

**P-1186-000** 0 trips and counting!

For any long time resident of Clark County you have a mostly hate relationship with the Interstate Bridge as I do. Over the years I have done the commute, the reverse commute, delivery truck runs, more business meetings in Portland than I can count, not to mention that quick trip to save on sales tax, and the near accidents on the bridge, and I won't talk about the hours sitting contemplating the meaning of life in traffic. With that said, we face a decision that will affect our lives today and our community's vitality tomorrow.

The statistics are well documented. You know the bridge is unsafe to drive. The lanes are too narrow, there are no shoulders for emergencies, and the interchanges are more a kin to "Mr. Toads Wide Ride" at Disneyland. The bottom line, accident rates on the bridge and its approaches are twice that of any other section of Interstate in the State of Washington.

But what of tomorrow? Yes the bridge may survive an earth quake. But most likely it would have to be torn down and rebuilt. I do not have much confidence in a bridge built at the turn of the century on wood pilings. Yes, lately it seems like there is less traffic because of the high cost of gas. Given America's ability to adapt to change I have no doubt we will eventually be driving electric, hybrid, or hydrogen vehicles, and the traffic counts will continue to climb.

P-1186-002 is your American dream? A big part of mine is a job! The Portland-Vancouver area economy is more transportation-dependent than most US cities our size. The value of the goods moving in and out of our warehouses and distribution systems is over \$363 billion per year. This in turn supports about 132,000 jobs. In fact, if we don't act to invest in our transportation infrastructure, we risk losing up to 6,500 jobs per year by 2025 according to the 2005 Cost of Congestion report prepared by the Economic Development Research Group.

About 64 percent of commodities moving in and through our region do so by truck. That number is expected to grow to 73 percent in the next 20 years. Modernizing I-5 and the Interstate Bridge is critical to ensuring that these trucks have safe and efficient access to their markets. Doing nothing is not an option, unless we want to watch as congestion on I-5 creeps to 15 hours each weekday in the next 20 years. This costs us all. Producers have to run more trucks or deliver fewer products, which we all pay for in the price of the goods we consume.

P-1186-003 Columbia River Crossing's purpose is to fix the problems on I-5. The elements that matter to business include replacing the bridge across the Columbia River and making major improvements at Marine Drive for trucks traveling to and from the Port of Portland. The ramp improvements in Vancouver will maintain access to the port, as well as eliminate backups on neighborhood streets.

There will be vast improvements for trip travel times and freight mobility in 2030, due to fewer hours of daily congestion. Freight delay will go down about 60 percent (as opposed to doing nothing) and afternoon travel times will go down about 40 percent, making trips faster for cars and trucks alike.

P-1186-004 is no free ride. And yes a new bridge is a whole lot of money. The financial plan for the bridge includes a unique opportunity for federal funds, State of Washington and Oregon funds and the hated word tolls. The current bridge was built with tolls. The inflation adjusted toll is not much different than a toll on the new bridge.

We need to replace the bridge, we can not afford to do nothing, and we deserve a better future for our community.

Bob Byrd
Commuter
Truck Driver
Business Owner

P-1186-001

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

P-1186-002

The ability to move freight efficiently in the Vancouver/Portland region is critical to the overall health of our economy. As such, the CRC project is designed to improve freight mobility on I-5, as well as make it safer and easier for trucks to get on and off I-5 to reach businesses and Port facilities. The Freight Working Group (FWG), comprised of representatives of the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area's freight industry, met 22 times throughout the DEIS and FEIS development process to advise and inform the Columbia River Crossing project team about freight issues. The group provided insight, observation, and recommendation about the needs for truck access and mobility within the corridor; characterized the horizontal and vertical clearances, acceleration/deceleration, and stopping performance needs of trucks that must be accommodated; and provided meaningful comments on the effect of geometric, regulatory, and capacity changes on truck movements in the corridor. See Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS for detailed discussion of how the project increases freight mobility and access along I-5 and in the region.

P-1186-003

The project purpose is to improve 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. See Chapter 1 of the DEIS for more discussion on the development of the project Purpose and Need.

P-1186-004

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 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.