



EASTSIDE Service Enhancement Plan

Final Report



June 2016

Dear Reader,

I am proud to present the Eastside Service Enhancement Plan. This report provides a vision for future TriMet service in the Eastside portion of TriMet's transit district, with recommendations to get you and your fellow community members where you need to go.

Starting in 2012, we took a fresh look at how transit service can be improved throughout the region to support current needs and future visions. Because the needs for improved transit service differs in various parts of the region, we've worked with communities to create shared visions for the future of transit in the Southeast, North/Central, Southwest, Westside and Eastside parts of the region. These visions represent a new era of growth for the TriMet system.

The service enhancement plans are not only visions of the future, but commitments to grow TriMet's system. This commitment was recently bolstered by employers' support for an increase in TriMet's payroll tax rate. This new revenue will be used to implement recommendations from the service enhancement plans, making steps toward this vision each year for the decade to come.

The Eastside vision for future service is the culmination of many hours of meetings with neighborhood groups, employers, social service providers, educational institutions and stakeholders. Community members provided input through open house meetings, surveys, focus groups, and individual discussions. We put in extra effort to gather input from the entire community, especially youth, seniors, minorities, people with low incomes, and non-English speakers. We used demographic research to map common trips, and cities and counties provided input on future growth areas.

The final result is a plan that calls for bus service that connects people to more places, more often, earlier and later. The plan also recommends new community/job shuttles to serve areas that we're unable to serve with full-fledged TriMet service. As you read through this plan, I hope you are as excited about the future of transit in the Portland Metro Region as we are.

Regards,



TriMet General Manager

Line 12, 43, & Orange Line MAX Rider



A note from
TriMet
General Manager,
Neil McFarlane

Introduction

Over the past two years, we spoke with transit riders, residents, neighborhood groups, community-based organizations, social service providers, governments, schools and businesses to develop a shared vision for the future of transit for the communities of East Portland, Gresham, Troutdale, Fairview and Wood Village.

The Eastside is the most racially and ethnically diverse portion of the TriMet service district and the area has a high concentration of low-income households, those with limited English proficiency (LEP), youth and persons with disabilities. Better bus service is imperative to the health and quality of life of Eastside communities. This 20-year-vision will guide the expansion of bus service to help people get where they need to go, improving access to jobs, education, healthy food, affordable housing and essential services.

Creating the Eastside Service Enhancement Plan

With recommendations from stakeholders, data analysis and coordination with government and community partners on existing plans and future growth, we've already been able to develop and share two drafts of this vision for better transit on the Eastside.

Outreach and Engagement To understand needs, strengthen relationships and solicit input on bus service proposals, we reached out to a wide range of stakeholders, including extra efforts to reach traditionally-underrepresented communities of color, limited-English-proficiency (LEP) populations and low-income communities. Engagement tools used to understand the needs of Eastside communities and to gather input and feedback on bus service proposals included community workshops; stakeholder and community meetings and events; hardcopy and online surveys; print and social media announcements; individual stakeholder meetings; neighborhood meetings; focus group discussions held in Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese and Bhutanese; and one-on-one conversations with riders at transit centers and onboard buses. Outreach materials were made available in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Russian (the four most prevalent languages on the Eastside other than English) and translation services to other languages were provided when appropriate.

Research and Analysis We analyzed and mapped Census data, as well as information available from the City of Portland, our own operational data and other sources for insight into transit ridership patterns and concentrations



Maria Gvozdicova (pictured) and Anna Volkova facilitate a conversation in Russian about transit in East Portland and East Multnomah County. This conversation added to the shared vision in this Plan.

of jobs and housing throughout the region. With this information, we connected where people live with where they work. The information included equity factors such as minority, low-income and limited English proficiency households. We used this data to ensure that outreach was provided to traditionally-underrepresented communities.

Individual jurisdictions and community and neighborhood organizations built the foundation we worked from. We will continue to work with partners to help achieve the goals set forth in the East Portland Action Plan, the East Metro Connections Plan, East Portland in Motion and other community plans.

Making Transit Better on the Eastside

Most transit riders and community members on the Eastside told us that they value transit service that gets them where they need to go quickly, conveniently, efficiently and frequently enough to allow flexibility in their travel plans. This plan responds to these needs and desires in the following ways:

Quality of Life Transit is an integral part of the communities on the Eastside and better bus service is imperative to their quality of life. The vision in this plan will improve access to jobs, education, health care, healthier food options, affordable housing and essential services, especially for those that rely on transit as their primary source of transportation.

A Growing Region The demand for transit is growing as our region's economy recovers and the area grows. The Metro area is expected to grow by 400,000 residents and 260,000 jobs by 2035¹. As the population grows substantially, the region expects to see a significant increase in congestion. Traffic congestion not only impacts residents' lives by increasing travel times and worsening air

Line C

New north-south service on SE/NE 148th, NE Airport Way and NE Sandy between the Parkrose Transit Center and SE Clinton.

Line D

New north-south service on SE/NE 162nd and NE 185th between SE Powell and NE Riverside Pkwy.

Line E

New north-south service between the Gresham Transit Center and Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park to serve NW Graham, SE/NE 223rd and the new Wood Village Town Center. TriMet will work closely with the City of Wood Village to identify the best routing through Wood Village Town Center as the timing and scale of future development there becomes clear.

Line 20

Increase to Frequent Service running every 15 minutes or better throughout most hours of the day, seven days a week.

Line 21

Increase frequency and hours of service and change route to serve NE 238th and NE 242nd between Gresham Transit Center and NE Sandy.

Lines 22 and 23

Combine lines to add service in both directions and change route to provide service on NE 148th. Increase frequency and hours of service and add weekend service on Line 23 to match service on Line 22. These improvements would require the extension of NE Fremont to NE 148th.

Line 25

Extend service to SW 257th along NE Glisan and SW Cherry Park and increase frequency and hours of service.

Line 71 (Renumber to Line 73)

Increase to Frequent Service and renumber to Line 73 along SE/NE 122nd between the Parkrose Transit Center and SE 94th and Foster. Split into two bus lines at Parkrose Transit Center.

Line 77

Increase frequency and hours of service.

Line 80

Route change to serve NE Burnside Rd, including Winco and Fred Meyer, and increase frequency and hours of service.

Line 81

Increase frequency and hours of service and add weekend service.

Line 84

Route change to serve SE Palmquist and SE Hogan and increase frequency and hours of service.

Line 87

Increase to Frequent Service along SE 182nd and SE/NE 181st between NE Sandy and SE Powell. Increase frequency and hours of service and add weekend service along NE Airport Way between NE Sandy and the Gateway Transit Center.

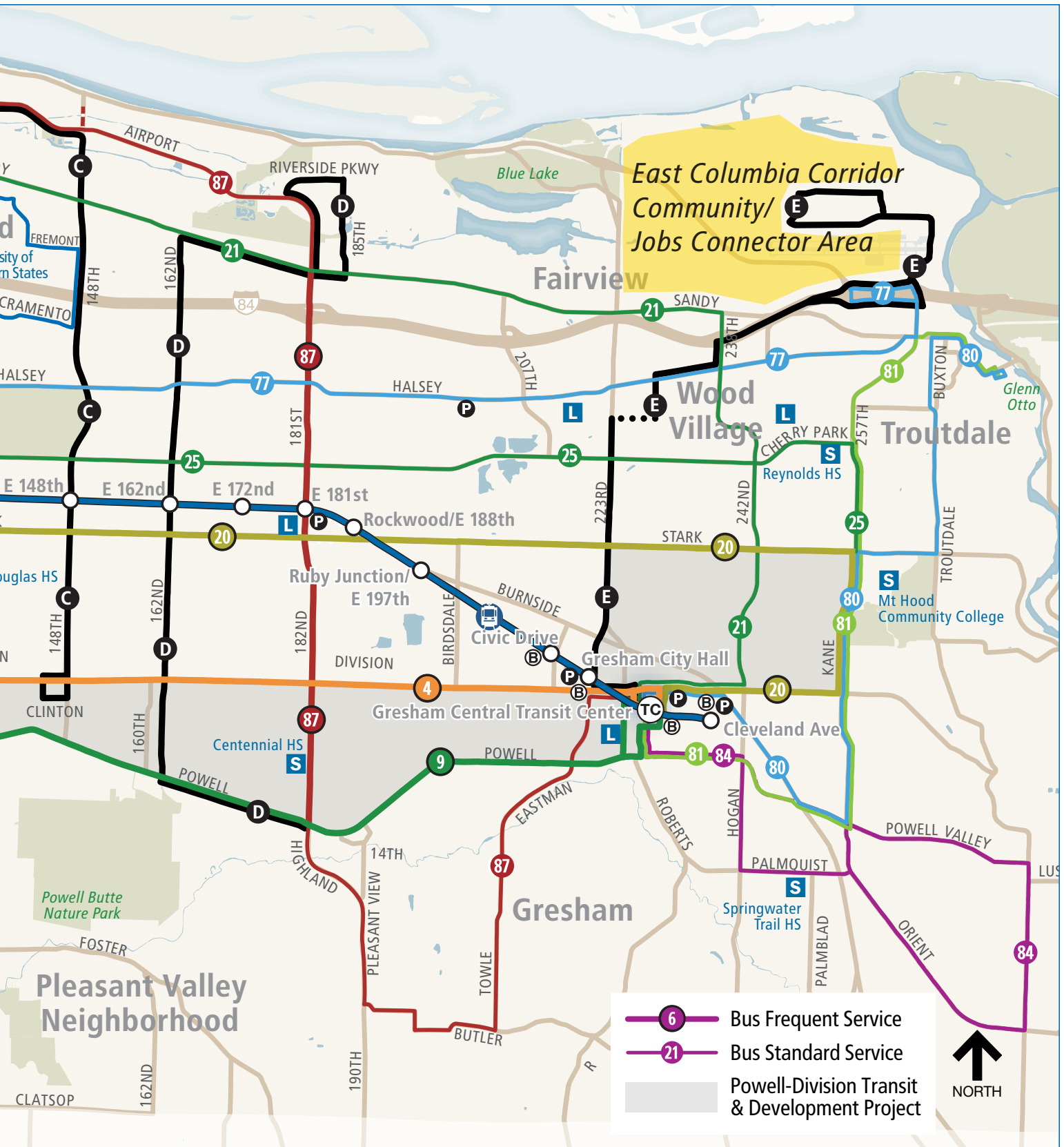
Potentially split into two bus lines at SE Powell and SW Highland to match ridership demand with bus service levels. Change route to serve SW Pleasant View and SW/SE Butler.

East Columbia Corridor Community/Jobs Connector

New community/jobs connector service in the East Columbia Corridor, generally between NE 223rd and the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park.



Future Vision for Eastside Bus Service





“The Rosewood Initiative connects and empowers Rosewood neighbors in East Portland and West Gresham to build a safe, prosperous, vibrant and inclusive community. Our neighbors need and deserve access to affordable, high quality public transportation, especially North/South bus lines.”

— **Jenny Glass**,
Executive Director,
The Rosewood Initiative

quality, it also imposes an economic cost. Companies who are unable to deliver their goods to customers and employees who can't get to their jobs, stunt the region's ability to grow economically and jeopardize the chances for people to seek out new job and educational opportunities. In order to stay ahead of growth and ease congestion, TriMet needs to expand transit service.

¹Source: Metro's 2014 Urban Growth Report

Connecting Portland and Gresham In addition to the proposed bus service improvements in this vision, the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project will make traveling between Gresham and Downtown Portland faster, easier and safer, with more reliable transit service — all to support better access to jobs and educational opportunities. The route and stations for the new transit service are expected to be confirmed in fall 2016. An extensive bus service planning effort will identify further enhancements to support and connect to the new transit service, which could open in four to five years. (For more information, visit oregonmetro.gov/powelldivision.)

Vision for Transit in the Future

The sections below describe some of the specific improvements that will make bus service better on the Eastside of TriMet's Service District. For a map and complete description of improvements see pages 4-5. Much of the new service would be in areas of high minority and low-income populations. Based on what we've learned about the challenges people face today and how these areas will grow in the future, we propose the following changes to bus service:

1. More North-South Service This vision recommends improving or adding new north-south service in areas where there are gaps in service or where some people must walk farther than a quarter-mile to reach their nearest bus stop.

New North-South Service

New Service on 148th New north-south service on SE/NE 148th, NE Airport Way and NE Sandy between the Parkrose Transit Center and SE Clinton will provide access to jobs in the Columbia Corridor and education at David Douglas High School. It will also improve connections to east-west service and the Parkrose Transit Center.

New Service on 162nd New north-south service on SE/NE 162nd and NE 185 Dr. between SE Powell and NE Riverside Parkway will provide access to jobs in the Columbia Corridor and essential services offered at the Rosewood Initiative, as well as other social service providers.

New Service on NE 242nd New north-south service on NE 242nd between the Gresham Transit Center and NE Sandy will provide better connections to education at Reynolds High School and jobs at Gresham Vista.

Improving Existing North-South Service

Frequent Service on SE/NE 122nd Increase frequency along SE/NE 122nd between Lents Town Center and the Parkrose Transit Center to improve connections and access to essential services.

Frequent Service on SE/NE 181st and NE 182nd Increase frequency along SE 182nd and SE/NE 181st to improve access to affordable housing and healthier food options for Rockwood neighbors, education at Centennial High School and jobs in the Columbia Corridor.

More Frequent Service and Longer Hours of Service on NE 238th and NE 242nd A new line would take over service for the Line 21 on NE 238th and provide

a new connection between Gresham Transit Center and the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park to improve access to the East Columbia Corridor, Fairview Village and the Wood Village Town Center.

2. Access to Opportunities This vision recommends more frequency, longer hours of service, weekend service and route changes on many existing lines to improve the quality of life on the Eastside. By enhancing existing service, access to the following opportunities will improve:

Jobs

Line 87 Increasing frequency and hours of service and adding weekend service along Airport Way will improve access to jobs in the Columbia Corridor.

New Line E New service along NW Graham Road and NE Marine Dr. will provide access to jobs in the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park.

Affordable Food Options

Line 87 Frequent Service on SE/NE 181st and NE 182nd will improve Rockwood Neighborhood residents' access to affordable and healthy food options.

Line 80 Changing the route to NE Burnside and increasing frequency and hours of service will improve access to Winco and Fred Meyer.

Education

Line 25 Extending service to SW 257th and increasing frequency and hours of service will provide direct access to Mount Hood Community College and Reynolds High School.

Lines 22 and 23 More coverage and more frequency will improve access to Parkrose High School and the University of Western States.

3. Making transit more reliable and accessible

To help our riders get where they need to go quickly, efficiently and with minimal delay, we'll continue to work with cities, counties, and the Oregon Department of Transportation. For example, the City of Portland Bureau of Transportation is leading the Growing Transit Communities effort and working in partnership with TriMet to support faster bus service in certain corridors, including along 122nd, Airport Way, and Halsey in Portland.

We'll identify opportunities for transit signal priority and other construction and service improvements, including intersection improvements, limited stop services and even more significant bus line projects. Generally, we focus on the highest ridership and most frequent lines for these kinds of improvements to maximize the number of people who benefit from our efforts.

Passing Through Flexible Federal Funds for Transit Service There are areas where the businesses and/or homes are so scattered or are located on so much land that there aren't enough people within walking distance of bus stops to cost-effectively provide fixed route bus service. In some instances there aren't



This vision recommends service enhancements that would improve access to education.



“TriMet's east side service enhancements will be instrumental in helping employees access the expanding job centers at Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park and Gresham Vista Business Park in East County and support the area's growing and diverse workforce.”

— **Bill Wyatt,**
Executive Director,
Port of Portland

enough roadway connections to allow people walk to and from bus stops safely. These areas, unfortunately, are often in industrial and warehousing areas where entry-level and living wage jobs are available, but are too spread out to support fixed-route transit service. However, TriMet has a long history of helping communities by passing on federal funds to other organizations to operate their own smaller, flexible transportation services in order to meet the unique needs of residents and employees.

For example, the North Hillsboro Industrial Area has seen a growing number of entry-level industrial and warehouse jobs, but does not have fixed-route transit service. Ride Connection, in partnership with the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, the City of Hillsboro, Washington County and the State of Oregon, was able to launch the North Hillsboro LINK because we were able to pass on state and federal grant funds. Similar arrangements exist in Tualatin, Swan Island and Forest Grove. The East Columbia Corridor Area is a candidate for Community/Jobs Connector service on the Eastside and is described below and shown on the map on pages 4-5.

East Columbia Corridor Community/Jobs

Connector A community/jobs connector service could connect residents, riders and students to employment located in the East Columbia Corridor, generally between NE 223rd and the Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park.

Making this Vision a Reality

Implementing this vision will depend on available resources and an ongoing annual review of opportunities and priorities with an emphasis on equity, demand, productivity, connections and growth. In September 2015, TriMet's Board of Directors approved an increase in the payroll and self-employment tax rate with revenues dedicated to new and improved service. This new revenue will fund a portion of this vision, phased in as the revenue grows over 10 years. The first service expansions began March 2016-17 with improvements on the Eastside including:

Line 4 Added early morning and late-night weekday service to accommodate early and late work shifts.

Line 20 Increased bus frequency on weekdays during peak and mid-day hours to better meet demand.

Line 21 Added weekday trips during rush hours to better connect workers to jobs.

Line 71 Increased frequency of service on 122nd Avenue. Separated Line 71 in two at Parkrose Transit Center and re-numbered and renamed the part of the line that serves between Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center and SE 94th and Foster Road to Line 73 – 122nd Avenue. This is the first in several planned improvements in service that go hand-in-hand with the City of Portland's improvements to sidewalks, accessibility, and crossings along 122nd. TriMet will continue to pursue such improvements because we know every transit rider is a pedestrian (or uses a mobility device) first and last.



Transit Service is an integral part of the communities on the Eastside and better bus service on Line 71 along SE/NE 122nd Avenue is imperative to their quality of life. This vision for future service calls for Frequent Service on Line 71.

Line 87 Added more mid-day service between 182nd/ Powell and the Gateway Transit Center.

We're committed to improving transit service on the Eastside and will continue to conduct research, include more data as it becomes available and meet with community interests to prioritize service expansions and work towards identifying new resources to expand transit service. We will also work with our city and county partners for future service to Pleasant Valley and the Wood Village Town Center, which will be guided by the timing and scale of future development. Overall, this Eastside Service Enhancement Plan will serve as a route map for each year's Annual Service Plan process where we will make step-wise enhancements toward this vision.



Available in other formats.