



## **SW Corridor Light Rail Project Community Advisory Committee (CAC)**

**Thursday, March 5, 2020, 5:30-7 p.m.  
Portland Building, Rm 108  
1120 SW 5th Avenue, Portland**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **Present**

Chris Carpenter – FocusPoint Communications  
Rachael Duke – Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH)  
Bill Garyfallou – Property/business owner  
Michael Harrison – Oregon Health & Sciences University (OHSU)  
Melissa Moncada – Engineer, West Portland Park Neighborhood  
Julia Michel – Portland State University (PSU)  
Ramtin Rahmani – Tigard resident, bicycle commuter to OHSU  
Lindsey Wise – Tigard Transportation Committee, transit commuter to PSU

#### **Not Present**

Debra Dunn – Synergy Resources Group Business Consultant  
Calista Fitzgerald – Designer, Former Tigard Planning Commission Chair  
Ethan Frelly – Tigard Chamber of Commerce, business owner  
Angela Handran – Tualatin renter Transit commuter to PSU  
Chad Hastings – CenterCal Properties Bridgeport Village  
Bob Ludlum – Washington County resident, Veteran's advocate  
Rebecca Ocken – Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania Campus  
Elise Shearer – Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee, St. Anthony Parish  
Eric Sporre – PacTrust

#### **Welcome & Introduction**

**Brandy Steffen, JLA**

Brandy reviewed the agenda and announced to the public in attendance that they could address comments or questions during the public comment period or speak with TriMet staff in the hallway if they had questions over the course of the meeting. No changes were made to the previous meeting's summary.

Josh announced that there was an opening for Tualatin representation on the CAC because Angela Handran has resigned due to other commitments. He asked for the CAC members to let him know if they have recommendations for a new member.

The CAC introduced themselves, followed by two new TriMet staff members: Aster Moulton, a new Community Affairs Representative and Guy Benn, a Program Manager in Transit Oriented Development. TriMet staff present were Fiona Cundy (Urban Design Project Manager), Guy

Benn (Program Manager of Transit Development), and Josh Mahar, Libby Winter, and Aster Moulton (Community Affairs Representatives). Metro staff present were Andy Shaw (Director of Government Affairs) and Matt Bihn (Principal Transportation Planner). City of Portland staff present were Teresa Boyle and Patrick Sweeney. City of Tigard staff present were Lauren Scott.

## Public Comment

One member of the public addressed the committee.

**Art Lewellan** is an opponent of the project. He has been an advocate of light rail for last 20 years. He demands high standards but he doesn't believe this project meets those standards. He believes if TriMet were to reveal the impacts this light rail line could really have, then many others would become opponents like he is. He disagrees with tearing up the corridor to build a light rail line because it would eliminate the future possibility of developing it into a better bus corridor. He views transit as a necessity in the age of global warming but prefers that TriMet invest in improving its existing bus system rather than building more light rail.

## Overview of Metro 2020 transportation investment measure

Andy Shaw, Metro, Director of Government Affairs

Andy discussed Metro's upcoming funding measure for November 2020, which is focused on getting ahead of growing traffic congestion, improving safety, and meeting the needs of smaller communities. To do this, Metro needs to raise funds beyond what the state legislature can provide. A 35-member Task Force made a recommendation for a package of corridors to fund, the Metro Council will decide to refer this to the ballot in late May 2020.

**Corridors Investments** – There are 13 Tier 1 corridor recommendations, including the Southwest Corridor, 82<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Tualatin Valley Highway, and McLoughlin Boulevard, East 122<sup>nd</sup>, 162<sup>nd</sup>, and 181<sup>st</sup> Avenues; E/W Burnside and the bridge; SW 185<sup>th</sup> Avenue; SE Powell; and Central City.

**Regionwide Programs** – The investment measure is also examining ten regionwide programs (such as safety hotspots, revitalizing main streets, regional walking and biking connections, anti-displacement strategies, affordable housing options) that will be developed for implementation by multiple jurisdictions beyond the corridors identified above.

**Oversight and Accountability** – Metro is working with the community and partners to create anti-displacement and equitable development strategies.

**Advancing Regional Policy** – The total investment would be \$7.43 billion with \$3.81 billion Tier 1 Measure investments, \$2.62 billion in leveraged FTA and local investments and \$1 billion in regional programs.

## Conceptual Design Report Follow Up

TriMet

Josh said TriMet has given 23 presentations so far and has 17 more presentations scheduled. 310 people attended the four, English-speaking open houses and the online open house had

about 8,000 visitors. He highlighted the positive feedback they had received from the public, noting that each proposed light rail station had a greater than 50% approval rating; the top ratings (all at 81% approval) were for Custer Street, 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Bonita Road and Bridgeport Transit Center. The outreach team will write a full public engagement report to share at the CAC next meeting.

## Questions & Discussion

Brandy Steffen, JLA

Throughout the meeting, committee members asked clarifying questions and expressed additional comments or concerns. Below are the questions and responses (when provided).

**Ramtin** wasn't comfortable with Metro's funding ask, specifically that if the SW Corridor project is moving forward without complete sidewalks along Barbur Boulevard how can Metro be sure that other projects will be committed to providing safe walking and biking facilities.

**Andy** responded that Kittelson is helping design the plan and will outline the project elements that Metro Council approves. All elements will be transparent in the voter's pamphlet. Metro will rely on ODOT, TriMet and the City of Portland to build the SW Corridor and be accountable for it. He agreed that it was important to hear from the community about their needs and acknowledged that oftentimes a project must be engineered down to remain within the scope of its budget.

**Josh** noted that the project would potentially add sidewalks to Barbur Boulevard between Luradel Street and 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, but will confirm the current scope by the next meeting.

Later in the meeting, Josh added that the jurisdictional transfer of Barbur Boulevard from ODOT to PBOT does not extend south of the Barbur Transit Center. This makes the cross section for the south section a bit more complicated.

**Ramtin** commented that the project has already been altered/watered down and it hasn't gone to voters yet. Because of this, he thought it was hard to trust the plan.

**Andy** reiterated that Metro wants to be held accountable.

**Bill** asked if there were lessons learned regarding business and residential impacts during construction that Metro had accumulated from previous light rail projects. He was concerned about the business tax and payroll tax funds required to finance the project.

**Andy** responded that there are anti-displacement measures, community stability strategies, and equity processes in place that the project team will follow. There is funding available that could help with community business stabilization, affordability, land banking, or other elements that can help Metro and other jurisdictions think through impacts along the corridor and mitigate them.

**Bill** asked if customers would have access to his parking lot during construction and how the contractor would mitigate parking restrictions. He has heard this question from nearby business owners, as well.

**Josh** responded that TriMet takes pride in its practice of active listening and it's commitment to working with business during construction. TriMet meets with businesses in advance of

construction to understand and anticipate their needs better. Community Affairs liaisons are available throughout the construction process to be a single-point contact for businesses and property owners to help alleviate concerns.

**Michael** requested that the CAC see a diagram of the Conceptual Design Report (CDR) and the proposed sidewalk locations south of the Barbur Transit Station. (Note: We will include additional information at the April meeting).

**Ramtin** added that he would like to know more about the bike facilities for the recommended Tier 1 corridors. Why weren't they more fleshed out? Will there be only a painted bike lane or a separated bike lane?

**Andy** said, regarding the Metro regional projects, that "a complete street" design varies from corridor to corridor. There are protected bike lanes in some locations but painted bike lanes in others.

**Ramtin** asked what standards they would follow.

**Andy** replied that Metro uses urban design standards for all arterials or roads that they fund. They will likely borrow from ODOT's recently adopted urban design standards.

**Rachel** commented that it is great if people who live along the corridor are allowed to stay but not so great if they will be displaced.

**Andy** replied that Metro understands the housing crisis and in fact stopped the transportation investment measure from going to the ballot in 2018 to focus on the housing measure.

**Ramtin** asked if the team had given attention to climate strategy and environmental goals, particularly related to air quality?

**Andy** responded that Metro is finalizing the project list now and they conducted traffic-demand modeling for the recommended corridors/projects. There are climate change benefits to this project, although they are not enormous. On a larger regional level, some of the priority projects are considering congestion pricing and road tolling.

**Ramtin** asked if the project team would offer priority to minority-owned construction firms and training opportunities?

**Andy** responded that Metro's Construction Career Pathways Project (C2P2) is working to address how to get more people of color and women on job sites.

**Bill** asked how law enforcement agencies will keep up with policing the new project corridors after they are constructed. He was concerned that adding such increased mobility for people around the region would increase the number of homeless people and drug users

**Andy** responded that Metro doesn't engage law enforcement directly, but he would take this law enforcement question back to Metro.

**Lindsey** noted that greenspace considerations, stormwater, and tree replacement was included in the SW Corridor project and wondered if it was included in Metro's other projects, as well.

**Andy** responded that the job of Metro is limited, in that they manage projects such as housing measures and parks measures. In some corridors, resources can be blended and those investments can better handle the larger quality of life desires the community has.

**Lindsey** asked if there would be an impact to traffic flow on Barbur Boulevard due to the addition of traffic lights. She was curious if more cars would be stuck in traffic there.

**Josh** responded that the traffic analysis study is not yet complete, but it would be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), and he would bring it to the group to discuss. He added that the traffic delays that could arise due to light rail would be no worse than the traffic delays projected for 2035 if there were no light rail.

**Rachel** commented that although she likes the flyer for equitable housing--that was in the packet--she is concerned that it is not being integrated for outcomes and planning efforts; requesting that efforts be made to integrate the conversation with the corridor planning work. She also wondered about the recent *Willamette Weekly* article that stated there has been a reduction in the expected ridership on the SW Corridor.

**Josh** responded that the projected ridership went down slightly due to a new calculation in Park & Ride spaces. The original DEIS included the total maximum of 4,000 spaces while the current design includes around 2,000 spaces.

**Matt Bihn** further responded that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requested the project planners assume the highest number of Park & Ride spaces in their study, knowing that the total ridership number would likely decrease when a more concrete number of Park & Ride spaces was determined. Park & Ride spaces were reduced after public engagement on Park & Ride in summer 2019. The current estimates help minimize impacts to surrounding properties and traffic.

**Rachel** asked who she could contact about pushing the housing equity question.

**Josh** replied that she should continue to contact Dave Unsworth as she has in the past.

**Lindsey** asked if the proposed Hall Station Park & Ride which is separate from the existing Park & Ride at Tigard Transit Center, is something that the City of Tigard wanted.

**Lauren Scott** of the City of Tigard responded that the City preferred the Park & Rides to be co-located.

**Fiona** added that TriMet is still working with the City of Tigard to come up with the best solution and configuration. Tigard has expressed a desire for more parking in downtown. While federal transit funds cannot be used for non-transit uses, there is an agreement in the MOU between City of Tigard and TriMet to explore shared use agreements. TriMet recently provided examples of shared use agreements to the City of Tigard to advance this conversation. The project team will try and provide an update at the April meeting.

**Josh** commented that the conversation around Park & Rides has been the most contentious topic on this project. TriMet asked for a lot of public opinion when selecting Park & Ride locations and selected the current option, which includes four surface lots and a large parking structure at Bridgeport, based on public input in Summer 2019.

**Ramtin** commented that it wasn't acceptable to defer to ODOT's rule about not having sidewalks and bike lanes. He asked why the City of Portland isn't taking jurisdictional transfer all the way to Tigard. He disagreed with simply painting bike lanes rather than make them protected lanes.

**Josh** responded that there are a lot of factors to balance with this project, as they are not scoped to rebuild the roadway but rather to improve it as best they can since the MAX will not run along Barbur Boulevard in this segment.

**Michael** commented that there are a lot of perspectives at OHSU regarding the project. Some people would like a lot of Park & Ride locations and some would like bike improvements only. Patients and recreationist would like to park and have access up the hill, as well.

**Josh** told the committee he would give them a list of discussion topics in advance of the next meeting.

**Brandy** concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and reminding the group that the next CAC meeting would be April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the same location.