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COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING DRAFT EIS
PUBLIC HEARING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2008

RED LION HOTEL
VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON



P-1048-001

The evaluation of the five alternatives in the DEIS was preceded by an 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) and Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS explain how the project's Sponsoring Agencies 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, such as a possible third transportation corridor across the Columbia River, alternative transit modes, and techniques for operating the existing highway system more efficiently. After identifying this wide array of options, the project evaluated whether and how they met the project's Purpose and Need, and found that alternatives that do not include improvements to the existing I-5 facility generally do not 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 I-5. Traffic modeling showed that even significant investment in improving transit options in the corridor or building a third corridor was not enough to alleviate future traffic demand and existing safety hazards on I-5. It is important to note that transit and river crossing components were not eliminated simply because they could not accommodate future vehicular trips. For example, both light rail and tolling help to decrease vehicular demand. See Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS for more discussion on the screening process used to develop project alternatives.

00014

1 staff making all the decisions.
 2 The NEPA process is meant to stop and
 3 reflect. All over the country, it does
 4 that several times. There is absolutely
 5 no shame and nothing wrong with stopping
 6 and doing this and taking a look at it.
 7 The idea that we are going to get the
 8 Government -- our Government -- to follow
 9 the law by producing a lawsuit is totally
 10 beneath us. We do not need our dirty
 11 laundry nationally washed.
 12 HAL DINGERINK: Thank you. Jon.
 13 JON HAUGEN: Good evening. My name
 14 is Jon Haugen, H-a-u-g-e-n, and I reside
 15 at 13502 Northwest 49th Avenue in
 16 Vancouver, Washington. I've read the
 17 Columbia River Crossing Draft
 18 Environmental Impact Statement.
 19 It seems that three years ago and
 20 80 million dollars ago, the Planners were
 21 told to produce a document to support
 22 building -- to support spending 4.1
 23 billion dollars to replace six lanes of
 24 traffic with six lanes of traffic with
 25 light rail.

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00015

1 COURT REPORTER: Can you slow down
 2 please.
 3 JON HAUGEN: Absolutely. Thank
 4 you. That document has been produced.
 5 Spend 4.1 billion dollars to replace six
 6 lanes of traffic with six lanes of traffic
 7 with light rail.
 8 There are several fatal flaws in the
 9 Draft Environmental Statement. The
 10 replacement bridge for the Burlington
 11 Northern Santa Fe rail bridge built in
 12 1908 -- once again, 1908, 100 years ago --
 13 was not considered. Because of this
 14 oversight, the supplemental bridge options
 15 are invalid.
 16 The supplemental bridge leaving the
 17 current I-5 bridge, but restriping six
 18 lanes of traffic to four lanes of traffic
 19 invalidates any meaningful traffic
 20 reduction comparisons for the new bridge.
 21 I have testified and advocate
 22 building an eight mile elevated highway
 23 between SR-500 in Vancouver and I-84 in
 24 Portland with no other exits. This
 25 expressway with four lanes would relieve

P-1048-001

P-1048-002

P-1048-003

P-1048-004

P-1048-002

Many different options for addressing the project's Purpose and Need were evaluated in a screening process prior to the development and evaluation of the alternatives in the DEIS. Options eliminated through the screening process included a new corridor crossing over the Columbia River (in addition to I-5 and I-205), an arterial crossing between Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver, a tunnel under the Columbia River, and various modes of transit other than light rail and bus rapid transit. Section 2.5 of the DEIS explains why a third corridor, arterial crossing of the Columbia River, and several transit modes evaluated in screening were dropped from further consideration because they did not meet the Purpose and Need. For a general description of the screening process see Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS. It should be noted that every proposal received from the public was considered, and many of the proposals that were dropped from further consideration included elements that helped shape the alternatives in the DEIS.

P-1048-003

The Supplemental Bridge alternatives were intended to represent a different approach to the purpose and need, with different transportation capacity. For data on the performance of a six lane option, please refer to the findings for the No Build alternative.

P-1048-004

The project team appreciates your willingness to consider alternatives and think "outside the box." However, an elevated highway facility of this type would have extraordinary and unacceptable environmental impacts and be so expensive that it is infeasible.

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P-1048-004 | 1 I-5 congestion by adding 66 percent more
2 lanes.

P-1048-005 | 3 Light rail, I'm opposed to this. At
4 250 million dollars per mile, serving only
5 downtown Vancouver, it is too expensive
6 and too limited.

P-1048-006 | 7 I have testified and advocate using
8 heavy rail, not light rail -- a third rail
9 line across a new rail bridge connecting
10 Kelso to Downtown Portland with stops in
11 Kalama, Woodland, Ridgefield and Vancouver
12 and then nonstop to Downtown Portland.
13 This idea would increase commerce.
14 On existing rails, we could have a route
15 from Washougal and Camas to Vancouver and
16 then to Downtown Portland and a third
17 route from Battle Ground to Vancouver and
18 then to Downtown Portland.

P-1048-007 | 19 We have talked about the current I-5
20 bridges being systematically (sic) unsafe.
21 They are old bridges. The northbound lane
22 was built 91 years ago. The southbound
23 lane was built 50 years ago.
24 If we are really serious about
25 short-term ideas, then we should ban all

P-1048-005

Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected light rail to Clark College as the project's preferred transit mode. These sponsor agencies, which include the Vancouver City Council, Portland City Council, C-TRAN Board, TriMet Board, RTC Board and Metro Council considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force (a broad group of stakeholders representative of the range of interests affected by the project - see the DEIS Public Involvement Appendix for more information regarding the CRC Task Force) before voting on the LPA.

As illustrated in the DEIS, and summarized in Exhibit 29 (page S-33) of the Executive Summary, light rail would better serve transit riders than bus rapid transit (BRT) within the CRC project area. Light rail would carry more passengers across the river during the PM peak, result in more people choosing to take transit, faster travel times through the project area, fewer potential noise impacts, and lower costs per incremental rider than BRT. Additionally, light rail is more likely to attract desirable development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver, which is consistent with local land use plans.

P-1048-006

Many different options for addressing the project's Purpose and Need were evaluated in a screening process prior to the development and evaluation of the alternatives in the DEIS. Options eliminated through the screening process included a new corridor crossing over the Columbia River (in addition to I-5 and I-205), an arterial crossing between Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver, a tunnel under the Columbia River, and various modes of transit other than light rail and bus rapid transit. Section 2.5 of the DEIS explains why a third corridor, arterial crossing of the Columbia River, and several transit modes evaluated in screening were dropped from further consideration because they did not meet the

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P-1048-007 | 1 trucks from these two lanes until a new
2 bridge is built. This, of course, would
3 be unacceptable. That is why it's not
4 been proposed.

P-1048-008 | 5 In my way of thinking, the Federal
6 Government owes this area a supplemental
7 bridge that they would pay for. We paid
8 for one of the structures currently in
9 place. The Federal Government should pay
10 for a new supplemental bridge.
11 I thank you for your time.

12 HAL DENGERINK: Thank you. Okay.
13 At this point, I'd like to bring up a new
14 crew for this table. Thank you, folks.
15 Okay. The next three are Ed Barnes, Jared
16 Ross and Dave Ritchey.
17 As far as I am concerned, you can.
18 Okay. Paul Edgar.
19 PAUL EDGAR: My name is Paul
20 Edgar. I am from 211 5th Avenue, Oregon
21 City.
22 The I-5 corridor, as we now know it
23 through Portland, is broken. Just
24 replacing the interstate bridges does not
25 solve the problem of Terwilliger Curves,

Purpose and Need. For a general description of the screening process see Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS. It should be noted that every proposal received from the public was considered, and many of the proposals that were dropped from further consideration included elements that helped shape the alternatives in the DEIS.

P-1048-007

The I-5 bridges, like many older bridges in the region and nation, are not seismically sound and were never designed to survive a significant earthquake. The same is true of some other bridges in the region. However, just because the bridges are seismically unsound does not mean that they face imminent collapse from ordinary use.

P-1048-008

See discussion of why a supplemental bridge was not included in the LPA, above. Regarding funding, the federal government is anticipated to contribute significantly to the project. 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 until the alternative selection process is complete.

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF WASHINGTON)
County of Clark)

I, Cathy S. Taylor, a notary public
for the State of Washington do hereby
certify that I transcribed to the best of
my ability said proceedings written by me
in machine shorthand and thereafter
reduced to typewriting; and that the
foregoing transcript constitutes a full,
true and accurate record of said
proceedings and of the whole thereof.

Witness my hand and notarial seal
this 16th day of June, 2008.

Cathy S. Taylor, RPR, CSR
Notary Public for the State of Washington
My Commission expires April 15, 2009