



July 23, 2019

**SWC Steering Committee
Tigard City Hall: 13125 SW Hall Blvd.
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Members present:

- **TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey, Chair**
- **Durham Mayor Gerry Schirado**
- **Metro Councilor Craig Dirksen**
- **ODOT Policy and Development Manager Mandy Putney (for ODOT Region 1 Manager Rian Windsheimer)**
- **Tigard Mayor Jason Snider**
- **Tualatin City Councilor Paul Morrison (for 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. Doug noted that public comment will take place at the end of today's meeting, as there are no decisions today. The committee approved the notes from last month's meeting.

Station Access and Park & Rides; Survey Results

TriMet Community Affairs Representative Josh Mahar provided an overview of light rail station access opportunities such as bus, WES, walking, biking, scooters, mobility hubs and smart phone apps that simplify trip planning and fare payment. For Park & Ride access to stations, staff asked for community input on three representative scenarios:

- Scenario A: parking dispersed throughout the corridor. This scenario was used in the most recent project cost estimate.
- Scenario B: parking concentrated in garages at major highways
- Scenario C: existing Park & Rides (no new parking)

An online open house explored these scenarios in the context of five considerations:

- budget,
- access,
- development/land use,
- environment, and
- demand

as well as eight station elements:

- bus connections,
- bike/walk access,
- automobile parking,
- mobility hubs,
- affordable housing,

- housing/shops,
- green space/nature, and
- public gathering spaces.

The survey was available in English and Spanish, promoted on the SW Corridor website, and a link was emailed to TriMet's SW Corridor project subscribers as well as other interested parties. Of the 569 responses received between June 10 and June 28, most respondents currently access transit by biking or walking (71%), while about 36% of respondents access transit via auto. This corresponds with the current estimate that about 5% of TriMet's daily rides originate from Park & Rides.

Key takeaways from survey respondents:

- Overall preference for Scenario A
- Most respondents want better bike, walk and bus access
- More respondents who currently drive to transit prefer Scenario A
- More respondents who currently bike to transit prefer Scenario C
- More respondents from urban areas prefer scenario C
- Among all respondents, the two most important considerations were access and environment
 - For people who drive to transit: access and demand
 - For people who bike to transit: environment and development
 - For people who walk to transit: access and environment
 - For SW Portland residents: access and environment
 - For Tigard and Tualatin residents: access and demand
- Among all respondents, the two most important elements were bus connections and bike/walk access
 - For people who drive to transit: auto parking and bus connections
 - For people who bike to transit: bike/walk access and bus connections
 - For people who walk to transit: bike/walk access and bus connections
 - For SW Portland residents: bike/walk access and bus connections
 - For Tigard and Tualatin residents: bus connections and auto parking
- When asked if they would support a fee for parking at stations:
 - Of people who drive to transit, 39% said yes
 - Of people who bike to transit, 82% said yes
 - Of people who walk to transit, 66% said yes
 - Of SW Portland residents, 53% said yes
 - Of Tigard & Tualatin residents, 38% said yes

Next steps for determining Park & Ride size and locations will be informed by October 2019 Steering Committee recommendations about project scope, and further refined in the Draft Conceptual Design Report in early 2020.

Mandy Putney asked if the survey included a question about whether respondents would use light rail. Josh confirmed that the survey did ask people if they currently use

TriMet and if they would use SW Corridor light rail. People who don't currently use TriMet but would use light rail were very favorable toward Park & Rides.

Conceptual Design Report

TriMet Urban Design Project Manager Fiona Cundy provided an overview of the Conceptual Design Report (CDR), which is currently being developed.

The purpose of report is to illustrate the design and how it responds to partners' visions. A draft CDR will be published at the end of 2019. Community engagement in early 2020 will help inform a final report in mid-2020.

The document will be organized around four draft project principles that are based on partners' priorities and community engagement to date. Each principle includes a list of goals and measurable objectives. Draft project principles and goals are:

- Mobility; move and connect people quickly, conveniently and safely;
 - goals: competitive for Federal funds, desirable projects for riders, adaptable with future technology, tie into larger transportation network
- Equitable communities; maintain and create equitable places that are vibrant and unique for diverse people in the Corridor; for partners equity is a core goal;
 - goals: build upon assets that already exist, equitable in access to community resources and transit benefits, tie into existing social fabric and reflect character and context of SW, inspire equitable economic development
- Environment; environmental protection, restoration, and connection of natural resources to increase ecosystem benefits and habitat;
 - goals: awareness of natural areas (wildlife corridors, wetlands) in order to minimize impact, build upon resources (ex. treating stormwater), provide access to open spaces
- Resilience; popular term especially in climate change world, word extends farther than environments and into community strengthening, adaptation, and growth; walk, bike, and transit is the preferred choice; maximize the community's physical and social resilience while reducing carbon emissions;
 - goals: promote community sustainability and growth to withstand the test of time, assist with transition to low-carbon future

The draft project principles were presented to the Community Advisory Committee last week. Their feedback included recommendation to highlight the importance of commerce, cover technological advances and use easily approachable vocabulary.

Mayor Snider appreciated that the CDR will strive for clarity and easily digestible information.

Commissioner Rogers suggested clarifying the term “diverse people.”

Project Cost Update

SW Corridor Project Director Leah Robbins provided an overview of the project’s cost and current funding picture.

Leah referred to discussion at last month’s meeting about the project cost/funding gap and explained that an updated cost estimate has identified a larger gap between the project scope as currently defined and the project funding target. The scope includes the cost of design, construction, property acquisition and relocations, etc. It assumes 3.5% escalation and 25% contingency (per FTA requirement). We are confident in the accuracy of the estimate: it aligns with industry best practices, included a market analysis, and was within 2% of an independent review.

Why has the gap increased? In response to a project risk assessment the project escalation rate increased from 2.75 percent to 3.5 percent, the project scope was expanded to include replacement of the viaducts (which was not in the pre-LPA initial route proposal). There is also additional scope to account for more information about stormwater requirements, property acquisitions and relocations and the tie-in with existing light rail in downtown Portland.

To solve the current \$462 million gap there are three possible solutions: increase funding, reduce scope or a combination of the two.

Funding assumptions have been based around securing the greatest possible amount of federal funding. However, this is a highly competitive funding program and most projects around the country are asking for less than a 50% federal share. Projects are rated on Project Justification and Local Financial Commitment. Our project generally scores well in most of the Project Justification categories. The variables we have most control over are related to cost effectiveness, which looks at the ratio of capital and operating costs to projected ridership. In the Local Financial Commitment category, we could achieve a higher rating if local partners provide substantial additional funds.

In order to maximize competitiveness for FTA ratings, some project scope must be reduced and some additional local funds must be secured.

When considering scope reductions, we’re exploring options that could provide substantial savings by reducing the project footprint, including reducing the widening of Barbur, running light rail adjacent to Barbur, and/or avoiding the viaducts. These possible changes are technically complex, and we are just beginning to explore feasibility.

When considering additional funding, the project team is exploring the opportunity to add the identified jurisdictional transfer funds (\$65 million), as well as pursuing additional contributions from project partners.

Over the summer, staff will continue to identify and narrow options. In September, the project will bring options that appear technically feasible. In October, staff will ask for a Steering Committee recommendation on what scope and funding plan is carried forward into the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Doug Kelsey clarified that some scope reductions could have a revenue reduction effect as well, for example removing stations affects ridership. Doug reiterated the project's goal is to extend south to Tualatin.

Councilor Morrison asked for clarification on the finance cost element of the budget (green block on bar graph).

TriMet Public Affairs Director Bernie Bottomly explained that the way to think about the interest is that it's a cost as well as a resource. For purposes of defining the project scope, we need to think about a construction cost cap.

Councilor Morrison noted the importance of State of Oregon funding, considering the project's ability to improve mobility in the I-5 corridor. City of Tualatin is making compromises (e.g., accepting at-grade crossing of Upper Boones Ferry Road).

Bernie Bottomly commented about opportunities for state funding, noting that in past light rail projects, bonding of lottery dollars comprised significant portions of the local funding. However, those dollars are now in demand by many other projects and programs. We have been talking to the legislature about this project for several years, and so far have found a diminished resource that faces significant competition.

Mayor Snider asked why the list of options for reducing scope didn't include shortening the line.

Leah replied that shortening the line may make the project less competitive, as it would have fewer riders.

Mayor Snider read a [statement](#) about promises to voters, opportunities for transformation, and maximizing the project's benefits, concluding that he would prefer a shorter project that terminates in downtown Tigard.

Mandy Putney agreed that it's smart to consider both finding more funding and reducing scope. But if the jurisdictional transfer funds from ODOT are included, replacement of

the viaducts must also be included. She also encouraged conversation about the role of Metro's regional transportation funding measure.

Councilor Dirksen noted that the committee will need to identify a Minimal Operable Segment (MOS), and if that terminus could create a viable project, he would support it. But he's also concerned about the loss of ridership if the project were to end in Tigard. In addition, to date, discussions about the regional funding measure have assumed the line would terminate at Bridgeport.

Mayor Snider asked for clarification on what information will be coming to the committee in September.

Leah Robbins explained that staff intends to bring data on options that partner staff have determined as viable. We don't expect the list of possible scope cuts to grow after this month. We will compare options using similar metrics as on other topics we've discussed, like cost, ridership, property impacts, etc. In October, we'll come to you with a recommendation.

Doug Kelsey noted the importance of October in defining the project for the regional funding measure, which has its own set of complexities and schedule constraints.

Commissioner Rogers agreed with Councilor Dirksen's remarks. We have committed to Bridgeport, but we can explore other options, although Washington County will reassess its assumed \$75 million commitment if the project doesn't go to Bridgeport. In the past, we've said auto capacity on Barbur should not be compromised because it's an outlet for Washington County residents, but we're willing to reassess that because of the importance of getting to Bridgeport. We understand the jurisdictional transfer of Barbur is important. In regards to the question about additional funds from Washington County: we've already stepped up; don't look to us for more.

Mayor Schirado asked for clarification about the slide that referred to scope reductions over \$100 million. Are all of the items listed over \$100 million, adding up to \$300 million?

Leah Robbins replied that we don't have final estimates, but they're on that scale. And these are not additive items. Some are alternatives to each other. What we're saying is that the scale of scope reductions necessary are in the \$100 million range.

Mayor Schirado noted that the committee needs clarity on which items are peripheral versus essential to the project.

Mayor Snider added that the committee needs data about downtown Tigard station options both east and west of Hall Boulevard. The station location could have a big effect on transformation and ridership. Also, please clarify what “Narrow Barbur” means.

Leah Robbins explained that one concept for a smaller footprint on Barbur could be eliminating a travel lane in segments that traffic analysis supports. That smaller cross section would allow for fewer property impacts and less additional infrastructure construction.

Mayor Snider asked committee members if they view getting to Upper Boones Ferry as getting to Bridgeport. All said no (though Councilor Dirksen said he’d need to look at a map for definitive answer).

Mayor Schirado asked if the project on Barbur includes infrastructure that’s not actually necessary for light rail. Or are they necessary because you can’t do the project without doing these infrastructure items?

Leah Robbins replied that the project is required to address deficiencies on Barbur. Some of that infrastructure doesn’t exist today because of the history of the corridor: it was developed before the requirements existed. So while some elements are not core to the transit project, we are obligated to meet the current standards.

Mandy Putney added that in the absence of a light rail project, those upgrades would be the responsibility of the agency who has jurisdiction of the highway, and would likely happen at a slower pace.

Doug Kelsey expressed continued optimism about the committee’s ability to work through these issues – this is a natural part of the process in delivering big projects. The North Star remains Bridgeport, to serve the most people in our growing region. Regardless of whether there may need to be a shorter first phase, Bridgeport must remain the goal. We need to think big and long term. I am a fan of transit-oriented development, but we need to be careful that we’re not pursuing developer-oriented transit. People will follow major transit lines, and developers will come and go. It’s also common for secondary desires to be added onto these large projects, but now is the time for a reality check of what is crucial and what’s peripheral. The project can be a catalyst but it can’t carry everything. I also have concerns about shortening and curving the line: light rail needs to be fast.

Doug also thanked partner staff for the extensive work exploring these options. Despite hard choices ahead, we can be optimistic about working together.

Commissioner Rogers suggested topics for next meeting: information about how a shorter line would impact the anticipated federal funding; questions from Tigard about alteration of route; how options affect the jurisdictional transfer.

Councilor Dirksen reminded members that there is a larger Southwest Corridor shared development strategy, not just the light rail project. There are projects that benefit us all, regardless of jurisdiction. For example, the Ross Island Bridgehead project is not part of the light rail project but we all agreed to support it in other ways.

Doug Kelsey reminded the committee to consider smaller cost and funding elements too.

Public Comments

Elise Shearer introduced herself as a Tigard resident and supporter of MAX who is excited to have the line extended to Tigard. She is concerned about the possibility of it not reaching Bridgeport, which is a key employment sector for both Tigard and Tualatin. She recommends that the Marquam Hill Connector be deferred. OHSU is already well served by transit. Let's build light rail first then wait and see if there's enough money left for the Marquam Hill Connector – it is not essential for the success of the project.

Meeting Adjourned