

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-12-____

Toll-free East County Bridge Resolution

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

3
4 **Because** the Board serves as representatives of the Citizens of Clark County; and

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

8
9 **Because** the need for this policy is demonstrated by the voter rejected CRC project that
10 consumed \$200 million before it was abandoned for lack of community support; and

11
12 **Because** that loss makes clear that there is a need for the following guiding principles
13 that would better protect the Citizens from inappropriate projects, maximize the benefits,
14 minimize the costs, and ensure project success:

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

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

21
22 **Principle 2 – Protect and enhance interstate commerce:**

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

28
29 **Principle 3 – Protect and enhance the unity of our bi-state community:**

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

33
34 **Principle 4 – Provide new freight corridors:**

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

38 **Principle 5 – Reserve resources for future bi-state freight corridors:**
39 Avoid all-consuming bridge projects that are so costly that the expectation of ever
40 building any new bi-state bridges would be virtually forfeited. Smaller, simpler and
41 lower cost projects would provide more timely incremental improvements and conserve
42 limited transportation funds for future projects.

43
44 **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.
46 Local government should welcome unsolicited proposals from capable reputable firms,
47 subject to compliance with bid laws, to envision simple, creative, affordable solutions

48
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
51 citizens with an upfront advisory vote to determine if the proposal is a community
52 embraced project and respect the results.

53
54 **Because** the previously abandoned CRC project violated all of these guiding principles
55 and was rejected by 223 out of 228 precincts in the November 2013 Advisory Vote #1, it
56 is recognized as the opposite of a community embraced project and would do more
57 harm than good; and

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

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

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

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

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

76

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

80
81 **Because** the previously considered CRC project required tolls to service billions of
82 dollars in debt above and beyond a \$900 million cash down payment from Oregon and
83 Washington; and

84
85 **Because** the total cost for this proposed project (including everything) is less than the
86 down payment of the previously considered CRC project; and

87
88 **Because** the proposed project is by far, much more affordable than the previous CRC
89 project and can therefore be reasonably expected to receive bi-state funding without
90 requiring tolls; and

91
92 **Because** item 13 of the adopted Resolution directs the Board to present the newly
93 received toll-free East County Bridge proposal to the citizens in a county-wide advisory
94 vote election; and

95
96 **Because** this matter was considered at a duly advertised public hearing, where the
97 Board concluded that adoption of this policy would be in the best interests of the
98 economic wellbeing, public health, safety and welfare of the Citizens, now therefore:

99
100 **BE IT ORDERED AND RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COUNCILORS OF**
101 **CLARK COUNTY, STATE OF WASHINGTON AS FOLLOWS:**

102 **Section 1. Adoption of Principles.**

103 The Board adopts these findings and guiding principles and supports the toll-free East
104 County Bridge proposal as presented in the July 25, 2014 public meeting as defined
105 below:

- 106
- 107 1. Provide a third free-flowing connection between Oregon and Washington that
108 enhances interstate commerce, relieve traffic congestion across the Glenn
109 Jackson I-205 Bridge and in turn, relieve traffic congestion across the I-5
110 Columbia River Bridge; and
 - 111
 - 112 2. Connect Clark County at SR-14 at SE 192nd Ave to Airport Way in Oregon with
113 provision for a future non-stop direct connection to I-84 at exit 13; and
 - 114
 - 115 3. Be toll-free, have a total cost less than \$860 million; and
 - 116

- 117 4. Have two through lanes in each direction plus shoulders for cars, trucks and
118 buses plus paths for bicycles and pedestrians; and
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120 5. Accommodate express bus service from Clark County Washington to the
121 Portland TriMet Light Rail station about 1.3 miles south of I-84 on 181st Avenue;
122 and
123
124 6. Meet or exceed the navigation clearances of the I-205 Glenn Jackson Columbia
125 River Bridge so as to not impede marine traffic; and
126
127 7. Be a model of integrity, transparency, forthrightness; and
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129 8. Minimize the work done and the money spent by public agencies; and
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131 9. Follow financial management and accounting practices recommended by
132 forensic accountants including periodic audits; and
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134 10. Genuinely seek input from local elected representatives and citizens through
135 open dialog and meaningful two-way interactions to improve the design to best
136 serve the citizens; and
137
138 11. It shall be the policy of the Clark County Board of Councilors to clearly support,
139 provide leadership and champion the proposed bridge project and the guiding
140 principles for community embraced projects.
141

142 **Section 2. Conclusions from Advisory vote.** Resolution 2013-07-27, was executed
143 as Advisory Vote #1 in the November 2014 county-wide General Election Ballot. The
144 outcome of that election revealed that majority of voters answered Yes to the following
145 question:
146

147 “Shall the voters approve proposed Resolution 2014-07-27 for a toll-free East County
148 Bridge?”
149

150 **Therefore**, the Board of Clark County Councilors, who seeks to faithfully represent the
151 will of the people, hereby adopts the findings and conclusions contained in the recital
152 clauses above as findings supporting this resolution and the Board adopts in the
153 affirmative, the above transportation principles, philosophies, and policies to guide the
154 Board’s priorities, advocacy positions, and future plans.

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155 ADOPTED this _____ day of December, 2015.

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BOARD OF COUNTY COUNCILORS
FOR CLARK COUNTY

158

159 Attest:

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161

Clerk to the Board

By: _____

David Madore, Chair

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165 Approved as to form only:

By: _____

166 ANTHONY F. GOLIK

Jeanne Stewart, Councilor

167 Prosecuting Attorney

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By: _____

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Tom Mielke, Councilor

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Christopher Horne