

# Columbia River Crossing

A long-term, comprehensive solution

**Paula Hammond**

Secretary of Transportation

# Topics to be covered

- Record of decision
- Process to reach selected alternative
- General Bridge Permit update
- Funding plan update

# Record of decision overview



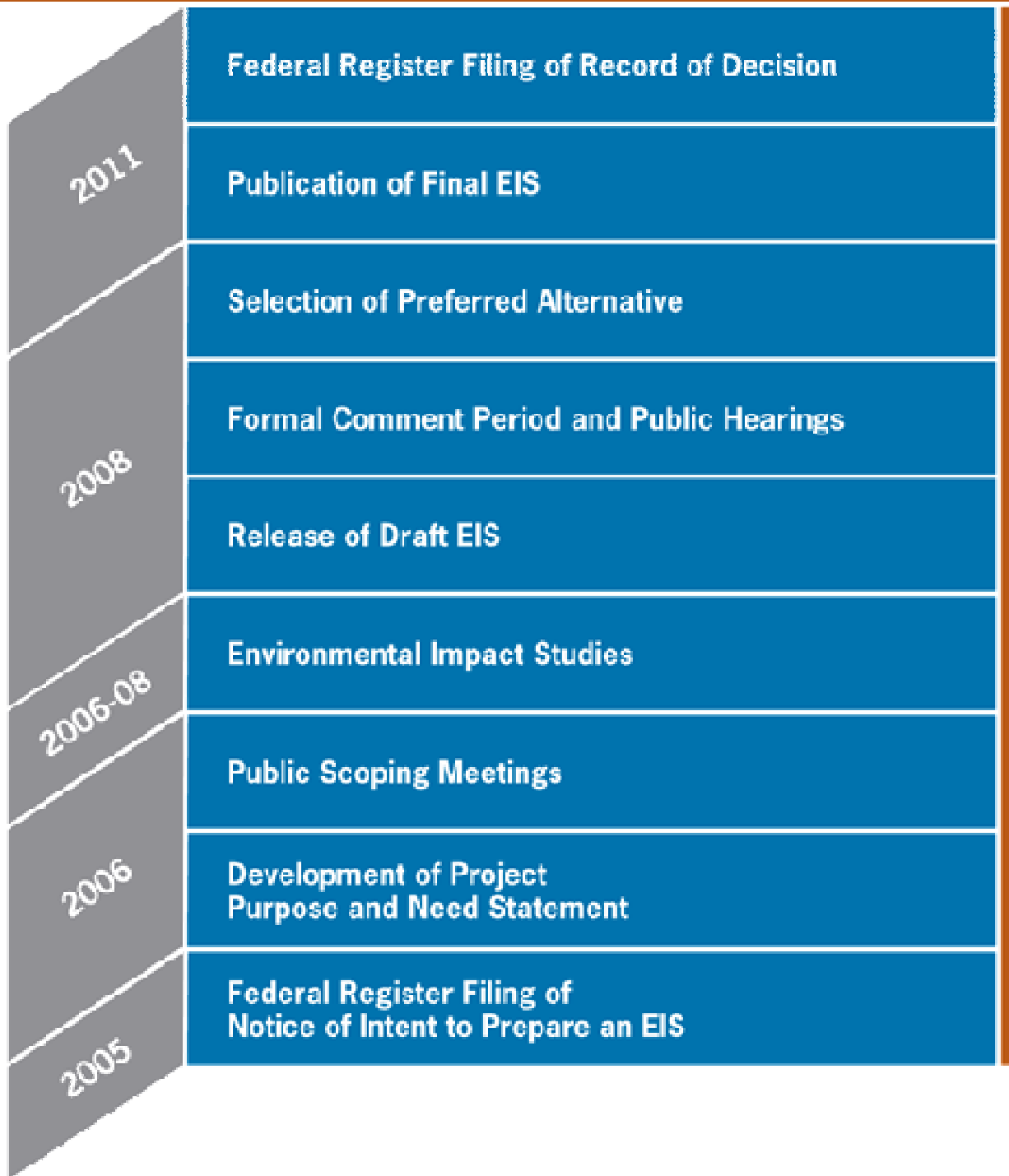
## Questions

*What's the process to amend the FEIS, and what would be the implications to this project?*

*Could the US Coast Guard bridge permit or Army Corps permits (water quality, levee, navigation) or FAA permit require a change to the EIS/ROD?*

*What are the implications of amending the FEIS in terms of time, cost, the New Starts grant, other?*


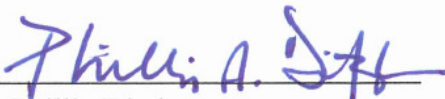

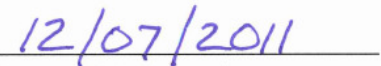


*What is WSDOT doing to reach out to affected businesses, and develop a plan to keep them in business during construction?*



**Public Input**

# The Record of Decision

This I-5 Columbia River Crossing Project Record of Decision is hereby approved.

 Daniel M. Mathis FHWA Washington Division Administrator	 Phillip Ditzler FHWA Oregon Division Administrator	 R.F. Krochalis FTA Regional Administrator, Region 10
 Date of Approval	 Date of Approval	 Date of Approval

- Re-confirms the purpose and need
- Reviews and validates technical work to date
- Reviews and validates the process used to select a preferred alternative
- Approves the mitigation measures to be used where there are unavoidable environmental impacts
- End of the planning stage; indicates the end of the NEPA process

# Targeted environmental permitting schedule for Columbia River Bridges

2012	2013				2014		
fall	winter	spring	summer	fall	winter	spring	summer
◆ Submit applications for Section 404 Clean Water Act permit and 401 Water Quality Certification							
	◆ Submit Section 408 of Rivers and Harbor Act for approval and applications for local land use permits						
	◆ Submit application for General Bridge permit						
			◆ Obtain local land use permits				
				◆ Obtain 401 Water Quality Certification			
				◆ Obtain General Bridge Permit approval			
							◆ Obtain Section 408 approval and 404 permit

# Current work: Construction outreach planning

- **Committed to working directly with property owners and businesses to mitigate construction impacts**
- **Commitments in Record of Decision include:**
  - Engage businesses and community to develop a construction transportation management plan
  - Implement programs to help businesses during construction such as marketing, promotions to generate patronage in construction areas and business planning assistance
  - Where possible, limit or concentrate construction work areas to minimize disruptions to business access
  - Identify, provide and/or advertise temporary parking locations during construction
  - Provide temporary signage to businesses affected by detours or temporary closures
- **This fall we will focus on sharing plans to lessen impacts and talk with businesses and community about further developing and refining those plans**



# Process to reach selected alternative



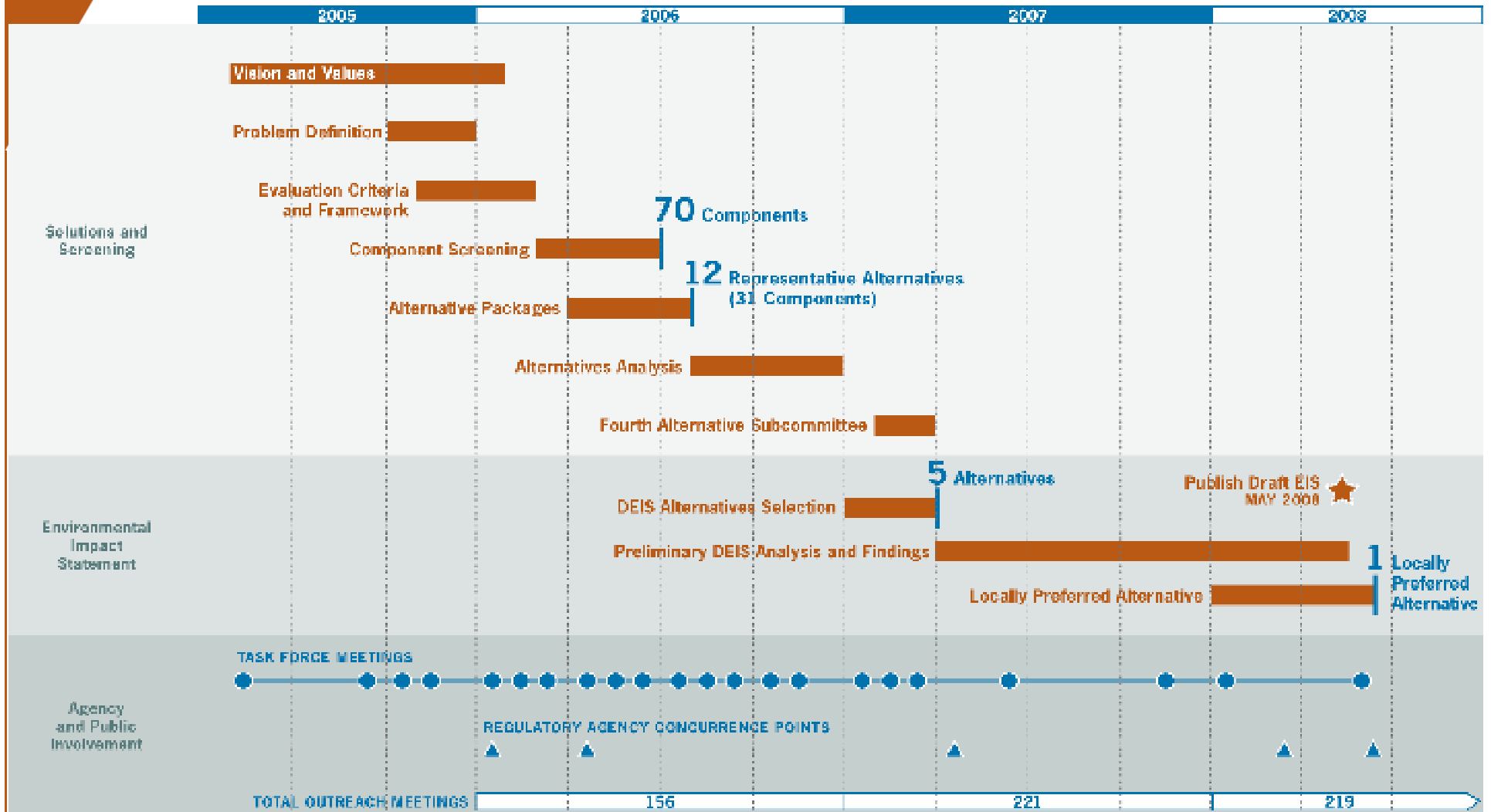


## Questions

*What was the decision-making that led to the current design?*

*How did the project get to the LRT decision?*

# Early alternatives and screening timeline



# Cooperating agencies and InterCEP

## Cooperating agencies:

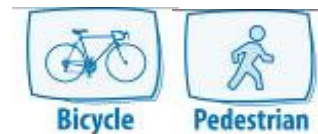
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
- U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)
- National Park Service (NPS)

## InterCEP:

- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology)
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)
- Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCDD)
- Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL)
- Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

# Purpose and Need: address six problems

- **Congestion**  
Growing travel demand exceeds capacity
- **Public transit**  
Service and reliability are limited by congestion
- **Freight**  
Mobility through the area is impaired
- **Safety**  
Crash rates are too high
- **Bicyclists and pedestrians**  
Paths and connections are inadequate
- **Earthquake safety**  
Bridges don't meet current seismic standards



# Major steps in screening

1. Gather ideas (river crossing, transit, interchanges and bike/ped)
2. Develop Evaluation Framework
  - Pass/Fail criteria (Step A) - purpose and need
  - Detailed Screening Criteria (Step B)
3. Apply Steps A and B to ideas (70 components)
4. Package remaining ideas into a “reasonable range” of alternatives (12)
5. Evaluate alternatives against the screening criteria
6. Carry forward promising alternatives into the DEIS



# River crossing ideas

- **Replacement Bridge – Downstream**
  - Low-level/Movable
  - Mid-level
  - High-level
- **Replacement Bridge – Upstream**
  - Low-level/Movable
  - Mid-level
  - High-level
- **Supplemental Bridge – Downstream**
  - Low-level/Movable
  - Mid-level
  - High-level
- **Supplemental Bridge – Upstream**
  - Low-level/Movable
  - Mid-level
  - High-level
- **Tunnel to Supplement I-5**
- **New Corridor Crossing**
- **New Corridor Crossing plus widen existing I-5 Bridges**
- **New Western Highway (I605)**
- **New Eastern Columbia River Crossing**
- **I-205 Improvements**
- **Arterial Crossing to Supplement I-5**
- **Replacement Tunnel**
- **33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Crossing**
- **Non-Freeway multi-modal Columbia River Crossing**
- **Arterial Crossing with I-5 Improvements**

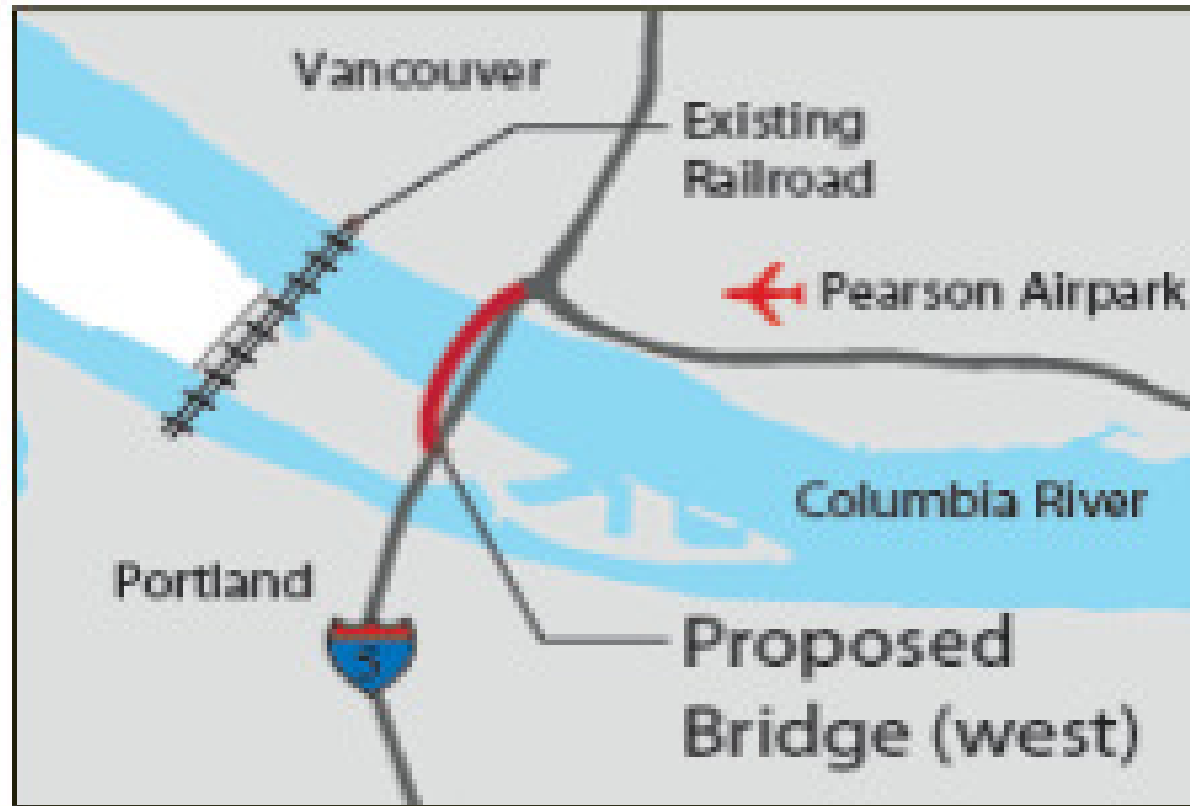
# Replacement Bridge – High-Level

Advance:

Yes



No





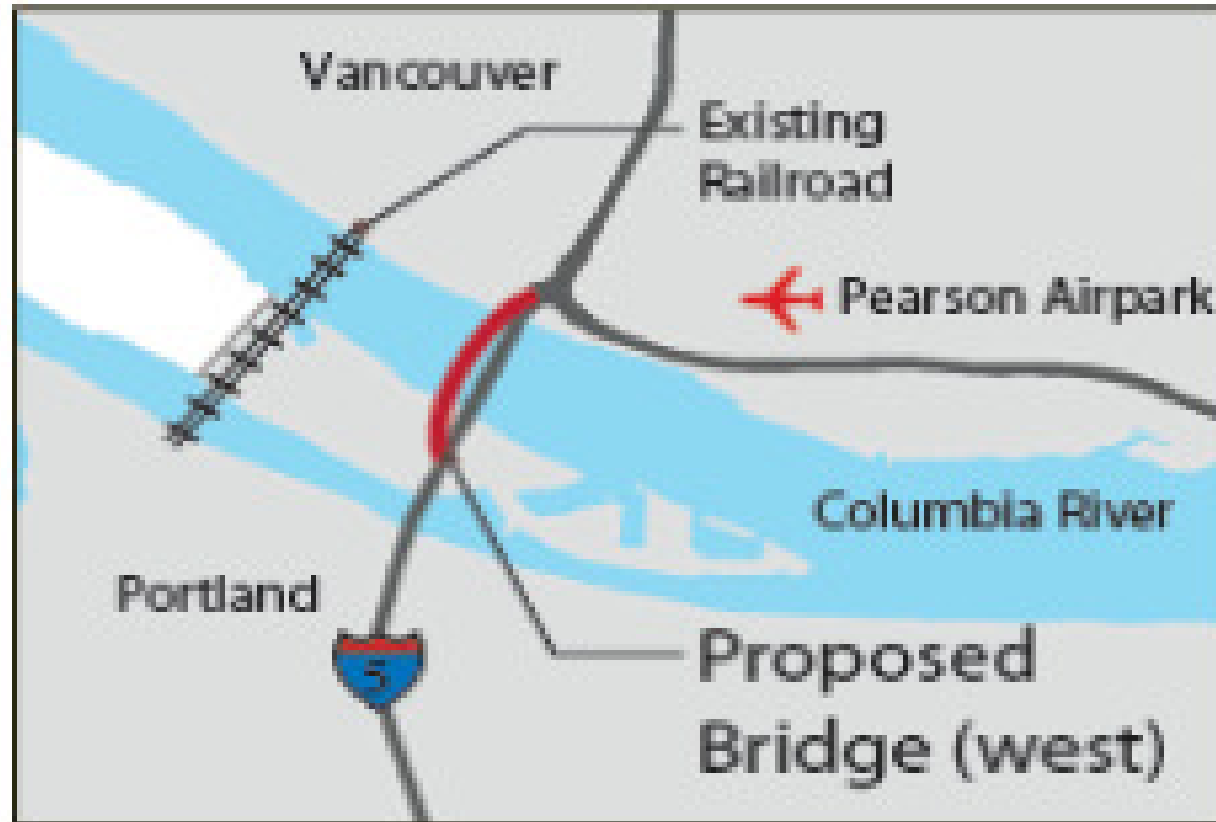
# Replacement Bridge – Low-Level

Advance:

Yes



No



# River crossing screening: Key findings pertaining to lift spans

- Collisions are three to four times more likely to occur during a bridge lift
- Bridge lifts occur, on average, once per day for approximately 20 minutes; traffic congestion from bridge lifts can take hours to recover
- Higher maintenance and operations costs than exist for a bridge without a lift span
- Greater initial construction cost compared to higher fixed span bridge
- Adding a lift span to the proposed bridge type would introduce unprecedented engineering design complexity resulting in bridge type re-evaluation

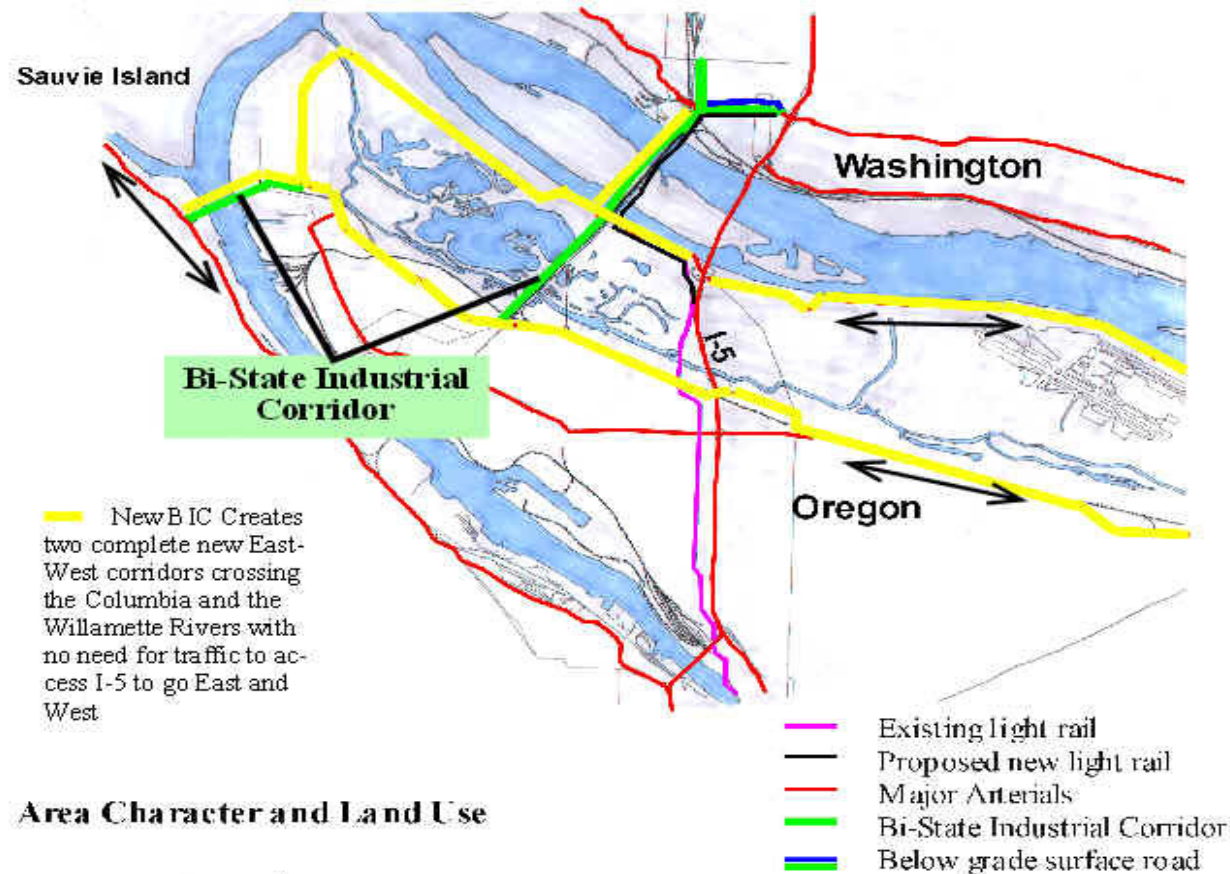
# New Corridor Crossing Near BNSF Rail Crossing

Advance:

Yes



No



# I-205 Improvements

Advance:

Yes



No



# Arterial Crossing without I-5 Improvements

Advance:

Yes



No



# River crossing ideas dismissed

- **Replacement Bridge – Downstream**
  - ~~Low-level/Movable~~
  - ~~Mid-level~~
  - ~~High-level~~
- **Replacement Bridge – Upstream**
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# Alternatives for analysis in Draft Environmental Impact Statement

1. No build
2. Replacement bridge with bus rapid transit
3. Replacement bridge with light rail
4. Supplemental bridge with bus rapid transit
5. Supplemental bridge with light rail

All “build” alternatives include interchange, freight, and pedestrian/bicycle improvements between SR-500 and Delta Park.



# DEIS key findings for river crossings

- **Replacement river crossing better meets the project's purpose and need than the supplemental crossing because it provides:**
  - Better congestion relief
  - Safer highway design
  - Better mobility for freight
  - Safer and more direct connections for bicyclists and pedestrians
  - Better navigation for river traffic





# Transit ideas considered and dismissed

- Express Bus in General Purpose Lanes
- Express Bus in Managed Lanes
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – Lite
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – Full
- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Streetcar
- High Speed Rail
- Ferry Service
- Monorail System
- Magnetic Levitation Railway
- Commuter Rail in BNSF Trackage
- Heavy Rail
- Personal Rapid Transit
- People Mover/Automated Guideway Transit (AGT)



# DEIS key findings for transit mode

- **Travel time and reliability**
  - Better for LRT, not subject to highway congestion
- **Ridership**
  - Higher with LRT, fewer transfers
- **Capital, maintenance and operation costs**
  - BRT costs less to build but more to operate
  - Light rail costs more to build but less to operate
  - LRT would cost about 25% less per rider (more cost effective)
- **Land use**
  - LRT likely to attract more development



# LPA endorsement and adoption

- **July 2008 - All 6 local sponsor agencies vote in favor of LPA resolutions**
  - Some held public hearings in advance of vote
- **Represents regional agreement**
- **Some sponsor agency leaders had questions for the FEIS process, including:**
  - Need independent review of travel demand analysis
  - Need independent review of GHG analysis
  - Raised concern over induced growth and costs
- **Adopted into MTP and RTP in July 2008**



# Locally preferred alternative

- Replacement I-5 **bridge**
- Improvements to closely-spaced highway **interchanges**
- **Light rail** extension to Vancouver
- **Pedestrian and bicycle** facility improvements



# LPA refinements



Major design refinements

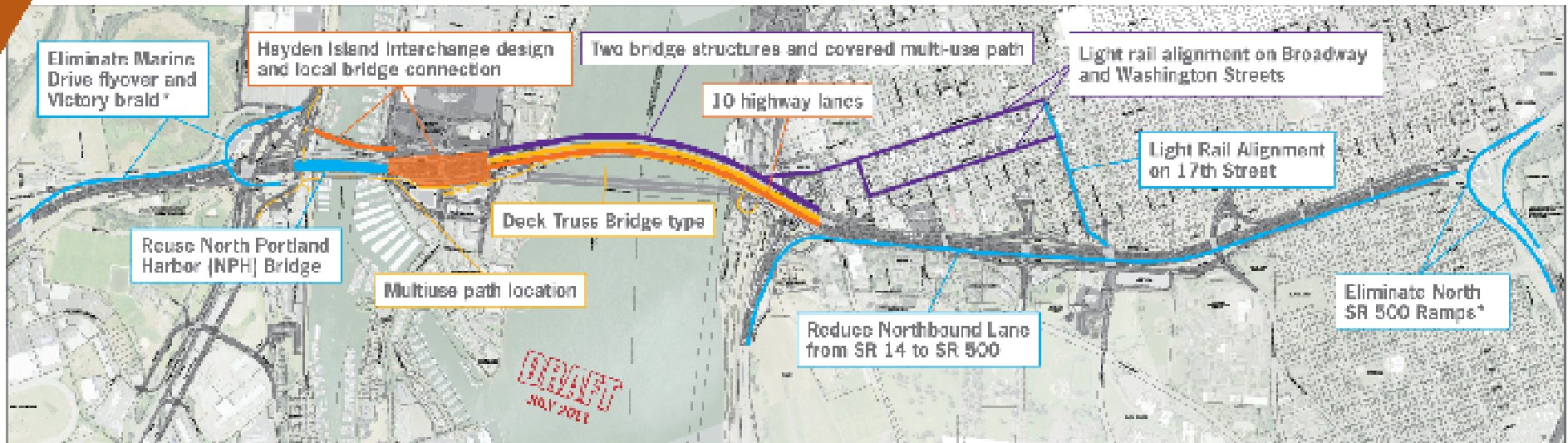
2009

Early 2010

Late 2010

2011

\*These elements will be included in the FDS but are not intended to be part of the initial capital construction project



# LPA refinements—Bridge type and design

- 2 bridge structures
- Open web box bridge type
- Covered multi-use path on river crossing
- 3 through lanes and 2 add/drop in each direction on river crossing
- Composite deck truss bridge type



Composite deck truss

# LPA refinements—Transit

- **22-member Vancouver Working Group, 2009-2010**
  - Represented downtown businesses, neighborhoods, transit-users and commuters
  - Recommendations on LRT alignment, station location and park and ride size and locations in downtown Vancouver have been integrated into the project's design
- **23-member Vancouver Transit Advisory Committee, 2010-2012**
  - Members are property owners along the Vancouver light rail alignment, neighborhood and business associations, transit-dependent populations, commuters and design-oriented specialists
  - Recommendations on design elements for Vancouver light rail stations and streetscape options and design themes for three Vancouver park and ride facilities

# Work plan for finalizing bridge height







## Questions

*What is the status of Coast Guard permit on bridge height and other bridge height issues?*

*What are the FAA concerns regarding bridge height?*

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# Coast Guard authority

- **Has statutory authority to approve location and clearance for all bridges over navigable waterways.**
- **Must preserve the public right of navigation and bridges are permitted only when they serve the needs of land transportation.**
- **Must promote and expedite projects that facilitate national/international commerce and provide for the reasonable needs of present and prospective land and marine transportation.**
- **Must provide for the reasonable needs of navigation, not all needs.**

# Securing a permit

- **CRC must obtain a permit for the main span crossing the Columbia River prior to beginning construction**
- **Application must demonstrate a balanced approach to meeting needs of all modes of transportation**
- **Provide analyses and documentation to show that reasonable needs of navigation are addressed**

# Work plan

- Fully incorporates and respects the needs and requirements of the USCG
- Also acknowledges and respects the years of work from local, state, and federal partners developing a locally preferred alternative with a mid-range bridge height
- Will produce a thorough, detailed analysis of mid-range bridge height alternatives on river users, freight, transit, aviation and local communities

# Work plan tasks

1. **Coordinate between USCG/USACE/CRC/ODOT/WSDOT/FHWA/FTA/FAA**
2. **Demonstrate that vertical clearance proposed in application avoids impacts to navigation as much as is reasonable practicable**
3. **Analyze vessel impacts**
4. **Evaluate mitigation options and costs**
5. **Document economic benefits of the project**
6. **Coordinate with FAA regarding obstructions to aviation**
7. **Conduct NEPA re-evaluation**
8. **Prepare draft permit application and submit to USCG**

# Work to date and draft findings

- 1. Completed preliminary engineering analyses to assess technical feasibility, cost and impacts associated with vertical clearance alternatives of 95, 100, 105 and 110 ft. to avoid some impacts to users**
  - **Draft finding:** Adjustments up to 110 ft. appear to be technically feasible, with moderate cost increases and without significant additional environmental impacts
- 2. Completed extensive survey of potentially affected vessels**
  - **Draft finding:** Mid-level bridge appears to address navigation needs for all but a small number of river users

# Work to date and draft findings

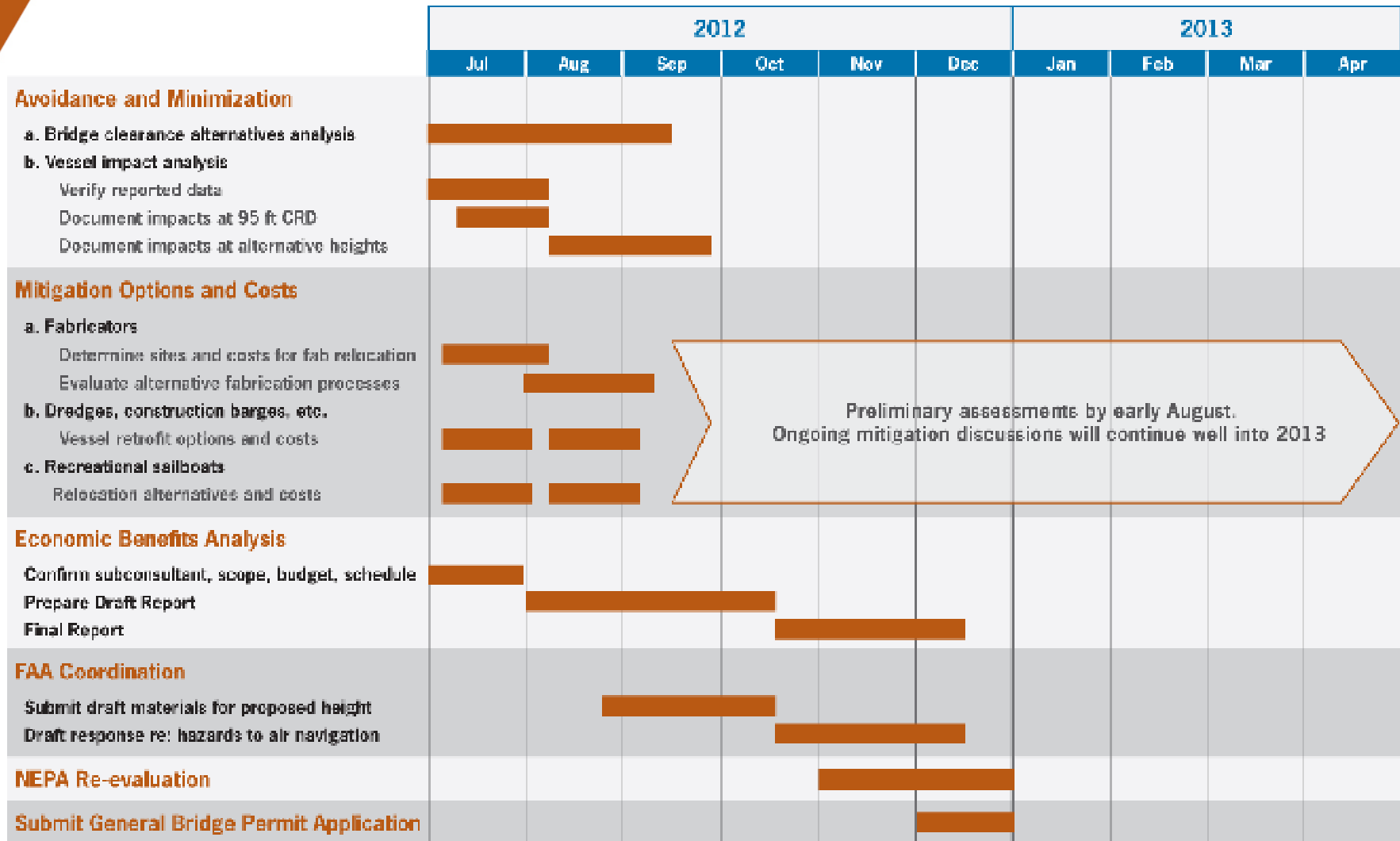
3. **Inspected USACE dredge Yaquina and prepared conceptual mitigation plan for USACE review**
  - **Draft finding:** Conceptual mitigation plan appears to provide a cost-effective solution that would allow unimpeded travel under the new bridge
  
4. **Completed preliminary analysis of future river user needs**
  - **Draft finding:** Anticipated future uses are generally consistent with existing types of vessels and clearance requirements



# Work to date and draft findings

5. **Completed preliminary assessment of technical feasibility and cost of adding a lift span to proposed deck truss**
  - **Draft finding:** Appears that an added lift span would result in structure of unprecedented complexity, increase construction cost by approx. \$250 million and require additional environmental evaluation
6. **Continue to conduct outreach to fabricators and property owners**

# General Bridge Permit schedule



# Funding update





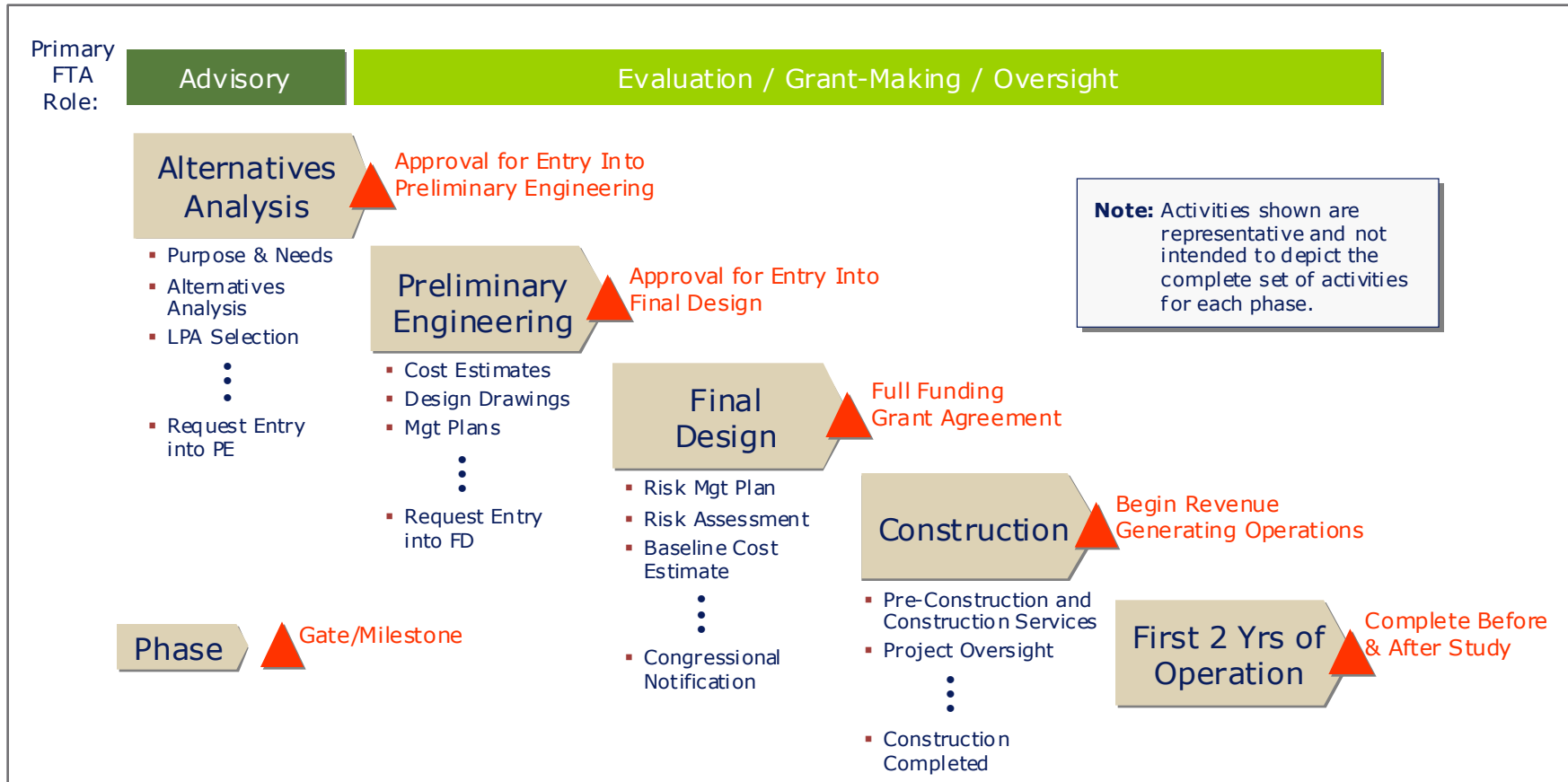
## Questions

*What changes were made in MAP-21 that could affect the Columbia River Crossing Project?*

*How will \$400 million from FHWA be funded?*

*What is the Federal Transit Administration process, and status of grant request?*

# FTA New Starts funding process





U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

# Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21)

Dan Mathis  
FHWA – Washington Division  
August 20, 2012



# Stable funding

- Program authorized through FY14 (September 30, 2014)
  - Current law through end of FY12 (September 30, 2012)
  - Most new provisions go into effect on October 1<sup>st</sup>
- Avg. annual funding at FY12 levels (plus minor inflation)
- Extends Highway Trust Fund taxes and ensures 2 years of solvency for Highway Trust Fund (HTF)
- Substantial programmatic consolidation
  - No earmarks
  - Most discretionary programs eliminated



# TIFIA and tolling provisions

- Expanded and enhanced TIFIA program
  - TIFIA authorized for \$750M in FY13, and \$1B in FY14
  - TIFIA financing may now account for up to 49% of total project costs
  - Rolling applications - letters of Interest / applications accepted throughout the year
  - Master credit agreement for programs of projects, phased single projects
  - Up to 10% setaside for rural projects; for these projects, increased eligibility and lower interest rates
- Revisions to toll authorities
  - Mainstreams tolling/pricing of new capacity, including Interstate (but generally requires current level of free capacity to remain unchanged)
  - In most cases, removes requirement for USDOT/State toll agreements
  - Extends toll pilots for value pricing and Interstate reconstruction