their own position. Mr. Ransom said if members had specific thoughts or comments for him related to the refinement of the formal input, he would welcome that.

Shawn Donaghy said based on what Mr. Ransom said, he agreed that time was of the essence, especially given the schedule that the committee is on for the Value Pricing itself. He was not sure he heard correctly. He wanted to make sure that our goal is to vote on a letter/document that we will send at the next RTC meeting. Mr. Ransom said that was his intention.

Jeanne Stewart asked if they will see a draft of the document before they see it in the RTC Board packet. Mr. Ransom said yes, that would be distributed.

Paul Harris asked if that draft could be shared with him and others on the Legislative body. Chair Onslow asked if it would be on the website.

Mr. Ransom said yes, given the magnitude of what they are talking about, they will make sure the distribution is complete.

X. Other Business

From the Board

Scott Hughes referred to the May 14 meeting of the three Ports that Mr. Ransom mentioned. He said it is a public meeting so all are invited to attend. It is at the Port of Ridgefield at 2:00 p.m.

Bart Gernhart thanked ODOT for coming to Vancouver the previous evening to hold the Open House on Value Pricing. He said they really appreciated their efforts.

Mr. Gernhart also clarified something that was stated earlier. The Open House for the SR-500 42nd Ave. / 54th Ave. Safety Study is on Thursday, May 3 at 4 to 7 p.m. at the Roosevelt Elementary School, 2921 NE Falk Road, Vancouver. He said they look forward to having as many people there as possible to share their opinion. They have several ways to provide feedback including online.

Mandy Putney said the Value Pricing Open House the previous evening concluded a series of five Open Houses at various locations throughout the region. It was also the end of their online Open House, so there will be a summary of input received provided to the PAC at their next meeting, as well as, the round-two findings. There will be more analysis shared on the five different concepts that are currently being considered. The next PAC meeting is on May 14. They do live stream the meetings and archive them online so you can watch them at a later time.

Ron Onslow added that everyone that was working at the meeting the previous night was well informed and polite.

From the Director

Matt Ransom said that the State Auditor's Office has concluded their financial and grant review audit of RTC. Both the RTC Chair and Vice Chair and the General Counsel participated in the opening and closing meetings with the State Auditor's Office. RTC's accountant said that RTC received an unmodified opinion with no report of financial statement findings, no report of federal award findings or question of costs. Mr. Ransom said essentially, an extremely clean sheet. He extended a public thank you to RTC's accountant and admin team that support each other to ensure the books are all in order. Mr. Ransom will distribute the Audit Report to Board Members.

Mr. Ransom said that late last year RTC held a Smart Cities Workshop and several members attended to learn about Smart Cities and the importance of investment in technology and systems. Just recently, they distributed to the attendees a summary report. He said if anyone didn't get it and are interested to contact him and he would send that out. The summary report identified the findings and recommendations and a status report. Just this evening, the Board implemented one of the items that was recommended at that forum, which is to require conduit in all projects that are funded by RTC. It is now part of the grant program criteria that all projects that open the road for utilities must include conduit. Mr. Ransom said this is a prudent thing from a policy perspective, because it sets them up for the 21st century and

beyond. He said they have a lot of great leadership in the county; the Port of Ridgefield specifically, in terms of their initiative they have underway which sets our communities up for smart infrastructure. Mr. Ransom noted that Clark County is pursuing some additional work where they are doing a white paper on how agencies can deal with this in considering connected vehicle infrastructure. This is just around the corner when thinking of autonomous connected vehicles. They are also doing a broader white paper on Smart Cities. When that work is complete, he said he might share that or invite them to present that. He said this is an important topic for everyone as they think about Smart Cities and how to prepare their communities and their infrastructure.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 5, 2018, at 4 p.m.

Chair Onslow added that he has some friends that live in Mississippi, but they work around the United States in fiber. One just won a bid to put dark fiber in from Umatilla to Reno, 800 miles cross country. The other friend just finished a 25 mile loop around Atlanta; an installation with rights-of-way. Their comment to him was that he should tell everybody that is thinking about fiber that what you have seen in the past ten years is nothing compared to what is going to happen in the next ten years, and it is going to be a tsunami of information.

XI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

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Ron Onslow, Board of Directors Chair