


**From:** [Stephanie](#) 

**To:** [Columbia River Crossing](#)

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**Subject:** I-5 Bridge with Light Rail Proposal

**Date:** Tuesday, July 01, 2008 5:29:12 PM

**Attachments:**

- P-0801-001** | I want this email to be included with all correspondence on the above mentioned Columbia River (I-5) Crossing to the Federal Transportation Administration for their review. Thank you.
- P-0801-002** | 1. The basic congestion problem from Vancouver, WA to south of Portland, OR on the I-5 corridor are two bottlenecks of 2-lane highway. One at Delta Park in Oregon and the second at the Rose Quarter area near downtown Portland, Oregon.
- P-0801-003** | 2. We can build a 12 lane bridge or a 20 lane bridge and the bottlenecks will remain the same.
- P-0801-004** | 3. Oregon has told us no light rail, no bridge. This is because they are afraid a bus rapid transit will reduce their Max ridership from Washington residents.
- P-0801-005** | 4. Oregon appears to not be ready to pony-up their share of the costs of this project.
- P-0801-006** | 5. The estimated ridership for light rail from Vancouver/ Clark County WA is extremely low. My guess would be not more than 2000 per day, each way. This is out of a population of over 160,000 in the City of Vancouver.
6. The light rail terminus will be at Clark College in Vancouver on the city's west side and is only 1.5 miles from the end of Max at the Expo Center in OR
7. The 1.5mile track from the Expo Center to Clark College is an ineffective way to serve the congestion problem as outlined in the DBS report.
8. The majority of residents in the City of Vancouver and Clark County have no reasonable access to get to the light rail terminus at Clark College.
9. The financing for this behemoth project has not been clearly defined to the public by any group associated with this project. When asking about financing, "we don't know yet" would be the answer.
10. It appears that tolls are going to end up being the major portion of

**P-0801-001**

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

**P-0801-002**

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-0801-006** money to finance this project.  
 11. Tolls will be a fluid source of income to the project and raised at the drop of the hat when bridge crossings decline due to the increases on already high tolls.  
 12. A toll will be placed on the I-205 bridge in east Vancouver to subsidize the I-5 construction due to lack of Federal, State and local funding for this project.
- P-0801-007** 13. Light rail systems all over this country have failed due to lack of ridership and poor planning and understanding of the problems needing correction. The consequences are that many, many cities are deeply in debt to the tune of millions of dollars. The residents are stuck paying off these failed light rail projects.  
 14. This CRC report is another example of poor planning. We know it's Oregon that has the issue, but our people from Washington are too timid or want the bridge and light rail too badly to take a proper stand for the people.
- P-0801-008** 15. I understand there is a movement afoot at our State Legislature to enact new legislation to circumvent a vote of the people on the maintenance and operational expenses associated with this project. In other words, whatever lack of funds from the Feds and State, the local people will foot the bill. Never mind if we can afford it or not, the emperor wants you to see his new clothes and he's as naked as a jaybird!  
 16. The light rail was voted down in 1995 by the voters in Vancouver.  
 17. The people MUST BE ALLOWED TO VOTE on this project.
- P-0801-009** 18. It will do no good to build when people can't afford to cross the river or support the operational costs if our sales tax, property taxes, various licenses, user fees, tolls, assessments go up to support a 4.2 to 6 billion dollar project.
- P-0801-010** 19. We are a small community. We're happy the way we are.
- P-0801-011** 20. We need to fall back and regroup until Portland decides what to do with THEIR bottleneck!!!
- P-0801-012** In my estimation, it is a sad state of affairs when the will of the people is circumvented by the few in power. Trust me when I say that selfish endeavors, for whatever reason, eventually pay a price in politics. Nothing is forever. We speak through our votes.
- Thank you for your consideration to my issues.
- Stephanie Turley

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

**P-0801-003**

Light rail has been endorsed by every local Sponsoring Agency (Vancouver City Council, C-TRAN, RTC, Portland City Council, TriMet, and Metro), whose boards are comprised of the elected leadership of the region.

Annual light rail passenger trips crossing the I-5 bridge in 2030 are projected to be 6.1 million, with daily ridership around 18,700. The travel time for the morning commute by light rail between downtown Vancouver and Pioneer Square in downtown Portland will be approximately 34 minutes. Light rail would travel on a dedicated right-of-way, with more reliable travel times than auto drivers dealing with unpredictable road conditions, traffic congestion, and parking challenges.

The CRC project planning for light rail incorporates and supports the principles of the Vancouver's City Center Vision Plan. Downtown Vancouver has seen recent growth in higher density mixed use projects from three to 12 stories in height. In addition, another 4,000 downtown condominiums are proposed or pending as part of new developments. The core of Vancouver has, along with many of the larger corridors such as Fourth Plain Blvd, medium to high density residential development and an urban mix of uses. Transit demand in these areas is quite high, and ridership will increase with the introduction of light rail.

Long-term operation and maintenance of the new light rail line will be funded through C-TRAN and TriMet. For its share of the operations and maintenance funding, C-TRAN plans on having a public vote.

**P-0801-004**

In 2006, WSDOT and ODOT agreed to a goal of equally contributing to

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the costs of the environmental process needed to reach a Record of Decision. This goal was agreed to in recognition that this project would contribute to the economic and freight mobility needs of both states and would include transit, highway and bridge improvements in both states. Though it is WSDOT and ODOT's shared goal to keep the project as close to equally funded as possible, it is understood that at any moment in time the total funds provided by WSDOT and ODOT may not be equal, owing primarily to the fact that each state's legislature operates on its own schedule and federal earmarks dedicated to this project are of unequal amounts and have been earmarked at different times. Regarding project construction and operation, please refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS. 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 the 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.

#### **P-0801-005**

Annual light rail passenger trips crossing the I-5 bridge in 2030 are projected to be 6.1 million, with daily ridership around 18,700.

The Clark College transit terminus was chosen by project sponsors as part of the LPA in July 2008, as it was deemed to most effectively balance the cost of the project and the projected community benefits.

The CRC project modeled how drivers would access the three proposed Park and Ride lots in Vancouver during the morning peak commute. Two of the three Park and Rides – Clark College and SR-14 – are located adjacent to major thoroughfares (I-5 and SR 14). The Mill Plain

Park and Ride, though not adjacent to I-5 or a state route, is located between two major arterials, Mill Plain and Fourth Plain Boulevards. This modeling confirmed the majority of drivers (70%-95%) would access the Park and Rides from major roads including I-5, SR 14, SR 500, Mill Plain and Fourth Plain.

The CRC Project is focused on providing a high-capacity transit option through downtown Vancouver to Clark College. RTC has completed a High-Capacity Transit System Study which recommends specific high-capacity transit improvements, including light rail, bus rapid transit and bus service improvements that will best serve Clark County residents in the mid-term (by 2030) and long-term (beyond 2030). To view their Final HCT System Study, visit RTC's website at [www.rtc.wa.gov](http://www.rtc.wa.gov). Though these recommendations are designed to connect with CRC transit improvements, they are not part of the CRC project.

**P-0801-006**

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 the 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. Regarding tolling I-205, it is not part of this project, but could be implemented separately if Oregon and Washington, in

partnership with the Federal Highway Administration, determine it is needed to advance regional transportation objectives.

**P-0801-007**

Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected light rail to Clark College as the project's preferred transit mode. These sponsor agencies, which include the Vancouver City Council, Portland City Council, C-TRAN Board, TriMet Board, RTC Board and Metro Council considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force (a broad group of stakeholders representative of the range of interests affected by the project - see the DEIS Public Involvement Appendix for more information regarding the CRC Task Force) before voting on the LPA. Please see response to P-0801-004.

**P-0801-008**

There will not be a public vote on construction of the various CRC project elements. However, as a public project, it must be approved and funded by the decisions of elected officials who are themselves directly elected by voters. Long-term operation and maintenance of the new light rail line will be funded through C-TRAN and TriMet. For its share of the operations and maintenance funding, C-TRAN plans on pursuing a public vote.

**P-0801-009**

Please refer to response to comment P-0801-006.

**P-0801-010**

Significant work has gone into developing the CRC project, including an ongoing public involvement effort. The public involvement program includes numerous advisory groups to ensure the values and interests of the community are reflected in project decisions. These groups include

representatives of public agencies, businesses, civic organizations, neighborhoods and freight, commuter and environmental groups. Feedback from the general public and advisory groups has been generally supportive of the project, including support for the transit, bicycle, pedestrian, highway, interchange, and financing elements of the project. See Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS for more discussion on the process used to develop project alternatives and select a Locally Preferred Alternative.

**P-0801-011**

See discussions regarding existing traffic bottlenecks, above.

**P-0801-012**

Please refer to response to comment P-0801-010.