

From: [Stephen Onisko](#)
 To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
 CC:
 Subject: CRC EIS and Recommendations
 Date: Monday, June 23, 2008 12:49:16 PM
 Attachments:

Sir:

P-0100-001 I take issue with your proposed recommendation to support the construction of a replacement bridge as a preferred option. I recommend that you support the no build option for the following reasons:

P-0100-002 First off there is the cost of such a monumental undertaking, the largest in this region's history. Much of the \$4.2 billion cost of this project will be shouldered by people like me whether as a fuel tax, tolls or some debt instrument. In my opinion these costs are based on some very doubtful and extremely speculative projections given today's economic and environmental uncertainties. For example the current gas crisis, the faltering economy, the mortgage crisis, unemployment, inflation and the huge national and personal debts that will call into play not only the cost of borrowing money, but the ability to pay it off. I believe that these factors have a far more negative role on your recommendation than is presented in the Draft EIS. Thus, as a possible payer for part of these huge sums, I recommend that the economic factors and analysis be reviewed and updated to reflect present trends and realities, and that concrete proposals be made that will describe exactly where the monies will come from and how they will be repaid. I want to know

P-0100-003 what my obligations are! In addition I believe that vehicular trips since the fuel crisis have fallen and will continue to fall significantly from what is projected and that this is a truer representation and should be the basis for your recommendation. These projections will support a no build option.

P-0100-004 I truly believe that Portland is a livable city and I want it to remain as such. It was through community action and political debate that the city has instituted land use

P-0100-001

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-0100-002

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

P-0100-004 laws in keeping with the State’s directives. As a livable city I am more than happy to put out the welcome mat and invite those who want to live, work and enjoy our wonderful city. However, with the recommendation, we will only accommodate urban sprawl to the detriment of our city. Oregon chose to diminish urban sprawl and all of the evils associated with it, especially the use of the automobile, a necessity for suburban living which is the chosen lifestyle in Clark County. Those who choose that life style should bear their own costs, but please, please do not push those costs onto our livable city. It is Portland and neighborhoods like mine which will bear the brunt. As stated in the Oregonian (May 18, 2008) “Clark County commuters are the primary cause of the congestion and the primary beneficiaries of the project.” Quite simply the bulk of the benefits are given to the Clark County commuters while the brunt of the costs, such as land use, air quality, noise, safety and health related problems, are born by Oregonians.

P-0100-005

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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.

P-0100-003

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-0100-004

As described in Chapter 3, Section 3.4 of the DEIS and in Appendix A: Indirect Effects: Induced Growth of the CRC Land Use Technical Report (2008), 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 induce sprawl. These are discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the FEIS. 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, Metro's 2010 run of Metroscope, 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, 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.

The City of Portland and State of Oregon were making considerable progress toward containing urban sprawl earlier than the State of Washington or Clark County. However, since that time, the State of Washington adopted the Growth Management Act and numerous implementing strategies. Clark County has an urban growth boundary, required minimum densities, and environmental protections very similar to those of Metro and the City of Portland.

P-0100-005

As discussed above, rather than inducing sprawl, 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.

Regarding health impacts to those living along I-5, the DEIS and FEIS analyses of impacts to air quality, noise, electromagnetic fields, and other health related factors are based on comparing the project's impacts to specific standards that have been established to protect public health. Ensuring the project will meet or better these standards is used as a method to determine whether the project will have an adverse effect on human health. The criteria used in the DEIS and the FEIS are based on government regulatory standards where they have been established (such as for criteria air pollutants). Where regulatory standards do not exist, then the criteria are based on government agency guidelines or thresholds established by public health and safety professionals.

For example, the analyses included in the DEIS and the FEIS assess changes in certain air toxics such as benzene and formaldehyde for which DEQ's Portland Air Toxics Assessment determined that areas along major highway corridors appear to be at higher risk. Modeling conducted for the DEIS and FEIS indicate that air emissions from I-5 traffic will be significantly lower by 2030 than they are today, and will be well below established regulatory standards designed to protect human health (see Section 3.10 of the DEIS and Section 3.10 of the FEIS). Noise impacts from I-5 traffic, with the mitigation proposed for the CRC project, will also be substantially lower than today. Noise from the light rail can be mitigated below FTA's noise impact criteria as well (see Section 3.11 of the DEIS and Section 3.11 of the FEIS).

If by "safety" you are anticipating increased traffic levels on local streets, increases are not expected. By reducing congestion on I-5, and improving travel time reliability on the highway, traffic will be less likely to divert onto local streets.