

March 13, 2005

Mr. Bruce Warner
Oregon Department of Transportation
355 Capital Street, NE, Room 101
Salem, OR 97301-3871

Mr. Warner:

Representing the Central Lane MPO, the Metropolitan Policy Committee (MPC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed Freight Route Designations developed as part of the Freight Route Analysis Project. Reasonable and reliable travel time for the movement of freight is a critical element in both the statewide and local economies.

In addition, we appreciate the extension of review time provided by the Oregon Transportation Commission and ODOT's responsiveness to comments provided to date to remove the designation of the McKenzie Highway as a freight route. ODOT staff is to be acknowledged for their support in providing valuable information and answers to questions raised as part of our review of the designation proposal.

After more extensive review, MPC has the following comments on the proposed freight routes within the MPO area:

1. We support designation of the limited access portions of the proposed designations. This would include Highway 126 from Main Street in Springfield west to I-5; and Beltline Highway from I-5 west to West 11th.
2. We support designation of Highway 99 from Beltline Highway to Airport Road. This recommendation reflects the truck use on that segment of Highway 99 and recognizes the inconsistency of support for designation of Highway 99 north of that point.
3. We suggest that West 11th from Beltline to its junction with Highway 126 West not be designated and that the West Eugene Parkway be designated upon its completion.

We recognize the importance of identifying a statewide freight route system that provides increased freight mobility, accessibility, and safety standards. Further, we understand the positive economic impacts of developing a more efficient statewide freight route system.

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We look forward to further work with ODOT on this important issue. We will continue to review and comment on the proposed designations as they evolve.

Sincerely,

Anne Ballew
Chair, Metropolitan Policy Committee