Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC)
Thursday, September 19, 2013
PMLR East Field Office
2300 SE Beta Street, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

PMLR CAC Members Present
Arnold Panitch, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Barbara Anderson, Oak Grove; Waldorf School
Catherine Goode, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Cindy Miguel, Island Station Neighborhood
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
David Edwards, Oak Grove (Committee Chair)
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie
Ian Stude, Portland State University (PSU)
James Robbins, Portland Opera
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Susan Pearce, Portland Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Terri Pucik, SMILE Neighborhood
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove

PMLR Members Absent
Adam Marx, Brooklyn Neighborhood
Fred Nelligan, Oak Grove Community Council
Jeff Reaves, Central Eastside Industrial Council
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood

David Edwards opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m. No errors or omissions were noted regarding the July 2013 meeting notes.

Bus Service Planning Process

Steve Kautz, TriMet Manager, Service Development, introduced additional staff: Young Park, Manager, Capital Projects, and Kerry Ayres Palanuk, Manager, Service Planning.

Steve provided a summary sheet with an overview of the process and timeline for reconfiguring bus service in the PMLR corridor to take advantage of the new MAX service.

In addition to planning for bus service changes in fall 2015 with the opening of the PMLR line, TriMet will also be initiating a longer-term Southeast Service Enhancement
Plan. This is a process of working with the public, neighborhoods, businesses, social service agencies, jurisdictions, and other stakeholders to define a longer term vision for expanding the transit network in the Southeast part of the region, including the PMLR corridor and communities to the south and east (Milwaukie, Gladstone, Oregon City, Happy Valley, and unincorporated Clackamas County). This includes working with jurisdictional partners like cities and counties, and considering their transportation systems plans and other long range plans. Service Enhancement Plan efforts are being undertaken throughout TriMet’s service area. This is a longer term look at the transit service we’d like to have for the future and how to get there. Recent Service Enhancement Plan activities on Westside defined a vision for a very substantial service expansion. Here in the southeast part of our region, we have a great opportunity to combine this larger, long-term visioning with the more immediate planning for PMLR startup and 2015 bus service changes.

The process for 2015 bus service planning takes place over the course of 2014:

- Outreach and analysis: January through April
- Draft plan and gather community feedback: May through early fall
- Refine and finalize plan: October through December

We need to finalize the bus service plan for September 2015 no later than January 2015. This is to facilitate preparations such as customer information, operator and supervisor training, development of the schedules and work assignments, etc. While those preparations are underway, we’ll also be continuing the Service Enhancement Plan for the southeast area through mid 2015.

Every time we open a new light rail line, we reexamine all current service in the corridor to take best advantage of new rail service. We want to serve as many people as possible while minimizing duplication of service. We’ll be looking at existing service and how productive the service is – how many rides can we serve with each vehicle hour. We also look transit equity – avoiding disparities or adverse impacts on minority and low income populations, and taking into account the needs of people who are transit-dependent. We also look at the nuts and bolts of service operations; capacity, speed, reliability, etc.

We understand that there are a number questions and issues important to the communities along the PMLR corridor, including:

- Service north of Harrison in Milwaukie, including at the Milwaukie Park & Ride
- Service at the SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek Station
- Service coverage throughout the Sellwood-Moreland neighborhood, including service across the Sellwood Bridge
- Service connections at SE Park Avenue station
- Possible downtown Milwaukie connections (e.g., lines 31 and 33)
- Connection between downtown Milwaukie and Clackamas Town Center
- Which bus lines will use the new PMLR bridge? And, which might remain on the Ross Island Bridge?
- More frequent service? Longer span of service?
- Park & Ride capacity? Potential parking impacts in station areas?

Right now we want to be sure we understand all the questions, and then we can start to dig in and work you and the larger community to assess the choices.

We’re trying to think creatively about how to reach and engage people where they are – not necessarily hosting stand-alone events, but using existing meetings and events to inform people and take their comments. We’re also thinking about how to reach populations that may not have otherwise been involved up to this time.

David Aschenbrenner shared with Steve a list of issues, including a suggested downtown Milwaukie neighborhood loop service, and concerns about limited evening/weekend service, service over the Sellwood Bridge, and service directly at the Tacoma/Johnson Creek Station. David suggested that outreach efforts include staffing a table at the Milwaukie Farmers Market.

Greg Hemer asked how TriMet decides where to locate bus service and stops, besides transit equity. Is population density the number one criteria? Or, is there a federal mandate? What is the number one criterion?

Steve Kautz replied there is no single criterion. We do look nearby residences and business (from the standpoint of both jobs and customers), major institutions or facilities serving the community, such as education, health or human services. Any areas that people are making trips to or from are a factor, including light rail stations.

Greg Hemer suggested bus and rail connections like a subway line in New York with bus service to the subway stops.

Steve Kautz agreed that connections are important. If service is frequent, then connections can really expand one’s ability to get around. We have good data about how people use our existing service. Buses and MAX are equipped with automatic passenger counters, so we have hour-by-hour data about ridership patterns now. This is all part of helping us understand what might be most effective.

Greg Hemer suggested that the system should be fully integrated; I don’t see any reason why you need a bus on McLoughlin if you have a light rail station. My opinion is that light rail is going to be faster and more reliable.

Terri Pucik emphasized that residents of north end of Westmoreland did not get a light rail station at Harold Street, so they would not have direct service to downtown Portland if buses no longer used this part of McLoughlin. Bus service in Sellwood-Westmoreland has already taken a huge hit during the last couple of budget cuts, and there are places where you have to walk more than a half-mile to get on a bus. We are advocating for restoration of that service before any of these other changes are made. This is a big issue for SMILE, and our president Gail Hoffnagale and board member Gerry Sue Lynn are here tonight to comment.
Ian Stude advocated for careful examination of service for the South Waterfront District, as well as the area around SW Kelly Avenue.

Arnie Panitch agreed there is a lot of activity between downtown and the Ross Island Bridge, and emphasized the importance of ADA access for the Bybee station. Arnie also asked about shared-use Park & Rides – do churches and businesses get paid for providing parking spaces?

Young Park, TriMet Capital Projects Manager, replied that most shared-use Park & Rides are provided by churches as a community service.

Ray Bryan asked if the Service Enhancement Plan will be a public process.

Steve Kautz affirmed it will be a very public process. It’s all about understanding needs and opportunities to support communities and mobility going forward.

Ray Bryan asked, what makes for a successful Park and Ride? We need to identify other possible Park & Rides near the stations.

Young Park replied that TriMet’s 11,000 Park & Ride spaces help create choices for people. Some people choose to drive to the closest-in Park & Ride, so many of those fill up quickly, while others have plenty of space. We will be doing campaigns to market some of the underutilized Park & Rides. We do plan to keep open the Milwaukie Park & Ride and will continue to look to churches and other possible shared-use locations.

Valerie Chapman recommended improved bus connections within Milwaukie and Clackamas County – not just connections to downtown Portland.

Barbara Anderson asked about extending light rail south of Milwaukie (Park Ave.).

Steve Kautz replied that the region’s high-capacity transit plan was coordinated by Metro and included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and will be a reference in our upcoming process.

Sue Pearce echoed concerns about service near the Ross Island Bridge, and encouraged Park and Ride expansion in order to minimize on-street parking by transit riders.

David Aschenbrenner and Greg Hemer reiterated calls for bus service directly into the Tacoma/Johnson Creek station site, not just along McLoughlin Boulevard or Tacoma Street.
Construction Updates

DeeAnn Sandberg, TriMet Community Affairs Representative, provided an update on the west segment and bridge:

- **Lincoln Street**: final pavement markings and striping are complete; traffic signals are being turned on. The first light rail platform shelter will be installed next week. Sculptures will be installed in mid-November.
- **Harbor Structure**: track is complete; structural and deck segments are complete; side barrier should be finished by tomorrow; starting to connect at Moody Ave.
- **Moody Avenue**: street will be closed September 12-30 for very complex track crossing construction. Southbound motorists and bus lines 35 and 36 will be detoured. Portland Streetcar will serve customers with a shuttle bus. All bikes and pedestrians are sharing one sidewalk, which is going well so far. Crews working 24 hours a day.
- **Bridge**: more permanent cables are in place (about five on west side and three on east). Bridge naming process is underway -- committee has begun to meet, public will be invited to participate starting with submissions beginning October 17. Public bridge talks over next 4 Wednesdays (Sept. 25, Oct. 2; Oct. 9; Oct. 16), 12-1 p.m. at Caruthers Plaza.

John Lostra, TriMet, Resident Engineer provided an update on the east segment:

- **Close the Loop Streetcar**: construction started September 9, continues through mid-October.
- **8th Ave & Division Place**: following track construction, just before we were ready to re-open the intersection, an existing water line sprung a leak, causing substantial damage to the newly built street and sidewalk. After the City of Portland repaired the water line and adjacent sewer line, our crews began rebuilding the street and sidewalk. We hope to have the intersection open by the end of September.
- **Track crossings at 11th and 12th avenues**: track, street and sidewalk construction is basically finished; crews are now working on traffic signals. The signals should be on in mid-January, when battery back-up system is in place.
- **Powell/17th Overpass**: the new roadway structure over Powell opened August 30, after having been closed for over one year. The new, extended sidewalk on the north side of Powell also opened, although it will be closed for a short time this fall for some minor repairs. Artwork under the light rail structure will be unveiled after more work in this area is complete.
- **17th/Holgate track crossing and intersection construction**: intersection has been constrained for a few weeks, making it very slow for traffic. Work is almost finished and all lanes are expected to open by the end of this week.
- **Bybee**: contractor is working on station and pillars for bus pull-outs; girders will be placed in October.
- **Johnson Creek**: in-water work with contributions from Johnson Creek Watershed Council is substantially completed.
- **Tacoma/Johnson Creek station site**: artist started on-site fabrication in August, and will return this fall to excavate and lift the earth cast sculptures.
- **Tillamook Structure**: the final four girders are scheduled to arrive by end of September.
- **Harrison Street**: track, roadway and sidewalk in place, but street is closed once more for City of Milwaukie paving several blocks east and west of the crossing.
- **Monroe Street**: track, roadway and sidewalk in place.
- **Washington Street**: track, roadway and sidewalk in place.
- **21st Avenue & Adams Street**: wall and street construction is underway. Grade at this location raises approximately three feet to fit new Milwaukie station. Intersection will be fully closed for track and intersection construction October 21 – November 3.
- **Kellogg Bridge**: full closure of McLoughlin for girder placement over the roadway was completed over a weekend in August. Detour traffic was slow, but better than expected; road reopened 12 hours earlier than planned. Remaining girders along west side of McLoughlin to be placed in mid-November. McLoughlin will be narrowed to one lane in each directions; work will take place at night when there is less traffic.
- **Park Avenue**: sewer rehabilitation work on Courtney Creek is ongoing through October.

Jennifer Koozer, TriMet, Community Affairs Representative also reported that the August open house for the Park Ave Park & Ride Garage was very well attended and designs were generally well received. We will share design at the next CAC meeting.

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**Round Table**

**Barbara Anderson** remarked that the light rail construction was less impactful on the Portland Waldorf School than the City of Milwaukie’s recent work.

**Ray Bryan** expressed concern about funding to connect the pedestrian facility on the Kellogg structure to adjacent neighborhoods.

**Susan Pearce** thanked Coral Egnew, TriMet Community Affairs Representative for attendance at HAND meetings. She also reported on the City of Portland’s station area planning process that’s been underway this summer. Sue expressed concerns about coordination among detours and road closures for various construction projects and community events and road races.

**Greg Hemer** advocated for eco-friendly features on all PMLR infrastructure -- green roofs, rain barrels, solar panels and overall green focus.

**Valerie Chapman** shared concerns about traffic delays, especially for buses, at 17th & Holgate during track and intersection construction.
Cindy Miquel shared concerns about coordination of utility relocation with fewer consultants now on board. Cindy is particularly concerned about overloading City of Milwaukie staff.

Stacy Bluhm, City of Milwaukie Light Rail Project Manager, responded that weekly utility coordination meetings are still taking place and the remaining issues are manageable for TriMet and City of Milwaukie staff.

David Aschenbrenner remarked that traffic constraints from the current City of Milwaukie construction have illuminated the amount of space that is needed for buses to make the turns in downtown Milwaukie.

Terri Pucik expressed concern about communication and the re-opening of the SE 8th & Division intersection.

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Public Comment

Gerri Sue Lent, SMILE board member, advocated for creative bus service in Sellwood-Westmoreland, including east-west service and service over the Sellwood Bridge. She estimates at least 1,000 people with no access to service, particularly near the river. She is also concerned about pedestrian to Tacoma/Johnson Creek station.

Gail Hoffnagale, SMILE president, shared concerns about for large apartment building under construction on Tacoma Street with no parking and very little transit service. Gail advocated for Sellwood to have more comprehensive bus service, including across the Sellwood Bridge. Gail also shared concerns about parking overflow from the Tacoma Park and Ride.

Dave Gray, Oak Grove resident, expressed continued concern regarding a design feature of the Park Ave Park & Ride Garage, which uses corten steel to emulate natural reeds. He advocated for the use of live bamboo or narrow trees such as Italian cypress.

Jeremy Ferguson, City of Milwaukie Mayor, commended TriMet’s outreach and communications for the McLoughlin closure in August. Mayor Ferguson encouraged TriMet to work collaboratively with the City of Milwaukie regarding bus service planning. He also noted the city’s renewed efforts to encourage development and support business growth.

William Danneman, South Portland Neighborhood, advocated for careful consideration of bus service in South Portland, particularly in light of aging and transit-dependent population. He suggested engagement with South Portland Neighborhood and groups beyond the larger institutions like OHSU and National College of Natural Medicine (NCNM).

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 21, 6 p.m., TriMet, PMLR, East Field Office, 2300 SE Beta Street.