Columbia River CROSSING

Columbia River Crossing Project Fact Sheet

May 2010

Project Overview

Project Sponsors Council

The governors of Oregon and Washington formed the Project Sponsors Council (PSC) in 2008 to advise the departments of transportation on project development. Members include two citizen co-chairs; the directors of the Oregon and Washington transportation departments; elected officials from the governing boards of Portland, Vancouver, Metro, RTC and C-TRAN; and the TriMet executive director. This group is charged with advising the project on: completion of the Environmental Impact Statement, project design, project timeline, sustainable construction methods, compliance with greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and the financial plan.

Tribal Consultation

CRC is committed to government-to-government consultation with tribes that may be affected by this project. The CRC tribal consultation process is designed to encourage early and continued feedback from, and involvement by, tribes potentially affected by the project and to ensure their input is incorporated into the decision-making process.

Community Involvement

Since October 2005, CRC staff has had about 22,000 face-to-face conversations at more than 750 events on evenings, weekends and work days. Public comments received as a result of this comprehensive outreach program were, and will continue to be, considered by local partners during project development.

CRC receives advice from several citizen groups that represent community interests and inform decision-making. These groups meet regularly to receive information and provide feedback to CRC staff and the Project Sponsors Council:

- Community and Environmental Justice Group
- Freight Working Group
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Group
- Portland Working Group
- Urban Design Advisory Group
- Vancouver Working Group
- Marine Drive Stakeholder Group (completed September 2009)

How can I get involved?

- Contact the project office to talk with a staff member
- Visit the website at www.ColumbiaRiverCrossing.org to learn about the project and sign up for updates
- Attend an advisory group meeting
- Invite CRC staff to an event or meeting 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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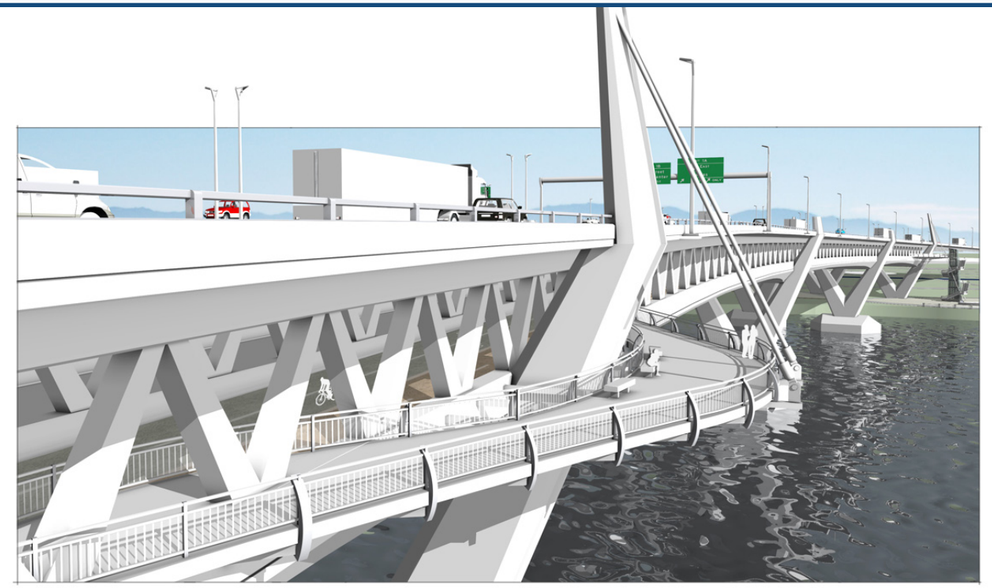


Design concept for the replacement I-5 bridge.

Project Description

The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project is a long term, comprehensive solution to address safety and congestion problems on I-5 between Portland and Vancouver. Currently, 4-6 hours of congestion occur daily. By 2030, a million more people will be living in the region. Congestion will last 15 hours a day and crash rates will double. This affects people's safety, quality of life and the regional economy.

Transportation and planning agencies are working together at the local, state and federal level to create sustainable solutions to maximize environmental, economic and community benefits in the CRC project area. The essential elements of the project include:

- Replacing the I-5 bridge
- Improving closely-spaced interchanges
- Extending light rail to Vancouver
- Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle paths

Project Benefits

Benefits to local residents, the natural environment and the regional economy include:

- No bridge lifts
- Improved safety
- Earthquake protection
- Reduced congestion on I-5 and in neighborhoods
- A more reliable trip for freight, autos, and transit
- New and sustained jobs with improved access to ports and highways
- Reduced emissions and improved water quality

Moving Forward

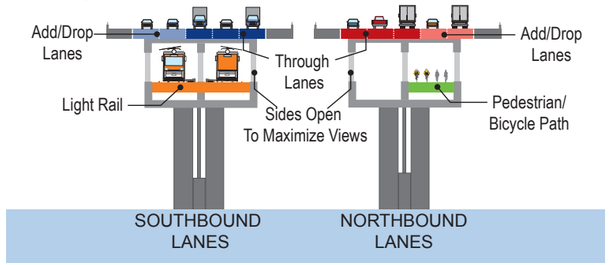
Since July 2008, when CRC local partners selected one preferred alternative, several decisions have been made to move the project closer to construction.

The CRC project area is a five-mile segment of I-5 from Columbia Boulevard in Portland to SR 500 in Vancouver.

Bridge Design

A new river crossing will replace the existing Interstate Bridge structures to carry I-5 traffic, light rail, pedestrians and bicyclists. The crossing will have 10 lanes (three through lanes plus two lanes to connect interchanges in each travel direction) on two bridge structures. The bridges could be restriped in the future to accommodate 12 lanes. The new structures will allow marine traffic to travel without bridge lifts and will meet current earthquake standards. The two structure crossing will have light rail tracks below the southbound bridge deck.

Two Bridge Concept



The Urban Design and Advisory Group (UDAG) has recommended a bridge design concept that includes a "v" shape carried through the piers, and connections to the bridge deck. The concept includes a scenic overlook at the center pier. When developing this design concept, UDAG considered technical feasibility, aesthetics, air and marine navigation, environmental sustainability and community desire for a signature feature that complements the surrounding area and its history.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Path

Design concept for the pedestrian and bicycle covered pathway over the Columbia River

The new path will meet disability standards and provide a safer trip across the bridge and through the project area. The pathway on the I-5 bridge will be widened to about 24 feet wide from its current four feet. The bridge path will be covered and located under the northbound deck. The 2.2-mile path on land in north Portland and in Vancouver will connect to regional trails and facilities. The path on land will be uncovered and 16 feet wide.

Light rail station concept for downtown Vancouver.

Light Rail Route and Station Design

Light rail will be extended from Portland's Expo Center MAX station to Clark College in Vancouver. The 2.9-mile extension will include one station on Hayden Island, four transit stops in Vancouver and three Vancouver park and rides. This new extension will connect to the region's light rail and streetcar lines, Amtrak passenger rail and C-TRAN and TriMet bus routes. CRC's citizen advisory groups are working closely with the project on transit-related issues, including safety, security and design.

The route runs parallel to I-5 from the Expo Center. In downtown Vancouver, trains will travel north on Broadway Street and south on Washington Street. Trains will travel east and west on 17th Street. The terminus station will be located at a park and ride near Clark College and the Marshall/Luepke Center.

Interchange Design

Within the five-mile project area, I-5 will be improved for safety and freight mobility. Plans call for improving links to and from arterials and state highways, connecting interchanges via merge lanes and lengthening on/off ramps. The following interchanges will be improved: Marine Drive, Hayden Island/Jantzen Beach, SR 14/City Center, Mill Plain and Fourth Plain. Interchange designs are currently being refined.

Cost and Funding

Based on fall 2009 design refinements and additional engineering, construction is expected to cost $2.6 to $3.6 billion (in year of expenditure dollars). Funding is expected from federal and state sources and tolling.

Electronic tolling

The project plans to collect tolls electronically, without the use of toll booths, to keep traffic moving. In addition, the project assumes the toll amount would vary by time of day with drivers traveling outside peak hours paying a lower toll.

A Tolling Study Committee and the public discussed a variety of tolling scenarios in 2009. Input gathered was provided to the Oregon and Washington legislatures in January 2010. Toll rates and policies will be set in the future by the state legislatures and transportation commissions.

Schedule and Next Steps

After three years of extensive public input and analysis, local project partners reached consensus on a preferred alternative in July 2008. They decided a replacement I-5 bridge and light rail extension best meets project goals and community needs.

In spring 2010 the governors of Oregon and Washington convened an Independent Review Panel to review and validate key project assumptions and plans for implementation. The independent review as well as a review by local agencies are expected to be completed in summer 2010. Ongoing public input also will be necessary. Analysis of the project's environmental and community effects will be included in a Final Environmental Impact Statement, expected in 2010.

Ongoing
- Highway and interchange refinements
- Light rail alignment, stations, park and ride design
- Pedestrian and bicycle path design
- Environmental analysis

2010
- Independent Review Panel
- Local agency review
- Preliminary engineering
- Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Federal Record of Decision

2011
- Right of way and property acquisition
- Final design

2012
- Soonest construction could begin

2018
- Construction complete