

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING) RESOLUTION NO. 97-2458
PRINCIPLES REGARDING IMPLEMEN-)
TATION OF LRT TO PORTLAND) Introduced by
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT) Jon Kvistad, JPACT Chair

WHEREAS, It is in the interest of the region to implement a regionwide comprehensive transportation system, including a light rail transit system, highways, roads, bridges, freight, bikes and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, The East, West, South and North segments of this LRT system are advancing toward implementation; and

WHEREAS, An extension of the LRT system to Portland International Airport is called for in the Regional Transportation Plan in the long term; and

WHEREAS, Air passenger traffic at Portland International Airport is growing faster than previously forecasted; and

WHEREAS, Development of the Portland International Center should be tied into light rail; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Metro Council:


1. Reconfirms its interest in development of a regional LRT system.
2. Reconfirms that South/North LRT is the next regional priority (after the Westside) for implementation of the Regional LRT system.
3. Supports pursuing an extension of the Regional LRT System to the Portland International Airport as long as it doesn't interfere with the South/North LRT project.

4. Supports creating a non-federal funding plan for the Airport light rail which includes private, Airport-related and other local or regional sources. This funding plan will not include federal transit funds or any state or local funds which would otherwise be needed for the South/North light rail or for a possible Community Bridge and Road Program.


5. Supports acknowledgement of the locally funded Airport light rail project in ISTEA if it can help secure ISTEA funding for South/North LRT.

6. Acknowledges that funding for roads and bridges remains critical and that pursuit of the Airport LRT project should not detract from the region's implementation of a Community Bridge and Road Program.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 27th day of March, 1997.


Jon Kvistad, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:


Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

STAFF REPORT

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 97-2458 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING PRINCIPLES REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF LRT TO THE PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Date: March 6, 1997

Presented by: Andrew Cotugno

PROPOSED ACTION

This resolution would establish the following several principles regarding the establishment of light rail to the Portland International Airport which would acknowledge that the Metro Council: 1) Reconfirms its interest in development of a regional LRT system; 2) Reconfirms that South/North LRT is the next regional priority (after the Westside) for implementation of the Regional LRT system; 3) Supports pursuing an extension of the Regional LRT System to the Portland International Airport as long as it does not interfere with the South/North LRT project; 4) Supports creating a non-federal funding plan for the Airport light rail which includes private, Airport-related and other local or regional sources—this funding plan will not include federal transit funds or any state or local funds which would otherwise be needed for the South/North light rail or for a possible Community Bridge and Road Program; 5) Supports acknowledgment of the locally funded Airport light rail project in ISTEA if it can help secure ISTEA funding for South/North LRT; and 6) Acknowledges that funding for roads and bridges remains critical and that pursuit of the Airport LRT project should not detract from the region's implementation of a Community Bridge and Road Program.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Regional Transportation Plan

Metro's *Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) is based upon a multi-modal approach to addressing the transportation problems and opportunities throughout the region. As such, it includes elements of a comprehensive transportation system, including a light rail transit system, highways, roads, bridges and facilities for freight, bicycle users and pedestrians.

The RTP's light rail element calls for four primary LRT lines: East, West, South and North with a variety of possible extensions once the primary light rail system is in place. One of the light rail extensions called for in the RTP is a line connecting the existing eastside MAX line at the Gateway Transit Center with the Portland International Airport.

Airport Terminal Expansion and Light Rail Connection

Previous plans for a light rail extension to the Airport have been linked to both terminal facility expansion plans and projected Airport passenger use. The terminal expansion

currently under construction provides for integration of a light rail station within the terminal. The Airport light rail extension was also intended to serve employment trips to and from the Airport and an adjacent multi-use development park located between the Airport terminal and I-205.

Based upon earlier forecasts of air passenger use of the terminal, planning for light rail extension was scheduled to begin following completion of planning activities for the South/North Light Rail Project. Over the past several years, however, the Portland Airport has experienced a significant increase in air traffic and air passenger travel. The Port of Portland has responded to this situation by accelerating terminal facility development plans and by expressing an interest in advancing planning and design efforts for a light rail extension to the terminal.

Preliminary discussions aimed at exploring the opportunity to accelerate the implementation of an Airport light rail extension were held between the Port of Portland, private development interests, Tri-Met, Metro and the City of Portland. A joint public/private funding opportunity was identified, with an approximate cost of \$150 million.

South/North Light Rail Project Finance Plan

In February 1997, the region adopted the *South/North Light Rail Project Finance Plan* based upon preliminary cost-cutting measures (Metro Resolution No. 97-2460). The *Finance Plan* will be used by the region to develop a funding request to the Federal Government to be included within the current reauthorization of ISTEA. Through the process and discussions leading to the adoption of the *South/North Finance Plan*, the JPACT Finance Committee and the South/North Steering Committee evaluated the relationship of the South/North Light Rail Project to the proposed extension of light rail to the Portland International Airport.

The adopted *South/North Finance Plan* states that:

The region is considering pursuing an "undertaking" consisting of the Phase I South/North Light Rail Project and the Airport Light Rail Project, if such an undertaking helps to secure congressional approval of the Section 3 request for the South/North Light Rail Project. The Airport Light Rail Project would be fully funded with non-federal funds and would be pursued in a manner that does not compete for funding with the South/North Light Rail Project. The resulting federal share for the South/North Light Rail-Airport Light Rail "undertaking" would be 52 percent. If referencing the Airport Light Rail Project in the ISTEA language is ill-advised, the proposed ISTEA language would focus solely on the South/North Light Rail Project.

As the JPACT Finance Committee and the South/North Steering Committee endorsed the inclusion of the Airport Light Rail Extension element within the *South/North Finance Plan*, the committees also called for a resolution to establish regional principles for the planning, development, funding and implementation of an Airport light rail extension and to state regional priorities for an Airport extension in relationship to South/North Light Rail and other regional transportation projects, specifically the Community Bridge and Road Program. This proposed resolution would establish those principles.