

PROPOSAL FOR A LEGISLATIVE STUDY
PORTLAND-VANCOUVER CORRIDOR STUDY
SECTION 2(1), 1979 OMNIBUS TRANSPORTATION STUDY BILL

October 22, 1979

INTRODUCTION

A phase 1 report on a third crossing of the Columbia River in Clark County was prepared in response to 1977 legislation. This report evaluated traffic, land use, and population to determine optimum traffic corridors for a bridge location. Eight crossings were considered. Four were indicated for further study as they appeared to provide the most relief to traffic congestion on I-5.

Section 2, Chapter 192, Laws of 1979, First Extraordinary Session, authorizes the conduct of a phase 2 study and states that it will consider:

"The feasibility of potential corridors which would include preliminary engineering, social, economic, and environmental analyses of a third bridge crossing the Columbia River between Clark county, Washington, and Oregon. Such study shall be based on, and be a continuation of, the January, 1979 third bridge study which developed and evaluated travel demands on potential crossings of the lower Columbia River between the vicinities of Camas and Woodland. The transportation commission and the department of transportation shall make every effort to obtain the cooperation of the Oregon transportation commission, the Oregon department of transportation, and the Portland metropolitan service district in conducting the study;"

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHASE 2 STUDY

This phase 2 study will be developed as outlined in this proposal. Guidance and input will be provided by steering and technical advisory committees. Alternatives and possible impacts will be evaluated. Costs and possible project implementation schedules will be developed. A schedule and cost for completing the study are also included.

Conduct of the Study

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) will be the "lead agency" in the conduct of this study. Specific responsibility will lie within the Public Transportation and Planning Office.

WSDOT responsibilities will include:

- Implement steering and technical advisory committees.
- Provide staff support to the committees in scheduling and coordinating meetings, disseminating information, and providing other necessary information.
- Evaluate committee input, acquire and evaluate other data pertinent to the study, and prepare a written report.
- Submit report with findings and recommendations to the Washington State Legislature.

Guidance and Direction for the Study

Since a number of government jurisdictions in two states are involved, this study cannot be undertaken unilaterally by WSDOT. In order for the study to have meaningful results, there must be close coordination and cooperation between the various agencies involved. This contact is proposed through the utilization of steering and technical advisory committees.

- + Steering Committee: A steering committee will be designated consisting of management and policy level representatives of state and local governmental agencies. These agencies will include, but not necessarily be limited to:
 - Washington State Department of Transportation
 - Clark County
 - City of Vancouver
 - Regional Planning Council of Clark County
 - Metropolitan Service District
 - TriMet
 - City of Portland
 - Multnomah County, Oregon
 - Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

The committee will provide input and guidance to the study at the policy level. This will include both short term and long range planning directions in such areas as land use planning, population trends, industrial growth and transportation planning.

- + Technical Advisory Committee: The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will involve persons at the technical level, generally from the same agencies represented on the steering committee.

These persons will provide the knowledge of local conditions and expertise in the various disciplines involved in conducting the study. They will provide the technical knowledge for implementing local, regional, and state policy and assess the implications and impacts relative to each alternative considered.

Existing subcommittees within the Metropolitan Service District, such as the Joint Policy Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) may be utilized in these roles.

In collecting the base data it will be necessary to consider the causes and effects of congestion, what viable transportation alternatives exist, the projected future growth in employment and industrial development, trends in the employment base which might result in a reduction of commuter trips and areawide transit planning.

This data must then be evaluated for its bi-state areawide impacts.

Elements of the Study

Preparation of the report for this study will involve consideration and analysis of a number of elements. These include:

- + Investigate Alternatives: Utilizing information from elected officials, the steering committee, and the TAC, an investigation will be made into the various alternatives available for the reduction of traffic congestion in the I-5 corridor. This will include not only alternate bridge and access road locations but also other methods of relieving congestion. Included are such items as alternate modes of transportation, redistribution of population growth patterns and land use controls, more effective utilization of existing road systems, and other alternatives which may appear feasible.
- + Social, Economic, and Environmental Impacts: An evaluation of possible air, noise, and water pollution impacts will be made. This will include not only the direct impacts resulting from bridge construction but also includes impacts of necessary changes and improvements to local access roads and streets. Impacts of alternatives other than additional bridges will also be evaluated.

Social and economic impacts on individuals and the community will be considered. This will include impacts on neighborhoods resulting from arterial construction and the attendant changes in traffic patterns, access to schools, shops, and churches, as well as possible changes in land use. Shifting of employment and population centers will also be considered.

Possible procedures and tradeoffs by which it will be possible to mitigate or eliminate these impacts will be discussed.

- + Engineering Evaluation: An engineering study will be undertaken to determine the feasibility of implementing the various alternatives from a construction standpoint.

Cost estimates will be prepared for the various alternatives. For bridges, this will include consideration of various types of bridges. In addition to the bridge, it will include costs of necessary connecting roads, streets, and other ancillary features. Also estimates will be prepared for alternatives other than bridges.

- + Financial Feasibility Analysis: An investigation and analysis will be made of the feasibility of obtaining and utilizing funds from all the various sources and methods that might be available. This would include sources other than those normally available through regular state department of transportation sources. Funding sources will be considered for alternative solutions which might be proposed as well as for bridges.
- + Implementation Schedule: A time schedule which could be anticipated for implementing a project, or projects, will be developed. The schedule will show durations of time for completing the major items of work through the project development and construction stages. It will take into account funding availability, the need for public hearings, preparation of environmental impact statements, licenses and permits, and other factors affecting the implementation of a project.
- + Final Report: WSDOT will assemble input and data from the various sources, edit and consolidate it, and compile it into formal report format. The report will then be submitted to the Legislative Transportation Committee.