

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

**RESOLUTION NO. 01-097**

Authorizing Suspension of 242nd Avenue Connector Environmental Analysis

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:**

- a. Multnomah County Transportation Division and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement in March 1998 to fund and undertake the 242nd Avenue Connector Environmental Analysis.
- b. Regional north/south traffic movements between I-84 and US 26 in east Multnomah County have been a concern to the cities of Wood Village, Fairview, Troutdale and Gresham; Multnomah County; and, ODOT for over 20 years.
- c. Preliminary findings of the Transportation Analysis prepared for the 242nd Avenue Connector Environmental Analysis indicate that in the short-term, there is not a need for the 242nd Avenue Connector based upon projected low traffic demand.
- d. The Transportation Division has determined that the public interest is best served in the long term by preserving the public right of way for the 242nd Avenue Connector between I-84 and Stark Street, and suspending the current 242nd Avenue Connector Environmental Analysis.
- e. As detailed in the attached Supplemental Staff Report, the determination to suspend the Analysis was the consensus of all the government agencies affected.

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:**

1. The 242nd Avenue Connector Environmental Analysis is suspended.
2. Multnomah County will continue to:
  - a. Preserve right-of-way across Multnomah County property proposed for the 242nd Avenue Connector.
  - b. Amend the Regional Transportation Plan to adjust the timeframe for the 242nd Avenue Connector and work with Metro in the Corridor Initiative Program in studying necessary improvements in the I-84 to US 26 Corridor.
  - c. Provide an interim truck/freight route until a new National Highway System Truck Route is selected.
  - d. Implement access controls in the I-84 to US 26 Corridor to guaranty capacity is maintained in the corridor.

- e. Continue to investigate and implement safety improvements to 238th Drive between Arata Road and Oregon Street.
- f. Pursue design and construction funds for undertaking intersection improvements on 242nd Avenue at Stark and Glisan Streets, and reconstruction of 242nd Avenue to principal arterial standards between Stark and Glisan Streets.
- g. County will work with local jurisdictions to assess the need and priority for interim improvements within the I-84 to US 26 Corridor.

ADOPTED this 19th day of July 2001.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Diane M. Linn, Chair

REVIEWED:

THOMAS SPONSLER, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
Matthew O. Ryan, Assistant County Attorney

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**Department of Sustainable Community Development**  
**MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON**

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Transportation Division  
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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

**FROM:** Mike Oswald, DSCD Director  
Karen Schilling, Transportation Planning Administrator

**TODAY'S DATE:** July 2, 2001

**REQUESTED PLACEMENT DATE:** July 19, 2001

**RE:** Resolution Supporting Suspension of 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Alternatives Analysis

I Recommendation/Action Requested:

Approve Resolution supporting suspension of the 242<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Connector Alternatives Analysis

II. Background/Analysis:

Following careful review and discussions, Multnomah County Transportation Division and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) are suspending the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Environmental Analysis. The reasons for this decision are outlined below.

**Background:**

Regional north/south traffic movements between I-84 and US 26 in east Multnomah County have been a concern to the cities of Wood Village, Fairview, Troutdale, and Gresham; Multnomah County; and ODOT for over 20 years. There have been several studies during that period investigating alternatives to relieve projected traffic congestion problems and safety issues. Most recently, ODOT and Multnomah County have been undertaking an alternatives analysis for selecting an alignment for a 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector between I-84 and Stark St.

The 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Study came about for two primary reasons. First, the Mt. Hood Parkway DEIS was suspended by the Governor due to the projected lack of construction funds within the 20-year planning period. A Major Investment Study was completed for the Mt. Hood Parkway to help determine a proposed general alignment for the facility to help preserve necessary right-of-way.

Second, with the construction of a new interchange on I-84 at 238<sup>th</sup> Dr., Exit 16B was eliminated. In exchange for the closure of Exit 16B, ODOT and Multnomah County agreed to investigate the feasibility of constructing a new connection between I-84 and Halsey St. at the request of the City of Troutdale.

It was also assumed that this new connector was a top priority need in the entire Mt. Hood Parkway corridor, so ODOT and Multnomah County pooled their resources and began investigating an alternatives analysis to comply with this request—the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Environmental Assessment (Study).

More recently, the Transportation Analysis (one of 13 technical reports being prepared for the Study) was submitted for review by the consultant. The question posed for the Study is: Does the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector function sufficiently as a stand-alone facility to provide for regional traffic movements and relieve parallel routes (181<sup>st</sup> Ave., 207<sup>th</sup> Ave./223<sup>rd</sup> Ave., and 257<sup>th</sup> Ave.)? Preliminary findings of the Transportation Analysis (TA) indicate that, in the short term, there is not a compelling need for the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector because of low traffic demand.

The dilemma posed by the preliminary findings of the TA is how to proceed with the Study, recognizing the long-term need for providing improvements to the entire 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. corridor between I-84 and US 26. Should the Study continue along the course it is presently taking, there is a strong possibility that the no-build alternative could become the preferred alternative and would not garner strong funding support as an immediate need.

#### **Implications and Next Steps:**

To ensure future consideration of a 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector between I-84 and Stark St. it is felt that the current Study should be suspended at this time. The concern of each jurisdiction involved is to provide enhanced regional vehicular movements between I-84 and US 26. Suspension provides the opportunity to “shelve” the Study until needs and priorities are reassessed within the entire 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. corridor between I-84 and US 26, allowing a resumption of the Study at a later date.

Despite the Study's suspension, there are several unresolved issues that need to be addressed. These issues include right-of-way preservation; Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and local Transportation System Plans (TSP) compliance; truck and NHS routes; access control, and need and priority assessment for the I-84 to US 26 corridor.

**Right-of-way preservation:** Multnomah County will continue to reserve right-of way across Multnomah County property along the proposed 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector corridor. Additionally, as Multnomah County Transportation continues to review development applications along the Study corridor, the county will work with local jurisdictions to ensure future development will not preclude construction of the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector.

**RTP and local TSP compliance:** The RTP identifies Hogan Corridor Improvements (Project #2001) for the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector in the 2000-2005 timeframe. An amendment to the RTP will be sought to adjust the timeframe to 2011-2020. This amendment would be consistent with the Corridor Initiative Program currently under consideration at Metro. Local TSPs will accommodate a Principal Arterial corridor connection between I-84 and US 26.

**Truck route/NHS Corridor:** The RTP also notes that the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave./Hogan Road corridor replaces the 181<sup>st</sup> Ave./Burnside interim freight route upon completion of planned improvements (242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector on the north end). Suspension of the Study delays the implementation of the designation as freight route to completion of the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector. When the RTP was developed, an additional freight route was included to serve as a relief to the 181<sup>st</sup> Ave./Burnside route contemplating a time lag until 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector improvements would be made. Additional review of the overall corridor will assess whether this additional route (207<sup>th</sup> Ave./Glisan St./242<sup>nd</sup> Ave.) will provide the necessary freight capacity or if other strategies are also required.

**Access control:** An important element in preserving the I-84 to US 26 corridor capacity is implementing strict access management within the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave./Hogan Road corridor. Multnomah County will work with local jurisdictions to review and ensure proper access management guidelines (as adopted in the Multnomah County Street Standards) are implemented in the corridor to preserve capacity.

**Need and Priority Assessment for the I-84 to US 26 Corridor:** The County will work with local jurisdictions to assess the need and priority for interim improvements within the corridor. Based on this assessment, the County, ODOT,

and local jurisdictions will monitor the need for the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector between Stark St. and I-84 and will continue the EA for this segment when appropriate.

In addition to addressing the issues previously outlined, there are several other issues that require consideration, as follows:

- County will work with local jurisdictions to identify and pursue funding for improvements at 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave./Glisan St., and 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave./Stark St. intersections.
- County will work with local jurisdictions to identify and pursue funds for improvements to 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. between Glisan St. and Stark St.
- County will work with local jurisdictions to continue to investigate and implement safety improvements to 238<sup>th</sup> Drive between Arata Road and Oregon St.
- County will work with local jurisdictions and the region in conducting a freight flow study for the I-84/US 26 corridor.
- County will work with local jurisdictions to seek funds to complete arterial road improvements to 257<sup>th</sup> Ave. between Division St. and US 26.
- County will work with local jurisdictions and the region to study and recommend improvements for the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave./Hogan Road corridor south of Stark St.

III. Financial Impact:

The County and ODOT have spent approximately \$200,000 on the current study. Suspension of the study will defer any further study costs until a later time when the study is resumed.

IV. Legal Issues:

There are no known legal issues.

V. Controversial Issues:

As identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector is targeted to be the National Highway System (NHS) Truck Route through East Multnomah County, connecting I-84 with US 26. Even with the suspension of the

study, the cities of Wood Village and Troutdale are opposed to the proposed designation. The current NHS route is 181<sup>st</sup> Ave. south from I-84 to Burnside Road, east on Burnside Road until it converges with US 26 at Powell Blvd. Burnside Road is planned as a regional boulevard by the City of Gresham between 181<sup>st</sup> Ave. and 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. That would conflict with the continued designation of Burnside Road as the NHS Truck Route. Other proposed alternatives have similar issues that require mitigation before they can become the NHS Truck Route.

V. Link to Current County Policies:

The Priorities 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Alternatives Analysis is consistent with the following *Comprehensive Framework Plan* policies:

- Policy 32: Capital Improvements
- Policy 33: Transportation Systems
- Policy 34: Trafficways
- Policy 35: Public Transportation
- Policy 36: Transportation Development Requirements

VII. Citizen Participation:

The recommendation to suspend the study has been discussed extensively at the East Multnomah County Transportation Committee meetings. The recommendation to suspend the study was also the topic of discussion at the May 10, 2001 242<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Connector Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). The CAC recommended suspension of the study.

VIII. Other Government Participation:

The recommendation to suspend the study has been discussed extensively at several intra-jurisdictional meetings including Multnomah County, ODOT, Wood Village, Gresham, Troutdale, and Metro. Consensus was achieved to suspend the study.