

**P-0704-001**

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

**From:** [David Carrier](#)  
**To:** [Draft EIS Feedback](#);  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** CRC comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 01, 2008 11:10:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [letterhead.doc](#)

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**P-0704-001** would like to submit the attached comments concerning the Columbia River Crossing.



thank you

**David Carrier**  
for State Senate  
17th Legislative District  
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## David Carrier for State Senate - 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Columbia River Crossing Project  
c/o Heather Gunderson  
Environmental Manager  
700 Washington St., Suite 300  
Vancouver, WA 98660

Subject: Testimony concerning the Columbia River Crossing Project

Date: June 30, 2008

Dear CRC Project Staff;

**P-0704-001** This is a copy of my testimony before the Clark County Commissioners on Monday June 23, 2008 and the Vancouver City Council on Monday June 30, 2008, regarding the Columbia River Crossing project.

I am an adjunct Professor of Economics and Statistics at Washington State University- Vancouver and other area Colleges and Universities. I am also a resident of East Vancouver and a candidate for State Senate in the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

**P-0704-002** Most of us would agree that economic growth is a good thing. Economies grow and new jobs are created through interaction and trade in goods and services with other regions. Adequate transportation and infrastructure are vital to that interaction and trade. If you were an employer with customers in Portland, would you locate here if you couldn't get across the bridge? If you are a shipper and waste several hours a day trying to get across the bridge, would you locate a new warehouse here in Vancouver?

Like it or not, Vancouver's economy is highly dependent on Portland. New jobs won't happen if people and goods can't get from here to there more easily. The current I-5 bridge is inadequate for current needs, and it will only get worse. If we want good jobs for future generations, we need to be able to move a lot more people between here and Portland than we currently do. Since more lanes will only relieve congestion in the short term, we need to include a public transit option to meet future needs.

**P-0704-003** To pay for the bridge, reduce traffic congestion, and encourage people to get out of their cars and use mass transit, we should charge a toll on the replacement bridge. A toll is not a tax. A toll is a user fee that is paid only by people who use the bridge. If drivers don't want to pay the toll, they can choose to ride mass transit or not use the bridge.

Time is money. Exactly how much is it worth? That's determined by how much people are willing to pay to avoid traffic. The toll should be set at a price where congestion is eliminated, and it should vary depending on the time of day in order to maintain the free flow of traffic. People who don't wish to pay a toll or wait in traffic should have the option to take mass transit instead.

**P-0704-004** In conclusion, a toll bridge with high capacity mass transit is the best way to support job growth in Vancouver for future generations. We need to build it now, while we still have federal support for the project. I have read the finance chapter of the EIS and am convinced that we can pay for the bridge with tolls, and will not need to increase taxes. Therefore I fully support the recommendations of the Columbia River Task Force.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this critical infrastructure project.

David Carrier, Ph.D.

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### **P-0704-002**

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-0704-003**

The CRC project proposes to include a variable rate toll. The goal of variable-rate tolling is to reduce congestion and maximize the flow of traffic through this corridor. With a variable rate toll, a lower toll is charged when traffic demand is lower and a higher toll is charged when the corridor is at its highest demand. Because a toll is charged by time of day, variable-rate tolling gives travelers an incentive to change travel times, reduce optional trips, take an alternate route, or choose transit as an alternative to driving alone. Experiences in other cities in the U.S. and

around the world have shown that these fees can help reduce congestion and improve the performance of the roadway.

**P-0704-004**

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.