



SW Corridor Light Rail Project Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

**Thursday, May 2, 2019, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Tigard Public Works Auditorium
8777 SW Burnham St., Tigard**

Meeting Summary

Present

Chris Carpenter – Oregon & Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers
Rachael Duke – Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH)
Ethan Frelly – Tigard Chamber of Commerce, business owner
Bill Garyfallou – Property/business owner
Bob Ludlum – Washington County resident, Veteran’s advocate
Julia Michel – Portland State University (PSU)
Melissa Moncada – Engineer, West Portland Park Neighborhood
Rebecca Ocken – Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania Campus
Ramtin Rahmani – Tigard resident, bicycle commuter to OHSU
Eric Sporre – PacTrust
Elise Shearer – Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee, St. Anthony Parish
Lindsey Wise – Tigard Transportation Committee, transit commuter to PSU

Absent

Debra Dunn – Synergy Resources Group Business Consultant
Calista Fitzgerald – Designer Former Tigard Planning Commission Chair
Angela Handran – Tualatin renter Transit commuter to PSU
Michael Harrison – Oregon Health & Sciences University (OHSU)
Chad Hastings – CenterCal Properties Bridgeport Village

Welcome; introductions; notes/agenda review; future agenda

Jennifer Koozer, TriMet Community Affairs Manager

Jennifer introduced Bob Ludlum, the new member recommended by TriMet’s Committee on Accessible Transportation, representing people with limited mobility, people with disabilities, and seniors. After members introduced themselves, Jennifer then introduced TriMet Community Affairs Representatives: Libby Winter, Josh Mahar, and Amparo Agosto, and Brandy Steffan, who will facilitate future CAC meetings.

There were no edits to the draft notes from April meeting, other than a spelling correction.

Jennifer reviewed the agenda and the future meetings schedule. The group confirmed a combined July/August meeting will be on July 18 with the location to be confirmed later.

Public comment

- **Madeline** – Provided testimony on behalf of Sightline Institute. Free parking at Park and Rides are the least effective way to spend money. With a 25-year lifespan, tax payers are spending about \$5.34 for every weekday a space will be used. To the region’s taxpayers this would be the equivalent of a free transit pass for anyone who shows up at a garage. If we want to maximize transit ridership, Park and Rides are less effective than other options. TriMet’s analysis projected that even if new garages are built for the SW Corridor 85% of future trips will come from foot or transfer trips, not Park and Rides. If we want to minimize congestion and pollution the meaningful solution is not to convince 200 or 500 cars out of the 30,000 that drive to Portland jobs each day to pull off I-5 a few miles farther south. If we want to improve mobility for low-income people the solution is not to offer free parking to several hundred car owning downtown workers.
- **Sherry** – Representing Comcast with comments from Marion Hanes our vice president of external affairs. At the onset Comcast would like to express support for the SW Corridor Project. Comcast has objections to the proposed 74th Avenue alignment options, currently specified as Bonita to Bridgeport Options 4 and 5, on the SW corridor plan. Given the financial impacts, relocation disruptions and substantial customer impacts Comcast urges the adoption of a route that does not include 74th Avenue. Again, Comcast reiterates its support in the project and appreciates the opportunity to comment.
- **Amber** – Oregon State Bar’s general council. First, I wanted to extend our thanks to staff and committee members they’ve done on this project, especially over the past couple of weeks. We’ve had a lot of helpful meetings with staff to get up to speed and understand the new proposals under consideration. So, in terms of the LPA we think it is clear that route has lots of advantages. First, it’s been fully vetted. The committees have had adequate opportunity to assess all of the impacts to local businesses and engage in a full stakeholder process that we value. So it seems like it’s a clear choice. We’re glad to see that you’re headed in that direction and we look forward to having light rail in the area and improving transit to Tigard.
- **Stan** – Owner of Pacific Door Service. I’m on 74th Avenue and I’m speaking for the people on 74th Avenue. People are affected by disruptions on 74th Avenue. I’ve chosen the location of my business because it’s very functional. It’s at the center point of five different entrances and exits to the City. Its property we couldn’t find now again, I’m sure, the way we have it now. Please consider A) impact to us, B) impact to City of Tigard, C) cost.

Eric wanted to add that he has a conflict of interest (PacTrust) regardless of the decision that is made. Jennifer thanked Eric and reminded the group that the last meeting included materials about conflict of interest.

Light rail alignment between Bonita and Bridgeport

Scott Robertson, TriMet Design Manager

- Staff findings and community input
- CAC discussion and recommendations

Scott reminded the committee that the project is in the design and environmental phase and that construction is expected in 2027. The committee's responsibility tonight is to make a recommendation on the alignment to forward to the Steering Committee on May 13. The information Scott presented was shared at the last meeting, as well as three open houses: the six alignment options included:

1. Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) which was in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
2. LPA Elevated
3. LPA Refined
4. 74th Avenue
5. 74th Avenue Refined
6. East of WES

Scott said that the input collected at the open houses and from project partners helped the team recommend that the LPA at-grade refined had the lowest cost, fewest impacts to businesses/residences, fewer delays to the overall project schedule (since it would not require supplemental environmental study), and provides service to Bridgeport the fewest business displacements. Since the design is at 5%, there is still a lot of work to be done, including evaluating the current traffic delays at Boones Ferry (the project will need to meet the no-build conditions for 2035; which means that this project cannot make traffic worse than that date's expected traffic without the project). The traffic model should be finished by late summer. The matrix shared with the group was updated recently.

Questions and Responses

- **Ramtin** – Are you looking at widening Boones Ferry?
 - When the study is done in the fall, we'll find out about possible mitigation options, such as a previously proposed project to widen to 5 lanes.
- **Bill** – Why are the impacts to wetlands greater on option 3? Can you discuss that mitigation?
 - I will follow up with you about that (the design team took another look at these calculations and revised the impact to 0.1 acres for the LPA At-Grade Revised option).
- **Eric** – What if we end up with more money? Is there a way to elevate this route in the future?
 - Yes, we proceed in a way that doesn't preclude us to elevate the structure. We expect that to cost approximately \$55 million more.

Scott reminded the group that they learned about relocation impacts (full and partial) at a previous meeting. He showed the group a more visual way of understanding these impacts. He also reviewed the difficult intersection at Upper Boones Ferry at Sequoia and 72nd Avenue. With the current high level of traffic, this coordination of intersections is difficult to coordinate, but a new model is being created to create a plan that will allow the signals to communicate with one another and create a safe and efficient system. The team is also incorporating future projects (outside of this one) and how those will influence this project. Scott also reviewed maps of projected ridership and low-income populations.

Questions and Responses

- **Elise** – Wondering about the social justice issues for people who can't afford to live in Tigard and they live further away and want to drive to the MAX to commute by train.
 - The hope is that as we continue to refine the project we will create a more equitable SW corridor that encourages people to walk/bike to trains.
- **Elise** – There are many people being forced to raise their transportation costs by moving further out; not just housing costs are rising.

Scott presented the input collected since January 2019. While the responses were mixed, overall we heard support for the LPA. Based on that input and the design work staff findings support pursuing the LPA at-grade refined option. Jennifer added that a few of the comments were from people who were supportive of 74th Avenue, because they wanted a station on Upper Boones Ferry that would be closer to Durham. That walkshed, she added, would serve more residential areas with a lower density of jobs compared to the LPA.

Questions and Responses

- **Ethan** = What did you do to not affect the Village Inn?
 - We are still refining that but we're thinking a Park & Ride and bus hub could fit on the other side of Lower Boones Ferry, which would avoid impacting that building.
- **Bob** = Does LPA 3 have a lesser environmental impact? What about tree canopy? Isn't there an impact for that?
 - It is shown as the highest wetland impact (the design team took another look at these calculations and revised the impact to 0.1 acres for the LPA At-Grade Revised option). We haven't looked at individual tree canopy yet, but the LPA runs from Bonita to Bridgeport along the rail line so there is less of a tree impact anticipated.
- **Lindsey** = Was the elevated option not recommended because of cost?
 - Yes, we are currently more than \$300 million over budget, so want a viable project that goes to Bridgeport, which means reducing costs where possible. That meant that the at-grade option was more viable.
- **Ramtin** = The current model of the at-grade option does not include bikes, so widening a road now could be overkill for 2035. If the no-build option says to

prepare an at-grade crossing, and you add light rail and that is the reason for the at-grade crossing.

- We can't add anything to the no-build model. We assumed Upper Boones Ferry has latent demand and we perceived that it will hold more traffic and draw more people; that is something we'll need to consider.
- **Ramtin** = So spending money on it might make it worse?
 - That is correct.

Jennifer asked the group if they concur with the staff findings for LPA 3 (at-grade refined)? All committee members agreed with this recommendation. Jennifer asked if they would like the Steering Committee to consider anything, specifically:

- **Melissa** - Make it a safe crossing, especially for biking/walking on Upper Boones Ferry Road.
- **Chris** – Clarify that you're looking at the potential for widening the road and traffic mitigation for future elevation options.
- **Bill** – Requested strong support for relocated businesses.
- **Ramtin** – Are you considering congestion pricing with the 2035 no-build? The Rose Quarter project is dependent on tolling on I-5. Do we take it into account?
 - Since that isn't a policy yet, we can't take that into account at this point.
- **Elise** – There is a lot of freight at the intersection of 72nd Ave/Boones Ferry and they often have trouble turning which causes backups and delays. How can we avoid that and ensure that all of the traffic signals are communicating to each other?
 - If we touch the corner, we bring it up to current standards and we can design it to easily accommodate truck turns.

Marquam Hill Connector

Carol Mayer Reed, Urban Design Integration Team

- Update on options and community input
- (Note: Steering Committee decision extended to June)

Carol provided a visual update on the Marquam Hill connector, building off the previous meeting's detailed discussion. The intent is to connect Gibbs Station with the many institutions on the hill and a Green Ribbon Committee is working through the details. Most of the hillside is park land and in a conservation zone. There is no clear dispersal point or attractor, which means that people are going to multiple locations on the hill. There is a potential hospital expansion being planned now. As we understand the different modes, we will figure out the costs and then come back in June to narrow to a preferred option/mode but we won't have an alignment at that time. There is a June 4 City Council Work Session where this information will be shared, as well as at the Steering Committee on June 6, where a decision will be made.

We want to minimize 4(f)/public park land and tie into the area to limit the visual impacts. Looked at ways to go over/under the park including:

1. Bridge = Open the views while limiting the impacts on the landscape with elevators (2) and potential bike hub at the bottom; however, there were some safety concerns.
 - **Elise** = Could the elevator be expandable in the future? Possibly to 4?
 - We could look at the capacity for expanding as well as the infrastructure (sidewalks, bridge, etc.) needed.
 - **Bob** = Will there be pedestrian lights/signals for safety around the light rail?
 - That will be decided upon need, but there will be safe crossings.
 - **Bill** = What are you doing for illumination? There are employees working 24-hours a day. Will there be access?
 - We had a lot of notes about safety but then also impacts to nature/birds. Access varies based on the mode, but we expect a bridge/elevator to be open all hours.
2. Inclined elevator = There is one in Salt Lake City; we don't have one in Oregon. There is limited walking, it feels safe, and is weather protected, with maintenance stairs on the side. There would be visual impacts with tree removal, but there are longer and shorter options that could vary in impact. This is a new technology but we expect the tram operators to be able to maintain.
 - **Rachel** = Are there staffing or security needs for the different modes? Have you considered that and is that included in the cost?
 - Yes, we have had conversations with the people who build these inclined elevators. We would expect this mode to close at certain hours because there would be an operator.
 - **Ethan** = Would TriMet be in charge of maintenance and operation? My big concern about that, in LA there is a system that is always broken. Elevator would be easier to fix.
 - We are looking at short term shuttles with any outage (for any modes).
 - **Bob** = The manufacturer is in Switzerland. Is there any US manufacturer?
 - The manufacturer is in Switzerland. However, this is a Federally funded project which has a Buy America requirement and so we could either get an exception or try to ensure that the rest of the system (rails, building, etc.) are sourced in the US.
3. Aerial tram = This can only go to the upper campus; there is a lot of tree removal and big towers. The benefit is that we have and know this mode but it is expensive for operations, capital, and maintenance. It also has limited capacity and must have a certain distance for it to be beneficial.
 - **Elise** = There was concern about an extra fee to use.
 - **Ramtin** = Is the incline elevator a different wait time?
 - It's about the same.
4. Tunnel + elevator = We looked at location and sensitivity of drilling; what disruption does that have on the specialized medical procedures on the hill. While it maintains the visual integrity of the hillside, it's very expensive and there are a lot of risk factors since you don't know what's underground. There were

also safety/security concerns for the long distance to walk through the 800ft tunnel.

- **Julia** = Do all options have limited hours of operation?
 - We think this is open to debate.
- **Eric** = What was the base case/placeholder in the DEIS?
 - \$13 million for a bridge/elevator.

The Green Ribbon committee prefers a bridge/elevator or inclined elevator due to the versatility of getting to Terwilliger and transferring to other modes.

Questions and Responses

- **Ramtin** – All of these options leave you at Terwilliger and the responses to the surveys were about access. All of these options add 20 minutes to your commute. I would like to have had a result closer to the locations; it's a huge hill and you want to make sure people have a chance to feel like a first class citizen not stranded at the terminus.
 - It's been very hard to determine an end location/destination; we acknowledge the constraints of the location; however, there are a lot of connections with in the campus that would allow people to get to their location. We are working with OHSU to get more information, but we don't think that one location is going to solve the problem.
- **Chris** = When talking with CAT how did their preferences break out?
 - The ad-hoc group is only 5 people, but they had a lot of concern with the tram for people with visual impairments since the current tram is difficult to use. There was also a concern about distance/safety for the tunnel. The bridge/elevator is familiar and they were intrigued with the inclined elevator.
- **Rachel** = Did you cost out options with multiple dispersal locations or two stops?
 - For some of the modes, you'd have to have two modes, one to lower and one to upper campus. There are also site issues that don't allow for a straight alignment (runs into different buildings or conservation areas of the hillside).
- **Ethan** = Could you have two bridges to get you to the upper campus?
 - There are campus connections that would get you to the upper campus.
- **Elise** = How likely will it be that the new hospital expansion will be built, allowing people to use that to get around?
 - They are currently in review and show space for public elevator.
- **Elise** = For any option you need to have enough space to expand/wait safely to get off MAX or wait for the bus.
 - Yes, you're right. Some modes have different dispersal impacts based on the number of people on each mode. That's why it's so hard to predict all use and impacts.

Park & Rides

Fiona Cundy, TriMet Urban Design Project Manager

- Introduction to process for defining Park & Ride sizes

Fiona started the conversation about station access and Park & Rides. She highlighted the fact that there are lots of variables that go into this process, which will be considered.

Park & Rides were originally designed to bring people from low density to high density because that was thought to be the only way to get people to ride transit; however, that idea has changed over the years. Fiona presented data collected from TriMet, including a Park & Ride Policy from 2005 and annual utilization surveys. People tend to use the Park & Ride closest to their home and their decision is tied to the cost/parking restrictions at their destination (higher parking costs means more Park & Ride use). There is also higher use when there are fewer other modes available. It's very expensive to build either surface or structure Park & Rides and cost effectiveness is a big piece for FTA funds. We also want to consider greenhouse gas reduction and future-proofing stations either for future redevelopment or new modes.

Questions and Responses

- **Bill** = Have you ever thought of working with private property to take advantage of several nodes? Developing parking is a huge deal breaker in attracting a developer.
 - We are talking with our peers in other cities and partnerships like that are promising.
- **Bob**= What research have you looked at for monthly charge for parking?
 - Seattle is implementing HOV promotion, reserve a spot for HOV. We are looking into that.

Next CAC meeting

Thursday, June 6, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Tigard Public Works Auditorium, 8777 SW Burnham St., Tigard