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PROPOSED
TOLL-FREE EAST COUNTY BRIDGE RESOLUTION 2014-07-27

A resolution to create a policy of the Clark County Board of Commissioners that defines and supports a toll-free East County Bridge proposal.

Because the Board serves as representatives of the Citizens of Clark County; and

Because the economic wellbeing, public health, safety and welfare of the Citizens are determined by major transportation projects; and

Because the need for this policy is demonstrated by the voter rejected CRC project that consumed \$200 million before it was abandoned for lack of community support; and

Because that loss makes clear that there is a need for the following guiding principles that would better protect the Citizens from inappropriate projects, maximize the benefits, minimize the costs, and ensure project success:

Principle 1 – Protect and enhance the Columbia River navigation channel:

The Columbia River is North America’s largest river connected to the Pacific Ocean and serves as our local economy’s most important marine freight corridor. Any bridge proposal that would impede the navigation channel would inflict unacceptable harm to present and future businesses essential to Clark County jobs and economic vitality.

Principle 2 – Protect and enhance interstate commerce:

The transportation corridors across the Columbia River work as a system. Any bridge proposal that would employ tolls would divert traffic to the other bridge. Tolling the I-5 Bridge would cause unacceptable congestion on the I-205 Glenn Jackson Bridge, stifle interstate commerce, delay access to Portland International Airport, and harm our local economic vitality.

Principle 3 – Protect and enhance the unity of our bi-state community:

Adding tolls to one Columbia River Bridge would eventually trigger tolls on any alternate bridge and erect a virtual barrier between our bi-state community that would harm our interstate commerce.

Principle 4 – Provide new freight corridors:

New freight corridors are needed to connect our bi-state community to provide redundant and alternate routes, relieve congestion, add additional lane capacity, shorten commute times, reduce air pollution, and improve our quality of life.

Principle 5 – Reserve resources for future bi-state freight corridors:

Avoid all-consuming bridge projects that are so costly that the expectation of ever building any new bi-state bridges would be virtually forfeited. Smaller, simpler and lower cost projects would provide more timely incremental improvements and conserve limited transportation funds for future projects.

Principle 6 – Invite innovative private sector firms to propose, design and build:

45 Bureaucracies should only do what the private sector cannot do better, faster, cheaper. Local government
46 should welcome unsolicited proposals from capable reputable firms to envision simple, creative,
47 affordable solutions.

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49 **Principle 7 – Determine if the proposal is a community embraced project:**

50 Before spending substantial sums on a project, the county should provide Clark County citizens with an
51 upfront advisory vote to determine if the proposal is a community embraced project and respect the
52 results.

53

54 **Because** the previously abandoned CRC project violated all of these guiding principles and was rejected
55 by 223 out of 228 precincts in the November 2013 Advisory Vote #1, it is recognized as the opposite of a
56 community embraced project that would do more harm than good; and

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58 **Because** an alternate proposal for an East County Bridge consistent with all of the above principles was
59 supported by a majority of the citizens in the November 2013 Advisory Vote #3, it is recognized as a
60 community embraced project; and

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62 **Because**, in response to that advisory vote, the Board unanimously adopted East County Toll-Free Bridge
63 Resolution 2013-07-21 in a January 21, 2014 public hearing; and

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65 **Because** item 14 of that Resolution directed the Board to clearly support, provide leadership and
66 champion the proposed bridge project; and

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68 **Because** the Board received a proposal to design, build and assist with possible multi-year financing for a
69 toll-free East County Bridge that achieves the goals outlined in that Resolution that could be completed in
70 five years; and

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72 **Because** that proposal was presented to the community in a duly advertised public meeting on July 25,
73 2014 and published on The Grid of the Clark County website; and

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75 **Because** that project would increase the number of freight corridor travel lanes across the Columbia River
76 by 28.5% for a cost per lane that is far less than the previously considered CRC project; and

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78 **Because** the previously considered CRC project required tolls to service billions of dollars in debt above
79 and beyond a \$900 million cash down payment from Oregon and Washington; and

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81 **Because** the total cost for this proposed project (including everything) is less than the down payment of
82 the previously considered CRC project; and

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84 **Because** the proposed project is by far, much more affordable than the previous CRC project and can
85 therefore be reasonably expected to receive bi-state funding without requiring tolls; and

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87 **Because** item 13 of the adopted Resolution directs the Board to present the newly received toll-free East
88 County Bridge proposal to the citizens in a county-wide advisory vote election; and

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Because this matter was considered at a duly advertised public hearing, where the Board concluded that adoption of this policy would be in the best interests of the economic wellbeing, public health, safety and welfare of the Citizens, now therefore:

BE IT ORDERED AND RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CLARK COUNTY, STATE OF WASHINGTON AS FOLLOWS:

The Board shall adopt these findings and guiding principles and support the toll-free East County Bridge proposal as presented in the July 25, 2014 public meeting as defined below:

1. Provide a third free-flowing connection between Oregon and Washington that enhances interstate commerce, relieve traffic congestion across the Glenn Jackson I-205 Bridge and in turn, relieve traffic congestion across the I-5 Columbia River Bridge; and
2. Connect Clark County at SR-14 at SE 192nd Ave to Airport Way in Oregon with provision for a future non-stop direct connection to I-84 at exit 13; and
3. Be toll-free, have a total cost less than \$860 million; and
4. Have two through lanes in each direction plus shoulders for cars, trucks and buses plus paths for bicycles and pedestrians; and
5. Accommodate express bus service from Clark County Washington to the Portland TriMet Light Rail station about 1.3 miles south of I-84 on 181st Avenue; and
6. Meet or exceed the navigation clearances of the I-205 Glenn Jackson Columbia River Bridge so as to not impede marine traffic; and
7. Be a model of integrity, transparency, forthrightness; and
8. Minimize the work done and the money spent by public agencies; and
9. Follow financial management and accounting practices recommended by forensic accountants including periodic audits; and
10. Genuinely seek input from local elected representatives and citizens through open dialog and meaningful two-way interactions to improve the design to best serve the citizens; and
11. It shall be the policy of the Clark County Board of Commissioners to clearly support, provide

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leadership and champion the proposed bridge project and the guiding principles for community
embraced projects.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2014.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

ATTEST:

Tom Mielke, Chair

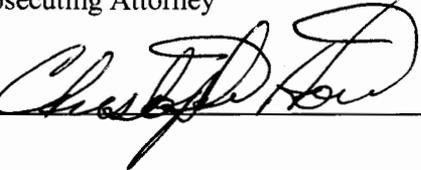
Clerk of the Board

David Madore, Commissioner

Approved as to Form Only

ANTHONY F. GOLIK
Prosecuting Attorney

Edward L. Barnes, Commissioner

By  _____