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Subject: Comment from CRC Submit Comments Page
Date: Wednesday, May 28, 2008 1:39:34 PM
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From: Robert Sanders
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 Comment or Question:

- P-0632-001** | I was very encouraged by the resolution put forward yesterday by Metro Councilors Robert Liberty, Carl Hosticka and Carlota Collette that calls for a light rail and toll to upgrade the existing bridge. Getting existing Vancouver / Portland commuters off the road and onto a train will free up lanes for freight traffic. Two reasons I offer why rail and not road is the right solution: 1) look at the congestion in Northern Virginia & Washington DC today after pursuing 20 years of road expansion policy... it's worse now. Lets learn from the mistakes made by Atlanta / Washington DC / LA. More lanes = more cars. Freeing one area of congestion (bridge) only shifts the congestion to other areas, but the car problem persists. I'm not at all in favor a larger wad of cars arriving in Portland at 8:30 every morning trying to get on the 405 or out 26 or arriving on the streets downtown. The goal should be to reduce the total # of cars on the road. 2) All great cities have trains: NYC, London, Paris - why? because it's the best solution for moving people back and forth and it allows a city / metro area to scale in a way roads alone cannot.
- P-0632-002** |
- P-0632-003** |
- P-0632-004** |
- P-0632-005** | Finally - why do the OR HOV /carpool lanes end before the crossing? If the HOV lane extends all the way to Vancouver more people will carpool and the total #'s of cars will be reduced.

P-0632-001

The evaluation of the five alternatives in the DEIS was preceded by an extensive 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. These options were evaluated for whether and how they met the project's Purpose and Need, and the findings were reviewed by project sponsors, the public, agencies, and other stakeholders. Alternatives that included only TDM/TSM strategies, or provided only transit improvements, would provide benefits, but could only address a very limited portion of the project's purpose and need. This extensive analysis 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 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. The DEIS evaluated alternatives with more demand management (higher toll) and increased transit service with less investment in highway infrastructure improvements (Alternatives 4 and 5) compared to the toll and transit service levels included in Alternatives 2 and 3. The additional service and higher toll provided only marginal reductions in I-5 vehicle volumes, and they came primarily at the cost of greater traffic diversion to I-205. This analysis found that a more balanced investment in highway and transit, as represented by Alternatives 2 and 3, performed considerably better on a broad set of criteria.

P-0632-002

See discussion above regarding improvements needed to meet the CRC project's Purpose and Need.

P-0632-003

The proposed new add/drop lanes (i.e., lanes that connect two or more interchanges) are used to alleviate safety issues associated with the closely spaced interchanges in the project area and are not designed to increase capacity generally on I-5. 68 to 75% of I-5 traffic enters and/or exits I-5 within the CRC project area, and these add/drop lanes provide space for this traffic to do so without disrupting cars and trucks traveling to destinations further north and south of the project area. The project does not propose to add lanes north or south of the project limits.

The DEIS evaluation found that the project, with a toll and light rail, would actually reduce the total daily volume of traffic using the I-5 and I-205 river crossings by approximately 3%. The FEIS analysis of the project has been updated to include an evaluation of how the CRC project would affect Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) (see Chapter 3, Section 3.1). 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. 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. The model showed only minimal changes in employment location and housing demand compared to the No-Build. For more information see FEIS Chapter 3, Section 3.4.

P-0632-004

The LPA includes a light rail extension into Vancouver. For more information on the LPA, please see Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

P-0632-005

The CRC project does not include HOV lanes inside its five-mile project area. The CRC project team looked at HOV lanes and freight lanes, which are typically located on the inside freeway lane next to the barrier, as part of its technical analysis. Because about 70 percent of the vehicles enter and/or exit I-5 within the five-mile study area, access to and from a HOV lane or freight lane could create traffic operational problems by increasing lane changes (for example, HOVs entering the freeway and needing to merge all the way to the inside lane). The results of this analysis is described in more detail in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the DEIS. Regarding the existing HOV lanes located outside the project area, the CRC project does not propose any changes. These HOV lanes might effectively link to HOV lanes in the CRC area in the future, if employed as part of a larger regional plan. Should the region adopt and develop a larger HOV system, lanes within the bridge influence area could potentially be striped as part of that network.