

Memorandum Date: December 30, 2008  
Meeting Date: January 14, 2009

W. G. A.

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**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**PRESENTED BY:** Celia Barry, Transportation Planning  
**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** In the Matter of Providing a Letter of Support for a Beltline-Delta Highway Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Federal Earmark

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I. **MOTION**

Move approval to submit a letter of support as drafted in Attachment A.

II. **AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Each year the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) seeks annual appropriations earmarks. These are projects that are small (\$800,000 on average) and few in number (5-10 per year) and included in the annual appropriations legislation. These are different than the reauthorization earmarks you supported for Lane County in September 2008, which are larger, more numerous, and only come every six years.

For Lane County, ODOT chose the Beltline/Delta Highway Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) as part of its annual appropriations earmark request. The ITS is inclusive of five projects shown in Attachment B. The congressional delegation asks for a minimum of three letters of support for each project.

III. **BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION**

A. **Board Action and Other History**

On June 25, 2008 the Board of Commissioners took action by Order 08-6-25-10 to approve submittal of an application for funding, through the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), for a "Delta Highway Intelligent Transportation System". In October 2008, ODOT announced that the funding proposal was successful. County Transportation Planning and Traffic staff are collaborating with ODOT staff to implement that project. It is listed as "ES-TM-02E, Delta Highway Freeway Surveillance and Management", in Attachment B to this cover memo. The remaining projects in Attachment B need funding and ODOT is pursuing an annual appropriation earmark for them, for Fiscal Year 2010.

The Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) took action in August, 2008 to support inclusion of the Beltline/Delta ITS project in ODOT's federal transportation bill reauthorization earmark priorities list, but ODOT did not include it. Instead, as mentioned in the summary above, ODOT is pursuing funding through its annual appropriation earmark request for Fiscal Year 2010.

On January 8, 2008, MPC is expected to approve providing a letter of support similar to what is in Attachment A. Staff will report on the outcome of that meeting.

As you are aware Lane County is participating in a Beltline Corridor Study, River Road to Coburg Road, as part of a technical advisory group. Transportation Planning and Traffic staff participate in a multijurisdictional advisory committee and supported Commissioners Green and Fleenor, who sat on the Steering Committee for this effort. It is anticipated that ODOT staff will contact Commissioner Handy to represent North Eugene on the Steering Committee. If funded, it is possible that the Beltline/Delta ITS components will be considered in the design analysis and solutions that emerge from the Corridor Study.

**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 provides 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 statement relates 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 an annual appropriation for ODOT, for FY 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. ODOT staff verified that ODOT would be responsible for any match required to fund the projects.

**E. Analysis**

ODOT's federal affairs advisor, Travis Brouwer, requested three letters of support to forward to our congressional delegation for the Beltline/Delta Highway ITS. The other two letters will be sought from the MPC and state representatives for Lane County. As noted previously, the second listed sub-project in Attachment B is already successfully funded in the 2008-2011 STIP and is now moving forward.

ODOT generally chooses 1-2 projects per congressional district. Mr. Brouwer indicates that an explicit decision was made to choose projects for the appropriations list that were different than those sought through the federal transportation bill reauthorization earmark list, because if a small earmark was received in the fiscal year 2010 appropriations legislation then a larger earmark would not be forthcoming in the

reauthorization legislation. Projects statewide on the appropriations list are:

I-5 Columbia River Crossing  
US 26 Dennis Edwards Tunnel  
US 101 in Seaside  
US 20 bicycle/pedestrian safety improvements  
Beltline/Delta Highway ITS  
OR 138 E corridor solutions  
US 97 Lava Butte-South Century  
OR 140 Curve Correction

In discussions with ODOT staff, the list in Attachment B is representative of the kind of projects that would be funded if the ODOT earmark request is successful. There may be changes in the details depending on existing conditions, cost considerations, and updated information about system effectiveness. For instant, any ramp metering would first need to be evaluated to ensure no additional negative impacts result on the local system supporting the state system.

ITS is a relatively new and emerging approach to managing congestion and safety, that can reduce the need for adding capacity to a system. Additional explanatory information about ITS and its benefits in managing congestion and safety is in Attachment B.

**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**

The letter must be provided by January 23, 2009.

**VI. RECOMMENDATION**

Option 1.

**VII. FOLLOW-UP**

No follow-up at this time is necessary.

**VIII. ATTACHMENTS**

- A Proposed letter of support
- B Beltline/Delta ITS Project Information

January 14, 2009

TO Oregon's Congressional Delegation,

The Lane County Board of Commissioners wishes to express support for the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) 2010 appropriations request for Lane County, a project proposal entitled "Effecting Operational Efficiencies for Safe Travel in the Beltline-Delta Highway Corridor, Eugene-Springfield Metro Area, Oregon". The project is commonly referred to as the Beltline/Delta Highway Intelligent Transportation System (ITS).

The Beltline-Delta corridor is a primary carrier of regional freight traffic, providing access between western Lane County and I-5, and access to a major hospital and trauma center. At the same time it transports tens of thousands of daily commuters.

This important corridor is arguably the most performance-challenged in the region. Peak travel periods are characterized by slowed traffic and weaving at major intersections along the limited access Beltline Highway. The goal of the Beltline/Delta ITS project is to alleviate this congestion and improve safety.

The ITS project would enhance major investments that ODOT has, and is now making in this corridor. These investments include nearly \$100 million in reconstruction of the I-5/Beltline Highway interchange, a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge and improvements being made at the Beltline Highway/Coburg Road interchange. ODOT is also currently studying the overall Beltline Corridor between River Road and Coburg Road, and funding for the ITS project could contribute to solutions that would potentially reduce the need, or at least delay the need for major and costly modernization projects in the corridor.

The ITS components include traffic sensors, signal timing coordination, cameras, variable message signs, and other communication infrastructure and devices that provide information to travellers to help smooth congestion and increase safety, and analytical data to transportation planners and engineers for long range transportation planning purposes.

The project was developed by a multi-agency group of engineers and managers from the Cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane County, Lane Transit District, and ODOT, with additional input from representatives of the Public Access Network (the public agency fiber consortium).

Not only does the project proposal represent a new approach using emerging ITS technology to addressing system performance, it promises to initiate a multi-agency, coordinated approach to corridor and cross-jurisdictional problem solving within the region.

We hope you will agree that this project merits support and consideration for a fiscal year 2010 annual appropriation. Thank you for considering this endorsement.

Sincerely,

, Chair

## **Effecting Operational Efficiencies for Safe Travel in the Beltline-Delta Highway Corridor, Eugene-Springfield Metro Area, OR.**

### **Purpose:**

To alleviate congestion and alleviate unsafe conditions in the Delta Highway – Beltline Highway corridor and particularly at the Delta/Beltline interchange.

### **Problem:**

Both the Delta Highway and the Beltline Highway are limited-access freeways for the majority of their length. The Beltline Highway is heavily utilized during peak travel periods with slowed traffic and weaving in the vicinity of the River Rd, Delta Highway, and Coburg Rd interchanges. Traffic movement onto and from Beltline Highway is impacted, particular with the formation of queues on the ramps. At the Beltline/Delta interchange, these queues routinely spill over onto the mainline Delta Highway. These queues create unsafe conditions which have been the cause of at least one pedestrian fatality, as well as many vehicle collisions.

The Beltline Highway also carries the majority of traffic crossing the Willamette River, and connecting western Lane County to I-5. The bridge crossing between the Delta Highway and River Road interchanges is a critical link in the event of a regional emergency.

The Beltline Facility Planning Study, currently underway, will assess deficiencies on Beltline Highway between River Road and Coburg Road and recommend long-term solutions, including adding capacity, to address those deficiencies. The capacity expansion has been identified in 2031 Regional Transportation Plan financially constrained project list. However, these projects may take several years to develop and many years to fund. ITS solutions can help address the more immediate needs by improving the efficiency of traffic operations in the corridor, and optimizing the use of the existing facilities.

### **Proposed Solution:**

Deploy ITS assets in the corridor, at the interchanges, and on the major arterials connecting the state highway system to the local roadway system. These assets will

- Reduce incident response time and thereby ease incident-related congestion
- Disseminate traveler information to the public thereby allowing intelligent choices to be made as to routes to be used
- Collect roadway performance data
- Improve travel time and reduce crashes.

ITS components that adjust traffic flow require expert operational monitoring and adjustments. By controlling and adjusting operations, both throughput and safety within the corridor will be much improved. By utilizing ITS assets, improved level-of-service will be obtained at much lower cost than by adding additional lanes.

### **Components:**

The project will implement at least part of several technology modules that are described within the Regional ITS Plan for the Eugene/Springfield Area. Each module contains multiple components from which to select in order to optimize system

performance. Note that not all components listed here can or will be deployed due to cost considerations, existing conditions or system effectiveness. The initial engineering/project development phase of the project will determine those that best achieve the objectives without adverse effects on other parts of the road system.

ES-TM-02B	Beltline Highway Freeway Surveillance and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install system wide ramp meters and system detection from River Rd. to I-5</li> <li>• Install CCTV cameras</li> <li>• Install system detectors to collect volume, occupancy and speed information</li> <li>• Install VMS signs and provide real-time traveler information</li> <li>• Install and implement communications</li> </ul>	\$2 million
ES-TM-02E	Delta Hwy Freeway Surveillance and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install traffic sensors, CCTV, VMS and communications on Delta Hwy</li> </ul>	\$700,000
ES-TM-03B	River Road Arterial Surveillance and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install CCTV cameras at key intersections</li> <li>• Install system detectors</li> <li>• Implement Signal Timing Coordination</li> <li>• Install and implement communications for transmission of data back to the City of Eugene and others</li> </ul>	\$150,000
ES-TM-03C	Coburg Road Arterial Surveillance and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install CCTV cameras at key intersections</li> <li>• Install system detectors</li> <li>• Implement Signal Timing Coordination</li> <li>• Install and implement communications for transmission of data back to the City of Eugene and others</li> </ul>	\$500,000
ES-TM-05	Gateway Area Traffic Response Signal Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install CCTV cameras at key intersections</li> <li>• Install system detectors</li> <li>• Implement Signal Timing Coordination</li> <li>• Install and implement communications for transmission of data back to the City of Springfield and others</li> </ul>	\$150,000
	Communication improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve City of Eugene traffic communication infrastructure, including controllers, server and software upgrades as needed</li> </ul>	\$1 million
	Communication improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve City of Springfield traffic communication infrastructure, including controllers, server and software upgrades as needed</li> </ul>	\$500,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$5 million</b>

An integral part of this project also includes:

**a) Interagency Agreements –**

Agreements will be established between the agencies providing, using and controlling the system components, so that regional partnerships will be effective and long-lasting.

**b) Engineering Design and Study –**

This project will adhere to the Regional ITS Architecture as defined and described by USDOT. ODOT engineers and consultant engineers will design the system in collaboration with the project partners. The analysis will consider various deployment scenarios with different component configurations to ensure that adjacent portions of the road system are not adversely affected. In particular, there will be an engineering study of the impacts of Bellline ramp metering on the adjacent local arterials.

**c) *System plans and documentation* -**

All assets will be geo-referenced, mapped, and attributed so that future expansion or sharing of assets acquired and deployed in this project can be easily assessed.

The Regional ITS Plan and the regional architecture will be amended and updated as needed.

**Benefits:**

- Improves efficiency of existing system at low cost
- Prolongs the effective use of the freeways before major upgrades are needed
- Improves safety thereby reducing vehicle and person accident costs
- Provides motorists with information enabling route and mode choices
- Provides transportation planners with data to enhance planning and project prioritization

**Partners:**

- Oregon DOT (ODOT)
- Lane County
- City of Eugene
- City of Springfield
- Central Lane MPO
- Public Access Network (PAN) and partners (including EWEB)

**Ancillary benefits:**

- Project incorporates state and local facilities in a regional collaboration
- Project benefits both state and local systems
- Project is a strategic investment, providing congestion relief and mobility improvement, as well as safety and freight mobility.
- Has strong support from local governmental bodies and from State Representative.
- There is an assemblage of existing parts which will be built upon to develop the project. There are no known environmental concerns.
- The project is timely and ready to begin in the 2010/2011 timeframe.
- Project can be scaled and implemented in phases to match the amount of funding available with the ability to add new phases as \$ become available.