

Columbia River Crossing Project

Case for Support

BACKGROUND AND STATE OF I-5 COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING

- The northbound I-5 bridge was built in 1917. The southbound bridge was built in 1958. Neither structure meets seismic standards. Plus, they are lift spans which must open almost daily for river commerce causing traffic jams.
- Over 125,000 vehicles cross the I-5 bridge daily.
- During peak hours, the I-5 bridge is at capacity, and the hours of stop-and-go traffic is growing.
- The bridge is the major bottleneck on the I-5 corridor.
- Traffic on the I-5 bridge is expected to grow by up to 35% in the next 20 years, extending the hours of congestion to most of the day.
- The costs of congestion in the I-5 corridor to the bi-state economy are a growing concern to the public and businesses.
- I-5 is the primary freight corridor in the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area, with national and international significance serving Canada, Mexico, and all points between.
- The I-5 corridor, Columbia River, Burlington Northern and Union Pacific railways, and Portland Airport comprise a regional hub for freight collection and transfer.
- The greater Vancouver/Portland metropolitan region is connected by two bridges over the Columbia River. Comparable-sized regions such as Kansas City and Cincinnati have ten bridges and seven bridges respectively.
- Adding highway capacity alone will not solve the problem. The solution must be multi-modal. High capacity transit will be a component of the new crossing.
- The Columbia River Crossing Project (CRCP) is a continuation of a bi-state public process. Oregon, Washington, and local governments are cooperating.





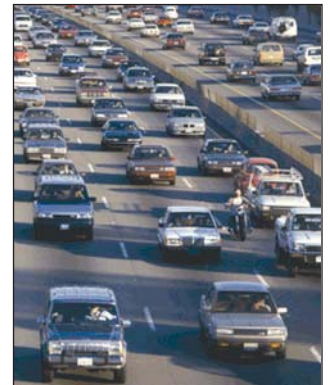
Port of Vancouver

GROWTH AND JOBS

- Vancouver is the fourth largest city in the state in the fastest growing county in the state.
 - Growth has outstripped the capacity of the transportation infrastructure system.
 - The I-5 bridge and the corridor between Vancouver and Portland are the region's most heavily congested freeway corridor. Truckers hauling freight up and down the west coast often identify the I-5 bridge as one of the worst segments of I-5 along the entire west coast during the morning or evening peak hours.
 - One-third of Clark County work trips travel over the I-5 and I-205 bridges to Portland daily.
 - International trade drives the economy of Washington State handling 7% of U.S. exports and 6% of U.S. imports, most of which are moved through our state by road and rail.
 - One-third of jobs in Washington State (900,000) depend on imports or exports.
- 48,000 jobs in manufacturing, construction, trade, and transportation in the Vancouver metro region directly depend on the freight system while 31,000 jobs in north-west Washington experience the same dependency.
 - Southwest Washington's manufacturing sector represents the three chips: silicon, potato, and wood.
 - Silicon wafers and associated tooling represent time-sensitive freight essential to the success of high-tech industries in east Clark County, which is the center of the I-5 Silicon Valley in Washington. One missing tool can shut down an entire plant.
 - Speed of transit to ship high-value parts is essential to the high tech industries in east Clark County.

FREIGHT MOBILITY

- In 2003 \$98 BILLION in goods came in to or went out of our ports. A good portion of those goods are transported by truck to or from the ports. (That figure does not include the estimated \$14 BILLION in service sector exports.)
- Every port in the northwest and regional industries rely on I-5's freight capacity to transport freight.



- Cargo moving through Washington ports could increase by two-thirds over the next 20 years. This places our state in a “special needs” category as our transportation system does not have capacity to handle that increase.
- Seventy percent of international goods entering Washington continue on to the larger U.S. market.
- \$17 BILLION in freight moves from Oregon to Washington through the I-5 corridor annually – most of which is destined for the Puget Sound region; \$7.5 BILLION in freight is shipped from Washington to Oregon annually.
- Truck travel is growing at a higher rate than commuter travel. Freight trips are expected to increase by up to 60% in the next 20 years.
- Without improvements, trucking costs associated with delays incurred on the I-5 Bridge are estimated to be \$34 million in 2020.
- Import-export tonnage is expected to grow by 123% in the next 20 years; domestic freight tonnage will grow by 76%.
- Truck traffic FROM Puget Sound ports will grow by 500,000 loaded trucks in 2020 – many of which will flow down the I-5 corridor and across the I-5 bridge.
- The I-5 corridor, Columbia River, rail, and Portland Airport create a regional hub for freight collection and transfer.
- Sixty four percent of freight moving in the metropolitan area is carried by truck.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

- The I-5 Columbia River Crossing is a segment of one of just a few north-south routes in the U.S. that run border to border.
- The I-5 Columbia River Crossing is the most significant bottleneck between our largest trade partners, Canada and Mexico.

- This bottleneck adversely affects local freight, just-in-time delivery systems, and international commerce.
- Business development in Washington and Oregon is hampered by increased transportation costs and lack of reliability.
- The I-5 Columbia River Crossing is the last remaining lift span on I-5. After every lift, traffic takes about half an hour to clear, even though most lifts are at night.
- Fifty four percent of the region’s economy is built on transportation-intensive industries.

BREADTH OF PROJECT

- The Columbia River Crossing project includes a comprehensive public involvement program, including a bi-state, 38-member task force.
- Representatives of the southwest Washington and Portland business sectors, neighborhood associations, the public, and other civic interests are actively involved in the project.
- The I-5 bridge is part of a system of transportation improvements that include deepening the Columbia River channel and the freight rail crossing immediately west of the I-5 bridge.



WHERE WE ARE IN THE PROCESS

- The project will begin an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Duration is anticipated to be approximately three years.
- The FHWA and FTA will oversee the NEPA/EIS process to address both highway and transit elements.
- Once the NEPA process is complete and federal approvals are in place, project design and construction will proceed.

FUNDING

- A variety of funding mechanisms will be investigated including local and state funding sources, public-private partnerships, and tolling. Some federal assistance will be sought. A financing strategy will be an integral part of the EIS process.



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