Proposed Planning Commission CRC Resolution:

Whereas the Portland Planning Commission makes the following findings of fact:

1. **Climate Change**. Vehicle transportation using fossil fuels is responsible for 35 to 40% of greenhouse gas emissions in the region. The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Task Force staff has assumed a 40% increase in vehicle miles traveled in the region by 2030 in its projected need for the crossing. But climate change goals, adopted as law in Oregon, require us to be on target for a 75% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, from 1990 levels, by 2050, and in order to be on target for that goal, the region would need to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 30% by 2030, not face a 40% increase.

2. **Safety**. The accident rate in the bridge influence area is lower than on other state highways in the Portland metropolitan area. According to ODOT's highway safety statistics, the accident rate in the bridge influence area is lower than on the Fremont Bridge, and no higher than the accident rate on the Marquam Bridge. Most of the accidents in the I-5 bridge area occur from the close spacing of on and off ramps, and do not occur on the bridge itself. Fatalities in the I-5 bridge impact area are rare.

3. **Seismic Safety**. The existing I-5 bridges are no more seismically vulnerable than most other structures on the Interstate facilities within the metropolitan area. These bridges can be retrofitted to meet the 2,500 year no-collapse seismic standard for a cost estimated at $100 to $200 million.

4. **Structural Soundness**. The structural integrity of the two I-5 bridges are rated as "fair" and "good" by ODOT in its ***2007 Bridge Condition Report***. The estimated cost to dismantle these bridges is about as much as the seismic upgrade – $155 million. Sustainability and prudence would argue for extending the life of these useful structures.

5. **Navigation and Bridge Lifts**. Moving and improving the opening of the Burlington Northern railroad bridge would eliminate the need to lift the I-5 bridges for towboat movements, according to the Columbia River Towboat operators. These modifications have been approved and supported by the Coast Guard for navigation safety reasons. The number of I-5 lifts for all vessels would be reduced to less than a handful per month.

6. **Funding Eligibility and Deadlines**. The August 15 FTA funding deadline applies only to the transit portion of the project, and is an annual deadline (not a once-every-six-years opportunity, as has been implied). There is no legally defined process or deadline for requesting federal earmarks for any regional projects as part of the transportation reauthorization legislation which is scheduled to take place in 2009 or 2010.

7. **Congestion**. Traffic congestion on the I-5 bridges is a product of high volumes of peak hour, peak direction commuting by Clark County residents, lack of parallel local traffic facilities that forces short trips onto the freeway and too-closely spaced interchanges that create high traffic turbulence. Commuters constitute the vast majority of peak hour traffic and the use of single occupancy vehicles exceeds local goals. In addition, a high proportion of trips are short-distance trips that have no alternate route.

8. **Congestion Impacts on Freight, Interstate Travel and Transit**. About 85 percent of freight movements occur in non-peak hours or in the non-peak direction. Long distance movement freight and people is about 10% of the total traffic volume over the bridges. Reducing the volume of single occupant vehicle peak commuting would free up peak hour, peak direction capacity for freight, interstate travel and freeway-based transit.

9. **Induced Demand**. The CRC Task Force staff expects 93% of the *new* commuter trips to occur by 2030 to originate in the "suburban fringe" of Clark County. The last time the region built highway capacity across the Columbia, the Glenn Jackson Bridge completed in 1982, actual trip counts in 2000 and 2005 exceeded by nearly 50% the similar 20 and 25-year bridge projections. More than 6,000 undeveloped acres of farm and forestland is zoned for housing in or near the seven smaller suburban cities of Clark County, outside of the Vancouver Urban Growth Area itself.

10. **Combined Alternatives**. The draft environmental impact statement does not appraise the environmental consequences of transit-only improvements, toll-only improvements or a transit and toll-only alternative. All build alternatives include additional highway capacity totaling 12 travel lanes.

11. **Decreasing Traffic**. The CRC build options over-estimate the need for additional highway capacity in the bridge impact area. The modeling prepared for the CRC assumes that traffic levels will continually increase on the I-5 bridges. In actuality, Traffic on the I-5 bridges has been declining: by 0.5% in 2006, by 1.2% in 2007, and down 3.1% from March 2007 to March 2008. There is lower demand for suburban housing across the nation, and these trends are causing reductions in Clark County housing prices and values. Oil has already settled in around $135 a barrel, and the CRC Task Force DEIS numbers indicate projections of only $59 a barrel by 2030.

12. **Local Funding Availability**. The Metro Council officially concluded that even if the Oregon state gas tax were increased by 1 cent every year for the near future, and even if the vehicle registration fee were increased by $15 every eight years, the region still faced a $7 billion shortfall for various proposed transportation projects in the region -- not counting the Columbia River Crossing. The 2008 Washington Legislature included no funding for CRC construction in its 15 year transportation funding package. The build options of this project will cost $4.2 billion, if one accepts the inflation estimates and ignores the large

interest costs of bonding both the tolls and the local match. More than $3 billion is needed for expansion of highway capacity alone – six additional lanes in the bridge impact area and numerous skyway ramps.

13. The elevated structures across Hayden Island have been portrayed as "allowing reuniting of the east and west parts of the island." However, a looming 12-lane structure more than twice the width of I-405 above NW Portland does not evoke a very inviting urban landscape below, when one considers the lack of light, the noise, the particulates and the usual restrictions on development underneath interstates.

WHEREAS, the Portland City Planning Commission has determined that:

1. The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Task Force has overstated the need for the crossing and understated the impact of the crossing.
2. There is no acceptable "Locally Preferred Alternative" among the options presented by the CRC Task Force.

- None of the build options help us to meet our climate change goals adopted as law in Oregon. The current project build options will encourage more people to drive and for longer distances, increasing global warming pollution and undermining our City's vision of a sustainable economy and compact urban growth.
- It does not find credible the CRC Task Force's claim that by speeding up traffic in the bridge impact area, the build options will reduce emissions in the region. Such a claim ignores scientifically provable second-level effects of induced travel and increased congestion at downstream locations, after highway capacity is added.
- All build options of the CRC will promote sprawl and increase not only the number but also the length of vehicle trips in the region. The CRC has under-estimated the impact of its proposed build options by maintaining the same 2030 land-use projections for the No Build Option as for all build options.
- The CRC project includes several forward-thinking elements, including high capacity transit, improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and congestion pricing in the form of variable tolls. These do, in fact, promote compact urban growth and will reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and thereby global warming pollution, and we support them. However, since no alternative puts forward these elements without including the massive freeway expansion (which none of those elements is predicated on), the gains will be more than eliminated.
- The CRC Supplemental Bridge option, by incorporating the use of the existing I-5 bridges, proves that those bridges can be upgraded to meet seismic and general safety concerns.

Resolved that the Portland City Planning Commission advises the Portland City Council to:

1. Reject all five options forwarded by the CRC Task Force.

2. Send the CRC Task Force back to the drawing board to produce less highway capacity and more cost-effective and sustainable options, including a combination of:

    - Implementing electronic tolling the existing bridges and the I-205 bridge now to fund improvements, improve freight mobility and reduce traffic.

    - Upgrading the existing I-5 bridges to address the seismic and safety concerns of non-local traffic.

    - Modification of the BNSF railroad bridge to virtually eliminate all I-5 bridge lifts, improve navigational safety and enhance rail operations.

    - Building a new, low-level, multi-modal arterial bridge to carry local traffic, light rail, bicycles, and pedestrians.

    - Improving I-5 interchanges by eliminating some interchanges, redesigning those remaining and providing new frontage/local road connections to ensure adequate local access to the remaining interchanges.

    - Improving transit on both sides of the Columbia.

    - Building a low-level, multimodal bridge across Portland Harbor for light rail that also caters to local traffic, bikes, and pedestrians.

    - Extending MAX to Hayden Island in the short-term.

    - Extending MAX across the river only as far as downtown Vancouver on the low-level, multimodal bridge that also caters to local traffic, bikes, and pedestrians and letting Clark County decide the kind of transit system it wants to connect to MAX.

Resolved that the Planning Commission is sympathetic to the recent proposal of Metro President David Bragdon, as follows: "The many, many detailed design, engineering and finance issues which will be unresolved at the time of adoption of the LPA leads to one over-arching conclusion: for this project to be favorably received by the people of our region, the local jurisdictions will need to be engaged in a new, close partnership of equals with the two state governments." We share Bragdon's desire for a new project management team after the LPA is officially adopted, one that includes the two city governments, Portland and Vancouver -- a team that has a "direct and intimate influence over the myriad of design and engineering and finance decisions…"