From: gypng@comcast.net
To: Columbia River Crossing;
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC Submit Comments Page
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2008 9:26:09 AM
Attachments:

From: Glenn Wanner
E-Mail: gypng@comcast.net
Comment or Question:
Dear CRC Commission,

P-0197-001 I have heard the proposal for the new I-5 bridge. I live in Vancouver and commute to Portland daily on the I-205 bridge (car and public transportation). Occasionally I take the I-5 bridge. Additionally, I have biked across the I-5 and I-205 bridge. Here are my thoughts:

THE CRC PROPOSAL IS STUPID AND ILL CONCEIVED! Only three lanes in each direction, but you will make plenty of room for the MAX train and bike lanes?!?!?! The bridge needs FOUR or FIVE traffic lanes in each direction or don't waste your time building the bridge at all. Why do you hate vehicles?? Why punish car & truck drivers who pay the taxes for the roads? Yes, a new I-5 bridge will be wider and have safety lanes. But you are not fully planning for the future (let alone today) if you only put in three traffic lanes.

P-0197-002 Additionally, you seem to have no realistic plan regarding toll collection. How will occasional users cross a toll bridge that is set up for electronic collection? Don't they make up 1/3 or more of those crossing the bridge? Will you make us drive out of our way to pick up a one time use electronic device? Again, why are you only punishing cars?? Why are you not putting a toll on the MAX and the bikes??? Why have a toll at all?? We all know that the toll charge will NEVER end. Once a government agency starts taxing, it cannot stop. I also sense that you cannot wait to put a toll on the I205 bridge. Both bridges should be toll free.

P-0197-003 Frankly, all I see is another government agency out of control and following special interests (groups that wants us to stop driving cars). This is not Maoist China. We don't commute to work on bikes. Cars are part of our daily lives and they are not going away.

Thanks,

P-0197-001

Following the selection of the LPA in July of 2008, the CRC Project Sponsors Council (PSC) was developed to provide recommendations to the project on a variety of issues, including the number of add/drop lanes over the river crossing. Over the course of several months, PSC was provided with operational characteristics and potential environmental impacts of 8-, 10-, and 12-lane options. These technical evaluation criteria included, but were not limited to, traffic safety, congestion, traffic diversion onto local streets and I-205, regional vehicle miles travelled, transit ridership, regional economic impact, effects to neighborhoods, and protected species and habitats. In additional to the technical information, PSC received input from CRC advisory groups and reviewed public comment submitted to the project and obtained during two public Q&A sessions in January 2009 regarding the number of lanes decision, as well as hearings conducted by Portland City Council and by Metro Council. In August 2010, the PSC voted unanimously to recommend that the replacement bridges be constructed with 10 lanes and full shoulders. For more information regarding the number of lanes decision making process, see Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS.

The proposed new lanes are add/drop lanes (i.e., lanes that connect two or more interchanges), which are used to alleviate safety issues associated with the closely spaced interchanges in the project area, and accommodate the 68 to 75% of traffic that enters and/or exits I-5 within two miles of the Columbia River.

P-0197-002

Details of the tolling system are still being refined as the project enters the final design stage. It is currently not anticipated that transit users, bicyclists or pedestrians will pay a toll. These use of these modes of travel are ones that the project, and the adopted plans of sponsoring agencies, wish to encourage.

Glenn

P-0197-004 PS – if you need help on this project, I can stop by and mark up your proposal. I have 20 years of engineering and management experience.

Tolling was evaluated in the DEIS, and included in the LPA for two important reasons. First, a toll may be necessary to pay for the construction of this project, as discussed in Chapter 4 of the FEIS. Second, a toll provides a valuable travel demand management tool that encourages travelers to take alternative modes (including light rail provided by this project), travel at off-peak periods, or reduce their auto trips. This demand management reduces congestion and extends the effective service of the facility.

When the existing I-5 northbound bridge was built in 1917, it was paid for with a toll. The southbound I-5 bridge, built in 1958, was also funded partially by tolls.

The authority to toll the I-5 crossing is set by federal and state laws. Federal statutes permit a toll-free bridge on an interstate highway to be converted to a tolled facility following the reconstruction or replacement of the bridge, and the CRC project would meet these conditions. Prior to tolling I-5, Washington and Oregon departments of transportation (WSDOT and ODOT) would have to enter into a toll agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). State legislation from 2008 in Washington permits WSDOT to toll I-5 provided that the tolling of the facility is first authorized by the Washington legislature. Once authorized by the legislature, the Washington Transportation Commission has the authority to set the toll rates. In Oregon, the Oregon Transportation Commission has the authority to toll a facility and to set the toll rates. It is anticipated that prior to tolling I-5, ODOT and WSDOT would enter into a bi-state tolling agreement to establish a cooperative process for imposing tolls, set toll rates, and guide the use of toll revenues.

P-0197-003

The Purpose and Need is based on extensive analysis of the existing and projected transportation problems in the I-5 CRC corridor, and reflects extensive feedback from the public and stakeholder groups. This

includes analysis and input during the CRC study as well as the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Study and Strategic Plan that preceded CRC. The Purpose and Need focuses largely on metrics that do not inherently require substantial, or exclusive, increases in highway capacity. The purpose statement is intentionally worded so as to allow consideration of a wide range of solutions including demand management, transit, highway, tolling, and other options for addressing the stated needs. Following the development of the Purpose and Need statement, analysis of a wide range of alternatives, and input from the public, agencies and stakeholders on those alternatives and analysis, it became clear that that the Purpose and Need could not be met by any single type of improvement. It is best met by a multimodal alternative that improves highway, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the I-5 corridor, and adds tolling to the highway river crossing.

P-0197-004

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the I-5 CRC DEIS.