Meeting Notes
Stakeholders of the Road User Fee Task Force
Meeting of January 15, 2002

Stakeholders Present:
Fred Patron, FHWA
Kim Hoovestol, FHWA
Sandy Bacon, FHWA
Janet Adkins, Legislative Committee Staff
Steve O'Toole, OR Petroleum Marketer's Association
Gary Corbin, City of Portland
Jack Evans, ORECA
Dinah Van Der Hyde, ODOT Public Transit
John Jackley, ODOT Public Affairs
Everett Cutter, OR Railroad Association
Monty King, OIADA
Don Miner, OMHA
Jeff Hamm, OTA
Robert Mawson, APP
Bill Sizemore, OUT
Betty Atteberry, Westside Economic Alliance
Lynn Lundquist, OBA
Darrell Fuller, OADA
DE Bridges, OFPTA
Jim Howell, CBT/AORTA
Andy Cotugno, Metro
Rich Angstrom, OCAPA
Bill Penhollow, AOC
Chris Hagerbaumer, OEC
Michal Wert, CCA
Bernie Bottomly, Tri-Met
Susan Schneider, City of Portland
Kristin Mitchell, ORRA
Jon Chandler, OBIA
Gary Conkling, AGC
Deirdre Molander, OBC
Linc Cannon, OFIC
Lana Butterfield, NW Propane Gas Association
Paul Thompson, LCOG

ODOT Staff Present: James Whitty, John Jackley

The administrator of the Road User Fee Task Force, James M. Whitty, opened the meeting with introductions. Mr. Whitty then reported the results of the first Road User Fee Task Force meeting held November 30, 2001.

Mr. Whitty described the stakeholder process as follows,

- To ensure two way a flow of information between the Road User Fee Task Force and the stakeholders.
- To ensure stakeholder participation in the Road User Fee Task Force process.
- To generate timely stakeholder responses to RUFTF proposals so that issues may be understood and dealt with early in the process.
- To Organize stakeholder contact with RUFTF.
- To enable communications with stakeholder constituencies and provide feedback to RUFTF.
- To foster consensus on any RUFTF proposal, to the extent possible.

A discussion occurred wherein stakeholders described their philosophies of revenue raising for transportation in Oregon. The following consists of a summary of these philosophical statements. *These summaries are not in any way meant to be an exhaustive representation of the discussion that occurred.*

Monte King, Oregon Independent Automobile Dealers Association, said the government will never track everybody in the United States with technological devices. This will be unacceptable to the general public. People will pay more if they consider the system fair. The OIADA does not like registration fees for reasons of fairness. He said the title system is broken (e.g. reduce for small cars and increase for big cars) and fixing it would generate much more revenue. Fee collection should be fair.

Bill Sizemore, Oregon Taxpayers United, said the voters of Oregon will not agree to a new way of taxation unless an old way of taxation is repealed. He also said that fairness is a big issue. There will be public resistance to strategies like congestion pricing because some people must drive during peak hours. Any such strategy should be designed to get at the people who are on the road during peak hours who do not need to be there without penalizing those who must be there. He said his organization is not opposed to more funding for roads. Oregon Taxypayers United resistance comes form a suspicion of those who want to get people out of their cars in to other transportation forms. OUT wants transportation money to go only to roads. He proposed that the State Highway Division be spun off from the Department of Transportation and that the limitations on the use of gas tax revenue be tightened up so that it can only be used for roads. He doesn't think the public knows it pays only $150 a year in Oregon gas tax to use the roads. He says the public opposes road taxes in order to oppose taxes whenever they get the opportunity – it's a matter of control. Mr. Sizemore does understand that the gas tax has to come off the table as a funding source at some point.

Darrell Fuller, Oregon Automobile Dealers Association, said that technological options for collecting road user fees may be acceptable to the public. The public,

however, will be concerned with who keeps the data. The issue of tax credits for green vehicles will be a thorny one in designing a new system.

Lynn Lundquist, Oregon Business Association, said those involved with the Road User Fee Task Force process should to talk about the demand side of the equation as well. He said there has been an increase in congestion outside the Portland area, particularly in central Oregon. Regional considerations ought to made.

Jon Chandler, Oregon Building Industry Association, said those in the Road User Fee Task Force process should be looking at urban design issues as well such as staggered work times.

Richard Angstrom, Oregon Concrete & Aggregate Producers Association, asked that the issue of how to reduce costs in highway maintenance and preservation be part of the Road User Fee Task Force discussion. He said ways must be found to reduce demand. Efficiency ought to be part of the discussion. Working on a project-by-project basis works but may not be the best policy. He says the best policy is long term. One criteria that must be considered is short term versus long term funding mechanisms.

Jim Howell, CBT/AORTA, said that the cost of collection and the issue of evasion ought to be part of any system design discussion.

Gary Corbin, City of Portland, said the Road User Fee Task Force process must consider behavioral modifications and economic impacts as important considerations. He said we should not discourage behaviors we want to encourage. The question is whether we should layer behavioral measures on to any newly designed fee system. He said a new fee system ought to relate the fee to the intensity of use of the road system. Additionally, he said, the state must make sure it captures out-of-state revenue.

Bernie Bottomly, Tri-Met, said the Road User Fee Task Force should ask, "What are we trying to pay for – the transportation system, congestion relief, capacity? He agree that fairness is an important issue.

Gary Conkling, Associated General Contractors, said the critical questions that need to be asked are, "For whom are you trying to solve the problem?" and "What will the public buy?" and "What transportation system do they want?" He said transportation supporters must give the voters something they will vote for. We're not asking the right question, he said. He suggested a different type of polling or market research to get a common basis of knowledge on these points. Chandler, Angstrom and Bottomly agreed with Conkling's viewpoint. Lundquist added another question to this grouping, "What are they willing to pay for?"

Andy Cotugno, Metro, said the revenue issues are different for a system devoted to maintenance and preservation and one for modernization. The questions should be asked, "Who benefits?" and, "Who pays?"