

**MEETING TITLE:** Freight Working Group

**DATE:** Thursday, November 12, 2009, 10 AM to 12 PM

**INVITEES:** Distribution

**LOCATION:** CRC Project Office, 700 Washington St., Vancouver WA 98660

**AGENDA:**

1. Introductions
2. Project refinement update and discussion
3. Other topics

**Meeting:** CRC Freight Working Group

**Meeting Date:** September 22, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

**Attendees:**

Lee Johnson	Jet Delivery
Katy Brooks	Port of Vancouver
Tracy Whalen	ESCO
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
Steve Bates	Redmond Heavy Hauling
Kathryn Williams	Port of Portland
Bob Hillier	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Ahmad Qayoumi	City of Vancouver
Cynthia Thornton-Tang	Lincoln Neighborhood resident
Aaron Myton	CRC
Ron Anderson	CRC
David Parisi	CRC
Ryan LeProwse	CRC
KC Cooper	CRC
Gavin Oien	CRC
Casey Liles	CRC
Claudia Hirschey	CRC

**Review of Meeting Agenda:**

- Update on September Project Sponsors Council meeting
- Marine Drive interchange update
- Discussion of construction phasing and project scope considerations
- Update on tolling presentations and public surveys

**Project Sponsors Council Meeting**

The key issues discussed at the Project Sponsors Council (PSC) meeting of September 6<sup>th</sup> were: overall project cost, methods to reduce cost, and tolling. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC) recommendations for pathway alignments were endorsed by the Project Sponsors Council, including the policy on safety and security. The Vancouver City Council will consider the transit alignments on October 23, 2009.

There is political and public concern with the estimated cost of the project. The CRC staff has recently begun developing a variety of options for project phasing as a way of reducing cost. Concerns have also been raised about tolling. The funding plan is proposed to be approximately 1/3 state, 1/3 federal, and 1/3 toll revenue. There will be no project without tolling. A tolling briefing was provided later in the meeting.

The CRC design team has just begun to explore refinements and phasing options to reduce costs. A number of examples were shared with the FWG. At the Marine Drive interchange, it is possible to build the eastbound-to-northbound flyover ramp as a later phase. This would require construction of the fourth leg of the Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) and it would require that trucks travel through the SPUI signal. This cost-saving option exemplifies how phasing can result in major cost savings but requires some level of construction to achieve the same function and usually results in a lower level of mobility than the full design.

Other phasing and cost savings ideas include saving the North Portland Harbor Bridge, lowering the mainline profile over Hayden Island, phasing the Mill Plain Boulevard interchange, phasing the 4<sup>th</sup> Plain Boulevard ramp braid and overcrossing, not constructing the northbound lane from Mill Plain Boulevard to SR 500, and phasing the north-to-east ramps at the new SR 500 interchange. The options described are a first look at phasing to save on the initial cost. There is much more work to be done.

The FWG discussed how cost-saving options may affect truck mobility. Key concerns raised by the FWG include:

- Uncertainty that future elements would be built after the project is complete given funding constraints.
- That the EIS would be invalid after a number of years.
- How the facility would operate during each phase. For example, if there are 10 lanes versus 12 lanes and no Marine Drive northbound flyover ramp, then there is less storage capacity for the northbound ramp. In the future the signal at the SPUI would operate at LOS B with the flyover and at LOS D without the flyover ramp. It was noted that the 10 lane option does not affect the Marine Drive interchange because the location of the mainline pinch point is south of the northbound ramp merge. It was noted that the 10 lane option has more “hotspots” than the 12 lane option.

Maintaining the North Portland Harbor Bridge is an interesting option to the FWG because it allows the mainline profile over Hayden Island to be lower, which also reduces cost. An “S” curve would be incorporated into the I-5 mainline, but it still meets all design guidelines.

In summary, the cost of the project now ranges from \$3.1 to \$4.2 billion, the upper end is a cost that is likely not affordable. It is believed that the project is fundable if the total cost can be capped near \$3.4 billion, with the highway piece at \$2.5 billion of this amount. The FWG noted that freight mobility is one of the major reasons for this project and so project phasing should not negatively affect freight.

### **Marine Drive Interchange Update**

The Marine Drive Stakeholder group will make a recommendation for the Marine Drive alignment—Option 12 or Options 12 Modified—at their next meeting (this is supposed to be the last meeting.) The FWG was provided a review of each option. The primary difference is that Marine Drive is basically rotated under Option 12 Modified, which would cause Marine Drive and I-5 to intersect at more of a skew rather than at right angles. With this skew, the southbound-to-westbound ramp and the northbound-to-eastbound ramps would have smaller turning radii. Both designs can meet design standards, but Option 12 with larger turning radii is more desirable for truck movement according to the FWG.

The FWG discussed the northbound-to-eastbound off-ramp and were concerned with truck mobility and sight distance with the tight radii and skewed angle. It was noted that a pier location for the northbound off-ramp could block site distance for a truck driver on that off-ramp turning eastbound (right), looking back (to the west). The current design positions the alignment of this off-ramp away from the property line of East Delta Park. The CRC design team will explore additional design options to increase this turning radius.

### **Update of Tolling Presentations and Project Surveys**

There were two presentations on tolling to the freight community on August 18<sup>th</sup> in Vancouver and in Portland. There have been six tolling scenarios studied so far and there will be study of six more scenarios. The freight interests asked questions regarding:

- Specifics regarding the toll pricing for trucks
- The potential for a discount for multiple daily or weekly trips
- Reduced transponder costs for multiple-truck fleets

- Other discounts – staff is researching freight tolling and general purpose traffic tolling pricing throughout the U.S. and internationally
- The toll differential on I-5 and I-205 and the effects
- Business impacts

At this point, there is no definitive price for tolls. More definition will occur when the project cost estimate is more refined so that the funding gap is estimated. The more detailed analysis of tolling is scheduled for the summer and fall of 2010.

The FWG discussed the cost of congestion and recognized that the actual toll price was a lower priority than assuring this project moves forward.

The next CRC Tolling Study Committee meeting is October 1, 2009, 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. at the Expo Center.

### **Requests**

The FWG requested additional design options for the northbound-to-eastbound off-ramp at Marine Drive.

### **Schedule**

The next FWG meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 8:00 to 10:00 A.M.