

From: halverbk@comcast.net
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Saturday, June 28, 2008 8:54:00 AM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code: 97217
 Work Zip Code: 97227

Person:
 Other - Live and work just south of the project area

Person commutes in the travel area via:
 Car or Truck

P-0440-001

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: No Opinion
 Kiggins Bowl Terminus: No Opinion
 Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: No Opinion
 Clark College (MOS) Terminus: No Opinion

Contact Information:
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Comments:

P-0440-002

As a member of the CRC Task Force, I have been involved with this project for the past 3 years. During that time, I came to the following conclusions:

**P-0440-001**

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-0440-002

Thank you for serving on the CRC Task Force and contributing your comments on the Draft EIS.

- P-0440-003** This project is all about connections
- Between Oregon and Washington
 - Between Portland and Vancouver
 - Between North and Northeast Portland, Hayden Island, and Downtown Vancouver
 - Between the freeway and the areas surrounding it
 - Between TriMet and C-Tran
- Improving those connections is should happen, and building a replacement bridge with light rail is the best answer. I do not have a strong opinion on the best terminus. After touring the Clark College, VA, and Clark County social service headquarters campuses, I think there are possibilities that need to be explored further for a terminus in that vicinity. A land swap and realignment of the traffic pattern may be beneficial to all parties.
- P-0440-004** It is critical that the interface between TriMet and C-Tran be improved for the transit option to work as well as possible. Currently it is not easy to travel from most areas of Clark County to North Portland on transit, and there is a big opportunity for drastically improving that with this project.
- P-0440-005** I support tolling the I-5 bridge now to start generating the local match for construction. I do not support a price break for those that use it most (e.g. Hayden Island residents or truckers) as they will reap the greatest benefit when it is built and should pay accordingly. I am concerned about the tolling of both the I-5 and I-205 bridges to pay for the operations and maintenance, and I think this decision can be made later when construction of the project is paid off in many years. However, if the I-5 bridge is tolled to pay for operations and maintenance, the I-205 bridge should also be tolled in a similar manner to discourage the additional vehicle miles generated by out of direction travel to avoid paying the toll. (I support a weight-mile tax on all vehicles instead of O&M tolls which would also replace the outdated gas tax.)
- P-0440-006** "Balanced congestion" is what I want this project to achieve. I realize that the I-5/I-405 loop will be the new bottleneck in Portland. However, the new bridge must not be built too wide so as to put pressure to widen I-5 through the neighborhoods of North Portland.
- P-0440-007** Perhaps six lanes on the bridge will be needed northbound but only five southbound.
- P-0440-008**
- P-0440-009** The local bicycle and pedestrian connections - just like the auto/truck connections - on each side of the bridge are critical to those that choose to walk or bike. Somehow having artwork or a landmark at each end of the bridge is important just as the bridge itself is important. Please continue to work with the subgroups on these and other topics.
- P-0440-010**
- P-0440-011** Finally, my understanding is that the bridges themselves may be able to be reused. I fully support this concept. From Hood River to Northwest Flanders to another way to travel

P-0440-003

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-0440-004

Extending light rail from the Expo Center, onto Hayden Island, and into Vancouver was chosen as a part of the LPA in July 2008. It is currently planned that since TriMet currently operates the Yellow Line and would do so up to the state line with the extension, and C-TRAN (which has the authority to operate in Washington State) will contract with TriMet to operate light rail into Vancouver and to the Clark College terminus. C-TRAN will likely own and manage the stations and park and rides associated with the light rail alignment in Vancouver. The physical rail and catenary system will also be owned by C-TRAN, but the transit agency will likely contract with TriMet to maintain the facilities, given TriMet's experience and existing resources. The details will be confirmed with intergovernmental agreements between C-TRAN, TriMet, and the City of Vancouver.

P-0440-005

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. Regarding your specific tolling comments:

- Modeling has indicated that tolling I-5 without making the improvements that are part of the CRC project would not meet the

P-0440-011 | between Hayden Island and the rest of Portland, there is an opportunity for reuse of that I hope will be fully explored.

P-0440-012 | I look forward to following the project as additional details become available, and I assume that by being on the mailing list, I will be notified when this happens.

project's purpose and need. This does not mean that some form of tolling prior to constructing CRC couldn't be implemented. The ultimate decision on any tolling options must be made by both the Washington and Oregon Transportation Commissions.

- The details of the tolling system are yet to be determined. 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.
- Tolling I-205 is not part of this project, but could be implemented separately if Oregon and Washington, in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, determine it is needed to advance regional transportation objectives. Traffic modeling indicates that tolling I-5, but not I-205, would divert some traffic to I-205. However, under existing and No-build conditions, trips already, and would continue to, divert to I-205 because of the unreliability and congestion in the I-5 corridor. With the CRC improvements to I-5, many of those diverted trips would shift back to I-5 because it would be a shorter and more reliable trip than I-205. Tolling the I-5 crossing causes some trips to shift to I-205 in order to avoid the toll. Thus the net difference in the number of trips crossing on I-205 is only slightly higher with the CRC project as without it. Section 3.1 of the DEIS discusses the effects of the project on traffic levels in the I-5 and I-205 corridors.

P-0440-006

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) completed Phase I construction of the I-5 Delta Park widening project in fall 2010. Phase I of the project involved widening I-5 and lengthening the entrance and exit ramps at Victory Boulevard and Columbia Boulevard. Phase II involves improving local streets and will begin when funding is secured. Phase I of the Delta Park project widened the current 2-lane segment of southbound I-5 to 3 lanes. There are currently no immediate plans to widen I-5 south of Delta Park. Neither the CRC project nor the Delta

Park projects are intended to address the southbound traffic congestion that currently exists near the I-5/I-405 split. However, traffic analyses show the congestion at the split will not be worsened because of the Columbia River Crossing project. The main reason is that fewer cars are expected to cross the river with a project in 2030 than without a project. This is due to the provision of improved transit service and tolling.

Beyond the CRC and Delta Park projects, the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Final Strategic Plan recommended a comprehensive list of modal actions relating to: additional transit capacity and service; additional rail capacity; land use and land use accord; transportation demand/system management; environmental justice; additional elements and strategies (such as new river crossings); and financing. RTC and Metro are tasked with initiating recommendations as part of their regional transportation planning role. Examples of current efforts include RTC's evaluation of future high-capacity transit in Clark County, and evaluation of needs for future river crossings. Regional planners have investigated solutions to existing bottlenecks at the I-5 connections with I-405 and I-84. ODOT is responsible for conducting ongoing studies to identify other congestion problems on I-5 in Oregon that may need to be addressed in the future.

P-0440-007

See discussion above regarding potential future I-5 widening south of the project area.

P-0440-008

Highway designers attempt to provide a balanced number of lanes to facilitate future development and the potential for an increased reverse commute.

P-0440-009

As discussed in the DEIS, a replacement bridge over the Columbia River will include dramatically improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities by providing:

- A new 16 to 20 foot multi-use pathway over the Columbia River completely separated from vehicle traffic due to the design of the Stacked Transit Highway Bridge
- Protections from traffic noise, exhaust and debris for pedestrians and bicyclists on the river crossing
- More direct connections on each side of the river, consisting of stairs, ramps, and elevators, as well as pathway extensions that connect in with existing or planned facilities and public transit
- Many new or enhanced sidewalks, bike lanes, and crosswalks near the bridge and throughout the project area

Since the publication of the DEIS in May 2008, and the selection of the LPA in July 2008, the CRC project team has continued to work with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee and project partners to refine route and facility design. The updated design, as described in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2) of the FEIS, is the outcome of a long collaboration process.

P-0440-010

The CRC project design for interchanges, roadway elements, transit stations, and other facilities will be context-sensitive and reflect the unique character of the surrounding area. CRC formed a 14-member, bi-state Urban Design Advisory Group (UDAG), made up of design professionals and neighborhood representatives. All UDAG meetings are open to the public to attend and observe. Goals of the UDAG include achieving “design excellence that can be embraced by affected communities and users” and providing “a landmark bridge that is both inspired and inspiring and fully integrates the design and function of the

structure with the urban design elements." Working closely with project designers, UDAG will provide input and guidance on integrating the new facilities with the surrounding community. This work includes identifying significant iconography (for example, symbols and patterns) that will reflect the history of the area, the Native American communities, early pioneers, or other significant themes. These images will be incorporated into an art master plan. Additional discussion of bridge designs can be found in Chapter 2 of the FEIS and in the Visual and Aesthetics Technical Report supporting the FEIS.

P-0440-011

Upon completion of the replacement bridge, the existing bridge will be removed. The CRC project does not currently have a plan for re-use of the existing bridge. The project's Urban Design Advisory Group has expressed interest in re-using some elements of the existing structure. As the project is further developed and construction plans are refined, the project will consider options for the bridge when it is removed.

P-0440-012

On a regular basis, updates on the CRC project are shared with those who have expressed an interest in the project. For efficiency, these updates are provided electronically through email. In addition, notice of project-related public events are mailed to those who have provided property addresses.