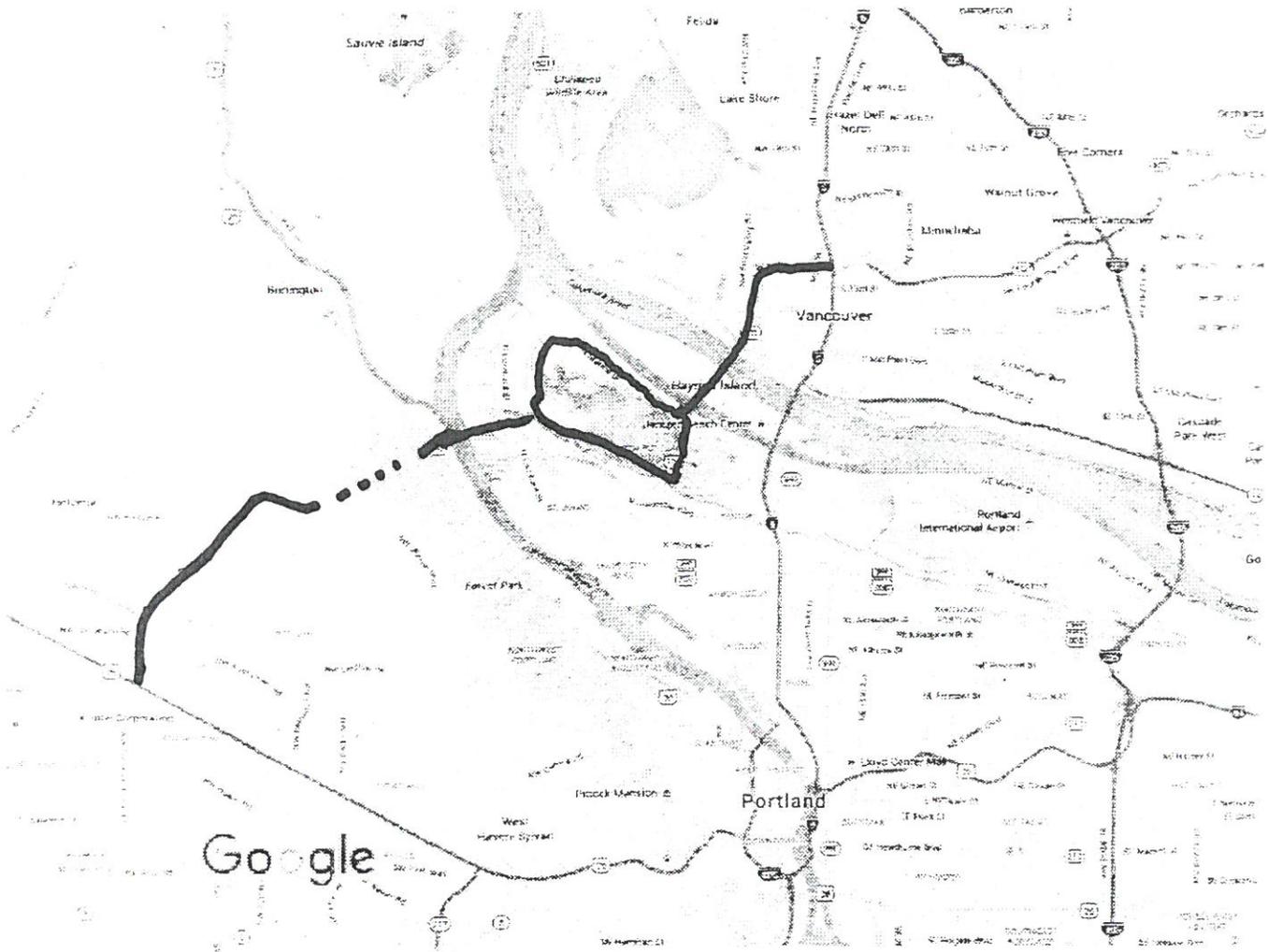
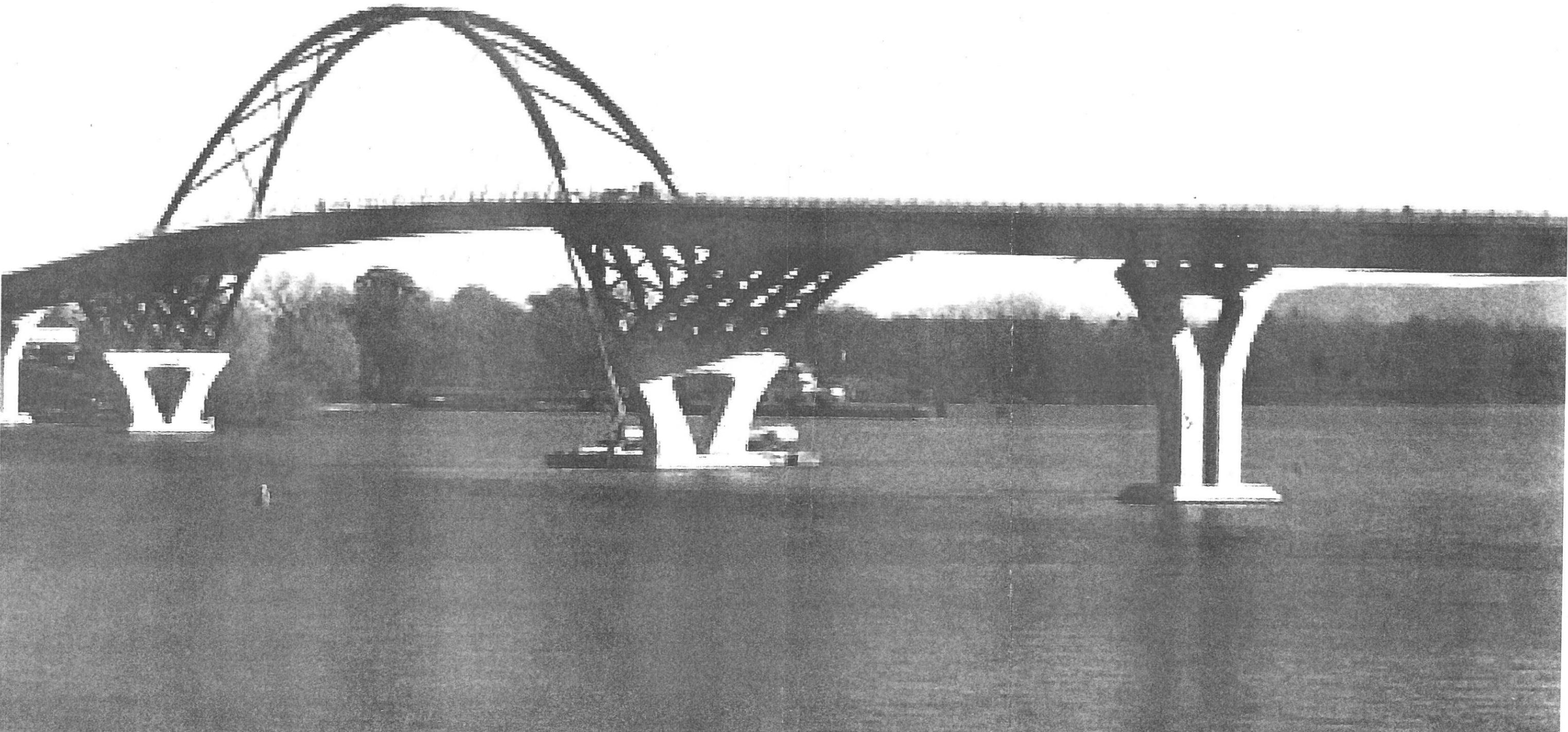


Submitted by Ron Swaren  
3/1/2016  
page 1 of 2

Maps



Map data ©2015 Google 1 mi



*Submitted by:  
Ed Barnes 3/1/2016  
20 pages*

Coordinates: 45°36'24"N 122°40'51"W

# Interstate Bridge

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Interstate Bridge** (also **Columbia River Interstate Bridge**, **I-5 Bridge**, **Portland-Vancouver Interstate Bridge**, **Vancouver-Portland Bridge**) is a pair of nearly identical steel vertical lift, through truss bridges that carry Interstate 5 traffic over the Columbia River between Vancouver, Washington, and Portland, Oregon, in the United States. First opened to traffic in 1917 with a second span opening in 1958, the bridge handles 121,400 vehicles daily (as of 2008) <sup>[2]</sup>. The green structure, which is over 3,500 ft (1,067 m) long, carries traffic over three northbound lanes and three southbound lanes.

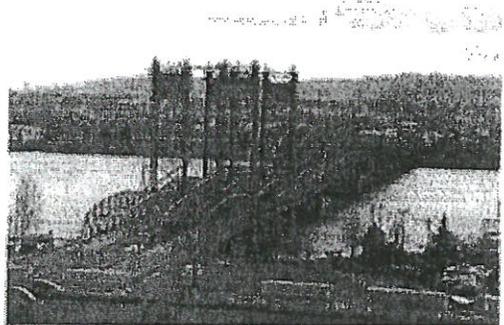
## First bridge

The bridge was built to replace an overcrowded ferry system operated by Pacific Railway, Light & Power Co. Construction on the bridge began in March 1915, following the sale of bonds.<sup>[3]</sup> The first bridge was opened on February 14, 1917 at a cost of \$1.75 million, which was shared between Clark County and Multnomah County.<sup>[4]</sup> Clark County paid \$500,000 with Multnomah County paying \$1,250,000.<sup>[5]</sup> The first bridge has a total of 13 steel spans with three measuring 275 ft (84 m) in length while the remaining ten spans are 265 ft (81 m) long.<sup>[5]</sup> One of the 275 ft (84 m) spans is the lift span for allowing river traffic under the bridge.<sup>[5]</sup> The original paved roadway was 38 ft (11.6 m) wide and had a 5 ft (1.52 m) wide sidewalk.<sup>[5]</sup> It was the first automobile bridge across the river between Washington and Oregon,<sup>[5]</sup> and the second to span the river at all, after the Wenatchee Bridge of 1908.<sup>[6]</sup> It was originally a toll bridge costing 5¢ per person. In 1929 the states of Washington and Oregon jointly purchased it from the counties and subsequently removed the tolls.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Upgrades

In 1958 a \$14.5 million upgrade created a southbound span and doubled the capacity of the bridge. The new bridge was built with a "humpback" that provides

### Interstate Bridge

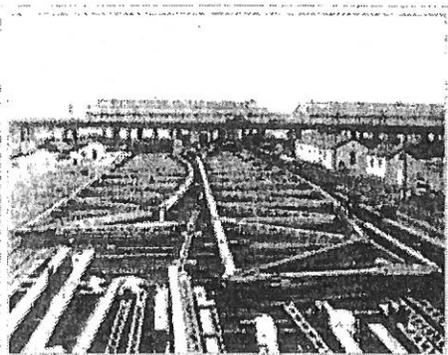


<b>Carries</b>	Interstate 5
<b>Crosses</b>	Columbia River
<b>Locale</b>	Portland, Oregon to Vancouver, Washington
<b>Maintained by</b>	ODOT, WSDOT
<b>ID number</b>	01377, 07333
<b>Design</b>	Dual truss with vertical lifts
<b>Total length</b>	3,538 ft (1,078 m)
<b>Longest span</b>	531 ft (161.8 m)
<b>Vertical clearance</b>	15.5 ft (4.72 m)
<b>Clearance below</b>	72 ft (21.9 m) closed, 176 ft (53.6 m) open
<b>AADT</b>	121,400
<b>Opened</b>	February 14, 1917 (Northbound), 1958 (Southbound)

**Vancouver-Portland Bridge**  
U.S. National Register of Historic Places



72 ft (21.9 m) of vertical clearance and minimizes bridge openings. At the time the new bridge was opened, the old one closed to give it the matching humpback. When both bridges were opened in 1960, tolls were reinstated at \$.20 for cars, \$.40 for light trucks, and \$.60 for heavy trucks and buses, until removed in 1966 after the construction expenses were paid off.<sup>[7]</sup>

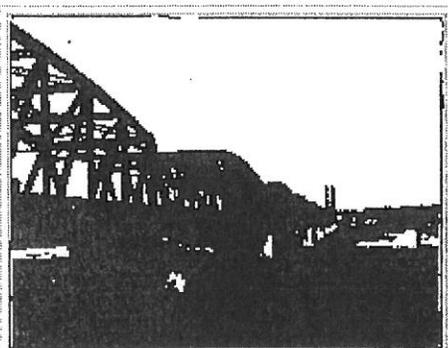


Components of the bridge were manufactured and prepared for assembly in Gary, Indiana.

A \$3 million upgrade to the lift cables, expansion joints, and a deck repaving was

completed in 1990. The diesel generator used to power the lift was replaced in 1995 at a cost of \$150,000. In 1999 the bridge was repainted at a cost of \$17 million. A \$10.8 million electrical upgrade was completed in mid-May 2005.<sup>[8]</sup>

The bridge is 3,538 feet (1,078 m) long with a main span of 531 feet (162 m).<sup>[9]</sup> The vertical lift provides 176 feet (53.6 m) of river clearance when fully opened. Each opening is for ten minutes and does so between 10 and 20 times per month.<sup>[10]</sup>



The bridge in 1917

Signals for several miles each direction warn of bridge opening since traffic has to stop and wait. Due to this interruption, the Interstate Bridge is one of the Federal Highway Administration's highest priorities for replacement.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> Commercial river traffic schedules passage to avoid rush hour.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

In 2001 the six total lanes of the bridges carried 120,000 vehicles daily including 10,000 trucks. Full traffic capacity occurs four hours every day.<sup>[10]</sup>

## Replacement

Currently, many traffic engineers consider the bridge to be obsolete, both due to its age and its limited capacity. The bridge is frequently a bottleneck which impacts both traffic on the freeway, as well as on the river. The Oregon and Washington state departments of transportation are jointly studying how to replace the bridge. Initially, the estimated cost for a replacement bridge was around \$2 billion,<sup>[11]</sup> but that number has climbed steadily to around \$4.2 billion.<sup>[12]</sup>

A replacement (especially a fixed span bridge) is complicated by a railroad drawbridge crossing the Columbia a short distance downriver, which constrains the location of the shipping channel; and by approach paths to Portland International Airport in Portland and to Pearson Field in Vancouver, which limit the height of any new structure. Some have proposed replacing the bridge in a different location.

<b>Location:</b>	Portland, Oregon
<b>Coordinates:</b>	45°36′24″N 122°40′51″W
<b>Built/Founded:</b>	1915
<b>Architect:</b>	Harrington,Howard & Ash
<b>Architectural style</b>	No Style Listed
<b>(s):</b>	
<b>Governing body:</b>	State
<b>MPS:</b>	Historic Bridges/Tunnels in Washington State TR
<b>Added to NRHP:</b>	July 16, 1982
<b>NRHP Reference#:</b>	82004205 <sup>[1]</sup>

There were originally 12 transportation plans that were being studied to improve and expand the Interstate 5 crossing of the Columbia River.<sup>[13]</sup> In late 2006, 4 of these plans were selected for a final proposal, along with a fifth no-build option.<sup>[14]</sup> The Columbia River Crossing project's six local partner agencies selected a replacement I-5 bridge and light rail extension to Clark College as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) in 2008.<sup>[15]</sup>

There is also a long standing debate as to whether or not a new bridge would include a MAX Light Rail line, express buses or bus rapid transit. During his 2007 "State of the City" address, Vancouver mayor Royce Pollard stated

“ I've said it before, but it bears repeating – Vancouver and Clark County residents have the cheapest buy-in to one of the most successful light-rail systems in the world, the MAX system. There is over \$5 billion invested in light rail across the river. We can tap into that system at a very minimal cost. We'd be foolish not to. The bi-state Columbia River Crossing initiative is making plans for the future of our community for 50 years and beyond. This project should not happen without integrating light rail that comes into downtown Vancouver. If the final alternative doesn't have a light rail component, I will not support it.<sup>[16]</sup> ”

In December 2007, Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski advocated for a new bridge, publicly endorsing the Oregon Business Plan's proposal.<sup>[17]</sup>

In 2008, as fuel prices increased and project cost estimates soared, many in the area began questioning whether the project is worth the costs. In addition, many on the Portland side of the river fear that a 12 lane highway bridge to Vancouver, which has virtually no land use restrictions, will encourage suburban sprawl and development north of the river.<sup>[18]</sup>

Further concerns over the 12-lane "Columbia River Crossing" (CRC) proposal include its failure to examine critical environmental impacts, such as damage to Clark County's drinking water supply, endangered fish habitat in the Columbia, and air pollution in North Portland.

In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency found that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the CRC had failed to adequately cover these issues, as well as the potential induced demand for suburban sprawl. In a letter to CRC planners, the EPA wrote that "There was no indication (in the CRC environmental impact statement) of how these vulnerable populations might be impacted by air pollution, noise, diesel construction vehicles and increased traffic", referring to minority communities in North Portland.<sup>[19]</sup>

## References

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- <sup>2</sup> ^ [http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TDATA/tsm/docs/2008\\_TVT.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TDATA/tsm/docs/2008_TVT.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> ^ Holstine, Craig E. (2005). *Spanning Washington : Historic Highway Bridges of the Evergreen State*. Washington State University Press. pp. 103–104. ISBN 0-87422-281-8.
- <sup>4</sup> ^ Wood, Sharon (2001). *The Portland Bridge Book*. Oregon Historical Society. ISBN 0-87595-211-9.
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13. ^ "Preliminary Alternative Packages". Columbia River Crossing. <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org/AlternativePackages/PreliminaryAltPack.aspx>. Retrieved 2006-11-05.
14. ^ Columbia River Crossing: Project Alternatives
15. ^ Columbia River Crossing: Locally Preferred Alternative
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19. ^ "I-5 bridge impacts on pollution, growth unexamined". *The Oregonian*. July 10, 2008. [http://blog.oregonlive.com/breakingnews/2008/07/epa\\_i5\\_bridge\\_impacts\\_on\\_pollu.html](http://blog.oregonlive.com/breakingnews/2008/07/epa_i5_bridge_impacts_on_pollu.html).

## External links

- WSDOT:Interstate Bridge
- *Columbia River Crossing: Home page of ODOT/WSDOT project to replace the Interstate Bridge*

Retrieved from "[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate\\_Bridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_Bridge)"

Categories: Bridges completed in 1917 | Bridges completed in 1958 | Bridges in Portland, Oregon | Bridges over the Columbia River | Vertical lift bridges | Movable bridges on the Interstate Highway System | Interstate 5 | Bridges on the National Register of Historic Places | National Register of Historic Places in Washington (U.S. state) | U.S. Route 99 | National Register of Historic Places in Multnomah County, Oregon | Towers in Washington (U.S. state) | Bridges in Vancouver, Washington

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[Home](#) » [Project Information](#) » [Analysis, Review and Results](#) » Record of Decision

## Record of Decision

CRC federal oversight agencies, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, selected an alternative for the project and signed a record of decision on December 7, 2011. The record of decision identifies a replacement bridge with light rail as the alternative that best improves safety, travel reliability, freight mobility, and bridge structural stability and relieves congestion on Interstate 5 between Portland and Vancouver. The record of decision also contains mitigation commitments for unavoidable impacts.

The record of decision is a significant milestone, which concludes the environmental planning phase under the National Environmental Policy Act. NEPA is a federal law requiring agencies that receive federal funding to consider the impacts to environmental, cultural and social resources from their proposed projects. This NEPA process involved comprehensive analysis with input received from more than 12,000 comments at over 1,000 public meetings.

The ROD is available online for viewing and download.

## What happens next?

CRC will continue to engage the community and local agencies in refining project designs and planning for construction. The record of decision

enables CRC to stay on schedule and start construction in late 2013. A schedule of the project's next steps is available online.

**A printed copy of the Record of Decision will be available for viewing at these locations beginning December 12, 2011:**

**VANCOUVER LOCATIONS**

Luepke Center

Marshall Community Center

Firstenburg Community Center

Vancouver Community Library

(Main)

Vancouver Mall Community Library

Washington State University (Campus Library)

Clark College (Cannell Library)

City of Vancouver City Hall

**PORTLAND LOCATIONS**

Matt Dishman Community Center

University Park Community Center

St. Johns Community Center

Peninsula Park Community Center

Multnomah County Library (Central Library)

North Portland Library

Albina Library

Kenton Library

St. Johns Library

University of Portland (Wilson W. Clark Memorial Library)

Concordia University Library (George R. White Library and Learning

Center)

Portland State University (Branford P. Millar Library)

Portland Community College (Cascade Campus Library)

## Related Links

Final EIS

Draft EIS

What is NEPA

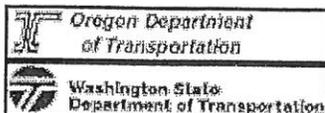
## Record of Decision availability

The ROD is available online for viewing and download:

Record of Decision (246 KB)

## ROD Technical Reports and Appendices

- Appendix A - Project Mitigation Commitments (9,499 KB)
- Appendix B - Maps of Selected Alternative (15,403 KB)
- Appendix C - Anticipated local, state and federal permits and approvals (145 KB)
- Appendix D - FEIS Errata (3,418 KB)
- Appendix E - FEIS Comments and Responses (link to HTML index)
- Appendix F - Biological Opinion (1,529 KB)
- Appendix G - Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (1,083 KB)



2011 Columbia River Crossing | A project co-sponsored by ODOT and WSDOT

700 Washington Street, Suite 300 | Vancouver, WA | 98660



September 2012

## Inside this Brief

- **Background**
- **Identifying the Problem**
- **Purpose and Need**
- **Record of Decision**
- **Cost and Financing**
- **Timeline and Governance**
- **Staff Contacts**

Legislative Committee Services  
State Capitol Building  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
(503) 986-1813

Background Brief on ...

# Columbia River Crossing

## Background

The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project is a bridge, transit, highway, bicycle and pedestrian improvement project proposed by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and federal and local agencies. The project proposes to replace the existing two highway spans on Interstate 5 (I-5) across the Columbia River with two new spans, along with new interchanges on both the Oregon and Washington sides of the river and extension of light rail public transit into Vancouver, Washington. The project focuses on a five-mile segment of the I-5 corridor, beginning at State Route 500 in northern Vancouver and extending to just north of Columbia Boulevard in north Portland. The project's stated intent is to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, increase mobility of motorists, freight traffic, transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians, and to mitigate seismic risks.

The existing two spans of the I-5 bridge are one of two crossings of the Columbia River in the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan region – the other being the Glen Jackson Bridge on Interstate 205. The older of the two spans, the northbound span, opened to two-way traffic in 1917; once the second span opened in 1958, the original span was converted to one-way traffic. The bridge currently carries three lanes of traffic in each direction, with a narrow pedestrian walkway on each span. The bridge was originally built to replace an overcrowded ferry system.

The existing spans also include a bridge lift, which brings road traffic to a stop when a vessel exceeds the bridge's typical clearance. With the lift span, the

bridges can accommodate traffic as tall as 179 feet. Between 2009 and 2011 there were 409, 412 and 429 bridge lifts respectively.

### **Identifying the Problem**

In early 1999, ODOT and WSDOT initiated the I-5 Trade Corridor Freight Feasibility and Needs Assessment, appointing a leadership committee to address five questions:

- Is there a congestion freight mobility problem on the corridor and, if so, what is its magnitude?
- What is the cost of inaction?
- What improvements are needed?
- How can improvements be funded?
- What are the next steps?

The leadership committee determined that without improvements, future congestion in the I-5 corridor threatened the economic promise of the Portland/Vancouver region. Doing nothing was not considered as an option; instead, it was decided that what was needed was a multi-faceted solution to address demand management, highway, transit and rail.

In 2000, the governors of Oregon and Washington appointed a 26-member I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership Task Force, which recommended improvements to the I-5 trade corridor, including: light rail and express bus service; new vehicle and transit capacity; a bi-state land use accord; strong transportation demand management (**TDM**) and transportation system management (**TSM**); and commencement of the environmental impact statement (**EIS**) process. The governors then appointed co-chairs to lead a 39-member Columbia River Crossing Task Force to advise on the project development process, including the identification of transportation problems, potential solutions and evaluation criteria.

### **Purpose and Need**

At the onset of the CRC project, the CRC Task Force, members of the public and stakeholders identified the current and future transportation problems in the corridor. This process informed the development of the Statement of Purpose and Need for the project and creation of the

evaluation criteria. The Columbia River Crossing project is designed to address six specific problems:

*Growing travel demand and congestion:* Heavy congestion on I-5 is the result of population growth in the region, with concurrent growth in employment and economic activity. The existing bridges are capable of accommodating about 5,500 vehicles per hour each direction. However, during peak periods, the number of vehicles traveling through the area results in significant congestion – two hours of congestion southbound during the morning commute, and four hours of congestion during the evening commute. This problem is exacerbated when an accident or breakdown occurs, as the existing bridges have no room to pull off the roadway.

Analysis by ODOT and WSDOT indicates that as the population of the region increases, congestion is likely to increase. Projections suggest that if no improvements are made, congestion will increase to 6.25 hours southbound during the morning hours, and 7.75 hours northbound and one hour southbound during afternoon and evening hours by 2030. Projections indicate that if the replacement bridge is built, by 2030 congestion will be approximately 3.5 hours southbound in the morning and zero to two hours northbound in the afternoon and evening.

*Impaired freight mobility:* Traffic congestion on I-5 reduces freight mobility between regional markets in Portland and Vancouver, as well as national and international destinations along the corridor. As the number of hours of congestion increases, it will continue to crowd out regular hours of freight movement, which tends currently to avoid the peak commute hours to avoid congestion.

Truck-hauled freight is expected to grow rapidly during the next few years, including as a percentage of freight moved through the region, from 67 percent of total freight moved in 2000 to 75 percent in 2035. The current total freight value moved across the bridge is approximately

\$40 billion, expected to increase to \$72 billion by 2030.

*Limited public transportation operation, connectivity and reliability:* Transit between Portland and Vancouver is currently conducted by bus and express bus service. Congestion reduces bus travel speeds and reliability; southbound bus service is up to three times longer during parts of the morning commute than during off-peak hours. Transit service times are expected to increase significantly by 2030 as congestion worsens.

*Safety and vulnerability to accidents:* There are approximately 400 vehicle crashes per year in the CRC project area, making it one of the most accident-intensive sections of the corridor. This is due to several design features of the current facility:

- There are seven interchanges spaced approximately one-half mile apart, insufficient for cars to enter and exit the highway and fully merge with traffic before the next interchange. Short on-ramps and off-ramps provide insufficient space to accelerate or decelerate, creating congestion and collision risk, especially for large trucks.
- Vertical grade changes due to the large “hump” in each of the existing bridge spans blocks view of conditions ahead.
- Narrow lanes and shoulders; the bridges themselves have no shoulders, and the northbound span has lanes one foot narrower than minimum standards, putting vehicles too close to physical barriers and other vehicles.
- Hazardous river navigation, particularly during peak traffic when bridge lifts are not allowed, and exacerbated when river levels are high and clearance under the I-5 and downriver rail bridge is low.

*Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities:* Existing bicycle and pedestrian paths are very narrow and extremely close to traffic and steel trusses; some do not comply with accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

*Seismic vulnerability:* The foundations of both bridges rest in soils that could liquefy during a major earthquake, and neither was built to current earthquake safety standards.

### **Record of Decision**

In December 2011, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration issued a Record of Decision (**ROD**) for a preferred alternative, which validated the technical and public process and concluded the formal environmental planning process.

The process of development began in 2005 with identification of 70 potential components by the public, Task Force and from earlier studies of the bridge influence area (**BIA**). The components were divided into six categories: crossings (such as replacement bridges, supplemental bridges, tunnels, arterial crossings and entirely new corridors); transportation demand/system management (lane striping, increased park and ride capacity, and signal systems); freight (freight bypass lanes, peak period truck restrictions and enhanced highway design); transit (express bus, high speed rail, ferry service and light rail); bicycle/pedestrian (enhanced existing pathway, enhanced in-city connectivity and a new pathway-only bridge); and roadways north and south. These 70 components were narrowed to 31 using evaluation criteria developed by the Task Force and then combined into 12 representative corridor alternatives in three categories:

- Existing bridges only (two alternatives)
- Existing and supplemental bridges (five alternatives)
- Replacement bridge(s) only (five alternatives)

From these 12 alternatives, five were selected to be analyzed for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement from which a Locally Preferred Alternative (**LPA**) was eventually selected after a public comment period.

The CRC Task Force recommended a replacement bridge with added vehicle capacity,

light rail, use of TDM and TSM, and improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

In 2008, the Oregon and Washington governors appointed a 10-member CRC Project Sponsors Council (PSC). The PSC was supported by an integrated project staff from both state departments of transportation, as well as local governments and agencies. The CRC Project Sponsors Council recommendations included the features of the CRC project design, as outlined below.

The key features of the LPA include two new double-deck spans that would replace the existing two spans, to include:

- Light rail extension from the Portland Expo Center into Vancouver to Clark College on the lower southbound deck
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths on the lower northbound deck
- Three through lanes and two add/drop lanes in each direction
- Tolling, including higher rates during peak travel periods
- Improvements to interchanges in Portland and Vancouver

### **Cost and Financing**

In 2009, the project reduced the scope and cost of the project by postponing improvements to the Victory Boulevard and SR 500 interchanges. The cost for the replacement of the existing I-5 bridges and improvements to five interchanges outlined in the Record of Decision is currently estimated between \$3.1 billion and \$3.5 billion. Those costs break down roughly as follows:

- \$1.2 billion for replacing the river bridges and approaches \$850 million for light rail transit extension
- \$435 million for roadway and interchanges in Washington
- \$595 million for roadway and interchanges in Oregon

ODOT and WSDOT have developed plans to further reduce the cost of the project, at least initially, by phasing construction of the project and deferring work on some non-highway elements on the Oregon side. These options

would reduce the cost of the project by approximately \$145 million.

Funding for the project would be split roughly evenly between the federal government, the combined contributions of Oregon and Washington, and revenues generated by tolls on the new facility. The federal New Starts program is expected to provide the cost of the light rail portion of the project (\$850 million), and other federal funding could provide as much as \$400 million in grants from the Federal Highway Administration. Tolling is expected to provide revenues sufficient to finance between \$900 million and \$1.3 billion, and will be the subject of an intergovernmental agreement to govern toll setting, administration, debt allocation and other issues.

Finally, each state would be responsible for contributing approximately \$450 million to the project. Early projections have indicated some of the options that may be available to the State of Oregon to cover its share; a funding package could include one or more of the following options:

- *Gas tax* – a one-cent per gallon tax statewide generates \$26.7 million per year
- *Vehicle registration fee* – a \$1 annual fee generates \$5.19 million per year
- *Title fee* – a \$1 fee generates \$1.22 million per year

Therefore, one possible package could include a one-cent per gallon gas tax, \$1 annual vehicle registration fee, and \$3 title fee – this package would raise an estimated \$35.5 million per year, sufficient to finance a 25-year bond for \$450 million. A legislative funding package is expected to be introduced for consideration in the Legislative Assembly during the 2013 Session.

### **Timeline and Governance**

Planning and design are ongoing in preparation for an anticipated start date for construction. Construction is contingent upon funding from the federal government and both Oregon and Washington. Assuming that funding is forthcoming, limited project construction could begin as early as 2013 with major bridge

construction beginning in late 2014. Under that timeline, the new southbound bridge would open in 2018, followed by light rail service in 2019 and the opening of the northbound bridge in 2020, when demolition of the existing bridges would occur.

A number of outstanding issues besides funding remain to be settled prior to beginning construction. Although the Final Environmental Impact Statement (**FEIS**) and record of decision have been issued, a number of other permits and approvals are required. Most notably, the United States Coast Guard (**USCG**) has expressed concern regarding the proposed height of the new bridges on the CRC, which, while higher than the existing bridges, are significantly lower than the existing bridges when the bridge lift is up. USCG has indicated that this lower height may result in river navigation issues for some river users, and one shipper has initiated legal action. The project maintains that the mid-level bridge height recommendation contained in the ROD was developed over a decade of work with local communities on both sides of the river, the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration, while also meeting the needs of most river users. Several analyses necessary for issuing the bridge permit are to be conducted during the remainder of 2012, and the project management team is planning to apply for the USCG permit late 2012 or early 2013. Permit approval is needed prior to beginning construction.

Other issues to be completed prior to construction include completion of Tier 2 and Tier 3 traffic and revenue (**T&R**) studies and an investment grade analysis of the financing plan, which includes tolling revenue estimates.

There are also a number of issues related to bi-state tolling and governance that remain to be worked out between Oregon and Washington. Both states are reviewing their respective authorities and work will commence in developing proposals and options for creating a governing structure for toll setting and administration, as well as debt allocation. Both

states have each also appointed legislative oversight committees to continue reviewing project planning and development.

### **Staff and Agency Contacts**

Patrick Brennan

Legislative Committee Services

503-986-1674

Kris Strickler

Oregon Department of Transportation

360-816-2200

Patricia McCaig

Governor Kitzhaber's CRC Advisor

503-593-5250

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1915

THIS BRIDGE IS DEDICATED TO THE  
CITIZENS OF OREGON AND WASHINGTON BY  
WHOM ITS ERECTION WAS ORDAINED.  
IT WAS CONCEIVED OF THEIR VISION. ITS FOUNDA-  
TIONS ARE LAID UPON THEIR SACRIFICE.  
THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF COURAGE,  
FAITH AND HIGH ENDEAVOR BEQUEATHED TO  
THIS GENERATION BY THE PIONEERS WHO WRESTED  
FROM THE WILDERNESS THESE WIDE AND FRUIT-  
FUL LANDS IS BUILT INTO ITS MEMBERS  
OF STONE AND STEEL AND HERE HANDED DOWN  
TO THE GENERATIONS THAT COME AFTER.

1915

THIS BRIDGE IS DEDICATED TO THE  
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1917

### Senate Transportation Committee

Budget Leadership	Joe Fain	R 1-360-786- 7692	<a href="mailto:joe.fain@leg.wa.gov">joe.fain@leg.wa.gov</a>	Doug Erickson	R 1-360-786- 7614	<a href="mailto:doug.erickson@leg.wa.gov">doug.erickson@leg.wa.gov</a>
Co-Chair	Curtis King	R 1-360-786- 7672	<a href="mailto:curtis.king@leg.wa.gov">curtis.king@leg.wa.gov</a>	Nick Harper	D 1-360-786- 7674	<a href="mailto:nick.harper@leg.wa.gov">nick.harper@leg.wa.gov</a>
Co-Chair	Tracey Eide	D 1-360-786- 7658	<a href="mailto:tracey.eide@leg.wa.gov">tracey.eide@leg.wa.gov</a>	Steve Litzow	R 1-360-786- 7641	<a href="mailto:steve.litzow@leg.wa.gov">steve.litzow@leg.wa.gov</a>
Vice Co-Chair	Don Benton	R 1-360-786- 7632	<a href="mailto:don.benton@leg.wa.gov">don.benton@leg.wa.gov</a>	Mark Mullet	D 1-360-786- 7608	<a href="mailto:mark.mullet@leg.wa.gov">mark.mullet@leg.wa.gov</a>
Vice Co-Chair	Steve Hobbs	D 1-360-786- 7658	<a href="mailto:steve.hobbs@leg.wa.gov">steve.hobbs@leg.wa.gov</a>	Christine Rolfes	D 1-360-786- 7644	<a href="mailto:christine.rolfes@leg.wa.gov">christine.rolfes@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Andy Billig	D 1-360-786- 7604	<a href="mailto:andy.billig@leg.wa.gov">andy.billig@leg.wa.gov</a>	Tim Sheldon	D 1-360-786- 7668	<a href="mailto:tim.sheldon@leg.wa.gov">tim.sheldon@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Mike Carrell	R 1-360-786- 7654	<a href="mailto:mike.carrell@leg.wa.gov">mike.carrell@leg.wa.gov</a>	John Smith	R 1-360-786- 7612	<a href="mailto:john.smith@leg.wa.gov">john.smith@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Sharon Brown	R 1-360-786- 7614	<a href="mailto:sharon.brown@leg.wa.gov">sharon.brown@leg.wa.gov</a>	Nathan Schlicher	D 1-360-786- 7650	<a href="mailto:nathan.schlicher@leg.wa.gov">nathan.schlicher@leg.wa.gov</a>

### House Transportation Committee

Chair	Judy Clibborn	D 1-360-786- 7926	<a href="mailto:judy.clibborn@leg.wa.gov">judy.clibborn@leg.wa.gov</a>	Linda Kochmar	R 1-360-786- 7898	<a href="mailto:linda.kochmar@leg.wa.gov">linda.kochmar@leg.wa.gov</a>
Vice Chair	Jake Fey	D 1-360-786- 7974	<a href="mailto:jake.fey@leg.wa.gov">jake.fey@leg.wa.gov</a>	Joel Kretz	R 1-360-786- 7988	<a href="mailto:joel.kretz@leg.wa.gov">joel.kretz@leg.wa.gov</a>
Vice Chair	Lilas Marko	D 1-360-786- 7972	<a href="mailto:lilas.marko@leg.wa.gov">lilas.marko@leg.wa.gov</a>	Dan Kristiansen	R 1-360-786- 7967	<a href="mailto:don.kristiansen@leg.wa.gov">don.kristiansen@leg.wa.gov</a>
Vice Chair	Luis Moscoso	D 1-360-786- 7900	<a href="mailto:luis.moscoso@leg.wa.gov">luis.moscoso@leg.wa.gov</a>	Jim Moeller	D 1-360-786- 7872	<a href="mailto:jim.moeller@leg.wa.gov">jim.moeller@leg.wa.gov</a>
Ranking Minority	Ed Orcutt	R 1-360-786- 7990	<a href="mailto:ed.orcutt@leg.wa.gov">ed.orcutt@leg.wa.gov</a>	Jeff Morris	D 1-360-786- 7970	<a href="mailto:jeff.morris@leg.wa.gov">jeff.morris@leg.wa.gov</a>
Asst.Ranking Minority	Mark Hargrove	R 1-360-786- 7918	<a href="mailto:mark.hargrove@leg.wa.gov">mark.hargrove@leg.wa.gov</a>	Steve O'Ban	R 1-360-786- 7890	<a href="mailto:steve.o'ban@leg.wa.gov">steve.o'ban@leg.wa.gov</a>
Asst.Ranking Minority	Jason Overstreet	R 1-360-786- 7980	<a href="mailto:jason.overstreet@leg.wa.gov">jason.overstreet@leg.wa.gov</a>	Marcus Riccelli	D 1-360-786- 7888	<a href="mailto:marcus.riccelli@leg.wa.gov">marcus.riccelli@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Jan Angel	R 1-360-786- 7964	<a href="mailto:jan.angel@leg.wa.gov">jan.angel@leg.wa.gov</a>	Jay Rodne	R 1-360-786- 7852	<a href="mailto:jay.rodne@leg.wa.gov">jay.rodne@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Steve Bergquist	D 1-360-786- 7862	<a href="mailto:steve.bergquist@leg.wa.gov">steve.bergquist@leg.wa.gov</a>	Cindy Ryu	D 1-360-786- 7880	<a href="mailto:cindy.ryu@leg.wa.gov">cindy.ryu@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Jessyn Farrell	D 1-360-786- 7818	<a href="mailto:jessyn.farrell@leg.wa.gov">jessyn.farrell@leg.wa.gov</a>	Mike Sells	D 1-360-786- 7840	<a href="mailto:mike.sells@leg.wa.gov">mike.sells@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Joë Fitzgibbon	D 1-360-786- 7952	<a href="mailto:joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov">joe.fitzgibbon@leg.wa.gov</a>	Matt Shea	R 1-360-786- 7984	<a href="mailto:matt.shea@leg.wa.gov">matt.shea@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Roger Freeman	D 1-360-786- 7830	<a href="mailto:roger.freeman@leg.wa.gov">roger.freeman@leg.wa.gov</a>	Dean Takko	D 1-360-786- 7806	<a href="mailto:dean.takko@leg.wa.gov">dean.takko@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Cyrus Habib	D 1-360-786- 7848	<a href="mailto:cyrus.habib@leg.wa.gov">cyrus.habib@leg.wa.gov</a>	Gael Tarleton	D 1-360-786- 7860	<a href="mailto:gael.tarleton@leg.wa.gov">gael.tarleton@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Dave Hayes	R 1-360-786- 7914	<a href="mailto:dave.hayes@leg.wa.gov">dave.hayes@leg.wa.gov</a>	Dave Upthegrove	D 1-360-786- 7868	<a href="mailto:dave.upthegrove@leg.wa.gov">dave.upthegrove@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Norm Johnson	R 1-360-786- 7810	<a href="mailto:norm.johnson@leg.wa.gov">norm.johnson@leg.wa.gov</a>	Hans Zeiger	R 1-360-786- 7968	<a href="mailto:hans.zeiger@leg.wa.gov">hans.zeiger@leg.wa.gov</a>
	Brad Kippert	R 1-360-786- 7882	<a href="mailto:brad.kippert@leg.wa.gov">brad.kippert@leg.wa.gov</a>			

### Introduction

This timeline shows most of the major steps and obstacles throughout 17 years of discussions and planning for the Columbia River Crossing project. The massive, multi-billion dollar project would replace the aged I-5 Interstate bridges and improve several interchanges in South Vancouver and North Portland.

Though it was recognized in 1996 that congestion on the I-5 corridor at this bridge is costing the region dearly, the process to narrow down a solution to meet the needs of two states, two cities, two transit agencies and two metropolitan planning organizations to address this has been time consuming and often quite controversial. The complex project is now potentially one short year away from breaking ground and the level of controversy seems to be peaking.

- **1996:** Washington and Oregon DOTs meet with businesses and civic leaders to examine whether congestion issues on the I-5 corridor at the Columbia River are negatively impacting the local economy.
- **1999:** The area's transportation policy-makers appoint the Leadership Committee, a 14-member group of business and civic leaders.
- **December 1999:** Leadership Committee publishes Portland/Vancouver I-5 Trade Corridor Study. The study identified the magnitude of the congestion problem on I-5, costs of inaction, improvements needed, how to fund improvements, and next steps in the process.
- **1999/2000:** Leadership Committee recommends initiating a public process to develop a plan for improving the I-5 corridor.
- **2001:** Washington and Oregon governors form the 26-member I-5 Portland/Vancouver Transportation and Trade Partnership Taskforce to study problems and potential solutions for I-5 corridor from I-205/I-5 junction in Washington to the I-84 interchange in Oregon.
- **June 2002:** Portland/Vancouver I-5 Transportation and Trade Partnership publishes its Final Strategic Plan. The plan provided findings on key issues, including transit, freeway capacity, environmental justice, and financing. It also provided recommendations for action and spelled out the next steps in the process to improve the corridor.
- **Early 2005:** Governors appoint 39-member Task Force to advise the DOTs on project-related issues and concerns.

- **Late 2006:** Four of 12 originally developed transportation plans are selected for a final proposal, along with a fifth no-build option.
- **2007:** Task Force explores using existing I-5 bridges to meet the project's purpose and need. Work on Draft Environmental Impact Statement under way.
- **May 2, 2008:** DEIS published, comment period begins.
- **July 2008:** Six local partner agencies selected a replacement I-5 bridge and light rail extension to Clark College as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative.
- **Summer 2008:** The Environmental Protection Agency finds the DEIS did not adequately cover certain issues, including potential increased suburban sprawl, which could negatively impact minority communities in North Portland.
- **November 2008:** Governors appoint 10-member Project Sponsors Council to help develop a long term, comprehensive solution for a five-mile stretch of I-5 between Portland and Vancouver.
- **December 2009:** Federal Transit Administration approved the project into preliminary engineering.
- **Late 2009/early 2010:** A series of public meetings are held to address the concerns of Hayden Island residents and businesses over lack of local access, overhead structures and elevation at Tomahawk Island Drive, and overall footprint of a proposed interchange on the island.
- **April 2010:** Washington and Oregon governors convene an Independent Review Panel (IRP) to ensure that key project study assumptions and methods are reasonable.
- **August 9, 2010:** Project Sponsors Council chooses 10-lane option with new Hayden Island interchange.
- **September 2010:** Governors and DOTs accept IRP's findings and recommendations. The IRP unanimously assesses that the project should move forward with a new crossing to be built at the earliest possible date.
- **October, 2010:** The Washington and Oregon departments of transportation convene a Bridge Expert Review Panel to evaluate bridge types and configurations for the replacement Interstate Bridge.
- **2010:** City of Vancouver and C-Tran select light rail route through downtown Vancouver.

- **Late 2010/early 2011:** The appearance of a new I-5 bridge is a major topic of discussion among project partners. Some argue for an iconic design, while others argue a simpler design is still effective but less costly.
- **April 2011:** Governors of Washington and Oregon accept Bridge Review Panel's recommendation for a deck truss bridge type, presumably ending the debate over the bridge's appearance.
- **August 11, 2011:** Metro adopts Land Use Final Order, approving the route of CRC through Oregon, including highway improvements, the light rail route and stations, park and ride lots and maintenance facilities.
- **Summer 2011:** WSDOT performs an internal audit on the project's finances in response to accusations of lack of transparency and failure to respond to records requests.
- **September 2011:** Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods and the Coalition for a Livable Future file suit against Metro, contending they are using an obscure 1996 law to force the project through.
- **October 2011:** Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) rules that Metro did not have authority to grant its approval of the CRC route through Oregon when it used a 1996 law aimed at siting rail lines. LUBA turned back most other opposing arguments.
- **September 2011:** Final EIS published.
- **December 2011:** Federal Record of Decision received.
- **March 2012:** U.S. Coast Guard announces that the new bridge, at 95 feet above the Columbia River, does not provide enough clearance to meet the "reasonable needs" of ships. CRC staff commit to analyzing options for bridge height.
- **April 12, 2012:** Metro Council approves a Revised Land Use Final Order, allowing the project to move forward within the realm of Oregon land use law.
- **November 2012:** Clark County voters reject a sales tax increase that would have covered the local cost to operate light rail.
- **November 9, 2012:** A group of 10 Southwest Washington lawmakers call for a complete redesign of the project, citing the recently rejected sales tax increase for light rail, funding problems and lack of public participation in the design.
- **December 2012:** Analysis of a 115- or 116-foot-high bridge presented to a group of Washington state lawmakers. This height will be used as the basis for the critical bridge permit application expected to be filed with the Coast Guard in early 2013.

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- **December 19, 2012:** State transportation commissions approve bi-state tolling agreement. Tolls must still have legislative approval to be used as part of funding.
  - **February 2013:** Oregon legislature approves \$450 million for CRC, contingent upon Washington producing its share of the funding.

### Introduction

This is a timeline of the process to fund, plan and construct the Interstate 205 corridor, including the Glenn Jackson Bridge. Unlike the CRC project controversy, it was the I-205 corridor, not the I-205 bridge itself that was controversial. Still, comparing I-205 and I-5 is like comparing Granny Smith apples to Red Delicious apples: Though the I-5 corridor and bridge already exist, CRC is faced with the same kinds of trials and controversy that challenged Oregon and Washington during two decades of work on I-205.

- **June 29, 1956:** President Eisenhower signs Federal-Aid Highway Act, which funded construction of 41,000 miles of Interstate Highway System, including I-205. The funding was handled through a Highway Trust Fund that paid 90 percent of construction costs, with the remaining 10 percent funded by the states.
- **Mid-1960s:** I-205 corridor identification and planning.
- **1968:** City of Maywood Park, which incorporated in 1967 with the intent of halting construction of the freeway through its locale, files lawsuit against the Oregon State Highway Commission. The city lost the case and corridor design continued.
- **1969:** Oregon and Washington signed a design and construction pact.
- **May 1970:** I-205 George Abernathy Bridge, over the Willamette River in Oregon City, opened.
- **1971:** Maywood Park again attempted to halt construction, filing suit in federal court. The city lost the suit, but concessions were made by the state. Among those, it was agreed that I-205 would be built below grade, and a large sound berm would be constructed.
- **1973:** Groups opposed to the project filed petitions with the Department of Environmental Quality.
- **1974:** I-205 from I-5 northeast to West Linn and Oregon City opened in Clackamas County.
- **July 1974:** Multnomah County Board of Commissioners formally retracted an earlier approval of the I-205 route and required that ODOT redesign a nine-mile section of freeway.
- **December 1974:** ODOT stopped taking action on all pending right-of-way acquisitions with the I-205 corridor.

- **April 1975:** The City of Portland suggested modification of the I-205 designs to include bus lanes and other mass transit improvements.
- **Summer 1975:** Tentative consensus was reached that would keep the right-of-way but allow some dedication for bus-only lanes while removing or redesigning several of the originally planned interchanges.
- **November 1975:** FHWA objected to portions of the compromise plan related to types of interchanges and busway design. A local group published a "Report to the People" that asked if I-205, as newly proposed and agreed to, would be functional and worth the cost.
- **December 1975:** Following changes to the interchanges and redesign of portions of the bus corridor, FHWA withdrew its opposition and so removed the major obstacle to construction of the segment between Foster Road and the Columbia River.
- **August 1977:** Construction began on the Glenn Jackson Bridge.
- **1978:** Maywood Park filed another lawsuit for alleged damage to properties along the west side of the city. The city again lost its lawsuit.
- **1978 – 1979:** Most controversial segment of I-205 in Multnomah County constructed as a six-lane facility with fewer interchanges and fewer lanes than originally proposed; rights of way reserved for a busway.
- **December 1982:** I-205 Glenn I. Jackson Bridge over the Columbia River opened, thus completing the Oregon section.
- **1983:** Washington section of I-205 completed, thus finishing the bypass route.

### **Funding**

The entire I-205 corridor, including the Glenn Jackson Bridge, cost about \$480 million. Oregon's portion cost roughly \$230 million, the bridge cost \$170 million, and Washington spent roughly \$80 million.

It is unclear whether the \$53 million it cost to build the justice center to replace Rocky Butte Jail is included in these numbers.