

Dear Legislators:

Here are my concerns about the proposed IBR project:

- Light Rail should NOT be a part of this project:
 1. Light rail is far too expensive for the few commuters it would serve. Under the old CRC project, light rail was expected to comprise about 20% of the total price tag, but only serve about 2% of commuters (the current number is about 1.7%).
 2. Bus or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is far cheaper, and can flexibly serve existing and future customers. No dedicated lanes are needed, so this option adds nothing to the cost of the bridge. Lanes for this form of mass transit can also serve cars, trucks, and emergency vehicles.
 3. Ridership projections by IBR administrators are wildly optimistic (about 10x current values), but with no supporting documentation given. Senator Lynda Wilson recently requested proof, but got none. Ridership during the pandemic has dropped by more than 50%, and many workers and businesses are continuing to re-evaluate the need for offices and commuting. Many people prefer to work from home, and this trend is likely to continue.
 4. Every TriMet light rail forecast has been wrong, and always wrong on the high side according to the Cascade Policy Institute (<https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/transit-gets-much-attention-as-details-on-ibr-about-to-be-released/>).
 5. Even if these 10x ridership increases eventually come true, analysis detailed in Clark County Today (<https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/is-the-ibr-setting-up-another-transit-failure/>) shows that it is much more feasible to meet the need with buses and/or BRT than with light rail.
 6. With light rail, the clearance for river traffic below the bridge would severely restrict upstream business activity, both now and in the future. This was a serious problem with the old CRC project, and continues to be an issue for the U.S. Coast Guard (<https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/news/u-s-coast-guard-comment-period-on-116-foot-ibr-ends-april-25/>). Without light rail, the clearance can be increased: no double-decker structure is needed, and the pitch of the bridge could be raised.
 7. Clark County voters have twice resoundingly rejected bringing light rail here. We want no part of Portland's money-wasting boondoggles.
- The IBR plan replaces 3 through lanes (both north and south) with only 3 through lanes. There is no increase at all. How is this going to reduce commuters' travel time and future congestion? It clearly does not help. This bridge needs to increase the number of through lanes from 3 to 4. Widening of sections of I-5 both north and south could be done to deal with bottlenecks.

- To significantly ease congestion, a third bridge needs to be seriously considered. For example, a bridge west of I-5 could dramatically reduce truck traffic to and from the Port of Vancouver across the current I-5 bridge.

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