



Marion County

OREGON

Board of Commissioners

April 9, 2019

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Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair
Representative Caddy McKeown, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Transportation

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Sam Brentano
Kevin Cameron
Colm Willis

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

John Lattimer

RE: Newberg-Dundee Bypass

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown, and Committee Members:

Marion County appreciates the tremendous work you accomplished in 2017 regarding Oregon's transportation infrastructure and your ongoing work to meet that promise of delivering a successful, modernized transportation system. While each county has its local priorities, we are writing to highlight a regional project that has significance to Marion County and all of the communities that will benefit from a completed Newberg-Dundee Bypass. Just as the entire state of Oregon is impacted by the congestion in the Portland metro area, the entire region stretching from Washington County, Yamhill and Marion Counties, to the Central Coast counties of Tillamook, Polk, and Lincoln are impacted by the severe congestion on Oregon Highway 99W from the Portland metro area to the intersection with Oregon Highway 18 and beyond.

Highway 99W, a critically important highway connecting the Portland area to wine country and the Central Oregon Coast, has become a well-known bottleneck among tourists, businesses moving freight, and commuters alike. Without completion of the full bypass, these traffic impacts will continue to result in significant diversion of traffic that increases congestion, and results in reduced safety on McKay, Yergen, and Ehlen roads in Marion County, which are already heavily traveled. This diversion also results in increasing congestion at the Donald interchange on Interstate 5. Marion County has a duty to protect its citizens and agricultural enterprises from the adverse effects of excessive traffic, noise, and air pollution, which will be significantly mitigated by the completion of the Newberg-Dundee Bypass.

The Newberg-Dundee Bypass is designed to relieve the intense congestion issues, and Phase 1 - the first 4 miles of the 11 mile bypass- is completed and operational; however, the entire bypass must be completed or we will not

realize the benefit of this massive investment to the region and Marion County. The project goals for the congestion relief, safety improvement, community livability, greenhouse gas emission reduction, improvement of freight traffic, and seismic resiliency will only be achieved by finishing the project.

As commissioners of Marion County, we urge you to consider necessary state funding to take advantage of federal opportunities to ensure completion of this vital project. We know there is great need across the state for projects large and small, urban and rural, multimodal and seismic, but the overarching goal, in order to ensure public support and confidence, should be to support completion of projects that are effective and that maximize the already considerable public investment in Phase 1. We know that the Newburg-Dundee Bypass will only be effective if the entire bypass is completed. We join the Yamhill County Parkway Committee in urging the completion of the entire bypass, with state and other funding, including asking the Oregon Transportation Commission and Oregon Department of Transportation to carefully examine the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan to see if resources can be shifted to the bypass.

Thank you for your consideration and leadership in the days ahead. Marion County looks forward to being a resource to you and your colleagues in order to complete the bypass project.

Sincerely,



Kevin Cameron, Chair



Samuel A. Brentano, Vice Chair



Colm Willis, Commissioner