

RTA Workshop
October 16, 1993
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Regional Transit Authority
Workshop
Museum of Flight
October 16, 1993

Members Present:

King County:

Bruce Laing, Chair
Paul Barden, King County Councilmember
Martha Choe, City of Seattle Councilmember
Don Davidson, City of Bellevue Councilmember
Mary Gates, City of Federal Way Councilmember
Audrey Gruger, King County Councilmember
Greg Nickels, King County Councilmember
Norm Rice, Mayor, City of Seattle
Cynthia Sullivan, King County Councilmember

Pierce County:

Ken Madsen, Pierce County Councilmember
Paul Miller, Tacoma Councilmember
Sharon Boehkelman, Bonney Lake Councilmember

Snohomish County:

Dave Earling, Edmonds City Councilmember
Bill Brubaker, Snohomish County Council

Washington State Department of Transportation:

Sid Morrison, Secretary of Transportation

Welcome and Workshop Objectives

The workshop was called to order by Chairman Bruce Laing at 9:00. Mr. Laing said the purpose of the workshop is to put issues on the table that should be addressed by the RTA Board. The Board should also decide what directions it should give to staff about items that the Board wants to discuss, he continued. This is not a public hearing, so there will not be any public comment, he concluded.

Overview Workshop Schedule and Guidelines

Rhonda Hillyer, the facilitator for the workshop, reviewed the agenda and the process/guidelines that would be used to achieve the workshop's objectives.

Present JRPC Conclusions

Mr. David Kalberer, Metro staff, gave a presentation on policies and conclusions reached by the JRPC. Highlights of his remarks are as follows:

One of the purposes of today's workshop is to look at the work done by the Joint Regional Policy Committee (JRPC) as this Board designs its work schedule and submits that schedule to the County Councils for their approval of the changes to the JRPC plan, ultimately taking that to a vote. Most of you are familiar with the plan. I would like to go into some of the assumptions that went into the creation of the JRPC plan.

It's important to start with the understanding of the context that that the JRPC was operating within. Not a lot of time was spent on the principal conclusions because of the self-evident nature of the problem. I think it was strongly impressed that the JRPC was to address a significant problem, and that the problem was getting increasingly pressing. The public manifested/perceived the problem from three perspectives: 1). the traffic congestion being experience by the public and 2). the pressing problems in subareas of the region, with neighborhoods and the business sector, which resulted in major pieces of legislation i.e., the Growth Management Act. 3). this problem was going to get worse, the area would continue to grow and continue to evolve more problems with with freeways and existing roadway systems.

The JRPC approached the problem as a regional problem. We were no longer dealing with situations that were only evident in the Seattle area. The entire region would be manifesting the same growth, congestion and experiencing the same circumstances. The JRPC assumed that the problem needed to be addressed on a three-county basis.

The historic way in which the problem had been dealt with in the past, which was relying on freeways and development of elaborate arterial systems, was not going to be relied upon in the future as the main focus of transportation improvements. This was mainly due to the high costs of constructing new freeways and roads. The freeway system and the arterial system was experiencing great difficulties. It was estimated that it would take \$32 billion to fix this system to the level projected in the early 1970s. In addition, neighborhood

Given that atmosphere, I'd like to review the JRPC's conclusions on how a transportation system ought to evolve.

Conclusion 1. The bus system was absolutely critical to whatever transit system is built. This was consistent with work done throughout the three-county area. Pierce Transit had already elaborated its vision and came to the JRPC with that already in mind. Within King County, the elaboration of ideas about how to develop the bus system was a top priority of the JRPC. The Eastside Transportation Committee, and the work that was done by them in the Eastside communities, lead the effort to detail a future bus system. Their desire to involve themselves at all in the JRPC and RTA was based on the assumption that a significant ingredient of the plan would be the development of the bus system on the Eastside for the purposes of meeting the concerns of the Eastside communities themselves. As the plan developed, there was similar work done in the South County with SKATEBOARD. In Seattle, the development of their own concept of how buses should operating in the city because Seattle's rational for the City's interest in the JRPC (the LINK Program).

In all these cases, there was a keen sense of meeting two needs.

1). There are a lot of connections that the public was demanding the transit system to make that simply were not being made well now. Those desired connections tended to be in subareas of the overall region. There was too much elaboration of transit in markets that transit had traditionally served, such as downtown Seattle, the University District and downtown Bellevue.

2). The transit system needed to address additional problems, expand its coverage and address convenient, timely service connections/transfer. The JRPC thought part of the program had to be maintained and concentrated on.

The importance of this task was exemplified during the last meeting of the JRPC. During that meeting, the amount of service dollars going into the bus system was increased from 2/10% of the sales tax to 2.25%. When the whole effort to add capital to make the bus system function more efficiently, the allocations were increased from \$800 million to \$1.6 billion over the period of time. This is completely out of relationship to what's been spent on transit investment in the past. During

This strategy assumed that we want to grow in the corridor, we want more economic activity to occur, and we were not going to abandon the core to a slow deterioration, as has happened in other parts of the United States, by preferring buildouts in outlying areas where land may be cheaper, but harder to access.

2). There was also a belief that rail systems could provide linkages between the centers we want to develop. We could like those centers largely because of the topography of this area. By causing those linkages to occur, we could organize land use better by providing that capacity into those major center. The hangup on the rail system was that the capacity we were developed wouldn't be used to its full extent throughout the region for some time to come. Three-quarters of the capacity would be used in a twenty year period, but there were areas that would use less than that during that same period. So, the JRPC plan went back again and looked at management mechanisms that would cause people to make the rational decision to use the system. None of these mechanisms, such as the effects of the Commute Trip Reduction Law, Parking Management, or Flex Pass Programs, were included in the ridership forecasts prepared for the JRPC. The JRPC members understood, however, that if investments were made in capitol there would also have to be consideration of techniques that promote usage of the new capacity.

The rail system considered by the JRPC was proposed in two parts. First, take advantage of opportunities provided by existing rail in the region. The existing tracks connected Tacoma, the Green River Valley, downtown Seattle, and northward to Everett. A commuter rail system could be put into place quickly, and offer attractive linkage for people who resided in the centers I just mentioned, and that its total capital and operating expense were very modest in relationship to other investments that were being proposed. The project also had a willing participant in Burlington Northern and Union Pacific railroads. The railroads were interested in exploring usage of their right-of-ways for commuter passenger service.

A lot more questions were raised about the other part of the rail system, namely rapid rail. This part of the system was proposed to be built by 2010 from Seattle to Tacoma, and from Redmond/Totem Lake to Bellevue and from Bellevue to downtown Seattle. Many questions about the rapid rail system

the JRPC. The question of how to finance the rail system was not fully resolved and is still on the table.

We understood that if the bus system was financed at three tenths of a percent, if we imposed another six tenths of a percent, the rail system and commuter rail system could be built before 2020, with the first Tacoma/Redmond/Totem Lake link being done in 2010. This also assumed in the 9/10s of a percent that there would be a significant federal contribution and it assumed bonding to the maximum extent that could be bonded, which equals 3 billion dollars, to support the system.

The cost estimates were all reviewed by the expert review panel, and were conservative estimates. That is how they were understood by the expert review panel. The JRPC, at the end of its deliberations, was not comfortable on relying on a 9/10s of a percent sales tax to implement the system. The lack of comfort was enhanced by the fact the Governor proposed a state role in financing the rail system, which was readily accepted by the JRPC. The rail system that was being talked about was adding capacity that historically had been added by the State DOT through freeway improvements. Rail substituted for improvements to the freeway network, and therefore, it was logical to assume that a cheaper option than the freeway system was something the State should contribute towards. The Governor originally proposed that the entire capital cost, or 6/10s of a percent sales tax, be borne by the State through a statewide gas tax. When that collapsed, the JRPC's will to define what they wanted to proceed with-- either shrinking the proposal to lower the tax rate or waiting to resolve with the State what the State contribution would be--was not resolved by the JRPC, and it was for that reason the plan was submitted to the Counties without a financing element in it. It was understood that a financing plan would be developed and brought back to the County for their approval.

Another element recognized by the JRPC was the fact that we should not rely on one kind of tax. The two taxes provided as funding sources for a new transportation system were the general sales tax and MVET. It was assumed that the equivalent sales tax rate rate required to finance the system would be achieved by proposing a mix of sales tax and MVET to the voter, rather than raising one taxing source.

Mr. Kalberer said the work done by the JRPC meets what is required in the legislation, except in the development of a financing plan. However, the public demands more elaboration on parts of the JRPC plan before going to a ballot, and was pushing the JRPC beyond what was required by the state law.

Mr. Laing said as background, the RTA needs information about the update of the PSRC's Regional Transportation Plan, which I think as being that broader look at transportation needs, and coordinate RTA planning with PSRC planning so we can interface. In doing these elements, to what extent is the expert review panel available, he asked, and to what extent is panel review required? Mr. Kalberer responded as follows:

The expert review panel is available. The expectation is that the panel would return to review any major changes made. This is the general assumption for which they were created by the legislature. The panel would follow through and comment on the adequacy of the numbers and cost estimates and assumptions being made. The panel would not comment on the wisdom of the proposals being made. The expert review panel is available, and will respond to any significant adjustments made to the JRPC plan by the RTA Board.

Mr. Laing said the financing of the bus system is an example of a legislative work element for the RTA. At this time, we are not allowed to use the gas tax as a funding mechanism, and would have to go to the state to request usage of this tax. Mr. Kalberer replied yes, that is correct. The JRPC reached the conclusion that the language was ambiguous, and the legislative history was such that we would not be comfortable relying on existing legislation to finance a transportation program.

Mr. Laing are there any other where legislative clarification is required? Mr. Kalberer replied no, not unless the evolution of the financing plan will require it. The substance of the plan doesn't need to be advanced.

Mr. Miller said there are two issues that were left for RTA consideration by the JRPC. Mr. Miller continued his remarks as follows:

The first issue is the concern about public involvement in the development of the overall plan. If it is the RTA's desire to have a plan that is approved by the voters and financed by the public, we need to separate the two issues. While there is a strong need to tie the public into the process, don't tie

2020 Plan and general policy guidelines being developed at the County level.

There were questions raised about whether market forces would actually work in the way that was assumed by the emerging government GMA policies. There were haunting questions that began to be asked, and that is why the economic development strategy emerged with increasing importance. Vision 2020 supplied a construct about where we wanted land, jobs and transportation to be. What was missing was whether or not the economy would truly respond as envisioned. We lost some confidence in the answer to that question, and then we needed to consider if there was flaw, and what was needed in a transportation system to induce that economic response.

Ms. Sullivan said I support the observations made by Mr. Kalberer about GMA/Vision 2020 and its relationship to economic development.

Mr. Davidson said the JRPC was focused on one section of a balanced system. How did they handle including the rest of that balanced system in their discussion? Mr. Kalberer replied it wasn't very comfortable, and wasn't done as well as it could have been. Mr. Kalberer continued his remarks as follows:

The JRPC never found a mechanism for achieving that balance. They assumed it was happening someplace else, and would fit in someplace else. Some linkages that were starting to be explored was in the development of the financing plan that the WSDOT was putting together to encourage more investment in the roads program. Through that WSDOT effort, the JRPC started to discuss a way to connect state funding for roads with funding for local transit. The JRPC never reached closure on this discussion, and left unanswered questions such as who goes first; does it go to the legislature before we go to a vote, etc. The other part that was missing was a clear articulation on the way road funds would be spent if indeed, there were an extra \$100 million. There is much more definition in the transit portion of the program that was achieved in the roads part of the program. We are looking toward current WSDOT and PSRC work to bring that discussion together for the RTA. Representatives working on WSDOT road funding the PSRC transportation plan should come before the RTA with an update on their work. We are not at a point at this time where we could go the public and say "this is the overall transportation plan--we are building this road here, doing something with the

3). A letter dated October 15th from the Transportation Discussion Group, signed by Caroline Robertson, Steve Excell, Bill Eager, and Bruce Nurse. (copies of these materials on file in ___????___)

Mr. Morrison made the following remarks:

The meetings that lead up to this coalition were partially due to WDSOT coordination. We felt that we needed to gain support for the Governors transportation package that was before the legislature, and needed to have business, labor and environmental organizations to have a better understanding of the issues at hand. I was pleased at the mix of people that were present at the first coalition meeting. It appears they are taking the steps necessary to get organized.

One person at the meeting aptly summarized the problem the RTA faces. There is a general understanding of the issues, and the groups that have followed this planning process probably understand the specific issues better than some of us on the board. However, the general public got lost during the time the JRPC was putting its plan together. The general public doesn't understand the issues involved, they don't know what the price tag will be or what taxes will be raised to pay for a new transportation system. We need to get communities reinvolved and have them help us in the design of what we do. We will ultimately have to answer to them when we go to a vote in 1994.

Ms. Gates made the following remarks:

I become concerned when I see coalitions form. I don't know who was invited to participate, and wonder who might have been left out. There are many people who work and can't come to a meeting during the day, and may never be heard. Also, Pierce and Snohomish County residents find it difficult to come to a meeting that is held in downtown Seattle. How are Pierce, Snohomish and suburban cities being included? We are dealing with a regional planning effort. A coalition could be helpful, but it needs to be done in a way that includes everyone, and doesn't bring about a perception that this is a Seattle plan. The coalition has a supportive feel to it, but we need an inclusive effort that goes far beyond the coalition. There are citizens who say "get moving for crying out loud."

Mr. Morrison said this coalition is not meant to be the entire answer, but it a mechanism for helping us move in the right direction.

satisfied with the process. People were more concerned more about the process than the project itself.

Mr. Rice said creating a public process is a chicken and egg situation. He continued his remarks as follows:

The more general the vision, the more difficult it is for the public to know what will be done and become involved. It is difficult to sell an idea that is not firm. Because this is a regional system, there may be difficulties in building a grass-roots public involvement process. There may not be time to work with every local group and secure their input. The Board may have to create a plan, then take the heat for it.

If the public process gets too long and drawn out, we may not meet our deadline or our objectives. I would like the Board to decide some key issues. These issues include: when the ballot will appear before the voters and what changes the RTA wants to make to the JRPC plan. Once the RTA knows what changes it wishes to make, then there is opportunity for public comment and involvement.

I want to make sure we are on task rather than spreading the process out to the point where we don't have a vision and we don't have an idea with substance. The public previously asked us for substance, and we didn't always have the answers. At that point, the public lost interest, because they knew the leaders didn't have the answers.

Present/Discuss City Council's Positions

Mr. Madsen made the following remarks about Pierce County position:

The discussion held today has addressed many issues discussed by the Pierce County Council. The Pierce County Council consists of seven members. Between us, we probably have 50 different positions and opinions about this project, all of which are correct. The "Regional Transit Authority Resource Book" (copy on file ????) contains Pierce County's position statement in the "Appendices" section, tab number 4. I don't want to restate the details. Rather, I'd rather review the philosophical discussions that occurred.

The economic development issue is one we are very sensitive to. We believe that this state is in a prime position and perfect

geographic location to interact with the growing economies of Alaska, the Far East, China, and Russia.

Consider the Port of Tacoma. We have all the room in the world to expand. The Port of Seattle has limited room to expand. Taking the port as an example, there is a strong feeling within Pierce County that we as a region will be much stronger if we can work together regionally. The same thing applies to transit.

We are very concerned about freight mobility. The Port of Tacoma will expand and generate container traffic. We also see another phenomenon. I talked with the manager of the Boeing Frederickson Plant last night. He said we have just delivered the first tail section of the 777 airplane on time. Employment in Everett and Tacoma is therefore linked, and underlines the need for a regional approach to transportation.

Pierce County has concerns about the governance issues and how that will all shake out. There is the PSRC, the RTA and the three respective counties. Everybody is working on the same issue. There needs to be cross-fertilization between these bodies. The RTA needs to define its job and its role. Is the job of the RTA to deal with a transportation system, or is it to build a rail system between Tacoma and Everett? What is the role of this RTA? I'm not totally clear what it is. We need to evolve a position that delineates the RTA's role from the PSRC and the County Councils, City Councils and County Execs.

Another issue Pierce is concerned about is the delineation between the RTA, or the people out negotiating for the RTA, and what they negotiate in the individual counties and cities. There has to be linkage and hand holding as you go into those kinds of negotiations.

I also believe that the government area cannot do transportation planning in a vacuum. We can't look at the transportation issue without looking at what is going on around us. Pierce had exposure to Mayor Rice's concept of an information infrastructure. Things are happening so fast technology-wise that we can't operate in a vacuum.

Another big issue is equity between the Counties. Pierce is as parochial as other parts of the region, and there needs to be sensitivity to the equity issue amongst jurisdictions. Pierce County, and I also believe Snohomish County, would like some

(transportation system management) and TDM (transportation demand management) that would benefit the area. At the first ballot stage of the plan, use the 4/10ths of one percent approved by that ballot to begin to implement the planning for the rail system, and start a demonstration rail system so we can see how people would use it. The last part of the first ballot stage would be to construct a commuter rail system from Everett to Tacoma. After a period of time, we would look at the effectiveness of the rail stations, and request more funding on a second ballot. Snohomish County assumes that state and federal dollars will not cover the cost of this system.

The underlying concerns in Snohomish County's resolution reflects how Snohomish County citizens felt about the JRPC and its plan. Many felt that the JRPC rushed its work toward the end of the process. The JRPC failed to thoroughly analyze proposed amendment, and concerns raised by citizen groups were not addressed towards the end of the process. After the Plan went through the EIS process, for example, commuter rail was suddenly added. The process did not work at the end of the process as it had historically had during the life of the JRPC.

As one of the outlying counties, it is important to create a perception that the RTA is a government body to consider. The RTA is not here to put together something that every interest group wants. The RTA Board needs to stand on its own. Further, it is as important to finish the Snohomish and Pierce parts of the system as it is to finish the system in King County.

In closing, I like to talk about the ongoing support Snohomish County is willing to give this effort. As you know, many city councils, including my own in Edmonds, voted not to join the RTA. Mountlake Terrace and Mill Creek also said no.

I wish the Resolution that was produced by the JRPC could have been manufactured and sent to Snohomish County cities ahead of time. Had that been done, there would have been time to work out issues, and many of us would have voted differently.

Many of the issues we had with the JRPC resolution were ultimately resolved by the Snohomish County Council. Many of the changes Snohomish County requested from the JRPC

from now. The issue of new technology and changes in technologies. We all live our lives very differently than we did five years ago. That order of magnitude will be even greater in ten years. If you think back 70 years, we are just achieving the same level of ridership as we had back then. The bus ridership has suffered because of a new technology--the creation of the automobile. We simply don't know how technology will affect the way we live in the years to come.

As far as Growth Management is concerned, King County is on two parallel tracks right now. The Growth Management Planning Council for King County is developing a comprehensive land use plan. Its first draft cut out supports few a high density centers, like Vision 2020 proposed. However, when this concept is put to a reality check, such as review and economic analysis by Mr. Barden's Fiscal Task Force, we discover difficulties in achieving dense center that are 1.5 miles across. Instead, a center may be three or five miles across. If that is the case, a different type of transportation system may be required to accommodate the lower density and larger sized centers.

Transit must support landuse. People move to this region for schools and affordability, not the quality of the transit system. Transit may focus development and investment, but it doesn't focus people's lifestyle decisions. We need to build a transportation system that fits residents' lifestyles, rather than impose a transportation system which doesn't reflect how we live in the Pacific Northwest on our communities.

King County also wants to be a constructive and cooperative in the RTA's planning effort. The issues being considered here are critical, and we want to be involved in addressing them.

Mr. Laing called a ten minute break.

Small Group Working Groups on System Plan Issues

Ms. Hillyer broke the RTA board into three groups and labeled them X, Y, and Z. She asked each group to appoint someone to record the discussion that took place in the group. She explained that they were to discuss priorities, interests, concerns, knowledge and splutter (PICKS) that related to the Board's workplan and system plan issues. The point is to outline the key priorities, interests, areas of concern and areas of individual expertise held by the

CONCERNS: Need to define RTA Role
Folks confuse intercity with commuter rail
What revisions of the JRPC Plan will satisfy the RTA Board?
The Tunnel Issue: Cost, Convenience

KNOWLEDGE: North leg on Commuter Rail - needs supporting data, numbers
Need a better handle on commuting routes/patterns
Are roads in the right place? (But, how do you change that if they are not?)

Ms. Choe made the final presentation for Group Y. The group recorder had written the following PICKS on a flipchart:

PRIORITIES: Sell the vision. Back off JRPC details then phase:
1. Bus/TSM/HOV/Commuter Rail
2. Rapid Rail

CONCERNS AND INTERESTS: Public Involvement and Education-we want the loop closed. There was a head count, but we were never told how the public's concerns were used or addressed in shaping the plan.

Timeline for fall'94/Spring 95 vote - what is competing; what is the success rate for initiatives

Content-Firming the Plan:

1. Use a two stage approach, but don't separate plan from funding.
 - Have demonstrations in each county during the first stage.
 - Right-of-way: Purchase now, look at local service initiatives and commuter rail.
 - Local service-advance demonstration projects for each county.

2. Link to GMA issues and things concerning land use.

KNOWLEDGE: 3. Rail was raised as a general concern. What threshold densities? What are the underlying GMA assumptions? Don't reinvent the wheel--look at what has already been done.
Competitive analysis of rail with bus
New issues and additional analysis that is needed

Ms. Gates said ask people if they are transit dependent, how split households commuter, where people live, and where they need to travel. The Board could use information provided from the US Census to answer some of these questions, but it is difficult to get good information about commuting patterns.

Mr. Rice made the following remarks:

In some people's opinion, providing this information means that you have already bought into the JRPC's plan. Sending out the JRPC plan for public comment may mislead the public into thinking it is the RTA's plan, rather an RTA device to generate public input about what the RTA should develop. Timing and what we want should help the RTA shape its plan, rather than getting feedback and shaping our work around that feedback. First, we have to know our parameters and decision what decisions need to be made. The RTA needs to present its own vision to the public. Presenting our vision seems more important than soliciting public feedback on a transportation system and asking the public what we ought to be doing.

Ms. Choe made the following remarks:

Whatever timeline the RTA adopts, there will not be enough time to do all we want to do. The Board has identified public education and involvement as a priority. We have to maximize whatever time the Board allocates to that priority. Boardmembers heard extensive public comment about the JRPC. Our challenge as boardmembers is deciding what to do with that public feedback. The Board needs to go back to the public and respond to the public input with more definitive ideas. What we develop today may look very different in six months. Should the RTA go out to the public now and then later? There is no benefit in confusing the public. The Board has already received a lot of public input on the final JRPC. Whenever we ask for feedback, we need to be prepared to incorporate that feedback, and tell the public how their input has been used. The Board needs to develop a game plan for incorporating public feedback. We need to look at policy and direct staff so that input will be utilized. The Board needs to be able to say, "yes we've heard you, this is what we've done, and this is how we have reflected your concerns."

Mr. Miller made the following remarks:

public that we aren't railroading a system through, but are trying to develop a system that meets the public's needs. We haven't articulated how the system will come to the users, and what elements will be included in the first phase.

Ms. Gates said I have objected to the changes that have been made, because in many cases, they were made without receiving public involvement from all three counties.

Mr. Rice said I am suggesting how we can package our actions and better communicate with the public.

Ms. Sullivan made the following remarks:

I question how informed the public is about the alternatives that are to be considered by the RTA. There is a core group of approximately two to three thousand people who have followed the entire process. Most people generally agree that we need a transit system of some sort, but don't understand the details involved. In order to secure a successful ballot, the Board need to get people more informed about the alternatives analysis, and possibly the specific proposal of the JRPC. I become concerned when political bodies massage the alternatives, then are insulted when their viewpoint is not accepted. The Board will have an easier time if it educates the public about the available alternatives prior to the ballot.

Mr. Miller said there are different levels of awareness from county to county and within each county itself. Awareness is different in Seattle than it is in South Snohomish County or Pierce County, for example.

Mr. Rice said the Board needs to have a holistic strategy.

Ms. Sullivan said the Board appears to be split on whether it should start public outreach now, or start in six months.

Mr. Miller said Ms. Choe's group talked about a two stage approach and not separating the plan from the financing. The Board wants to present a long term solution., he continued. I want to confirm that the intent is to present the plan as a whole, he concluded. Ms. Choe replied yes, that is correct. The Board needs to present the entire plan.

Ms. Gates made the following remarks:

am held responsible for selling the RTA plan to those areas, I have to convince myself that this is the best solution. The JRPC Plan is a good starting point for discussion purposes. The recommendations of the JRPC may be the best solution, but I am not convinced yet. If I were asked to actively endorse the JRPC recommendations to my area and help sell them on a public ballot, I couldn't do it.

Mr. Laing asked from the standpoint of a work program for the RTA Board, what would it take to convince you? Do we need to schedule time as a Board to review the assessments done by the JRPC, or are their points you need to review on an individual basis?

Mr. Madsen replied I believe I need more knowledge. There are too many goals. The Board hasn't settled on a single goal, other than the fact that we plan to build a rail system.

Mr. Laing said I heard something different.

Mr. Morrison asked how many board members support bus and TSM as part of this system. (All board members raised their hands.)

Mr. Morrison asked how many board members support commuter rail. (Some board members raised their hands).

Mr. Morrison said there is support, in some form, for commuter rail.

Ms. Sullivan said there has been no market analysis on commuter rail. Will people ride a commuter rail system, and will it travel where people want to go.

Ms. Gates said ridership analysis has been done on the South leg.

Mr. Laing said commuter rail ridership was compared to bus ridership for the same area. There is a need for review of the north and southern leg. We need to fill in some blanks.

Mr. Morrison asked how many boardmembers want to accept the total package, as it was presented by the JRPC. (Nobody raised their hand). Mr. Morrison continued his remarks as follows:

The purpose of these questions is to see how the Board should focus its attention. The Board needs information on commuter rail and is intrigued with the idea of adding a "back to the future" rail to a future transportation system. We just don't know what rail amendments will be added. The Board should

environmental protection. To that end, the Council prepared ten pages of policies about environmental protection, then subsequently learned, that we all had the same goals.

Earlier in today's meeting, I suggested a supplement to the Seattle Time which summarized the JRPC's process and recommendations. I didn't suggest that as a means of marketing the JRPC's ideas. My intent was to inform the public so the RTA can secure a broader audience.

Direction on Development of other Work Program Elements

Mr. Hillyer said the items being discussed by the Board are very important. She restated items the three committees listed for inclusion in the work plan. These items were:

1. Defining the RTA's role, goals, purpose and vision;
2. Equity.
3. Which items in the JRPC Plan should be adopted and which JRPC conclusions does the Board agree upon;
4. Develop a public involvement strategy now that is holistic, has a great deal of outreach, and explains how the feedback will be used;
5. Costs and financing.

Ms. Hillyer noted that the Board had not discussed a timeline for completing its work. As a test, does the Board believe it needs to define its role and vision? Is that a priority?

The Board unanimously agreed that defining a role and vision is a priority.

Mr. Laing said the Board's vision and the Board's role are two different issues. He continued his remarks as follows:

The vision is the vision of the system. The Role is the mission of the RTA board. This mission is the goals, responsibilities and authority as defined by state law.

Mr. Rice said in the law, there is a short term role and long term mission when the RTA starts administering the system.

Mr. Morrison said is there some type of computer network we could use to maximize public involvement, or other innovative approaches that will secure public input without requiring residents to attend meetings? Mr. Hillyer said innovative approaches will be added to the goals for a public involvement process.

Mr. Miller said there is a marketing role. The Board will have to sell its ideas in order to secure a successful vote. Mr. Laing said when we get to that point, we will need legal council to tell us when marketing become campaigning.

Ms. Hillyer suggested adding "explore education". The Board agreed.

Ms. Hillyer said financing and cost was another issue identified by the Board. The Board agreed that financing should be discussed early.

Mr. Rice said corridors and technology needs to be discussed at the same time financing is discussed.

Mr. Morrison asked are we willing to step forward with a more aggressive local program. In other words, local funding will lead the way. Mr. Rice said I thought this was a marriage. I didn't think we had to bring a dowry.

Mr. Morrison said the RTA has to deal with the legislature. It would help if we promised local funds, or authorized 9/10 of a percent, when we request a system, he continued. The challenge back to the RTA is to see if we can avoid levying those funds by putting pressure on counties that don't vote with us on transportation.

Mr. Rice said there has to be an indication that if local jurisdictions act, that the state will act too. If the funding burden is put back on local jurisdictions, the jurisdictions need some guarantee that the state will provide long term support, he concluded.

Mr. Laing said the Board needs to deal with phasing of financing, and is not prepared to answer Mr. Morrison's question at this time.

Ms. Hillyer suggested that the Board talk about time frames, and possibly set a deadline, for creating a deadline for making a decision on when to go for a vote.

Mr. Davidson suggested setting deadlines as the tasks in the workplan are defined.

those issues back to the RTA to see how they should be handled. I am not supporting going back and looking at the whole picture ,(should we do bus or rail, for example). There are a number of issues that need to be addressed. If we have legitimate questions, there should be time to have them answered.

Mr. Kalberer made the following remarks:

I heard there are major issues, and that there needs to be discussion about those issues. We don't know if the information developed to date is sufficient to answer the RTA's concerns. I suggest staff present the information that is available, determine whether or not it is adequate, and have staff prepare an assessment of solutions that the Board could debate, discuss and resolve. This needs to be done before directing staff to do more work and more studies. Staff would present the information that has already been done. That information would be considered in the context of the RTA's new membership and a new willingness to find solutions.

Mr. Miller said the Board's timelines will be determined by the amount of work the RTA has to complete. The timelines will also be influenced by the dates the RTA decides to release its work, he concluded.

Mr. Laing asked if additional workshops are feasible.

The Board checked among its members for an optimal time to hold future workshops. The Board agreed to have three hour meetings for staff to review the work that has been done to date. Longer workshop meetings, possibly on Saturdays, would be held to discuss linking of issues that had been previously discussed in the three hour meetings.

Ms. Sullivan said in the early stages of development, these workshops are useful. I like meeting in this space.

Mr. Kalberer said when the Board chooses to meet for three hours, we need to use the time wisely.

Ms. Gate added the Board members need to arrive on time.

Mr. Earling requested that notices of meeting times be given to members well in advance so members can adjust their work schedules.

Mr. Laing referred to Mr. Morrison's suggestion of a phased program, and made the following remarks:

Staff should explain what is required to produce a phased alternative. Among the alternatives, the phased alternative seems to have the greatest current interest for Board members. Perhaps we should look at this alternative first, and see what work is needed to generate information that supports a phased alternative.

Mr. Miller made the following remarks about the staffing subcommittee:

The staffing subcommittee will make decisions about qualifications, and timing for hiring an executive director and a clerk, and a treasurer. We are also discussing the loaned staff process, and determining whether the RTA needs full - time loaned staff. Full time loaned staff may make sense to avoid having staff whose loyalties are split.

Mr. Laing said we need to understand the existing staffing structure that was established under the JRPC. The Board needs to understand how the high capacity transit funds, and other funding, supported staffing. We need to understand what staffing is available to the Board. The Staffing Subcommittee is considering how the RTA's own staff will interact with the HCT interjurisdictional staff and loaned staff. A staff presentation to the Board would really help clarify those issues.

Mr. Morrison said HCT funding that ran through June 1994 has already been assigned and faithfully worked through. We need to determine who is on the payroll for the RTA, but the State doesn't want to thwart work that is already going on by discontinuing current HCT staff funding arrangements.

Mr. Laing said the Board needs a better understanding of the existing staffing structure.

Mr. Morrison said on Thursday morning, an agreement was signed with Burlington Northern that delineated how the public sector and Burlington Northern would cooperate on track and signal improvements that could benefit a passenger rail operation on its tracks. On the same day, we signed an agreement with AMTRAK for passenger intercity rail. This is the same rail that could be used for commuter rail. We see this as a dual investment. Progress is being made.