

**From:** [NoEmailProvided@columbiarivercrossing.org](mailto:NoEmailProvided@columbiarivercrossing.org)  
**To:** [Columbia River Crossing](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page  
**Date:** Saturday, May 10, 2008 11:07:25 PM  
**Attachments:**



Home Zip Code: 97232  
 Work Zip Code: multiple

Person:

Person commutes in the travel area via:

Bicycle  
 Bus  
 Car or Truck  
 Walk

**P-0122-001**

1. In Support of the following bridge options:  
None
2. In Support of the following High Capacity Transit options:  
Bus Rapid Transit between Vancouver and Portland
3. Support of Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail by location:  
 Lincoln Terminus: Unsure  
 Kiggins Bowl Terminus: Unsure  
 Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: Unsure  
 Clark College (MOS) Terminus: Unsure

Contact Information:

First Name:  
 Last Name:  
 Title:  
 E-Mail:  
 Address:

,

Comments:

### **P-0122-001**

Preferences for specific alternatives or options, as expressed in comments received before and after the issuance of the DEIS, were shared with local sponsor agencies to inform decision making. Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected a replacement I-5 bridge with light rail to Clark College as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). These sponsor agencies, which include the Portland City Council, Vancouver City Council, TriMet Board, C-TRAN Board, Metro Council, RTC Board, considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force when voting on the LPA.

With the LPA, new bridges will replace the existing Interstate Bridges to carry I-5 traffic, light rail, pedestrians and bicyclists across the Columbia River. Light rail will extend from the Expo Center MAX Station in Portland to a station and park and ride at Clark College in Vancouver. Pedestrians and bicyclists would travel along a wider and safer path than exists today.

For a more detailed description of highway, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements associated with the LPA, see Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

- P-0122-002** | I am a fan of public transit and in fact that is most often what I use whenever I travel more than a couple miles, but I do not think replacing the bridges or supplementing the bridges is worth the economic and environmental costs and I do not want my tax dollars to go towards the work.
- P-0122-003** |
- P-0122-004** | I am curious too, whether using train tracks and the existing train bridge for a commuter train between Portland and Vancouver is ever considered.
- P-0122-005** | I think the solution lies in using the infrastructure we already have more efficiently, not growing the infrastructure with economic and environmental costs exceeding the gains.

**P-0122-002**

The DEIS discussed the potential impacts of the project alternatives on the natural environment, including fish and other aquatic and terrestrial species (Section 3.14 of the DEIS and the Ecosystems Technical Reports). Impacts to fish, wildlife, and habitat as a result of constructing the CRC project were similar among all alternatives analyzed in the DEIS. The DEIS analysis of potential impacts to threatened and endangered species was coordinated with the federal agencies that implement the Endangered Species Act – the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), The analysis was also coordinated with the Washington and Oregon state departments of fish and wildlife. The ESA, as well as NMFS and USFWS, do not require the completion of a Biological Assessment prior to a DEIS. The information available in the DEIS and related technical reports aided the project's local partner agencies in selecting a LPA.

Since the publication of the DEIS, a Biological Assessment was prepared and submitted that provided more detailed impact analysis for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. It addressed hydroacoustic impacts and stormwater treatment and other potential impacts to species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Based upon the evaluation of this Assessment, NMFS and USFWS issued a Biological Opinion that the project will not likely jeopardize the continued existence or adversely modify the habitat of a listed threatened or endangered species. See Chapter 3 (Section 3.16) of the FEIS for more discussion on ecosystem impact analysis and mitigation.

**P-0122-003**

Please refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS for a description of the current plans for funding construction and operation of the LPA. This discussion provides an updated assessment of likely funding sources for this project, though it is not common practice to receive funding commitments prior to completion of the alternative selection process. As

described in the FEIS, project funding is expected to come from a variety of local, state, and federal sources, with federal funding and tolls providing substantial revenue for the construction. As Oregon and Washington businesses and residents will benefit from the project's multi-modal improvements, both states have been identified as contributors to the project. As jurisdictions on both sides of the river seek to encourage non-auto travel, tolls are not anticipated for bikes, pedestrians, and transit users. Lastly, CRC assumes funds allocated to other projects and purposes would remain dedicated to those projects and purposes.

#### **P-0122-004**

The evaluation of the five alternatives in the DEIS was preceded by an evaluation and screening of a wide array of possible solutions to the CRC project's Purpose and Need statement, including commuter rail on the existing BNSF rail track and bridge. Chapter 2 of the DEIS (Section 2.5) explains how the project's Sponsoring Agencies solicited the public, stakeholders, other agencies, and tribes for ideas on how to meet the Purpose and Need. This effort produced a long list of potential solutions, such as a possible third transportation corridor across the Columbia River, alternative transit modes, and techniques for operating the existing highway system more efficiently. After identifying this wide array of options, the project evaluated whether and how they met the project's Purpose and Need, and found that alternatives that do not include improvements to the existing I-5 facility generally do not address the seismic vulnerability of the existing I-5 bridges, traffic congestion on I-5, or the existing safety problems caused by sub-standard design of I-5. Traffic modeling showed that even significant investment in improving transit options in the corridor or building a third corridor was not enough to alleviate future traffic demand and existing safety hazards on I-5. It is important to note that transit and river crossing components were not eliminated simply because they could not accommodate future vehicular trips. For example, both light rail and tolling help to decrease vehicular

demand. See Chapter 2 (Section 2.5) of the DEIS for more discussion on the screening process used to develop project alternatives.

**P-0122-005**

See discussion above regarding operating the existing highway system more efficiently does not address the seismic vulnerability of the existing I-5 bridges, traffic congestion on I-5, or the existing safety problems caused by sub-standard design of I-5.