

**OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN EARL BLUMENAUER
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION
HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT REQUEST FORM**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2009

This form must be filled out in its entirety. It must be accompanied by at least one letter of support from a state, regional, or local governmental official specifically supporting the project request. This letter should discuss the merits of the project; specify the process to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the project; and identify the other sources of Federal, state, or private funding that will be used to complete this project or project phase. This letter must contain an explicit statement of support for the project. In addition, if you are requesting less than 80 percent of the total estimated cost of the specific segment or activity, the letter must identify other specifically designated Federal, state, local, or private funding sources that, combined with this request, equal at least 80 percent of the total estimated cost. Please use **boldface font** to highlight these statements in the letter.

The deadline to submit this form and the support letter is Friday, April 24, 2009. No exceptions. Pl form along with any supplementary materials to David Skillman via email at Da ail.house.gov. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact David ; 1.

Form instructions: This form contains drop-down menus to answer some questions. To access the drop-down menu, run your cursor over "Select One" or "Select One if Applicable" and click your mouse. A drop-down menu will appear and you can select the appropriate answer. Additionally, written answers should be typed in the gray boxes provided.

1. Project Title:

I-5 Columbia River Crossing

2. Organization (project sponsor) Name and Address: (if state or local entity, please identify specific department requesting funding)

Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capitol Street NE Room 135
Salem, OR 97301

3. Primary contact name, phone number, mobile phone number, fax number, and e-mail:

Travis Brouwer, ODOT Federal Affairs Advisor
ell); 503-986-3432 (fax)

4. Project location address (if different from organization):

Interstate 5 from Victory Boulevard in Portland to SR 500 in Vancouver; light rail component will extend from Portland Expo Center to Clark College.

5. What is the purpose of the project? Why is it a valuable use of taxpayer funds? How will the project support efforts to improve the economy and create jobs in Oregon?

The I-5 Columbia River Crossing is a long-term, comprehensive and sustainable multi-modal solution to the economic, safety, and environmental challenges caused by the Interstate Bridge

over the Columbia River. The bridge and its approaches in Oregon and Washington—a five mile area known as the Bridge Influence Area— cause the worst traffic congestion in the Portland/Vancouver metro region. This area is also one of the biggest bottlenecks on the I-5 trade corridor, one of the nation's top freight routes.

The northbound bridge was built in 1917 for Model Ts. The southbound bridge was built in 1958, but traffic has more than quadrupled in the years since it opened. Today, with just three lanes in each direction, the bridges strain to carry 135,000 vehicles each weekday. Congestion on this crucial corridor already lasts four to six hours a day, stranding motorists in their cars, stalling buses in gridlock, and delaying freight moving up the freeway by truck. As bad as it is today, by 2030, stop and go traffic is projected to increase to 15 hours a day.

The Columbia River Crossing project is developing multi-modal solutions that will address congestion and other problems in the Bridge Influence Area. In July 2008, local agencies endorsed replacing the Interstate Bridge with a new structure, extending light rail across the Columbia into downtown Vancouver, improving interchanges, and creating a world-class bicycle/pedestrian facility over the river.

The Columbia River Crossing project will offer a long-term comprehensive solution to the challenges on this section of freeway. The project will significantly reduce congestion and safety problems while improving mobility, reliability, and accessibility for all users of this section of freeway, whether they're traveling by automobile, truck, transit, bicycle, or on foot.

- **Reduced Congestion:** The existing bridge is expected to experience congestion 16 hours in 2030 if nothing is done. A replacement bridge with light rail will reduce congestion by 70 percent.
- **Safety:** This section of freeway experiences about 300 crashes each year—nearly one every day—that are caused by closely spaced interchanges, short distances to merge onto the freeway, poor sight distance due to the steep bridge hump, and bridge lifts. These safety hazards would be eliminated, and adding auxiliary lanes would allow traffic to safely enter and exit the freeway. As a result, the crash rate would decline significantly.
- **Improved Freight Mobility:** The Interstate Bridge carries goods from across Oregon, and congestion in the area makes it difficult for trucks to access the Port of Portland, Port of Vancouver, and industrial areas that are accessed from interchanges in the Bridge Influence Area. Each year the Interstate Bridge carries about \$40 billion in freight, and this is projected to increase to \$70 billion annually by 2030. The Federal Highway Administration has recognized the Interstate Bridge as one of the top freight bottlenecks on the nation's highway system, with an estimated 644,200 annual hours of delay for trucks. A replacement bridge would allow freight to move up I-5 much more efficiently and reduce the time and money lost when trucks are stuck in gridlock. Interchange improvements at Marine Drive and 4th Plain—which provide access to industrial areas and the Port of Portland and Port of Vancouver—would significantly improve access to these important economic activity centers.
- **Expanded Public Transportation:** The limited transit service across the Columbia River does not provide a convenient alternative to driving. The CRC would more than double the number of transit riders over the no build scenario. Transit is projected to carry 6.7 million riders per year, and about 20 percent of commuters are projected to choose transit, compared to less than 5 percent today.

- **Improved Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing:** The bicycle and pedestrian crossings on the existing bridges are narrow, steep, and immediately adjacent to freeway traffic. A new crossing will include a world class pedestrian and bicycle path that would create direct connections and provide better links to public transit. The new path would be safer than the existing crossing and would protect pedestrians and bicyclists from traffic noise and debris.
- **Reduced Air Pollution:** The CRC would reduce air pollution by cutting the amount of fuel burned by vehicles idling in congestion. Extending light rail and tolling the bridge would shift many crossings to transit and dampen auto demand. The number of vehicles crossing the river would *actually decline compared to doing nothing, and greenhouse gas emissions would fall.*
- **Protecting Environmental Quality:** The current bridges have no storm water collection system, so rain falling on the bridge mixes with fuel and car oil and drains directly into the Columbia River. A new bridge would collect and treat stormwater to preserve the Columbia's water quality.
- **Promoting Transit Oriented Development:** Extending the Portland region's light rail system across the river into Clark County would create new opportunities for transit oriented development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver. Light rail would support the urban development plans of the City of Vancouver, which has begun to develop a denser urban core with a mixture of housing and employment.
- **Eliminate Bridge Lifts:** The Interstate Bridge is the last significant lift bridge on the Interstate system and includes the only stoplight on I-5 between Canada and Mexico. The bridge is raised once a day on average to accommodate large vessels, causing safety problems and traffic delays of up to an hour. A replacement bridge would eliminate bridge lifts and the congestion and safety issues they cause.
- **Reduced Seismic Vulnerability:** The bridges, which are not anchored in firm soil, are vulnerable in a major seismic event. A significant earthquake could cause the bridges to collapse or render them unusable. Retrofitting would cost hundreds of millions of dollars and impact navigation. A replacement bridge would be designed to remain standing even in a 2500-year seismic event, ensuring that interstate traffic would continue to move on the West Coast's principal trade corridor.

6. Are you requesting Federal funds for more than one project in this bill? Yes

If Yes, this project is priority 1 of 8 total requests for your organization.

(For example, priority 1 of 3 requests or priority 3 of 3 requests.)

7. Are you requesting funds from other Members of Congress? Yes

If Yes, which Members? WSDOT intends to request funding from Congressman Brian Baird.

8. Please select which type of eligible project under Title 23 (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 (Public Transit) of the U.S. Code for which you are requesting funding. (Note: The Committee will not accept requests for non-surface transportation projects, such as transportation museums, horse trails, or historic battlefields, as part of the High Priority Projects program.)

Highway Project (Title 23)

Type: Select One

Located on a Federal-aid highway? Select One

Located on the National Highway System? Select One

Located on the Interstate System? Select One

Public Transit Project (Chapter 53 of Title 49)

Indicate Type with an 'X':

Passenger Vehicles

Transit Bus or Van

Transit Rail Car or Locomotive, including Streetcars

Transit Ferry

Transit Facilities

Vehicle Maintenance or Administration Facility

Passenger Facility, including Intermodal Facilities, stations, and terminals

Transit Rights-of-Way

Property Acquisition Corridor Development

Rail Track Construction or Maintenance

Bus-only Lane Construction or Maintenance

Transit Equipment

Vehicle-related Equipment System-related Equipment

New Start Project (A New Start project is a major *new* fixed guideway capital project seeking more than \$75 million in Federal funds.)

Small Start Project (A Small Start project is a *new* fixed guideway capital project seeking less than \$75 million in Federal funds and with a total estimated net capital cost of less than \$250 million.)

Rail

Intercity Passenger Rail (Not commuter rail. Commuter rail should be requested under public transit)

Is the project located within a corridor previously designated by the Secretary of Transportation pursuant to section 104(d)(2) of Title 23, United States Code, or the Northeast Corridor? Select One

If Yes, which Corridor: Select One

Freight Rail

Select Rail Class

Research

University Transportation Center

Other

9. Did the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, State Department of Transportation, or public transit agency confirm that the project is eligible

under Title 23 (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 (Public Transit) of the United States Code? Yes

If Yes, which entity confirmed the project eligibility?

FHWA, FTA, State DOT, or Public Transit Agency:

Federal Transit Administration

Contact information (Name, Position, Phone):

Rick Krochalis, FTA Regional Administrator,

According to the entity, is the project eligible under Title 23, Title 49, or both:
Title 49

10. Please identify the state, regional, or local governmental entity that is an eligible recipient of the funds. Please include an address. (For example, a State Department of Transportation, public transit agency, Metropolitan Planning Organization, local government, or Federally-recognized tribe.) Note: If a project is a multi-state project, please identify the state, regional, or local governmental entity which will serve as the lead agency for the project.

Washington State Department of Transportation
PO Box 47300
Olympia WA 98504-7300

11. Please identify and describe the specific segment or activity for which project funding is requested. (The request must finance at least 80 percent of the total estimated cost of the specific segment or activity by either (1) the amount requested; or (2) the amount requested in addition to other specifically designated Federal, state, local, or private funding sources.)

Project Description: (Include the specific terminus points of the project or activity, as appropriate.)

The Columbia River Crossing's transit component will extend TriMet's Yellow MAX light rail line from where it currently ends at the Portland Expo Center to Hayden Island and across the Columbia River into Vancouver, where it will end at Clark College. This light rail extension will more than quadruple transit ridership across the Columbia from current levels and double it compared to the no build option in 2030. With the project, transit is projected to carry 4.2 million riders per year by 2030, and about 17 percent of commuters are projected to choose transit, compared to less than 5 percent today.

The transit component will also include the project's bicycle/pedestrian path. This path, which will be at least 16 feet wide across the Columbia River (compared to the existing four foot wide path), will meet disability standards and provide a safer trip across the bridge and through the project area. Project improvements will better connect the river crossing to regional trails and facilities. Better facilities will help meet the needs of the projected 5000 cyclists per day in 2030.

The project is examining the possibility of including the transit and bicycle/pedestrian elements underneath the deck of the highway bridge. This would allow for construction of just two structures, rather than having to build a third bridge for non-highway users, which will reduce the project's cost and limit its community and environmental footprint.

Project Activities: (May select more than one.)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> construct | <input type="checkbox"/> plan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> design | <input type="checkbox"/> engineer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> conduct | | <input type="checkbox"/> environmental review | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> acquire right-of-way | | <input type="checkbox"/> conduct alternatives analysis | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> research | <input type="checkbox"/> develop | <input type="checkbox"/> demonstrate | <input type="checkbox"/> deploy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reconstruct | <input type="checkbox"/> rehabilitate | <input type="checkbox"/> replace | <input type="checkbox"/> retrofit |

install mitigate implement realign

What is the total estimated cost?

\$945.7 million for the project's transit component

What amount is being requested? \$750 million

What percentage of the total estimated cost is the request for Federal funding? 79.3%

If the percentage is less than 80% identify other specifically designated Federal, state, local, or private funding that when combined with this request equal at least 80 percent.

Source: Tolling revenues (some of which may be used to cover costs for the bicycle/pedestrian element of the project)

Amount of Funding: \$1.34 billion

12. If you are requesting funding for a specific segment or activity, please describe the overall project of which this segment/activity is a part.

Project Description: (Please limit your response to 3-4 sentences; up to 500 characters.)

The Columbia River Crossing will replace the Interstate Bridge with a safer and more efficient structure; extend light rail to Hayden Island and downtown Vancouver; create a world-class bicycle/pedestrian crossing; and construct highway improvements-- including fixing seven interchanges and adding auxiliary lanes between these closely spaced interchanges-- to improve traffic flow and reduce the number of crashes.

Total Project Estimated cost: \$3.1-4.2 billion

13. Is the project included in the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan? No

If Yes, please provide the date of approval of the most recent version of the plan and the title of the plan.

Date of approval (MM/YYYY):

Title of the plan:

14. Is the project included in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and/or the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)? No

If Yes, please provide the date of approval of the most recent version of the program(s), and the title of the program(s).

Listed in TIP: Select One

Date of approval (MM/YYYY):

Title of the Program:

Listed in STIP: Select One

Date of approval (MM/YYYY):

Title of the Program:

15. If the project is an intercity passenger rail project is it included in the State Rail Plan?

Select One

If Yes, please provide the date on which the Governor approved the most recent version of the plan and the title of the plan.

Date of approval (MM/YYYY):

Title of the plan:

16. Please describe the current status of the project and the expected schedule for its completion.

Federal-aid Highway projects:

Select One if Applicable

Public Transit projects:

In Alternatives Analysis

Rail projects:

Select One if Applicable

Research:

Select One if Applicable

17. What is the expected date of completion of the project for which you are requesting funding (Between FY2010-FY2020)? 2017

18. Does the project have regional or national significance? (A project of regional and/or national significance is typically a high-cost transportation infrastructure facility that often includes multiple levels of government, agencies, modes of transportation, and transportation goals and planning processes that are not easily addressed or funded within existing surface transportation program categories. These projects have national and/or regional benefits, including improving economic productivity by facilitating international trade, relieving congestion, and improving transportation safety by facilitating passenger and freight movement.)

Does the project have regional or national significance? Yes

If Yes, Please describe the regional or national significance of the project. Please limit your response to 3-4 sentences (up to 500 characters):

I-5 is one of the top trade corridors in the nation, carrying more freight than almost any other freeway, and the Interstate Bridge is one of the worst bottlenecks on this corridor. By eliminating this bottleneck, the Columbia River Crossing will benefit freight flowing on the I-5 corridor in interstate commerce and facilitate international trade.

19. Describe the safety, economic development, mobility, and environmental benefits associated with completion of the project.

Safety Benefits: (Please limit your response to 2-3 sentences; (500 characters).)

This section of freeway experiences about 300 crashes each year—nearly one every day—that are caused by closely spaced interchanges, short distances to merge onto the freeway, poor sight distance due to the steep bridge hump, and bridge lifts. These safety hazards would be eliminated, and adding auxiliary lanes would allow traffic to safely enter and exit the freeway. As a result, the crash rate would decline significantly.

Economic Development Benefits: (Please limit your response to 2-3 sentences; (500 characters).)

Extending light rail into Clark County will create new opportunities for transit oriented development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver. The project will also improve access to industrial areas and the Port of Portland and Port of Vancouver, facilitating the creation of jobs in these areas. Eliminating this bottleneck will also improve the ability of northwest companies to get their products to national and international markets.

Mobility Benefits: (Please limit your response to 2-3 sentences; (500 characters).)

The existing bridge is expected to experience congestion 15 hours in 2030 if nothing is done. A replacement bridge with light rail will reduce congestion by 70 percent. Travel times would also improve, as would reliability-- particularly with removal of the bridge

lift. A replacement bridge would allow freight to move up I-5 much more efficiently and reduce the time and money lost when trucks are stuck in gridlock.

Environmental Benefits: (Please limit your response to 2-3 sentences; (500 characters).) Extending light rail and tolling the bridge would shift many crossings to transit and dampen auto demand. The number of vehicles crossing the river would decline compared to doing nothing, and greenhouse gas emissions would fall. The current bridges have no stormwater collection system, so rain falling on the bridge mixes with fuel and car oil and drains directly into the Columbia; this problem would be rectified on the new bridge.

20. Has the project previously received any Federal funding? Yes

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (P.L.109-59)

Section: 1702 and 1934

Project Number: 1423, 2458, 5114 (Section 1702), 337 (1934)

Amount of Funding: \$14,220,000

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated: \$4,445,037 (of the \$6,220,000 million provided for Oregon)

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) (P.L. 105-178)

Section:

Project Number:

Amount of Funding:

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated:

National Highway System Designation Act of 1995 (NHS Act) (P.L. 104-59)

Section:

Project Number:

Amount of Funding:

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated:

Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) (P.L. 102-240)

Section:

Project Number:

Amount of Funding:

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated:

Appropriations act(s)

Public Law Name: FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations

Public Law Number: PL 111-8

Section: Interstate Maintenance Discretionary Program

Project Number: NA

Amount of Funding: \$4,655,000

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated: \$0

Other legislation:

Public Law Name:

Public Law Number:

Section:

Project Number:

Amount of Funding:

Amount of Funding Amount Obligated:

21. Has the project received any prior funding from a state, local, or private source? Yes

Source: OTIA III Modernization Program

Amount of Funding: \$5,000,000

Amount Obligated: \$5,000,000

22. Please provide the proposed legislative text (in no more than 250 characters) of the project as you would like it to appear in the bill. Please use action verbs to begin the description (for example, "construct," "plan," "design," "engineer," "research," or "rehabilitate"). Please note that project line items carry the force of law, and can only be amended through subsequent public laws. If Congressional intent (as established through answers listed on this form) is different from the legislative text, the entity administering the project is required to adhere to the statutory language.

Interstate MAX Extension to Clark County (Columbia River Crossing),
Oregon/Washington

23. Are you enclosing the letter referenced at the top of this form with the required formatting? Yes

24. Notes or anything else we should know about the project request:

This project was authorized to enter Preliminary Engineering in Section 3043(c) of SAFETEA-LU (project 256). ODOT and WSDOT are requesting authorization to enter Final Design and Construction.

In addition to the requested New Starts funding, Washington State Department of Transportation and ODOT are jointly requesting a total of \$400 million in funding for the I-5 Columbia River Crossing from a "megaproject" program such as Projects of National and Regional Significance.

**Please return this form and at least one local or state letter of support
no later than Friday, April 24, 2009 (via email) to:**

mail.house.gov

Washington, D.C. Contact for Rep. Blumenauer: David Skillman, (202) 225-4811

Oregon Contact for Rep. Blumenauer: Sarah Masterson, (503) 231-2300