

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Marine Drive interchange plans move forward

PORTLAND – A diverse group of stakeholders reached consensus Wednesday on a preferred alignment for a rebuilt Marine Drive interchange.

The recommended alignment would enhance freight and vehicle safety and mobility, improve local street connections, avoid and minimize impacts to nearby wetlands and allow for future open space development.

The Marine Drive Stakeholder Group includes representatives from Columbia Corridor Association, Portland Audubon Society, Port of Portland, Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee, neighborhood association leaders, nearby businesses and CRC partner agencies, including TriMet, Metro, City of Portland and ODOT.

“Marine Drive is a front door for the Port. The current interchange causes delays and safety problems at a critical point on the I-5 system,” said Kathryn Williams, Port of Portland. “We appreciate the work of the stakeholder group and believe this new design will accommodate multiple goals.”

The Marine Drive interchange moves the highest volume of freight trucks in Oregon. It connects I-5 to the Port of Portland’s Terminal 6, Expo Center, other industrial and distribution facilities, as well as nearby recreation sites and neighborhoods. Currently, congestion affects all travelers, freight trucks are hampered by steep grades and numerous stops, and pedestrians and bicyclists use circuitous routes from North Portland to the Columbia River.

The recommendation adopted by the Marine Drive Stakeholder Group calls for the interchange to be rebuilt with additional ramps to improve safety. The Marine Drive overpass would be realigned over I-5 and the light rail tracks. The interchange will require fewer stops to improve

freight access. Pedestrian and bicycle access around the interchange will be more direct and easier to follow.

“This is the busiest freight interchange in Oregon,” said Richard Brandman, Oregon Columbia River Crossing director. “This recommendation is a significant step forward in project development.”

The recommended alignment now moves forward for additional design work and environmental impact analysis as part of the Columbia River Crossing Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Construction is planned to occur between 2012 and 2019.

The stakeholder group started meeting in September 2008 and asked for additional options to be considered and technical analysis to be completed to ensure that all needs and interests of the multiple public and private entities were addressed.

About the project

CRC is a bi-state project to reduce congestion, enhance mobility and improve safety on I-5 between SR 500 in Vancouver and Columbia Boulevard in Portland. The project will replace the I-5 bridge, extend light rail to Vancouver, improve seven interchanges, and enhance the pedestrian and bicycle path between the two cities. The cost estimates for the project is \$3.1 to \$4.2 billion, a portion of which would be financed by tolls. More information may be found on the CRC project Web site: <http://www.columbiarivercrossing.org>.

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