

# Lane Council of Governments

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July 6, 2005

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Petra Schuetz

Subject: Item 4.h: Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Amendment for I-5/Coburg Interchange Funding

**Action Recommended:** Review and discuss options for amending RTP to include federal “earmark” and Lane County funds for I-5/Coburg interchange project on RTP financially constrained project list (leading to programming of funds in MTIP). Provide feedback and direction to staff.

## **Background**

At the May 12, 2005 MPC meeting, staff presented information on the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, including a description of key projects in Lane County for which funding is included in the current House version of the bill. One of those projects is the I-5/Coburg Interchange project, currently listed in the bill for \$9.2 million of federal funding.

At the April, 2004 MPC meeting, MPC adopted project priorities for the FY06-09 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process which included “Interstate 5 at Coburg Interchange Environmental Assessment” as a Development STIP (D-STIP) priority. On April 14, 2004, the Lane County Board of Commissioners adopted Order 04-4-14-15 which recommended countywide modernization project priorities to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the FY06-09 STIP. That Order listed the I-5 at Coburg interchange as the third-highest large roadway project priority in the entire county for the Construction STIP (C-STIP). Lane County has committed \$2.5 million in County road fund money as the local match to the federal funding.

## **Discussion**

Amending the committed I-5/Coburg Interchange funds into both the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) is a priority to both the City of Coburg and the region and would, ideally, be concurrent processes. The RTP amendment process should begin now in order to incorporate the I-5/Coburg Interchange into the RTP by the end of the year (2005). The financial constraint criteria for the RTP is a “reasonable expectation” of funding.

However, MTIP amendments must be financially constrained to a stricter standard – the funding must be committed and available prior to programming the funds in the MTIP. This means that federal reauthorization must happen before the earmarked \$9.2 million can be programmed into the MTIP. The Lane County money is considered ‘match’ and is also dependent on availability of the federal funds. Therefore the MTIP process must wait for reauthorization. After reauthorization occurs, the MTIP amendment process will take approximately three months.

The MPO should immediately proceed with amending the RTP to move the interchange project from the “illustrative” project list to the financially constrained project list. Subsequently, upon completion of the federal reauthorization process the MPO should be prepared to program the Lane County and federal funds in the MTIP and then submit the project for amendment into the FY06-09 STIP. Planning efforts wholly or partially related to the interchange project are proceeding, including the Interchange Area Management Plan (the target for completion is December, 2005) and the Coburg Transportation System Plan Update (the target for completion is July, 2006).

Given that the MPO and the County have already established the interchange project as a high priority, that the County has demonstrated its funding commitment to the project, and that, pending approval of the federal earmark funds for the project, there is no further funding or policy decision necessary on the part of the MPO, both of the processes for inclusion of the project in the RTP and the MTIP should be straightforward.

Staff is requesting direction from the MPC on the process for amending the RTP to include the Lane County and federal funding for the I-5/Coburg project. Below is a draft timeline for the required adoption processes:

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| July 28, 2005                               | Transportation Planning Committee (TPC) meeting. City of Coburg requests RTP amendment to move I-5/Coburg interchange project from RTP illustrative project list to financially constrained project list. TPC considers recommendation to MPC.   |
| August 11, 2005                             | MPC considers and acts on proposed RTP amendment.  |
| <i>Immediately<br/>Post-reauthorization</i> | Coburg requests MTIP amendment to program federal and Lane County funds. TPC considers request and makes recommendation to MPC. MPC considers recommendation and acts on MTIP amendment. Assuming approval, MTIP amendment sent to ODOT as STIP amendment (this often takes two months to process). Incorporated STIP Amendment sent to October Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) for approval. |