

RESOLUTION NO. 3382

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE OREGON CASCADES WEST COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS' TRI-COUNTY HIGHWAY TASK FORCE'S STATEMENT TO THE OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE 1995-1998 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP).

THE CITY OF ALBANY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, the City of Albany has reviewed the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments' statement, presented to the Oregon Transportation Commission on June 15, 1994, regarding the State Transportation Improvement Program; and,

WHEREAS, the statement represents a consensus of local jurisdictions concerning the importance of retaining the Van Buren Bridge replacement project in the 1995-1998 STIP; and,

WHEREAS, the statement represents a consensus of local jurisdictions concerning the importance of retaining the US Highway 20 Pioneer Mountain-Eddyville project in the STIP for right-of-way acquisition in 1996; and,

WHEREAS, the statement represents a consensus of local jurisdictions concerning the need for improved communication and coordination by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) with local and regional jurisdictions;

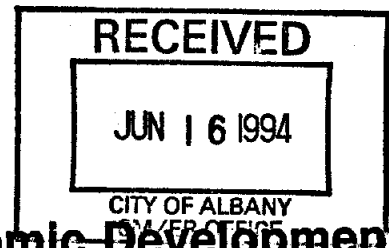
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Albany City Council that the City of Albany hereby approves and endorses the statement and authorizes staff and elected officials to actively pursue incorporation of the projects in the STIP as listed and to promote measures to assure increased cooperation and coordination by ODOT.

DATED this 22 day of June 1994.


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Recorder



Community and Economic Development

408 SW Monroe • Corvallis, Oregon 97333 • (503) 757-6851 • FAX (503) 757-7072

DATE: June 15, 1994
TO: City/County Managers and Administrators
FROM: Scott Wilson, Community Development Planner
RE: Resolution supporting the Tri-County Highway Task Force/CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee's statement

Since the beginning of the year the Tri-County Highway Task Force (HTF) and the CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) has been working to have high priority transportation projects in Linn, Benton and Lincoln Counties included in the 1995-1998 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP process is nearly completed and the Oregon Transportation Commission has received the final recommendations from ODOT's Region 2 office.

The Region 2 recommendations were very unfavorable for projects in our area. In particular, two projects that we felt had strong support from the Region 2 staff were affected. The Van Buren Bridge replacement project (Corvallis) was not recommended for inclusion in the STIP, and the Hwy 20 Pioneer Mountain-Eddyville project was moved back from Right of Way Acquisition in 1996 to Final Environmental Impact Statement in 1996.

On June 9th, the Tri-County Highway Task Force and CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee met in a joint meeting to review the final Region 2 recommendations and organize an effort to restore the projects to the STIP. Also, during that meeting there was strong concern expressed about the overall handling of the STIP process by ODOT.

As a result of that meeting, a letter from the Chair of the CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee, Charles Vars, was prepared and presented to members of the Oregon Transportation Commission. A copy of the letter is attached. In addition, mayors and commissioners of several jurisdictions sent letters to the Transportation Commissioners supporting the stand of the HTF/TPAC.

As in the past, we want to show ODOT and the Transportation Commission that there is support throughout the region for the recommendations and concerns of the HTF/TPAC by having each of the region's jurisdictions adopt a resolution endorsing the letter that was presented to the Transportation Commission. I have attached a draft resolution for your convenience along with a copy of the letter. After your board/council adopts the resolution, please send copies of it to:

Oregon Transportation Commission
Transportation Building, Room 140
355 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97310

and

Don Wagner, Manager
ODOT Region 2
205 E. Salem Highway Building
2960 State St.
Salem, OR 97310

Written comments concerning the STIP will be accepted through June 30th. I realize that this may be difficult to put before your board/council within this timeframe, however, even if this cannot be done prior to June 30th, please mail the resolution when adopted. Also, please send a copy to me, for the COG files. Thanks for your efforts on this.

If you have any questions, please call me at 757-6851.

Attachments



Community and Economic Development

408 SW Monroe • Corvallis, Oregon 97333 • (503) 757-6851 • FAX (503) 757-7072

June 15, 1994

Mr. Henry Hewitt, Chair
Oregon Transportation Commission
900 SW 5th Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mr. Hewitt:

As Chair of the Cascades West COG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee and as Mayor of Corvallis, I am writing to express extreme concern about two proposed revisions to the 1995-1998 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and, the manner in which the revisions were proposed. The project changes, the elimination of the Van Buren Bridge replacement project in Corvallis and the delay of the Pioneer Mountain-Eddyville project on US Hwy 20, are difficult to accept because both projects have significant importance to transportation in the Linn, Benton and Lincoln County region. The regional importance of the projects is evident from the continued support the projects have received from the Tri-County Highway Task Force, which has worked for nearly a decade to identify and recommend projects that are important to the region. During that time the Task Force has tried to work with ODOT staff in a manner that is consistent with the Oregon Transportation Plan's vision of coordination and cooperation between state agencies and local and regional governments.

The spirit of coordination and cooperation is in jeopardy now, following the proposal to eliminate the Van Buren Bridge project from the STIP. This project, which is listed in the current STIP for construction in 1995, was pushed back to construction in 1997 when the draft STIP was released this spring. However, based upon the evident funding constraints of ODOT, the delay was acceptable. In addition, there were encouraging signs from Region 2 ODOT staff that the project would remain in their recommendations for the final STIP. In fact, as late as April 25th, ODOT staff met with Corvallis City staff to discuss the procedures for the environmental assessment and design process. Because of these indications, the local and regional support efforts focussed on projects that were believed to be more vulnerable. Yet, without any advance notice to the City of Corvallis or the Tri-County Task Force, Region 2 released its list of revisions that included elimination of the project.

ODOT staff assert that the Van Buren Bridge is a sound structure on the basis of a recent structural study. A study ODOT staff have told us is only partially finished. I am extremely upset that this important project can be taken out of the STIP base solely on incomplete findings.

Furthermore, over a period of several weeks we have repeatedly asked ODOT staff for specific information that was used to eliminate the project. The City of Corvallis is still waiting for that information.

How can we adequately comment on the staff's recommendation to you without benefit of their data?

I strongly urge you to leave this project in its current status until there is complete and compelling reason for a change.

ODOT's handling of the Hwy 20 Pioneer Mountain-Eddyville project further emphasizes why our region has difficulty maintaining confidence in the STIP process. Even though this project has been maintained as a high priority for the region from the beginning of the Task Force, no local or regional officials were formally notified of the revision from Right of Way Acquisition in 1996 to Final EIS in 1996. In fact, the change was not even included in the list of revisions that were released by Region 2. The word was finally delivered locally through radio and newspaper spots.

According to ODOT staff, this revision was necessary because staff feel they cannot now maintain the original schedule of work. However, the revision occurred at almost the same time that Lincoln County staff members were meeting with ODOT staff to discuss a process that would allow the original schedule to be met. Now we are being told it will take ODOT staff essentially five years to write up the already gathered EIS data and complete preliminary design. This just does not seem reasonable, given the high priority of this project.

As a region, we can make strong arguments that support the need for these projects and we can show a regional consensus on the importance of the projects. However, developing the arguments and developing a consensus requires cooperation from ODOT, open, honest communications, and a reasonable amount of time to prepare. At a minimum, we should receive: a) clear criteria that ODOT is using to determine the priority of projects; b) project related data that is used to assess projects; and c) timely communication from ODOT staff about the status of projects. During this latest STIP process these elements were missing.

Through the Tri-County Highway Task Force and the CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee there has been a regional effort to develop lines of communication and cooperation with ODOT staff. As a participant in that effort over the past eight years, I have made a concentrated effort to develop open communications and partnering relationships between the region and ODOT. As a region, we are disappointed, and I am personally disappointed, in the progression of the recent events. We are sympathetic with the constraints that ODOT must work under, but even sound objective decisions to revise projects will destroy good relationships if local and regional jurisdictions are not included in the process and provided information in a timely and appropriate manner.

In closing, we urge you to maintain the following projects in the 1995-1998 STIP:

1. The Van Buren Bridge project for construction in 1997; and,
2. The Hwy 20 Pioneer Mountain-Eddyville project for Right of Way Acquisition in 1996.

And, we expect that future communications and coordination from ODOT will be carried out in a manner that will foster cooperation and partnerships with local and regional jurisdictions. We look forward to an opportunity to sit down with you and ODOT staff to develop a partnership that will make the intent of the Oregon Transportation Plan a reality.

Sincerely,

R. Charles Vars

R. Charles Vars, Jr.

Chair, CWCOG Transportation Planning Advisory Committee
Mayor, City of Corvallis

c: Commissioners, Oregon Transportation Commission
Bill Wagner
Don Wagner
CWCOG Board
CWCOG Area Legislators



TO: Albany City Council
FROM: Steve Bryant *Steve*
City Manager *KH*
DATE: June 20, 1994
SUBJECT: State Transportation Improvement Program

The attached resolution will be an addition to Wednesday's Consent Calendar.

kg
Attachment