

**South
North**

Transit Corridor Study

North Corridor

Locally Preferred Strategy Amendment Report

June 1999



METRO



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Transit
Administration

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1.0 Introduction

In July 1998, the Metro Council adopted the Locally Preferred Strategy (LPS) for the South/North Corridor Project. This LPS was the region's preferred light rail alignment that was to be the subject of detailed Preliminary Engineering and *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. However, in November 1998, local voters did not approve a measure that would have provided local funding for the first construction segment of the light rail project selected as the LPS. In early 1999, community and business leaders requested that Tri-Met and Metro evaluate a new alignment in the North Corridor. The proposed Interstate Avenue alignment would be less expensive and require no displacements compared to the LPS alignment in the North Corridor. Tri-Met developed the design further and Metro evaluated the design and produced the *South/North Corridor Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (SDEIS), published in the *Federal Register* on April 30, 1999. The publication of the SDEIS allowed the Full-Interstate Alignment to be considered along with the DEIS Alternatives in the North Corridor.

This *North Corridor Locally Preferred Strategy Amendment Report* documents the July 1998 amendment to the LPS. It documents the Metro Council's action defining the Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative, or Interstate MAX, as the revised preferred alternative in the North Corridor and defines the North Corridor between the Steel Bridge and Expo Center as the first construction segment.

Appendix A includes a corridor and segment maps of the Amended LPS described in this report. This proposed amendment of the LPS was considered by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) on June 17, 1999 and by the Metro Council on June 24, 1999. The Metro Council resolution and staff report adopted is included in Appendix B. Appendix C includes the resolution adopted by the Tri-Met Board of Directors from June 23, 1999. The Portland City Council resolution, from June 15, 1999, is included in Appendix D. Both Tri-Met and the Portland City Council recommended approval of the LPS Amendment. The Interstate MAX Advisory Committee began formulating its recommendations on June 9, 1999.

The decisions to amend the LPS have been made after consideration of:

- 1) Review of public comments from the DEIS, the post election "listening posts" and the SDEIS;
- 2) Data and analysis included in the *South/North Corridor Project Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement*;
- 3) The project's adopted goals and objectives, and consistency with the study purpose and need; and
- 4) Consideration of recommendations from the following committees and jurisdictions:
 - The Interstate Max Advisory Committee on June 9, 1999.
 - The Portland City Council on June 15, 1999.
 - The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation on June 17, 1999
 - The Tri-Met Board of Directors on June 23, 1999

The LPS amendment will be the basis of subsequent project activities. These activities include the development and completion of Preliminary Engineering, the preparation of *the North Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement* (FEIS), preparation of the project finance plan and amendment of the Land Use Final Order (LUFO).

2.0 Alternatives Considered

Prior to adoption of the *South/North Corridor Project Locally Preferred Strategy Report*, July 1998 the region considered a No-Build Alternative, several light rail length (Minimum Operating Segment) alternatives, various alignment alternatives and various design options developed for the nine South/North Corridor Segments. The alternatives that were considered are defined in the *South/North Corridor Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (DEIS). The original LPS was selected from the alternatives described and evaluated in the DEIS.

In the North Corridor, the 1998 LPS would have included ten stations north of the Rose Quarter Transit Center. North of the Rose Quarter Transit Center, the original LPS alignment would have crossed under I-5 at the Rose Quarter. It would have then paralleled the eastside of I-5, serving Emanuel Hospital, to approximately Fremont Avenue, where the alignment would have crossed over to the westside of I-5. The 1998 LPS called for a study of "crossovers" between I-5 and Interstate Avenue between Killingsworth and Lombard. North of Killingsworth, the alignment would have been located in the median of Interstate Avenue to the Kenton area, where the alignment would have transitioned to Denver Avenue. A future phase of the project would have extended to the Expo Center by traveling between I-5 and Expo Road, to an Expo Station and then north to Vancouver.

3.0 Description of the North Corridor Amended Locally Preferred Strategy

3.1 Overview of the Amended LPS Alignment

The Amended Locally Preferred Strategy includes the Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative as defined in the SDEIS and shown in Appendix B, Figure B1 of this report. The Eliot Segment is detailed in Figure B2 and for the North Portland Segment is detailed in Figure B3.

The Amended Locally Preferred Strategy would result in the construction of 5.63 miles of new light rail track and include ten new light rail stations. The North Corridor trains would also operate on 1.46 miles of existing track between the SW 11th Avenue downtown Portland turnaround and the Rose Quarter Transit Center for a total of 7.09 miles. The LPS alignment includes the new light rail alternative in the center of Interstate Avenue between the Rose Quarter Transit Center and the Edgar Kaiser Medical Center. The alignment north of Kaiser is generally similar to the DEIS Interstate Avenue Alternative, with design changes to reduce displacements and cost. The Amended LPS Alternative would include generally the same bus service improvements in the North Corridor as identified with the North Corridor light rail alternatives

described in the DEIS. Final bus service plans will be developed by Tri-Met in close coordination with the community. The Amended Locally Preferred Strategy would cost \$223.4 million to construct in 1994 dollars, or \$350 million in year-of-expenditure dollars.

As mentioned above, the DEIS describes the Tri-Met and C-TRAN transit systems for the Build Alternatives and the No-Build Alternative. These descriptions would remain generally the same for the Amended Locally Preferred Strategy. The SDEIS describes the Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative and the expected environmental impacts associated with the project that differ significantly from those disclosed in the DEIS. Tri-Met's *North Corridor Conceptual Plans for Light Rail Interstate MAX Alignment* (Tri-Met: April, 1999) provide more detailed descriptions of the Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative. The three main segments are described below.

3.2 Downtown Portland to Rose Quarter Segment

The Amended LPS alignment would utilize the existing east-west light rail tracks between the downtown turnaround located at SW 11th Avenue (between SW Yamhill and SW Morrison Streets) and the east end of the Steel Bridge. The new light rail alignment would split from the east-west alignment on the eastside of the Steel Bridge in the vicinity of the Rose Quarter Transit Center, where the alignment would turn north into the center of N Interstate Avenue. Seven existing light rail stations would be served in the downtown area by North Corridor trains. A new station would be located at the corner of N Multnomah and N Interstate Avenue adjacent to the Rose Garden and about 200 yards west of the existing Rose Quarter Transit Center light rail station.

3.3 Eliot Segment

North from the Rose Quarter, the new light rail tracks would be aligned in the middle of N Interstate Avenue and pass underneath the Broadway Bridge. One vehicular travel lane would be provided for northbound traffic and one lane would be provided for southbound traffic on N Interstate Avenue between N Multnomah and N Larrabee. North of the Broadway Bridge, the alignment, one general traffic lane and a bike lane in each direction would generally fit within the existing N Interstate Avenue right-of-way (the right-of-way width varies in this segment between 80 and 100-feet). North of the Rose Quarter station, the trackway would be tie-and-ballast. A center platform station would be located between N Russell and N Knott Streets on N Interstate Avenue.

Truck access into the Lower Albina Industrial District would be provided at N Tillamook Street at the location of the City of Portland's proposed Lower Albina Overpass. Turning lanes would be provided at N Tillamook Street, N Russell Street, N Knott Street and N Greeley Avenue. From the intersection of N Greeley Avenue, the alignment would proceed up a five to six percent grade to the area near Overlook Park and the Edgar Kaiser Medical Center. A traffic signal would be modified and turn lanes provided to allow access into Kaiser medical buildings on the east and west sides of N Interstate Avenue. The Overlook Station would have a center platform located in the center of N Interstate Avenue at N Overlook Boulevard.

3.4 North Portland Segment

North of N Overlook Boulevard the Amended LPS alignment would continue to occupy the median of the N Interstate Avenue. Compared to existing conditions, one travel lane would be eliminated in each direction in order to retain on-street parking and avoid displacements. A bicycle lane would be added in each direction.

The Amended LPS alignment would be constructed almost entirely within the existing 100-foot right-of-way of N Interstate Avenue. The pedestrian crossings for the new alternative would be provided through pedestrian-activated signals or Z-type pedestrian crossings as were defined for the Interstate Avenue Alternative in the DEIS. Compared to the DEIS Interstate Avenue Alternative, the Amended LPS alignment on N Interstate Avenue would have:

- fewer or no displacements,
- fewer traffic lanes on N Interstate Avenue,
- fewer on-street parking spaces on N Interstate Avenue at the intersections of N Going Street, N Killingsworth Street, N Portland Boulevard, N Lombard Street and N Denver Avenue.

Within the 100-foot right-of-way of N Interstate Avenue, the Amended LPS Alignment would provide for sidewalks, bicycle lanes, one auto lane in each direction and two sets of light rail tracks. On-street parking would be maintained in most areas except at intersections with either traffic or pedestrian-activated signals. The light rail trackway is proposed to be tie-and-ballast between the Steel Bridge and the Expo Center.

Light rail stations would be located at N Going Street, N Killingsworth Street, N Portland Boulevard, and N Lombard Street, identical to the locations studied for the Interstate Avenue Alignment as described in the DEIS. In comparison, the alignment design has been modified in the Kenton area to avoid impacting a historical structure and other buildings. As a result, the proposed Kenton Station would be shifted one block to the southeast and the alignment would be shifted from the eastside into the middle of the street at the N Argyle and N Denver Avenue intersection.

North of the proposed Kenton Station, the Denver Avenue Viaduct over N Columbia Boulevard and an existing bridge over the Columbia Slough would be replaced with two combined light rail and traffic bridges. The DEIS Interstate Avenue Alternative would have included new light rail only bridges on the eastside of the Denver Viaduct. In either case, the new bridge would cross over Columbia Slough with a vertical clearance of at least 34 feet Columbia River Datum (CRD) and a horizontal clearance of at least 66 feet.

The Amended LPS alignment would cross over the southbound N Denver Avenue traffic lane on an elevated structure to a potential event-only station located on the eastside of the intersection of N Expo Road and N Broadacre Street adjacent to the entrance of the Portland International Raceway (PIR). This station is still under study by Tri-Met and has not been included in the calculation of transit ridership or capital and operating costs. The station location and cost will be developed further in Preliminary Engineering and documented in the FEIS.

From N Broadacre Street, the alignment would proceed north between the I-5 Freeway and N Expo Road to a terminus station located in the existing Expo Center parking lot. Approximately 600-spaces for park-and-ride lot(s) would be developed in this northern end of the corridor. A new traffic signal at N Marine Drive and the Expo Center is being evaluated to provide access into the park-and-ride lot.

Appendix A

Maps of Amended North Corridor Locally Preferred Strategy

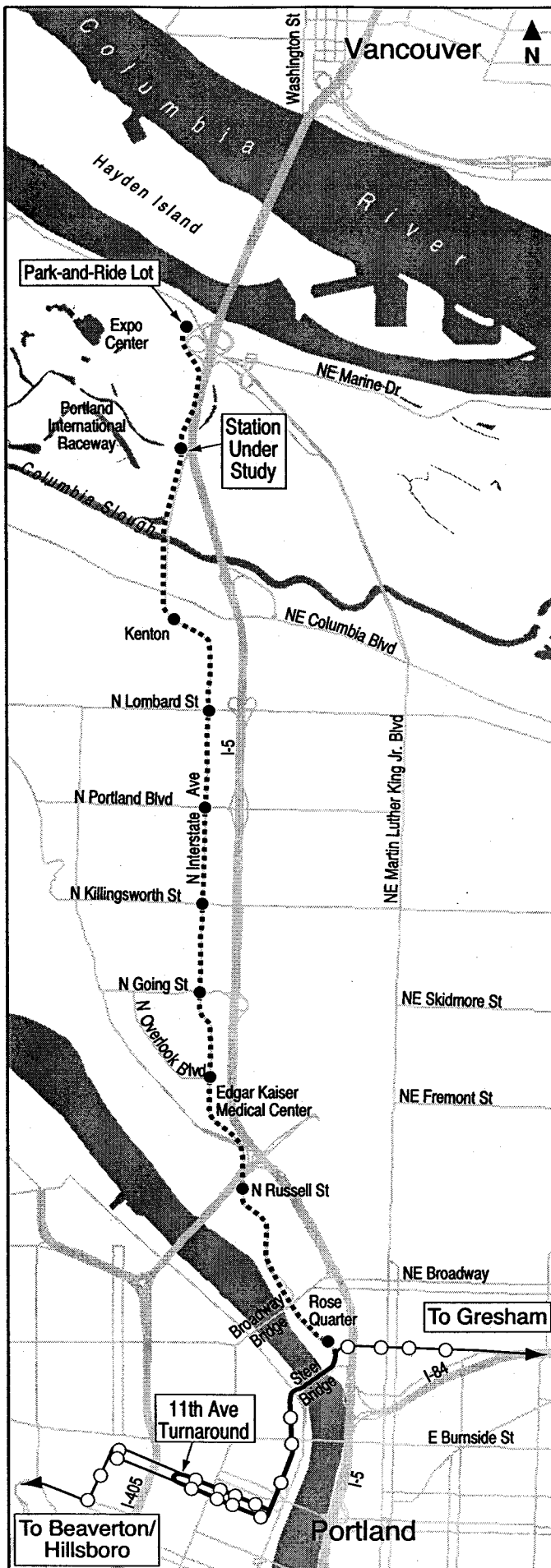


Figure A.1
Amended Locally Preferred Strategy
North Corridor Full-Interstate Alignment

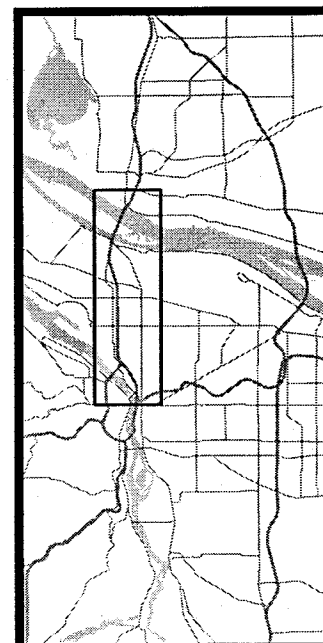
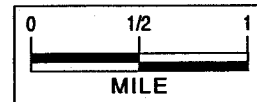
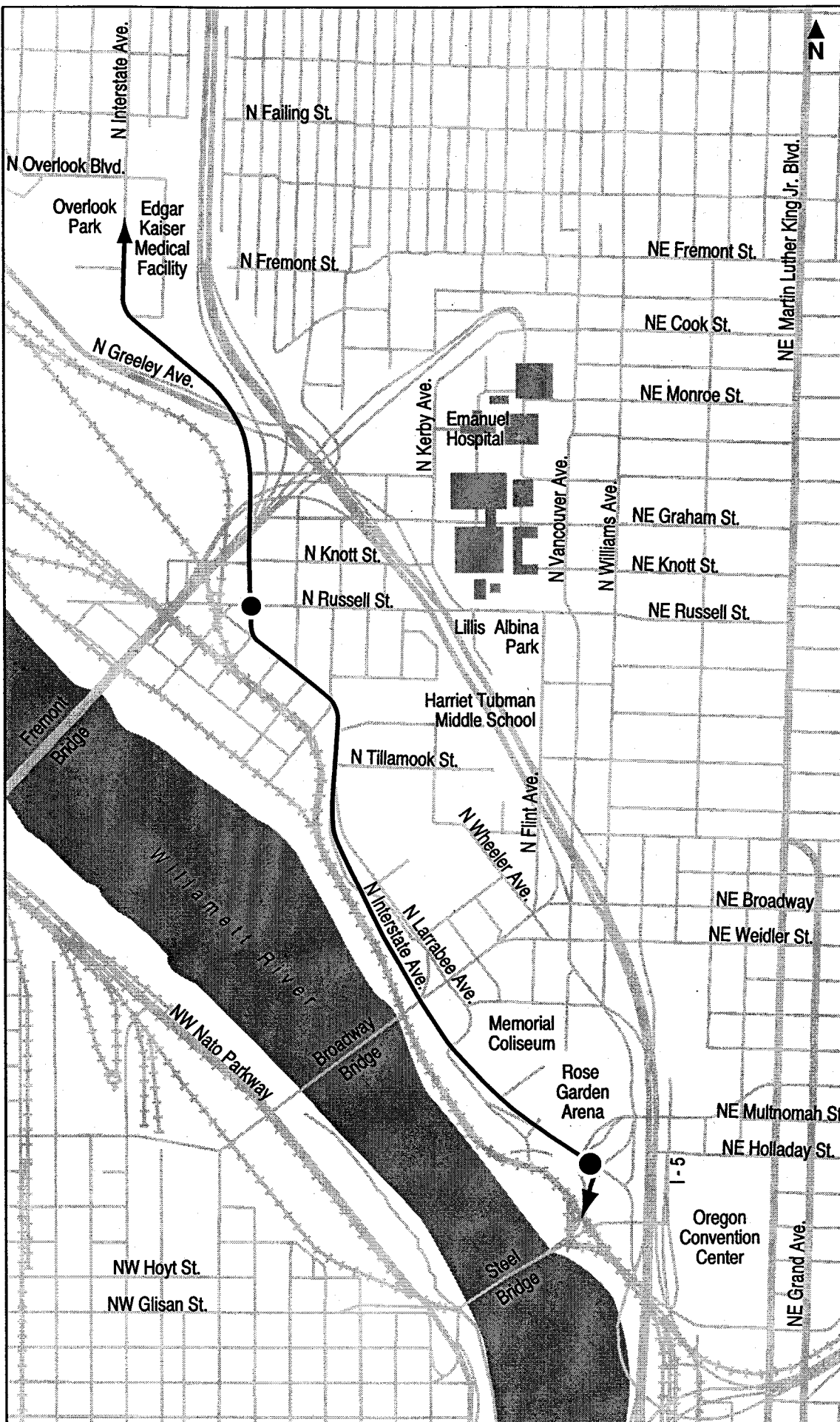
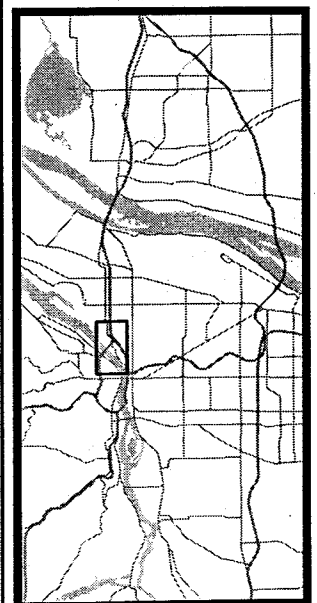
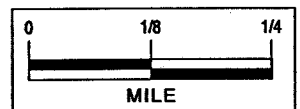


Figure A.2
**Amended Locally
Preferred Strategy**
North Corridor Full-
Interstate Alignment
Eliot Segment

— LRT Alignment
● Station
--- Existing Railroad



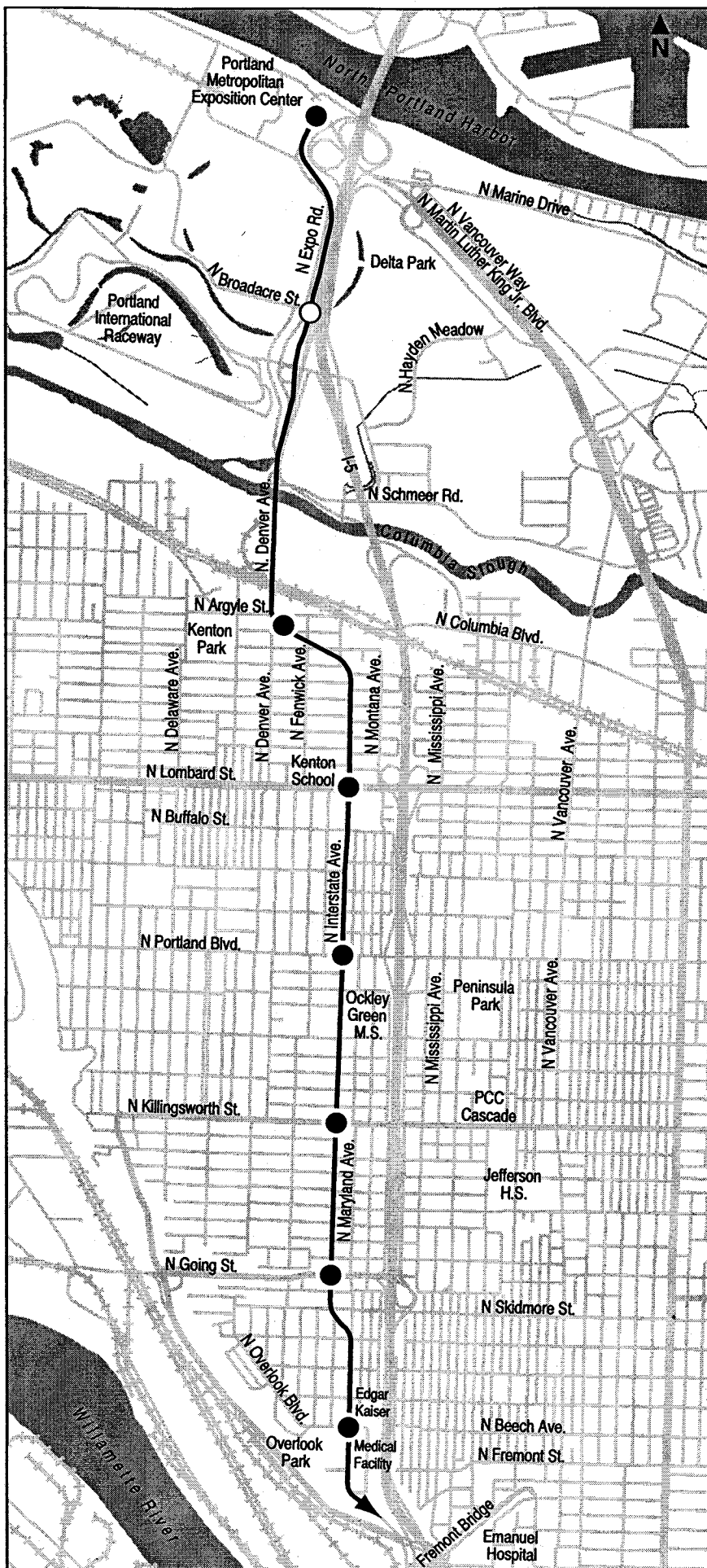
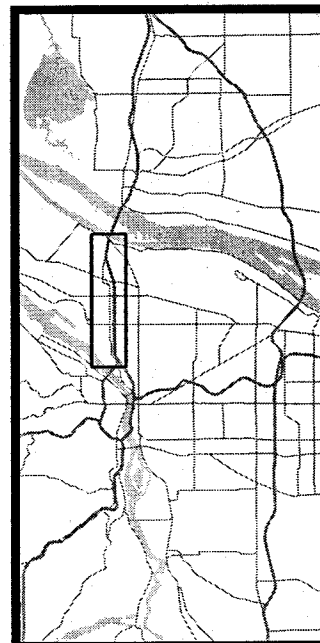
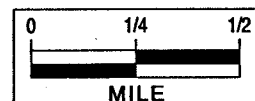


Figure A.3
Amended Locally Preferred Strategy
North Corridor Full-Interstate Alignment
North Portland Segment

- LRT Alignment
- Station
- Station under study
- Existing Railroad





Appendix B

Adopted Metro Council Resolution

Rebecca Shoemaker, Archivist
Clerk of the Metro Council

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE) RESOLUTION NO. 99-2806A
LOCALLY PREFERRED STRATEGY FOR THE)
SOUTH/NORTH LIGHT RAIL PROJECT TO) Introduced by:
DEFINE THE INTERSTATE MAX PROJECT AS) Councilor Kvistad, Chair
THE FIRST CONSTRUCTION SEGMENT AND) JPACT
TO AMEND THE FY 2000 UNIFIED WORK)
PROGRAM)

WHEREAS, The Federal Transit Administration and Metro have prepared a *South/North Corridor Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement* that evaluated numerous light rail alternatives in the South/North Corridor; and

WHEREAS, The Metro Council adopted Resolution 98-2674 on July 23, 1998, defining the *Locally Preferred Strategy* for the South/North Light Rail Project; and

WHEREAS, In November 1998, voters in the Portland metropolitan region did not approve a ballot measure that would have reaffirmed the region's 1994 voters' approval of local funding for the South/North Corridor Light Rail Project; and

WHEREAS, In response to the loss of local funding for the project, Metro sponsored a series of "Listening Posts" throughout the region to better understand the public's perception of the region's transportation needs; and

WHEREAS, Following the "Listening Posts," public officials concluded that there was public support for continuing to work toward transit solutions in the South and North Corridors; and

WHEREAS, Business and community leaders requested that the region further evaluate a Full-Interstate Avenue Alternative in the North Corridor (referred to as Interstate MAX); and

WHEREAS, The Interstate MAX alternative would have no displacements of residences and businesses and would cost approximately \$114 million less than the previously adopted alignment; and

WHEREAS, Metro, Tri-Met and FTA have prepared a *Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (SDEIS) evaluating the Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative; and

WHEREAS, Notice of availability of the SDEIS was published in the *Federal Register* on April

30, 1999; and

WHEREAS, Following the publication of the SDEIS, there was a 45-day public comment period that included a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, The Interstate MAX Project is projected to carry 14,100 light rail riders which includes 4,400 new transit riders, and the trip between the Expo Center and Portland Central Business District (CBD) is projected to be 46 percent faster on light rail than on the bus; and

WHEREAS, The Interstate MAX Advisory Committee comprised of neighborhood leaders, citizens and business owners with interests in the North Corridor, has met numerous times during the preparation of the SDEIS and the public comment period and has reviewed public testimony and recommends the Full-Interstate Alignment move forward; and

WHEREAS, The FY 2000 Unified Work Program was previously adopted by Resolution No. 99-2756 and did not include the preparation of an FEIS and Preliminary Engineering in the North Corridor; and

WHEREAS, The Portland City Council unanimously recommended the amended Locally Preferred Strategy at its June 16, 1999 meeting; and

WHEREAS, JPACT unanimously recommended the amended Locally Preferred Strategy at its June 17, 1999 meeting; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED,

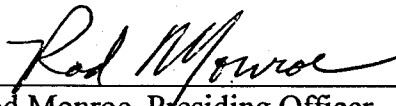
That the Metro Council:

- Amends the South/North Locally Preferred Strategy to include the Full-Interstate Alignment (Interstate MAX) in the North Corridor; and
- Amends the Locally Preferred Strategy to define the Interstate MAX Project as the first construction segment; and
- Directs Metro to work together with Tri-Met, the City of Portland and the Federal Transit Administration to complete the North Corridor Preliminary Engineering and publish the North

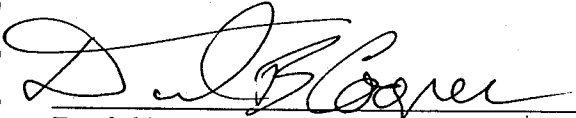
Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement based upon the amended Locally Preferred Strategy; and

- Amends the FY 2000 Unified Work Program to be consistent with these amendments to the Locally Preferred Strategy.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council on this 24th day of June, 1999.


Rod Monroe, Presiding Officer

Approved as to Form:


Daniel B. Cooper, General Counsel

STAFF REPORT

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 99-2806A FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE LOCALLY PREFERRED STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH/NORTH LIGHT RAIL PROJECT TO DEFINE THE INTERSTATE MAX PROJECT AS THE FIRST CONSTRUCTION SEGMENT AND TO AMEND THE FY 2000 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM

Date: June 9, 1999

Presented by: Richard Brandman

PROPOSED ACTION

This resolution adopts Exhibit A, the revised *Locally Preferred Strategy Report*, as an amendment to the South/North Corridor Locally Preferred Strategy. It defines the Full-Interstate Alignment as the alignment choice for the proposed light rail project, and it identifies the Rose Quarter Transit Center and Expo Center as the termini for the first construction segment. The resolution also directs project staff to complete Preliminary Engineering and prepare the North Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) based on this revised Locally Preferred Strategy (LPS) and amends the FY 2000 Unified Work Program to be consistent with these amendments.

The Interstate MAX Citizens Advisory Committee met on June 9, 1999 and recommended the Full-Interstate Alternative move forward. The Portland City Council recommended the proposed amendment to the LPS at its June 16, 1999 meeting. JPACT unanimously recommended the amended Locally Preferred Strategy at its June 17, 1999 meeting. The Tri-Met Board of Directors will review the proposed amendment at its June 23, 1999 meeting.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The South/North Transit Corridor Study was initiated in April 1993 when the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 93-1784 that selected the Milwaukie and I-5 North Corridors as the region's high capacity transit priority corridors to be studied further through the federal project development and environmental process. In October 1993, the Federal Transit Administration issued notice in the *Federal Register* of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in the South/North Corridor.

Following a series of steps (including Scoping, Narrowing of Alternatives, Design Option Narrowing, Major Investment Study and Cost Cutting), the project defined a set of alternatives to be studied in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (DEIS). The DEIS and supporting reports documented the anticipated benefits, costs and impacts that would be associated with the alternatives and options under study. On February 27, 1998, the FTA issued notice in the *Federal Register* of the publication and availability of the South/North DEIS.

On July 23, 1998, following extensive public involvement, four informational open houses, three public hearings and significant public comment, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 98-2674 adopting the Locally Preferred Strategy (LPS) for the South/North Light Rail Project. The LPS adopted the phased implementation of the Full-Length Light Rail Alternative between the Clackamas Regional Center and Vancouver, Washington with the first construction segment identified as the segment between the Linwood Park-and-Ride Lot in Clackamas County and the Rose Quarter Transit Center. In November 1998, the voters of the region did not re-approve a ballot measure to provide a portion of the local funding for the project. In response to the loss of the major local funding for the project, the regional and local officials held a series of *Listening Posts* during which the public was encouraged to

provide input on numerous transportation issues including the future of light rail and other transit improvements in the South/North Corridor.

More than 375 individual comments were received at the four *Listening Posts* and through correspondence with Metro and Tri-Met. The comments represented a broad cross-section of ideas, opinions, criticisms and suggestions for regional decision-makers to consider. Generally, the majority of people who commented supported the multi-modal emphasis that the region has adopted to address transportation problems. Fifty-seven percent of the people who commented indicated support for expanding the light rail system. This was reflected most strongly in the comments from the City of Portland and inner Multnomah County residents. Eighteen percent of those commenting were opposed to light rail in any configuration. Residents of Clackamas County voiced the strongest preference for increased road capacity and bus improvements and the least support for light rail.

Of the people commenting specifically on the South/North light rail project, many suggested moving forward with a shorter line and were particularly supportive of a north only line. Many also commented on the opportunity to capture available federal resources to help construct the line.

Proposed Amendment

Following the *Listening Posts*, local business and community members urged Tri-Met, the City of Portland and Metro to investigate a modified Interstate Avenue Alignment in the north portion of the corridor. The business and neighborhood leaders asked that the revised project have a significantly lower capital cost, fewer displacements and be affordable without the use of property tax revenues. The proposed modified alignment combines portions of the Interstate Avenue Alignment Alternative that was evaluated in the DEIS (between the Edgar Kaiser Medical Facility and the Kenton Neighborhood) with a new route on Interstate Avenue (between the Rose Quarter Transit Center and the Edgar Kaiser Medical Facility) that had not been evaluated in the DEIS. This new alternative is often referred to as Interstate MAX. The alignment for Interstate MAX is shown in Figure 1.

The modified alternative would result in an estimated savings of \$114 million, have approximately 130 fewer displacements and reduced environmental impacts, when compared to the alternatives evaluated in the DEIS. The project could also be constructed without an additional vote for new local funding. The major trade-off with these savings is the change in location of one station in the Eliot Neighborhood which would have provided somewhat better access to residential areas in the neighborhood and to Emanuel Hospital and the loss of one station on the edge of the Lloyd District which would have provided access to the Broadway/Weidler area north of the Coliseum.

In March 1999, the Federal Transit Administration determined that a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) would be the appropriate vehicle for evaluation of the new Full-Interstate Alternative. On April 30, 1999, notice of availability of the North Corridor SDEIS was published in the *Federal Register*. Following publication of the SDEIS, a 45-day public comment period was held that included a public hearing on June 1, 1999.

Extensive public comment has been received during the public comment period with a large majority of those commenting supportive of the proposal. The public comment period ended June 14, 1999. All comments were compiled into a public comment document. Comments received have been distributed to the Interstate MAX Citizens Advisory Committee. Comments have also been distributed to the Portland City Council, the Tri-Met Board of Directors, JPACT and the Metro Council. Following review of the SDEIS and consideration of the public comments, the Interstate MAX Advisory

Committee, the Portland City Council and JPACT have recommended adoption of the revisions to the LPS for the North Corridor.

Next Steps

Following adoption of the proposed amendment to the Locally Preferred Strategy, the project schedule includes many steps:

- *July 1 - October 15:* Complete Preliminary Engineering and the Final Environmental Impact Statement;
- *August 31:* Submit New Starts rating criteria report to FTA for the Interstate MAX Project;
- *October 15 - November 1:* City of Portland and Tri-Met adopt formal financial commitments. These commitments will be forwarded to FTA prior to update of the New Starts criteria;
- *November 30:* Goal for receipt of Record of Decision from FTA acknowledging completion of the federal environmental process;
- *December 31:* Goal for receipt of FTA Letter of No Prejudice and permission to enter final design;
- *March 31, 2000:* Goal for signing Full-Funding Grant Agreement with FTA;
- *March 2001:* Start of construction; and
- *September 2004:* Opening for revenue service.

Exhibit A: North Corridor Locally Preferred Strategy Report

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Appendix C

Adopted Tri-Met Board Resolution

RESOLUTION 99-06-32

**RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-COUNTY METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT OF OREGON (TRI-MET)
RECOMMENDING THE FULL INTERSTATE ALIGNMENT AS
THE SOUTH/NORTH LOCALLY PREFERRED STRATEGY (LPS)**

WHEREAS, Tri-Met is authorized by Oregon statute to plan, construct and operate fixed guideway light rail systems; and

WHEREAS, Tri-Met and Metro, pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement, have commenced the planning and environmental review process for the South/North light rail project; and

WHEREAS, In December 1998 and January 1999 Metro sponsored a series of public listening posts to determine next steps for the regional light rail program after the failure of the South/North ballot measure in November 1998; and

WHEREAS, support for a lower impact, lower cost extension of MAX in the Interstate (North) corridor was evidenced at these listening posts and in subsequent actions of the business community and of community organizations; and

WHEREAS, Tri-Met, at the request of the business community and community organizations, developed a light rail alignment in the Interstate (North) corridor that is proposed to become the locally preferred strategy; and

WHEREAS, Metro, in cooperation with Tri-Met and the City of Portland, completed and published a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement that reviewed the impacts of this proposed alignment, known as the Full Interstate alignment, or Interstate MAX; and

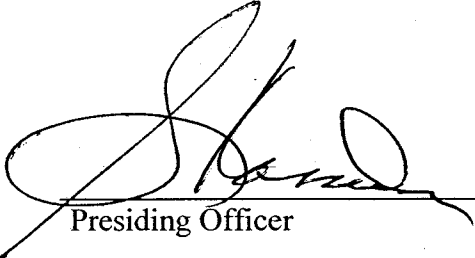
WHEREAS, Tri-Met, Metro and the City of Portland have conducted three open houses providing public information, appointed a citizen advisory committee that has conducted seven meetings, held two public hearings, opened an information office on Interstate Ave., and provided numerous other opportunities for public comment on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement; and

WHEREAS, comments from the public during the review period have been mostly favorable toward the light rail proposal (over 60% in favor);


NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

1. **THAT** the Board of Directors recommends to Metro Council the adoption of the Full Interstate alignment as the locally preferred strategy for light rail in the South/North corridor, as shown on Attachment A;
2. **THAT** the General Manager is directed to proceed with preliminary engineering on the Interstate MAX alignment.

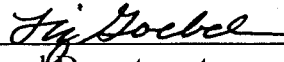
Dated: June 23, 1999


Presiding Officer

Attest:

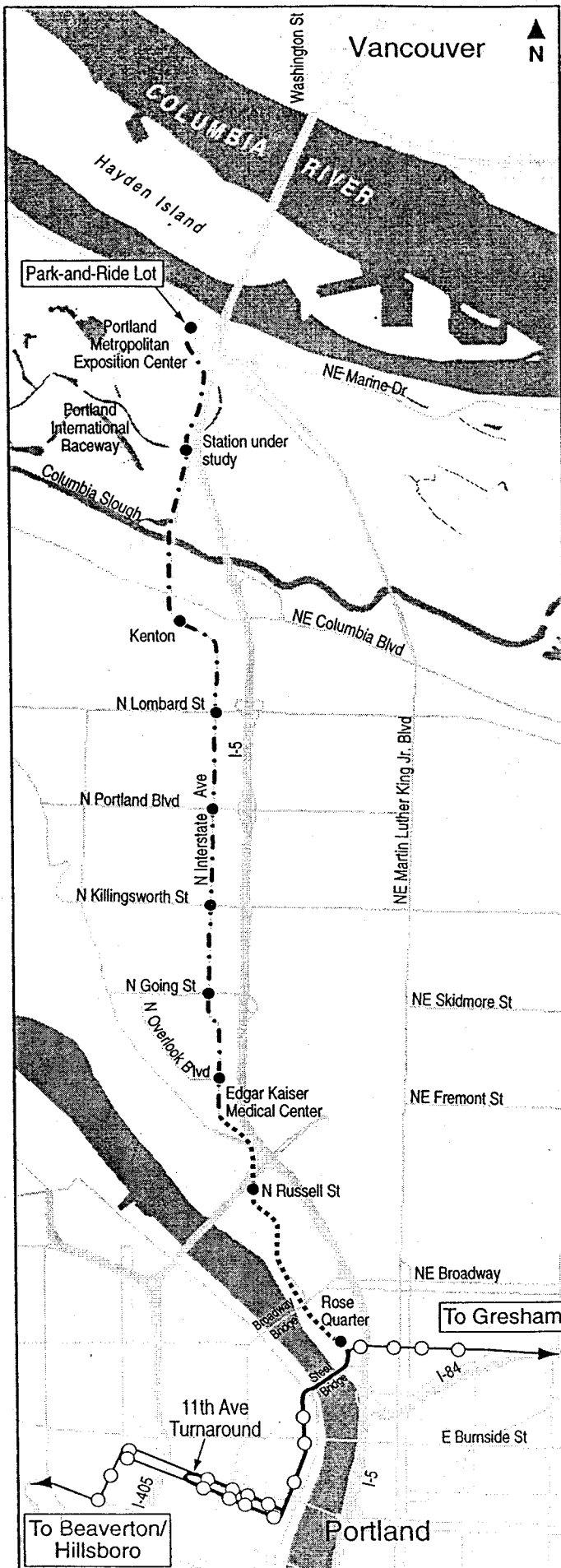

Recording Secretary

Approved as to Legal Sufficiency


Legal Department

Full-Interstate Alignment Alternative

- DEIS Interstate Alignment
- New Full-Interstate Alignment
- Existing MAX Cross-Mall Alignment
- Remainder of Existing MAX Line
- Proposed Full-Interstate Light Rail Stations
- Existing Light Rail Stations



April 1999



TRI-MET
MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item: T

DATE: June 23, 1999

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Fred Hansen *FH*

SUBJECT: **RESOLUTIONS 99-06-32 AND 99-06-33 OF THE TRI-COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT OF OREGON (TRI-MET) RECOMMENDING THE FULL INTERSTATE ALIGNMENT AS THE SOUTH/NORTH LOCALLY PREFERRED STRATEGY (LPS) AND ENDORSING CAPITAL FUNDING FOR THE INTERSTATE MAX PROJECT**

The attached resolutions accomplish actions to advance the Interstate MAX project. Resolution 99-06 32 recommends to Metro that the full Interstate alignment be designated as the region's locally preferred strategy. Resolution 99-06 33 endorses the region's capital financing plan for the Interstate MAX project and provides Tri-Met's intent to fund \$25 million of the Interstate MAX capital cost.

Background

Earlier this year, with input from Metro's post-election listening posts and the region's business community, we heard that:

1. Light rail is still a favored solution in North and Northeast Portland.
2. Light rail proposals should offer a lower cost per mile than our previous plans.
3. Light rail proposals should minimize impacts to business and households.
4. The total project should be affordable without going back to the voters for new funding.
5. We need to act now in order to capture available TEA-21 funding and utilize the matching capability the region has developed with the Airport MAX and Streetcar projects.

At the request of the business community and many North Portland neighborhood leaders, we have been collaborating in development of a project that meets these criteria – Interstate MAX.

The proposed project:

1. Extends light rail North from the Rose Quarter to Expo Center along Interstate Avenue.
2. Is a project that costs \$350 million, \$114 million less than the previously proposed North light rail alignment.
3. Has an affordable funding plan leveraging existing funding sources with no new taxes.
4. Requires no displacements of residences or businesses.

With the help of Metro's transportation staff, we have progressed this project through to a completed Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) which has the approval of the Federal Transit Administration. A 45-day public comment period on the SDEIS concluded June 14, 1999. The document has been the subject of three open houses, numerous neighborhood and community meetings, and a well-attended public hearing on June 1. A second public hearing was held in front of the Portland City Council June 15.

The review of the project has resulted in strong public support. Comments in response to the SDEIS were approximately 2 to 1 in favor of proceeding with the project. A recent poll conducted by the Portland business community indicated support by 63% of the region's residents, and 65% support of those within ½ mile of the proposed line.

Recommended Actions

The first of the attached two resolutions (99-06-32) accomplishes the following:

1. It recommends that Metro adopt the full Interstate alignment as the region's locally preferred strategy (LPS). This alignment is recommended because of its lower costs, displacements reduced from over 150 to zero, better transit station environments, potential for transit-oriented community revitalization, and projections for over 14,000 daily rides in 2015.
2. It authorizes the General Manager to proceed with Preliminary Engineering (PE) on the project. PE funding and contracts are in place – funding sourced from the grant-funded South/North work program.

June 23, 1999

The second attached resolution (99-06-33), dealing with the project's funding, accomplishes the following:

1. It endorses the region's capital financing plan for the Interstate MAX project.

The plan is as follows:

Local funds:	Tri-Met	\$25 million
	City of Portland	\$30 million
	Regional STP	\$40 million ^(a)
	Federal Section 5309 (New Starts)	\$257 million
	Total	\$350 million ^(a)

(a) Column actually sums to \$352 million, but \$2 million is lost to borrowing costs associated with advancing the out-year STP dollars into the construction period.

The leverage of federal funds included in this financial plan is possible because the region is, at the same time as Interstate MAX, undertaking two rail projects using only local funds. These are the Airport MAX extension (\$125 million) and the Portland Central City Streetcar (\$52 million). Crediting these two projects as contemporaneous local efforts together with Interstate MAX results in a total federal share of less than 50%.

2. It provides Tri-Met's intent to fund \$25 million in capital funds. To accomplish this, Tri-Met will issue revenue bonds backed by payroll tax receipts. Financial forecasts indicate that this debt service (approximately \$2.3 million/year) is affordable within current resources. Depending on the performance of the local economy, the decision to commit these funds may cause the deferral of other planned transit improvements.

Next Steps

Should the Board approve, and the full Interstate alignment and financing plan is formally adopted by the Metro Council on June 24th, the steps ahead are:

- July 1 – October 30: Complete preliminary engineering and Final Environmental Impact Statement.
- August 31: Submit new starts rating criteria report to FTA for Interstate MAX.
- October 15 – November 1: City and Tri-Met to adopt formal financial commitments and forward them to FTA, and enact a Land Use Final Order for the project.
- November 30: Goal for receipt of Record of Decision (ROD) providing environmental sign-off.

June 23, 1999

- December 31: Goal for receipt of FTA permission to enter final design and letter of no prejudice.
- March 31, 2000: Goal for full funding grant agreement with FTA and start of final design.
- March 2001: Start of construction.
- September 2004: Open for revenue service.



Appendix D

Adopted Portland City Council Resolution

35800

As Amended

COURT
RESOLUTION
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RESOLUTION NO.:

Adopt amendments to the South/North Locally Preferred Strategy to designate the N. Interstate Avenue MAX alignment from the Steel Bridge to the Expo Center as the preferred alignment, project conditions, and intent to provide City funding to construct the project.
(Resolution)

WHEREAS, the Council previously adopted Resolution No. 35704, approving the South/North Project's Locally Preferred Strategy on June 18, 1998, and recognizing the transportation needs in both the South Corridor to Southeast Portland and Clackamas County and North Corridor to North Portland and Clark County; and

WHEREAS, in November 1998, voters in the Portland metropolitan area did not approve a ballot measure that would have reaffirmed the region's 1994 voter approval of local funding for the South/North Light Rail Project; and

WHEREAS, in response to the loss of local funding for the project, Metro sponsored a series of "Listening Posts" throughout the region to better understand the public's perception of the region's transportation needs; and

WHEREAS, following the "Listening Posts" public officials concluded that there was public support for continuing to work toward transit solutions in the South and North Corridors; and

WHEREAS, business and community leaders requested that the region further evaluate an all North Interstate Avenue MAX Alignment in the North Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the N. Interstate MAX Alignment is anticipated to carry 14,000 average weekday riders, and attracting 4,000 new transit riders; and

WHEREAS, the N. Interstate MAX Alignment would cost significantly less than the alternatives evaluated previously in the South/North DEIS; and

WHEREAS, the N. Interstate MAX Alignment would be consistent with the Metro's Regional Transportation Plan and 2040 Framework Plan and Portland's Albina Community Plan, and

WHEREAS, Metro and Tri-Met have prepared a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) evaluating the All North-Interstate MAX Alignment Alternative; and

WHEREAS, the Interstate MAX Advisory Committee comprised of neighborhood leaders, citizens and business owners with interests in the North Corridor, has met numerous times during the preparation of the SDEIS and the public comment period and reviewed public testimony; and

WHEREAS, community leaders in North and Northeast Portland anticipates that light rail will become a catalyst for economic revitalization; and

WHEREAS, the North. Interstate MAX Alignment is estimated to cost \$350 million and the financial strategy proposes \$240 million in federal funds and \$110 million in regional and local funds.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Portland adopt the amendments to the Locally Preferred Strategy indicating that the All Interstate Alternative is the preferred option and will be the first segment constructed, and contained in Exhibit A, and recommends adoption by Tri-Met and Metro;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council intends to provide \$30 million as its share of the project;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council adopt the conditions in Exhibit B as measures to be completed during the phases of the North Interstate MAX Project.

Adopted by the Council JUN 16 1999
Commissioner Charlie Hales
Stephen Iwata
June 10, 1999

GARY BLACKMER
Auditor of the City of Portland

By *Bette Olson*
Deputy

E X H I B I T B

NORTH AND NORTHEAST PORTLAND REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

The City Council request that the light rail project become part of a larger North and Northeast Portland Revitalization Strategy that will include an economic development program, comprehensive bus plan, and diversify work plan. The following are the description of the elements of this revitalization strategy.

1. North and Northeast Economic Revitalization Program:

The Council recognizes that the I-5 Freeway, while an important part of the Interstate Freeway System, had significant adverse impacts to the north and northeast neighborhoods bordering this highway. Dividing neighborhoods, physical blight to the community, loss of businesses-especially neighborhood oriented retail, and increased air pollution are some of the consequences of the freeway to this community. The Albina Community Plan recognized these impacts and calls for light rail to be an important catalyst to revitalize North and Northeast Portland. The North Interstate Avenue LRT Project is proposed to be the next major transportation investment in this community. To this end, the Council directs the development of economic revitalization strategies to guide transit-oriented development.

The economic revitalization strategy should be based on a collaborative public involvement process that includes the following goals:

1. Develop a main street urban form plan for N. Interstate Avenue, including major cross streets such as N/NE Killingsworth, N. Denver, N/NE Lombard;
2. Identify revitalization strategies that include opportunities for new residential, commercial, and job-based development that could occur in conjunction with light rail; and
3. Identify specific development projects that can be completed at the same time as the commencement of light rail service in North Portland.
4. Identify transportation improvements, including parking and traffic management, street system improvements, and other transportation planning strategies needed to support the economic revitalization;
5. Evaluate land use planning strategies to support economic revitalization strategies.

To carry out the North and Northeast Economic Revitalization Program, using the Albina Community Plan as the framework, the Council directs the Portland Development Commission to take lead responsibility for the program and work with the Portland Office of Transportation, Bureau of Long Range Planning, Tri-Met, and Metro to carry out the following tasks:

- a) Undertake a Community involvement process integral to the development of revitalization strategies;
- b) Prepare development strategies, including the possible creation of an urban renewal district, to stimulate revitalization, and
- c) Provide a progress report on meeting the Council's goals prior to Council's final approval of City funding for the project.

2. **North/Northeast Portland Comprehensive Transit Concept Plan:**
Interstate LRT can be a catalyst to improve mobility for North and Northeast residents' access jobs, schools, community services, shopping, and other destinations. Therefore the Council requests that Tri-Met prepare a transit service plan to be effective with the start of LRT service in September 2004. Further, Council requests that, in conjunction with the Portland Office of Transportation, Tri-Met include community stakeholders in said plan. The plan shall focus on sustaining current service level and, where appropriate, enhancing it. Further, the plan shall be a tool to identify future enhancements that incorporate other City of Portland goals such as the regional Job Access Plan, the Albina Community Plan, and the Transportation Element.
- a) **Diversify Project Work Force:**
Council request that Tri-Met continue to work with the City of Portland and the Oregon Construction Workforce Alliance to foster apprenticeship training and employment of a diverse workforce on the light rail project. Tri-Met is encouraged to utilize the City/County/PDC Workforce Training and Hiring Program, or other programs to maximize training opportunities and increase recruitment and retention of women and minorities involved with the construction of the North Portland LRT Project. Also, Tri-Met is encouraged to prepare progress reports on the status of this effort.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN ISSUES:

The following are design issues that the Community has identified as issues that Tri-Met should evaluate during the next phases of the project. Council request that Tri-Met and the Portland Office of Transportation report back to Council on these issues.

1. **Paved Traffic Track--**To best meet 2040 goals and objectives for station communities and to support economic revitalization in North and Northeast Portland and to enhance public safety in the corridor, Tri-Met will work with the community to select an alternative to tie and ballast track design for the segment between Overlook Neighborhood and Kenton Neighborhood.
2. **Traffic Management Plan--**Tri-Met and the Office of Transportation will develop traffic management plans to address community concerns regarding traffic displaced by light rail construction and with light rail on N. Interstate Avenue.
3. **Construction Management Plan--**Tri-Met and the Office of Transportation will develop a construction management plan to minimize disruptions to businesses and neighborhoods along the N. Interstate MAX Alignment.
4. **Traffic Mitigation--**Tri-Met and the Office of Transportation will develop mitigation strategies to address the traffic impacts at the intersections of Going Street, Lombard Street, and Denver Avenue, and with the proposed park and ride at the Expo Center.
5. **Lower Albina Access--**Tri-Met and the Office of Transportation works with businesses in Lower Albina Industrial area to coordinate the Lower Albina Overcrossing Project and to address truck access concerns.
6. **Kenton Station--**Tri-Met will examine design options for the Kenton Station that will locate the station close to the Kenton Business District to maximize access and redevelopment in Downtown Kenton.
7. **Commuter Bicycle Facilities--**Tri-Met and the Office of Transportation develop and implement strategies to enhance bicycle access to one or more stations by developing covered bike parking facilities at MAX stations; and consider a bike commuter center located at one station at least. The Office of Transportation will identifies bicycle access

routes to MAX Stations and implement improvements to encourage bike to rail commuting in the North and Northeast Portland community.

8. **Expo and PIR Station**—Tri-Met, Metro, and the Office of Transportation will develop an overall long-term plan for the Portland International Raceway and the Expo Center Station areas. This plan should consider improvements and strategies that improves regional accessibility and convenient access to these facilities while complementing the natural environmental, minimizing traffic congestion, and support long term development activities at both these facilities.
9. **Comprehensive Plan:** The Portland Office of Transportation is directed to work with the Bureau of Planning review and consider changes to the Comprehensive Plan, Policies, and Map to be consistent with the City Council's approval of the North LRT Project as the preferred alignment in North and Northeast Portland.