

1 not just one way. We need to get rid of the  
2 bottleneck that we have here and get the traffic  
3 flowing.

4 Thank you very much.

5 **MR. HEWITT:** Thank you.

6 Mark Rabinowich.

**P-0958-001** 7 **MR. RABINOWICH:** The writer, Kurt  
8 Vonnegut, said that "A flaw in the human character  
9 is that everyone wants to build, but nobody wants to  
**P-0958-002** 10 do maintenance." I support a stronger bridge with  
11 transit. I do not support a wider bridge. I will  
**P-0958-003** 12 be formally requesting in the comment period, in  
13 writing, a supplemental draft EIS for your failure  
14 to factor in peak oil and peak traffic. The  
15 National Environmental Policy Act states that there  
16 are -- if there are new circumstances that impact a  
17 project, they need to be factored in. The fact we  
18 are in peak oil, globally, needs to be included in  
19 your traffic analysis. The chart from ODOT -- which  
20 I have extra copies of (indicated) -- shows the  
21 traffic levels on Oregon State highways peaked in  
22 2002. It's not quite the same in Multnomah, but  
23 it's close, and is on a plateau. The federal  
24 figures from the Bureau of Transportation statistics  
25 say the same thing happened nationally two years

### **P-0958-001**

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

### **P-0958-002**

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-0958-003**

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

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P-0958-003

1 ago. Last week the Federal Highway Administration  
 2 said that in March 2008 there was the sharpest  
 3 decline of traffic they've ever recorded on a  
 4 monthly basis. It was 4.3 percent less than March  
 5 2007.

6 As we pass the global peak of oil,  
 7 gasoline prices are going to increase to the point  
 8 that travel demand will begin to decline. While no  
 9 one, not even Dick Cheney, can tell us what gas  
 10 prices are going to be in the design year of 2030.  
 11 It'll be surprising if gas is not either rationed or  
 12 just too expensive for many people to use. So-  
 13 called alternative fuels exist and there are  
 14 vehicles that are more efficient, but they're only  
 15 going to be able to mitigate, slightly, the energy  
 16 down-slope. Carpooling is going to be more  
 17 important than hybrids.

18 Transportation law that governs this  
 19 project says that federal aid projects have to  
 20 consider the travel demands 20 years in the future.  
 21 So you need to factor in what the price of gas is  
 22 likely to be in the year 2030 after most of the  
 23 world's oil fields are on terminal decline.

P-0958-004

24 So, I would support building one bridge  
 25 that would likely withstand the earthquake that is

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.

Regarding peak oil specifically, 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.

In short, the traffic analysis was not flawed and a supplemental DEIS is not needed.

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**P-0958-004** 1 likely to come, design it for bidirectional travel,  
 2 so if the old bridge is toppled by the earthquake,  
 3 and the newer bridge is not. I do not support a  
**P-0958-003** 4 wider bridge. We're not going to need a wider  
 5 bridge once gasoline is much more expensive.

**P-0958-005** 6 A final point: As for tolls, I do not  
 7 support setting up a surveillance system to track  
 8 everyone's travels so that voyeurs and the federal  
 9 government can keep track on everyone's travels.

**P-0958-006** 10 The way to do this fairly is to pay it through the  
 11 gas tax; what the gas really costs. Those who drive  
 12 more, pay more. Those who drive more inefficiently,  
 13 pay more. And that's a much more equitable way to  
 14 do it than recording everyone's license plate.

15 **MR. HEWITT:** Thank you.

16 Peggy Anderson.

17 **MS. ANDERSON:** Peggy Anderson. I live at  
 18 5585 East Evergreen Boulevard in Vancouver,  
 19 Washington. That's right near Exit 3.

20 I retired here to Vancouver in 2006, and I  
 21 have used my bike to commute across the I-5 Bridge  
 22 most of the time, because I don't like the noise on  
 23 the 205 Bridge.

24 Personally, what I would really like to  
 25 see is the extension of light rail to Kiggins Bowl

#### **P-0958-004**

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.

#### **P-0958-005**

Details and policies for the tolling system will be decided by the transportation commissions and legislatures of both states. However, the project has proposed and assumed that an electronic tolling system will be used. Electronic tolling collection (ETC) is a cashless toll collection system using the latest electronic technology. ETC promotes free-flowing traffic by eliminating the need for toll booths and allowing all vehicles to pay a toll without stopping.

ETC systems in use today allow drivers to purchase an inexpensive, credit card sized transponder that is placed on the inside windshield of their car. When driving through the toll collection point, radio equipment above the road scans the transponder and deducts the toll from the user's account. User accounts could be linked to a credit or debit card, or they could be prepaid.

Infrequent travelers without a transponder would be charged via a video camera that can quickly scan and photograph license plates. A bill for the cost of the toll and a processing fee can be sent to the registered vehicle owner.

All personal information necessary to use the ETC system would be maintained by the State DOT, as is now being done with WSDOT's Good To Go! Program that is collecting tolls for facilities such as the Tacoma Narrows bridge. The use of this information, like all personal information provided to the state, will follow state privacy guidelines.

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**P-0958-006**

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. Regarding tolling specifically, it 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.