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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING
2051 KAEN ROAD | OREGON CITY, OR 97045

July 21, 2010

Chair Gail Achterman
Oregon Transportation Commission
355 Capital St NE Room 135
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Achterman and Commission members:

Clackamas County appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments on the proposed new control tower for the Aurora Airport. While Clackamas County supports measures to enhance aviation safety, the addition of a tower represents a significant step toward the potential expansion of uses in and around the airport.

As the commission knows, the north end of the Aurora Airport sits at the Clackamas County line, and unlike most existing towered airports in Oregon, sits outside of any Urban Growth Boundary. Impacts from development at the airport will have a profound impact on Clackamas County and several of its cities.

Increased use and development of the airport will inevitably impact surface transportation facilities, particularly Interstate 5. In comments submitted last year to Metro, the State of Oregon noted that there are "severe" capacity problems on Interstate 5 in and around the Wilsonville area and across the Boone Bridge. The assessment noted that the cost to improve capacity in the area would be in excess of \$500 million. Increased development at the Aurora Airport would also impact Highway 551, the Canby/Hubbard cutoff, and I-5 access at Charbonneau.

Clackamas County does not oppose airport development, but without coordinated planning, increased congestion will present an impediment to economic activity in the entire region, endanger the public investment in existing surface transportation facilities, and contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions.

The November 2009 funding application states, the "Tower Master Plan study . . . will be completed in 2010 with the concurrence of counties of Clackamas, Marion and cities of Wilsonville, Canby and Aurora." Since November 2009 there have been no meetings of the Planning Advisory Committee, and no concurrence by Clackamas County or its cities.

Clackamas County's concerns are heightened because Marion County and the Oregon Department of Aviation recently declined to include Clackamas County and the City of Wilsonville in an Inter-Governmental Agreement addressing development in and around the airport.

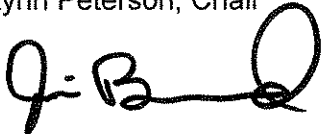
Therefore, we request that the Oregon Transportation Commission condition the approval of the tower, or the expenditure of funds, on the completion of revisions to the 2000 Aurora Airport Master Plan, including a thorough and coordinated evaluation of the impacts on surface transportation facilities and land use in Clackamas County including the cities of Canby, Barlow and Wilsonville.

Sincerely,

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Lynn Peterson, Chair



Jim Bernard, Commissioner
Aurora Master Plan PAC Representative

LP/JB/dc/lb