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**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**PRESENTED BY:** Oliver Snowden, Director  
**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Reallocation of Delta/Beltline Interchange Funding – Report Back

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**I. MOTION**

N/A

**II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

This is a report back on the investigation with ODOT of alternative projects that could be constructed in lieu of funding the Delta/Beltline Interchange project. The investigation concluded that the Division Avenue Bridge is only option considered that could use County Road Funds and be built independently of the Beltline Corridor Study process. The Bridge, listed as the Division Avenue Frontage Road in the County Transportation System Plan (TSP) and in the “illustrative” list of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), was estimated to cost \$4 million in 2002. A recent review now sets the estimate at \$21 to \$28 million, depending on the number of lanes to be built. This is well beyond the available funding from the County Road Fund.

**III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION**

**A. Board Action and Other History**

In May 2006, by adoption of the FY07-FY11 Lane County Capital Improvement Program, the Board reduced the funding programmed for the Delta/Beltline Interchange to \$1.1 million. This represented about a \$7 million reduction from funding programmed for the project in previous years. Some of this money was reprogrammed to other projects in the CIP.

Several people testified in opposition to the reduction, stating that the project was of high importance, especially considering the proposed location of McKenzie-Willamette at River Ridge. ODOT asked that the Board preserve the \$8 million so that it could be used as local match for ODOT’s Beltline Corridor project.

The Board declined to do so, but requested that County staff meet with ODOT problem solvers to see if the County’s funding could be used constructively to improve the traffic flow on Beltline Highway sooner than if it were used for the ODOT Corridor project. The Board asked that staff return in September with the results of the investigation, and indicated that it may consider revising priorities and reprogramming the FY07-FY11 money for a new Beltline project at that time.

Based on the Board direction, County, ODOT and Eugene staffs met and agreed

that the following criteria would be used to develop and evaluate project alternatives:

- The project is a regional project, offering some immediate improvement in traffic flow and safety, and is consistent with the larger Beltline corridor project.
- The project does not subsidize McKenzie-Willamette, but could leverage County money with funding by others, like Eugene, ODOT and/or McKenzie-Willamette.
- The project development process is concurrent with, but independent of and separable from, the ODOT process on the Beltline Corridor project.
- Construction of the project could occur sooner (ideally in the next 3-5 years) than construction on the Beltline Corridor solution, which will likely have a 2013 construction start at best.

Concurrently with the County and ODOT exploration for alternative uses of County money on a Beltline project, McKenzie-Willamette (M-W) was preparing its application for a Metro Plan and Refinement Plan amendments and a zone change necessary for construction of its new medical center at the end of Delta Highway. The application materials included proposed transportation mitigation measures developed as part of the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA).

On July 18, 2006, Eugene staff concluded that there was insufficient information in the record to find that the M-W proposal complies with Statewide Planning Goal 12 (Transportation) as implemented through the Transportation Planning Rule (TPR). Following that determination, M-W explored the possibility of preparing a revised TIA that relied on construction of the Division Avenue Bridge as a means to comply with the TPR. However, on September 15, 2006, M-W submitted a new TIA that did not consider the Division Avenue Bridge. Although discussions between the parties are continuing during TIA review, it appears unlikely that the Bridge will be a part of those discussions or a component of a revised TIA.

**B. Policy Issues**

Allocation of resources for capital projects is a policy issue. Staff is seeking direction from the Board on the possible reallocation of Road Funds.

**C. Board Goals**

The Board has multiple goals related to allocation of Road Funds, including:

- Work for a strong regional economy ....
- Ensure the provision of basic social support ....
- Contribute to appropriate community development ....
- Protect the public's assets by maintain, replacing or upgrading the County's investments in systems and capital infrastructure.

**D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations**

The amount of money available for reallocation depends upon assumptions embedded in the FinPlan. The most critical of these is reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools at current the level and current distribution formula. Another key assumption is the Road Fund cash carryover necessary to fund operations from July 1<sup>st</sup> until the annual Secure Rural Schools payment is received. In FY11-12, this could be on the order of \$10-\$12 million. We can discuss the FinPlan in more detail with either Finance and Audit or the full Board, if desired.

There are multiple and complicated financial and resource considerations with respect to the Division Avenue Bridge and possible public-private partnerships. Clearly, though, the County cannot come close to funding the Division Avenue Bridge by itself without redirecting the resources programmed for nearly all of the improvement projects currently in the FY07-FY11 CIP.

**E. Analysis**

The County/ODOT collaboration identified three candidate projects that could potentially meet the evaluation criteria listed above – widen the westbound Beltline Willamette River Bridge and add 1 or 2 westbound auxiliary lanes (Attachment A); a split diamond interchange (Attachment B); and, the Division Avenue Bridge (Attachment C). These were transmitted to ODOT Region 2 for review. The Region 2 analysis (Attachment D) indicates that only the Division Avenue Bridge appears to meet the criteria.

As noted above, pursuit of the Division Avenue Bridge solely with County Funds seems impractical. An update of the Road Fund FinPlan shows that the FY05-06 year-end fund balance is approximately \$36.3 million. This is higher than the forecasted balance of approximately \$31 million, primarily because of delays in capital projects. For example, approximately \$2.1 million in Lane County's Local Government Investment Pool account is contractually obligated to projects administered by ODOT.

On the other hand, additional funding became available because the lapse for both Engineering and PW Administration was higher than anticipated in FY05-06, as positions were held vacant in anticipation of reductions later in the fiscal year. Also, some money was freed up when the Board reduced the scope of the Marcola Road project in May. As a result of these factors, we estimate that – assuming reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools – there is \$4 to \$5 million available for reallocation to capital projects, like the Division Avenue Bridge, or other uses. Using less conservative fiscal assumptions could raise that to \$6 to \$7 million.

This leaves a variety of options for the Board to consider if it wants to program the \$4-\$5 million currently unallocated.

**F. Alternatives/Options**

1. Reallocate \$5 million to Division Avenue Bridge; seek partners to complete the funding.
2. Investigate the potential to fund the Division Avenue Bridge by reallocating money currently programmed for improvement projects in the FY07-FY11 CIP.
3. Provide direction to staff for programming \$4 to \$5 million when preparing the FY08-FY12 CIP.
4. Continue to investigate smaller projects in the Delta/Beltline corridor for use of available County funds.
5. Reserve the unallocated fund for local match on the ODOT Beltline Corridor Project.
6. Direct that unprogrammed funds be reserved as a transition safety net in the event that Secure Rural Schools is not reauthorized.

**V. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION**

Staff will begin preparation of the draft FY08-FY12 CIP in December for January 2007 release. FY07-08 Budget preparation begins in early 2007. Absent Board direction, Engineering staff will make recommendations for use of the unallocated fund balance in the draft CIP.

**VI. RECOMMENDATION**

Option 1, Option 3, or Option 6.

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

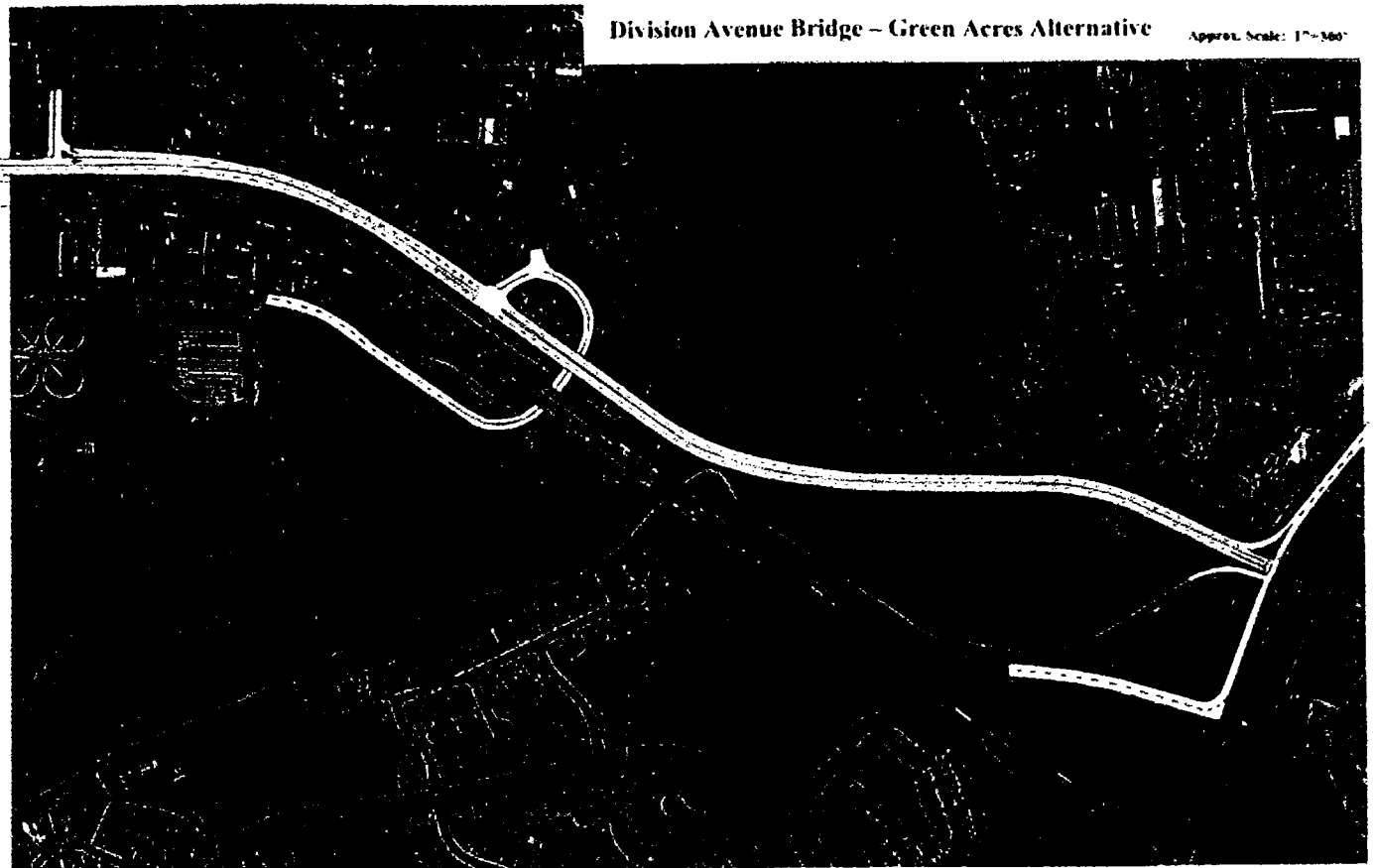
- A. Auxiliary Lanes Alternative
- B. Split Diamond Interchange Alternative
- C. Division Avenue Bridge Alternative
- D. ODOT Response





Division Avenue Bridge – Green Acres Alternative

Approx. Scale: 1"=300'





# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

ATTACHMENT D

## Region 2

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September 7, 2006

Ollie Snowden, Director  
Lane County Public Works Department  
3333 North Delta Highway  
Eugene, OR

Subject: Regional Solutions to the Beltline Highway transportation issues, River Road Interchange to Delta Highway Interchange

Dear Ollie:

When we met during June 2006, we brainstormed three possible regional solutions to the transportation issues on the Beltline Highway between the River Road Interchange and the Delta Highway Interchange. ODOT agreed to evaluate these alternatives to see which of the three would be most likely to have lasting value and could be constructed in the near term. At later meetings with ODOT staff, you indicated that a response before mid-September 2006 was needed in order to allow the Lane County Board of Commissioners to reconsider its recent decision on the capital improvement program. The three alternatives to be considered were:

1. Division Avenue extension eastward to Green Acres Road;
2. Beltline Highway auxiliary lanes between River Road and the Delta Highway; and
3. A "Split-Diamond Interchange" involving the Delta Highway as one crossroad and River Road as the other.

Adequate data to prepare a technical analysis does not exist and could not be acquired within the desired timeframe. The system planning and environmental documentation already programmed in the STIP are the means to provide a technical analysis, but that work has not been initiated. ODOT reviewed the three alternatives on a conceptual basis, but has not performed any formal scoping. Our conceptual review notes are as follows:

1. At the conceptual level, the Split-Diamond Interchange alternative appears to have the most substantial impacts and to involve the most extensive acquisition of right-of-way. It is likely that nearly complete reconstruction of the Delta Highway Interchange would be necessary, significant reconstruction of the River Road Interchange also would be needed, and the River Avenue and Division Avenue ramps would be eliminated. Such a major change in the state transportation system would only be made through an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement process.

2. Auxiliary lanes are listed in federal regulations as transportation improvements that may be authorized without an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. However, this situation points more toward inclusion of the alternative in the analysis programmed in the STIP. Auxiliary lanes would be called for in both directions based upon traffic volumes. Auxiliary lanes could be constructed in one phase, or in two phases. As a

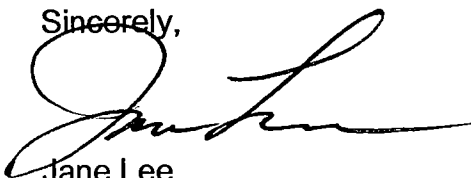


single project, the auxiliary lanes would extend from the River Road Interchange to the Delta Highway Interchange. Extensive right-of-way impacts would be necessary and the River Avenue and Division Avenue ramps would be eliminated. Phased construction could occur in two phases: Phase One could extend from the Delta Highway westward across the river to the Division Avenue/River Avenue ramps; Phase Two would extend the auxiliary lanes to the River Road Interchange. If wider Willamette River bridges mean replacing the existing bridges, fish habitat impacts would have to be considered. Depending upon what decisions are made regarding wider bridges, phased construction could postpone most of the right-of-way impacts to the second phase, but may not delay eliminating the River Avenue and Division Avenue ramps. Eliminating the ramps may cause other traffic pattern impacts needing analysis. It's likely that more travel lanes and auxiliary lanes will be needed to meet the future travel need—a significant factor that needs to be known before impacting Division Avenue and before making decisions about its reconstruction. Making a decision to advance auxiliary lanes will involve a lot more system analysis.

3. Extending Division Avenue to Green Acres Road would be a local transportation facility providing a local system alternative to the Beltline Highway. Interchanges would not need to be reconstructed, but the Division Avenue ramp would be eliminated and the westbound on-ramp from southbound Delta Highway would be relocated opposite the westbound off-ramp. Extending Division Avenue eastward to align with Green Acres Road would improve the local network significantly. Right-of-way acquisition would affect fewer landowners than the other two alternatives. While environmental and land use permitting would be necessary to extend Division Avenue eastward across the Willamette River, the processes needed are not likely to be more complicated than the processes required for the other alternatives.

As stated above, ODOT has not accomplished any technical analysis for the alternatives. While considerable analysis of traffic operations still will be needed, it is ODOT's opinion that extending Division Avenue to Green Acres Road is the only one of the three alternatives that has lasting value and can be constructed in the near term. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in seeking a solution to this transportation problem that impacts the entire metropolitan area and specifically the City of Eugene, Lane County and ODOT. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss our review, any next steps and to prepare to provide feedback to the Lane County Commissioners.

Sincerely,



Jane Lee  
Lane County Area Manager

C Kurt Corey, City of Eugene  
John deTar, ODOT Region 2 Planning  
Erik Havig, ODOT Region 2 Planning & Development Manager  
Jeff Scheick, ODOT Region 2 Manager  
Mike Spaeth, ODOT District 5 Manager  
Terri Harding, ODOT Region 2 Planning  
Joe Harwood, ODOT Public Information Officer