

O-032-001

Thank you for your comment. 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.

From: genesee@transportationchoices.org
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
CC:
Subject: Comment from CRC DraftEIS Comments Page
Date: Wednesday, July 02, 2008 12:00:58 AM
Attachments:

Home Zip Code: 98104
Work Zip Code: 98104

Person:
Other - statewide nonprofit organization

Person commutes in the travel area via:

- O-032-001**
1. In Support of the following bridge options:
No Opinion
 2. In Support of the following High Capacity Transit options:
Light Rail between Vancouver and Portland
 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

Contact Information:
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Comments:
July 1, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

- O-032-002** Transportation Choices Coalition recognizes the substantial amount of work the project team has put into studying how to address transportation problems associated with crossing the Columbia River between Portland and Vancouver and producing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that analyzes four build alternatives and a no-build alternative for the proposed Columbia River Crossing (CRC).
- Environmentally sound and efficient transportation options are important for all travelers crossing the river. In particular, alternative transportation modes and freight movement need to be addressed. In short, we agree that both states have a large stake in making safety and seismic improvements to the bridge, improving freight mobility, and providing citizens with reasonable access to the places they need and want to go.
- O-032-003** Given that the transportation sector is responsible for about 38% of Oregon’s greenhouse gas emissions and about 50% of Washington’s greenhouse gas emissions, any future transportation investments must put both states on a path toward real progress in reducing climate change and carbon emissions. Doing anything less could have wide repercussions for our region’s future livability and our ability to achieve our respective states’ adopted greenhouse gas reduction goals.
- O-032-004** We would like the project team to take the following steps in moving forward with the EIS:
- ^a A new analysis of traffic demand in the corridor, taking into account the long-term decline in projected trips that could result from the continuing increase in international fuel prices. If fewer auto trips are expected, fewer lanes can be built.
- O-032-005** ^a The Bridge Influence Area should be expanded so that decision makers have a better understanding of the relationship between this project and other bottlenecks in the region.
- O-032-006** ^a A more in-depth analysis of the air quality impacts of the project is warranted. While the DEIS notes that none of the alternatives being proposed are expected to violate federal or state standards for criteria air pollutants or hazardous air pollutants, scientific evidence is growing that air pollution harms people at levels even lower than the current federal maximum allowable levels and that air pollutants do not act in isolation, but rather cumulatively. It is important to the health of residents of the region and to those who live in close proximity to I-5, in particular, that we choose the project design resulting in the least amount of air pollution. This is an environmental justice issue as well as a health issue given that the project is located near neighborhoods with a high proportion of lower-income residents and people of color. OEC therefore encourages project design that foresees and adheres to even stricter federal standards. Lower maximum allowable levels are likely to be adopted in coming years because of emerging scientific evidence.

O-032-002

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

O-032-003

Please see the climate change analysis in Chapter 3 (Section 3.19) of the FEIS.

O-032-004

Traffic forecasts reported in the DEIS and used to inform decisions on a locally preferred alternative were derived from adopted regional employment and population forecasts and state-of-the-art modeling and evaluation conducted by Metro, RTC and the project team, and reviewed by all project sponsor agencies as well as FTA and FHWA. In addition, an independent panel of traffic modeling experts was convened in October 2008 to review the modeling methods and findings. These experts concluded that the project’s approach to estimating future travel demand was reasonable and that it relied on accepted practices employed in metropolitan regions throughout the country. These findings are summarized in the “Columbia River Crossing Travel Demand Model Review Report” (November 25, 2008). This independent review confirmed the approach CRC modeling used to address multiple variables that can affect travel demand, including gasoline prices, tolling, travel demand measures and induced development.

O-032-005

Over the course of the CRC project, the project team analyzed a variety of geographic areas. The boundaries of these areas were designed to meet specific purposes, such as analyzing the impacts of project alternatives. The boundaries of the Bridge Influence Area (BIA) were developed by the Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership as a way of determining how effectively project components

O-032-007 We would like to see a more thorough analysis of how freight mobility will be improved with a refigured corridor. Goods movement is essential to the region's economy, but inefficiencies in the system are impacting our climate and harming our environment. Nationally, freight movement is responsible for approximately 20% of the transportation sector's CO2 emissions.

O-032-008 %^a Use of a peak period variable pricing model, applied to both the I-5 and I-205 bridges in advance of building additional lane capacity.

O-032-009 Thank you for your consideration of these comments and for your ongoing leadership on this important transportation project. We look forward to continuing to work with you to develop a Columbia River Crossing project design that meets both states' environmental, economic, mobility and community goals.

Sincerely,

Genesee C. Adkins
State Policy Director
Transportation Choices Coalition

and alternatives met the project's Purpose and Need. The project area extends from approximately Columbia Boulevard in the south to SR 500 in the north, along the I-5 corridor. This did not, however, limit the extent to which impacts were evaluated.

Analysis of traffic impacts south of the BIA on I-5 has occurred, as well as analysis of potential diversion of traffic to I-205. Regarding I-5 traffic south of the BIA, the southbound traffic congestion that currently exists near the I-5/I-405 split will not be improved by either the CRC project or the Delta Park project. However, traffic analyses show the congestion will not be worse 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. Regarding I-205, traffic modeling indicates that tolling I-5, but not I-205, would divert some traffic to I-205. However, under existing and No-build conditions, trips already, and would continue to, divert to I-205 because of the unreliability and congestion in the I-5 corridor. With the CRC improvements to I-5, many of those diverted trips would shift back to I-5 because it would be a shorter and more reliable trip than I-205. Tolling the I-5 crossing causes some trips to shift to I-205 in order to avoid the toll. Thus the net difference in the number of trips crossing on I-205 is only slightly higher with the CRC project as without it. Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the DEIS discusses the effects of the project on traffic levels in the I-5 and I-205 corridors. This discussion is updated in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS.

O-032-006

Please see response to comment O-027-007.

O-032-007

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.

O-032-008

Tolling was evaluated in the DEIS, and included in the LPA, for two important reasons. First, a toll may be necessary to pay for the construction of this project, as discussed in Chapter 4 of the FEIS. Second, a toll provides a valuable travel demand management tool that encourages travelers to take alternative modes (including light rail provided by this project), travel at off-peak periods, or reduce their auto trips. This demand management reduces congestion and extends the effective service of the facility. In addition, modeling has indicated that tolling I-5 without making the improvements that are part of the CRC project would not meet the project's Purpose and Need. Tolling I-205 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.

O-032-009

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