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December 10, 2003

Bob Thompson
ODOT Bridge Section
355 Capitol Street NE, Room 301
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Local Bridge Application Information Request Response

Dear Mr. Thompson:

We are pleased to provide additional information in response to Doug Tindall's November 24th request. These are highly beneficial projects for both freight transport and the general public. So we hope this information further underscores the necessity of these projects. For ease of understanding, we have organized our response based on the categories given in the information request.

Bridge Number 1106A – Jefferson-Marion Road Bridge

How the Bridge Is Used:

Jefferson-Marion Road is designated as an Arterial in the adopted Marion County Transportation System Plan. It links with Stayton Road to provide an important 15-mile arterial corridor linking Jefferson, Millersburg, Albany, Corvallis, I-5, and the Central Willamette Valley with Stayton, Sublimity, Lyons, Mill City, the Santiam Canyon, Detroit Lake, and Central Oregon. It serves regional transportation needs, and also provides a viable alternative to congested travel through Salem. This bridge, with its load restrictions and sharp curving approaches, is the single factor limiting the effectiveness of this route for freight transportation. The sharp blind curves and narrow structure also raise safety concerns for long vehicles (including 53' trailers and doubles) and overwidth vehicles.

Many truckers find this to be the best route from the Santiam Canyon area to Albany and I-5 south, and also prefer this as the best route from Corvallis to Central Oregon. That is, those truckers that are not kept off this route by this bridge. These trucks would travel an additional 14 miles each way to stay on Oregon 22 and I-5, or an additional 5 miles (and 32 miles on slower roads) to use Oregon 226 to Albany.

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Jefferson-Marion Road, via this bridge, also serves as the primary access to dozens of square miles of prime agricultural land. Because of this bridge, some haulers of local agricultural products must take lengthy detours when they could otherwise use this Arterial route. Local farmers are also hurt by increased shipping prices, as some companies opt to use smaller vehicles solely because of this bridge.

Who Uses it and When:

Primary users include Agriculture and Lumber/Wood Products shippers, as well as all kinds of freight and passenger transportation. Nearby companies include the Norpac Cannery, Trus-Joist, and McMillan/Blodell, Emery & Sons, other companies in Stayton; Weyerhaeuser, Morse Brothers, dozens of farms and nurseries, and large mills in Millersburg.

This freight use (or desired use) of this route occurs throughout the year, with some fluctuation in the various industries involved, but use of this route is heavy year-round.

How It Connects With Other Freight Routes

This bridge is five miles from Interstate 5 exit 238 (South Jefferson) via good, mostly 55mph roads designed for freight transport and for relatively high volumes of automobile travel. The city of Jefferson is two miles to the west, and Stayton is ten miles to the east, also via good roads designed for freight transport and relatively high speeds. In Stayton, drivers connect with Oregon 22, a Statewide Highway and State Highway Freight System Route connecting through Santiam Canyon to Central Oregon and points East.

How the truck average daily traffic was determined

The truck average daily traffic was based on recent vehicle classification traffic counts (by road tube) taken in the vicinity of the project. These counts were verified by the Traffic Engineering staff in consultation with County Weighmasters. Traffic Engineering staff and Weighmasters also collaborated on estimates of truck average daily traffic if this project were in place so that truckers were free to use this route without special restrictions or sharp curves.

Future traffic volume data was from the EMME/2 transportation model used in development of Marion County's Transportation System Plan, and assuming the same percentage of traffic would be trucks.

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Bridge Number 47C22 – Mount Angel-Gervais Road over Pudding River

How the Bridge Is Used:

Mount Angel-Gervais Road provides an important connection. It not only links Mount Angel and Gervais, but also connects Mount Angel and the surrounding area with I-5, particularly southbound. This road also provides a viable option for traffic from Mount Angel and Silverton to avoid traveling through Woodburn to access I-5, or for traffic heading from Mount Angel and Silverton to Yamhill County or northwestern Marion County. Mount Angel-Gervais Road is also the primary access to many square miles of prime farmland.

Who Uses it and When:

The freight use of this bridge is now severely limited by the load limit enforced on the bridge.

Without the load limits, primary users would include dozens of haulers of various agricultural commodities. Many companies currently use the bridge when their trucks are empty (and thus legal on the bridge) including the Wilco Farmers Co-operative (a major regional business), Mount Angel Beverage (a Pepsi bottling plant), and numerous nurseries. Other potential users include Redman Homes and many other companies in Mount Angel and Silverton.

This freight use (or desired use) of this route occurs throughout the year, with some fluctuation in the various industries involved, but use of this route is heavy year-round.

How It Connects With Other Freight Routes

To the east, this route connects with Oregon 214 in Mount Angel and many County Roads serving the eastern Mid-Willamette Valley. To the West it connects with Oregon 99E (a Regional Highway) and Butteville Road near Gervais. It also connects, via Butteville Road and Oregon 219, to the I-5 Woodburn interchange from the west, allowing vehicles to avoid the congested typical approach to this interchange via Oregon 214 from the east. This strategic collector also connects dozens of square miles of prime farmland to the regional and national transportation system.

How the truck average daily traffic was determined

The truck average daily traffic was based on recent vehicle classification traffic counts (by road tube) taken in the vicinity of the project. These counts were verified by the Traffic Engineering staff in consultation with County Weighmasters. Traffic Engineering staff and Weighmasters also collaborated on estimates of truck average daily traffic if this project were in place so that truckers were free to use this route without load limits.

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Future traffic volume data was from the EMME/2 transportation model used in development of Marion County's Transportation System Plan, and assuming the same percentage of traffic would be trucks.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this information to help further explain the substantial benefit of this project to Oregon's freight and passenger vehicle transportation system. If we can provide any additional information, please contact our office at (503) 588-5036.

Sincerely,



Willis G. Worcester, P.E.
County engineer

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