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February 25, 2010

City Club's Big Ideas for Transportation Governance

City Club of Portland has just released its transportation governance study report: "[Moving Forward: A Better Way to Govern Regional Transportation](#)" (PDF, 5.5M).

Among the big ideas for reforming transportation governance in our region:

- Shift most of the money that ODOT spends inside the region (other than for the freeway system) to be programmed by (but not necessarily spent by) Metro.
- Form a bridge authority under Metro that would manage the Willamette River bridges (including those owned today by the County and ODOT) and a number of other regionally significant bridges.
- Shift to a "utility" model of transportation planning that would more rigorously do cost-benefit analysis and ensure adequacy of funding for the transportation system (analogous to what State law and the PUC require of private utilities).
- Reform the membership and voting structure of JPACT to give more voting power to the Cities and Counties, in contrast to the significant power held by Metro Councilors and agencies (TriMet, Port, etc.) in today's voting structure.

I'm sure some readers will be interested in what the report **does not** recommend:

- Having Metro take over TriMet (not enough reason to do so)
- A bi-state transportation planning body for the whole Portland/Vancouver region (desirable from a policy point of view but politically infeasible today due to very divergent views about transportation on each side of the Columbia)

A must-read for anyone interested in transportation in our region. If nothing else the review and discussion of the current system is very educational - probably the best single place to get a primer on how things work.

And I hope our local leaders will seriously review the recommendations.

I look forward to the discussion at City Club on the evening of March 3rd (5:30-7pm at the Club offices as 901 SW Washington) and the vote at the Friday Forum on March 5th (11:45 at the Governor Hotel).

Posted by [Chris Smith](#) at [12:56 AM](#)

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