



1300 Franklin Street, Floor 4
P.O. Box 1366
Vancouver, WA 98666-1366

360-397-6067
360-397-6132 fax
<http://www.rtc.wa.gov/>

Member Jurisdictions

Clark County
Skamania County
Klickitat County
City of Vancouver
City of Camas
City of Washougal
City of Battle Ground
City of Ridgefield
City of La Center
Town of Yacolt
City of Stevenson
City of North Bonneville
City of White Salmon
City of Bingen
City of Goldendale
C-TRAN
Washington DOT
Port of Vancouver
Port of Camas-Washougal
Port of Ridgefield
Port of Skamania County
Port of Klickitat
Metro
Oregon DOT
15th Legislative District
17th Legislative District
18th Legislative District
49th Legislative District

May 17, 2006

Hal Dengerink, Co-Chair Columbia River Crossing Task Force
Henry Hewitt, Co-Chair Columbia River Crossing Task Force
Members of the Columbia River Crossing Task Force

RE: RTC Board Policy Statement on Guidance for the Transportation Corridors
Visioning Process and the Context for Addressing New Columbia River
Crossings

Dear Co-Chairs Dengerink and Hewitt and Members of the Task Force:

On behalf of the Regional Transportation Council Board of Directors, I have enclosed a policy statement as endorsed by the Board at their May 2, 2006, meeting. This policy statement is the result of a series of discussions by the Board that started with the idea of taking a longer-term, 50-year vision of growth in Clark County and the corresponding need to identify new transportation corridors. The policy statement, while recognizing the need to look at future transportation corridors in Clark County, clarifies the Board's support for the Columbia River Crossing process that is examining options for supplementing or replacing the I-5 Bridge. The Board's policy statement also states that now is the time to start to identify the possible need for additional Columbia River crossings as a part of the Board's 50-year vision for new transportation corridors in Clark County.

The RTC Board is forwarding this policy statement to the Columbia River Crossing Task Force for their consideration.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dean Lookingbill
RTC Transportation Director

Attachment

RTC BOARD POLICY STATEMENT

Approved May 2, 2006, by the RTC Board of Directors

Guidance for the Transportation Corridors Visioning Process and Context for Addressing New Columbia River Crossings

RTC has recently completed its 2030 transportation plan. The plan includes a review of Southwest Washington Highways and Roads that will need to be expanded to handle the expected growth.

Clark County is in the process of revising its Growth Management Plan and RTC will need to update its 2030 plan to be consistent with the revised Growth Management Plan.

Two things are missing from the current RTC 2030 Plan. The first is the inclusion of “new” thoroughfares, including the Battle Ground to Camas thoroughfare suggested by Mayor Idsinga. This thoroughfare, as well as others that may be needed, should be identified and analyzed to determine if they are in fact needed, and if so, RTC should work with WSDOT, Clark County (for land use vision and planning), and other entities to determine appropriate route and cost. These thoroughfares should then be added into the 2030 plan.

The second element missing from the current RTC 2030 plan is additional Columbia River crossings. Notice the word “crossings,” which means perhaps more than one additional crossing. One of the new crossings could be an extension of the Battle Ground to Camas thoroughfare. Another could be replacement of the BNSF rail bridge and inclusion of a 2nd deck to handle truck traffic between the Ports of Vancouver and Portland, as well as serving as a reliever of traffic from the I-5 crossing. It’s hard to see the RTC 2030 Plan as being complete without the inclusion of additional Columbia River crossings.

Many comments have been heard from citizens suggesting we not replace the current I-5 Bridge, but instead invest the money in new crossings. While new crossings are actually needed now, we must also “fix” the current I-5 Bridge by supplementing or replacing it with a more modern structure. We need to show the citizens of Southwest Washington and Northwest Oregon that we recognize the need for additional Columbia River crossings and begin to include them in the long-range plan as soon as possible.

We all need to work together to support supplementing or replacing the I-5 Bridge and to begin the process of identifying new thoroughfares and locations for additional Columbia River crossings.

The action required is to identify a “Leadership Group” that could define the long-range land use and transportation goals that lead to the identification of new transportation corridors, under the jurisdiction of the Regional Transportation Council.

Source: Comments by Commissioner Arch Miller Presented at the March 7, 2006, RTC Board Meeting