

I support the Common Sense Alternative to the Columbia River Crossing project
It's time to shut down the current flawed plans and start over with a plan that we need and that we can afford

The current CRC project is too expensive for Oregon and Washington, and is unnecessary
Traffic counts across the Columbia have fallen since 2005, when gas prices started increasing, long before the recession and real estate collapse.

Even now, with a recovering economy, people in Oregon and SW Washington are driving fewer miles per person every year.

We don't need a wider Freeway bridge. We need a 3rd bridge for local traffic between N Portland, Hayden Island and Vancouver, so the current tangle of onramps can be fixed. We don't need a bridge that's too low for river freight users but too high for light rail. And we certainly don't need a massive freeway widening thru Vancouver and North Portland neighborhoods (which would have to followed by widening the freeway thru central Portland, at immense cost).

With gas tax collections down, let alone keeping up with population growth and construction cost inflation, there is no money for this project. Even tolls on both I-5 and I-205 bridges are unlikely to be able to pay back the costs: a \$10 toll, high enough to pay for construction, will reduce demand so much that the project will be unnecessary.

The CSA (Common Sense Alternative) would fix the current problem: 1) Earthquake safety for the existing bridges, 2) Reduce bridge lifts, 3) Increase capacity between Portland and Vancouver, 4) Eliminate the dangerous ramps on Hayden Island.

It could also A) Increase freight rail capacity between Oregon and Washington, B) Improve Amtrak service, C) Provide a 3rd bridge for local traffic, light rail, pedestrians and bikes, D) Maintain the full navigational channel height in the Columbia River and E) Save taxpayers a huge amount of money and risk.

It could even provide new fast, commuter-rail passenger service between SW Washington and Portland

http://portlandafoot.org/w/Common_Sense_Alternative

At half the projected cost of the CRC, the CSA could be paid for entirely by reasonable tolls on the new bridge and the existing Columbia River bridges (probably \$5 round-trip at rush hour, less at off-peak times). This would be fair and equitable, and it would leave gas tax money available for the backlog of other road and transit maintenance projects in both states. And since the CSA is made up of several projects (retrofitting the current bridges, fixing the railroad bridge, and building the new 3rd local bridge, building light rail, starting commuter rail), it can be staged as funding becomes available.

I believe the highway widening stages will NEVER be necessary, if the \$2 to 5 tolls are started now. People will chose alternatives, and trips over the Columbia will continue their slow decline.

Young people us are driving much less, because we have chosen to live and work where we can walk, bike and take transit.

For longer tips, we prefer flying, taking the bus or train compared to driving with our 2 children. When we do drive, it's in a full car, not alone.

Many 20 and 30 year olds are making the same choices; other's can't drive due to the skyrocketing cost of car ownership

Even freight is moving more and more by boat and train, instead of by truck, due to high diesel prices.

People support Common Sense. Let's hit the brakes on the CRC, and build a project that works for Oregon

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