

P-0763-001

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](#)

P-0763-001 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 - 17th 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-0763-002 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 17th Legislative District.

P-0763-003 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-0763-005 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-0763-006 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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Service and leadership with competence, compassion, and commitment to community

P-0763-002

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

P-0763-003

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

P-0763-004

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-0763-005

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 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-0763-006

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.