

Memorandum Date: April 9, 2009
Meeting Date: April 15, 2009

W. A. C.

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Celia Barry, Transportation Planning

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: ORDER/IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING THE CITY OF
SPRINGFIELD'S REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR AN
OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANT SUBMITTAL
FOR THE SPRINGFIELD-EUGENE BICYCLE VIADUCT

I. MOTION

Move approval of Attachment A, Board Order.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The City of Springfield is working with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), on submittal of an application for a Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant proposal to add a south bank bicycle path component to the I-5 Willamette River bridge replacement project ("bicycle viaduct"). On April 1, ODOT's TE program informed the ODOT Major Projects Unit Manager that the proposal was approved for advancing to the next step in the TE Discretionary review/approval process, being submittal of an application for funding. ODOT's project manager needs local government letters of support for the submittal. A map of the bicycle viaduct is in Attachment B. A Notice of Intent and project overview is in Attachment C.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The I-5 Willamette River bridge replacement project has been going through a series of public involvement processes and permits. Board Order 09-1-7-9 authorized execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement regarding the staging area at Day Island and coordination with ODOT to facilitate the bridge replacement. Ordinance PA 1247 adopted July 30, 2008, authorized an exception to statewide Goal 15, Willamette River Greenway, and amended the Metro Plan text to allow for the bridge replacement. The City of Springfield processed or is processing development permits for the bridge replacement.

The Metropolitan Policy Committee unanimously supported endorsement of the proposal on April 9.

B. Policy Issues

The bicycle viaduct is anticipated in the adopted metropolitan Transportation System Plan (TransPlan), Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and Willamalane Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

C. Board Goals

The following Strategic Plan Goal statements relate to this Board item:

- Contribute to appropriate community development in the areas of transportation and Telecommunications infrastructure, housing, growth management and land development.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

There is no financial obligation on the part of the County associated with this action.

E. Analysis

Physical barriers created by the I-5 bridges and proximity of Franklin Boulevard to the river terminate the off road, river front bike path at this location, requiring cyclists to use Franklin Boulevard. The bridge replacement provides an opportunity to remove the barriers.

The bicycle viaduct will be a key component of a long term vision to extend the existing river path to connect with the Glenwood area, extend along the Middle Fork, and provide a central route to Lane Community College and to Mt. Pisgah from Eugene and Springfield.

The connection will increase safety of bicycle travel by eliminating the need to go on Franklin Boulevard. Increased safety helps promote alternative travel modes to motor vehicle travel, potentially reducing greenhouse gas emissions and bringing about obvious exercise and health benefits.

An additional bonus is that recycled box beams from the replaced bridge can be used for the bicycle path saving an estimated \$500,000.

With the added scope of the bike path, it is likely that additional environmental permitting will be required. Springfield staff intend to ensure all permitting requirements are met.

IV. Alternatives/Options

1. Approve the Order
2. Approve the Order with modifications
3. Decline to approve the Order

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

ODOT learned of the go-ahead to move forward with the application submittal on April 1 and a complete application is due May 2. ODOT and Springfield are coordinating with multiple staff to assemble the complete application and endorsements prior to that date.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Option 1 is recommended.

VII. FOLLOW-UP

No follow-up at this time is necessary.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Board Order and Exhibit A, proposed letter of support
- B. Schematic of bicycle viaduct
- C. Notice of Intent and project overview

**IN THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY
STATE OF OREGON**

ORDER NO.

) IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING THE CITY OF
) SPRINGFIELD'S REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF
) SUPPORT FOR AN OREGON DEPARTMENT OF
) TRANSPORTATION GRANT SUBMITTAL FOR
) THE SPRINGFIELD-EUGENE BICYCLE VIADUCT

WHEREAS, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is replacing the I-5 Willamette bridge and design and construction of the bridge is underway; and

WHEREAS, an opportunity exists to remove existing barriers to an off road bicycle connection, by designing and constructing the "Eugene-Springfield Bicycle Viaduct", at this location as part of the bridge replacement; and

WHEREAS, ODOT is applying for Transportation Enhancement funds in order to incorporate the Bicycle Viaduct into the bridge replacement project; and

WHEREAS, the Bicycle Viaduct will provide a critical off-road path connection along the river, promoting bicycle travel, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and improved public health and safety; now, therefore, it is hereby

ORDERED that a letter of support for the proposal in substantial conformance to the letter attached herein as Exhibit A be provided to ODOT.

Dated this 15th day of April, 2009

Pete Sorenson, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date _____ Lane County

OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

Exhibit A

April 15, 2009

Pat Rogers Fisher
ODOT Transportation Enhancement Program
355 Capitol St NE, Room 326
Salem OR 97301-3871

RE: South Bank Path Extension – Springfield Viaduct

Dear Ms. Fisher:

The Lane County Board of Commissioners strongly endorses and supports ODOT's application for Transportation Enhancement Program funding, to complete the south bank bicycle and pedestrian viaduct connection under I-5 along the Willamette River. Funding for this critical system gap will ensure that the path can continue eastward along the river in the constrained location under I-5, between McKenzie Hwy (a.k.a. Franklin Boulevard) and the riverbank. As you know, the design and construction of the I-5 Willamette River Bridge replacement is underway as part of the OTIA bridge work statewide. This presents a significant and unique opportunity to enhance east/west bicycle and pedestrian connectivity along the south bank of the Willamette in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area.

The path viaduct link will address safety and connectivity problems with the current path in this vicinity at the southern bridgehead, all within existing ODOT right-of-way. Without the connection bicyclists must cross four lanes of traffic without a signal or intersection to reach the continued bike lane to the east on Franklin Boulevard. The connection will also leverage completion of the entire riverfront path system east and south of I-5 down to Seavey Loop Rd., the 2,200-acre Howard Buford Recreation Area, and Lane Community College

The Board of Commissioners is strongly interested in promoting alternative travel modes to motor vehicles, promoting public health and safety, and reducing green house gas emissions. This project would facilitate bicycle travel and is therefore squarely aligned with these philosophical views.

Thank you for giving the South Bank Path Extension the timely attention it merits.

Sincerely,

Pete Sorenson, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

**I-5: WILLAMETTE RIVER BRIDGE - BUNDLE 220
FRANKLIN PATH EXTENSION**

T OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OSEC CONSULTING ENGINEERS
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Willamette River

Franklin Blvd.
(Jacksonville Hwy.)

1100' Viaduct

1-5 Northbound
1-5 Southbound

River View St.

Cover Memo Attachment C, Page 2 of 2

The Springfield-Eugene Bicycle Viaduct

This project proposes to complete an east-west connection of the bicycle-pedestrian path that has been a component of relevant transportation plans for Springfield, Eugene, and Lane County for many years. The City of Springfield and Willamalane Park and Recreation District, with strong City of Eugene and Lane County support, have long been planning to continue the south bank path easterly and southerly along the Glenwood riverfront to a connection with Seavey Loop Rd. near the I-5/30th Ave. interchange. The extensive south bank Willamette River path system in Eugene ends at Interstate 5 because of the physical barriers created by both the existing I-5 bridges and the proximity of Franklin Boulevard to the Willamette River. Completion of this system will provide the metro area with access to the Glenwood riverfront, Lane Community College, the Glenwood industrial area, and the Mt. Pisgah recreation area. The section proposed in this TE request is from the east terminus of the existing South Bank Path (Eugene) to a signalized intersection east of I-5 in Springfield.

Design and construction of the replacement I-5 Willamette River Bridges, (B220- WRB), at this location is currently underway, and the opportunity exists to include modifications to the design to include underpass structures to remove these barriers, and extend the structure toward the east on a viaduct, enabling this community connection. Coupled with this co-operative design opportunity is the fact that as the I-5 detour bridge is removed, the box beams which are being disassembled, can be re-used and placed on a series of single hammer-head bents placed over the river bank, to create a new viaduct pathway, saving up to \$.5 M material costs that otherwise would be realized in this project. All of the new viaduct structure would be within the current ODOT right of way along Franklin Blvd.

Postponement to the future will remove these opportunities and if consideration is not given to this connection in the design, continued physical barriers will be even more expensive and challenging to overcome. An alternative under-crossing design places the trail on the south side of Franklin Blvd. and requires bike and pedestrians to cross four lanes of traffic without benefit of a signal or intersection to reach the continued bike lane to the east on Franklin Blvd.

As the I-5 WRB replacement project has moved through the public review process toward construction, citizens and agency staff have repeatedly called attention to the need for bicycle and pedestrian route continuity between Eugene and Springfield at this location. The pending WRB construction presents a unique opportunity to complete the critical riverside gap along the ODOT property from I-5 east to Glenwood. Because the WRB project is moving forward with project activities set to begin later this spring, finding funds to fill the \$1 million dollar shortfall to extend the riverfront path is urgent.

This project has complete local support and is identified in all relevant planning documents. The City of Springfield and Willamalane Park and Recreation District, through the efforts of the 'United Front' lobbying partnership of Lane County jurisdictions, continue to seek federal funds to complete the Glenwood Riverfront Path and modern urban standards upgrades to Franklin Blvd. adjacent to the location of this project request. Completing the difficult causeway section east of I-5 is key to the future success of these project efforts.