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**Date:** Monday, June 23, 2008 1:26:19 PM  
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Comment or Question:

This illustration shows the usage of the space underneath. Good idea. However retaining the old bridges is only setting up for trouble in future and the need to replace them eventually. Better to do it NOW, and establish connections at both ends now, instead of waiting. The sooner the better. :)

Realizing the impact of traffic on I-5 going into/thru Portland, I was going to suggest building the bridges about 1+ mile west and crossing the Columbia where the RR crosses and then cross Hayden Island following high over the RR tracks and paralleling N. Portland Ave, cross Willamette River and St Helen's Hwy turning south about 1/2 mile go straight south through two new tunnels bored through the hill, coming out on the Valley side and wind/find a way to connect to State Fwy #217 at the Sunset #26 Fwy. This would open up traffic flow directly to Beaverton and the Valley and take traffic that now has to go down I-5 and I-405 thru Portland to get to the Valley, and vice-versa for north bound traffic. People and Commerce/Trucking would love this. I picture two tunnels bored wide enough for 3 lanes each and maybe wide enough for light rail lane too. After reading and looking at the CRC project here online, and seeing the importance of the bridge at this location, I am wondering if, after crossing the Columbia (going south) the Freeway could split-off westward, perhaps in the Columbia Slough- N Columbia Blvd area, and swing over to those RR tracks previously mentioned and then follow the RR tracks (maybe up over the top of the tracks) thru the St Johns area, over the Willamette and thru the hill to #217.

This is a lot to suggest, yet believing in the need, it could be well to contemplate and plan for. Not only will 217 have to be widened, but if it is relabeled as an Interstate, I-605, maybe we could get some Federal funding for it?

Looking to the future with high hopes, Tom