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**Testimony of the City of Wilsonville before the Oregon Transportation Commission  
regarding the Oregon Department of Aviation's Connect Oregon III  
Program Application for the Aurora Airport Control Tower**

Good day Chair Achterman and members of the Commission:

My name is Mark Ottenad, and I serve as the Public and Government Affairs Director for the City of Wilsonville. I am appearing today on behalf of Mayor Tim Knapp and the Wilsonville City Council to provide testimony on the Oregon Department of Aviation's Connect Oregon III program application for the Aurora Airport Control Tower.

First, let me state that Wilsonville fully supports the concept of operating a safe, well-planned airport.

Simply stated, the Aviation's Department application for funding of the Aurora Airport Control Tower is premature. That is, steps and processes that should have taken place prior to the application for funding of the control tower have not occurred.

The Department's response to application Question 13, "Can the project demonstrate support from public agencies that must approve the project," could be misconstrued as the tower project garnering the support of nearby jurisdictions Clackamas County and City of Wilsonville:

*"Tower Master Plan study in progress...with the concurrence of counties of Clackamas...and cities of Wilsonville..." See Exhibit 1, "Oregon Department of Aviation Connect Oregon III Program Application" response to Question 13.*

At this time, neither Clackamas County nor the City of Wilsonville has been consulted by the Aviation Department in any real, meaningful fashion regarding a control tower at the Aurora Airport. The Department has omitted this important first step for developing a successful project — constructively engaging all of the adjacent, impacted jurisdictions.

Clackamas County and Wilsonville sought to be included in an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the Aviation Department and other neighboring jurisdictions (Marion County and City of Aurora) in order to conduct joint planning and substantive discussions about growth management and transportation issues at the Aurora Airport. *See Exhibit 2, Letters from Clackamas County and City of Wilsonville to Oregon Dept. of Aviation, Marion County and City of Aurora requesting to be signatories to the "Aurora Airport Intergovernmental Agreement."*

***"Serving the community with pride"***

Our requests to participate in the Aurora Airport IGA were rejected. Clackamas County and Wilsonville were omitted from the IGA and presented with a “gerrymandered” map of the Aurora Airport Impact Area obviously drawn in a manner to exclude Clackamas County and Wilsonville. *See Exhibit 3, pp 1, 8, “Cover letter and Intergovernmental Agreement on the Coordination of Growth Management and Transportation Issues Between [sic] the City of Aurora, Marion County, and the Oregon Department of Aviation” and “Aurora Airport Impact Area Map - Exhibit A.”*

Whether the Aurora Airport “impact zone boundary” is a 14,000-foot or 10,000-foot distance from the runway, depending on interpretation of administrative rules, both Clackamas County and Wilsonville are in the actual, real impact area of the Aurora Airport. *See Exhibit 4, “Aurora Airport Region” Impact Area Maps with 14,000-foot and 10,000-foot impact areas shown.*

The Department’s application states that “Infusion of larger aircraft will create opportunities for increased economic development.” *See Exhibit 5, “Oregon Department of Aviation Connect Oregon III Program Application” response to Question 10.*

Wilsonville and Clackamas County are all in favor of economic development — in the right places under the correct conditions. However, at this time the funding application for the Aurora Airport Control Tower fails the test.

**That is, the Department has in no meaningful way conducted planning or discussions with neighboring jurisdictions to determine potential off-site impacts and mitigation strategies to nearby land-uses and surface transportation facilities from increased activity at the Aurora Airport that the Department predicts will occur by the siting of a new control tower.**

In a “Joint State Agencies Letter to the Metro Reserves Steering Committee” presented during the Urban and Rural Reserves process in April 2009, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) states that:

“The analysis shows that the highways least suitable to accommodate additional trips and most expensive to improve, are I-205... and I-5, especially the segment from Or 217 to south of the Willamette River.” *See Exhibit 6, p 3, “Joint State Agencies Letter to the Metro Reserves Steering Committee,” April 6, 2009.*

ODOT goes on to state that the “Potential to accommodate additional traffic” for highway #1, also known as I-5, from “inside [the Portland metro] UGB and from Wilsonville SCL [southern city limits] to Marion County line” is “Very Low.”

ODOT further found that the Metro:

“2035 RTP [Regional Transportation Plan] identified severe capacity problems on I-5 within and south of existing UGB and at Wilsonville Interchanges. Congestion is especially high in

the segment between I-217 and I-205. Widening of I-5 including Boones [sic] Bridge will be very expensive.”

How expensive? ODOT's response is:

“Huge,” which means “greater than \$500 M [million]”

*See Exhibit 7, pp 2-3, “Joint State Agencies Letter to the Metro Reserves Steering Committee,” April 6, 2009, Exhibit 1: Oregon Department of Transportation Comments on Candidate Urban and Rural Reserves.”*

What roads and highways might we assume would be used by an increased number of businesses and commuting employees at the Aurora Airport as activity increases? The answer would appear to be Clackamas County roads and I-5, which as ODOT has noted, is already reaching capacity at the nearby Boone Bridge.

So, who really gets the predicted benefit and who gets stuck with land-use impacts and paying for the potential \$500 million-plus of off-site surface transportation costs impacts of increased activity produced by a new control tower? Neither the Aviation Department nor Marion County appears to have the jurisdiction or the funding to mitigate these impacts, but they appear willing to reap the benefits.

It may very well be that a control tower at the Aurora Airport would increase safety and produce more activity as the Department suggests. However, the Aviation Department has made no efforts to study the potential land-use and surface transportation impacts that increased activity at the Aurora Airport could produce when a control tower is installed. The Department's application for ConnectOregon III support is premature.

Therefore, the City of Wilsonville respectfully requests that the Oregon Transportation Commission approves the Aviation Department's Connect Oregon III program application for the Aurora Airport Control Tower subject to two conditions:

1. The funds cannot be released until and after a thorough study is jointly conducted and completed with the participation of ALL of the neighboring jurisdictions within the impact area that includes a thorough analysis of potential land-use and surface transportation impacts and mitigation strategies to deal with the impacts that increased activity at the Aurora Airport that could come about when a control tower is installed; and
2. The study comes back to the Commission for your final approval and adoption for release of the funds.

Commissioners, we thank you for your time and consideration.