



Division Transit Project

Community Advisory Committee questions, and project staff responses

April 14, 2017

Station Design and Route

Why isn't there a "left-running" design with buses in the left lane serving platforms in center medians?

During the planning phase, technical staff explored this concept but found it could have safety concerns, would not significantly improve bus travel times and would have higher costs and impacts than right-side stations.

Safety concerns with a left-running transit design include buses stopping in the left lane, the bus operator's line of sight when merging back into traffic after serving a center platform and the waiting-environment for riders in the center of Division Street.

Left-running designs have substantially higher costs than right-running. This includes the costs of platforms, buses with doors on both sides and roadway and traffic signal reconfigurations to accommodate U-turns and access changes. Creating space for center platforms would also trigger more property acquisitions than right-side platforms.

Why isn't there a dedicated bus lane?

Taking a lane for transit would increase traffic congestion on Division and result in diversion onto other streets. The traffic volumes on Division are higher than the range that is typical for a "road diet."

A continuous transit-only lane wouldn't significantly improve bus travel times—it's the congested intersections where buses currently get delayed.

Project planners will propose business access and transit (BAT) lanes at some of the most congested intersections. BAT lanes are bus-only lanes that also accommodate other vehicles turning right.

When will committee members see station design concepts?

Beginning with the April CAC meeting, design concepts will be part of every agenda. TriMet will send the design presentation once we've received it from the design

consultant. We strive to provide it as early as possible, though you may receive it as late as the day of the CAC meeting.

When will shelter designs be available for review?

The design team and the CAC will explore and review shelter designs throughout the summer and fall of 2017.

What about the visual impact of stations on the businesses and properties behind them: will station shelters include clear glass?

Summer 2017 we may begin exploring shelter design. However, the project hopes to design shelters to be as transparent as possible, this was a big discussion and lesson learned from the transit mall downtown and something that we plan to address in more detail. Translucency and clear sight lines are important to TriMet and will be incorporated into the shelter design.

What uniform features will be included at stations?

The current assumption is that each station will include will include real time bus information, LED lighting, a shelter with weather protection and a bike rack. Hop Fastpass readers will be on the BRT vehicle at each door. Specific design and location of windscreens and seating will be determined through this summer and fall. CCTV and fare machines will not be on the platform, these functions will be provided on the vehicles.

How would priority bus lanes affect or be integrated with current and future left and right turn lanes at SE 12th, 20th, 50th, 60th avenues, and Caesar Chavez Boulevard?

Changes to lane configurations are being evaluated by the design and traffic team. Proposals for changes will be presented this summer once the design has been vetted through value engineering.

Benefits

Will there be road surface improvements associated with the project?

Road surface improvements are part of the project budget; the current scope assumes a concrete bus pad as well as repaving within the vicinity of the station. The current scope also assumes providing a protective bike component to the bike lanes in Portland east of 82nd Ave.

Will signal priority be in place when the project opens?

Yes. This is a requirement for a Small Starts project.

Boarding

If no rider requests a stop, and if there is no one waiting at a station, will the bus still stop at each station?

The current assumption is the BRT will stop on demand at stations and will not stop unless a passenger is waiting or a request is made to stop.

Buses

Will the project use electric buses?

TriMet is excited about the promise of battery-electric bus technology and is looking forward to the addition of five 40-foot New Flyer XE40 Xcelsior battery-electric buses joining the fleet in 2018. This pilot project will enable TriMet to gain firsthand experience with the emerging technology and to validate cost and performance in our operating environment and duty cycle; help the agency better understand any changes needed to scheduling and operations to accommodate battery charging.

In addition to piloting electric buses to the fleet, TriMet has applied to form a federally funded consortium (through the Federal Transit Administration's ZERO program), along with PGE and other electric utilities and transit agencies around the country, as well as bus manufacturers to help develop a reliable pathway for expanding battery-electric fleet choices and utilization by encouraging the bus manufacturing industry to continue to advance bus, charger and battery technology, reliability and affordability.

Battery electric buses are still quite new to the industry, so full lifecycle performance in daily operation has not been fully validated by any operator. Upfront costs are still significantly greater than hybrid-diesel and diesel buses and long-term operating and maintenance costs will be better understood as industry experience matures. This

consortium would help support data sharing, standardization and other analysis need to help agencies and their partners understand what is needed to be able to scale bus electrification beyond today's pilot projects.

The Division Transit Project will look to begin procurement of a 60-foot articulated bus fleet in 2018. At this time there are a limited number of 60-foot battery-electric buses on the market, but the agency will continue to engage with manufacturers to bring additional options to market in a timely fashion.

Will the project's buses accommodate more than three bicycles?

The current assumption is that the vehicles will accommodate three bikes inside the rear door of the vehicle. TriMet will introduce this concept as part of the design conversation and seek feedback from the community to balance the space and access needs of all transit users. TriMet staff has reached out to peer agencies to discuss how bikes are accommodated on similar types of service with articulated busses. Lessons learned and best practices from other agencies will be shared as part of the design discussion.

CAC Process

There is some concern that Google Groups may not be the most productive forum for sharing ideas that help ensure the best design outcome.

We share and understand your concerns about this forum, and communicating among CAC members between meetings. The discussions on the project must be documented, tracked and searchable by TriMet's legal department. Please remember, you can call or email TriMet project staff to discuss the project at any time.

The CAC is tasked with evaluating and discussing project design elements over the next three meetings, to reach a consensus on design by June. Will you provide us with a transcript of the discussion held during our first CAC meeting, and a link to the PowerPoint presentation from that meeting?

Meeting notes will be available to members prior to the following meeting. Links to PowerPoint presentations are typically posted online for the public to review one week after the meeting.