



Bureau of Planning and Sustainability  
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West Hayden Island  
Technical Work Session #3 Meeting Summary  
December 16, 2011

Agenda

10:15-11:15 – Ports of Portland and Vancouver Coordination

11:30-12:30 – WHI Transportation Modeling Analysis

## Ports of Portland and Vancouver Coordination

Staff gave a brief presentation of the subject and discussed City Council's resolution to consider opportunities for increased coordination between the two ports. The presentation reviewed the history and organizational structure of the two ports, their current coordination activities and the potential for greater coordination, and the steps required to form a joint bi-state authority. Staff stated that the report is not intended to provide a recommendation but to provide information for decision makers. Since there were very few comments that came in ahead of the session, the discussion was focused generally on whether there were any errors, omissions or items that were misleading. The comments are provided in this order.

Comments from Technical Reviewers (TR), Advisory Committee (AC) members and the Public (P).  
Facilitator indicated as (F):

### Errors of Information

(AC): Did not see anything wrong or an error.

(TR): It should be noted that the Port did have a coal terminal set up in the 1960's and 1970's but it was never actually used. Somewhere in the report it states that a coal terminal was never built. The terminal equipment was dismantled in the 80's.

(TR): In reference to the Port of Vancouver, there are 76 port districts in Washington. They are formed and operate more like economic development districts, although shipping and freight are important components. Also, the report states that both ports have a minimal amount of property taxes that cover their operation. I believe that the Port of Vancouver has a higher proportion of their operations covered by property taxes.

(AC): To clarify on the coal terminal, although the infrastructure may have been built for a possible coal terminal, it was never operated as one. This is also the site of the current T5 Potash terminal which has been a successful terminal. Not sure what the reason is for having this brought up.

(Staff): To help clarify any confusion, on page 6 of the report, under Past and Current Coordination efforts, at the end of the last paragraph on the page, there is mention of a movement in 1981 to consider merging the Ports of Astoria and Portland to help aid in the construction of a coal terminal. The report states the bill was not passed and the coal terminal was never built. We can clarify that statement to include the information that the Port of Portland had infrastructure for a coal terminal.

## Missing Information

(AC): The comment on the Port of Portland increasing their real estate holdings over time may be misleading. All ports on the Lower Columbia have had increases over time due to property acquisition.

(AC): There are three areas of potential missing information. 1) Information from those outside of port operations could have been useful. Critics of the port's relationships may have shed insight. 2) The report would have been stronger if it looked at the 1999 process and the lack of inter-port coordination during that process. Evidence from the first phase of WHI indicates that not a lot has changed, (plans for additional auto terminals made by both ports). What has changed since then? Not including this history is a significant omission. 3) The report seems skewed toward looking at the joint authority option which is admittedly hard. What about other ways to share land use resources and planning? Are there opportunities worth exploring through state regulations to allow greater coordination?

(AC): Portland is subject to many regional and state goals and regulations through Metro and ORS. As a result, it is hard to expand planning consideration across the river. Vancouver is outside of the UGB. We're statutorily precluded from considering Vancouver to satisfy our land needs. The state statutes and regional codes will need to change for the city to be able to consider this option.

(AC): Regarding past events, it's the city's discretion to consider the events of the 1990's and incorporate that into the paper. However, the two ports currently endorse each other's development plans. Ultimately the market is the determining force for where development goes. We're working on a land use planning process to determine whether more land should be made available for this type of development, not the exact siting of where development will go. Forecasts do show robust growth predicted along the river. It is a region of growing volumes.

(AC): I would like to echo the comment about the goals and regulations. It may be the current land use planning structure that inhibits coordination between the entities. Should the paper have a section that indicates how state planning should be amended to allow holistic planning that crosses state lines?

(F): Is there anything unnecessary in the report?

(AC): Even though the report is intended to be a non-partial reporting, the tone of the paper makes it pretty clear that we shouldn't pursue a joint port authority as it lists all the hurdles to this approach. The memo may need a more objective consideration of joint authorities, or at least of other regulatory ways to get coordination across state lines.

(F): Open the session up to any public comments.

(P): From the Port of Portland's perspective, there are some additional areas of cooperation that weren't fully listed. There has been considerable coordination over the past 10 years. These include coordinated freight and cargo forecasting between the ports. Also, the complexity of the channel deepening may not have been captured. There is an agreement for current maintenance of the channel, there was joint coordination of beneficial use planning for dredge material placement, which resulted in much of the dredge materials getting placed on potential building sites such as Vancouver's Gateway area rather than on WHI. There were actually 28 dredge placement sites, owned by the six ports, worked out through the deepening project. In addition, mitigation measures for the deepening were coordinated between the ports.

(P): I have a couple issues. First, do the improvements have the potential to raise property taxes? Also, was there any input from the Port of Vancouver on this report? More importantly, how does sustainability factor into this? What does it mean to BPS or to the Port. There isn't much mention of environmental stewardship in the report.

(P): In response to the above, there are collaborative agreements between the ports to work on Best Management Practices (BMP)s, and this is continuing by exploring the potential to achieve LEED certification on infrastructure. There are additional IGA's covering this.

(AC): Also, development would not create additional property taxes.

(P): I would like to re-enforce the idea of using the Columbia River as a linking element, instead of as a dividing element, which is how many regulatory and organizational structures consider it. The dividing silo effect has problems with the consideration of high-speed rail. The regulatory environment should be structured to be more positive to consider collaboration of networks and improvements that span the river.

(AC): There is a feeling of déjà-vu with the previous 1999 process. Do we want a report that provides a long list of how the two entities coordinate and cooperate? Or do we want to determine how the two should coordinate in relation to WHI development. The editorial in the Business Journal from 1999 still sums up the issues (reads from the editorial). Has there been the effort for the ports to team up their land use planning?

(F): Moving forward, are there any comments or concerns that the report is misleading in any way? (No comments). Since there are no comments, this session is adjourned.

*Note, the draft report will be edited and staff will consider and respond to the issues that were raised during the technical session.*

(Break)

## Transportation Modeling Analysis

Staff from Portland Transportation (PBOT) provided an overview of the purpose of the modeling exercise, a description of the modeling assumptions, the different scenarios that make up the base case and high impact development options, and a summary of some of the initial findings from the model. It was noted that Hayden Island is expected to have a large increase in traffic by 2035, but this increase is mostly from new development on East Hayden Island, not potential terminal development on WHI. The discussion format, similar to the last session, focused on whether there were any errors, omissions or misleading information in the initial analysis.

Comments from Technical Reviewers (TR), Advisory Committee (AC) members and the Public (P). Portland Transportation indicated as (PBOT) and (F) is the facilitator:

(TR): The list of assumptions includes the Columbia River Crossing (CRC), a WHI bridge, and the Hayden Island Street network, all of which are future developments. However, there are no assumptions about high speed rail. Considering that the scenario is set to predict levels out to 2035, it seems that high speed rail should be considered. Also, if there was a multi-modal rail/road bridge as has been shown on the high-speed rail alternative, this could have a large effect on the road network by providing a potential link between N Portland Blvd and Mill Plain in Vancouver. (Handouts were provided to the group.)

(PBOT): The transportation model was developed based on the future transportation system improvements and land uses currently adopted in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and the Hayden Island Community Plan. High speed rail is not identified in the currently adopted plans.

(TR): The WHI bridge is a large development. Is there a threshold to trigger the new bridge, especially from a strict road capacity ratio.

(PBOT): This is best answered through a cost/benefit analysis. The results from the traffic model show that future operating capacity is within an acceptable range with and without a new WHI bridge. A cost/benefit analysis could help answer the question, at what level of development on WHI would require transportation system improvements that would exceed the estimated \$100 million cost for a new bridge?

(TR): I have some clarification questions. First, what is the source of the trip generation for the distribution?

(PBOT): The auto/truck trips generated and distributed from the High Impact development scenario were based on traffic count data taken at the Toyota facility at Terminal 4 provided by the Port.

(TR): Second, what is meant by the bridge tolling “penalty” mentioned on page 6?

(PBOT): This is a modeling term to help translate the dollar amount into a time consideration for the model. In the model, I-205 does not have a toll. This will be defined within the report.

(TR): On page 8, the model considers an option 2A and 2B for the base. These two scenarios are different from each other in key elements, and the selection of one or the other for a base could impact the model. I’m not sure why 2A would be used for a base model since it includes a WHI bridge and some assumptions for WHI buildout already in it. 2B is a much cleaner base model to use.

(F): What do people think on this? Does option 2B make better sense to use as a base model?

(TRs): There is general agreement that 2B is the better base case option.

(TR): There is some general confusion about the components that make up the different scenarios, and their comparables. It may help to have better documentation and descriptions of the differences. For background, the ITE manual was checked for terminal operations, and the numbers were similar to the T4 numbers provided. I have a question about the tolling assumption, and whether tolling is considered for I-205? (*Note, another TR stated that federal action is required to propose tolling on an existing facility.*) My last comment is with the ‘trips per link’ number on the one slide. Is that total or average? It states average, but it is not clear.

(PBOT): These points are understood, and we will provide better documentation and clarification in the next draft.

(TR): How does transit use figure into these scenarios? It seems that there needs to be more specific assumptions for transit usage to help determine mode split. Just using current split doesn’t get at potential changes due to investments such as light rail.

(PBOT): This analysis is based on traffic generation and mode split data from Metro’s future land use and transportation assumptions, as well as the CRC mode split assumptions.

(TR): Is there a consideration for cut-through traffic?

(PBOT) A cut-through traffic analysis is included in this report. The modeling analysis shows that with the proposed Marine Drive and Hayden Island interchange improvements, no traffic would use a new WHI bridge as a cut-through route between I-5 and the Rivergate district, due to a 2-4 minute time difference. Without the Marine Drive and Hayden Island interchange improvements, about 1/3 of the eastbound to northbound traffic (about 200 vehicles) would use a new WHI bridge as a cut-through route between I-5 and Rivergate.

(AC): Will there be any information or data on the noise and sound generation, especially where it crosses into the natural area? Any info will be helpful from a mitigation standpoint, plus we need to know the traffic impacts on the manufactured housing community.

(PBOT): Noise analysis would be addressed as part of the NEPA process and is outside the work scope for this analysis.

(AC): It should be noted that there is much greater impact from the future development expected on EHI. I have a question about scenario 3D that mentions mitigation measures. What are those? Could they include things such as alternative transit options like terminal shuttles between the development and light rail?

(PBOT): Mitigating measures will be based on transportation system improvements such as signalization and additional turning lanes.

(TR): I mostly had some language changes which I've already forwarded to PBOT. I do want to mention that the analysis should use similar land use assumptions as the CRC.

*At this point the discussion was turned over to public comment.*

(P): Is there a legal authority to base the analysis on an unfunded project (i.e. the CRC)? It seems an omission for the analysis to rely on this. Why isn't there a scenario to consider the impacts to development considering the CRC doesn't get built?

(AC): For planning purposes, not every project needs to be funded to be considered for the model. There needs to be a reasonable expectation for future funding, which is provided as part of the financially constrained RTP. .

(PBOT): PBOT's transportation model is based on the future land use and network assumptions in Metro's adopted RTP which include the CRC project. If the CRC is not built, there would be a lot of other transportation issues that would need to be resolved besides WHI.

(P): Is one phase of analysis to look at freight movement? There is a concern that this is not addressing all the impacts for congestion. Previous WA studies have shown the need for additional rail crossings of the Columbia. If a project similar to the multi-modal rail/road bridge were to be placed along the rail line between Portland and Vancouver, this would change the traffic conditions quite a bit and get much of the freight traffic off of I-5 in this area.

(PBOT): PBOT's transportation model is based on the surface roadway network and does not include a freight rail component, so these alternatives are not included in this analysis. These alternatives are also not included in the adopted Transportation System Plan, whereas the CRC is.

(P): At what level are streets considered to be congested?

(PBOT): This occurs when the V/C (vehicle to capacity) ratio reaches 1.00 or above.

(P): Perhaps instead of constantly changing the assumptions as some commenters want, it may be better to run a sensitivity analysis on these variables to see at what level a feature might break down with the change.

(PBOT): This can be considered in the next phase of the transportation analysis.

(F): If there are not any more questions, the meeting is adjourned since we have run over our time.

*Meeting adjourned*