



**From:** [Jerry Rhodes](#)  
**To:** [Columbia River Crossing](#);  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Comment to Metro councilors  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 28, 2008 10:57:43 AM  
**Attachments:**

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I read with disbelief the comments of the three Metro councilors who propose to levy a toll on the Columbia River Crossings as an alternative to improving the span.

I've met a couple of them, and know they all are highly intelligent people. But I wonder what they have been reading, or who they have been listening to.

Do they honestly believe that a significant number of people are enduring the morass of rush hour on the bridges by choice? Don't they think it would reduce traffic much more to merely relocate about 100,000 jobs from Portland to Vancouver so the commute isn't necessary?

Do they honestly believe that we who live in Vancouver and work in Portland enjoy the long commute? Do they think we like to pay Oregon income taxes, which our neighbors who have jobs closer to home don't have to pay?

Do they honestly believe that we who work in Portland have not spent months and years in a futile search for work closer to home?

Do they honestly believe that we who must work in Oregon are willing to uproot our children from the stable school and college systems in Washington so that that they can attend schools in the chronically underfunded Oregon schools and universities? Do they honestly believe everything would be better if instead our spouses with jobs in Clark County would be making the journey the other direction so that we both can enjoy paying Oregon income taxes?

Do they honestly think that C-Tran has the capacity to handle a huge shift from private to public transportation? Do they not know how little financial support the system gets?

Have they ever attempted to take public transportation from Portland to Vancouver in the middle of the day, when the extremely limited schedules makes commutes of 90 minutes to two hours likely, whether there is a traffic jam or not? Have they ever missed a bus and had to wait a half hour for the next one, which may not

even be direct if the timing is a bit off?

Have they ever had to leave for work before 6 a.m. because the park-and-ride lots are full if you get there much later? Have they ever had to drive to the park-and-ride lot in the first place because there are no connecting buses in your neighborhood? Have they ever walked three-quarters of a mile in the rain to catch the nearest connecting bus, then enjoyed the 70-minute, 20-mile commute because the connections are so poor?

Do they honestly believe that Portland and Vancouver are two distinct, separate economies? Do they not know that this is a single, unified metropolitan area, and that people will have no choice but to continue to make that crossing regardless of the toll?

Do they not know that until there is something that brings effective public transportation across the Columbia River, the crossings will continue to be a problem regardless of the toll, or lack of it?

The only real impact of a toll will be to raise the level of ire for those of us who already chafe at paying Oregon income tax while our children are denied in-state tuition at Oregon universities. And that will likely make it even more difficult to come up with a cooperative, jointly shared solution.

*Jerry Rhodes*

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