

# The Interstate Bridges

## *Why the 1917 and 1958 bridges need to be replaced*

### UNSAFE AND OUTDATED

**Cars and trucks:** We're currently averaging about one collision per day. Accidents are mostly due to congestion, which is caused by: too much traffic; drivers stopping suddenly for the bridge to lift; and the lack of safe shoulders for disabled vehicles to pull over. Collisions could increase by 80 percent in the next 20 years if we do nothing.



**Pedestrians and bicyclists:** The pathway is only four feet wide—too narrow for pedestrians and bicyclists to pass each other—and it does not meet standards of



the Americans with Disabilities Act. Pedestrians and bicyclists are exposed to loud traffic noise, roadway dust, debris and exhaust fumes. Pathways leading to the river crossing are indirect and difficult to navigate, and some areas lack sidewalks, bike lanes and crosswalks.

**Earthquake risk:** The current bridges were built in 1917 and 1958. The wooden pilings don't extend into the bedrock 200 feet below the surface. If a significant earthquake were to hit the area, there is a real risk of structural failure. We live in a seismically active region: a 1962 earthquake was 5.5-magnitude, and a 1993 earthquake was 5.6 and caused \$28 million in damages.

### INEFFICIENT, UNRELIABLE AND COSTLY

About 134,000 vehicles crossed the bridge every weekday in 2005, creating four to six hours of congestion. 1 million more people in 2030 = up to 15 hours of congestion per day.

These problems make trip planning unreliable, add millions of dollars in costs for freight-dependent businesses, increase air pollution and have a negative impact on our quality of life.

Fresh food suppliers, tradespeople and local and long haul truck drivers all depend on a reliable transportation network. \$40 billion worth of freight crosses the Interstate Bridge each year, but congestion in the corridor causes shippers and recipients of goods to schedule extra time for deliveries.



One in five jobs in Oregon and two in five jobs in Washington are tied to trade. Freight industries support about 130,000 family wage jobs at warehouses and distribution centers near the ports of Vancouver and Portland. Every \$1 spent on improving transportation generates an economic benefit of at least \$2 for the region in the form of savings in travel time and expense.

If we do nothing over the next 20 years, slow-moving traffic will spread into the mid-day, which is the peak travel period for trucks. The cost of truck delay could increase by 140 percent, to nearly \$34 million per year by 2030.

# The Columbia River Crossing Project

## *Why it makes sense in every way*

### **INCREASED SAFETY**

Collisions will decline by about 70 percent compared to the no-build scenario, thanks to: better sight lines so drivers can see over the crest of the bridge; added safety shoulders and wider lanes; new structures high enough for marine traffic so vehicles won't stop unexpectedly for bridge lifts; better connections to and from I-5; and increased earthquake protection.



### **RELIABILITY AND CONVENIENCE**

Reduced congestion will result in predictable travel times and significant travel time-savings for commuters. Highway and transit improvements will save travelers about 6.8 million hours per year in reduced auto and truck delays, which equates to more than \$435 million in travel time-savings per year in 2030.

### **ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

The I-5 corridor is the backbone of a network of roads that provide access to the greater Vancouver and Portland region, which is more susceptible to long-term economic losses from congestion than other areas because of its ties to trade.

Economic impacts of the project will result in the creation of about 4,200 jobs and \$231 million in additional wages in 2030 compared to the "no build" scenario. Trucks currently carry 67 percent of all freight in the region, and this will grow to about 73 percent by 2030, outpacing other freight modes.

CRC creates benefits for both trucks and marine freight through reduced congestion in the corridor, improved access to ports and highways, elimination of bridge lifts and aligning the primary river navigation channel with the channel under the adjacent railroad bridge.



### **BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE**

Surrounding neighborhoods will benefit from reduced congestion and enhanced community mobility. Added light rail, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and local road improvements will better connect neighborhoods. Improved highway conditions will reduce cut-through traffic on local streets.

CRC project design also includes environmental benefits, such as improved water quality with treatment of 30 million gallons of polluted stormwater each year, improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.