

**From:** [NoEmailProvided@columbiarivercrossing.org](mailto:NoEmailProvided@columbiarivercrossing.org)  
**To:** [Columbia River Crossing](#);  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page  
**Date:** Monday, June 02, 2008 3:37:29 PM  
**Attachments:**

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Home Zip Code: 97206

Work Zip Code:

Person:

Person commutes in the travel area via:

1. In Support of the following bridge options:  
Supplemental Bridge
2. In Support of the following High Capacity Transit options:  
Light Rail between Vancouver and Portland
3. Support of Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail by location:  
Lincoln Terminus: Yes  
Kiggins Bowl Terminus: Yes  
Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: Yes  
Clark College (MOS) Terminus: Yes



Contact Information:

First Name:

Last Name:

Title:

E-Mail:

Address:

,

Comments:

June 2, 2008

Rebecca Chung & Ariel Singer  
Master of Public Health students

School of Community Health  
Portland State University  
PO Box 751 - SCH  
Portland, OR 97207-0751

Dear City Official:

As students in the Master of Public Health program at Portland State University, we are concerned about the health impacts of the Columbia River Crossing project. While the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project is designed to prepare the region for projected growth, a transportation project of this size and scope could have broad and far-reaching effects on global climate change, as well as local environmental health.

In addition to concerns relating to global warming, the CRC project has the potential to negatively impact health and quality of life for local communities. The communities in North and Northeast Portland located within close proximity to the proposed bridge site are among the most diverse in Portland, with many community members who come from racial or ethnic minority backgrounds; these populations are generally more impoverished, and at higher risk for disparities in health outcomes. If plans for the CRC move forward with little or no consideration of potential health impacts, these already vulnerable communities may experience widening health inequality.

The increase in car and truck travel that will result from expanded travel on the CRC will lead to deteriorating air quality for the entire region. The health impacts will be greatest for those who live in the I-5 corridor, many of whom already experience inequalities in outdoor air quality and important measures of morbidity and mortality.

Please support a Climate Smart Columbia River Crossing, which would reduce all pollutants, re-green the corridor, and give people more transportation choices – all of which offer numerous health benefits. We must find a way to reduce the growth in driving, not just support improvements in vehicle and fuel technologies.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Chung & Ariel Singer  
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Pre-existing Disparities in Outdoor Air Quality:  
Why the CRC Should Not Expand Capacity for Automotive Vehicles

- Outdoor air quality assessments conducted by the Multnomah County Health

Department using data from the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) have shown that levels of 14 toxic air pollutants exceed the health-based benchmark, and that emission levels for six of these pollutants exceed the benchmark level by 10 times. Four of these pollutants can be traced to motor vehicles, including cars, trucks, and airplanes. In the region, Multnomah is the only county to exceed benchmark levels on all 14 indicators (Multnomah County Health Department, 2003).

- The median cancer risk for residents of Multnomah County (82 in a million) is twice that of the state of Oregon (39 in a million) for 33 of the most dangerous pollutants, and also far exceeds the national risk (45 in a million) (Multnomah County Health Department, 2003).
- Cancer risk is not equally distributed throughout the population - the cancer risk rate from air toxics is more than 100 per million in census tracts in North and Northeast Portland, and the highest rate in an area of North Portland (180 per million) is more than 4 times greater than the lowest risk rate in the County (46 per million) (Multnomah County Health Department, 2003).
- Because the neighborhoods of North and Northeast are populated by higher rates of minorities and individuals living in poverty, the health impacts of poor outdoor air quality may be greater for already disadvantaged populations (Multnomah County Health Department, 2003).
- According to a 2001 survey of Northeast Portland residents conducted by the Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG), 14% of households surveyed had at least one person suffering from asthma, which is twice the national average of 7% (Podobnik, 2004).
- National research suggests that the high concentrations of truck routes, freeways, and industrial sites in Northeast Portland play a role in residents' elevated asthma levels. In fact, studies show that outdoor air pollution triggers asthma attacks and may even cause asthma (Moore and Bates, 2001) and that children living within close proximity to high volumes of traffic are much more likely to have asthma (Ostro, 2004).