

Project Background

Columbia River Crossing (CRC) is a bridge, transit and highway improvement project for I-5 between Vancouver and Portland.

The project will improve conditions on I-5 by:

- Preventing southbound congestion from starting before 6 a.m. and lasting until noon each weekday
- Preventing northbound congestion from starting at 1 p.m. and lasting until 9 p.m. each weekday
- Providing reliable high capacity transit service
- Improving safety on the I-5 bridge and highway
- Moving goods more efficiently for a healthy economy
- Providing safe and direct access across the Columbia River for pedestrians and bicyclists

Importance of I-5

The region's economic livelihood depends on the efficient and safe movement of people and goods. The Portland-Vancouver area is a major gateway for domestic and international trade. More than 132,000 jobs in the region rely on transportation, wholesale and distribution activities.



Looking south from downtown Vancouver across the Columbia River toward Hayden Island.

Project History

2001 – 2002: I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership

In 2001, the governors of Oregon and Washington formed a bi-state partnership to study transportation problems and possible solutions for the I-5 corridor. The Partnership recommended fixing three bottlenecks in its 2002 Strategic Plan:

- I-5 at Salmon Creek in Clark County (completed in 2006)
- I-5 at Delta Park in Portland (construction to begin in 2008)
- I-5 at the Columbia River (this project)



Spring 2005: CRC project begins

The 39-member CRC Task Force was formed in early 2005 to advise the CRC project on key decisions. The CRC Task Force consists of leaders from a broad cross section of Oregon and Washington communities, including public agencies, businesses, civic organizations, neighborhoods, freight, commuter and environmental groups.

Fall 2005: Defining the problems and potential solutions

Using data developed by the I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership, CRC worked with the public, tribal governments and partner agencies to define the primary problems in the project area: congestion, dangerous travel conditions, and travel demand that exceeds capacity. Once the problems were identified, 23 river crossing and 14 transit ideas were proposed as potential solutions, and evaluation criteria were developed.

Spring 2006: Narrowing the ideas

Continuing discussions with the Task Force and community, the CRC project team studied the river crossing and transit ideas, which included a tunnel under the Columbia River, a third highway crossing, and commuter rail. As a result of this discussion and analysis, the ideas were further narrowed to a set of four river crossing options and five public transit options.



Spring – Summer 2006: Testing the preliminary alternatives

CRC packaged the most promising bridge and transit options into a dozen preliminary alternatives. Each alternative included several transportation components: bridge, highway,

transit, freight, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and strategies to reduce travel demand. These preliminary alternatives were tested against the evaluation criteria. The results highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the components.

Fall 2006 – Spring 2007: Identifying Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) alternatives

In collaboration with partner agencies, the CRC project team identified the best performing bridge and transit options and recommended these for further evaluation in the EIS process. CRC held an extensive public discussion to gather comments on the proposal in early 2007. With guidance from the CRC Task Force and the public, five alternatives were recommended for further analysis in the Draft EIS.

Spring – Fall 2007: Analyzing the five alternatives

The CRC project analyzed each alternative to determine how well it relieves congestion and improves safety and

mobility on I-5. In spring 2008, the project will release the Draft EIS, which will report technical analyses and the potential effects on the built and natural environment for each alternative. A 60-day public comment period will follow.

The five alternatives are:

- No build (for comparison purposes)
- Replacement bridge with bus rapid transit
- Replacement bridge with light rail
- Supplemental bridge with bus rapid transit
- Supplemental bridge with light rail

How can I get involved?

- Visit the website at www.ColumbiaRiverCrossing.org to sign up for updates
- Attend an advisory group meeting
- Invite CRC staff to your group to discuss the project

How can I comment on the project?

E-mail: feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org

Mail: 700 Washington Street, Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660

Phone: 360-737-2726 or 503-256-2726

Fax: 360-737-0294



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