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Columbia River Crossing

June 25, 2008

Heather Gunderson  
 Columbia River Crossing  
 700 Washington, Suite 300  
 Vancouver, WA  
 98660

 **Comments re: EIS for CRC**

Dear Heather,

The Clark County Historical Society Board is concerned that the Clark County Historical Museum (CCHM) needs careful consideration in the decision making process regarding light rail associated with the Columbia River Crossing project. The recent draft EIS identified several options all of which, we believe, will have an impact on our building. We are concerned that the draft EIS consistently identified our building as a *library* not a *museum* and states that there are, “no adverse effects”.

Clark County Historical Museum is located in a 1909 Carnegie Library Building at 1511 Main St. owned by the city of Vancouver. The building is listed on the National Historic Register. It is a brick building with no reinforced concrete with the exception of the new elevator column. There is no earthquake retrofitting and no rebar in the structure. To further complicate matters, the south east corner of the building currently has some structural concerns which the city is studying.

The CCHS board believes there are concerns about the building itself and concerns about access for our patrons that should be considered as the Columbia River Crossing project moves forward. Our concerns are:

1. **Vibration:** As noted above this is an old building without reinforced concrete. When the C-Tran bus system had a stop in front of the building, the one-hundred-year-old windows would rattle as the bus stopped and started and the noise disrupted activities in the research library. We are concerned about vibration effects such as cracks to old plaster, loss of mortar between bricks and other vibration effects during construction and following with the light rail operation.
2. **Dust and Mold:** Dust is a serious concern for this building. Our concerns are about construction dust and dust generated by the future light rail system. The Museum has a collection of artifacts valued at eight million dollars. These artifacts are not dust tolerant. In addition, the building contains a research library with historic documents. Dust would also damage these items.

As the building has no air conditioning, it has no protection from dust. The building has many gaps that allow dust to enter and opening windows is the only ventilation system we can use for cooling it.

The CCHS board is concerned that protection during the construction phase such as “wrapping“the building would set up conditions for mold to grow. Mold is a concern in terms of damage to the collection and the library holdings. Workers likely could not work in the museum under these conditions. If the museum is not open we lose revenue.

3. **Access and ADA Access:** The board is also concerned about our patrons. We are concerned about maintaining access to the building for all of our patrons. We have a specific concern about the ADA elevator and the alley. We would hope that the selected alternative would consider access to the museum for persons with disability. Not only direct access at the building itself but access from the general area.

The newly built ADA access is a vital part of our institution. We need to be certain that this access is not hampered by the light rail project. In addition the alleyway that is part of that access is also important for moving items in and out of the museum.

4. **Noise:** - As noted above with the old C-TRAN bus stop, noise disrupted the activities in the research library. Locating a major transit terminus across the street and running a transit line within feet of the library windows will have adverse effects on the individuals working and visiting inside. Our windows are nearly 100 years old. The sills are old, the glass fragile and single panes. We do not have doubled paned insulated windows to reduce the noise. Additionally, the Museum has worked hard to develop many programs for the public including First Thursday speakers. Increased outside noise would hamper the ability for the public to hear during these programs.
5. **Setting:** If the light rail option selected involves removal of a section of sidewalk and land on the north side of the building along with installation of a barrier between the transit system and the Museum, the board is concerned about access for our patrons.

The Museum must be visible to the community to encourage use of the facility. The Museum also depends on admission fees for operations. If the Museum is not able to remain open during construction it will be detrimental to our future.

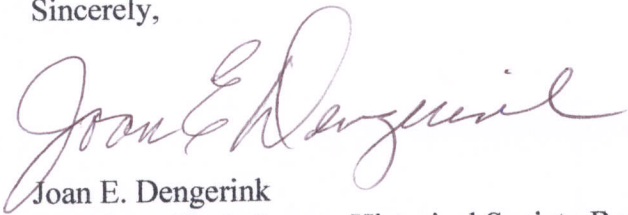
6. **Parking:** Several of the options show the removal of parking around the Museum. Since we do not have a parking lot, this would also discourage use of the facility. Removal of parking would be detrimental to our visitors, thus reducing our admission fees. We need to have continued disability



parking in close proximity to our ADA entrance. We would also like to provide access to blind persons and believe sidewalk removal could be an obstacle for their access.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns. We hope everyone will work together for the best interests of our historic building and the artifacts it holds.

Sincerely,



Joan E. Dengerink  
President, Clark County Historical Society Board

Cc:, Matt Ransom, Susan Tissot