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Memorandum Date: January 11, 2010
Meeting Date: January 26, 2010

TO: Board of County Commissioners
DEPARTMENT: Public Works
PRESENTED BY: Celia Barry, Transportation Planning & Traffic
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Approve Letter of Endorsement for Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Funding Request

I. MOTION

Move approval as part of the Consent Calendar for Chair Fleenor to sign an endorsement letter for ODOT's request for a \$450,000 annual appropriation for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) improvements at the Willamette River Bridge.

II. DISCUSSION

A. Background / Analysis

ODOT staff requested that the Board of County Commissioners endorse ODOT's request for federal Fiscal Year 2011 appropriation for ITS improvements at the Willamette River Bridge. The letter (attached) is due to ODOT's Federal Affairs Advisor by January 29th. He will package it with others to be delivered to Oregon's Congressional Delegation.

As you know, the Willamette River Bridge is being replaced. The new bridge will include infrastructure to support ITS components. The components themselves are as yet unfunded. The components include fiber for communications, a road and weather information station including pavement sensors, a motion camera for traffic and incident management, and traffic sensors. The improvements are included in the adopted Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan, in the MPO area's Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan.

B. Recommendation

County and ODOT staff support approval of the motion. It is anticipated that the Metropolitan Policy Committee will endorse submittal of a similar letter at their January 14, 2010 meeting.

III. ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed endorsement letter



Lane County Board of Commissioners

Bill Dwyer
Bill Fleenor
Rob Handy
Peter Sorenson
Faye Hills Stewart

January 26, 2010

The Honorable Members of Oregon's Congressional Delegation
c/o Mr. Travis Brouwer
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capital St. NE, 5th Floor
Salem, OR 97301-3871

Representing Lane County, the Board of County Commissioners are writing to endorse the project proposal entitled "ITS Components for the Willamette River Bridge Project".

The Willamette River Bridge replacement project is one of the largest construction projects undertaken in the Lane County area. The bridge is a critical link along the I-5 Corridor and traverses the Willamette River between the cities of Eugene and Springfield. This project is primarily funded with Oregon Transportation Improvement Act (OTIA)-III funds and demolition of the old bridge is currently under way.

An important element of the adopted Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Regional Transportation Plan is the area's Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan. That plan recommends several key ITS components for the Willamette River Bridge, including a full motion, closed circuit television (CCTV) camera for traffic monitoring, incident detection, and bridge and highway surveillance. A second component is a weather station with pavement sensors for monitoring conditions where early morning shade can create a slick, icy roadway. Other traffic sensors will gather real-time traffic data.

Components of the ITS system are dependent on a communications network that is fast and reliable, and that can carry the large amount of data needed for continuous, CCTV coverage. The data are sent to the ODOT Traffic Operations Centers in Salem and Glenwood. Some of the data are made available to travelers, through www.TripCheck.com. One of the most essential legs of the communication network parallels I-5 and must cross the Willamette River at this bridge. To do so, conduit to carry the cables must be installed on the bridge.

Incorporating these ITS components into the Willamette River Bridge project is clearly desirable and is consistent with the employment of efficient and cost-effective project delivery practices. As we look forward to improving transportation system management and operational efficiency, the ITS infrastructure within the area will become a pivotal resource. We understand that this project would be ready to go almost immediately as the project is within ODOT's existing right-of-way and in an area that has already been reviewed for environmental impacts.

We are very interested in seeing the project supported and forwarded for consideration for a fiscal year 2011 Annual Appropriation. Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

William A. Fleenor, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners