

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE FY) RESOLUTION NO. 00-3001A
2000-03 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION)
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) TO) Introduced by Jon Kvistad,
INCLUDE \$3,443,122 OF CMAQ FUNDS FOR) JPACT Chair
HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRACK IMPROVEMENTS)
IN THE PORTLAND AREA)

WHEREAS, The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) established five "high-speed rail corridors" and;

WHEREAS, The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, which extends between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, is one of the five corridors (Cascadia High Speed Rail service); and

WHEREAS, The long-range planning for upgrading passenger rail service in the corridor is jointly managed by ODOT, Washington State DOT, the Province of British Columbia, Canada, Amtrak, the US DOT and the Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe (BNSF) railroads; and

WHEREAS, The Cascadia service provides three round-trips daily between Eugene and Portland, Oregon (one round-trip provided by Amtrak "Starlighter" service from Los Angeles to Seattle and two state-sponsored trips from Eugene to Portland), with minimum one-way travel time of 2 hours and 35 minutes; and

WHEREAS, Various track and signal improvements in southeast Portland have been identified as necessary to reduce one-way travel time to 2 hours and 15 minutes; and

WHEREAS, These improvements will lead to an increase in train speeds between the east end of the Steel Bridge to SE Clay Street from the current 20 mph to 35 mph; the 20 mph speed from Clay Street to Powell Boulevard to 45 mph and 65 mph; and permit speeds from Powell Boulevard to Milwaukie Avenue of 70 mph; and

WHEREAS, These and eleven other programmed improvement projects will permit scheduling of four round-trips by 2003; and

WHEREAS, Current supplemental “Motorcoach” service provided by Amtrak can be correspondingly reduced with addition of the new rail service; and

WHEREAS, Annual ridership is expected to increase from the 1998 level of 108,369 boardings to 387,000 passengers in 2003; and

WHEREAS, The per passenger subsidy is expected to decrease from the 1997 level of \$20.46 to \$6.10 in 2003 and to generate a \$1.8 million surplus in 2018; and

WHEREAS, The Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are being matched by approximately \$9.8 million of additional funds (\$13.2 million total cost) contributed by Amtrak (\$379,878), the Union Pacific Railroad (\$5,127,000) and other dedicated federal funds (\$4,250,000); and

WHEREAS, Increased train ridership will reduce travel demand on congested segments of I-5; and

WHEREAS, Vehicle delays at current crossings will be reduced due to improved train speeds and realigned crossings; and

WHEREAS, The proposed improvements will also benefit general freight train operations; and

WHEREAS, Policy support for the Cascadia High-Speed Rail service is included in the RTP; and

WHEREAS, All federal transportation funds approved for obligation in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the Metro region must also be shown in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP); and

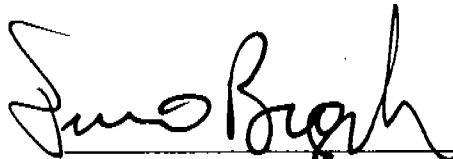
WHEREAS, The Oregon Transportation Commission has authorized ODOT to allocate CMAQ funds to the Cascadia program and the funds allocated to the program will not reduce federal obligation limitation assumed to be available for projects in the Metro region; and

WHEREAS, ODOT staff are coordinating with Oregon DEQ and FHWA staff regarding demonstration of air quality benefits from the project, which is a condition for federal approval for proposed programming of CMAQ funds; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The MTIP is amended to approve obligation of \$3, 443,122 of CMAQ funds for construction of the Cascadia Rail: Wilsburg Junction to Steel Bridge track and signal improvement program in FY 2001.
2. Approval of the project is contingent on demonstration by ODOT to Metro, DEQ and to US DOT that implementation of the project will result in reduction of automobile emissions.
3. Both the federally recognized 1995 and 2000 (pending) financially constrained RTP networks are amended to include the Cascadia Rail: Wilsburg Junction to Steel Bridge track and signal improvements.
4. Metro staff are authorized to refine programming of the approved funds by phase of work and program year, if needed.

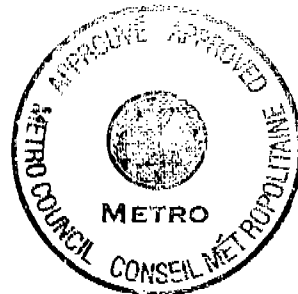
ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 16th day of November, 2000.


David Bragdon, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:


Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

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WHEREAS, The long-range planning for upgrading passenger rail service in the corridor is jointly managed by ODOT, Washington State DOT, the Province of British Columbia, Canada, Amtrak, the US DOT and the Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe (BNSF) railroads; and

WHEREAS, The Cascadia service provides three round-trips daily between Eugene and Portland, Oregon (one round-trip provided by Amtrak "Starlighter" service from Los Angeles to Seattle and two state-sponsored trips from Eugene to Portland), with minimum one-way travel time of 2 hours and 35 minutes; and

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WHEREAS, The Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are being matched by approximately \$9.8 million of additional funds (\$13.2 million total cost) contributed by Amtrak (\$379,878), the Union Pacific Railroad (\$5,127,000) and other dedicated federal funds (\$4,250,000); and

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WHEREAS, The proposed improvements will also benefit general freight train operations; and

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4. Metro staff are authorized to refine programming of the approved funds by phase of work and program year, if needed.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this _____ day of _____, 2000.

David Bragdon, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:

Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

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2000-03 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION)
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) TO)
INCLUDE \$3,443,122 OF CMAQ FUNDS FOR)
HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRACK IMPROVEMENTS)
IN THE PORTLAND AREA)

RESOLUTION NO. 00-3001

Introduced by Jon Kvistad,
JPACT Chair

WHEREAS, The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) established five “high-speed rail corridors” and;

WHEREAS, The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, which extends between Eugene, Oregon, and Vancouver, British Columbia, is one of the five corridors (Cascadia High Speed Rail service); and

WHEREAS, The long-range planning for upgrading passenger rail service in the corridor is jointly managed by ODOT, Washington State DOT, the Province of British Columbia, Canada, Amtrak, the US DOT and the Union Pacific (UP) and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe (BNSF) railroads; and

WHEREAS, The Cascadia service provides three round-trips daily between Eugene and Portland, Oregon (one round-trip provided by Amtrak “Starlighter” service from Los Angeles to Seattle and two state-sponsored trips from Eugene to Portland), with minimum one-way travel time of 2 hours and 35 minutes; and

WHEREAS, Various track and signal improvements in southeast Portland have been identified as necessary to reduce one-way travel time to 2 hours and 15 minutes; and

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WHEREAS, Increased train ridership will reduce travel demand on congested segments of I-5; and

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WHEREAS, The proposed improvements will also benefit general freight train operations; and

WHEREAS, Policy support for the Cascadia High-Speed Rail service is included in the RTP; and

WHEREAS, All federal transportation funds approved for obligation in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the Metro region must also be shown in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP); and

WHEREAS, The Oregon Transportation Commission has authorized ODOT to allocate CMAQ funds to the Cascadia program so that funds allocated to the program will not reduce federal obligation limitation that will otherwise be available for projects in the Metro region; and

WHEREAS, ODOT staff are coordinating with Oregon DEQ and FHWA staff regarding demonstration of air quality benefits from the project, which is a condition for federal approval for proposed programming of CMAQ funds; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The MTIP is amended to approve obligation of \$3, 443,122 of CMAQ funds for construction of the Cascadia Rail: Wilsburg Junction to Steel Bridge track and signal improvement program in FY 2001.
2. Approval of the project is contingent on demonstration by ODOT to Metro, DEQ and to US DOT that implementation of the project will result in reduction of automobile emissions.
3. Both the federally recognized 1995 and 2000 (pending) financially constrained RTP networks are amended to include the Cascadia Rail: Wilsburg Junction to Steel Bridge track and signal improvements.
4. Metro staff are authorized to refine programming of the approved funds by phase of work and program year, if needed.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this _____ day of _____, 2000.

David Bragdon, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:

Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

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TRANSPORTATION PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 00-3001, FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE FY 2000-03 METROPOLITIAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) TO INCLUDE \$3,443,122 OF CMAQ FUNDS FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRACK IMPROVMENTS IN THE PORTLAND AREA

Date: November 13, 2000

Presented by: Councilor Monroe

Committee Recommendation: At its November 7 meeting, the Committee considered Resolution No. 00-3001 and voted unanimously to send the resolution to the Council. Voting in favor: Councilors Bragdon and McLain and Chair Monroe. Councilor Kvistad was absent.

Background: The Cascadia rail line between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia is one of five high-speed rail lines designated in the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Act (ISTEA). As a result of this designation, federal funds are available to make signaling, crossing and track improvements along the line. The ODOT rail division administers the allocation and expenditure of these funds along the Oregon portion of the line. There are 12 projects totaling \$31 million.

Committee Discussion: Mike Hoglund, Transportation Planning Manager, presented the staff report. He explained that the purpose of the proposed resolution was to program the receipt of \$3,433,122 in CMAQ funds that have been allocated by ODOT as partial funding of a \$13.2 high-speed rail project in southeast railroad. The remaining funding would come from the Union Pacific Railroad (\$5,127,000), other federal funds (\$4,250,000) and Amtrak (\$379,878).

The project would double track and make signaling improvements along the existing line between the Steel Bridge and the Wilsburg Junction along Tacoma Street. These improvements significantly increase train speeds over this stretch of track and reduce the passenger rail travel time between Portland and Eugene by about 20 minutes. This reduction, along with other line improvements, will permit another daily round trip between Eugene and Portland.

The staff report notes that the scheduled track improvements will contribute to an estimated increase in annual ridership between Portland and Eugene from 108,000 in 1998 to 387,000 in 2003. Such a ridership increase would reduce the per passenger subsidy for this service from \$20 to \$6. Staff also indicates that improved ridership will decrease 1-5 auto traffic and traffic delays in the central eastside and southeast Portland caused by slow moving trains.

STAFF REPORT

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE FY 2000-03 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) TO INCLUDE \$3,443,122 OF CMAQ FUNDS FOR HIGH-SPEED RAIL TRACK IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PORTLAND AREA

Date: October 20, 2000

Presented by: Mike Hoglund

PROPOSED ACTION

This resolution would amend the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) to program \$3,433,122 of Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to construct track and signal improvements within the Cascadia high-speed rail corridor from the Wilsburg Junction (approximately Tacoma Street) to the Steel Bridge in southeast Portland. This resolution also authorizes staff to refine programming of the funds as necessary with respect to phase of work and anticipated year of obligation.

EXISTING LAW

The 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) authorized creation and special funding for five high-speed rail corridors in the country. The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, popularly known as the Cascadia Line, is one of these corridors, and runs from Eugene, Oregon, to Vancouver, British Columbia. The corridor is identified in the Regional Public Transportation System map in the adopted 2000 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Dedicated federal funds are available to support enhancement of designated rail corridors and are supplemented by myriad other funding sources. ODOT's rail division is lead agency for the Cascadia corridor improvement program in Oregon.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Oregon Transportation Commission authorized annual allotments of Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for use by ODOT's rail division to improve trackage and subsidize service in the Oregon portions of the Cascadia high-speed rail corridor. From this source, ODOT has approved programming of \$3,433,122 of CMAQ funds for two projects to improve trackage and signals in southeast Portland. The improvements would be built in various locations between Tacoma Street (Wilsburg Junction) and the east end of the Steel Bridge. (These two projects are part of a larger \$31 million program of 12 projects to make similar improvements from Eugene to Portland.)

The two southeast Portland projects fall within Metro's jurisdiction as MPO of the Portland urbanized area. Any programming of federal transportation funds in the MPO boundary must not only be approved by ODOT, but must also be included in the Portland Metropolitan

Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). The CMAQ funds will be matched by approximately \$9.8 million of additional funds (\$13.2 million total cost) contributed by Amtrak (\$379,878), the Union Pacific Railroad (\$5,127,000) and other dedicated federal funds (\$4,250,000). The CMAQ funds allocated to the program will not reduce federal obligation limitation that will otherwise be available for projects in the Metro region. As noted, the high-speed rail corridor is identified in the 2000 RTP and supported in the RTP Chapter 1 policies. However, these specific improvements are not included in either the 1995 (federally acknowledged) or 2000 (federal acknowledgement pending) financially constrained RTP networks. They must be included in the network for federal review and approval purposes. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will be consulted on air quality conformity status prior to the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) meeting of October 27, 2000.

Presently, three daily round-trips are provided in the corridor between Eugene and Portland. One round-trip is provided by the Amtrak "Starlighter" service from Los Angeles to Seattle, and two state-sponsored trips are run daily between Eugene and Portland. Completion of the subject improvements will enable scheduling of four round-trips. The current minimum round-trip time from Portland to Eugene is 2 hours and 35 minutes. Train speed increases will reduce this to 2 hours and 15 minutes. In the southeast Portland segments, train speeds between the east end of the Steel Bridge to SE Clay Street will increase from the current 20 mph to 35 mph; the 20 mph speed from Clay Street to Powell Boulevard will increase to 45 mph and 65 mph; and speeds from Powell Boulevard to Milwaukie Avenue will reach 70 mph.

The improved service schedule is predicted to greatly improve ridership. For instance, 1998 boardings were 108,369. This is expected to increase to 387,000 passengers in 2003. Improved ridership and operational efficiency is projected to decrease the per passenger subsidy. In 1997 the subsidy was about \$20.46. This will decrease to \$6.10 per passenger in 2003. A \$1.8 million surplus is projected in 2018. As rail service increases, the current supplemental "Motorcoach" service provided by Amtrak will be correspondingly reduced.

As rail ridership increases, auto trips on congested I-5 segments will reduce. Improved train speed and realigned rail crossings will reduce auto delay in southeast Portland. The track improvements will also benefit freight rail operations which will also reduce auto delay. All of these factors are expected to reduce both auto and train related emissions in the Portland area. ODOT environmental staff will provide calculation of these benefits for review and approval by DEQ and US DOT staff prior to federal approval of the MTIP/STIP amendment that authorizes obligation of the CMAQ funds.

BUDGET IMPACT

There would be no direct or indirect impact on Metro's finances from approval of this resolution.

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