



**SWC Steering Committee**  
**Tigard City Hall: 13125 SW Hall Blvd.**  
**September 23, 2019**

**Members present:**

- **TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey, Chair**
- **Portland Bureau of Transportation Director Chris Warner**
- **Durham Mayor Gery Schirado**
- **Metro Councilor Craig Dirksen**
- **Tigard Mayor Jason Snider**
- **Tualatin City Councilor Robert Kellogg**
- **Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers**

Doug Kelsey opened the meeting by welcoming committee members, guests and staff, and by reviewing the agenda, including the future meetings to be scheduled. The committee approved the notes from the last meeting.

**Cost and funding update: scenarios for full project and MOS definition**

**Leah Robbins**, TriMet Director of the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Project, provided an overview of the current project cost gap and potential changes to the project scope, with decisions expected in October/November.

**Malu Wilkinson**, Metro Investment Areas Manager, presented Metro's 2040 Growth Concept map. She noted that the planning and building of the regional transit system has been in support of managing regional growth. She stated that the SW Corridor is the last major area of the region that is not served by light rail, and that workers and people in the SW Corridor region have fewer choices about how to get around. Malu said light rail will provide a backbone for better transit choices. She explained that a line extending to Bridgeport serves the most riders and is the most competitive project when looking to complete for federal funding.

**Malu** noted that the project will serve workers in all parts of the region. She shared a graphic that explained there is a nearly equal number of commuters going into Portland as are traveling to Tigard and Tualatin from Portland. She emphasized that getting LRT into the SW Corridor will bring better transit to workers. Malu concluded that the project ending in Bridgeport supports our regional goals.

**Leah** then reviewed the cost gap between the proposed funding assumptions and the current cost of the project. She detailed the scope refinements incorporated since July in various geographic areas of the project, resulting in a total cost savings of about \$74 million.

Leah then reviewed the funding assumptions since July, including incorporating the Jurisdictional Transfer funds (approximately \$65 million) between ODOT and the City of Portland. She then reviewed potential project scope refinements. She explained that



since July, the project team has looked at potential scope refinements on Barbur Boulevard that could result in savings of over \$100 million. She presented those options, both within the City of Portland on Barbur Boulevard:

“Narrow Barbur” has a lower impact design because it has a smaller footprint, affecting fewer properties, but it includes the removal of an auto lane in areas where technically viable.

A “Hybrid” concept has elements of Narrow Barbur, but on a portion of it, from SW Custer to 30th Avenue, the alignment moves to the side of Barbur and runs along I-5. She then referred to a [handout](#) that details the locations and concepts, and what the team is considering as viable for each option.

Leah said the expected ridership of either refinement option would remain about the same, as opposed to not doing one of them. Both refinement options reduce potential private property impacts and relocations. She said there is a trade-off for traffic impacts. Leah noted that the technical viability of either option is under study by the team, including traffic diversions through neighborhoods, plus impacts on the jurisdictional transfer and station areas.

Leah explained that the Narrow Barbur option eliminates one through auto lane in each direction from SW Capital Highway to SW Briar and from SW Custer to Barbur Transit Center. This concept tries to minimize impacts to properties adjacent to Barbur, and has an impact on traffic lanes, while still rebuilding Barbur in its entirety, with the alignment running down the center of Barbur. Leah shared an example of this concept, citing an existing rail system in Phoenix, Arizona.

**Robert Kellogg, Tualatin City Councilor** asked Leah how these concepts impact stations.

**Leah** replied that alignment widens at stations located at intersections.

Leah then gave an overview of the Hybrid option, which starts similarly to the Narrow Barbur option, but moves off Barbur from SW Custer to 30th Avenue. She stated that both options would rebuild viaducts including bicycle and pedestrian facilities. She noted that the illustration shows the same general station areas; same number of stations in the same areas as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

**Kelly Betteridge**, TriMet Capital Planning Manager, presented funding scenarios to frame the discussion on the technical decisions. She stated that there are three strategies to close the \$400 million gap. The strategies include just increasing funding, increasing funding and reducing scope, or just reducing scope.

Kelly then reviewed four concept scenarios that could occur for the project to stay on schedule for a 2027 opening:



Scenario 1A, includes the project ending in Bridgeport, with Barbur refinements (removes approximately \$200 million worth of project scope) and an additional approximately \$200 million in additional funding from project partners.

Scenario 1B includes the project ending near Upper Boones Ferry with the intent, in the future, that the project would extend to Bridgeport. This scenario includes approximately \$400 million in reduction of project scope on Barbur, but no additional funding from project partners.

Scenario 2A includes the project ending near Upper Boones Ferry with the Locally Preferred Alternative design, and with the intent, in the future, that the project would extend to Bridgeport. This scenario includes adding approximately \$200 million in additional funding from project partners with removal of approximately \$200 million of project scope on Barbur.

Scenario 2B includes the project ending near the Hall Boulevard station in Tigard with the Locally Preferred Alternative design with the intent, in the future, that the project would extend to Bridgeport. No additional funding would be needed from project partners, and there would be a reduction of \$400 million worth of scope from the project.

Kelly affirmed that there are many variables, and these conceptual scenarios are meant to help frame the conversation. She noted these concepts discussed with the CAC earlier this month. Kelly said the CAC voiced that getting to Bridgeport is very important to them, but had concerns with the potential Barbur Refinement impacts. Neighbors had concerns about potential for cut through traffic due to the reduction of auto lanes on Barbur.

**Doug Kelsey** thanked Leah and staff for their work to reduce project scope and opened the discussion. He emphasized that the Committee should consider the balances and tradeoffs as they work toward a decision.

**Councilor Kellogg** asked how not getting the light rail line to Bridgeport would affect the potential for federal funding.

**Kelly** replied all scenarios were competitive per federal guidelines, but that that option 1A is the strongest option, scores the highest and is the most competitive for federal funding.

**Councilor Kellogg** then asked if the project were to end at Upper Boones Ferry or Hall, how those stations would be affected, such as a parking garage, right of way acquisition or land costs.

**Leah** answered that the total parking capacity is assumed to be the same for all scenarios. The cost of the Bridgeport Park & Ride garage, is absorbed into the capital cost of the other scenarios, potentially spread among Park & Rides at 68th Ave, 53rd Ave and/or Barbur Transit Center.



**Councilor Kellogg** stated his support to find additional funding to get have the light rail line end at Bridgeport.

**Chris Warner, Director of the Portland Bureau of Transportation**, thanked the team for their presentation. He said the he recognizes that getting to Bridgeport is very important and the cost savings do need to be explored. The impacts to local traffic, emergency access, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities for the Narrow Barbur concept needed to be examined. Chris asked how the stations would fit into the neighborhood plan within the Hybrid concept, how would users access the station, and how would it impact potential development in the area. He noted he will be discussing these questions with the Mayor and City Council in the next few weeks.

**Craig Dirksen, Metro Councilor**, thanked the staff for their work on the project and agreed that additional study is needed. He noted that the Committee must find what's really important, and how to fit that into the project budget. He noted there are tradeoffs in funding and project scope scenarios, and that he is committed to moving the project forward.

**Roy Rogers, Washington County Commissioner**, thanked the project staff for their work on the scenarios. He reiterated Washington County is committed to contributing \$75 million in funding, but if the project doesn't reach Bridgeport, the County may not be able to make the financial investment. Washington County's goal is for the project to reach Bridgeport. Roy noted that the group needed to get a clear message from the City of Portland on what they desire for the project, and asked their vision is for the project.

**Chris Warner** replied that he will discuss the scenarios' impact on neighborhoods with the Portland Mayor and City Council. He stated that they're trying to be good partners to find meaningful savings, and is committed to being part of the decision making in the next few weeks.

**Jason Snider, Mayor of Tigard**, reviewed a list of assumptions he does not he does deem realistic: that that additional funds can be secured, that all funding commitments will be delivered, that there will not be additional unforeseen costs, that traffic issues from Barbur Refinements can be mitigated, and that voters will be supportive of the project if it includes fewer lanes on Barbur. Mayor Snider said he shares in the common goal of the project getting to Bridgeport, but he is not in favor of taking lanes off Barbur and will not be voting for an alternative that includes Barbur lane reductions.

Mayor Snider then said he wants to understand the contingency plan for not getting to Bridgeport. He asked project staff to confirm the locations of possible Minimal Operable Segment (MOS), which staff confirmed: around Hall Boulevard, Bonita Road or Upper Boones Ferry Road. He then asked why members of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) were told that a project terminating at Hall Boulevard would not be federally competitive.



**Kelly** replied that at this month's CAC meeting, she explained that each scenario would be competitive for federal funding. Leah Robbins added that in previous calculations, a Hall terminus did not look competitive, but current information indicates that each of these scenarios would qualify for medium-high ratings.

**Mayor Snider** then asked when a decision would be made about an MOS location.

**Leah** answered that the first decision is the full project scenario, and from that, an MOS would be selected, at the Steering Committee meeting in November.

**Mayor Snider** reviewed the project's purpose and needs statement, noting that if Tualatin cannot be connected to light rail, the logical way to read the statement is to connect downtown Tigard, SW Portland and the central city. He also noted the statement's reference to communities achieving their land use visions, and requested that the project team follow up on his request to explore a terminus station west of Hall, in support of Tigard's vision.

**Gery Schirado, Durham Mayor**, thanked the staff for their work on the project. Mayor Schirado expressed his desire to have more information about the jurisdictional transfer of Barbur between ODOT and the City of Portland. Gery asked what taking Bridgeport out of the equation would do to ridership.

**Leah** replied that removing Bridgeport would reduce projected ridership by about 5,500 riders.

**Mayor Schirado** expressed concerns for ridership if the project does not end in Bridgeport, and affirmed that funding should be advanced toward getting the project to Bridgeport. He needs to know what ODOT and City of Portland think of the scenarios to refine Barbur. Mayor Schirado noted that he understood Mayor Snider's concerns, and that whether the project goes to Bridgeport, Hall or Boones Ferry, Tigard will have a larger share of Park & Rides than any other city.

**Doug Kelsey** reminded the committee that the region will grow to three million people, and with that growth, the project goal remains getting to Bridgeport. He noted that the project must be competitive for federal dollars, and that there are other projects competing for the same funding. He stated that finding more funding and reducing scope will both be needed. Doug noted that the region has an excellent history with delivering transit projects on time and on budget, but there is more work to be done, and decisions won't be easy. Doug asked staff to separate core project costs and the arterial project costs -- what is required and what is desired.

**Commissioner Rogers** revisited the purpose and needs statement and noted that if there's a future phase of the project, it should go to farther, to downtown Tualatin, as was studied several years ago. Washington County has already compromised with a terminus at Bridgeport.



## Public Comments

**Lester** introduced himself as a Tigard resident. He asked, if the 2020 funding measure doesn't pass, is there a backup plan. He also referenced a September 6 *Oregonian* article about the project that described the possibility of lane restrictions on Barbur, and Washington County's project funding contribution, saying those things needed to be resolved.

**Marianne** introduced herself as a Portland resident. She expressed concern about the Narrow Barbur concept, due to traffic going into surrounding neighborhoods. She also stated her support for active transportation improvements occurring, as well as improvement work to the Barbur viaducts. She noted that the impacts of Barbur lane reductions would impact neighborhoods.

**John**, from Portland, asked the Committee to consider having their November meeting at a date after the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. October meeting. He asked Chris Warner from PBOT to consider the importance of having storm water treatment as part of the project. He noted that the group should consider this and other issues when making decisions.

**Sylvia** introduced herself, said she lives in SW Portland. She said she has lived in the area for 52 years. She would like improvements to the Crossroads area and stated she attends many meetings but thinks the Committee isn't paying attention to financial considerations.

**Carol**, from Tualatin, stated her support for the project going to Tualatin. She explained her concerns of getting to Hall if the project doesn't go to Bridgeport. She asked the Committee to consider how people would use the system if it doesn't go to Bridgeport.

**C. Leon** said that he is a Tigard resident and believes in buses as a transit solution for the area. He described how he lived in California and saw the BART system cost a lot of money. C. Leon asked if Portland would be a growth center in the future, and if nearby communities would grow faster. He stated businesses and jobs shift. He expressed his hope that the Committee listen to his and other people's concerns.

## Meeting Adjourned

### Next meetings:

- **Monday, November 4, 6 p.m. at Tigard Library**
- **Monday, November 18, 9 a.m. at Tigard City Hall**