


From: KayceeWY@aol.com
To: [Columbia River Crossing](#)
CC:
Subject: I-5 Opposition Opinion
Date: Thursday, May 29, 2008 9:43:10 AM 
Attachments:

To Whom It May Concern:

- P-0700-001** | I take great offense that Carlotta Collette, Robert Leberly and Carl Hosticka signed a resolution to charge a toll on the current I-5 bridge between Vancouver and Portland simply because they believe a new bridge will create new congestion and promote sprawling development. And, mostly, they want to force the residents of Clark County to take mass transit. .Why do they think they have the right to enforce taxes and a worse commute on other people? Have they asked the trucking industry what they think? It most certainly will raise the price of goods because it will take more fuel and time to get through this already horrible commuting corridor. Would they like this proposal? I bet not. But, I invite them to do their jobs and walk the talk. Find out what it's like to be a Clark County commuter.
- P-0700-002** |
- P-0700-003** |
- I invite all three of them to get up at 5am, drive north, take the WA State Highway 14 exit, east, take exit 1 (Columbia Way), turn around and experience the Highway 14 interchange and I-5 commute for one month, every day, just like I do, every day. I also invite them to drop their cars in downtown Vancouver and commute to work for another month. Take the express bus into Portland and then take a bus to the Interstate light rail terminal and ride the "milk run" into Portland. It'll be a rude awakening to the realities faced by Clark County commuters and will give them a much better sense for why their proposal is nonsense and light rail to Clark County is nonsense.
- P-0700-004** |
- P-0700-005** | I realize that these people think that by taxing rush hour commuters a premium to get to work or school is a good way to raise money for their coffers and to try to enforce the mass transit issue. I'm humored that they think most people have the option of not driving during rush hour and could commute at another time! Don't they have to be to work at a certain time? Those pesky bosses and school administrators expect most of us to report on time and actually a little early for a standard business day! And, I'm not sure many of us would give up an additional

P-0700-001

Modeling has indicated that tolling I-5 without making the improvements that are part of the CRC project would not meet the project's Purpose and Need. This does not mean that some form of tolling prior to constructing CRC couldn't be implemented. The ultimate decision on any tolling options will be made by both the Washington and Oregon Transportation Commissions.

P-0700-002

This issue was addressed as part of the economics analysis and is described in detail in the Economics Technical Report. This report, and Chapter 3 (Section 3.4) of the DEIS, note that the increased costs incurred because of tolls would generally be offset by the improved travel options and travel times. Under existing and No Build Alternative conditions, congestion delays and high crash rates have significant costs for local businesses and travelers; improving these conditions is one of the purposes of the project.

Tolls could discourage home-based shopping trips from Clark County to points in northern Oregon, such as Hayden Island and Airport Way. However, the variable-rate toll structure that was evaluated in the DEIS allows for different rates to be charged by time of day. Therefore, discretionary trips, such as those between Oregon and Washington for retail purposes, could be taken in off-peak hours when toll rates are at their lowest, reducing the effect of the tolls on these types of trips. Also, CRC would provide improved transit connections between Clark County and Oregon, offering travelers a toll-free alternative for reaching destinations across the river.

P-0700-003

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the I-5 CRC DEIS.

P-0700-006 hour or two of sleep to take mass transit. If you're just going to downtown Portland it isn't that far of a commute and taking mass transit would only add about a half hour to the commute. But, for many of us, we go beyond the downtown corridor and so our commutes would be a nightmare and take twice as long as sitting in our cars.

P-0700-007 Believe me, it's a long, and unnecessarily miserable commute brought on and regulated by people who don't have the foggiest idea of what it's like. Why does Portland always have the final say in everything for Vancouver? They prohibit any commercial development of anything other than discount stores because we let them convince developers that only hillbillies live in Vancouver who don't have the taste or resources for the finer things in life - I would much rather pay tax on goods than support anything in Portland. And, for the record I don't think hillbillies just completed a \$50mm capital campaign for SW Washington Medical Center or raised \$4.2mm for a new breast care center at SW Washington Medical Center or raised over \$2mm for a new humane society. Come on! Wake up! Clark County residents are an economic force to be dealt with in this metro area - not a backwash, ugly step child to Portland! We're our own fabulous community!

P-0700-008 The public transportation system doesn't work because it's not user friendly for working families that juggle multitudes of obligations and time lines for the members of their families every day. It's just too far between Vancouver and Portland for most people to spend an extra 2-3 hours commuting by mass transit and then try to get kids to their after school obligations, and do the routine daily chores of providing for a family. Amazingly enough, sitting in stalled traffic is still faster and more feasible. And, many of us don't want to live in a live/work/play community that Portland wants to inflict on everyone. We love living in Clark County and we love not living on top of each other!

P-0700-010 Putting a fee on the bridge is only going to further congest the traffic while people stop and go through the toll booth and it's not going to really change that many commuting habits. There are large numbers of people who commute into Portland not only for work but also so their kids can go to school because there are no Catholic high schools in Vancouver, nor are there any non-denominational private school programs that run preschool through 12th grade. As a result, many families make the horrid drive into Portland every morning and return every night. We don't have much of a choice and we sure don't have a choice to not drive during rush hour. Also, we aren't going to get up two hours early to catch a slow, multi-change, bus or worse, unsafe light rail line, even if we have to pay toll fees and absurdly high toll fees because we have to drive during rush hour.

P-0700-004

Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected light rail to Clark College as the project's preferred transit mode. These sponsor agencies, which include the Vancouver City Council, Portland City Council, C-TRAN Board, TriMet Board, RTC Board and Metro Council considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force (a broad group of stakeholders representative of the range of interests affected by the project - see the DEIS Public Involvement Appendix for more information regarding the CRC Task Force) before voting on the LPA.

As illustrated in the DEIS, and summarized in Exhibit 29 (page S-33) of the Executive Summary, light rail would better serve transit riders than bus rapid transit (BRT) within the CRC project area. Light rail would carry more passengers across the river during the PM peak, result in more people choosing to take transit, faster travel times through the project area, fewer potential noise impacts, and lower costs per incremental rider than BRT. Additionally, light rail is more likely to attract desirable development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver, which is consistent with local land use plans.

P-0700-005

Tolling was evaluated in the DEIS and FEIS, and included in the LPA for two important reasons. First, a toll may be necessary to pay for the construction of this project, as discussed in Chapter 4 of the FEIS. Second, a toll provides a valuable travel demand management tool that encourages travelers to take alternative modes (including light rail provided by this project), travel at off-peak periods, or reduce their auto trips. This demand management reduces congestion and extends the effective service life of the facility. When the existing I-5 northbound bridge was built in 1917, it was paid for with a toll. The southbound I-5 bridge, built in 1958, was also funded partially by tolls. In 2008, the

P-0700-011 | I constantly read about urban growth boundaries. If we're not going to enforce them, why do put them in place. And, if we have them aren't they supposed to ease urban sprawl? Come on! We have mechanisms in place, let use them, let's not punish the commuter and let's not use urban sprawl as a weak excuse!

P-0700-012 | Also, I think it's fiscally irresponsible to install light rail between Vancouver and Portland. First of all it's too expensive for the amount of ridership. Second, **P-0700-013** | Portland has done a terrible job of ensuring the safety of it's light rail riders and they have built platforms in isolated and dangerous parts of the community **P-0700-014** | between Vancouver and Portland. Third, the light rail system is built on two sets of tracks, one going one way, one going the other. As a result, we can't have express trains into downtown Portland or out to the surrounding areas because you can only run one train, each way, at a time. This makes the commute **P-0700-015** | unbearably long and again, safety is a real issue. I would be irresponsible as a mother to let my kids ride the light rail.

P-0700-016 | Additionally, light rail is permanent and comes at a very high expense, if the population center changes, we're stuck with the existing light rail that once again, no one will ride because it doesn't take them to where they need to go. It's easy to change a bus route but pretty impossible to change light rail lines as the population centers change. If we buy more buses and dedicate those buses to express trips to the population centers in the metro area, we'll have more ridership and buses are a lot less expensive than light rail.

P-0700-017 | So, I urge you to not tax us to cross an already crowded and dilapidated bridge. I don't mind paying a reasonable toll of a couple dollars per crossing a new bridge, but I mind being taxed at a higher rate because I don't have the choice to not commute during rush hour and I'm not getting up before dawn to get my kids to school. This is nuts and it's unfair to the residents of Clark County. I'm tired of being dictated to by Portlanders who don't know anything at all about Clark **P-0700-018** | County or it's transportation needs or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kaycee Wiita
360-256-9200

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Washington legislature passed enabling language for tolling on I-5, provided that each facility is later authorized under specific legislation. Once authorized by the legislature, the Washington Transportation Commission has the authority to set the toll rates. In Oregon, and the Oregon Transportation Commission has the authority to toll a facility and to set the toll rates.

P-0700-006

The light rail extension provided by the LPA would connect to the existing system at the Expo Center. It would provide an option across the river for those who do not want to pay a toll. It would also improve transit commut times and reduce headways to 7.5 minutes during the peak hours and 15 minutes during non-peak hours.

Travel times vary by time of day, direction of travel and travel mode. Travel times improve for transit in the LPA compared to the 2030 No-Build Alternative. More specifically, the LPA:

- Improves transit travel times region-wide,
- Improves transit travel times relative to automobile travel times, and
- Improves reliability of transit travel times.

The in-vehicle and total transit travel times for all of the origin and destination pairs that were studied would improve with the LPA, compared to the 2030 No-Build Alternative, with savings ranging from 3 to 24 minutes in the southbound direction during the morning peak period. For example, with the LPA a transit trip between Downtown Vancouver and Hayden Island would save a total of 3 minutes, while a trip between Clark College and Pioneer Square would save 24 minutes. During the afternoon/evening peak period in the northbound direction, travel time savings would range from 5 to 28 minutes. For example, a transit trip between Hayden Island and Vancouver would save an estimated 5 minutes, while a trip between Pioneer Square and Clark

College would save 28 minutes (dropping from 72 minutes with the No Build Alternative to 44 minutes with the LPA). Transit reliability between major origins and destinations is higher due to the availability of light rail that travels in an exclusive guideway. For more information, please see FEIS Chapter 3 (Section 3.1).

P-0700-007

Significant work has gone into developing the CRC project, including an ongoing public involvement effort. The public involvement program includes numerous advisory groups to ensure the values and interests of the community are reflected in project decisions. These groups include representatives of public agencies, businesses, civic organizations, neighborhoods and freight, commuter and environmental groups. Feedback from the general public and advisory groups has been generally supportive of the project, including support for the transit, bicycle, pedestrian, highway, interchange, and financing elements of the project. See Chapter 2 (Section 2.7) of the FEIS for more discussion on the process used to develop project alternatives and select a Locally Preferred Alternative.

P-0700-008

The LPA would provide light rail transit as an option to cross the river. It would also reduce the number of vehicle trips across the the I-5 bridge compared to the no-build option due to tolling and other transportation system management and transportation demand management programs.

P-0700-009

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the I-5 CRC DEIS.

P-0700-010

Details and policies for the tolling system will be decided by the transportation commissions and legislatures of both states. However, the project has proposed and assumed that an electronic tolling system will be used. Electronic tolling collection (ETC) is a cashless toll collection system using the latest electronic technology. ETC promotes free-flowing traffic by eliminating the need for toll booths and allowing all vehicles to pay a toll without stopping.

ETC systems in use today allow drivers to purchase an inexpensive, credit card sized transponder that is placed on the inside windshield of their car. When driving through the toll collection point, radio equipment above the road scans the transponder and deducts the toll from the user's account. User accounts could be linked to a credit or debit card, or they could be prepaid.

Infrequent travelers without a transponder would be charged via a video camera that can quickly scan and photograph license plates. A bill for the cost of the toll and a processing fee can be sent to the registered vehicle owner.

All personal information necessary to use the ETC system would be maintained by the State DOT, as is now being done with WSDOT's Good To Go! Program that is collecting tolls for facilities such as the Tacoma Narrows bridge. The use of this information, like all personal information provided to the state, will follow state privacy guidelines.

P-0700-011

Thank you for taking the time to submit your comments on the I-5 CRC DEIS. Both Oregon and Washington employ urban growth boundaries, and are recognized for doing so in a manner that successfully contributes to compact urban areas and a reduction in low-density urban sprawl. However, managing urban growth is challenging, and is not

achieved with any one tool or approach. The DEIS and the FEIS include a discussion of induced growth. Additional detail is provided in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4).

P-0700-012

Please see response to comment P-0700-004.

P-0700-013

Safety and security are high priorities for C-Tran and TriMet. CRC, C-TRAN and TriMet are partnering with local jurisdictions, police and neighborhoods to design, implement and operate a safe and secure transit system. A Safety and Security Management Plan (SSMP) was created, in part, to address public concerns about safety, and is a requirement for funding from the Federal Transit Administration. Nationally, studies show that crime rates at the stations directly correlated to the amount of crime in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Between 2008 and 2009 TriMet has aggressively enhanced safety and security on its MAX and bus systems. During that time frame, the number of police officers working in the Transit Police Division doubled to 58 officers who spend up to 70 percent of their time patrolling the system. Additionally, TriMet added 15 new fare inspectors and granted authority for all 46 TriMet Road Supervisors to enforce fares.

Please see Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS for more information regarding potential impact on crime and plans for ensuring the safety and security of passengers using the light rail system.

P-0700-014

Providing express light rail service between Portland and Vancouver would require a third, and possibly fourth track, to be built to allow light rail trains traveling along the Yellow Line to bypass certain transit stops

and non-express trains. This would require a significant capital investment and greater community impacts that are not a part of the CRC project.

Even without an express light rail service transit times will be reduced across the river due to improved headways and the light rail traveling on a separate guideway.

P-0700-015

Safety and security are high priorities for C-Tran and TriMet. Though studies show that crime rates at transit stations are directly linked to the amount of crime in the surrounding neighborhoods, CRC, C-TRAN and TriMet are partnering with local jurisdictions, police and neighborhoods to design, implement and operate a safe and secure transit system. The project team has developed a Safety and Security Management Plan for the transit component of the project, which outlines a variety of potential safety measures. These measures include working with local governments to develop supportive land-uses near transit stations; enforcing fare payment; installing closed-circuit TV at light rail stations, park and rides, and on trains; and patrolling stations and trains by Transit security and local police officers. For more information about how safety and security associated with light rail is being addressed by the CRC project, see Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS.

P-0700-016

As illustrated in the DEIS, and summarized in Exhibit 29 (page S-33) of the Executive Summary, light rail would better serve transit riders than bus rapid transit (BRT) within the CRC project area. Light rail would carry more passengers across the river during the PM peak, result in more people choosing to take transit, faster travel times through the project area, fewer potential noise impacts, and lower costs per incremental rider than BRT. Additionally, light rail is more likely to attract desirable development on Hayden Island and in downtown Vancouver, which is

consistent with local land use plans.

As described in Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the DEIS, the operations and maintenance (O&M) costs associated with light rail would be less than those associated with bus rapid transit, largely because light rail operates on electricity while bus rapid transit is dependent on the volatile fuel market. LRT costs approximately \$3.50, or 31%, less than BRT, per incremental rider when comparing both capital and operating costs.

Long-term operation and maintenance of the new light rail line will be funded through C-TRAN and TriMet. For more information on how O&M costs will be shared between TriMet and C-TRAN, and how C-TRAN may finance these additional costs, please see Chapter 4 of the FEIS.

P-0700-017

Modeling has indicated that tolling I-5 without making the improvements that are part of the CRC project would not meet the project's Purpose and Need. This does not mean that some form of tolling prior to constructing CRC couldn't be implemented. The ultimate decision on any tolling options will be made by both the Washington and Oregon Transportation Commissions.

P-0700-018

Please refer to responses to comments above.