PORTLAND-MILWAUKIE LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Final Environmental Impact Statement Process

In 1969 the U.S. Congress enacted the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to direct agencies to consider environmental consequences during the planning stages of a project. This is achieved through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a document that examines the consequences of a proposed project. There are two phases to the EIS process, a Draft EIS and Final EIS. The Draft EIS was published in May 2008 and can be found at www.oregonmetro.gov/southcorridor. The Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project is now in the Final EIS stage of the NEPA process.

- **Refine LPA and update methods.** The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is refined by gathering additional details and providing these for input from the affected jurisdictions, the Citizens Advisory Committee and public comment. The methods for analyzing impacts are also updated.

- **Analyze impacts.** More details about impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the light rail line are examined. Areas of analysis include water quality, threatened and endangered species, community impacts, traffic, noise and vibration, cost, safety and security, and parks and recreational resources, among others.

- **Define mitigation.** Actions needed to mitigate impacts caused by construction or operations of the light rail are identified.

- **Draft Final EIS chapters and related documents.** Project staff draft chapters for the Final EIS document. The chapters lay out impacts and necessary mitigation. In addition, a natural resource analysis, or Biological Assessment, is completed.

- **FTA review.** The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) reviews the draft chapters to identify any additional information needed to produce a thorough document.

- **Resource agency review.** Federal agencies, such as US Environmental Protection Agency and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, review the draft chapters and Biological Assessment and identify any additional information needed.

- **Biological Opinion.** The Biological Opinion is issued based on information in the Biological Assessment, and states that the project is unlikely to jeopardize the existence of threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.

- **Publish Final EIS.** The Final EIS is made available for public review.

- **Record of Decision.** The Federal Transit Administration issues the Record of Decision (ROD), a document that explains the reasons for a project decision and summarizes all mitigation measures that will be incorporated in the project.