

Meeting: CRC Freight Working Group Meeting

Meeting Date: October 17, 2007

Attendees:

John Leber	Swanson Wood & Bark Products	360.414.9663
Lee Johnson	Jet Delivery Systems	503.256.3621
Bob Hillier	Portland DOT	503.823.7567
Katy Brooks	Port of Vancouver	360.992.1198
Kathy Williams	Port of Portland	503.944.7018
Tracy Ann Wheeler	ESCO Corporation	503.778.6252
Duane Decker	Self	
Ron Anderson	CRC	360.816.2171
Gavin Oien	CRC	360.816.2176
Chivanna Pot	CRC	360.816.4037
Claudia Hirschey	CRC	425.227.5144
David Parisi	CRC	360.816.2165

Review of Meeting Agenda:

- Public Involvement Update
- Next Task Force Meeting and Key Decisions
- Briefing on Cost Estimates
- Update on Design Concepts
- Truck Forecasting Methodology for DEIS 2030 Analysis

Public Involvement Update:

There are CRC project open houses on Wednesday, October 17 in Portland and Saturday, October 20 in Vancouver. Post cards were distributed. Peter Ovington, from the CRC communications staff, summarized recent public outreach events including the September Task Force meeting. Funding options were discussed at the September meeting. There were numerous presentations made since the August FWG meeting. Ron Anderson made a presentation at the Pacific Northwest Waterway Association conference. David Parisi presented at the Portland Air Cargo Association. There were a few attendees from the Seattle area at this meeting who saw the CRC project as an important regional issue. There was good support for the project from both organizations. CRC staff attended the Columbia Corridor meeting to be available for question and answers. Peter Ovington will present at the Women’s Shipping Club on October 18.

The standard outreach occurred to a variety of businesses and neighborhoods during the month of September. There were outreach efforts to 15 groups on right-of-way and property issues.

Upcoming meetings where the CRC staff will attend and/or present the project are the Longview Transportation Club and the Kelso-Longview Chamber of Commerce.

The CRC project has received more attention from the press recently, with the I-5 corridor receiving federal designation as a “Corridor of the Future.” Additional project funding is available with the designation. Preliminary cost estimates were formalized and released to the public.

The majority of public comments received during the month of September were with regard to transit issues, especially the alignment in Vancouver, north of West 15th Street. There continues to be discussion on the supplemental versus replacement bridges. In general, the supplemental bridge alternative provides much less benefit than the replacement bridge alternative for a small cost savings. Both alternatives will be treated equally in the DEIS. It was asked if there is organized opposition for or against these alternatives and it was noted that the City of Vancouver is against the supplemental bridge alternative (reasons summarized below).

Next Task Force Meeting and Key Decisions:

The next two Task Force meetings are in November and January. At the November 27 meeting, the Task Force will be provided with a briefing of technical analyses and data from 23 technical memoranda. No environmental fatal flaws have been disclosed. The historic properties and cultural resources on the north side of the bridge are the biggest challenge. A decision was made to eliminate the upstream alignment of the bridge due to cultural resource impacts. In addition, the upstream bridge would take three to four years longer to construct, which is a major cost impact.

At the January 22, 2008 meeting, the Task Force will have three key decisions to make. The first is to select either the Supplemental Bridge Alternative or the Replacement Bridge Alternative. By keeping the existing bridge, the high point of the new bridge is near the north side of the river in order to maintain a navigation route. This means that the bridge would touch down further north and West 6th Street in Vancouver would be closed. This is a fatal flaw for the City of Vancouver. In addition, the choice of bridges affects the driver destination on the north side and that choice would be required five miles in advance, or in advance of the Marine View Drive interchange due to the design limitations created by the split in northbound movement. Traffic analysis shows that 60% of traffic would need to travel on the existing bridge. There is only a small cost savings with the supplemental bridge.

The second key decision is the high capacity transit (HCT) alignment (light rail transit or bus rapid transit). Across Hayden Island there is the choice of an alignment along side the freeway, or an offset alignment, which is better for Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Through downtown Vancouver there is one alignment on Washington Street up to West 15th Street. North of West 15th Street the alignment splits, and each alignment has very different characteristics, each resulting in public/neighborhood challenges. The CRC staff is looking at minimum operating segments so that the public concerns of the alignment do not hold up the bridge project. The third key decision is the mode choice of HCT mode—light rail transit (LRT) or bus rapid transit (BRT).

Briefing on Cost Estimates:

Two handouts were shared that present the cost estimating procedure and the resulting range of costs for each alternative and HCT option. The cost estimating procedure is risk based. Everything that could affect cost is evaluated—delays to the schedule, working in water, cost of materials, etc. The range of cost is calculated at the 10% to 90% range, meaning that there is a 90% likelihood that the construction costs will be higher than the low estimate and 10% likelihood that the construction costs will be higher than the top estimate. Handouts are located on the web at <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/FileLibrary/FactSheets/CostEstimates.pdf>

Update on Design Concepts:

At the previous FWG meeting a request was made to evaluate the design of the off-ramp to Marine Drive to determine if it could accommodate a 16-foot-wide load. A truck-turning template was applied to the ramp design, which resulted in design revisions to increase the ramp width by six feet and provide two feet of clearance.

There is a vertical curve on the mainline north of the Marine View Drive interchange. Both WSDOT and ODOT requested a re-evaluation of the curves to meet their standards for site distance of a six-inch object at a 70 mph design speed (the AASHTO standard is two feet) The design speed for ramps is 60 mph, but for this project some ramps were designed at 40 to 50 mph due to constraints. The design team will evaluate extending the ramps to increase the design speed. The project includes some design deviations, but most of the deviations are on the collector-distributor roadways rather than on the mainline.

The interchange concepts are now fixed for design. The design team will continue to refine the design. It was noted that the supplemental bridge alternative precludes connection between Marine Drive and Hayden Island due to design constraints.

At the previous meeting there was concern raised about clearance heights for truck movement and that the LRT catenary should also meet interstate clearance standards. The WSDOT clearance is 16.5 feet and ODOT's is 17.5 feet.

It was noted that the proposed HCT bisects all of the major truck arterials from the Port of Vancouver to I-5. LRT will take green time from the east-west movement. It was explained that while it takes less time for a bus to cross an intersection there are many more buses required with the BRT alternative than with LRT. Bus pre-emption of signals could not be tolerated due to the number of buses.

A preliminary view of the design in 3-D simulation was shown to the FWG. They were very impressed with the simulation and design. The FWG members were able to visualize the results of their efforts to evaluate each and every ramp for truck access and truck operations.

Requests:

The FWG discussed upcoming Task Force meetings and decided that it would be most effective to meet after the November 27 Task Force meeting and before the January 22, 2008 meeting when the Task Force will select the preferred alternative.

Schedule:

The **FWG** agreed to meet next on **Thursday, January 17, 2008.**