

Memorandum Date: February 17, 2009
Meeting Date: March 4, 2009

T.6.a.

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PRESENTED BY: Celia Barry, Transportation Planning

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Request to Provide a Letter of Support for ODOT Region 2's Earmark Request Priority, the I-5/Beltline Project

I. MOTION

Move approval for Chair Sorenson to sign the letter of support.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) requests that the Board provide the letter of support contained in Attachment A, for a Reauthorization Earmark for the I-5/Beltline project.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

By Board Order 08-9-3-11, the Board commented on Region 2, Area 5 priorities for the ODOT Earmarks Requests List. The first priority on the Board's adopted recommendation was the I-5/Beltline project.

On February 12, 2009, the Metropolitan Policy Committee approved sending a letter similar to that contained in Attachment A.

Last year ODOT established a "Policy on Federal Reauthorization Highway Program Earmark Requests". The Board took action commenting on the policy by Board Order 08-3-19-12. The policy was adopted by OTC and took effect May 13, 2008.

On April 30, 2008, the Board took action to adopt Order 08-4-30-10, a potential list of priorities for the 2010-2015 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), given a large funding package made available by the 2009 legislature. This list was the basis for the Earmark priorities recommended by the Board for Lane County.

B. Policy Issues

TransPlan is the Eugene-Springfield Metropolitan Area Transportation System Plan and includes the following Finance Policy #3: *Set priorities for investment of Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and federal revenues programmed in the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to address safety and major capacity problems on the region's transportation system.*

The Lane County Transportation System Plan (TSP) adopted by the Board in June 2004 does not list state highway projects individually, instead providing supportive policy language for state highway projects under TSP Goal 2: *Promote a safe and efficient state highway system through the State Transportation Improvement Program and support of ODOT capital improvement projects.*

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

The financial implications of taking action on this item relates to the potential of federal funding for state highway improvements upon adoption of the federal highway bill, anticipated in 2009 or 2010. Other than that, at this time, there are no direct financial implications with regard to County revenues or expenditures as a result of taking action on this item as proposed.

E. Analysis

SAFETEA-LU is the federal highway bill that authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit. With reauthorization anticipated in 2009 or 2010, ODOT wants to prepare for requesting federal earmarks for state highway modernization projects.

ODOT's federal affairs advisor, Travis Brouwer, requested the letters of support. Providing the letter is consistent with previous actions of the Board.

IV. Alternatives/Options

1. Move approval for the Chair to sign the letter
2. Approve a modified version of the letter
3. Decline to approve submittal of the letter

V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

ODOT staff requested the letter be provided in early March 2009.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Option 1.

VII. FOLLOW-UP

No follow-up at this time is necessary.

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

- A Proposed letter of support

February 13, 2009

Travis Brouwer
ODOT Federal Affairs Advisor
355 Capitol St NE Rm 135
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Brouwer,

The Lane County Board of County Commissioners is writing to support the Authorization Earmark for the Interstate 5 (I-5)/Beltline Interchange.

We have identified the completion of the I-5/Beltline interchange as the region's top priority for transportation improvements. The interchange is integral to our region, as this interchange provides key connectivity to and from surrounding communities, major cities, employment centers, and regional trauma center. In addition to the traveling public, this facility is a primary freight route, providing the necessary means to transport goods and services efficiently throughout the region and our community.

The Oregon Department of Transportation recently completed the northbound to westbound I-5/Beltline flyover (Unit 1), allocating significant time and resources to ensure successful completion. Construction of Unit 2, consisting of reconstructed northbound on and off ramps and new sound wall, is currently funded for construction in 2010. As outlined in the Authorization Earmark, Unit 3 and Unit 4 of the interchange project are essential to ensuring that these recent and planned investments are enhanced by providing improved operations at the interchange.

We support this project as a major step towards safe and efficient interchange operations for commuters who live within, and travel through, our community.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Peter Sorenson, Chair
Lane County Board of County Commissioners

Cc: Sonny Chickering, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 2
Savannah Crawford, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 2



Lane County Board of Commissioners

Bill Dwyer
Bill Fleener
Rob Handy
Peter Sorenson
Faye Hills Stewart

February 13, 2009

Travis Brouwer
ODOT Federal Affairs Advisor
355 Capitol St NE Rm 135
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Brouwer,

The Lane County Board of County Commissioners is writing to support the Authorization Earmark for the Interstate 5 (I-5)/Beltline Interchange.

We have identified the completion of the I-5/Beltline interchange as the region's top priority for transportation improvements. The interchange is integral to our region, as this interchange provides key connectivity to and from surrounding communities, major cities, employment centers, and regional trauma center. In addition to the traveling public, this facility is a primary freight route, providing the necessary means to transport goods and services efficiently throughout the region and our community.

The Oregon Department of Transportation recently completed the northbound to westbound I-5/Beltline flyover (Unit 1), allocating significant time and resources to ensure successful completion. Construction of Unit 2, consisting of reconstructed northbound on and off ramps and new sound wall, is currently funded for construction in 2010. As outlined in the Authorization Earmark, Unit 3 and Unit 4 of the interchange project are essential to ensuring that these recent and planned investments are enhanced by providing improved operations at the interchange.

We support this project as a major step towards safe and efficient interchange operations for commuters who live within, and travel through, our community.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Peter Sorenson, Chair
Lane County Board of County Commissioners

Cc: Sonny Chickering, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 2
Savannah Crawford, Oregon Department of Transportation, Region 2