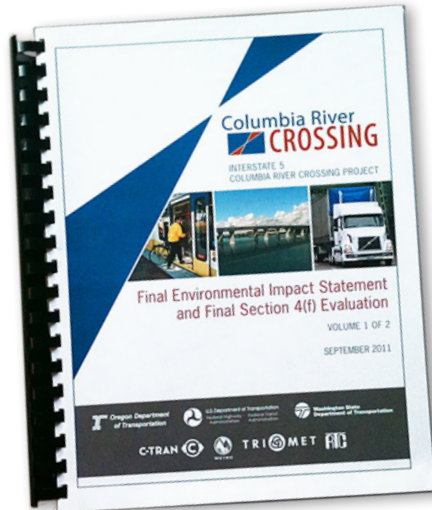




Final Environmental Impact Statement

The Columbia River Crossing Final Environmental Impact Statement contains analyses of environmental and community effects of the project. It also describes how the project will improve safety and mobility while reducing congestion on Interstate 5 between Portland and Vancouver.

The Final EIS was issued by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). It is the culmination of six years of planning, design and discussions with project sponsors, stakeholders and the public. It builds on analyses included in the Draft EIS published in 2008, comments received on the Draft EIS, and public input received at more than 950 community briefings, workshops and public meetings since 2005.



In 2011, state and local sponsors signified their support to complete the planning phase of the CRC project by signing the Final EIS. These agencies include the Washington State Department of Transportation, the Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet, C-TRAN, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council and Metro.

Replacement I-5 bridge with light rail extension to Vancouver

Local project sponsors selected a replacement bridge with light rail as their preferred alternative in 2008 after considering advisory group recommendations, findings in the Draft EIS and public feedback. The locally preferred alternative includes:

- Replacement Interstate 5 bridge over the Columbia River
- Improvements to the highway and closely-spaced interchanges
- Light rail extension to Vancouver
- Enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Tolling
- Transportation demand and system management measures

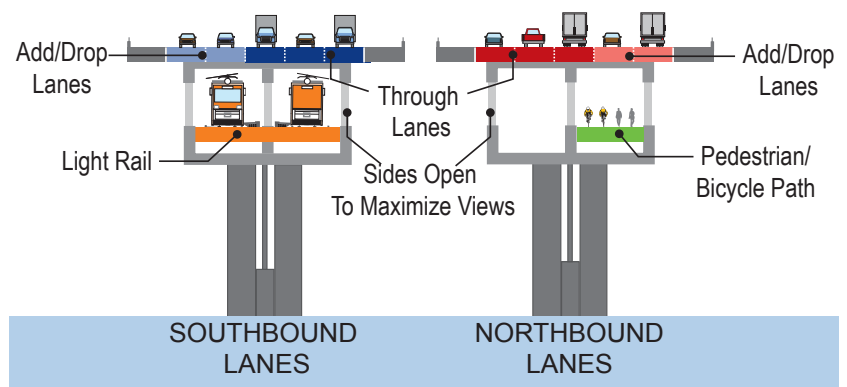
Findings presented in the Final EIS

TRANSPORTATION EFFECTS:

- **Improved safety:** Projected safety improvements would prevent more than 500 collisions each year compared to the No-Build alternative.
- **Reduced congestion:** Peak travel time would decrease by 20 minutes from the Rose Quarter in Portland northbound to Vancouver, and the duration of daily congestion on I-5 near the Columbia River would drop by more than 60 percent compared to the No-Build alternative.
- **Increased transportation choices:** Compared to the No-Build alternative, the project would double the number of people using transit to cross the river each day and would save more than 50 minutes round trip on transit between Clark College in Vancouver and Pioneer Square in Portland. By 2030, there would be 6 million transit boardings a year. The project would replace the narrow, sub-standard sidewalks on the existing Columbia River bridges with a considerably wider, safer and better connected multi-use pathway for pedestrians and cyclists.

ENVIRONMENTAL RELATED EFFECTS:

- **Reduced vehicle miles traveled:** The region's total vehicle miles travelled would be reduced by more than a quarter million miles per day compared to the No Build scenario.
- **Reduced greenhouse gas emissions:** The project area's greenhouse gas emissions would decline about 5.4 percent with the CRC project due to a decrease in the number of



Current design calls for two structures with a total of 10 lanes and full safety shoulders.

cars crossing the Columbia River with tolling and light rail, and decreased congestion on I-5.

- **Improved water quality:** Runoff from more than 200 acres of roadway that is currently untreated would receive stormwater treatment.
- **Reduced noise:** Without added mitigation, the Locally Preferred Alternative and No-Build alternative would result in additional noise effects beyond the current noise impacts. With mitigation, noise impacts would be less than today.

LAND USE AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS:

- **Property purchases:** Project construction requires land outside the current highway right-of-way. This will result in acquisition and displacement of 59 residential and 69 commercial properties. Relocation assistance will be provided.
- **Development:** The project is likely to promote transit-oriented development near new light rail stations on Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver. The project would promote additional density of jobs and housing near the I-5 corridor and is not expected to promote “urban sprawl.” Clark County would have a slight increase of residential growth compared to the No-Build alternative and North Portland would have a 1.5 percent employment gain as a result of the project.
- **Employment:** Project construction would support or sustain an average of 1,900 direct, indirect and induced jobs per year for a total of 20,000 job-years. Long-term, transportation improvements will improve travel reliability, reduce travel costs and allow the region to remain economically competitive.

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED EFFECTS:

- **Transportation:** Temporary traffic construction impacts include increased congestion in the corridor as a result of traffic detours and street closures. I-5 traffic flow with three through lanes in each direction will be maintained during weekdays. Some night time or weekend lane and ramp closures may be necessary.
- **Air and noise:** Construction activities could temporarily affect air quality due to operating heavy construction equipment and construction operations at staging sites. On-site construction would require noise-producing machinery and equipment. The project will require all construction contractors to develop and implement a control plan to reduce dust and exhaust emissions. Diesel construction vehicles and equipment will use ultra-low sulfur diesel. Construction noise

abatement measures include sound-control devices on equipment and compliance with noise standards of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

- **Finance:** The finance chapter illustrates options and describes several scenarios to fund construction. Construction funds are expected to come from three, nearly equal revenue sources: one-third from the federal government, one-third from Oregon and Washington and one-third from tolling. The state legislatures and federal agencies will now review the proposal described in the finance chapter of the Final EIS.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Review the Final EIS online at www.ColumbiaRiverCrossing.org or at many public libraries. A complete list of libraries is available on the CRC project website.

The executive summary and DVD of the entire document are available at no charge. Printed copies are available for \$60. To request an executive summary or printed copy of the Final EIS, send an email to feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org or call the project office at 866-396-2726.

WHEN CAN I COMMENT ON THE FINAL EIS?

Comments on the Final EIS will be accepted through Oct. 24, 2011. Comments on the Final EIS will be reviewed by FHWA and FTA before issuing the Record of Decision (ROD), expected in December 2011.

Comments can be submitted in the following ways:

E-mail: feedback@columbiarivercrossing.org

Mail: 700 Washington Street, Suite 300
Vancouver, WA 98660

Fax: 360-737-0294



Concept rendering of deck truss bridge for replacement I-5 bridge.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Environmental Impact Statement?

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required by the NEPA and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). It describes the positive and negative effects to the natural and human environment for each of the alternatives considered for a project. An EIS also describes the purpose and need of the project and proposed plans for construction.

Why does the CRC project need an environmental impact statement?

CRC must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act because the project is seeking federal funds, federal permits and other federal actions. NEPA requires an EIS for projects likely to have significant environmental impacts.

What happens next?

Following completion of the 30-day review period, it is anticipated that FHWA and FTA will select an alternative and issue the federal Record of Decision (ROD) in December 2011.

What does a Record of Decision (ROD) accomplish?

The ROD signals completion of the NEPA process which makes the project eligible to receive federal permits and federal funds. It signals formal federal approval of a preferred alternative, and authorizes a project to proceed with final design, right-of-way acquisition and construction.

A ROD accomplishes the following:

- Identifies the preferred alternative and the reasons for selection.
- Presents the mitigation measures and the commitments to be incorporated into project construction and operation.
- Identifies any outstanding issues to be resolved.
- Allows the project to move from planning to permitting and construction.

What are the differences in the Final and Draft environmental impact statements?

The Draft EIS contained analyses of the effects of five alternatives studied. In 2008, project sponsors selected a locally preferred alternative based on the Draft EIS comments by agencies, advisory groups and the public. The Final EIS includes a description of design refinements to the locally preferred alternative and the results of the analyses of the community and environmental effects.

Since the preferred alternative was adopted, the project has worked with the community to:

- Select the number of structures for the replacement bridge
- Select a location for light rail and the bicycle and pedestrian pathway on the replacement bridge
- Select alignment configuration for the Marine Drive interchange
- Select a light rail alignment and station and park and ride locations in Vancouver
- Update the traffic analysis using the 2009 regional travel demand model
- Update the design for the SR-14 interchange to minimize impacts to the Vancouver Historic Reserve
- Refine the design for the Hayden Island interchange, which now includes a local traffic bridge between Hayden Island and Marine Drive
- Select a deck truss bridge type for the main river crossing.

What is included in the Final EIS?

Much of the information in the Final EIS is drawn from documents and technical reports prepared for the project, including information from the Draft EIS. The Final EIS consists of two volumes and includes a disk of additional information.

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Volume 1 contains an Executive Summary and the following six chapters:

- Chapter 1, **Project Purpose and Need**, describes the primary objectives for the CRC project.
- Chapter 2, **Description of Alternatives**, includes the locally preferred alternative (LPA) design and other alternatives studied.
- Chapter 3, **Existing Conditions and Environmental Consequences**, describes current conditions in the project area, analyzes the impacts of the CRC alternatives and identifies measures to mitigate impacts.
- Chapter 4, **Financial Analysis**, describes project costs, revenue options and finance scenarios for the LPA.
- Chapter 5, **Final Section 4(f) Evaluation**, provides information to comply with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, which relates to public park and recreation facilities, historic resources and wildlife refuges.
- Chapter 6, **Public Input on the Draft EIS**, describes the public involvement activities that occurred between the publication of the DEIS through selection of the LPA. It also includes the most common comments received and responses to those comments.

Volume 2 includes appendices and other information. The DVD included with the document includes responses to all comments submitted on the Draft EIS as well as responses to each comment, and includes 28 technical reports.

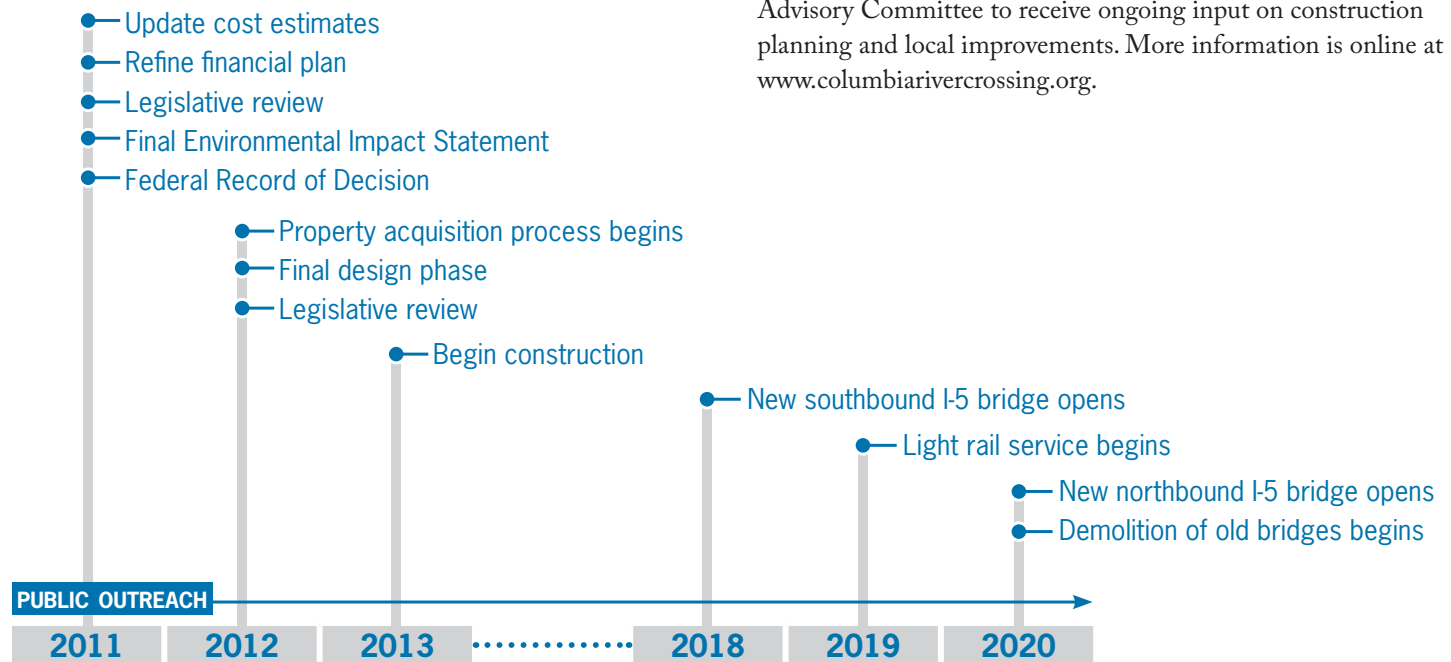
What happens before construction can begin?

The CRC will continue to move toward final design of the project, including details on construction staging and construction techniques. Funds to purchase property and construct the project must be awarded from the federal government and state legislatures. In 2012, CRC anticipates issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposals (RFP) for a design-build contractor for the main river crossing. The selection of a design-build contractor is expected to occur in 2013.

How will the project involve the public moving forward?

The CRC project accepts public comments at any time and is continually considering input. As in past years, CRC will present information at project-sponsored public meetings, open houses and workshops. Staff also will present information at community group meetings and host information booths at local fairs and festivals.

In fall 2011, the CRC will form a Bi-State Community Advisory Committee to receive ongoing input on construction planning and local improvements. More information is online at www.columbiarivercrossing.org.



AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) INFORMATION Materials can be provided in alternative formats: large print, Braille, cassette tape, or on computer disk for people with disabilities by calling the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project office at (866) 396-2726. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact the CRC project through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 7-1-1.

TITLE VI NOTICE TO PUBLIC WSDOT and ODOT ensure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the provision of benefits and services resulting from its federally assisted programs and activities. For questions regarding WSDOT's Title VI Program, you may contact the Department's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098. For questions regarding ODOT's Title VI Program, you may contact the Department's Civil Rights Office at (503) 986-4350.