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Financing Columbia Crossing will hit local bridge users hardest says, Betty Sue Morris **Federal and state financing to be about half that expected**

Suggesting that the Columbia River Crossing proposal for a replacement I-5 bridge and light rail to Clark County is far from a “done deal,” Clark County Commissioner **Betty Sue Morris** said yesterday during a CVTV *Clark County Focus* television taping that the costs of building and maintaining a new bridge will fall disproportionately on Clark County commuters.

Sources of financing a \$4 billion bridge have changed dramatically from what was expected in the beginning, according to Morris.

“We were led to believe that one-third of the cost of the new bridge would come from the federal government, one third from the states of Washington and Oregon, and one third from Clark and Multnomah counties,” Morris said.

Federal and state resources have shrunk dramatically, Morris added. Federal and state funding is expected to total about one-third of the cost.

Now we can expect Clark and Multnomah county people to pick up two-thirds of the cost of the bridge and light rail, Morris declared.

“This means that Clark County commuters, paying tolls on the new I-5 bridge, will be picking up most of the cost of the bridge, since the only way local governments—Clark and Multnomah Counties—can pay their shares in the cost will be through tolling.”

“This is unfair to our commuters,” Morris declared. She added that there is currently no provision for tolls on the I-205 bridge.

According to Morris, there could be two local ballot measures that would have to be approved before light rail could be brought from Portland to Vancouver.

“We at first thought the federal government was going to cover the cost of bringing light rail to a downtown Vancouver location in Clark County,” Morris said. “If we are going to have to pick up that cost instead, the county has asked that that be put to a vote in Clark County.”

The operational costs of light rail would have to be funded through C-TRAN, according to Morris, and that would require a local vote on a sales tax increase.

Morris said that light rail would not be a deal breaker. Even if local voters turned down light rail, the bridge likely would be built.

RFK Jr. single tickets available for \$25; book signing follows lecture

The 2008 Southwest Washington Sustainability Conference & Trade Show, presented by the City of Vancouver and Clark County, is offering single event admission to the 7 p.m., Thursday, July 10, keynote presentation by **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** for \$25. A book signing, a benefit for the Fort Vancouver Library Foundation follows the lecture.

Thursday's special presentation is included in registration for the 2008 Southwest Washington Sustainability Conference & Trade Show being held at the Hilton Vancouver Washington Thursday and Friday, July 10 and 11.

The single event tickets can be reserved by going to <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/34959>. Registration is \$325 for two full days of nationally recognized speakers, networking, exhibits, breakfasts and lunches, and special Robert F. Kennedy Jr. keynote.

There are special \$275 reduced rates when three or more sign up from one organization, agency or business. Contact **Mike Piper** or **Rita Davidson** at **487-7111** for information and the group rate code.

The entire community is invited to learn about sustainable living practices when this year's sustainability conference heads into the weekend and a free community GreenFest, Saturday, July 12.

The GreenFest is at the waterfront at Marine Park and the Water Resources Education Center, 4600 SE

Columbia Way.

Clark Public Utilities offering free replacement CFL lights

Clark Public Utilities, which for years has been promoting the use of compact fluorescent lamps, is now recommending that CFL users return their burned-out lamps to any of the utility's office locations and get free CFL replacements.

CFL lights are the twisty fluorescent lamps that fit in regular screw-in light sockets. The lights can last as long as 10,000 hours. It uses about 75 percent less electricity than comparable incandescent bulbs. A 13-watt CFL bulb produces the same amount of light as an old-fashioned 60-watt incandescent bulb.

Nonetheless, CFLs eventually do burn out and should be recycled because they contain minute amounts of mercury, according to **Patrick McGary**, the utility's director of energy resources.

Bulbs can be taken for replacement at any of the utility's three offices, 1200 Fort Vancouver Way, 8600 NE 117th Avenue and 100 Columbia Way.

Regional Transportation Council to take public comment on Columbia Crossing

The Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council will be taking public comment on a preferred alternative crossing of the Columbia River Crossing Project at a special meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 9, in City Hall.

The transportation council is expected to adopt its preferred alternative at a July 22 meeting. The council will also amend its Metropolitan Transportation Plan to fit with a new crossing proposal.

Calendar

The C-TRAN board of directors, meeting at 5:30 p.m. today in the Rose Besserman room in the Fisher's Landing Transit Center, is expected to declare its preferred option for the Columbia River Crossing Project. <> AARP Washington is holding a public event to raise awareness of healthcare costs from 9 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Wednesday, July 9, in the Red Lion Hotel at the Quay. For further information, call (206) 517-9345. <> The first in a series of free outdoor summer concerts sponsored by the Terry Lee law firm is the **Vancouver Pops Orchestra** at noon, Wednesday, July 9, in Esther Short Park. Food vendors are on hand. <> Clark County commissioners meet in an informal session at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 9, in conference room B in the Public Service Center.

Tuesday on the air

Vancouver City Council: Columbia River Crossing (6/30)—5:30 p.m. CVTV

Seattle Mariners at Oakland (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFX

Portland Beavers at Fresno (live)—7 p.m. CVTV

Clark County Chamber Legislative Review (6/10) 8:30 p.m. CVTV

Vancouver Fire Department Awards

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Kurt Creager maintaining contact. <> **Chad Peru** offering help to El Salvadorans. <> **Heather Allmain** reciting correct answers. <> **Sande Sandbom** spelling out details. <> **Maggie Huffman** promoting Twilight Criterium. <> **Tuesday**, sunny and hot, 61-88. **Wednesday**, sunny, scattered clouds, 57-90. **Thursday**, continued sunshine, 55-82.