

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENDORSING THE I-5) RESOLUTION NO. 02-3237A
TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE STUDY)
RECOMMENDATIONS) Introduced by Councilor Rod Monroe

WHEREAS, I-5 is the only continuous Interstate on the West Coast; and

WHEREAS, I-5, between Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington experiences some of the Portland region's worst congestion; and

WHEREAS, at the Columbia River I-5 provides a key economic connection to two major ports, deep-water shipping, up-river barging, two transcontinental rail lines, and much of the Portland/Vancouver region's industrial land; and

WHEREAS, the transportation facilities in the I-5 corridor in the vicinity of the Columbia River provide important connections to and from national and international markets for businesses throughout Oregon; and

WHEREAS, in the Portland/Vancouver area, I-5 provides one of two crossings of the Columbia River for cars, trucks and transit vehicles; and

WHEREAS, doing nothing in the I-5 corridor between Portland and Vancouver will result in unpredictable delays and congestion throughout the day, which cannot be tolerated without an adverse impact on the Portland/Vancouver region's economy and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon and Washington Departments of Transportation jointly conducted a public planning process to develop a strategic plan for the I-5 Corridor between the Fremont Bridge in Oregon and the I-205 interchange in Washington; and

WHEREAS, the development of the I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan was guided by a bi-state Task Force representing a wide range of interests; and

WHEREAS, a thorough process of public outreach and involvement was conducted to seek public input in the development of the I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan; and

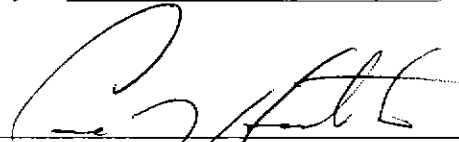
WHEREAS, recommendations of the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force for a I-5 Corridor Strategic Plan have statewide significance; now therefore; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED,

1. That the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and Metro Council endorse the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership's "Final Strategic Plan" (June 2002) including the following improvements for the Interstate-5 corridor, as recommended by the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force at their June 18, 2002 meeting:
 - Three through-lanes in each direction on I-5, between I-405 in Portland and I-205 in Clark County including southbound through Delta Park including designation of one of the three through-lanes as an High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane as feasible.

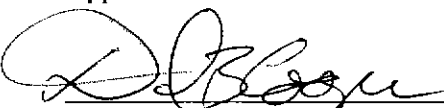
- A phased light rail loop in Clark County in the vicinity of the I-5, SR500/4th Plain and I-205 corridors
 - An additional span or a replacement bridge for the I-5 crossing of the Columbia River, with up to 2 additional lanes in each direction for merging plus 2 light rail tracks
 - Interchange improvements and additional auxiliary and/or arterial lanes where needed between SR500 in Vancouver and Columbia Boulevard in Portland. These include a full interchange at Columbia Boulevard
 - Capacity improvements for freight rail that will improve freight and intercity passenger rail services
 - Bi-state coordination of land use and management of our transportation system to reduce demand on the freeway and to protect the corridor investments
 - Involving communities along the corridor to ensure that the final project outcomes are equitable and committing to establish a fund for community enhancements
 - Develop additional transportation demand and system strategies to encourage more efficient use of the transportation system
2. That the bridge influence area (BIA) improvements be identified as illustrative projects for the purposes of federal review and certification, and therefore included in interim air quality analyses completed prior to the next scheduled RTP update;
 3. That Metro staff be directed to incorporate these recommendations into the next update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), scheduled to occur in 2003-04;
 4. That I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force recommendations for further study of the NW Highway 30 to I-5 connections be incorporated into the North Willamette Crossing Study provisions of Section 6.7 of the RTP, and that this study be elevated to a Type 2 refinement plan as part of the next RTP update.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 14th day of November, 2002



 Carl Hosticka, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:



 Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

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Approved as to Form:

Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 02-3237A, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENDORSING THE I-5 TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Date: November 14, 2002

Presented by: Councilor Burkholder

Committee Recommendation: At its November 7 meeting, the Transportation Committee voted 2-0 to recommend Council adoption of Resolution No. 02-3237A. Voting in favor: Councilor Monroe and Chair Burkholder. Voting against: None. Absent: Councilor Atherton.

Background: In 1999, Oregon Governor Kitzhaber and Washington Governor Locke initiated a public process to examine and make recommendations related to the I-5 Trade Corridor stretching north from the I-5/Fremont Bridge interchange in Oregon to the I-5/I205 interchange in Washington. The staff report for the proposed resolution provides a detailed review of the history and resulting recommendations from this effort which has become known as the I-5 Partnership.

Committee Issues/Discussion: Kate Dean, Oregon Department of Transportation, and Andy Cotugno, Metro Planning Director, presented the staff report. Dean presented a power point review of the history and work product of the I-5 Partnership entitled "Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership's Final Strategic Plan". Her review generally covered the historical material and recommendations addressed in the staff report for the resolution

She noted that the partnership included a 28-member task force and involved over 1700 citizens.

Andy Cotugno reviewed the contents of the proposed resolution. He presented an "A" version of the resolution that included several amendments proposed by the Transportation Policy Alternative Committee (TPAC). He explained that the basic purpose of the resolution was to endorse the recommendations of the I-5 Partnership. A similar endorsement will be requested from appropriate local government committees in southwest Washington. The resolution outlines several of the major recommendations. It also includes proposed actions related to bridge influence area (BIA) improvements near the current I-5 Interstate Bridge and directs Metro staff to incorporate the recommendations in the next update of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Cotugno then explained the proposed TPAC amendments. These include:

- 1) Clarification of a "Whereas" clause that the scope of the study included the area in the I-5 Corridor north of the Fremont Bridge instead of the I-84 interchange as shown in the original version of the resolution.
- 2) Including the entire title of the "Final Strategic Plan" in the "Be It Resolved" clause to clarify that the endorsement being sought applied to the entire document, not just the listed recommendations, and
- 3) Clarification that certain interchange improvements could include either auxiliary or arterial lanes.

Councilor Monroe expressed concern that the first "bullet" in the "Be It Resolved" clause related to three lanes of traffic along I-5 between I-205 in Clark County and Delta Park in North Portland did not specifically address the desire to have one of these lanes designated as a High Occupancy Vehicle

(HOV) lane. Mr. Cotugno drafted language to address this concern and his amendment language was adopted by the committee.

Key Public Testimony: None.

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 02-3237, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENDORSING THE I-5 TRANSPORTATION AND TRADE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Date: November 1, 2002

Prepared by: Tom Kloster

BACKGROUND

The I-5 Partnership brought together Washington and Oregon citizens and leaders to respond to concerns about growing congestion on I-5. Governors Gary Locke and John Kitzhaber have appointed a bi-state Task Force of community, business and elected representatives to develop a recommended Strategic Plan for the I-5 Corridor between I-84 in Oregon and I-205 in Washington.

As the only continuous Interstate on the West Coast, I-5 is critical to the local, regional and national economy. At the Columbia River I-5 provides a critical connection to two major ports, deep-water shipping, up-river barging, two transcontinental rail lines, and much of the region's industrial land. In 1997, 14 million tons of freight (valued at \$17 billion) was shipped from the Oregon side of the metro area to locations in Washington. Shipments southbound from Washington into the Oregon side of the region totaled 28.5 million tons (worth an estimated \$7.5 billion).

Both the Ports of Portland and Vancouver are located in the I-5 Trade Corridor, as is much of the Portland/Vancouver industrial land. For residents in the Portland and Vancouver area, I-5 provides one of two crossings of the Columbia River for transit and automobiles. It connects the communities of Portland and Vancouver for work, recreation, shopping and entertainment purposes. An average of 125,000 trips are made across the I-5 Bridge every day.

In 1999, a bi-state leadership committee considered the problem of growing congestion on the highway and rail systems in the I-5 Corridor. The committee recommended that the Portland/Vancouver region initiate a public process to develop a plan for the I-5 Corridor based on the following findings:

- **Doing nothing in the I-5 Corridor is unacceptable.** While there are some transportation improvements planned in the corridor, they are insufficient to address the transportation and economic needs of the corridor. Without additional improvements, congestion in the corridor will increase to unacceptable levels. Further, the increased congestion will have a significant impact on our economy, potentially limiting attraction and retention of business throughout our industrial areas.
- **There must be a multi-modal solution in the I-5 Corridor – there is no silver bullet.** The needs of the corridor will require highway, transit, and rail improvements, and better management of traffic demand. In other words, constructing new highway capacity alone will not solve the problem; neither does constructing only new transit capacity or new rail capacity.
- **Transportation funds are limited. Paying for improvements in the I-5 Corridor will require new funds.** The scale of improvements needed in the corridor far exceeds presently available state and federal funds. These sources can contribute but cannot completely pay for the improvements. Assuming the current structure of public funding, tolling will be required to pay for a new Columbia River crossing and other corridor improvements. From a historical perspective, tolls are not new. Tolls were used to construct the original I-5 bridges.

- **The region must consider measures that promote transportation- efficient development.** This includes a better balance of housing and jobs on both sides of the river and other measures that manage additional demand. Even with improvements in the I-5 Corridor, there will be a significant capacity problem that must be managed.

In January 2001, based on the above findings, Washington Governor Locke and Oregon Governor Kitzhaber initiated the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership, also known as the I-5 Partnership. A 28-member Task Force was established to guide the development of the *Strategic Plan* for the corridor. This group worked for a year and a half, hosting six rounds of public meetings to get ideas and comments from the community. In addition, a Community Forum of interested stakeholders from both states was invited to closely follow the strategic planning process and to provide input at each milestone in the study.

The overall goal of this strategic planning effort was to determine the overall level of investment needed in the corridor for highways, transit and heavy rail, and to determine how to manage the transportation and land use system to protect investments in the corridor. The Task Force's final product has been sent to the Oregon Transportation Commission, the Washington Department of Transportation, and is now being considered by the metropolitan planning organizations in Portland and SW Washington for review and potential adoption into their transportation plans. After adoption, the environmental review and project development phase may begin.

Before any improvements suggested in this plan can be made, a formal environmental process must to be conducted under the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to identify the specific design of improvements and the impacts. The NEPA process is designed to ensure public participation in the process and a thorough assessment of environmental and community impacts. Through the NEPA process, plans for mitigating impacts that cannot be avoided will need to be developed. In addition, issues of environmental justice will receive a thorough exploration.

The foundation for the *Strategic Plan* is the problem, vision and values statement. This statement was created, edited and revised based on feedback from Community Forum members and public input. The recommendations in the *Strategic Plan* document have been crafted to address the identified corridor problems and to do them in a manner that reflects the collective vision for the community.

SUMMARY OF I-5 STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Transit:

- Provide a phased light rail loop in Clark County in the vicinity of the I-5, SR500/4th Plain and I-205 Corridors.
- Provide peak-hour, premium express bus service in the I-5 and I-205 Corridors to markets not well served by light rail.
- Increase transit service in the Corridor over the next 20 years called for in regional transportation plans.

Interstate 5:

- The I-5 freeway between the Fremont Bridge in Portland and the I-205 interchange in Vancouver will be a maximum of three through lanes in each direction. This includes widening I-5 to three lanes between Delta Park and Lombard, and 99th St. to I-205 in Vancouver.
- Designate one of the three through lanes for use as a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane during the peak period, in the peak direction.

- Add a new supplemental or replacement bridge across the Columbia River with up to 2 auxiliary and/or arterial lanes in each direction, and 2 light rail tracks.
- Improve interchanges between SR 500 and Columbia Blvd to address safety and capacity problems -- including making Columbia Blvd into a full interchange.
- In adding river crossing capacity and making interchange improvements every effort should be made to: 1) avoid displacements and encroachments, 2) minimize the highway footprint and 3) minimize the use of the freeway for local trips.

Additional Rail Capacity:

- Pursue the rail infrastructure improvements required to accommodate anticipated 20 year freight rail growth in the I-5 Corridor and frequent, efficient intercity passenger rail service.
- Establish a public/private Bi-State rail forum to advise regional decision-makers about prioritizing, scheduling and funding of needed rail improvements.
- The rail forum and regional decision-makers should encourage funding for:
 1. Additional inter-city passenger rail service in the Pacific Northwest High Speed Rail Corridor
 2. High Speed Rail service in the Corridor; and
 3. The replacement of the existing “swing span” with a “lift span” located closer to the center of the river channel

Land Use:

- Adopt and implement a Bi-State Coordination Accord to protect existing and new capacity and support economic development.
- Jurisdictions in the Corridor will develop and agree on a plan to manage land development to avoid adversely impacting I-5 or the Region’s growth management plans.
- Commit to formation of a Bi-State Coordination Committee to review and comment on transportation and land use decisions of bi-state significance.

Transportation Demand and System Management:

- Commit to a comprehensive use of TDM/TSM strategies -- alternative modes, work-based strategies, policies and regulatory strategies, pricing and TSM strategies -- and pursue additional funding for transit and TDM/TSM strategies.
- Prepare an “I-5 TDM/TSM Corridor Plan” with guidance from the proposed “Bi-State Coordination Committee”
- Fund and implement additional TDM/TSM strategies now to encourage more efficient use of the transportation system.

Environmental Justice

- Establish a Community Enhancement Fund for use in the impacted areas in the I-5 Corridor in Oregon and Washington
- Map low-income and minority communities in the corridor.
- Take list of potential impacts identified by representatives of environmental justice communities into the EIS for the Bridge and Bridge Influence Area as a starting point for more analysis.
- Work with affected communities to explore ways to offset impacts and/or bring benefits to the community.
- Develop a public outreach plan for EIS process that includes special outreach to low-income and minority communities.
- Form and coordinate two working groups for the EIS -- one for public involvement and one for environmental justice.

Finance

- OR, WA and the Portland/Vancouver region should develop a financing plan for transit and highway capital projects
- Tri-Met and C-Tran need to increase revenues for a significant expansion of transit service, starting within the next five years.
- Establish regional transit financing commitments that will allow for:
 1. an aggressive bi-state TDM program and
 2. an expansion of transit service to support the light rail loop.
 3. Seek funding to widen I-5 to 3 lanes: Delta Park to Lombard after environmental and design work is completed.

Next Steps/Implementation

- Fall 2002: SW Washington Regional Transportation Council and Metro review and amend the Regional Transportation Plans to incorporate recommended I-5 corridor improvements.
- Delta Park to Lombard: widen I-5 to 3 lanes
 - Summer 2002-2004: Conduct environmental assessment and design work
 - Post 2004: Construction of Delta Park to Lombard
- 2003 – 2009: Environmental Impact Study on Bridge Influence Area
(new supplemental or replacement bridge, interchange improvements between SR 500 and Columbia Blvd., including light rail between Expo Center and downtown Vancouver)
- 2010+: Construct improvements in Bridge Influence Area.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and Metro Council endorse the Interstate-5 corridor strategy, as recommended by the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force at their June 18, 2002 meeting. This endorsement, in the form of the attached resolution, would call for the needed policy and project updates to be included in the next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update, scheduled to begin in Spring 2003.

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Land Use:

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- Jurisdictions in the Corridor will develop and agree on a plan to manage land development to avoid adversely impacting I-5 or the Region’s growth management plans.
- Commit to formation of a Bi-State Coordination Committee to review and comment on transportation and land use decisions of bi-state significance.

Transportation Demand and System Management:

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- Prepare an “I-5 TDM/TSM Corridor Plan” with guidance from the proposed “Bi-State Coordination Committee”
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Environmental Justice

- Establish a Community Enhancement Fund for use in the impacted areas in the I-5 Corridor in Oregon and Washington
- Map low-income and minority communities in the corridor.
- Take list of potential impacts identified by representatives of environmental justice communities into the EIS for the Bridge and Bridge Influence Area as a starting point for more analysis.
- Work with affected communities to explore ways to offset impacts and/or bring benefits to the community.
- Develop a public outreach plan for EIS process that includes special outreach to low-income and minority communities.
- Form and coordinate two working groups for the EIS -- one for public involvement and one for environmental justice.

Finance