

**Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
Board of Directors
February 4, 2020, 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 Scott Hughes Tuesday, February 4, 2020, 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:

Shawn Donaghy, C-TRAN Chief Executive Officer
Carley Francis, WSDOT Regional Administrator
Paul Greenlee, Washougal Councilmember
Scott Hughes, Port of Ridgefield Commissioner
Bill Iyall, Cowlitz Indian Tribe Chairman
Temple Lentz, Clark County Councilor
Gary Medvigy, Clark County Councilor
Ron Onslow, Ridgefield Councilmember
Eileen Quiring, Clark County Councilor
Ty Stober, Vancouver Councilmember
Rian Windsheimer, ODOT Region 1 Manager

Voting Board Members Absent:

Shirley Craddick, Metro Councilor
Jim Herman, Port of Klickitat Commissioner
Tom Lannen, Skamania County Commissioner
Anne McEnery-Ogle, Vancouver Mayor

Nonvoting Board Members Present:

Nonvoting Board Members Absent:

Curtis King, Senator 14th District
Chris Corry, Representative 14th District
Gina Mosbrucker, Representative 14th District
Lynda Wilson, Senator 17th District
Paul Harris, Representative 17th District
Vicki Kraft, Representative 17th District
Ann Rivers, Senator 18th District
Larry Hoff, 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:

Ed Barnes, LRTSW / I-5, Citizen
David Bennett, Citizen
Lucinda Broussard, ODOT
Carson Coates, Rep. Herrera Beutler's Office
Sorin Garber, SGA Consulting
Scott Langer, WSDOT
John Ley, Citizen
Jeff Mize, The Columbian
Scott Patterson, C-TRAN
Mandy Putney, ODOT
Bryan Stebbins, Senator Murray's Office
Page Phillips Strickler, Strategies 360
Marc Thornsby, Port of Klickitat
Greg Thornton, La Center Mayor

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

RON ONSLOW MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 4, 2020, MEETING AGENDA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY PAUL GREENLEE AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

III. Call for Public Comments

John Ley from Camas spoke about tolling implementation in Oregon and the impact to Southwest Washington.

Ed Barnes from Vancouver spoke about his concern with waiting until 2025 to start any construction on the replacement of the I-5 Bridge. He said Oregon and Washington need to work together to get the project moving quickly.

Action Items

IV. Consent Agenda

- A. January 7, 2020, Minutes**
- B. February Claims**
- C. 2020-2023 TIP Amendments, Resolution 02-20-05**

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS A, B, AND C AS LISTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY TEMPLE LENTZ AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

V. Federal Legislative Policy Statement, Resolution 02-20-06

Matt Ransom said at the January meeting he presented a recommendation to the Board that they consider a Federal Legislative Policy Statement. Federal Surface Transportation Law is very important to our region. About every four or five years, the Feds create a new authorization. Mr. Ransom said fundamentally, what they are looking for is for Congress to reauthorize a new Act, fold in relevant and important policy principles, but in the end, allocate and authorize and appropriate funds. That is the key aspect. Both the House and the Senate Bills that are going to be making their way through, they are not sure how they are going to fund it. Creating the established framework and policy is the first step. How they authorize and appropriate funds will come after that.

Mr. Ransom referred to Resolution 02-20-06; he said it was unmodified since the Board saw it in January. He highlighted some of the major categories related to surface transportation and the transit programs. There is a new idea to reauthorize or re-establish a Bridge Investment Program, which would be a good fit to helping us replace and rehabilitate bridges within the RTC region. There are six bridges in the RTC region, two of them are owned by a Port District, the other four are owned by both Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation. They are suggesting some policy emphasis around their freight programs, expanding innovative financing programs, establishing an Infrastructure Resiliency Program, and streamlining regulations and procedures. Attached to the Resolution is a Showcase of RTC

Region Projects. This captures the types of projects that they fund using federal aid dollars. They range from basic roadway infrastructure, Port infrastructure, and transit improvements, etc.

Mr. Ransom said he would prepare a cover letter for the Resolution that will be transmitted to our Members of Congress. He offered that Board Members can use the Resolution and the attached Showcase of Projects for their own consultations with the Members of Congress as well as the general public. Mr. Ransom said the proposal is to have the Board endorse this Resolution.

Gary Medvigy said he fully supports the Resolution, but he has an amendment to it. He asked how they move this forward, if they have a cover letter signed by the Chair and Director to go to each of our Senators and Congressmen and women from both states.

Mr. Ransom said he would put a letter together and execute the signatures. He said they would use the same format as Mr. Medvigy had described. They have used similar formats in the past with communication like that. He said they would package it and distribute it both in hard copy and an electronic copy.

Chair Hughes said the timing on that is actually kind of perfect. He said the Ports will be going to Washington, D.C. in about a month. To have this, and they will have already received it, but to sit down and talk to them about this, this kind of documentation is invaluable.

Gary Medvigy said he had a second point to make. He referred to the funding for capital infrastructure across the United States and when that might open up. They don't know if that will happen or what the breadth of that will be. They are sitting on a strategic west coast corridor here. Councilor Medvigy referred to resiliency and the possibility of an earthquake and the bridge coming down and the need for additional corridors and bridges. He said he would like a resolution that captures that notion, looking forward once the flow of federal dollars opens up. If they have a stated goal to have a corridor open up, maybe they will have access to funds for that design, and he would like to see that put into the resolution in some manner.

PAUL GREENLEE MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 02-20-06 SETTING FORTH THE FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENT. TEMPLE LENTZ SECONDED THE MOTION.

GARY MEDVIGY MOTIONED FOR A FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO ADD LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS. EILEEN QUIRING SECONDED THE AMENDMENT.

Chair Hughes asked for any comments or questions from Board Members regarding the amendment.

Bill Iyall said he assumed that means a long-term planning effort to identify possible corridors. He said that is a twenty- or thirty-year effort. He said wherever those corridors might exist, that infrastructure investment is a huge effort. In recognizing that, it might be something that could take a lot of study and a lot of effort. Mr. Iyall said our priorities today are immediate, and that is the primary concern. Long term, certainly there would be other corridors, and transportation alternatives as well is another consideration as we move to electric vehicles. He

asked how we maintain our corridors with just the infrastructure that is needed for that. It is a long-term view. He said people need that understanding as we move from gas tax to road use charges and things like that. Each state has some tough decisions. It is a state to state issue on where a corridor could go, if at all. The immediate impact is not the question; it's a long-term planning element.

Paul Greenlee said he is concerned that planning a corridor is basically the job of our municipal governments. It is not really a federal program. Once we have a corridor, then it could become a federal program. Unless or until we have a corridor designated, he said it looks like we would be putting something very different in the basket with all of the other things that are there. What are there right now are some very specific projects that are much closer to ready to go; that if they were funded, they could be completed rather quickly. Mr. Greenlee said he was worried that this would be a distraction from this particular resolution. He suggested that future bridge corridors are deserving of their own discussion and not really in the immediate fast track resolution.

Eileen Quiring said these aren't actually project driven; they're driven by the Bill, the FAST Act. They fit into the projects that we are working on, but she said she actually does see that the infrastructure resiliency program as Mr. Medvigy said, if we have some disaster, it may fit into that. She said the way she sees it, it is just putting an opportunity out there that may be nobody thought of. It does take planning, and it will take many years to plan. Other municipalities and groups will be looking at this, and she didn't see what it hurts.

Ty Stober asked Mr. Medvigy what he envisions as a potential outcome for including this.

Gary Medvigy said he is hoping just to keep options out there and to highlight the issue that we are behind in our strategic transportation corridors. If there is a bill with this fast track or otherwise that may incorporate, we really do need to augment the I-5 corridor. It just puts it on paper and in the public's eye and our Congressional delegation's eye. Mr. Medvigy said he thinks it is an immediate need as far as having other bridges to fall back on and important that we include it in this resolution.

Ty Stober asked if they put that in the resolution, what do they want the Legislators to specifically do.

Gary Medvigy said he would like them to designate some money to study additional corridors and buy rights of way, and help fund it.

Shawn Donaghy said for clarification purposes, he had a similar question as Councilor Stober. He said at last month's meeting they had a conversation about the Bridge Investment Program. He said he thinks they all may have had some misunderstanding that that funding mechanism could go to future corridors, and really, what it is designed for is corridors that exist in the now under the Federal Highway that need some immediate attention. His question to Councilor Medvigy is if he is asking to have it on the list as a way to generate conversation about a potential funding mechanism for future corridors beyond that which Federal Highway already funds.

Councilor Medvigy said he would consider the I-5 corridor to include I-205. He would include another east bridge or a west bridge or a tunnel. He said this is one corridor coming through the west coast from Mexico to Canada. Councilor Medvigy said he sees it as maintaining the I-5 corridor and opening up the Columbia River for navigation without having to lift the bridge. It is important for navigation as well as the roadway.

Shawn Donaghy said he would tend to agree that they can't rule out other corridors after they deal with the I-5 Bridge issue. He said a lot of things on the resolution are about how they can shore up or increase the funding that exists to maintain the infrastructure that is already out there, projects that already exist. He questioned how they could put language in that is asking for future corridors that have not yet been determined. He was not sure what they want to gain by adding that language.

Temple Lentz agreed with what Mr. Donaghy said. She said it might not hurt to add the language, but she didn't necessarily see that it would help. This is about working with things that are already here. She said the role of the local governments is to talk about corridors, to plan where they will be, to set aside land, and to determine how to acquire right of way. Since none of that work has been done, Councilor Lentz said she didn't think it was necessarily helpful with the goal of the resolution. She suggested that they steer the resolution toward goals that which they might be able to achieve funding from the federal government.

Ty Stober asked Mr. Ransom if he was aware of instances in which the federal government has assisted with regional planning in such a way.

Mr. Ransom said yes, that if Congress goes back to congressionally directed project spending or earmarks, that is an example of when that has been more frequent in terms of those kinds of things. Mr. Ransom said they want Congress to stabilize the transportation programs and other programs, and that means money. They also want Congress to set in law, program language that authorizes them to spend money in certain areas. If that means create a Bridge Investment Program so that they can shield off and say they need billions of dollars to fix the nations bridges, and they shield that off and put money directly into that account. That's a good thing; whether it is the I-5 Bridge or one of the other five bridges in the RTC region, each one needs maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation. Mr. Ransom said that is a very good idea, and something that they as a region with a lot of bridges should support. They can also advocate for stabilizing and increasing funding.

Mr. Ransom said in crafting the statement/resolution for the Boards consideration, he tried to keep broad programmatic ideas. In the transmittal that accompanies the resolution, he intends to incorporate some statements about their desire to continue to plan and improve. He said they do have in their Plan a strategic question which is are there new corridors within this county. That remains unanswered. RTC did establish in their 2008 Plan a concept vision of what that could be that needs validation and work before they can commit to it. In summary, the Feds do invest in our infrastructure, and our region has many projects that need to be developed.

Ty Stober said it didn't sound like it was a typical activity of the federal government to fund the exploration for a project. He questioned what they were exactly asking for and said they need to be more clear of what they are looking for. Councilor Stober said an example would be that they want the federal government to establish a corridor planning process, but they haven't flushed through any of that yet.

Chair Hughes asked if he was asking if it was the feds idea to start this or is it usually something that the states do.

Councilor Stober said no. He said there were a lot of calls that the replacement bridge over the Columbia River should not use tolling, so on his lobbying trips back to D.C. he has asked staff members to give him an example of a project of this magnitude that is not being built with a tolling component. There were none. There is no example of the federal government doing that. Councilor Stober said he would like to be more refined in what they are asking for.

Mr. Ransom said if the question is if there is a program in federal law that is the corridor planning program, the answer is no. However, there are other buckets of federal law that create avenues for money. Right now the feds have shifted to create nationally competitive programs. What they find is the projects that get funded are generally the infrastructure projects. Federal dollars flow to projects directly or they flow to the states and the states can choose what to do with their money. Or it flows to the regions and they choose what to do with their money. In RTC's case, they release it for competitive grant application. That is a policy decision around this Board.

Rian Windsheimer asked if there were already corridor planning funds in the form of MPO planning allocations, and that is the venue if this group wanted to create a new corridor to do planning work on.

Mr. Ransom said that is correct. He said the feds directly distribute through their competitive grant programs. They flow to the states, and the state funds are committed to bridge programs. RTC's decision was to use the regional flexible dollars to support project improvements.

Shawn Donaghy said they are not talking about money to conduct a study. What they are asking for is a simple notation of the reauthorization of the FAST Act that there is importance placed on another type of funding mechanism for additional money for additional projects deemed significant to RTC that would be able to fund that infrastructure once they have done the planning for that.

Bill Iyall said they did put some money in the Governor's budget for that effort.

Carley Francis said if he was referencing House Bill 1160, as part of the I-5 Bridge replacement planning and development work to look at a Bridge Authority. There is the call for some analysis of what that could be with the idea that could be an entity that considered maintenance needs, new corridor needs, and other things. Ms. Francis said she believed that the work and activities of bridge authority are right now in the eye of the beholder. There are

folks that look at that fairly narrowly to the Metro area. There are folks that look at that more broadly and consider whether or not that should be relevant to a multiple county region for new corridors, for maintenance, and maybe replacement of something like the Lewis and Clark Bridge in the Kelso – Longview area. There is a wide variety of perspectives on that. She said there is also the considerations that will be a conversation in that space of what authorities they have, who is giving up those authorities, and what capacity they have to make decisions independent of other authorities in both states, and how that gets enacted. The basic intention would be to look at other examples that exist across the country. Look at what other authorities have chosen to invest in those entities.

EILEEN QUIRING CALLED FOR THE QUESTION.

THE MOTION TO ADD LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS FAILED WITH 9 NO VOTES AND 2 YES VOTES, MEDVIGY AND QUIRING.

THE MOTION FOR RESOLUTION 02-20-06, FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENT WAS APPROVED.

Discussion / Information Items

VI. State Legislative Session Update

Mr. Ransom referred to the memo he released today and provided to members along with their meeting packets. Mr. Ransom also provided some slides from the presentation that the Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar provided in a “State of Transportation” briefing to the House and Senate Transportation Committees. A link to the Secretary’s presentation was provided in the memo. Mr. Ransom highlighted some of the slides including the following: challenges today and opportunities for the future; where the gas tax goes; the cost to Washington’s economy for Congestion, State of Good Repair, and the highest cost, Safety; WSDOT’s five major program areas: maintenance, safety, systems operations, demand management, and focused system expansion; 10-year unfunded needs to meet policy goals vs current appropriation; align the statewide plans with the metropolitan/regional plans; existing funding resources: gas tax, motor vehicle fees, and tolling; potential funding resources: road usage charge, congestion pricing, and public private partnerships. The conclusion was to plan for their future growth and develop a more sustainable transportation system.

Carley Francis noted the 8 cents of the gas tax that comes to WSDOT is generally used for preservation and maintenance. That amount has not gone up since 1998. They have 7500 miles of roadway across the state that is either due for preservation or past due, and they are able to do 750 miles right now. They have nearly 100 bridges that are in need of painting, and they are able to paint 4. That is the kind of gap that they are facing. Ms. Francis said they are trying to actually figure out how to be very strategic in those ways in which they increase the system, because every increase in the system, every year of inflation, and every lack of increase in that 8 cents over time means their buying power gets less and less. They are really failing to maintain the system that they have, which is critical to recognize.

Mr. Ransom listed Bills in the memo that staff has been monitoring and provided links to each one. He said they fall into two or three categories: one related to state transportation policy goals and another about what to do with I-976, to implement it or not implement it. Mr. Ransom said the Legislature may defer making major adjustments to budgets and have a possible revenue discussion in 2021. In looking at future transportation issues, the most notable is a funding proposal by Senator Hobbs. A link was provided in the memo. There is a specific project list, and the top project on the list is the Columbia River Bridge Replacement, I-5. Also on the list is the Hood River Bridge Replacement.

Mr. Ransom said in looking at Oregon, he had reached out to Rian Windsheimer for anything they should be aware of. On the ODOT budgeting side, there is not that much. They are also evaluating a cap and trade type system. One of the key initiatives they are tracking is the I-5 Rose Quarter improvement project. They will be hearing an update on the I-5 / I-205 tolling program. Metro Councilor Craddick has mentioned that Metro is working on a region-wide transportation investment levy. Links were provided in the memo.

VII. Smart Communities Assessment – Workshop Preview

Bob Hart referred to the memo included in the meeting packet along with a copy of the invitation to the workshop. Board members should have received the invitation in an email sent a couple weeks ago. Mr. Hart said RTC, in collaboration with Vancouver, WSDOT, Clark County, and C-TRAN, is hosting this workshop on Tuesday, March 3. He noted that if members had not responded yet, they could respond to him or to Diane, or they could respond to the invitation. The workshop is going to focus on the current state of transportation in technology around the country to help understand current capabilities in the Vancouver region and a moderator workshop that will help set the direction for future transportation and mobility in our region.

Mr. Hart said they have done a lot of things in the last several years in transportation technology and operations projects. This includes putting bus rapid transit on Fourth Plain and Mill Plain bus rapid transit in the design phase; transit signal priority; bus on shoulder; integrated traffic operations; and I-5 south ramp metering. They are also doing a good job sharing fiber between their communications assets between their public agencies. All of these things require a lot of close collaboration to achieve common goals and objectives. In looking at future needs and strategies, they want to reduce barriers between agencies and departments, especially when they think about things like connected and autonomous vehicles. The role of transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft and micro transit is used some times to serve low density land use areas or underserved transit areas. As they consider these things in developing a smart community, the work shop is going to focus on these two things: transportation mobility where they are now and how their region compares to others around the country and try to set benchmarks in how they want to move forward.

There are two elements to the overall Smart Communities Assessment. The Workshop itself is next March 3, and it will be followed by a Readiness Assessment that happens after that. In

preparation for the Workshop to get a sense of the issues that they have locally, the consultant team has been interviewing three RTC Board members, Chair Scott Hughes, Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, and Vice Chair Shawn Donaghy. The Workshop has three parts. They will end the day with a short briefing to the RTC Board about the Assessment Project and some key takeaways from the day. The Readiness Assessment happens after the Workshop based on Workshop outcomes and what they hear that day. That will be a detailed assessment survey of staff of current practices and future needs. It will look at performance areas and digital transition including vision, culture, process, technology and data. The Workshop is by invitation only. They are trying to get a broad participation, and they will be looking for assistance from agency staff to get names and contact information to get as much participation from RTC partners as they can. When they finish the project and the assessment of the survey, they will come back to the Board in May or June with a summary of the findings. He encouraged all to attend.

VIII. ODOT Tolling Program Update

Mr. Ransom invited Mandy Putney to present the Tolling Program Update. He said at the last meeting, Board Member Windsheimer asked for time for ODOT to present the latest status report on their initiative to toll I-5 and I-205. He said he wanted to go back to set some context. Several members around the table were not present in 2018 when the Oregon Legislature authorized the Oregon DOT to review this. They initiated a public process enumerated in the memo what that process looked like. There was some participation from Washington stakeholders. Relative to the RTC Board, in June of 2018, the Board did authorize the transmittal of comment inputs to the Oregon Transportation Commission. That letter dated June 13, 2018, and the comments were attached to the memo. That is the guidepost that Mr. Ransom is using to direct his staff's involvement and represent the Board's interest as they have engaged in the last year with ODOT. He said some of their team has been involved in some of their technical modeling exercises. They anticipate at a technical level and at a policy level that coordination will pick up.

Rian Windsheimer said at the last meeting he had shared that they had just hired some folks for the Office of Urban Mobility and Mega Projects. He introduced Lucinda Broussard, their new Tolling Program Manager. She has experience doing tolling work here in Washington State as well as in Georgia. This is day three for her at ODOT. Mr. Windsheimer said he is very excited to have somebody with her experience and credentials having worked here and other places successfully implementing these kinds of programs. He also emphasized the fact that they are years away from this; they don't know exactly what this looks like or how it is going to work. That is why they are here and getting input. Mr. Windsheimer said they appreciated the opportunity to share this with them.

Mandy Putney thanked Mr. Ransom for the introduction and said his opening comments were helpful. She would provide a brief overview of where they are today, a status update, a look ahead of upcoming opportunities for input, community engagement, how they are moving

forward incorporating equity, some milestones they anticipate, and time for questions at the end or throughout the presentation.

Ms. Putney provided a brief reminder of the feasibility analysis. During that point as they were directed by the House Bill 2017 legislation, they were looking at I-205 and I-5. They had about an 18 month process to consider different segments of both of those corridors. They worked with a large Policy Advisory Committee. They presented several times to the RTC Board. Through that work, there was a determination to focus their ongoing efforts on two specific locations. One location on I-5 from Going Street to Multnomah, and another location on I-205 on or around the Abernethy Bridge. When she is talking about tolling, she is talking about those specific segments and how they are anticipating moving forward evaluating and moving those projects forward.

They were before the Oregon Transportation Commission in November and received some direction at that point to continue to move forward and specifically to set up an Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee. They are on the cusp of beginning a formal Environmental Review process under NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) for I-205, and then they will be launching some additional planning activities to further investigate the I-5 location. Ms. Putney said they are thrilled to have Lucinda and said they will see quite a bit of her moving forward. They have started to lay the foundation in terms of the technical work that they will need to do as they move forward. They are convening a series of staff working groups to focus on modeling and to focus on transit and multi-modal planning. They will convene those groups for the first time this month. There is representation on those groups from staff in Vancouver and from RTC and C-TRAN.

The I-205 project will look at starting the NEPA process first as they continue to have conversations about exactly where tolling might start or end on I-5. They are looking at about a seven mile segment. There are still questions about where exactly is the right place to begin and end and how I-84 and other intersecting interstates would be affected. They want to do more planning work to screen some of the alternatives before they start a formal NEPA process. The equity work will inform both of the projects as they are being developed.

Ms. Putney said they get asked a lot as to why they would do tolling or pricing. They are moving forward with dual objectives with two consideration points. One is to think about revenue opportunities. When talking about additional infrastructure or congestion relief projects, could tolling be a source for generating revenue or some of that revenue? The other question is about how they manage the demand of their system. How do they make it function better, be more reliable, and provide more predictable trips? Congestion Pricing has been proven to be a tool that can be effective in that regard. As they are looking at both of the locations, they want to understand what the implications are in terms of managing demand as well as revenue.

They will continue to do very robust engagement and have conversations around the region. As they move forward, all of that work will be grounded in the series of interagency technical

committees to inform their conversations. They will be standing up an Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee. They will help them with performance measures and an equity framework, as well as to think about how to best engage low income and communities of color, and communities that have historically not been as involved in transportation planning processes and projects. They will continue to do robust public and community engagement efforts which will include the whole suite of in person and online tools. They found that to be very effective last time to have online questionnaires and open houses, and videos for people to click on and review on their own time. They will be looking to existing policy groups, such as RTC; the Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation, which is an existing group that informs and advises the Oregon Transportation Commission; as well as Metro JPACT.

They will be coming to the public and all of the different groups as they approach NEPA milestones for I-205 and I-5. They will talk about goals and objectives, performance measures, a range of alternatives and a preferred alternative, and mobility strategies to incorporate into the project. They heard from their policy committee and the public, as well as the Transportation Commission that they needed to really delve into some equity considerations and questions as they move forward with tolling. This is in terms of who would benefit and if those benefits are shared broadly with the community.

As during the feasibility analysis, they will be meeting with Boards and Councils, meeting individually with elected officials or transportation executives, and attend policy groups. They will do community groups or advocacy groups, and they are open to ideas.

At this point, they are thinking it will be the spring that they have a series of public events specific to I-205 where they will talk about the NEPA process and the scope of the work. They would move forward with the variety of engagement tools. They are planning to do some stakeholder interviews and discussion groups specific to equity communities' considerations, and speak with their Equity Mobility Advisory Committee.

Ms. Putney said equity is a term that is used a lot and used differently in different contexts. When they are thinking about equity, they are thinking about the process for planning and who is engaged and how, as well as the outcome of the work of the project that they ultimately will have. They will look if the benefits are shared broadly or are there communities that don't benefit as much. These pieces will be important as they move forward with conversations about equity and mobility. The Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee will be non-elected representatives from Oregon and SW Washington. They expect to have that group up and running by early April.

The NEPA process is rather complicated. They are starting to explain the key pieces that will be forthcoming. There is the Scoping Phase, the NEPA Draft Document Phase, and the NEPA Final Document Phase. They will have about a two-year NEPA process for the I-205 project.

Moving forward they will have ongoing local government and public outreach. They will convene technical working groups. They are doing a Travel Preference Survey for I-205 to inform the traffic modeling work that is being done. They will convene the Equity and Mobility

Advisory Committee in March or April. They will begin the formal I-205 NEPA process in the spring.

Gary Medvigy said they have seen some instances in the State of Washington where the administrative overhead for tolling is very expensive, up to 40%. He asked if they have come up with technology that won't cost so much.

Ms. Putney said there are a variety of options for collection and enforcement, and that will be a key piece of Lucinda's work and the team's work as they move forward. In parallel with doing the environmental review, she will move forward with thinking about how to set up a back office and the best approach to do that. They don't have specifics to share at this point in terms of what percentage would be used for any of those areas.

Councilor Medvigy asked if they are also looking at other alternatives. He said a lot of the nondiscretionary trips across the bridge are for people who are working, so tolling will be a factor. He asked if they are looking at employers and possible tax breaks or other alternatives to the toll cost.

Ms. Putney said this direction from the Legislature to move forward with tolling or congestion pricing on these specific corridors was part of a very robust effort to think about how to deal with congestion in the broader Portland metro region. There was funding provided for transit, funding for bikes and pedestrian use, safe routes to schools, and pricing is another tool that has been added to their toolbox for how to move forward and think about managing congestion. Ms. Putney said they know that right now businesses already are responsive to the congestion on the road today; many of them are offering flexible work times and work from home opportunities. She said she was sure that businesses will continue to respond to conditions as they move forward. They know that many employees have trouble getting to work on time right now, because trips are unreliable. Congestion pricing, when it is done well, is a mobility benefit for the work force. Ms. Putney said it is important to also remember that really there is a benefit as well. It might have a cost associated to it, but you are given a much more reliable trip.

Rian Windsheimer added that this is exactly the input and thoughts they are hoping to hear as they move through this process. There are a lot of questions, but it is too early to know. By the end of this process, they hope they are able to do that in a smart equitable way.

Other Business

IX. Other Business

From the Board

Carley Francis, WSDOT Regional Administrator, provided an update on the SR-500 Safety Project. She said at the end of 2018, they implemented safety improvements on SR-500, which was removing the lights and transitioning those two intersections at 54th and 42nd to right-in and right-out treatments. As part of that they had the opportunity to move fairly quickly by way of a small amount of funds within the state be able to be redirected by the department

specifically; also upcoming work to do repaving on the roadway. This allowed them to do some work and get ahead of the crashes, nearly 400 over five years. As part of that, they also committed to pay attention to what the outcomes were. This is a report back on the crash reduction they have seen. They estimated that they would see 70% crash reduction on that corridor. That is almost exactly what they have seen. Folks were interested in traffic patterns and how they were adjusted. They saw a 19% increase in traffic on SR-500. They had some suspicion that folks might have been rerouting through the neighborhoods in part to avoid the delay at those lights. That does seem to be what they see in the traffic numbers. Traffic on Fourth Plain is a little higher. They do have a remaining outstanding watch at Fourth Plain and Andresen just to monitor that and see whether or not there has been a degradation of service that is measurable there. There is some additional traffic at that location. There are a couple other places where they have questions that came up in looking at that data. They're looking at whether or not they could connect 54th and Andresen by way of an auxiliary lane in the eastbound direction. It is a quick merge in and merge back out. They're also looking at places where they may be seeing folks having issues navigating the roadway and doing some additional markings or other things to make sure that is reinforcing the treatment out there.

From the Director

Mr. Ransom referred to the distributed memo with the Federal Safety Grant Awards. WSDOT distributes federal grant funding to the local agencies based on a competitive grant process to target critical safety needs. Four projects were awarded in December to the RTC region. Clark County received \$3,000,000 to construct a roundabout at NE 119th Street/NE 152nd Avenue Intersection. Skamania County received \$294,000 to install and upgrade guardrail and signage. Klickitat County received \$152,000 to install white plastic pavement edge line. Klickitat County also received \$307,000 to install and upgrade flexible guide posts and curve warning signs.

Mr. Ransom said the Clark County Transportation Alliance has scheduled their 2020 Information or Lobby Day in Olympia on February 18. He will be attending the meeting along with many other local governments. Secretary of Transportation Roger Millar is giving a key note briefing to the group. They will be able to discuss the revenue plan for 2021.

The I-5 Bridge work has been authorized by the Legislature. The Department has started to convene some activities among partners to the project. RTC is a partner; they were a signatory agency to the EIS work in the prior project. It is likely that they will also be asked to be a signatory agency this EIS. This means that RTC would be reviewing the NEPA document process, and they would be validating its conformance with our Regional Plan. They would also be incorporating into their TIP document federal aid dollars that flow to the state that they would want to use for that project. They will be convening some chartering exercises among the partners to the project beginning this next month. In the forthcoming months, Mr. Ransom will report back how that group is coming together and report back with any important questions or policy matters that this Board needs to provide input on.

The next RTC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, at 4 p.m.

Ty Stober said last month they adopted the Safety Targets for their requirements under MAP 21. He said he had questioned why they chose one number target versus another, and he never really said why he was raising his concern. He said that is because as he looked at the numbers that they did adopt, he felt they are extremely aggressive and unattainable. He questioned why address one set of unattainable numbers instead of another set of unattainable numbers. Councilor Stober said while they adopt this goal because they are told to adopt the goal, that there isn't a goal that requires substantial change there are no plans behind that goal in order for them to actually effect the change. He said the City does not have a plan of that kind and likely none of the other jurisdictions under RTC do either. He said it is great to set a target, but it doesn't do us any good if the background plans aren't there to try and effect the dramatic change that the goals set. He said it raises a concern that some entities are missing a key component in helping to truly achieve a vision of safer streets.

Mr. Ransom said he thought it would be helpful to have a more detailed briefing on the matter of safety on our roadways and could be brought back. He said there is probably no more important issue facing the public in terms of value, value in terms of safety and life, value in terms of cost to the community and cost to society, notwithstanding emotional value in living in a safer place and having safer streets. It is an important public policy question. He suggested he schedule some time and have a deeper look at what is happening at the local level. It is an important topic.

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Scott Hughes, Board of Directors Chair