

Comment to Joint Interim Committee on IBR Program

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By Dave Rowe of Battle Ground, Washington

It is a mistake not to include regional passenger Rail and Freight improvements to the IBR program study. ODOT made the same mistake in the 1960's Millions of taxpayers' dollars were wasted on the failed 4 ½ mile Mt. Hood Freeway. The 16 mile long MAX rail line was built for one-fourth the cost of the 4 ½ mile Mt. Hood Freeway. Please advocate for Rail in the IBR Program. The solution should be a multi transit development.

The IBR Program has been meeting for a year. The result has been not much different than the 2012 CRC solution. Forty-two years ago on January 27, 2000, The Oregon and Washington State Departments of Transportation issued the **Portland/Vancouver 1-5 Trade Corridor, Freight feasibility and Needs Assessment**. This report pointed out the I-5 corridor requires a multifaceted solution. Not only Interstate highway expansion is necessary, but rail is needed to be part of the solution. Rail service provides equity because all citizens do not have access to an automobile. Rail stations can be serviced by buses, Lyft, bicycles, wheel chairs and pedestrians.

The IBR Program must study new methods to move people and freight. Please study the advancement China has made in rail development. In twelve years, they have built 25,000 miles of high speed rail system with an initial investment of \$4 Billion. The same investment the IBR is projecting to spend on one bridge. Goods and passengers are moved by rail in China to Europe and England very swiftly and efficiently. Germany's development of battery powered passenger rail service should also be studied.

Freeway expansion only caused traffic jams in the 20th century and will not be any different for crossing the Columbia River. The future Tri-Met MAX Yellow line will be slower than the current C-Tran Bus #105 to travel from Vancouver to Portland. Today C-Tran bus # 105 takes 25 minutes from Vancouver to Portland. **The Cascades** train travels from Vancouver to Portland in 15 minutes. Regional Rail tracks from Battle Ground, Ridgefield, and Camas connect Portland now. Rail travel is more equitable for all citizens.

The IBR Program must get out of this silo that was built in 2012. This project must be designed for citizens and freight to use for next one hundred years.