

## **SW Corridor Light Rail Project Community Advisory Committee (CAC)**

**Thursday, June 6, 2019, 5:30-7:30 p.m.  
Tigard Public Works Auditorium  
8777 SW Burnham St., Tigard**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **Present**

Chris Carpenter – Oregon & Southern Idaho District Council of Laborers  
Rachael Duke – Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH)  
Ethan Frelly – Tigard Chamber of Commerce, business owner  
Bill Garyfallou – Property/business owner  
Bob Ludlum – Senior, Washington County resident  
Julia Michel – Portland State University (PSU)  
Rebecca Ocken – Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania Campus  
Eric Sporre – PacTrust  
Elise Shearer – Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee, St. Anthony Parish  
Calista Fitzgerald – Designer Former Tigard Planning Commission Chair  
Michael Harrison – Oregon Health & Sciences University (OHSU)  
Chad Hastings – CenterCal Properties Bridgeport Village

#### **Not present:**

Melissa Moncada – Engineer, West Portland Park Neighborhood  
Ramtin Rahmani – Tigard resident, bicycle commuter to OHSU  
Lindsey Wise – Tigard Transportation Committee, transit commuter to PSU  
Debra Dunn – Synergy Resources Group Business Consultant  
Angela Handran – Tualatin renter Transit commuter to PSU

#### **Welcome; introductions; notes/agenda review; future agenda**

**Brandy Steffen, Facilitator**

Brandy Steffen introduced herself as the facilitator and welcomed attendees. She then provided time for committee members and TriMet staff to introduce themselves to the group. Key TriMet staff in attendance included: Libby Winter, Josh Mahar, Amparo Agosto, Jennifer Koozer, Scott Robertson, Carol Mayer, Jeramie Shane and Leah Robbins. There were no edits to the draft notes from the May meeting.

#### **Public comment**

- **Naomi**— Beaverton resident. She is opposed to the parking garages at the planned Park & Rides. She noted that the Beaverton Transit Center is very successful and only has 11 parking spaces for personal and car share vehicles. She appreciates the “bus and ride” feature at this location because it makes it easy for folks to take a bus to the MAX. Additionally, as a bike commuter, she prefers not having to interact with cars at the Transit Center. She would like to see TriMet spend the \$50,000+ per parking space on bus and bike facilities instead.

- **Anton**—Green Ribbon Committee member speaking on behalf of Friends of Terwilliger, also participated in the Marquam Hill Working Group. Anton reported out that the Green Ribbon Committee selected the inclined elevator over the bridge/elevator option for the Marquam Hill Connector. He relayed that the committee strongly prefers the inclined elevator because it can be tucked into the canyon, so it is less visually obtrusive when viewed from Terwilliger. Additionally, users would be protected from the weather and need to exert less physical effort to reach their destination. The Green Ribbon Committee determined that this option better met the criteria it set. It found that the bridge/elevator option would require users to walk a longer distance and would be much more visible from the roadway. He also noted that the Terwilliger Parkway is a historic city park designed by the Olmsted brothers that attracts visitors from across Portland for its views and recreational amenities.
- **Lori**—Property owner near the planned station in Tigard. She recently found out about the project due to receiving a zoning change notice. She raised concerns about the project's potential impact on nearby wetlands. She requested further traffic studies noting that GPS is sending folks down her street to avoid freeway traffic.

## Project cost and schedule update Process for defining Minimum Operable Segment (MOS)

Leah Robbins, Project Director

- Presentation and discussion

Leah reminded the committee that her last presentation focused on project cost. She noted that the target project cost is \$2.375 billion and the Locally Preferred Alternative is currently penciling out to \$2.733 billion—causing a significant funding gap.

Leah showed the committee a map of the Locally Preferred Alternative with associated costs and potential savings at key locations. She described how her team is exploring ways to address project elements that are driving costs up and noted that they've identified \$100 million in potential savings.

She reviewed specific project elements affecting cost, including the connection to the downtown line (Downtown Tie-in). As TriMet studied the traffic impacts of bringing light rail through Lair Hill, they determined that they need to look into grade separation at Caruthers and Sheridan. She noted the significant congestion in the area and the challenge of adding light rail and bus service without grade separation. This element will increase project costs. She also noted that the Marquam Hill Connector will also have an impact on the cost, depending on which option is selected by the Steering Committee.

She then reviewed specific costs savings ideas, including consolidating stations, seeking federal funding for viaduct improvements, reducing right of way purchases, reducing planned Operations & Maintenance facilities, and modifying designs.

Her team is working to update cost estimates based on 2018 construction costs.

**Questions, Responses and Comments:**

- **Bill**—Are we looking at rerouting around the viaducts completely?
  - We're looking at an option that was presented in the DEIS.
- **Elise**—The point of this project is to get from downtown Portland to Bridgeport and hit the high points along the way. The highest cost I'm seeing is the Marquam Hill Connector, so maybe that should be our last priority. We already have a lot of transit service going up to OHSU. There was huge controversy due to cost overruns with the tram. Perhaps getting up to Marquam Hill should be a low priority. It would be a major cost savings and get us to Bridgeport and employment districts at the south end.
  - **Ethan**— I don't disagree with you, but we need to have a stop at the Hill.
  - **Michael**—I want to mention that between OHSU, VA Hospital, and Shriners there are more than 20,000 employees and patients who live throughout the region. It is such a dense location that if it was not included, we'd miss the single busiest stop along the entire route. Not building a Marquam Hill Connector would mean that folks travelling from Bridgeport to the Hill would need to go all the way downtown, then get a bus to the tram at South Waterfront. It would not be a feasible option.

Leah returned to the presentation and provided an overview of upcoming project milestones, including a revised project estimate expected later this summer, development of the project definition in September, and noted the ongoing work to refine project costs and designs.

Additionally, she noted that TriMet will be speaking with Metro in September to request \$850 million in regional support for the project.

She then moved on to describe the project's Minimum Operable Segment (MOS), noting that the MOS needs to meet all the project criteria to be competitive for federal funding. She provided an overview of Federal Transit Authority funding criteria.

TriMet is working to develop 3-4 options for the MOS, which will be selected in September to keep the project on schedule.

**Questions, Responses and Comments:**

- **Chad**—Was inflation added into the construction estimate?
  - Yes, our published costs are tied to the planned midpoint of construction.
- **Rachel**—How big is the contingency fund? Can it address the gap in funding?
  - We currently have planning level estimates, so the contingency fund is large and will be refined over time as we design the project and eliminate risks. We cannot take funds from the contingency to address project shortfalls.
- **Michael**—It was my understanding that TriMet does a particularly good job of estimating project costs. The Orange line came in at/under budget. They all had contingencies, and it seems that those get used. Do they get pulled back into the project?
  - I've participated in several major capital projects with TriMet. Often, we've been able to reconvert contingency funds back into scope items when we progress through the design process. On our most recent project, we gave money back to the federal government. Part of our work is to make sure that we set accurate budgets and stick to them.
- **Chad**—Is there an operational budget built in?
  - No, this is all design and construction.

## Marquam Hill Connector

Carol Mayer Reed, Urban Design Integration Team

- Report on Green Ribbon Committee recommendation
- CAC discussion and recommendations

Carol provided an update of recent progress on planning for the Marquam Hill Connector. She began by orienting folks to the location and reviewing the project timeline. She noted that there has been robust public engagement on this topic, including in-person and online open houses, presentations to key groups (Committee on Accessible Transportation, Portland Design Commission, Portland City Council), and the creation and engagement of the Green Ribbon Committee.

Through this work, TriMet has eliminated two of the four options from further consideration, including the aerial tram and tunnel/elevator options. The two remaining options are a bridge/elevator and inclined elevator.

Both remaining options provide access to Marquam Hill. She noted that the Green Ribbon Committee preferred the inclined elevators. They felt that this option would be safer because users would be less exposed to the elements. It would operate much like a traditional elevator with a call button. Visually, this option hugs the ground, so it is more hidden. It would, however, take longer for each round trip (as compared to an average trip time walking on the bridge) and be more difficult for wildlife to cross.

Carol reminded the committee that whichever option is selected will go through design review. Her team is continuing to evaluate where on Marquam Hill the selected mode would surface.

### Questions, Responses and Comments:

- **Michael**—Separate from this project, OHSU has proposed to replace a dirt path with an ADA accessible route to connect a key bus stop on the Hill to the campus' 9<sup>th</sup> floor. The 9<sup>th</sup> floor is a common floor that connects the buildings so people can safely get across campus in an ADA accessible way. That would be a \$10-\$20 million investment made by OHSU.
- **Elise**—One of the things we've been asked to consider is the speed of the trip and how many people can be moved. According to your figures, the bridge/elevator is moving two to three-times more people than the inclined elevator and the cost is close to half. As a Citizen Advisory Committee, we need to consider those factors.
- **Bill**—Why is there a \$10 million cost range for the bridge/elevator and inclined elevator options?
  - This is a planning level cost estimate range of low-to-high for each mode by their approximate size. We don't yet know the exact specifications at this point (e.g. how many feet long the bridge in the bridge/elevator option would be).
- **Bob**—Do you have an annual operating budget to compare the bridge/elevator and inclined elevator? Does either option need to be staffed during operation?
  - From what I understand, it is a negligible difference between the two. Neither need to be staffed to operate.
- **Elise**—We selected the alignment for the Crossroads based on impact to utilities. The inclined elevator could affect utilities more than a bridge/elevator.

- **Michael**—OHSU prefers the bridge/elevator because of the cost and time savings. I'd like to acknowledge that a lot of good thoughts about the inclined elevator were raised. I'd like to see that both are explored further.
- **Chad**— Is the bridge going to be covered from the elements? If it was something I was taking daily, I'd want some cover.
  - That has not yet been determined. We're also thinking about adding heating elements to limit the likelihood of icing.
- **Ethan**—What's the length of the bridge? How long will it take people to get across the bridge? How often are the trains going to be dropping people off?
  - Most trains drop off approximately every 15 minutes. The bridge could be between 200-360 feet long. We don't have a more detailed design at this point.
- **Rachel**— I'd like to get more information on both options. The cost variances are so great. I would like to have a choice later or say that we're willing to go with an option unless it costs "X" amount more.
- **Elise**—We still need to keep in mind which option helps you move more people, faster.
- **Ethan**—My other concern is if more than one train arrives at once and you have to wait a long time to get on the inclined elevator.
- **Bill**—I'd like to echo that we ask the Steering Committee for more information. I think a bridge without cover certain times of the year will be an accessibility issue.
- **Rachel**—I would like to acknowledge the work of the Green Ribbon Committee. To me an inclined elevator is probably a better option for folks with disabilities, but I do feel like the cost issues are pretty big.
- **Chad**—The elevator can carry 40 people?
  - Yes, much like the one at the Zoo.

TriMet staff provided additional clarifying information to address a number of questions/comments. They stated that the inclined elevator is technically quicker because it reduces the need to walk, but the overall travel time could be longer than a bridge/elevator because of the longer wait time. Also, either mode could connect to the #8 bus to get right to the VA Hospital. It is frequent service.

- **Chad**—Thirty years from now, that \$10 million really doesn't mean much. I'd rather look at this big picture. Personally, I'd prefer the inclined elevator. My dad goes to the VA and has a hard time walking. That would be better for him. We're talking about a place that people are going when they are sick.

The committee recommended to the Steering Committee that they do not have enough information about cost and efficiency to compare the bridge/elevator and inclined elevator options. They would like both to be considered in the EIS. Specifically, they would like the assessment to consider:

- Travel time
- Capacity/wait time
- Cost/operation for this element and the entire line
- Environmental impacts
- Accessibility (bridge with cover compared with the incline elevator)

## Station Access and Park & Rides

Scott Robertson, TriMet Design Manager

- Presentation and discussion

Scott began his presentation with an overview of connected transportation choices. He noted that Park & Rides are one piece of a larger puzzle which also includes buses, trains, cycling/walking, and a number of newer modes, such as scooters. Additionally, he highlighted the recent experiences of cities expanding transit access, such as Seattle, Denver and Los Angeles. In Seattle, for example, they are seeing such a high utilization of their Park & Rides, they recently released HOV passes to get parking spaces closer to trains.

He then provided an overview of the Conceptual Design Report process, a major focus of which is station access. He reviewed some of the core topics, such as patron experience and mode of access that will be addressed in this report when it is completed next year.

To wrap up his presentation, he provided an overview of upcoming engagement opportunities and next steps. The online engagement will be open for three weeks, starting June 10, and will be available in English and Spanish through June 28th.

**Questions to be addressed at the next meeting:**

- **Bob**—I have a number of questions that I will email. Who will answer them?
  - Libby will answer any emails.
- **Rachel**—It would be nice to look at the cost of parking and Park & Rides in one place, as well as the relationship between providing parking and ridership.

**Next CAC meeting**

Thursday, July 18, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Tigard Public Works Auditorium, 8777 SW Burnham St., Tigard