

# CRC and Climate Change

Fact Sheet  June 2008

Oregon and Washington depend on a reliable transportation system for a strong economy. Currently freight, drivers and transit riders are stuck in traffic for 6 hours a day. As our region grows, congestion will only get worse. The Columbia River Crossing project is committed to being environmentally responsible while meeting the economic and transportation needs of the region.

## Transportation Solutions for the Future

The Columbia River Crossing project is consistent with the climate change guidance available from the Oregon Governor's Climate Change Integration Group, the Climate Action Team for the State of Washington, and the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

At this time, the main way to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions produced by transportation is to reduce the amount of fuel consumed by drivers. This can be achieved by three means:

- create more efficient driving conditions,
- reduce the amount of driving, and
- develop more fuel-efficient vehicles.

The Columbia River Crossing project will create more efficient driving conditions, provide faster, more reliable transit and greatly improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities. 

## Project Benefits

### *Safer travel*

- Add shoulders and auxiliary lanes on I-5
- Decrease earthquake damage risk to I-5 Bridge
- Build wider pedestrian-bicycle path over Columbia River

### *Community livability*

- Add high capacity transit between Vancouver and Portland
- Reduce travel times for all travelers
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections within the project area
- Reflect state and community goals

### *Environmental quality*

- Treat more stormwater in the project area
- Reduce number of hours of vehicles idling in congestion on I-5
- Add vegetation, street trees and landscaping





## Climate Change Strategies

The CRC project is taking a hard look at climate change guidance from Governors Kulongoski and Gregoire. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement discusses potential project effects related to climate change and peak oil from page 3-430 through 3-439. The project proposes implementing these strategies to address climate change concerns:

### Replace Aging Infrastructure in Existing Corridors

*Transportation solutions for the future should focus on already developed urban centers and utilizing existing corridors.*

The CRC project focuses on I-5, keeping growth and development focused on two vibrant communities where people already live and work.

Completed in 1917 and 1958, the existing bridges do not have safety shoulders and do not meet current seismic or highway design standards. The project area experiences crash rates about two times higher than comparable facilities in Oregon and Washington. When collisions occur congestion increases dramatically. Modernizing this section of highway will reduce congestion and improve safety.

By addressing these issues, Columbia River Crossing will enhance the existing I-5 corridor’s capacity to efficiently move people and goods.

### Increase Efficiency of Transportation Systems

*Transportation solutions for the future should seek to keep people moving reliably and safely.*

Columbia River Crossing will improve efficiency in the I-5 corridor by eliminating or reducing the effect of bridge lifts, providing high-quality mass transit, safe bicycle and pedestrian routes, variable tolling, wider traffic lanes, safer merge lanes and modernized interchanges.

This is a highly congested corridor: 68 to 75 percent of all traffic enters or exits within the five-mile project area. Adding longer merge lanes or auxiliary lanes will reduce accidents and improve efficiency and safety without additional through-traffic lanes.

Freight, a key component in our regional economy, will also experience more reliable movement. This area has the last remaining bridge lift on I-5. Removing it will decrease congestion and collisions on the highway and greatly improve river navigation.

Variable tolling will help improve efficiency by encouraging people to ride transit, change their travel times or route, or not make a trip.



Streetcars originally crossing the 1917 bridge.



Auxiliary lanes between Hayden Island and Marine Drive.



Current pedestrian and bicycle path on I-5 bridge.

### Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

*Transportation solutions for the future should provide an opportunity for safe non-motorized transport.*

Columbia River Crossing will dramatically improve the existing narrow four-foot pedestrian and bicycle paths.

New paths will meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and be at least 16 feet wide.

Improved connections and signage will make the project area along I-5 easier to travel by foot or bike.



Bus rapid transit, Eugene.

### Provide Transit Options

*Transportation solutions for the future should provide opportunities for travelers to shift from driving alone to public transit systems.*

Columbia River Crossing will build a high capacity transit line to connect two major urban areas, providing residents with a reliable transportation alternative to driving alone.

Introducing high capacity transit will result in at least 4.8 million transit trips every year across the Columbia River by 2030.



Light rail, Portland.

### Support Transit-Oriented Development

*Transportation solutions for the future should support dense regional centers.*

An additional benefit of the CRC project is the creation or revival of walkable, dense, multi-use developments near transit in Vancouver and on Hayden Island. People will have the opportunity to live, work and shop without relying on a car.

Transit oriented development is supported in regional land-use plans. In 2030, Vancouver is projected to have the second highest concentration of jobs in the region; transit will make these jobs more accessible to residents on both sides of the Columbia River. 

## CRC and Sustainability

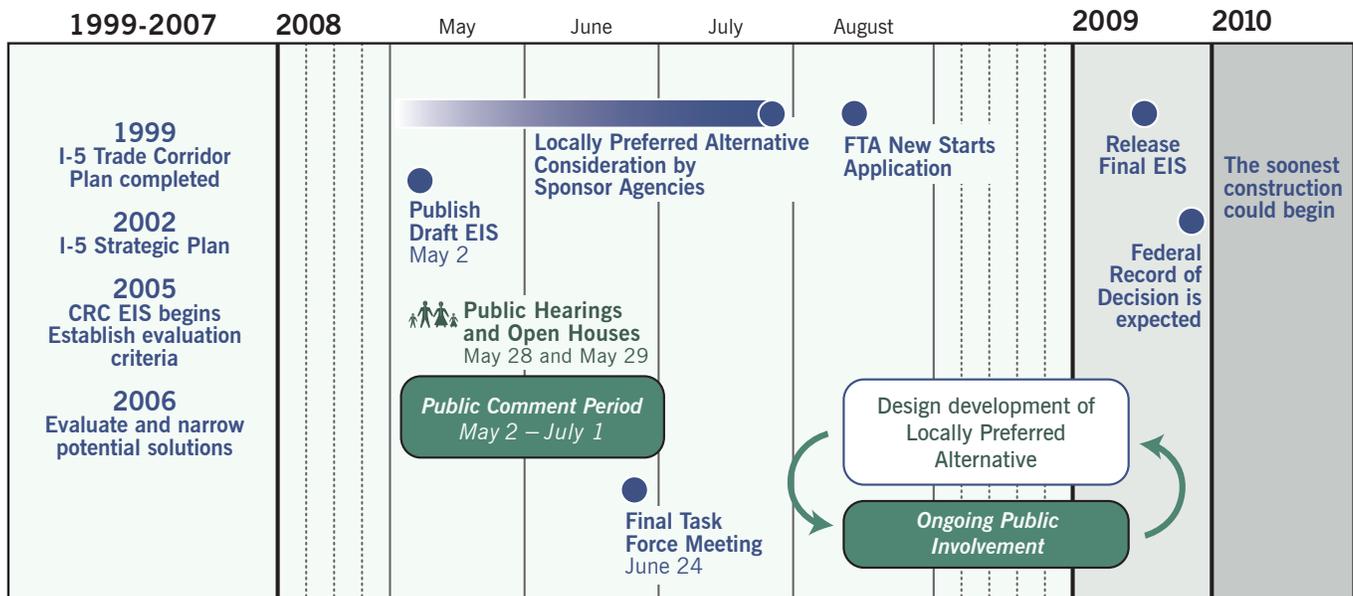
Columbia River Crossing will incorporate environmentally sensitive practices in the development of the project. The project is creating a sustainability plan consistent with the sustainability programs of Oregon and Washington. This plan will explore opportunities to apply green practices through design and construction including:

- Energy conservation
- Recycled materials
- Alternative construction methods
- Wind and solar energy
- Stormwater treatment
- Fish habitat protection
- Carbon sequestering

## Project Schedule

The Draft EIS was released on May 2, 2008, for public review and comment. The Draft EIS comment period is May 2 to July 1, 2008. During this time, community meetings and public hearings will occur to provide the public with information and opportunities for input. The project's Task Force will make its

recommendation on a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) on June 24, near the end of the public comment period. Project sponsors are expected to take formal action to adopt the LPA this summer. If funding is secured, construction could begin in 2010 or 2011. 



### How can I get involved?

- Visit the website at [www.ColumbiaRiverCrossing.org](http://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](mailto:feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org)  
 Mail: 700 Washington Street, Suite 300  
 Vancouver, WA 98660  
 Phone: 360-737-2726 or 503-256-2726  
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