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Dear CRC Project Sponsors,

The members of the Community and Environmental Justice Group have been meeting since August of 2006. We are a collection of neighborhood and community representatives who live in the Columbia River Crossing Bridge Influence Area and advise the CRC on the communities which will be most significantly impacted by this project. Many of our communities contain low income and minority individuals who historically have been overly impacted and excluded from development and decision making processes particularly as it relates to decisions which impact health and livability through toxic emissions, construction noise and vibration and unhealthy air quality.

The Community and Environmental Justice Group was formed by the Columbia River Crossing project to achieve the goal of meaningful public involvement. Meaningful public involvement is achieved when:

- Potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health;
- Public contribution can influence decisions;
- Concerns of all participants are considered in the decision making process;
- Decision makers seek out and facilitate involvement of those potentially affected; and,
- Environmental impacts which damage air or water quality, create health hazards, or otherwise damage livability in the area are reduced or eliminated, and meaningful mitigation, enhancement and compensation are implemented.

We take this responsibility seriously and meet with CRC project staff regularly to provide input. This input includes identifying community concerns, presenting recommendations at key milestones, raising issues to inform efforts to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential impacts and assisting staff in effectively engaging the public.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) public comment period provided us an opportunity to help staff develop innovative and additional public engagement opportunities. This included the development of two documents the Draft EIS Public Comment Guide and the Draft EIS Table of Contents. These two documents were provided at outreach events and presentations throughout the comment period and online to assist our community members in reading and understanding the many elements of the

DEIS. We also suggested and helped develop targeted outreach before and during the comment period. This included the four (4) informal question and answer sessions, transportation mode specific outreach, a transit information session for individuals who depend on public transit for mobility, and newsletter articles, community board postings and presentations to residents of subsidized and senior housing. Staff also responded to additional requests by compiling neighborhood specific information or holding neighborhood specific meetings.

During the Draft EIS stage, we believe it is important to make a statement about the project to date, the information in the Draft EIS and the project to come.

In our experience, the CRC's public process to date has been transparent and has worked to engage people, especially those within the project area, to raise awareness and understanding of the project. CRC staff have been responsive to our ideas, as evidenced by their adoption of the materials used during the Draft EIS comment period.

We believe that the Draft EIS has generally described the communities within the Bridge Influence Area. We are concerned, however, with several items that appear to misrepresent some communities and we will work with CRC to clarify these issues before the Final EIS. We recognize that this is not the end point for this analysis. It is not the final statement on which impacted individuals need additional assistance to understand the project and project impacts. Nor is it the final statement on important details of mitigation and compensation for impacts. As specific impacts become clearer, more detailed work and attention must be taken by staff to ensure that individuals who are protected by environmental justice legislation are not disproportionately impacted. This is as much about the project's willingness to actively provide information and seek out those persons affected as it is to provide just and clear compensation for impacts.

We expect to play a significant role in communications and project development from this point forward. We are extremely interested in the development of design, mitigation plans and project aspects to enhance the communities affected by this project. Because of past burdens borne by this area, we want to see the project go above and beyond minimum requirements to improve the livability of the communities in the bridge influence area. As the project moves forward we are committed to:

- Continuing to ensure a meaningful communications process that reaches as many people as possible, particularly those who would not normally be involved;
- Working for enhancements to maximize the benefits for communities in the bridge influence area;
- Watching for environmental justice concerns voiced in the NEPA process or in our communities and ensuring they are considered and addressed in project plans; and,
- Watching for equity between areas and people of the costs and benefits of the project and of project enhancements.

The CEJG believes that there are many upcoming opportunities to shape the alternative endorsed by the region to meet the needs of the community and enhance the Bridge Influence Area. We are committed to working with project staff to ensure the nearby communities are informed, engaged and have a voice in the process.

Sincerely,

Community and Environmental Justice Group

John Benson, Piedmont Neighborhood Association, Portland

Jonath Colon-Montesi, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber, NE Neighborhood Coalition,  
Portland

Dave Frei, Columbia River Crossing Task Force, Arnada Neighborhood, Vancouver

Ed Garren, Manufactured Homes Association, Hayden Island

Peg Johnson, Jantzen Beach Moorage, Inc. Board of Directors, Portland

Steve Kayfes, Kenton Neighborhood Association Board Member, Portland

Connie Sherrard, Vancouver Housing Authority, Vancouver

Dave Skagen, Rose Village, Vancouver

Michelle Tworoger, Jantzen Beach Moorage, Inc. Board of Directors, Portland

Marcia Ward, Clark County Resident

Matt Whitney, Bridgeton Neighborhood Association, Portland