



From: stbecker@fs.fed.us
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2008 2:05:46 PM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code: 97229
 Work Zip Code: 98682

Person:
 Commutes through the project area

Person commutes in the travel area via:
 Car or Truck

- P-0202-001**
1. In Support of the following bridge options:
 Replacement 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: No
 Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: No
 Clark College (MOS) Terminus: No

Contact Information:
 First Name: Shea
 Last Name: Becker
 Title: Civil Engineer
 E-Mail: stbecker@fs.fed.us
 Address:
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Comments:

- P-0202-002** In short I support replacement of the Bridges with preference for alternative 3, but urge
P-0202-003 the commission strongly to refrain from placing tolls on this main artery and exhaust all

P-0202-001

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-0202-002

Thank you for your comment. 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.

P-0202-003

Tolling was evaluated in the DEIS and FEIS, and included in the LPA for two important reasons. First, a toll may be necessary to pay for the

- P-0202-003** possible means of funding alternatives with the objective of funding as much as possible without tolls. This is a project that should be eligible for enough funding from many sources and partners that should include federal, state, county, and other business interests all along the West Coast and likely even into Canada and/or Mexico. With I-5 serving such a large part of the U.S., and likely adjacent portions of other nations, it seems that it would be unjustified to strap the local people like me that have to cross it everyday with the high cost of this enormous project that benefits so many. Also, the culture of this area is not one that is accustomed to tolling of the infrastructure that we use on an everyday basis, and I feel that our country would do best to fund its infrastructure without placing a toll on everything and limiting the ability of those less well off to travel freely. Our infrastructure is important and should take priority over less important things that we are spending money on, particularly a bridge such as this located on one of our main Interstate highways. On another note, being that I MUST drive across this crossing twice a day in order to perform my job I would be faced with losing a very significant portion of my salary in order to pay possible mandatory toll fees. Based on preliminary estimates of \$2.50/ea crossing I find that I would be paying approximately \$1,300 additional dollars a year just to get to work, which is an unaffordable amount of money, leaving me with the dreadful alternatives of having to move from where I live and/or find a job that I can afford to commute to. Perhaps if all funding sources are exhausted and a toll must be used, that some sort of plan can be derived in order to give some economic relief to those that are required to travel across the crossing 5 days a week 365 days a year for work. Does the toll plan take into account all the workers that don't make much that are currently crossing this bridge 5 days a week?
- P-0202-004**
- P-0202-005**
- P-0202-006** Having the background in Transportation Engineering that I do being that I am a Civil Engineer working in transportation, I fully agree that the old structure needs to be replaced for a number of reasons, safety and congestion being of primary concern. After going through the entire Draft EIS statement and considering the advantages and disadvantages of all the alternatives, I feel strongly that alternative 3 is the best alternative solution proposed, with alternative 2 being a close 2nd. I believe that in this case light rail service is superior in both customer satisfaction and capacity to that of bus service, and that this location is a very logical one to expand light rail service in, particularly based on the locations of other light rail facilities in the area. I have lived in this area for the last 27 years, and in that time numerous people have asked the question "When will the light rail connect Portland with Vancouver?". Perhaps if we need to at a later point it may be possible to expand bus service off of the light rail. I also feel very strongly that alternatives 4 and 5 should not be considered based on a number of reasons. Based on the numbers it appears that we would be paying nearly as much if not equal to or more money as alternative 2 & 3, but would be getting much less benefit, specifically in terms of congestion, which is one of the main reasons for moving forward with this project other than safety. It appears that nearly all aspects of alternative 2 & 3 are better, even from an environmental standpoint. Plus there are consequences to retrofitting an

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 life 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. In 2008, the Washington legislature passed enabling language for tolling on I-5, provided that each facility is later authorized under specific legislation. Once authorized by the legislature, the Washington Transportation Commission has the authority to set the toll rates. In Oregon, and the Oregon Transportation Commission has the authority to toll a facility and to set the toll rates.

P-0202-004

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-0202-006 old structure and in this case with the monetary estimates as they are, it really makes no logical sense to retrofit an old structure for nearly the same cost as it would take to build a new one that would provide better service. The aged materials of a retrofitted bridge also present additional variables that could require costly measures to correct during the lengthy proposed lifetime of these bridges. Alternatives 4 & 5 appear foolish and I can see no reason as to why they were even submitted as alternatives other than to make alternatives 2 & 3 look better!

P-0202-005

Details of the tolling system are still being refined as the project development enters the final design stage. It is currently not anticipated that transit users, bicyclists or pedestrians will pay a toll. Additionally, certain toll discounts or waivers for other groups have been and will continue to be considered. The ultimate decision on any tolling options will be made by both the Washington and Oregon Transportation Commissions.

P-0202-006

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