



December 15, 2025

Commander
U.S. Coast Guard District Northwest
915 Second Avenue, Rm 3510
Seattle, WA 98174-1067
Submitted via: d13-smb-d13-bridges@uscg.mil

Re: Navigation Impact Report (NIR) comments related to the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program General Bridge Permit Application and navigation

Dear Commander,

The Port of Vancouver USA (port) supports efforts to make improvements in the Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor through the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program. I-5 is one of the most important freight corridors in the nation, supporting national and international commerce, as well as local jobs and families. On behalf of the port, I write to provide comments for the U.S. Coast Guard to consider for the General Bridge Permit for the IBR project and to confirm the navigation needs of the port are met with 116' of vertical navigation clearance.

The port has endeavored to consistently and meaningfully engage the freight and river navigation communities on all relevant aspects of this program. Two such issues include the bridge design and whether a fixed span or lift span will best meet the region's freight needs, and the potential location of new shipbuilding activity on the Columbia River.

The port relies on efficient and predictable flow of freight, yet the current structure creates frequent and unpredictable bridge lifts that cause significant delays and economic losses for our freight community, even when traveling outside of peak travel times. The height limitations of the current structures and channel alignments also create challenges for our barge partners. To remain globally competitive, the port supports a bridge configuration in the final design that provides safe and predictable travel for freight, while meeting the navigation requirements of the port's river partners. The port's position remains that the fixed span options presented in the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement meet those needs.

Communication and coordination are critical. As the IBR proceeds to demolition of the old bridge and construction of the new bridge, it will be very important to engage navigation interests and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to ensure that information about the phases of construction and any potential impacts to river traffic are clearly communicated far in advance.

The IBR configuration will allow for the tug and barge vessels to use the primary channel under the new bridge rather than the barge channel. The use of the primary channel will increase safety as the operators maneuver the vessels without having to make a sharp turn to clear the railroad bridge and then immediately line up to use the barge channel.

We understand that some regional stakeholders are interested in potential locations for new shipbuilding activity on the Columbia River. We also understand that the IBR Program's formal

December 15, 2025

Page 2

agreements with entities determined to be negatively impacted by a 116' vertical navigation clearance for a fixed-span option have been granted adequate mitigation.

It is worth noting that the port has more than 500 acres of developable marine-adjacent property located west of the I-5 bridge that is served by the Columbia River Channel and its 43' depth as opposed to the 14' channel depth east of the I-5 bridge. We are always open to new opportunities to support jobs and create economic activity. We would be willing to explore the viability of business relocation and/or restoring shipbuilding activity on our property and whether it is compatible with allowable uses and permitting requirements.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments on the IBR Program General Bridge Permit and confirm our navigation needs are met with 116' of vertical navigation clearance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Bomar', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mike Bomar
Chief Economic Strategy Officer
Port of Vancouver USA

CC: Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (IBRP)