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6. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, AGENCY COORDINATION, AND REQUIRED PERMITS

6.1 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

This section summarizes the community participation process for the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project, describing past activities and elements that will be implemented as part of the public comment period for this SDEIS and leading to the selection of a new Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). Additional information on community participation activities can be found in Chapter 2, Alternatives Considered (Section 2.1, Screening and Selection Process); and Appendix B, Environmental Justice Compliance.

6.1.1 Goals of the Community Participation Program

The goal of the public involvement process is to support the selection and implementation of an LPA through participation of well-informed and involved communities and local governments. The community involvement process has been designed to ensure that community concerns and issues are identified early and addressed in the planning, engineering, environmental, economic, and financial efforts of the project.

Public involvement and participation have been critical in the development of both phases of the current project and its predecessors, the South/North Corridor Project and the South Corridor Project. The project has featured:

- Proactive public involvement and education programs to provide comprehensive and understandable information
- Timely public notice
- Full public access and involvement in key actions and decisions
- Outreach to segments of the community that typically do not become involved in transportation planning
- Support for early and continuing involvement of the public
6.1.2 General Elements of the Community Participation Program

This section outlines the general elements included within the community participation program.

6.1.2.1 Citizen Advisory Committee

A 21-member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was engaged at the beginning of the preparation of this SDEIS. CAC members were solicited through an advertised process where members applied to participate in the CAC and members were selected by Metro from the applications received. The purpose of the CAC is to:

- Have accessible public meetings and make meeting notes available to members of the public upon request.
- Work with Metro staff to review and understand technical, design, and operational information in order to facilitate informed recommendations from their communities.
- Advise the Portland-Milwaukie Steering Committee on issues regarding the overall design of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Alternative as they relate to neighborhood character and needs.
- Provide a forum for corridor-wide public involvement and input, where citizens throughout the corridor can address issues of corridor-wide significance.
- Inform Metro staff of community issues that need to be considered in the design of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Alternative.
- Evaluate the community acceptability of light rail alignment and design options.
- Review and assess technical analyses (such as environmental and traffic impacts) from a local perspective and recommend potential mitigation.
- Connect with other community organizations and establish a network for the flow of information to and from project-related areas.
- Address contentious community issues among those most directly affected by a light rail project and the various design components of that project.
- Provide a community-based recommendation for the LPA.

6.1.2.2 Community Outreach Tools

The project has employed a variety of community outreach tools through the preparation of this SDEIS and will continue to use these tools to engage the community in the selection of the LPA.

- **Transportation hotline.** The hotline (503-797-1900) provides project information about public involvement opportunities at key decision points. It also offers community members a convenient method for requesting information about the project.

- **Web site.** The project web site has provided up-to-date information including project history, information about the SDEIS process, opportunities for public involvement, and a schedule of meetings. Online access is an important means of communication, especially with those who might not attend meetings or public hearings. The web site uses accessible technology and offers the opportunity to request further information. The web site can be accessed at [www.metro-region.org/southcorridor](http://www.metro-region.org/southcorridor).
• **Online questionnaire.** A self-selected web-based survey will likely be used to gather information and opinions prior to formation of the LPA. The method does not provide statistically sound data, but it does provide information about public views, especially for those who are interested in the process but do not attend public meetings. A paper survey will be available upon request.

• **Mailing list.** The project has maintained an active mailing list and seeks to expand the distribution of study materials through community resources and public destinations.

• **Newsletter and e-newsletter.** The project has prepared and mailed one newsletter to residents and businesses in the corridor and interested persons, describing the range of alternatives now being considered and the process to update the previous environmental analysis. E-newsletters have been used frequently during the process to announce meetings and other milestones. A final newsletter and e-newsletter will be prepared to announce the publication of the SDEIS and public comment opportunities.

• **Fact sheets.** Fact sheets and area-specific updates were prepared and distributed as needed to support station planning, safety and security activities, and other specific project needs.

• **Visual simulation.** The project has created visual simulations of design concepts and mitigation strategies conceived for the proposed alignment (and any design options) to increase public understanding and strengthen their ability to provide meaningful input on station design, environmental review, and selection of the LPA.

### 6.1.2.3 Media Outreach and Advertising

Media outreach, with a specific emphasis on community newspapers and project-specific neighborhood publications, ensures that the public is informed about meetings, workshops, key decision points, and opportunities for involvement. At earlier stages in the project, including during the previous South Corridor Project, outreach to the media included reporter and editorial briefings, news releases, media advisories, and meeting notices. Continued media outreach is planned to coincide with the release of this SDEIS and the public comment period and will continue through the selection of the LPA and development of the FEIS.

• **Earned media.** The project has coordinated with local jurisdiction partners to provide community newspapers and neighborhood newsletters with information about meeting dates and public involvement opportunities.

• **Advertisements.** Paid ads will be purchased at key decision points to ensure that the public is informed about project meetings. Large advertisements in *The Oregonian* will be purchased to advertise the draft SDEIS open houses, public comment period, and public hearing.

• **Press releases.** Press releases and media advisories to regional and community newspapers have accompanied key milestones and public meetings. Additional press releases will be prepared to support the public comment period and selection and adoption of the LPA.
6.1.2.4 Community Meetings

In addition to the CAC and Steering Committee meetings, public meetings and events of various sizes and formats occurred throughout the process to provide information to the public and gather input.

Community meetings targeted a wide variety of groups including neighborhood and business groups, property owners, tenants adjacent to alignments, transportation and environmental interest groups, major employers, civic organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders. Metro staff provided project briefings upon request.

- **Project kick-off.** The project has held two open houses in the corridor, stakeholder meetings in the north end of the proposed alignment, and three segment meetings at the south end of the proposed alignment to announce the start of the SDEIS and ask for public input on proposed design options before selecting the option(s) that would be studied in detail.

- **Canvassing.** With a variety of impacts, Metro staff contacted property owners along the proposed alignment to discuss potential impacts and mitigation strategies and engage property owners in public involvement opportunities like station planning workshops or open houses.

- **Community meetings at station areas.** The project has held two workshops and two open houses in Southeast Portland to examine ideas about changes to station areas and gather input about priorities for changes to station areas. The project also held two workshops in Milwaukie/Clackamas County to examine choices about station locations.

- **Draft report open houses.** To release and explain the draft environmental review document, Metro is holding open houses along the project corridor, as identified in the project fact sheet.

- **SDEIS Public Hearing.** Metro is conducting a public hearing in compliance with the requirements of NEPA, Oregon land use regulations (as appropriate), and Metro’s Public Involvement Policy. The hearing is scheduled within the 45-day public comment period and is beyond the minimum 15 days required for a hearing following the release of the SDEIS “Notice of Availability” in the Federal Register. Notification of the SDEIS has also been published in local newspapers and mailed to property owners adjacent to the alignments under study. All comments received during the comment period will be compiled into a public comment report for distribution to decision-makers for their use in adopting an LPA. A definitive response to all comments will be made in the FEIS.

6.1.2.5 Documentation

A wide range of documentation was prepared and made available to the public throughout each project phase. Beyond newsletters and fact sheets developed specifically to engage the public, other documents available include the following:

- **Technical Reports.** The project’s technical reports are available to the public for review and are listed in Appendix C, Supporting Documents.

- **SDEIS/FEIS.** The SDEIS, and subsequent FEIS, are key public information documents that are available to all community members, stakeholders, agencies, and other interested people. This SDEIS provides information about the alternatives under consideration as well as a comparison of the benefits, costs, and impacts associated with each alternative. The Executive Summary of the SDEIS is available separately for public review.
• **Public Comment Report.** With the release of the SDEIS, the project is providing a 45-day public comment period, as required by federal regulations. During this time, the public can comment on the SDEIS by e-mail, telephone, fax, or at public meetings. Local jurisdictions will review the SDEIS and prepare recommendations and comments. Comments will be summarized and also published verbatim, indexed, and sorted by topic in a Public Comment Report. As mandated by NEPA, the project will also respond to comments in the Response to Comments section of the FEIS.

6.1.2.6 Notification

A range of techniques has been used to notify the public of project-related meetings and decision points. Information about project meetings has been included in Metro’s agency-wide weekly meeting notices and posted on the project web page. Meetings are typically advertised in *The Oregonian* (general or zoned editions) or community newspapers. Open house or workshop invitations were mailed or hand-delivered to homes and businesses in a targeted geographic area. Information about meetings was also distributed at neighborhood and business association meetings and through e-mail lists.

Public comment periods, public comment hearings, and other meetings related to the formal decision process will be advertised in community newspapers, *The Oregonian*, and mailed to household and businesses on the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project mailing list. The project mailing list includes property owners adjacent to or near the proposed alignment and interested persons from the South/North Corridor Project and the earlier phases of the South Corridor Project.

6.1.2.7 Environmental Justice Outreach and Compliance

Early in the project, Metro staff evaluated 2000 U.S. Census data and reviewed past documentation of the project area to identify concentrations of low-income, Hispanic, or minority residents. No significant concentrations of these groups were identified. However, some limited low-income, Hispanic or minority pockets were identified, so areas with potential concentrations of these groups were targeted for door-to-door canvassing and offered project briefings. The 2000 U.S. Census data related to low-income, minority, and Hispanic populations are provided in Section 3.3, Neighborhoods and Communities, and Appendix B, Environmental Justice.

6.1.2.8 Complying with Federal and State Regulations

Metro’s Public Involvement Planning Guide ensures that the appropriate publics are involved, that adequate notice of meetings and decision points are given, and that a variety of appropriate public involvement strategies are used. FTA also provides guidance and review to ensure that the requirements of NEPA and other applicable federal laws are met. The public involvement effort for this SDEIS also complies with Metro’s Transportation Planning Public Involvement Policy. Metro’s policy exceeds federal and state requirements for public involvement and notification.

6.1.2.9 SDEIS Public Comment Period and Adoption of the LPA

The publication of this SDEIS initiates a public comment period that will last a minimum of 45 days as required by federal regulations. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the project will begin a process aimed at selecting the LPA. A concerted effort will be made during the 45-day public comment period to inform and engage community members using tools described above.
Some of these activities will include community group briefings, newsletters, web site updates, online questionnaires, and CAC meetings.

At the conclusion of the formal public comment period, the Steering Committee will make a formal recommendation on the LPA. Each involved jurisdiction and agency will then review and formulate their own recommendation on the LPA. In most cases, a public hearing will be held prior to a decision being made by the local governing body. The LPA will also need to be presented to the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and the Metro Council. The Metro Council will also hold a public hearing before taking final action on the LPA.

6.1.3 Public Participation Efforts in Previous Project Phases

The key public involvement activities undertaken within the previous major project phases prior to undertaking this SDEIS are summarized below. Section 2.1, Screening and Selection Process, of this SDEIS, provides a project timeline and a more detailed description of these project phases.

6.1.3.1 South/North Corridor DEIS

The South Corridor Project was preceded by the South/North Corridor Project. A DEIS was published in February 1998 that evaluated various LRT Alternatives in the South/North Corridor. The South/North Project LPA was revised when voters failed to re-approve local funding in 1998. The North Corridor Interstate MAX Project evolved with alternative sources of local funding in the north portion of the corridor, and the South Corridor Project evolved from a re-examination of a variety of High-Capacity Transit Alternatives in the South Corridor. Community participation during the South/North Project began in 1991 with preliminary alternatives analysis and is detailed in the South/North DEIS (Metro 1998).

6.1.3.2 South Corridor Project

Between 2000 and 2002, the South Corridor project conducted public involvement for the South Corridor Alternatives Analysis and its SDEIS, which included alternatives for light rail, bus rapid transit and busways in the Portland-Milwaukie corridor and in the I-205 corridor. Details on the public involvement efforts conducted for that SDEIS are available in the South Corridor SDEIS (Metro 2002).

6.2 AGENCY COORDINATION

Federal, state, and local agency coordination has played an important role throughout the entire study process. Agencies listed in Table 6.2-1 have been contacted for the reinitiation of the SDEIS for the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project and also became sources for supporting information used in the development of analysis methods, data collection, resource identification, and/or determination of regulatory compliance requirements. Agencies have provided valuable information and, on occasion, additional evaluation or comments throughout the analysis. Consultation regarding compliance with specific regulatory issues with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, the Oregon Department of State Lands, and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office is reflected in letters from these agencies, included in Appendix A, Agency Correspondence and Coordination. A summary of the coordination activities with the natural resource agencies is also included in Appendix A.
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<td>Warm Springs Tribe</td>
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Source: Metro and TriMet: July 2002.
6.3 PROJECT PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Following is a list of the major federal, state, and local permits and approvals that the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project may need. The project will seek intergovernmental agreements to consolidate, simplify, and contain costs of the local permitting process to the extent possible.

Federal and State Permits/Approvals:

- Section 404 Permit – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State Wetlands Removal and Fill permit – Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL)
- Section 401/Water Quality Certification – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act – U.S. Coast Guard
- Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Section 106 – Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- Section 4(f) – U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT), in consultation with the U.S. Department of the Interior
- Indirect Source Permit – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Oregon Endangered Species Act – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- NPDES Permit – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Permits – Oregon PUC
- Right of Way Permit (Interstate) – Federal Highway Administration

Local Permits/Approvals:

- Land use design review, conditional use, subdivision and environmental review permits – City of Portland, City of Milwaukie, City of Oregon City, City of Gladstone, and Clackamas County
- Greenway Permit and Environmental Zone review – City of Portland
- Land Use Final Order (LUFO) in compliance with Statewide Planning Goals – Metro
- Building, demolition, blasting, grading, tree removal, and erosion control permits
- Electrical/mechanical/plumbing permits
- Utility relocations
- Right-of-way permits