



**From:** [Keith Watson](#)  
**To:** [Draft EIS Feedback;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** impact of increased volume on I-5 SB  
**Date:** Thursday, June 26, 2008 10:16:57 PM  
**Attachments:**

Hello,

**P-0732-001** I am a North Portland resident who works in SE. We bought our house in North for several reasons, mostly due to its proximity to the yellow Max Line that was soon to open along N Interstate at the time (the business in SE was not one of them – that came later). My wife and I share one car, and she either bikes to work or takes the Max. We love the city of Portland and the great parks and green spaces that are in such abundance here – that was what drew us to move here in the first place.

**P-0732-002** As I have made my daily commute on I-5, I have watched traffic get heavier and heavier. The entrance I use at N Rosa Parks Way is almost always a point of some congestion, and it usually gets heavier and heavier as more traffic enters down through the 405 interchange and the road narrows down to 2 lanes just prior to the I-84 interchange, where I exit. Every day I hear on the traffic report that I-5 is stop and go or slow across the Interstate Bridge and through Delta Park starting very early and continuing through the morning. It is rarely mentioned that it is slow at the I-84 interchange, but it always is when I get there around 7:30. I have listened with interest to the news reports about the proposed expansion of the Bridge and I-5 through the Park. Lately it has become very alarming to me what will happen to my commute and my neighbors' commutes when the bottleneck at the bridge goes away and the gate opens for SE Washington residents to flood south into Portland for work every day.

Everyone has a choice to make about where to live. I think it is beyond dispute that more people commute into Portland from Washington than the other way around. I can't tell you how many people I talk to who say, "Portland property taxes are too high – I'm moving to (or that's why I live in) Vancouver. Washington doesn't tax you so much." So they make the move further away from their workplace, increasing their commute by however long it takes to wade through the traffic to cross into Portland. More and more cars sitting in traffic spewing out

### **P-0732-001**

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

### **P-0732-002**

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

- P-0732-002** exhaust fumes, people spending more time on the road getting stressed out, away from their families, all for the sake of lower property taxes. And they drive into Portland to do all their shopping because Oregon has no sales tax. I'm hardly one to talk about the environment as I have to commute diagonally across town, but it concerns me when I hear about the possibility of all the money that is likely to be spent so that people who have forsaken Portland for lower property taxes can get back to Portland that much quicker, likely causing gridlock for everyone closer in to the city. I realize that part of this project will be to expand light rail into Vancouver, but the people that I know that move to Vancouver are (and I know I'm generalizing here, but I call it like I see it) the type of people who value their SUV's and their driving independence more than the environment and who drive everywhere. For this reason, I expect the main result of freeway expansion to be simply much more car traffic moving much more quickly into the city center from further out, causing more of a mess than there already is.
- P-0732-003**
- P-0732-004**
- P-0732-005** After reading the Final Strategic Plan, it is unclear to me if the 2-lane section of I-5 near the Fremont bridge:
- " 3.1.1 There are three remaining two-lane sections on I-5 in the study area: (1) I-84 – Fremont Bridge near the Rose Quarter, (2) Delta Park to Lombard, and (3) 99<sup>th</sup> Street to I-205 in Clark County."
- includes the section just prior to the I-84 interchange (there are 2 separate sections between 405 and 84). On a daily basis, I see that traffic backs up from the 84 interchange, through the 405 interchange, and continues to back up further north, but all originating at the 84 interchange. The recommendations made:
- R 3a.1 I-5 should be widened to three lanes in each direction between (a) Delta Park and Lombard and (b) 99<sup>th</sup> Street and I-205 in Clark County  
 R 3a.2 The Delta Park to Lombard project should go to construction as quickly as possible.  
 R 3a.3 The transportation issues south of the I-5/Fremont Bridge junction must be addressed and solved. The Mayor of Portland, the Governor of the State of Oregon, and JPACT should join together to appoint a group of public and private sector stakeholders to study and make recommendations for long-term transportation solutions for the entire I-5/I-405 freeway loop.
- seem to indicate that the lowest priority is the area south of the Fremont Bridge interchange. It seems to me that the highest priority for I-5 and Portland traffic flow at this point (aside from expanding mass transportation and supporting bike transportation) should be making sure that the pathways through the center of the city can handle the current traffic load and then some prior to expanding pathways

congestion problems on I-5 in Oregon that may need to be addressed in the future.

**P-0732-003**

Reduced commute times are only one aspect of the proposed project. The project has the larger purpose of improving Interstate 5 corridor mobility by addressing present and future travel demand and mobility needs in the Columbia River Crossing Bridge Influence Area (BIA). The BIA extends from approximately Columbia Boulevard in the south to SR 500 in the north. Relative to the No-build alternative, the proposed action is intended to achieve the following objectives: a) improve travel safety and traffic operations on the Interstate 5 crossing's bridges and associated interchanges; b) improve connectivity, reliability, travel times and operations of public transportation modal alternatives in the BIA; c) improve highway freight mobility and address interstate travel and commerce needs in the BIA; and d) improve the Interstate 5 river crossing's structural integrity.

**P-0732-004**

The proposed new add/drop lanes (i.e., lanes that connect two or more interchanges) are used to alleviate safety issues associated with the closely spaced interchanges in the project area and are not designed to increase capacity generally on I-5. 68 to 75% of I-5 traffic enters and/or exits I-5 within the CRC project area, and these add/drop lanes provide space for this traffic to do so without disrupting cars and trucks traveling to destinations further north and south of the project area. The project does not propose to add lanes north or south of the project limits.

The DEIS evaluation found that the project, with a toll and light rail, would actually reduce the total daily volume of traffic using the I-5 and I-205 river crossings by approximately 3%. The FEIS analysis of the project has been updated to include an evaluation of how the CRC project would affect Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (see Chapter 3,

**P-0732-005**

into the city from further out. Mention was made of the fact that no more than 3 through lanes each was recommended to limit the traffic load increase on 405 to 1%, but as i drive by the 405 interchange, it seems that traffic usually flows well onto the bridge long after it backs up at the 84 interchange. Perhaps my vantage point does not allow me to see the real issue on the other side of the river?

It is obvious from the amount of the Plan devoted to expansion of the Interstate Bridge that that part of the project is the highest priority, but I can't help but notice how that will affect things further south (namely the entire part of my commute spent on I-5). I know this is probably too late to put in my 2 cents, but I think the bridge project happening before everything further south is dealt with is a colossal mistake as it will only move the problem area a few miles further south. Please consider this aspect of the issue.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,  
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Section 3.1). Rather than inducing sprawl, the CRC project will likely reinforce the region's goals of concentrating development in regional centers, reinforcing existing corridors, and promoting transit and pedestrian friendly development and development patterns. In 2010, Metro ran the MetroScope model (an integrated land use and transportation model) to forecast growth associated with transportation improvements of a 12-lane river crossing and light rail to Clark College. The model showed only minimal changes in employment location and housing demand compared to the No-Build. For more information see FEIS Chapter 3, Section 3.4.

**P-0732-005**

As discussed above, the project is expected to lower expected future increases in auto traffic traveling across I-5.