



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

## Department of Transportation

Region 1

123 NW Flanders

Portland, OR 97209-4019

(503) 731-8200

FAX: (503) 731-8259

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To: South Waterfront Transportation Strategy  
Stakeholder Advisory Committee

File Code:

From: Jason Tell, Manager, Oregon Department of Transportation Region 1  
Sue Keil, Director, City of Portland, Office of Transportation

Dear Members,

In late 2005, PDOT and ODOT staff began discussions of how to implement the findings of a study conducted by the Portland Development Commission reported January 17, 2004 titled "North Macadam Central District Transportation Improvement Alternatives Evaluation Final Report". As you know, this report recommended replacing the existing I-5: North Macadam off-ramp with a fly-over ramp to correct operational issues on North Macadam and facilitate access from I-5 to the South Waterfront District.

Recent joint analysis of the recommended project has resulted in the updating of several important project implications. The project would require substantial right-of-way acquisition on the eastern side of North Macadam to accommodate the necessary lane configurations to support traffic operations and the project cost estimates have escalated from the planned \$30 million to over \$50 million today, significantly more than either agency can afford.

At the direction of agency management, PDOT and ODOT staff proceeded to explore other potential solutions within the project area. A technical staff work session was completed in March 2008 to identify alternative opportunities for improvements. Primary goals for the project were identified as safety, direct access to the district, and affordability. With these goals in mind, the team began investigation of additional access from the interstate in the vicinity of I-405/Harbor Way and Sheridan Street at the northern edge of the district in addition to improvements near the North Macadam Ramp.

Numerous proposals were investigated to determine their applicability to the project goals. Additionally, the group analyzed project feasibility and performance to determine if a safe project could be engineered and if the cost of the project was justified by its benefits. After months of traffic studies and preliminary engineering, we are jointly recommending that the intersection of Harbor Way and River Parkway be improved to provide safe, efficient, and cost effective access to the South Waterfront District.

Two main elements of this project are:

1. Improving the safety of both I-5 and Macadam Avenue by removing the right turn movement from the I-5: North Macadam off-ramp to Curry Street.



2. Facilitating access to the South Waterfront District by lengthening the right turn lane from northbound Harbor Way, adding an additional left turn on southbound Harbor Way and improving pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and crossings at the intersection, including "boulevard" treatments for median areas to improve and enhance the visual nature of the gateway leading from I-5 to the South Waterfront District.

Please refer to the attached map for additional project details.

ODOT and the City of Portland agree that this is the best way to both improve safety and accommodate traffic demand from I-5 to the South Waterfront area for the next 20 years within our budgets.

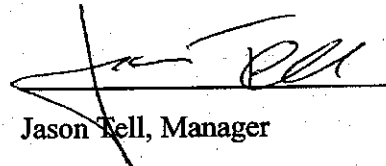
To facilitate these improvements ODOT will provide up to \$6 million of Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA) funds, pending Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) approval. The City will provide matching funds on a dollar for dollar basis which may be applied to the project described above, or applied to other improvements on North Macadam subject to ODOT approval and OTC concurrence.

We look forward to seeing these improvements constructed by the end of 2012; deadline for spending OTIA dollars, and to the continued success of the South Waterfront District.

Best Regards,



Sue Keil, Director



Jason Tell, Manager