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## **Cowlitz tribe reviews environmental study**

The landless Cowlitz Indian Tribe has heard many casino development recommendations.

In the draft environmental impact statement, however, the preferred recommendation is clear: build a giant casino and resort on a 152-acre site at the La Center-Interstate 5 junction.

Alternative A, as it's called, "would provide the tribe the best opportunity for securing a viable means of attracting and maintaining a long-term, sustainable revenue stream," according to the document prepared by Analytical Environmental Services of Sacramento.

That hasn't stopped anyone from making their own recommendation for the tribe, however.

The Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and Identity Clark County opted for Alternative D: a business park at the La Center junction.

Not going to happen, responded Philip Harju, a tribal council member and spokesman.

At two public hearings last week to collect comments about the impact statement, plenty of people told the tribe not to build anything at all.

Then there is the intriguing Section 2.9, "Alternatives not analyzed in this EIS."

Those alternatives include the Columbia riverfront acreage downriver of the Interstate Bridge for sale by Boise Cascade.

The document doesn't say who suggested this property – less than a mile from a historic gathering site for Native Americans – to the tribe.

But the site was dismissed because it "would be expected to cause major traffic problems in downtown Vancouver."