



January 14, 2010

Representative Terry Beyer  
Oregon House of Representatives  
900 Court St. NE H-277  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: I-5/Beltline Project Funding

Dear Representative Beyer:

On behalf of the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization, I would like to ask for your assistance in addressing some issues that are critical to the transportation program in our area.

As you are well aware, HB 2001 provided \$80 million in dedicated funding for Interstate 5 at Beltline Highway, Units 3,4,5,6 and 7. The HB 2001 funds represent a huge step toward project completion and we are very grateful for the inclusion of those funds by the Legislature. While there are concerns, we believe that with your assistance we can work with ODOT and the Legislature to reach a shared understanding of the I-5/Beltline project funding shortfall in the context of HB 2001, and develop strategies to cover that shortfall.

Specifically, we request your attention to the following issues:

- ***An alternative financing plan is needed to cover the full implementation of the I-5 at Beltline project.*** The \$80 million listed in HB2001 relies on the assumption that ODOT will receive a \$30 million federal earmark to complete the interchange portion of the project. What is not clear at this point is what will happen should an earmark not materialize, or be insufficient to complete the project.
- ***Any I-5/Beltline alternative financing plan should address both the state and local portions of the project.*** The cost estimate used in the development of HB 2001 was for the state portion of the project and does not factor in the remaining cost of the Gateway/Beltline intersection. These local improvements are a very important operational and safety aspect of the overall interchange upgrade. Recall that the Environmental Assessment (EA) Preferred Alternative pairs an interchange upgrade with an intersection upgrade as a single integrated project. The cost to complete the intersection per the I-5/Beltline EA is currently estimated at \$20 million. With the intersection accounted for

## CENTRAL LANE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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within the I-5/Beltline improvements, an alternative financing plan is needed to address a \$50 million project gap.

It is our strong belief that the full implementation of the I-5/Beltline preferred alternative is both a local and a regional priority. For the past 10 years, I-5 at Beltline Highway has been consistently identified as this region's top transportation priority. The project is critical to resolving safety, congestion, and economic development issues presented by the current deficiencies in the system. Significant progress has already been made on the project over the past several years. Securing the requested funding for this project will complete the I-5 at Beltline Interchange. Finally, more than \$90 million of local, state and federal dollars have already been invested in this project.

We recognize that HB 2001 presents a number of challenges for ODOT and for other Oregon MPO's and ACTs. We hope that in developing a local solution for I-5/Beltline project that we can be part of a larger statewide discussion regarding ODOT project delivery.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input. For additional information and coordination assistance moving forward, please contact our MPO Manager Andrea Riner at 541-682-6512 or by email at [ariner@lcog.org](mailto:ariner@lcog.org).

Sincerely,

Alan Zelenka, Chair  
Metropolitan Policy Committee