

From: timjlynch@gmail.com
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#);
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Monday, June 30, 2008 9:53:06 AM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code:

Work Zip Code:

Person:

Other - Travel to and through the project area

Person commutes in the travel area via:

Bicycle

Bus

Car or Truck

Other - Light Rail



1. In Support of the following bridge options:
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: Timothy

Last Name: Lynch

Title:

E-Mail: timjlynch@gmail.com

Address: 1959 SW Morrison Street, #328

Portland, OR 97205

Comments:

As we look towards a future faced with climate change and \$200 dollar per barrel oil, it is incumbent on all of us, consumers and decision makers alike, to re-examine our actions and assumptions under this new paradigm. I have studied the Columbia River Crossing project carefully over the last six months, including reading substantial portions of the comprehensive DEIS. I commend the task force and staff for all of their hard work and proven dedication. I honestly believe that everyone working on the project has the best interest of their constituents and the region in mind in selecting a new bridge with light rail as the LPA. However, I also strongly believe that this LPA, and all of the other alternative currently being considered, are being evaluated from the perspective of a reality that is quickly disappearing. My question for this project is: Will the CRC be the last major transportation project of the 20th Century, or the first of the 21st Century?

I recognize that the process for selecting transportation project pushes you to always continue to forge ahead, but I would ask that you do something truly ground breaking: take a step back and evaluate this project from this new paradigm of climate change, peak oil and fiscal constraints. Taking a step back and questioning current assumptions will do several things. It will allow the project team to demonstrate its leadership, as true leadership is open to questions and alternative ideas and does not act out of fear. It will help allay some of the concerns from people like me and ultimately build a stronger (and critical) consensus surrounding the project. And finally, reevaluating some of the assumptions of the project may allow for a more create, comprehensive and less expensive solution to the problems the CRC addresses.

To summarize some of the important and outstanding issues that have not been resolved in the selected LPA:

What are our real transportation needs likely to be with the escalating costs of fuel and CO₂? To assume that we will continue to live, develop, travel and transport goods in the same manner under these new global constraints is absurd. We are already witnessing a significant change in driving and shipping behavior with the current level of fuel prices, and are likely to see a continuation of the trend as prices continue to escalate. Suburban housing markets are under a serious decline and will continue to do so, and retailers as large as Walmart are redesigning and rethinking their distribution systems to lower shipments via freight. With active demand management combined with these external forces, we can reasonably see declines in the amount of travel over the CRC area even with a significant influx of new regional residents. For whom then is the additional capacity meant for? And do this group's interest trump those of the region as a whole?

What are the fiscal realities that we should be considering when adopting this project? The region faces an almost impossible level of needed infrastructure funds without this project. As we look beyond freeways and 20th century transportation modes, where will we find the funding to create new means of moving goods and people? Does the

argument that the CRC will not compete with other projects for funding given the dire fiscal prognosis make any sense at all? I understand the political funding realities as they have been described by the CRC, but it simply defies basic logic this project will not negatively effect the region with respect to the other significant shortfalls in our regional infrastructure funding.

How can we reconcile legislation on climate change (local, regional, state, and federal) and new understandings of how we need to change our policies/lifestyles with a project that so deeply entrenches an old way of doing things? I am open to an explanation, but I seriously doubt that there is one that could bridge this divide, so to speak. The selected LPA allows for or encourages increased CO2 emissions and decreased land use densities, which are basic facts that are hard to get around, regardless of how they are framed in the DEIS.

There are other significant arguments that have been made about the project, with some of the most salient coming from Joe Cortright, and I urge you to take these comments and others into consideration before moving any further ahead with the project. To question the project and its assumptions at this stage will require great courage and humility, and will certainly earn my respect regardless of the ultimate outcome. I ask that you demonstrate your leadership by re-evaluating the project under the 21st century realities of peak oil, climate change, and regional and global sustainability.