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## **DRAFT Recommendations for I-5 Corridor Transportation Strategic Plan Adopted**

VANCOUVER – At a January 29, 2002, public meeting in Vancouver, the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force discussed and adopted draft recommendations for addressing growing congestion on the Interstate 5 (I-5) Corridor between I-84 in Oregon and I-205 in Washington.

The overall recommendation by the group was that physical improvements in this segment of the I-5 corridor are warranted and necessary to meet the transportation, economic and livability needs of the Portland/Vancouver area. According to Task Force member John McKibbin, “Doing nothing is not an option. Regardless of which side of the river you call home, this is about our region’s future...and the future of our children. We’ve been given the opportunity to come together and provide direction and focus on how transportation improvements can shape our communities. This is something we need to do, and we need to do it well.”

Specific plan elements outlined in the “Draft Strategic Plan Recommendations” include:

- Three through-lanes, including Delta Park;
- A phased light rail loop in Clark County;
- Additional I-5 capacity across the Columbia River; and
- Interchange improvements

The Task Force discussed – but did not recommend – widening I-5 to four lanes. The Task Force draft recommendations also call for a post-Task Force study of a west arterial road west of I-5 in the vicinity of the railroad bridge. During the five-hour meeting, members of the Task Force listened to extensive public comment and reviewed the results of more than 1,500 responses to questionnaires about transportation issues in the corridor.

According to Ed Barnes, co-chair of the Task Force, “I’m really proud of what has been accomplished so far. With the help of the many, many members of the public who have come to our meetings and shared their thoughts and ideas, we’ve been able to make significant progress in crafting a vision for the corridor.” Co-chair Henry Hewitt echoed Barnes’ comments on the importance of the Task Force’s efforts. “The recommendations are a balanced set of solutions, and although there is still much technical and environmental work that has to occur before we know exactly what will be done in the corridor – the Task Force’s hard work and dedication to

the effort will give us a big picture look at where we want to go and how we want to get there,” he stated.

A series of public meetings at which Washington and Oregon residents will be encouraged to offer comments on the draft recommendations will occur between now and June 2002. Also during this time, additional technical work on the draft recommendations will be completed which will include the development of a financing and implementation strategy. Following these efforts, the Task Force will meet in June 2002 to review the public comments and technical work, consider revisions and formally adopt a strategic plan for the corridor.

Once adopted by the Task Force, the strategic plan will be delivered to the states of Oregon and Washington and to the metropolitan planning organizations in Portland and SW Washington for review and potential adoption into their transportation plans. At this point, the environmental review and project development phase may begin.

For more information on the I-5 Partnership and a complete copy of the draft recommendations, please visit the project web site at: [www.I-5partnership.com](http://www.I-5partnership.com)

#### BACKGROUND:

The Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership is a bi-state planning project sponsored by both the Oregon and Washington Departments of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Designed to respond to concerns about growing congestion in I-5 between Portland and Vancouver, the project brings together citizens and leaders from both states to develop a strategic plan for the corridor. The 28-member Governors’ Task Force, appointed by Governors Gary Locke and John Kitzhaber, is made up of business, elected and community representatives.

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