



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

**P-0631-001** 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?

**P-0631-002** 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

### **P-0631-001**

The construction of the CRC project is not intended to be a substitute for creating jobs in Clark County. In fact, the project's improvements for freight, reliability and transit access are expected to stimulate economic activity and job growth. The economic analysis indicates that job growth in Vancouver and at the Port of Vancouver will benefit from the project. The construction of the project itself will also provide jobs to workers in Clark County. Vancouver, Clark County, the Columbia River Economic Development Council, and other organizations work together to increase the jobs to population ratio in Clark County.

Furthermore, the project team recognizes the need for an efficient regional transportation system that connects the urban core of Portland with the surrounding communities of Gresham, Hillsboro, Tigard, Vancouver, etc. While this connectivity is needed, it is also necessary for major transportation projects like CRC to assess their ability to induce sprawl. We have completed this analysis and found that sprawl is less likely with the project than without it.

### **P-0631-002**

The LPA provides the option of light rail from Clark College in Vancouver connecting to the existing system at the Expo Center. This option could be used by people crossing the river who do not want to pay a toll. With the LPA there are three proposed park and rides, Clark with 1,910 spaces, Mill with 420 and Columbia with 570. 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. The light rail is expected to run at headways of 7.5 minutes during the peak 2 hour

**P-0631-002** 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?

**P-0631-003** 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.

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morning and evening periods and 15 minute headways at other times.

Travel times vary by time of day, direction, 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.

### **P-0631-003**

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 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.