

**Division Transit Project
Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
Thursday March 16, 2017, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
JADE/APANO Multicultural Space
8114 SE Division St, Portland, OR 97206**

CAC Members Present

Heidi Guenin, Public Health Advocate (Committee Chair)
Rick Bartko, Division Midway Alliance
Sydney Mead, Division Clinton Business Association (DCBA)
Thuy Tu, Jade District/APANO
Paul Pappas, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT); Portland Commission on Disability (PCOD)
Michael Harrison, Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU)
Kari Schlosshauer, Safe Routes to School National Partnerships
John Carr, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition (SEUL); Portland Clean Air
Cory Price, Gresham Business Owner
Chabre Vickers, Portland Community College Southeast (PCC)
Jef Kaiser, Gresham Coalition of Neighborhoods
Carol Fenstermacher, Centennial School District

CAC Members Absent

Carlos Moreno, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Elizabeth Cabral, The Street Trust
Kem Marks, East Portland Action Plan (EPAP)

Welcome

Steve Witter, Executive Director of Capital Projects & Construction at TriMet, welcomed everyone to the kick-off of the Division Transit Project Community Advisory Committee. He emphasized how the faster, more reliable bus service will have a positive impact on the communities along Division Street. He relayed that community involvement will be the key to success for the project and thanked Metro for initiating the project and getting us to a Locally Preferred Alternative.

Steve discussed some of the challenges, including the constraints of the project budget. He mentioned that as the team works within the budget constraints, if any snags are found along the way, the community will be consulted to provide input, and the team will use those ideas along with the budget and technical constraints.

Meeting logistics & CAC Purpose

Coral Egnew, Senior Community Affairs Coordinator, directed committee members to their packets and reviewed the meeting's agenda. She discussed the process of transferring the project from Metro to TriMet at the selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative. Coral directed everyone to the graphic which displayed how the project would take comments, concerns and recommendations from the CAC, relay it to our technical staff and multijurisdictional coordination committee. She also mentioned the creation of a new Policy and Budget Committee that would include the CAC Chair, Heidi Guenin, and another CAC member.

The main purpose of the CAC is facilitate two-way communication between project staff and CAC members' respective communities, to help influence design and advise TriMet as the project moves forward. The project has outreach staff that will be going out into the community as well. Brenda Martin will be working with communities from 82nd Avenue to Downtown Portland, Wendy Serrano between 82nd Ave and Gresham City Limits, and Coral Egnew in Gresham.

Coral addressed the general public and invited people to sign up to address the committee or complete a comment card.

Role Call and Ice Breaker

Heidi Guenin, CAC chair, did roll call and conducted an ice breaker to introduce the committee.

After introductions, Heidi began the public comment period.

Comments from the Public

Doug Allen

Division BRT is neither light rail nor a substitute for light rail. However, it may be TriMet's prototype for other heavy use bus lines. Therefore it is imperative that Division BRT demonstrates a path towards increased transit ridership.

I have four recommendations to improve the project and increase ridership.

- Eliminate the excessively long gaps planned between some of the stops.
- Choose battery-electric bus fleet, not diesel buses.
- Non-peak service should operate more frequently than the current Line 4 Division bus to the extent possible.
- New cross-town feeder buses on 148th and 162nd should, at minimum, operate at 15-minute frequency on weekdays and 20-minute frequency on weekends.
- One more recommendation: Should investigate what it would take to run the buses on the streetcar bridge over the railroad tracks to get from Division to Tilikum crossing. See if Union Pacific is willing to stop their trains to let busses pass.

Bing Wong

Mt Tabor Neighborhood Board was opposed to the project. Long buses' inability to get into and out of traffic lanes will cause major congestion particularly major congestion around Cesar Chavez. Asked police if the bus is blocking the lane is it legal to use the middle lane. The police said no, but they don't ticket and patrol people who do. Concerned about the distance between stops – people miss appointments. Need more frequency.

Heidi Guenin explained that she would allow TriMet staff to address community concerns.

Context and History

Alan Lehto, Director Policy & Planning for TriMet, began the presentation by reviewing the context and history of the project. When Metro began looking at this project, there were a lot of things going on in the community, but there was a request to focus on transit to make it as positive and useful to the community as possible.

The cities of Portland and Gresham adopted Action Plans that identify strategies for community driven economic development, mitigating involuntary displacement, and a broader range of issues. The City of Portland's conditions of approval of the LPA and memoranda of understanding focus on making sure that

we have the best transit project possible project while still paying attention to the other issues of importance in the corridor.

One of those issues is expanding other bus service in the Division corridor. Last week, TriMet increased the frequency of Line 20 between Gresham and Rockwood, which brings more service to Mt Hood Community College. Due to lots of feedback from the community, TriMet is proposing a new north/south line to begin service in 2018 along SE 162nd Avenue.

While initially the project was the Powell/Division Project, we found that we could not serve the community well with a route that used both streets. We are developing a project along Division that makes sense for the most folks who are riding in this corridor and will be riding in the future. We heard very strong support for the route to use Tilikum Crossing, which we are still pursuing.

Safety will continue to be our emphasis.

Goals – Overseeing Design and construction

Michael Kiser Manager, Division Transit Project Manager, presented to the committee on the design and construction for the project. He emphasized the fundamentals to the transportation project:

- Safety - improving the connectivity between Division and the rest of the Transit system
- Well Being - safety at the core and creating healthy neighborhoods and community building
- Equity – bring all the values that we can, spreading the benefits while reducing disparities
- Efficiency – Division is a complicated corridor so we need to make this project effective

The corridor is 14 miles long, with roughly 40 new stations equaling 80 platforms. Stations will be an average of 1/3 of a mile apart. We expect a 15-20% improvement in service. The project will have 10-12-inch high platforms, allowing for easy ons and offs for those in mobility devices. Vehicles will be 60-foot articulated buses with three doors for boarding. Transit signal priority will help the buses communicate with signals to improve performance and keep traffic moving. The new Hop Fast Pass program that will allow riders board quickly at multiple doors, reducing dwell time.

We are in the preliminary design process until June, collaborating with all jurisdictions.

The project needs to be delivered for \$175 million, which includes civil construction, right-of-way acquisition, purchase of articulated buses, a maintenance garage to store them, and design.

Michael reviewed the project schedule with the committee. A final design consultant will be brought on board in July of this year. Design will be completed at the end of 2018. Construction will start at the end of 2018. Then there will be two years of construction from 2019-2020, with service starting in September 2021.

Questions and Answers

The project team took questions from the committee regarding the presentation and information presented to them.

Sydney Mead, DCBA asked if we will get more detail about the budget. She wanted more information about whether there be open line items for the small local businesses that will be impacted by project construction, i.e. advertising on buses etc. Michael Kiser responded that Community Affairs group will work with local businesses during construction to help minimize construction impacts.

John Carr, SEUL asked what the current spacing between existing stops was. Alan Lehto answered about a sixth of a mile. John also asked if the Powell Garage renovation was part of this project and if it was included in the budget. Michael Kiser said only a portion of the larger, separately funded Powell Garage renovation project is for the new 60-foot articulated buses.

Cory Price, Gresham business owner asked how the stops will align with crosswalks. Michael Kiser said that the stations will be designed on a block by block approach. In some locations they will align with existing crossings and at times the project will create new crossing opportunities.

Paul Pappas, CAT committee asked about landing areas for people with disabilities. Michael Kiser said that at next month's CAC meeting we will begin discussing platform designs.

John Carr asked about CAC members lobbying to make sure that the project continues in light of federal budget proposals. Alan Lehto answered that he still expects that the FTA's Small Starts program to continue. For the past two decades TriMet has excelled in qualifying for federal funds and while the program may become more competitive, we are confident this project can successfully qualify.

Chabre Vickers, PCC asked about future meeting topics.

Coral Egnew reviewed the next three CAC meetings. April's agenda will focus on the Portland Bureau of Transportation's plans for safety improvements on Division Street, and an overview of transit design considerations. The May meeting will continue this discussion of transit and station design. By June, we expect to have a proposed design for station footprints to share and begin gathering feedback on, including an open house in late June. The Policy and Budget Committee will also be kicking-off in June.

Rick Bartko, Division Midway Alliance asked if the tight to the curb was cast in stone on all of the 14 miles. Michael Kiser stated that at this point moving forward, yes it was. Alan Lehto addressed running buses in the left lane. Ultimately it is not beneficial and is not feasible because it costs too much and it does not provide value to transit time.

Sydney Mead asked if there would be different station designs in different sections of the corridor. Michael Kiser explained that the length of the platform is dictated by the length of the bus, which is 60 feet. The heights of the stations will differ from station to station depending on the environment. The station elements will all be the same, and architects will design the station amenities to fit and reflect the community.

Michael Harrison, OHSU asked if there will be a field trip to Vancouver's new BRT (The Vine) in this process to become more familiar with the areas and corridor. Paul Pappas said the Committee on Accessible Transit is planning a trip to Vancouver to ride the Vine BRT system. Heidi Guenin wanted to know if that tour might be available to the CAC. Coral Egnew said that staff would work to coordinate something with C-TRAN for a tour.

Heidi Guenin asked members to let her know if they were interested in joining her on the Policy & Budget Committee.

Coral Egnew noted that the next two or three CAC meetings will be at Gresham City Hall, then subsequent meetings will be at PCC.

John Carr asked if the buses will be pulling over outside travel lanes or inside or will it be a mix. Michael Kiser said that there will be a mix depending on the environment.

Heidi Guenin asked how the CAC would be responding to public comments. Coral Egnew said that staff will collect the comments and record them in the notes.

Community Comments

Written Comment #1

I am primarily a bike commuter, so I think my first concern would be the agility of the larger buses and platforms. Secondly, I take the #72 and the #4 and am very concerned about safety on the bus and at the stops. I'm hoping the represented advocacy organizations will take these into consideration. Both options are not particularly clean nor safe in all of the pass I've been commuting. I would like to see more input from young riders in the process, but appreciate the work that has been done thus far in reconfiguring this project.

Written Comment #2

It needs to be clear to the committee members and the public that if 4-Division 45 minute service buses which currently run on SE Division St. stop about every 2-3 blocks, will be continued after the Division BRT/Division Transit Project is implemented.

Walk the route. Have photos of current conditions at proposed stops and potential mockup to compare differences.

Written Comment #3 (presented during verbal public comment)

Community Advisory Members:

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Submitted by Doug Allen
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