Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC)
Thursday, January 19, 2012
Former Advantis Credit Union Building
3717 SE 17th Avenue

PMLR CAC Members Present
Barbara Andersen, Oak Grove
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Lina Bensel, Independent Living Resources
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Paul Carlson, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
David Edwards, Oak Grove
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Neil Hankerson, Milwaukie Downtown Business
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Erin Kelley, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate
Adam Marx, Brooklyn Action Corps
Cindy Miguel, Island Station Neighborhood
Fred Nelligan, Oak Lodge Community Council
Fred Nolke, Eastmoreland Neighborhood
Susan Pearce, Hosford Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Teri Pucik, SMILE
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Dee Walsh, REACH
Rick Williams – CHAIR, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association

PMLR CAC Members Absent
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Dan Zalkow, Portland – Portland State University (PSU)

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) welcomed attendees and opened the meeting. There were no comments on the previous meeting’s notes.

Project Finance Update, presented by Rob Barnard, TriMet Project Director

Rob reviewed how the project is funded. The TriMet portion of the funding will come from increased payroll tax revenues that were authorized in 2009 to fund new service. This new service leverages the whole transit system, since light rail provides the most
cost-effective way to add service. The operating cost of light rail is $1.89 per boarding vs. $3.65 for bus service.

TriMet’s share of the project is about 4 percent. Half the rest comes from the federal government. As discretionary funds, the federal share can go anywhere in the nation, but we’d rather have them here to provide local jobs.

The City of Milwaukie and Clackamas County have also made funding commitments to the project, which TriMet views as legally binding contracts. Recently petitions were filed by some citizens opposed to those contracts. Meanwhile the project has been moving forward. Based on good-faith reliance on those contracts, TriMet has spent $193 million to date and has contracts committed for $340 million. In terms of construction jobs, 285 people are now working on the project. There are 172 firms under contract. The current jobs total over 1,000 when you add professional services such as engineers.

Regarding the federal funds, Congress passed a minibus bill to fund transportation. There has been $511 million set aside for new Full Funding Grant Agreements (FFGAs) for projects such as the Portland Milwaukie Light Rail Transit Project (PMLR). PMLR is one of five FFGAs soon to be awarded nationwide. Last week, when Peter Rogoff, Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), was in town, he announced publicly that the “money was on its way.”

There are just a few more steps to finalizing the FFGA. The project management oversight and financial consultants have finished their reviews. FTA staff has finished the wording of the FFGA. That has all been combined and is now being reviewed by FTA management, which should be completed by the end of January. It will then move to the Office of the Secretary and the Office of Management and Budget for one-month review, then to Congress for a 60-day notice period, with signing expected in May. This means some funds will arrive in 2012, a year earlier than expected.

QUESTIONS

Erin Kelley: Can you start some construction sooner?

Rob Barnard: We already have work under way. This (earlier funding) helps our cash position.

Valerie Chapman: How many jobs will be created?

Rob Barnard: We project the project will create more than 14,000 jobs total, about half direct and half indirect. Visit the TriMet website soon for details.

Catherine Goode: How many jobs will be filled by people in the Portland region?
Rob Barnard: The website will detail this. You can see a map and list of all 172 contractors and subcontractors, their names, addresses, disadvantaged status and more. We are committed to hiring disadvantaged, small and local firms.

David Aschenbrenner: Does earlier funding lower our interest payments?

Rob Barnard: The cash flow through the last payment in 2020 is our best guess. It's a bit early to spend that money. But it does show a strong commitment from federal government and solid support. It is encouraging to see that the federal government funded the program for next year. And by getting a portion of those funds, it shows our project is well-received and supported.

Paul Carlson: Have you received any bids for major expenditures?

Rob Barnard: We should have them by the end of month.

Construction Updates – west segment and bridge, presented by Rob Barnard, TriMet Project Director

Rob highlighted construction progress on SWt Lincoln Street, the Harbor structure, and the PMLR bridge. He also showed a BridgeView video interview segment on bridge tower construction (videos online at trimet.org/pm/construction/bridgeview). We will start to see the piers rise out of the water this spring, with tower construction to follow.

Design and Construction Updates – east segment, presented by Leah Robbins, TriMet east segment director

Leah updated the committee on east segment construction progress. She highlighted work at the following locations:

- Clinton to river multi-use path
- Powell and Holgate
- Crystal Springs Creek crossing
- Tacoma site /Johnson Creek station
- Milwaukie
- Kellogg structure and Trolley Trail construction
- Park Avenue

QUESTIONS

Cindy Miguel: Question about existing pedestrian bridges.

Leah Robbins: The SE Gideon/16th/Brooklyn structure will be removed in 2013 in connection with track construction. The SE Lafayette structure, owned and maintained
by Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), will remain. However, the city is requiring its
reconstruction when UPRR implements its Brooklyn Yard modernization plan.

Dee Walsh: How long will construction on SE 11th and 12th avenues continue?

Leah Robbins: Some of the work going on now is private utility work, in preparation for
light rail construction, but there is also a City of Portland sewer project. While we cannot
direct the private utilities, we are coordinating with them, as well as with the City sewer
project.

Valerie Chapman: When will work occur at Park Avenue? And when will the trees
come down?

Leah Robbins: Utility work will start later this year. Regarding the trees, federal law
protects migratory birds, and discourages tree removal from March through August,
when they are more likely to be nesting. This has bearing on our work on the Kellogg
structure. Trees will be removed at the south abutment of the structure by March 2012.
Most of the other trees along the Trolley Trail portion of the alignment will remain until
September 2012. (In a handful of other locations where the project schedule requires
trees to be removed during the March to August window, a federal biologist is on
contract to monitor and discourage nesting by any migratory birds in these trees.)

Greg Hemer: When will land acquisitions take place?

Leah Robbins: The acquisitions are coordinated with the construction schedule. Most
are already in progress.

Catherine Goode: Was the commercial proposal for the Tacoma station area rejected?

Leah Robbins: The developer’s revised proposal didn’t meet TriMet’s criteria for
unsolicited proposals. We are in the process of acquiring that land.

Fred Nelligan: What is the timeline or phasing for demolishing buildings after they are
acquired?

Leah Robbins: We are working to make that a seamless process from permit application
to approval. The timeline is based on the permit and the demands of the particular
property.

Barbara Andersen: Is there any hope for a parking structure being built at the Tacoma
Street station? I’m concerned that if we build only surface parking, we’ll never get a
structure in there. Can something be built now to accommodate a later structure? I
would like to see some creative thinking about how to increase the size of this parking
structure later. A surface parking lot will be obsolete almost as soon as it’s built.

Leah Robbins: There is a possibility, but it’s low.
**David Aschenbrenner**: Are you aggressively recycling demolition materials?

Leah Robbins: The demo contract project manager includes scoping recycling into each building as a part of the contract. Some buildings have more potential than others.

**Catherine Goode**: Is there a priority given to certain add-backs, such as the Bybee pullout, based on criteria such as safety and neighborhood concerns?

Leah Robbins: At the time of recalibration, we didn’t choose add-backs in any priority. Instead, we marked the latest point in the project when items could be brought back for the same cost figure. The intention was, as we got to levels where we could consider bringing scope back, we would prioritize those elements. In general, all that has been moved to later in the process than anticipated.

**Dee Walsh**: The issue is the FTA won’t allow you to spend the contingency until you’re further down the line, so that pushes back decisions about adding back scope?

Leah Robbins: Yes.

Audience member: When will this (Advantis) building be demolished?

Claudia Steinberg: I believe it’s around September.

**Valerie Chapman**: When will the buildings near Park Avenue station be demolished?

Leah Robbins: We’re proceeding with demolitions for properties we own as soon as permits are in place. Each building has its own requirements for demolition, such as removing hazardous materials.

**Valerie Chapman**: DaVinci’s restaurant has not relocated after it had to leave its building. Why? Was there a breakdown somewhere?

Claudia Steinberg: DaVinci’s owners knew that building would be demolished when they entered into their lease. There was full disclosure by the previous building owner. We are still working with the DaVinci’s owner on their next steps. The reason they closed was related to an issue between them and their landlord.

**Barbara Andersen**: When will construction start behind the Waldorf School? I’ve heard excavation would start in June this year.

Leah Robbins: Utility work is mainly within the cross streets. The earliest that wall construction could occur is summer.
Claudia Steinberg: We are meeting with property owners along the alignment. We will share with you in our next meeting the Conduct of Construction. We want a meeting with the Waldorf School. Now we are starting a whole new phase.

**Fred Nelligan:** Are any planned 2012 activities contingent on approval of the FFGA?

Leah Robbins: No. The near-term schedule is all related to foundations and utility construction. That work will occur after we receive the FFGA but we’re gearing up now.

Rob Barnard: We have the authority to procure materials requiring a long lead time, e.g., steel for the Harbor Structure, and to install advance utilities. Three letters of no prejudice allowed advanced construction on the bridge, utilities along the Moody project, and for another structure. We have enough authority to keep the project moving while waiting for the FFGA.

**Greg Hemer:** What if you don’t get the FFGA?

Rob Barnard: Congress has signed and the president has passed new funding for FFGAs. The administration has said the money is on its way. We’re in the final stages of the approval process. All indications are good.

**Susan Pearce:** One of the key contingencies was the switches for the Close the Loop streetcar project. Will those have to wait until the end of the project? Will that affect the chances of their being installed?

Rob Barnard: When we made our FFGA application, we included in our project budget the small elements of Close the Loop that are within our track envelope. We took a drawdown on project contingency to make that happen. The City of Portland is seeking funding for the remaining portions of the Close the Loop project. We’ve advanced the the design work so the estimate can be updated.

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**Public Involvement Update, presented by Claudia Steinberg, TriMet Community Affairs Manager**

Claudia announced the dates and locations of open houses in southeast Portland, downtown and Milwaukie. We will have information on the designs and the Conduct of Construction.

At next month’s CAC meeting, we will present the Conduct of Construction and discuss the construction schedule.

The Oak Grove Community Council on Wednesday, Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. will host a discussion on light rail and crime at Rose Villa senior community. The council has invited law enforcement officials from Milwaukie, Clackamas County and TriMet. We encourage people with concerns to attend.
Claudia asked the committee for feedback on the desirability of the Advantis building as a location for committee meetings. Most members supported it.

Roundtable

Cindy Miguel: My Island Station neighborhood is emotional. We have homes being vacated. As we see more properties acquired, we'll see more needs of the heart rather than of the head. I'd like to see Claudia and the TriMet outreach team work with the people left behind as well as with the people displaced. I'd to find a way to turn the tide and make it more positive.

Erin Kelly: I’d like to know more about what will be improved around the Umatilla intersection near Tacoma Street station. I’d like to see what TriMet is going to do about relocating the bus stop there and making it easier for pedestrians to cross Highway 99.

David Aschenbrenner: ODOT may need to come and explain the Umatilla-Tacoma project scheduled for this spring and summer.

Teri Pucik: I’d like more information on the Crystal Springs culvert. We’ve had flooding there before. The presentation slides didn’t make the new culvert appear any wider, only longer.

Leah Robbins: The city and TriMet are designing this culvert. All natural resources agencies are reviewing this project in detail. It will have to pass criteria for hydrology and habitat.

Lina Bensel: I’m still concerned that certain streets and intersections will be closed to traffic for seven days at a time. I would like to know more about that and how to ameliorate that.

Catherine Goode: I’d like to think that our tour of the Tacoma Street area in October may have helped nudge ODOT to make some improvements. They painted the island vivid yellow and reinstalled the pedestrian crossing sign, which had once again been knocked down.

Fred Nelligan: At the south end of the alignment there are a couple of voter initiatives being kicked off this week that are basically anti-rail. City of Milwaukie has been struggling with a white oak tree in Kronberg Park. TriMet and Milwaukie have reached agreement on a process for working to save the tree. These kinds of discussions got me thinking of the big picture. We as a citizens committee may want to draft a letter to the PMLR Steering Committee and copied to Clackamas County Commission, City of Milwaukie, Portland City Council and Portland mayor saying that we want to share equally in the wealth and also expect all communities to share equally in cuts and add-backs.
Cindy Miguel and I attended a meeting in Oak Grove where 250-300 people gathered in opposition to light rail. Speakers overall stood opposed to mass transit, light rail or change. The meeting’s focus was to pressure the county commission about its $25 million commitment to the project. They're thinking that if they can jeopardize the $25 million, it would also jeopardize the federal government’s 50 percent match. But in Oak Grove, which I represent, the people leading the community forward are counting on this light rail project to be a catalyst. There’s a lot of work to do still.

**Rick Williams**: Perhaps we can discuss these (Clackamas) proposals at our February meeting. We could come to our own conclusions about what we can do. We appreciate Cindy and Fred for going.

**Greg Hemer**: I know a lot of these people who are opposed to light rail. I encourage them to volunteer. My point to them is, where were you in 2006 and 2007 when all these decisions were being made? Join some of these committees and become a part of the community and a part of the solution. I encourage everyone, pro or con, to volunteer. I’ve learned a lot throughout this process. Everybody’s opinion is valid. I encourage them to join the committees that form when these processes start.

On the abandoned buildings, consider connecting with the Portland Rebuilding Center, firefighters and Metro’s used materials website.

I appreciate the environmental practices, such as green roofs, solar panels and storm water cisterns.

**Barbara Andersen**: Is there an update on art at Park Avenue?

Ann Becklund: It's in process still. They expect to select a new artist around March.

**Valerie Chapman**: There is a sense from opponents to the project that there has been no involvement. It may be helpful for people to understand how many hours of citizen time already have been put into this project.

**Cindy Miguel**: That’s why it’s important to reach some of the people who I talked about earlier. Get them on committees and get them involved.

**Rick Williams**: If there are better ways to communicate to residents, let us know and we’ll pass that on to the project team. Every time we have done that, they have responded.

**Fred Nelligan**: Part of the problem in Clackamas County as far as communication goes is that opponents frame their unhappiness as “no one listens to me.” Personally, I believe the powers that be, our elected officials, are listening. But when the decisions don’t fit their views, they think they’re not being heard. But this is representative government. It’s the cumulative voice that should prevail.
Catherine Goode: Is this opposition new or has it been simmering for a while?

Fred Nelligan: It’s been simmering for a while, but this group was successful in November on their ballot initiative regarding urban renewal. That success emboldened them. They’re well organized. Now their focus is to force future rail projects to a countywide vote.

Public Comment

David Rowe: I once owned a house one block from here but have always been interested in the project. On the bridge, will light rail and street car run on the same track?

Rob Barnard: Yes, they’re designed to share the same track.

David Rowe: There was a lot of pushback when MAX first was proposed. Governor candidate Norma Paulus said the best thing would be for someone to take the keys and steal it. They called it WPPS on Wheels. And yet, on opening day, more than 150,000 people showed up to ride the trains.

Michael Aiello, homeowner. I own a home about four blocks away. Thank you for your hard work. As a resident, I’m acutely aware of the drawback of the impassable nature of the rail line and Powell Boulevard. I applaud attempts to take away blind turns. This neighborhood is so close to everything yet still so cut off. ODOT has been kind but unmoving. Union Pacific is trying to close rail crossings. Has there ever been discussion about rail crossings at ground level, particularly here on SE 17th Avenue and across to Hosford Abernethy?

Leah Robbins: We had multiple conversations early on about these issues. Right now, it’s not possible to add rail crossings at grade.

Peter from Sellwood. I am concerned with the Tacoma station. It seems MAX is proposed to run along a large dead space against a backdrop of a neighborhood that is already minimally served. It’s on the other side of the freeway from the neighborhood it will serve. If I can't drive to the station and count on parking, it’s absolutely useless to me. It seems the line has not been designed well to maximize service in between the two end-points.

Philip, Brooklyn homeowner. I accept construction and the loss of my left turn. However, we’re already experiencing a lot of disruption from construction workers using our street, taking on-street parking, causing vibration, dust, etc. Has that been addressed in the Conduct of Construction?
Rob Barnard: The public utilities currently at work are not under our control as will be our contractors. We'll address these kinds of issues under the Conduct of Construction.

David Aschenbrenner: One thing about the light rail is how the bus lines are interconnected with the stations. That is one of the issues I'm dogging from the Milwaukie standpoint: how we can get our citizens down to the stations on bus feeder lines with good frequency so they don't have to park at the station. That's coming. It's part of the project.

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Rick Williams adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

**Next CAC meeting:** Thursday, February 16, 6–7:30 p.m., Former Advantis Credit Union Building 3717 SE 17th Avenue