From: gimmespamnow@yahoo.com
To: Columbia River Crossing;
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Tuesday, July 01, 2008 8:59:26 PM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code:
Work Zip Code:

Person:

Person commutes in the travel area via:

P-0791-001 1. In Support of the following bridge options:

2. In Support of the following High Capacity Transit options:

3. Support of Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail by location:
Lincoln Terminus: No Opinion
Kiggins Bowl Terminus: No Opinion
Mill Plain (MOS) Terminus: No Opinion
Clark College (MOS) Terminus: No Opinion

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Comments:
P-0791-002 The purpose of commenting on a DEIS isn't to vote on an alternative, the purpose is to give comments on the analysis presented. If it turns out the analysis has problems, then the vote should be considered invalid, it would be like asking people to sign a contract and then rewriting it afterwards.

P-0791-001

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-0791-002

Answers to closed-ended survey questions were not "votes," as tallies of these answers were not the decision-making process. As the DEIS is technically sound and available to those who were providing comments, their answers remain a useful aspect of the public involvement process.

P-0791-003 The DEIS doesn't consider peak oil.

The energy technical report says that more oil products will be used in 2030 than today regardless of the alternatives (a roughly 25% increase, slightly different depending on the alternative but roughly in line with the projected increase in traffic over the bridge.) This is quite a bit different than what I heard at one of the open houses where the presenter said that people would just drive more efficient cars, but I'll get to that later. The problem is that is the near future, (much sooner than the 2030 that is considering in the EIS,) oil will peak, and less oil will be available each year than there was the year before. The way that the limited stock of oil will be allocated on the global level is by price and so oil will become very, very expensive until people use less of it. (At $140/ barrel, many people are saying that time is now.) Add in the fact that China and India are industrializing, and there will be quite a bit less oil for the US to use each year. As the price continues to rises, people will consume less oil, (something that we've seen recently on I-5 with the recent reductions in traffic. It was only a 2% reduction in the last year, but the DEIS said it should be increasing by 2% a year, not decreasing.) The DEIS does consider oil prices, but uses some old numbers that were estimated during the scoping period and are no longer accurate, (the highest price the DEIS assumes is $100/ barrel.) The EIA (DOE) produced some new numbers in March of this year, (before the DEIS was released. Those numbers should have been in the DEIS,) that assumes a low price of $100 in 2030. The IEA will produce a report in November that will probably be much higher than that. By the time the final draft of this EIS is released, I expect that the EIA will have produced a new estimate, and that estimate needs to be incorporated into the final EIS. However, the actual price of oil isn't the only issue: the fact remains that regardless of price, less oil is available the following year than the year before after we've peaked, and that translates into less oil to use. Portland actually has a plan to deal with peak oil: Resolution 36488, passed in March of 2007 states "Establish a goal to reduce oil and natural gas use in Portland by 50 percent in 25 years"

But getting back to what I was told at the open house. It isn't true. The DOE did a study recently called the Hirsch Report (Here: http://www.netl.doe.gov/publications/others/pdf/Oil_Peaking_NETL.pdf) that said that peak oil could not be dealt with, with more efficient automobiles, unless the US started building much more efficient cars 20 years before oil peaked. I'm not going to go into too much detail as to why, but it takes a long time (or a lot of money) to replace all of our automobiles and we don't have that long. (The DEIS also mentions biofuels. The Hirsch Report says that they'll have a very limited effect because of the large amount of land used to grow them, and the large population of the world that depends upon that land for feeding itself. We are already observing that today as well with the high prices of food.)

Less oil means that less traffic will be going over the bridge in 2030 than right now. The DEIS doesn't consider any of this. There are some small differences between the

P-0791-003

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-0791-003 alternatives, but they all assume a large increase in oil usage. Considering the large amount of new information released recently about peak oil from the Portland City Council, the DOE, the IEA, and the current price of oil, a supplemental DEIS should be issued under NEPA regs 1502.9c1ii. That supplemental DEIS needs to add alternatives that do consider peak oil. Such alternatives would include components like increasing freight movement across the Columbia River via railroad and shorter trips and vastly increased transit usage, (far higher than what has been assumed under any of the alternative so far.) There also needs to be a way to get low speed electric vehicles, (the type that are currently available in Portland today,) across the river. The alternatives also should consider what the tolling and gas tax revenue will be like under peak oil, and therefore how this project will be paid for.