From: NoEmailProvided@columbiarivercrossing.org
To: Columbia River Crossing;
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 11:36:28 PM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code: 98683
Work Zip Code: 98683

Person:
Other - Ride through the project area.

Person commutes in the travel area via:
Bicycle

P-0788-001

1. In Support of the following bridge options:
Supplemental Bridge
Do Nothing

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: Yes
Kiggins Bowl Terminus: Unsure
Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: Yes
Clark College (MOS) Terminus: Unsure

Contact Information:
First Name:
Last Name:
Title:
E-Mail:
Address:
,

Comments:

P-0788-002

All of the induced sprawl is essentially in the project area too.

P-0788-001

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-0788-002

As described in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the DEIS and FEIS, and in the Indirect Effects Technical Report, highway capacity improvements and access improvements can induce development in suburban and rural areas that were not previously served, or were greatly underserved, by highway access. The DEIS outlines a comprehensive analysis of the potential induced growth effects that could be expected from the CRC project. A review of national research on induced growth indicates that there are six factors that tend to be associated with highway projects that

P-0788-003 To simply say that the bridge would not induce sprawl is ludicrous. The fact is that sprawl will occur much faster than it already is if we were to replace or supplement the bridge. This fact must be taken into account.

P-0788-004 The traffic projections must also be completely redone to take into account the actual price of gas by the time the bridge is complete. To simply say that gas prices will not rise significantly is again ludicrous. Factor peak oil into these calculations.

P-0788-005 Do not just give through pedestrian/bike facilities to the replacement bridge options. The supplemental bridge should have both the path on the original 1917 span widened along with a path on the supplemental bridge from the expo center all the way to Vancouver without grade crossings.

P-0788-006 Also strongly consider adding tolls immediately, priced in a way that makes transit a far more cost-effective option. This would likely decrease congestion and allow for more data to be collected about the effects of tolls on bridge traffic.

Considering that the most dangerous parts of the area are the short ramps on Hayden Island, replace these first and observe the increased safety in the project area.

In strengthening the interstate bridge against earthquakes, the BNSF rail bridge must also be strengthened against earthquakes as it serves as a vital link in the rail system. The BNSF span should also be reconstructed or replaced in a way that moves the drawbridge portion inline with the hump of the interstate bridge. Once the BNSF span was fixed in this manner, freight could more easily be moved by rail instead of clogging up the highway with trucks. This would both drastically reduce the number of draw bridge openings and the amount of congestion caused by semi-trucks.

A supplemental bridge could then be built that would carry ONLY light rail and bike/ped facilities.

induce sprawl. These are discussed in the Indirect Effects Technical Report. Based on the CRC project team's comparison of those national research findings to CRC's travel demand modeling, Metro's 2001 land use / transportation modeling, and a review of Clark County, City of Vancouver, City of Portland and Metro land use planning and growth management regulations, the DEIS and the FEIS conclude that the likelihood of substantial induced sprawl from the CRC project is very low. In fact, the CRC project, because of its location in an already urbanized area, the inclusion of new tolls that manage demand, the inclusion of new light rail, and the active regulation of growth management in the region, 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 October, 2008, the project convened a panel of national experts to review the travel demand model methodology and conclusions, including a land use evaluation. The panel unanimously concluded that CRC's methods and the conclusions were valid and reasonable. Specifically, the panel noted that CRC would "have a low impact to induce growth…because the project is located in a mature urban area," and that it would "contribute to a better jobs housing balance in Clark County…a positive outcome of the project". These results are summarizes in the "Columbia River Crossing Travel Demand Model Review Report" (November 25, 2008).

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. Even with a 12-lane river crossing, the model showed only minimal changes in employment location and housing demand compared to the No-Build Alternative.

For a more detailed discussion regarding potential indirect land use changes as a result of the CRC project, including the likely land use changes associated with the introduction of light rail, please see Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the FEIS.

P-0788-003

Please see response to comment P-0788-002.

P-0788-004

Significant increases in oil prices can have both short term and long term effects on travel behavior. In the short term, the options for responding to rising gas prices are more limited, and include driving less and/or changing from driving to walking, biking or transit for at least some trips. During recent increases in gasoline prices transit use increased and off-peak highway travel decreased. Peak period highway travel changed little.

Over the long term, there are more options for adjusting to changes in gasoline prices, besides changing driving behavior. Technological advances and legislative mandates can increase fuel efficiency standards in the long term. In turn, as older vehicles wear out, more consumers can replace them with more fuel efficient vehicles. Automobile manufacturers are developing and will continue to develop new vehicle and engine technologies that require much less, or even no, petroleum-based fuels. This trend is already happening as evidenced by the growing popularity of gasoline-electric hybrid and small electric vehicles.

P-0788-005

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-0788-006

The evaluation of the five alternatives in the DEIS was preceded by an evaluation and screening of a wide array of possible solutions to the CRC project's Purpose and Need statement. Chapter 2 of the DEIS (Section 2.5) explains how the project's Sponsoring Agencies generated ideas and solicited the public, stakeholders, other agencies, and tribes for ideas on how to meet the Purpose and Need. This effort produced a long list of potential solutions, many of which were non-auto oriented options such as various transit modes and techniques for operating the existing highway system more efficiently without any capital investment. After identifying this wide array of options, the project evaluated whether and how they met the project's Purpose and Need, and found that in order for an alternative to meet the six "needs" included in the Purpose and Need (described in Chapter 1 of the DEIS), it had to provide at least

some measure of capital improvements to I-5 in the project area. Alternatives that did not include such improvements in the highway generally did not adequately address the seismic vulnerability of the existing I-5 bridges, traffic congestion on I-5, or the existing safety problems caused by sub-standard design of the highway in this corridor. Also, travel demand modeling and traffic analysis demonstrated that alternatives with substantially more transit service and only minor highway capacity improvements, had only marginal differences in transit ridership and auto demand, but had substantially greater congestion, emissions, and highway safety problems.

Regarding freight, the Vancouver-Portland region is the "last mile" for 85 percent of the freight traveling in the region. That is, goods are produced, assembled, and/or delivered within the region, and the overwhelming majority of the local shippers and customers are not located on a rail spur or within a rail/intermodal terminal. Even if there was a targeted effort to use railroads more frequently, the goods would need to travel by truck on regional roads and freeways to arrive at rail terminals. In fact, most of the goods produced or received from the rail system must drive those goods by truck to or from the rail lines; and, increased rail service would likely lead to greater use of trucks for this very reason. While there are certainly some commodities that could shift form truck to rail in the region, it is probably a very minimal amount, probably not part of a consistent and regular shipment schedule, and would not significantly ease congestion along I-5 in the project area.