

**Vancouver's Downtown Association's
Locally Preferred Alternative for CRC**

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Columbia River Crossing

A-002-001 After much consideration, VDA stands strongly in favor of a replacement bridge with a light rail minimum operating segment that ends at Clark College with configured couplets on Broadway and Washington. We strongly urge the extension of Main Street to the waterfront as well.

A-002-002 Vancouver's Downtown Association has a significant interest in issues that affect the development, livability, vitality, accessibility, potential for diversification, and connectivity of Vancouver's greater downtown area. We realize that wise choices in transportation investment, both within the city and outside the city, impact the movement of goods and services, downtown residents, visitors and consumers. We believe wise decisions made today provide great benefit for generations to come.

VDA has been an active participant in the discussions surrounding the choices before our region regarding the optimum mode to service traffic crossing the Columbia River. We have done our due diligence by gathering data, evaluating and debating the options. Without question, the decisions made on this issue have the potential to streamline commerce and leave a much improved transportation system for our residents. This decision, while bold in some ways, is appropriate for the transportation system we will need in the future.

Briefly, the benefits of adopting our position include:

A-002-003 Safety

- significant safety improvement by thoughtfully designing ingress and egress lane changes with maximum safety in mind
- safety lanes for emergency needs
- safe accommodation of alternative modes of transportation such as bicycle and pedestrian
- improved sight distance
- elimination of bridge lifts which not only cost valuable time but create an unsafe condition and increase accidents.

A-002-004 Access

- improved access to the waterfront
- improved access from Portland to our downtown
- more commuter choices for visitors and residents to travel in and around our region
- more commuter choices for employees who work within the city
- easier movement from place to place within the city

A-002-001

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.

A-002-002

Thank you for your comment.

A-002-003

Thank you for your comment. Improving safety for all users traveling through and within the CRC project area is a key part of the Project's Purpose and Need. Please see Chapter 2 of the FEIS for a description of how the project will address safety.

A-002-005**The new bridge would protect against significant risks**

- inadequate assurance of viability in the event of earthquake
A new bridge would eliminate significant economic risk and gives a more reliable platform for the movement of freight and commuters.
- existing antiquated structure not sufficient for current needs

A-002-006**An improved, modern image for our city**

- a symbol of a modern, forward-thinking community.
As its design is developed, we are excited to see what message it can send to our visitors.
- a new bridge will be the gateway to significant development and both public and private investment on the waterfront and within the city. It will demonstrate clearly that our city has planned from a total perspective and not in small, unrelated chunks.

A-002-007**VDA strongly believes that these concerns need to be addressed**

- public safety on light rail and around stations
- construction impact on existing businesses kept to a minimum
- more information on unknown impact of operating and maintenance costs
- bridge design will create significant landmark
- plans include the additional connectors to rejoin Vancouver .

A-002-008**A-002-009****A-002-010****A-002-011**

A-002-012 We encourage the voting entities to make this decision in a timely manner allowing the Columbia River Crossing funding to be considered as a part of the next federal funding cycle.

Dated this 12th day of June, 2008.

On behalf of the Board of Directors
VANCOUVER'S DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION

Signed:



Lee Coultard, Board Chair

**A-002-004**

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

A-002-005

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

A-002-006

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.

A-002-007

The CRC project is using design strategies that have been proven to reduce the potential for crime at stations and on trains. In addition, CRC has received input from advisory groups, jurisdictions, and the public to

design a system that will enhance safety and security.

Recommendations include, but are not limited to, locating stations near residential and commercial buildings; controlling pedestrian access to stations through the strategic placement of entrances and exits, fencing, lighting, and landscaping; lighting stations so that all activity is easily visible; and designing a clear line of sight into and out of the station. A Safety and Security Management Plan (SSMP) was created, in part, to address public concerns about safety, and is a requirement for funding from the Federal Transit Administration. Safety will be designed into every phase of the project.

The CRC project is also working with the City of Vancouver and Portland police and C-TRAN and TriMet security to promote passenger safety at stations and park and ride facilities, as well as on light rail trains.

Measures to increase public safety on and near light rail could include enforcing fare payment; installing closed-circuit TV at light rail stations, park and rides, and on trains; and patrolling stations and trains by transit security and local police officers. For more information about how safety and security associated with light rail is being addressed by the CRC project, see Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS.

A-002-008

Construction activities associated with transit and highway improvements have the potential to negatively and positively affect nearby businesses, as described in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the DEIS and the FEIS. For example, construction could temporarily block visibility and access to specific businesses, cause traffic delays, and reroute traffic to detours, all of which could divert customers and hamper business activities.

Potential positive construction effects could include increased spending in the project area during construction, which can, for example, increase sales at local shops and restaurants.

The project team will work to minimize negative business impacts and encourage positive impacts. Construction will be carefully planned to minimize road closures and to avoid completely closing access to businesses. When needed, signs would be used to identify temporary access points and the businesses they serve. Detours would be carefully routed to reduce travel times and be signed to reduce confusion. Programs to help businesses affected during construction could include business planning assistance, marketing and retail consulting, or promotions to generate patronage in construction areas. See Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the FEIS for more discussion on temporary construction effects and possible mitigation measures.

A-002-009

Please refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS for a description of the current plans for funding construction and operation of the LPA.

A-002-010

Please see response to comment A-002-006

A-002-011

The CRC project is contributing significantly to the design competition and later completion of a Community Connector, or lid, at Evergreen Boulevard. There will also be considerable open space underneath the Vancouver bridge head, allowing for a park-like setting to reconnect the east and west sides of the bridge. The CRC project team, in coordination with the CRC Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, has also designed improved east-west connections for bicycles and pedestrians at six interchanges in the project area, and at Evergreen Boulevard, and the 29th and 33rd Street overpasses in Vancouver. Lastly, raising I-5 at the SR 14 interchange would allow for an extension of Main Street from 5th Street South to Columbia Way. A more detailed description of these facilities can be found in Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

A-002-012

Funding plans for the CRC project are progressing as quickly as regional consensus and compliance with local, state, and federal regulations allow.