David Edwards opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m. and welcomed members of public. No errors or omissions were noted from the summary of the previous meeting. David announced he will represent the CAC at the PMLR Steering Committee meeting on April 8. He asked CAC members to let him know if they have comments or ideas to share with the committee.

TriMet Budget Forecast and Service Outlook, presented by Diane Goodwin, TriMet Public Affairs Manager

Diane Goodwin outlined TriMet’s current and future financial picture. We’ve heard the public is frustrated with incomplete and negative news media coverage about TriMet’s fiscal crisis and service cuts. The last three years have been challenging for TriMet riders, particularly the most vulnerable. We’ve put in place $43 million in service cuts, the system’s largest-ever fare increase, longer wait times, more crowded vehicles and the elimination of the rail free zone.
The good news: TriMet is in a stable financial position this year. There will be no service cuts or fare increases this year with one caveat—the ruling of an appeal to the Employment Relations Board. Losing this ruling could result in an additional $7 million budget shortfall. The core problem is our healthcare benefits. Our benefits are larger than our ability to pay, and the problem is escalating. The agency’s employees enjoy better benefits than those in other public agencies. In 1994, the union negotiated lifetime health care for retirees and their dependents in lieu of wage increases. Since then, healthcare costs have skyrocketed. With an aging workforce and a high utilization rate, these long-term costs are unsustainable and are hurting our ability to add back service.

A series of slides illustrated service, budget and healthcare cost issues.

The first slide highlighted a growing gap between revenues and expenses. The first gap would appear by fiscal 2017 if healthcare benefits costs are not controlled. Under that scenario, by 2020, the income-expense disparity would leave a 34 percent shortfall. By 2025, the deficit would reach 70 percent.

The next slides pictured the disparity in medical benefits between TriMet and other governmental agencies, TriMet’s current offer to the union and the potential impact of that offer to ease service cuts.

Diane explained details of a current process with the state Employment Relations Board. She also addressed recent news of a pay raise for non-union employees. A total of 420 non-union employees received a 3 percent raise. The sum of the raises added up to $910,000. The increase was on par with raises received by union employees for each of the past three years. The agency’s general manager considered the raises a matter of fairness and equity after asking non-union employees to pick more and more of their healthcare costs during the last several years.

If the agency can bring healthcare costs in line with other public employers, we can go back and look for new revenues to restore service. But until we do that, the region won’t support new revenue. Taxpayers want to know that new revenue is being spent on new service, not our healthcare.

QUESTIONS

Terri Pucik: Putting the budget crisis on the backs of retirees is wrong. The union is willing to make healthcare concessions, but it wants to negotiate in public, and the agency doesn’t. TriMet has hired more than 100 employees, such as lawyers and engineers, making over $100,000 in the past two years. Why are you still hiring when you have a fiscal crisis? TriMet could do many other things to save money, such as bringing LIFT buses back in-house rather than contracting for this service. I also take exception with the claim that the average pay raise was 3 percent.
Diane Goodwin: Those engineers (and others) are paid as part of the PMLR project, not the TriMet general fund, and those positions will be gone when the project is completed. [Note: Following the meeting it was confirmed that since 2011, TriMet has hired seven non-union employees with salaries over $100,000 paid for through the general fund. The percentage of non-union employees with salaries in excess of $100,000 has dipped slightly during this period from 8.0 to 7.8 percent. In total, there are 50 non-union employees funded through the TriMet general fund in this salary range. ]

Some conversation followed about what retirees pay under different Medicare plans, as well as general discussion about rising healthcare costs.

Ray Bryan: What is the issue about the negotiating venue?
Diane Goodwin: I understand TriMet is fine with representatives from the media attending negotiation sessions, but does believe this is a public meeting. The issue is being resolved in court.

Clackamas County Update, presented by Dave Unsworth, TriMet Project Deputy Director
Dave Unsworth discussed issues related to funding from Clackamas County. The $1.4 billion budget reflects promises made by local and regional jurisdictions. The Clackamas County Commission voted three times to fund the project. Clackamas has paid $20 million toward its commitment. Three items remain, and TriMet has sued the county to hold it to its commitments. These include:

- $1.28 million toward road improvements at Park Avenue
- Transfer of properties
- Moving forward on right of way along the Trolley Trail

All the partners agreed we would extend the line to Park Avenue. We are going to do it, and we want Clackamas County to move forward.

QUESTIONS

Fred Nelligan: How do I give people certainty that this project will get built as designed?
Dave Unsworth: We have signed a contract called the Full Funding Grant Agreement with the Federal Transit Administration to construct the Project as we have designed it to SE Park Avenue. TriMet intends to keep this promise. Leah can provide you an update on the construction progress on the alignment to SE Park Avenue.

Project Status Update, presented by Leah Robbins, TriMet East Segment Project Director
Leah Robbins presented an overview of construction progress, with an emphasis on the east segment. Overall, the project is 37 percent complete.
Leah next discussed upcoming heavy civil construction with related traffic impacts, including the Willamette River Greenway Trail, Powell Boulevard structures, Kellogg structure and a number of rail crossings. Project staff, jurisdictional partners and the contractor are coordinating the construction schedule closely with Union Pacific Railroad. Community Affairs staff will share information about detours, road closures and other impacts with business owners and residents as soon as possible.

Leah showed slides of the design for the Bybee station. The slides offered views of station pullouts at street level and of station platforms at ground level.

Next, Leah described the process for determining that a sound wall will be built on McLoughlin Boulevard in the Island Station neighborhood. Noise assessments were performed following the removal of structures that demonstrated the need for noise mitigation. The sound wall will stand as high as 12 to 14 feet in some places and as low as 7 feet elsewhere. Community Affairs staff has shared the plans with neighbors.

Finally, Leah showed slides of efforts to ensure that the “cyclops” lamps (headlights) on light rail trains do not interfere with visibility for motorists on McLoughlin Boulevard approaching in the opposite direction. The design adds more street lighting to lower the contrast between the bright train light and the surroundings, helping drivers’ eyes adjust.

QUESTIONS

**David Aschenbrenner**: Will the lighting on McLoughlin use LEDs?
Leah Robbins: No; however, I’m not sure about lighting on the pathway. Also, there were concerns by neighbors near Lark and 27th about road hazards that drivers might not see at night.

**Cindy Miguel**: The issue has been addressed through erecting some barriers and a light pole.

**Fred Nelligan**: Will lighting on the west side of McLoughlin be designed to prevent back spill into the neighborhood?
Leah Robbins: Yes.

**Susan Pearce**: Will project staff coordinate with other construction projects in the neighborhood during the July 15 rail crossings closure?
Leah Robbins: Yes, we’re working to coordinate with the other agencies and projects.

**Catherine Goode**: I’ve heard concerns from neighbors about additional noise possibly generated by traffic on the Tillamook structure. Has there been any study of that?
Leah Robbins: Yes. Studies have found no noise impact requiring mitigation. There has been a lot of communication about this with adjacent neighbors.

**Catherine Goode**: Has there been an environmental study of the impact of the Johnson Creek bridge?
Leah Robbins: Yes. The project requires habitat restoration directly tied to our work. We're also taking the restoration a step further in cooperation with the watershed council. Workers will complete riparian and stream channel improvements this summer.

Ray Bryan: Is there any news about the bike path on the Kellogg bridge? Leah Robbins: We have completed 60 percent design, and the contract has been put out to bid for fabrication. Once a fabricator is chosen, it can take the project to full construction. The project is still within the budget for the grant from ODOT and the City of Milwaukie.

Fred Nelligan: On River Road, where you come off the Kellogg bridge, there is a lot of utility work underway, including an elevated bench.
Leah Robbins: This is only a temporary access bench for construction staging. In the next month or two, landscaping permitting will enter phase two in Milwaukie. This will be discussed in upcoming neighborhood meetings. At our next CAC meeting, we can answer more of your questions.

Trolley Trail Bike/Pedestrian Detour presented by Stacy Bluhm, City of Milwaukie Light Rail Project Manager
Stacy Bluhm shared plans to change the Trolley Trail detour during future phases of construction to allow a more direct route for cyclists and pedestrians. Claudia Steinberg confirmed that details will be posted on the project website and communicated with cyclists, pedestrians and bus riders.

Valerie Chapman: I appreciate the change and public notification. When the longer detour is in place in August, some people won't take it. It would be good to put up “bikes on roadway” signs to warn motorists there may be cyclists on McLoughlin.

Ian Stude: I second Valerie’s comments. August is a peak bicycling time, and bicyclists will be on the road. Any signs to try to mitigate that are helpful. Please let us know where that leads you.
Stacy Bluhm: We will talk to ODOT, who has to approve any signs on McLoughlin. We don’t want to encourage bicyclists to take the road.

Relocations and Acquisitions Update presented by Jillian Detweiler, TriMet Real Property Director
Jillian Detweiler discussed relocations and property acquisitions.

Overall, the project has 203 acquisitions. Of those, 55 are entire properties and 90 are partial acquisitions. Seventeen are permanent easements and 41 are temporary construction easements. TriMet now has 140 real properties in which the owner has accepted our offer or has reached settlement. In contested cases, the courts have
awarded TriMet 14 properties through an eminent domain process. One case recently failed to be settled in mediation and may go to trial. Another case is awaiting trial.

There are 122 relocations. These range from large, complex industrial sites to small residential storage units. All residential relocations have been completed, and we’re wrapping up the larger industrial sites.

Outstanding issues include work to prepare the site for the Park Avenue parking garage. The Elks Club voted last night to accept a settlement. Other offers have been made, and negotiations are in progress. We’re working with tenants who want relocation assistance.

ODOT is allowing TriMet and the contractor to access its property where needed. We typically will wrap up agreements with ODOT toward the end of the project, but we expect no issues.

**QUESTIONS**

**Fred Nelligan:** What acquisition is needed from the Elks property?

Jillian Detwiler: We required a partial acquisition, a temporary construction easement and conservation easement for restoration of a riparian area along the Trolley Trail. We’ve made an offer, negotiated, the and the Elks accepted a proposed settlement.

**Fred Nelligan:** Who are you negotiating with at Park Avenue? How do you work with landowners versus tenants?

Jillian Detwiler: We’re working with tenants who are entitled to relocation benefits and with property owners who receive compensation for the real estate. TriMet acquires the property and then gives notice that an offer has been accepted. There are 30-day and 90-day notice requirements for vacating a site, but we typically start working with them much earlier.

**Valerie Chapman:** Some businesses have to move out of the county they’re in to another part of the region. That is a concern for businesses that are renting.

Jillian Detweiler: So far, it’s been a wash. Some business move out (of the county) and others move in. We do keep track and have that information available.

**Valeria Ramirez:** When you report again on this, could you apply detail to the number of jobs associated?

Jillian Detweiler: Yes, we have information on the number of jobs. Some businesses have chosen to close rather than relocate.

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**Roundtable**

**Barbara Andersen:** I am excited to see progress behind the Waldorf School. We enjoyed seeing how a removed tree was creatively recycled into a playground structure. Most people seem to be getting along well with construction.
Adam Marx: I am excited to see progress along SE 17th Avenue but will be glad when the construction noise is gone.

Neil Hankerson: It’s exciting to think about how the underground utilities will benefit the neighborhood.

Ray Bryan: A recurring issue at our meetings has been the lack of Park & Ride spaces since the budget recalibration. Anything you can do along those lines is appreciated. We continue to hope for a station building in Milwaukie.

Terri Pucik: Thanks to Jennifer Koozer for providing me with more information about design changes discussed at the last CAC meeting. There is still more parking needed at Tacoma. I also appreciate any work you do to add parking. As to TriMet’s fiscal crisis, I don’t think it’s fair to use this forum to spread TriMet’s message about how it thinks the union is causing the problems. To be fair, the union should have been invited to give their side.

Ian Stude: At PSU, things are going smoothly. In April we’ll see the tail end of rail installation. Traffic issues are going reasonably well. Thanks for answering all my emails. I appreciate it.

Susan Pearce: Please remember that the pedestrian bridge near the Clinton Station is near and dear to the Hosford Abernethy neighborhood.

David Aschenbrenner: I remain concerned about Sellwood neighborhood pedestrian access to the Tacoma station. I had lobbied for a pedestrian-operated light as a solution. Also, I want to be involved in bus-routing discussions. Further, it might be interesting to hold a CAC meeting at the rail museum. It is a short walk from there to see the bridge construction.

Claudia Steinberg: We’d again like to offer tours of the alignment for CAC members. A tour allows more time to see construction. (All members expressed interest in a tour.) We’ll work to get some dates.

Valeria Ramirez: The Willamette Greenway Trail will close for 14 months along the Eastbank Esplanade. I have scheduled a meeting with Coral Egnew and DeeAnn Sandberg to talk about what that means for us. It will be interesting to see how traffic flows with all modes sharing space on new Water Avenue. I hope there are some observers to see how that works. That would give the opportunity to make adjustments beforehand.

Fred Nelligan: Arnold Panitch emailed me to say the bus route to this meeting location prevents him from coming. He provided a message in support of the project, noting all who benefit including those with disabilities.

The political environment in Clackamas County is still very sticky. I and others are very grateful to TriMet for filing a lawsuit against the county. There is so much disinformation
circulating in the county. People want to know, is the project going to happen or not? People need certainty.

**Cindy Miguel**: We are excited about the sound walls. I appreciate everyone being on board, being there for us, listening to neighbors. Knowing there will be sound walls brings a sense of relief and solves many problems. I also appreciated the reuse of trees and other objects like cobblestones.

**Valerie Chapman**: It is exciting to see things moving rapidly. I appreciate TriMet and Milwaukie coming through on the detours. Here’s another idea: A bike tour would provide a handlebar view of what bicyclists face and bring a larger body of people into awareness of what we’re talking about.

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**Public Comment**
Tom Ralley, SE Portland: Will there be bike lanes along the Union Pacific right of way?
Leah Robbins: A multi-use path will be built to provide a direct connection from the Clinton bike boulevard to the riverfront. Work in some areas is under way.

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David Edwards adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

**Next PMLR CAC meeting: Thursday, May 16, 2013, 6–7:30 p.m.**
PMLR East Field Office
2300 SE Beta St., Milwaukie, OR 97222