

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING ) RESOLUTION NO. 03-3348  
INTENT TO AMEND THE REGIONAL )  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) TO INCLUDE ) Introduced by Councilor Rod Park  
I-205 AUXILIARY LANES FROM I-5 TO THE  
STAFFORD RD INTERCHANGE.

WHEREAS, The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) sets forth policies for maintaining minimum levels of mobility and freight access along major highway corridors; and

WHEREAS, the RTP identifies the Interstate-205 Corridor as a major mobility and freight corridor that will require a number of improvements to continue to function acceptably in response to expect growth in the region over the next 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the RTP is scheduled for a periodic update in 2003-04 to respond to new economic, social, environmental and travel conditions; and


WHEREAS, the proposed I-205 auxiliary lane amendment to the RTP has been demonstrated to be consistent with these and other regional policies set forth in the plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed I-205 auxiliary lane amendment has dedicated funding sources that enable the project to be added to the RTP financially constrained system without affecting the status of other projects; now therefore

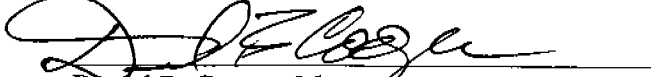
BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council establish an intent to include the proposed I-205 project in the RTP financially constrained system as part of the 2003-04 update, and in doing so directs staff to:

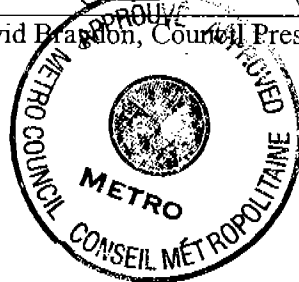
1. Include the I-205 auxiliary lane project in preliminary RTP project lists and technical analyses, review and comment;
2. Include the I-205 project costs and associated revenues in the RTP financial analysis; and
3. Evaluate the I-205 project as part of the RTP analysis of consistency with the federal Clean Air Act.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 17<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2003

  
David Braddon, Council President

Approved as to Form:

  
Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney



## **STAFF REPORT**

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 03-3348, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING INTENT TO AMEND THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) TO INCLUDE I-205 AUXILIARY LANES FROM I-5 TO THE STAFFORD RD INTERCHANGE.

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Date: June 17, 2003

Prepared by: Tom Kloster

### **BACKGROUND**

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is seeking to construct auxiliary lanes on Interstate-205 between the Interstate-5 interchange and Stafford Road Interchange to address localized traffic congestion on this major interstate commuter and freight route. ODOT seeks to amend the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to identify this improvement as a Financially Constrained project as part of Metro's upcoming RTP Update in 2003-04.

ODOT has programmed a roadway preservation project for FY 2007 on I-205 from I-5 to the Willamette River. A preliminary assessment of pavement conditions in the section of I-205 between I-5 and the Stafford Rd Interchange indicates that major reconstruction of the outside lanes will require the construction of parallel, temporary detour travel lanes for up to one year, in order to allow for construction staging. Federal rules guiding roadway preservation projects would normally require the removal of these temporary detour lanes following completion of re-paving. However, a unique opportunity exists for the region to address a major operational problem in the vicinity of the I-205/I-5 interchange by converting these temporary detour lanes to permanent auxiliary lanes at a small additional cost.

This section of I-205 is part of a major interstate commuter route and designated freight route in both regional and state transportation plans, serving the rapidly growing south metro area, as well as providing a connection to major trade and tourism activity centers in the region. It currently (2001) experiences average daily traffic volumes of 80,000 to 89,000 vehicles (39,000 to 43,500 eastbound and 40,500 to 45,500 westbound). Truck traffic comprises 7.7 percent of the total traffic volume (6,160 to 6,850 average daily truck trips). This heavily traveled truck route serves a number of major industries in the region:

- It is a principal connection to Portland International Airport for many of the high-tech industries located in the south metro area (i.e., Wilsonville, Tualatin), including Xerox Corporation, Mentor Graphics, Hollywood Video, and In-Focus.
- Major warehouse/distribution centers located near I-205 (Fred Meyer, Safeway, Albertsons) and I-5 (Rite Aid, Sysco Food Services) also use this route.

### ***Relationship to the Regional Transportation Plan***

The proposed improvements are consistent with RTP motor vehicle policies to provide for long-distance, high-speed, interstate, inter-region and intra-region travel, and statewide connections to and from the region.

The section between the I-5/I-205 interchange and Stafford Road experiences significant localized congestion during peak hours, due to inadequate merge/weave conditions on I-205. It currently operates at Level of Service F (stop and go traffic) during the peak two hour period in both the a.m. and p.m. direction. ODOT's operational analysis shows that capacity in the existing I-5/I-205 interchange is not being realized due to unbalanced traffic flows in the transition from the 6-lane I-5 to 4-lane I-205.

As a result, this section of I-205 currently exceeds the RTP level of service deficiency threshold for the 2-hour peak (LOS E/F). The proposed auxiliary lanes would be approximately 1.8 miles in length, and be located solely between the two existing interchanges. The auxiliary lanes would effectively address existing operational deficiencies along this section of I-205 that results in significant localized congestion, due to inadequate merge/weave conditions.

Based on ODOT's analysis, the proposed improvements in this segment would improve highway performance during peak hours to the preferred RTP level of service standard (LOS D/E). Traffic flow balance would be greatly enhanced between the 6-lane I-5 and 4-lane I-205 within the project area, and existing latent capacity in the I-5/I-205 interchange would also be realized. The addition of auxiliary lanes would relieve current congestion in this section of the regional interstate network, reduce commute times, and greatly improve the reliability of freight movement in this corridor.

The RTP already includes a system-level evaluation of the south I-205 corridor (I-5 to Oregon City) of future transportation needs. The plan has tentatively determined a future need for three lanes in each direction for the south I-205 corridor and accompanying improvements to adjacent local street networks and transit service. However, the RTP has also determined that high capacity transit in this corridor would be insufficient to address mobility needs due to the diffuse pattern of trips using the corridor, and lack of common destinations.

To address this broad need, the RTP calls for an I-205 corridor refinement plan to identify specific projects that can meet future travel demand. ODOT plans to undertake such a corridor study in the next biennium. The addition of the proposed auxiliary lanes between I-5 and Stafford Road is consistent with these general RTP findings, and would not predetermine or preclude the consideration of any alternatives that could come out of this future corridor study.

### ***Relationship to Local, State and Federal Transportation Planning***

ODOT has also determined that the proposed auxiliary lanes are consistent with the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) policies for maintaining highway performance and safety by improving system efficiency and management before adding through travel-lane capacity.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) supports the planned retention of the temporary detour lanes as part of the programmed preservation project as permanent auxiliary lanes between the I-5 and Stafford Interchanges. Their agreement is conditioned on completion of an Expanded Part 3 Prospectus with select technical reports to ensure potential environmental effects are evaluated and appropriately mitigated, and extensive stakeholder involvement.

A joint ODOT and Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) review of the proposed auxiliary lanes has concluded that the proposed improvements are consistent with Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) regulations on transportation improvements on rural lands (OAR 660-012-0065), and do not require any LCDC goal exceptions for the portions of the project area located outside the Metro urban growth boundary. Washington and Clackamas County planning staff have indicated they consider the proposed auxiliary lanes in this section of I-205 to be consistent with long-range transportation system plans for this corridor.

## ***Funding***

Adding the auxiliary lanes project to the Financially Constrained system of the RTP will not affect the funding status of other projects listed. The bulk of the expense of adding the lanes will be covered under ODOT's Preservation Program. The rest of the cost will be new funds obtained through federal appropriations. Representative Hooley has also expressed a strong interest in pursuing earmarking for this operational improvement. Therefore, the project can be added to the RTP without affecting other projects in the plan. However, because the project adds lane capacity, it must also be considered as part of an updated analysis of the RTP for consistency with the federal Clean Air Act. This work will occur as a routine component of the 2003-04 RTP update, and is not triggered by the proposed addition of this project to the plan.

## ***Conclusions***

The proposed auxiliary lanes are designed to address operational deficiencies and localized congestion in this section of I-205. As such, they would provide *independent utility*, and are not intended as a first phase in widening I-205 east to Oregon City with additional travel lanes. ODOT has programmed budget in the coming biennium for a corridor study of I-205, between I-5 and OR 99E to address issues of need, function, and mode on a more comprehensive basis. This study will have full involvement of the public and affected agencies. The addition of auxiliary lanes in this 1.8-mile section of I-205, between two existing interchanges, would *not* predetermine the outcome of a future corridor study and refinement planning.

The programmed FY 2007 Preservation project of the south I-205 corridor (I-5 to Willamette River) represents a unique opportunity to address a significant operational problem on the regional interstate system, between I-5 Interchange and Stafford Rd. Interchange. The addition of auxiliary lanes within this section of I-205 are consistent with federal, state, regional, and local TSPs, and do not constitute a general travel lane widening of this facility. These improvements would likely not result in a discernable regional impact on air quality conformity, but could be modeled in conjunction with other projects to be amended in the upcoming RTP Update. The project will bring its own funding and not financially affect other projects in the Constrained RTP.

## **ANALYSIS/INFORMATION**

1. **Known Opposition:** There was some conversation at TPAC regarding the need for the permanent auxiliary lanes. ODOT agreed to distribute their analysis of the need for the lanes to TPAC and JPACT members prior to JPACT consideration in July.
2. **Legal Antecedents:** None.
3. **Anticipated Effects:** This resolution would establish an intent to incorporate the proposed I-205 auxiliary lanes project into the 2003-04 RTP update, and direct staff to complete the needed technical work to include this project in the updated plan.
4. **Budget Impacts:** None

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approval of Resolution No. 03-3348.