

## MINUTES OF THE METRO COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING

Monday, January 26, 2009  
Portland Council Chamber

Councilors Present: David Bragdon (Council President), Kathryn Harrington, Rod Park, Carlotta Collette, Rex Burkholder, Carl Hosticka, Robert Liberty

Councilors Absent:

City of Portland Commissioners Present: Sam Adams (Mayor), Randy Leonard, Amanda Fritz, Dan Saltzman

City of Portland Commissioners Absent: Nick Fish

Mayor Adams and Council President Bragdon convened the Joint City of Portland Council and Metro Council Work Session Meeting at 10:02 a.m.

### **I. OPENING REMARKS BY MAYOR ADAMS AND COUNCIL PRESIDENT BRAGDON**

Mayor Adams welcomed the Metro Council to the Portland City Council Chamber for the first ever joint meeting. This meeting was appropriate given the size of the project they were contemplating. He noted Mayor Pollard, City of Vancouver, was in attendance. Today was an opportunity to talk about all aspects of the project. He noted that the City had passed a resolution in support of the project. He provided a history of the project to date, which included light rail. He noted governors from Oregon and Washington had appointed an eight member commission to provide guidance to the project including Council President Bragdon and Mayor Adams. Council President Bragdon acknowledged all Metro Councilors were present. He noted that this project was being done in partnership with Washington Department of Transportation and Oregon Department of Transportation as well as a variety of local jurisdictions. He said that this was the second joint meeting with City of Portland and Metro Council. The first meeting was when the City sold Metro St. John's Landfill for \$1.00. He talked about the reasons to do the project as well as doing it right. He noted the conditions that both Councils had put on the table for further study. He spoke of induced demand, where if you build unlimited road capacity, people change their behavior. They didn't want to defeat their own purposes by adding too many lanes and increasing congestion. He talked about the capacity that might be added and how it would be managed. He spoke to freight movement and making sure trucks weren't trapped. He asked can they be assured that the unintended negative consequences would not occur. They wanted direction and advice given as partners in the project.

### **II. COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PRESENTATION**

- Review of two Council's resolutions, progress report on what has been completed
- Review of Induced Demand and Greenhouse Gas Reports
- Report on Tolling work to date

Richard Brandman, Oregon Director of the Columbia River Crossing Project, introduced his team. He thanked both Councils for allowing the presentation. In July 2008 when they last addressed both Councils there were numerous points of agreement between the two Councils including light rail and tolling. There were numerous decisions to come. They were here today to talk about the

number of lanes. He noted the conditions placed by the Metro Council and the City of Portland Council. A copy of the conditions was included in the record. He summarized some of the conditions including urban design, pedestrian and bicycling modes. Today there were five hours of congestion on the bridge. He talked about projections for congestion in the future. He also noted the value of the freight today as well as potential increases in the future. There was a lot of movement of freight and commerce. He then spoke to current safety issues and limited transit access. They were proposing a multi-model plan for the bridge. The design would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project was using Metro's national demand management model to evaluate the project. In both cases independent panels were formed to review methods and the travel forecasting work that had been done. Both panels concluded that the results were reasonable, had positive land use attributes, did not induce sprawl and would reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There were several issues related to induce demand. He reviewed those issues. They understood why there had been concerns. They believed the conditions existing in other cities were not present in this project. He reviewed why this was true. Both sides of the river had strong land use controls. He provided additional conditions that would assist in having this project be different from other cities. He noted that the project lane length was not 20 miles long. He talked about the impact of added lanes. It was important to note why unintended consequences might occur. This was a multi-model project which included tolls which would impact the demand, assume congestions controls, and provide significant transit opportunity, which would also reduced demand.

Mr. Brandman talked about the no build condition. They were trying to show what would happen if there was a no build option, 15 hours of congestion at a minimum. He talked about unintended consequences. What was unique about the project was that there would be fewer autos crossing the river with these designs. The project did not serve underserved areas and did not provide new access on the edge. On the transit side, it significantly increased ridership. He then talked about tolls and the effect of tolls on the project. It was complex formula. There would be fewer autos crossing the river because the project assumed congestion pricing and the light rail. He mentioned that the tolls itself did not have to do with operational effects such as accidents. The accidents also added to the congestion. If they had a larger toll than assumed, it would have an increase effect on light rail. He talked about increasing transit ridership through park and rides, feeder bus service, and walks-ons. They had tried to answer the questions of both Councils.

### **III. COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS**

- Number of lanes
- Tolling

Mayor Adams called for clarifying questions. Commissioner Leonard said the analysis done showed that 12 lane bridge would not impact greenhouse gases. Councilor Liberty clarified, it was not a reduction in greenhouse gases but it would be less than if they did the no build model. Mr. Brandman explained the issue of greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions were a big issue for the region. The proposed project would provide less greenhouse gases than with a no build model. Councilor Liberty explained why he asked the question. He wanted to be clear that there would be an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Commissioner Leonard explained he was trying to understand the issues at hand. He summarized what Mr. Brandman had said if they did not build a bridge there would be more greenhouse gases than if they built a bridge which included light rail. He then asked about the lanes. The analysis was that a 12 lane bridge would further reduce greenhouse gases than a 10 lane bridge. Mr. Brandman said the data was based on the conditions such as tolling and light rail. Commissioner Leonard said he understood that the

changed infrastructure would reduce greenhouse gasses. Commissioner Fritz asked what factors went into greenhouse gases other than vehicle miles traveled. Jeff Heilman, Environmental Manager for the Columbia River Crossing Project, said it was based on congestion and speed. He explained the model used for coming up with greenhouse gas emissions for this project. Commissioner Fritz asked about the tolling of I-205 versus only tolling I-5. Mr. Brandman said both bridges should have a toll. Councilor Harrington said she would like to see the report where the Columbia River Crossing Review Panel shared findings. Councilor Hosticka asked about comparing the transit crossing traffic dependent upon the lanes. Mr. Brandman responded to his question. Councilor Hosticka asked about tolling. Mr. Brandman said the numbers that were used were a \$2.00 toll in peak hour, \$1.50 toll in off peak, and \$1.00 when minimal traffic was occurring. Councilor Hosticka asked further clarifying questions about tolling. Mr. Brandman talked about other possible applications of tolls. Mayor Adams asked about sensitivity to tolling and number of trips. Councilor Collette asked in every case did it include full lane shoulders. Mr. Brandman said full travel lanes were 12 feet and shoulders were 8 feet.

Councilor Park talked about impacts on freight and value of freight crossing the river. Mr. Brandman said the freight community tended to look at times where there was not so much congestion. Councilor Park asked about cost benefit between 10 lanes and 12 lanes and what the impact would be. Mr. Brandman explained the benefits of additional lanes versus no build on freight. Councilor Liberty asked about the tolling analysis. He spoke to interchange costs. He wanted to know where the toll would be levied. Mr. Brandman said they would be levied at the bridge. Councilor Liberty talked about the range of cost and was this related to the number of lanes. Kris Strickler, Deputy Director for the Columbia River Crossing Project said the cost was for the 12 lanes project. He explained the difference impacts based on the number of lanes. Mayor Adams asked about impacts on job creation based on the number of lanes. Councilor Burkholder said the legislature would make some of the decisions about the project. Mr. Brandman said the analysis today would assume tolling of I-5 only. They had done a sensitivity analysis tolling I-205. Commissioner Leonard asked Mr. Strickler about environmental impact. He said there had been a lot of debate on whether they build a 10 or 12 lane bridge. He said those that oppose the 12 versus 10 lanes, were they using a different modeling? Mr. Brandman said the concerns expressed to him were the impacts on communities. Commissioner Leonard asked if there was a scientific modeling that showed 10 lanes were better.

Commissioner Fritz said Commissioner Fish had asked how the project would be funded. Mr. Brandman said there were several components to the project itself that would create the costs. He provided an overview of costs. He explained how it would be financed. They were requesting funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), roadway funds from the federal government. Federal Transportation Bill also had funding for projects of national and regional significance. The remainder of the financing would be from tolling. Commissioner Fritz asked about the state funding component. Mr. Brandman said the governor's package included funding components for the project. Commissioner Leonard asked if it was \$4.1 million cost for a 12 lane bridge. He talked about the savings if it was reduced to a 10 lane bridge. Mr. Brandman said all of the components would determine the cost. Mayor Adams said they had to breakdown individual decisions. He mentioned park and rides and asked about the assumptions. He then asked about commuter buses and the assumptions that were included. Mr. Brandman responded to his concerns.

Councilor Liberty said they amended the financing plan in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He explained the amendments and wondered if the numbers were still good. Mr. Brandman said the numbers he was referring to were the current numbers. Commissioner

Leonard asked clarifying questions. Councilor Hosticka commented on tolling and decisions ahead of them. He said specifically on tolling, since there was such a large effect on outcomes, it needed to be looked at very closely. He started his experience by chairing a committee on congestion pricing. He said there needed to be a critical analysis of past predictions and the impacts. It was not a question of economics but political will. What had been found in other parts of county was that the politicians would limit tolls. Do we have the political will to put a toll on the bridge to have the effects that we wanted? There was an equal issue on the land use system. Do we have the political will to maintain the land use system? Commissioner Leonard said it seemed like the question of tolling needed to be made at the same time as they were deciding on the size of the bridge. Councilor Hosticka said he thought they had to make the decision on tolling first because all of the other analyses were dependent upon the tolling. He talked about the sequencing of the decisions. Commissioner Leonard was trying to understand that if they did make a decision on tolling first, why would Councilor Hosticka not be OK with a 12 lane bridge? Mayor Adams said the decision on the lanes might be to make a provisional number of lanes subject to getting information on the tolling.

Councilor Collette said one of the points that Councilor Hosticka was making was that if you set a target for demand and then you do the demand management, technical information and add in the transit opportunity then you can decide how many lanes you need. She looked at the numbers and all of the impacts based on the number of lanes. From her perspective, it was not a question about greenhouse gases it was what were your priorities. Commissioner Leonard asked about building it to the capacity of 12 lanes and then striping it. Councilor Collette said cost was important. The lanes were a significant piece of the cost of the bridge. Are they inviting more demand by the number of lanes? Councilor Collette said their goal as a region was to create the best environmental system they can. They get that with a smaller bridge. The goal should be how they move freight and people. Councilor Burkholder said he didn't think there was going to be a huge infusion of money from the States. He thought tolls will be higher than the current analysis. He suggested having principles around tolls. He talked about peak hour speeds, which was based on outcomes, what they wanted to achieve. What was the performance they wanted to have?

Councilor Park wondered if you could take portions of the 10 lane and moderate the bridge. Mr. Brandman talked about phasing the bridge. He said the number of lanes had to do with the operations of the facility. He explained that the freeway was so congested that people get off and use local streets. The discussion of number of lanes was to try and resolve the hot spots such as freeway traffic on the local streets. He also talked about freight impacts and that the extra lanes allowed better movement of freight. Commissioner Leonard said they must plan for light rail with the bridge whether it was built at the same time or not. Councilor Liberty said the advantage of this joint meeting was sharing the two Councils principles for the bridge. He talked about the cost impact dependent upon the number of lanes and the interchange costs. He didn't know how you could make a decision about number of lanes without having a demand management analysis. He explained what they were about to vote on. He asked if they had a plan B if they didn't get the financing from the federal government that they needed. He didn't understand how he could make a decision without tolling analysis.

Council President Bragdon thanked the City Council for their invitation. He acknowledged Councilor Leavitt, City of Vancouver and Commissioner Stuart, Clark County who were in attendance. He summarized that there was a lot of agreement around the region that they wanted to do this project but they wanted to do it right with regard to the induced demand issue. It came down to reliance on the model. He talked about the skepticism around the model and the science around transportation modeling. He talked about Hwy 217 and managing limited resources. He

observed that they had used “we” around stakeholder issues. It was a big “we” around this project. There were varying interests within the partners but a lot of overlap. This discussion needed to continue moving forward on how the sequencing related to demand question. System performance was important in the mix. Commissioner Leonard talked about global warming impacts and the arguments against a big bridge. Council President Bragdon said most of the facts on the page were projections not necessarily facts. He said pricing was a big part of the issue and the science had not been developed in this area as much as needed. He talked about a trigger performance measure. He spoke to the risk assessment and the risk of overbuilding which included induced demand. Mayor Adams said he thought there was agreement around the table. This was an opportunity to improve an active transportation model that was not wholly dependent upon infrastructure. He suggested a bi-state group that would be allowed to make joint decisions.

There being no further business to come before the Metro Council and the City of Portland, Council President Bragdon and Mayor Adams adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Billington', written over a faint circular stamp.

Chris Billington  
Clerk of the Council

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF  
JANUARY 26, 2009**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Doc. Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Doc. Number</b>
II	Panel Report	1/8/09	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Kelly McGourty, Chair Expert Review Panel Re: Columbia Crossing Greenhouse Gas Emission Analysis Expert Review Panel Report	012609c-01
II	Memo	12/30/08	To: Columbia River Crossing Sponsors Council From: Columbia River Crossing Staff Re: Impacts for the CRC Project on Land Uses in Oregon and Washington	012609c-02
II	Report	11/25/08	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Maren Outwater, Chair of CRC Travel Demand Review Panel Re: Columbia River Crossing Travel Demand Model Review Panel Report	012609c-03
II	Discussion Draft	1/26/09	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Richard Brandman, Director of Columbia River Crossing Project Re: CRC Issues Raised by Metro in Locally Preferred Alternative Resolutions – Discussion Draft	012609c-04
II	Draft Discussion	1/26/09	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Richard Brandman, Director of Columbia River Crossing Project Re: CRC Issues Raised by Portland in Locally Preferred Alternative Resolutions – Discussion Draft	012609c-05
II	Lane Scenarios	1/12/09	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Richard Brandman, Director of Columbia River Crossing Project Re: CRC Traffic Effects of 8, 10, 12 lane scenarios	012609c-06
II	Lane Design	1/26/09	To: Metro Council and City of Portland Council From: Richard Brandman, Director of Columbia River Crossing Project Re: CRC Add/Drop Lane Designs	012609c-07