



SW Corridor Light Rail Project Steering Committee

**Monday, March 11, 2019 9a-10:30a
Tigard City Hall**

Present

Steve Witter – Executive Director, Engineering & Construction

Councilor Craig Dirksen – Metro

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly – Portland Bureau of Transportation

Councilor Robert Kellogg – City of Tualatin

Commissioner Roy Rogers – Washington County

Mayor Gery Schirado – City of Durham

Mayor Jason Snider – City of Tigard

Rian Windsheimer – ODOT Region 1 Manager

Absent

Doug Kelsey – General Manager, Chair

Welcome, introductions

Steve Witter, Executive Director Engineering & Construction

Steve Witter opened the meeting, thanked Mayor Snider for hosting, and explained that he was chairing today on behalf of TriMet General Manager, Doug Kelsey, who was attending a transit conference. He noted there were 38 members of the public who wished to address the committee today and would allocate a minute per person; he also encouraged written testimony.

SW Corridor Project Context

Carol Mayer-Reed, urban design team

Carol provided an overview of the purpose and context of the project. Regional transit achieves more than greater access to employment, housing, and recreation – it is a key element to help communities achieve their vision.

As our region faces continued growth, the light rail system is intended to reduce congestion and allow more capacity for goods and services to move throughout the region, which, in turn, helps to support the economy. Investments in light rail infrastructure can include enhancements to roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, parks, trails, creeks and wetlands -- contributing to an increased quality of life for everyone as growth continues.

New technologies are also part of the picture. For example, a driverless shuttle operating on a short, fixed route is being considered between 53rd Ave station and PCC Sylvania.



Who will light rail serve? It serves work commuters, residents, students, seniors, families and those with accessibility needs. Access to the multi-line light rail system enables connections throughout the region.

Looking at history, the present-day I-5 corridor has been a north-south path of travel for centuries, beginning with indigenous people and then white fur trappers and settlers. Next followed railroads and then the automobile era, and remnants of car-centric culture are still present along Capitol Highway and Barbur Blvd. By the end of the 1960s, Interstate-5 replaced or paralleled many of the early north-south routes through the region.

The corridor has a variety of physical characteristics from automobile-oriented commercial strips to industrial work centers to major watersheds and forested areas. The area includes sensitive creeks and wetlands, many of which have become degraded over time. Many developed areas consist of large, unbroken parcels that lack connecting streets. Much of the corridor is challenged by topography, and a portion is adjacent to existing freight rail.

Work commuters travel in both directions between Portland, Tigard and Tualatin. The corridor also includes a number of institutions of higher education and health and healing.

Each station area can have a unique community identity through the plazas, open spaces and structures. They can become elements of distinction, while the stations, and wayfinding are more consistent for ease of use by riders.

The Orange Line in downtown Milwaukie is as a case study. It runs in an existing freight rail corridor. The station was placed south of downtown next to an undeveloped parcel that now supports a food cart pod as a temporary use. Re-development projects that benefit from the light rail connections are currently taking place nearby.

The Southwest Corridor project will be designed using best practices in green stormwater infrastructure, pedestrian, bicycle and roadway connections, and many kinds of transit-oriented development projects are possible around stations.

Public comment

Speaker 1: Ben L. – Circuit Gym – this will have a huge negative effect on the community if impacted.

Speaker 2: Jason Z. – 16520 SW Upper Boones Ferry Rd. – 74th Ave. alignment will take up a huge chunk of business parking.

Speaker 3: Dylan M. – Circuit Gym – please consider an alternative to the 74th Ave route.

Speaker 4: Molly B. – heart disease survivor. Circuit Bouldering Gym has been a huge part of her life and her recovery.



Speaker 5: Andy: owner Circuit Gym. It is an asset to the community.

Speaker 6: Amber H. – Oregon State Bar – think about the public in the broader good. This line will impact many people.

Speaker 7: Jeremy N. – Interstate Roofing – will have to relocate to Wilsonville or further south if property is impacted. Estimate fuel cost increase by \$125k per year.

Speaker 8: Mike W. – Interstate Roofing – safety is a major concern for the employees and public. The 74th alignment would impact parking lot.

Speaker 9: Brad M. – behalf of Circuit Gym – encourages committee to visit and see how the gym impacts the community. The gym and space is rare.

Speaker 10: Dustin G. – Interstate Roofing – if you take away the parking lot/building we don't get to support the community we love.

Speaker 11: Chris W. – Interstate Roofing – has been with the company for years. Relocation would be a loss to him and others.

Speaker 12: Jim C. – Circuit Gym – without this gym, people from all over Washington County would have to travel to Portland to attend a climbing gym.

Speaker 13: Kerry L. – Circuit Gym – there would be loss to the area if the gym were to close or be relocated. The gym has become her family.

Speaker 14: James K. – 16083 SW Upper Boones Ferry Rd. – our building is right next to Oregon State Bar and the new line would eliminate his business parking as well as the gym. Go with the original alignment instead.

Speaker 15: Dave S. – 74th Industrial Park owner – 21 small business owners operate within his business park. Where will these folks go? Displacing small businesses is not good.

Speaker 16: Steve H. – Circuit community is his family away from family. Opposes the 74th corridor expansion – please consider the 72nd corridor. Do not destroy the community.

Speaker 17: Andrew J. – Vice president of Pac Trust, speaking in support of the LPA alignment and opposition to alternatives. Other alignments has too many impacts on businesses. Supports a supplement EIS for other alignments.

Speaker 18: Kelly W. – Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, Eminent Domain Lawyer – speaking on behalf of two clients that are concerned a supplemental EIS is not taking place.



Speaker 19: Andrew G. – Circuit Gym – please consider listening to everyone here that has spoken on behalf of the businesses along the proposed 74th corridor.

Speaker 20: Steve S. – the process seems rushed. An additional EIS has not been completed. You have to have the facts.

Speaker 21: Michelle R. – we do not want light rail in the City of Tigard.

Speaker 22: Christina J. – climber of Circuit Gym. Community of gym is special to many; it helps with mental and physical health. Gym is better than any medication available.

Speaker 23: Danny B. – Circuit Gym – provided numbers of people that have visited the gym, hosted parties, etc.

Speaker 24: Antonio – Interstate Roofing – moving Interstate Roofing would be a big loss.

Speaker 25: Nick S. – the gym has provided me a healthier and happier lifestyle. Please save the Circuit.

Speaker 26: Annie – the gym is very accessible to many individuals and would be a great loss to see it go.

Speaker 27: David B. – son of Mr. and Mrs. Bowles who own property on 74th Ave. The loss of buildings and income will have a serious impact on quality of life. Loss of income will be far greater than any compensation provided by TriMet.

Speaker 28: Dean S. – shame to lose the gym and other businesses around.

Speaker 29: Stan. – Precision Door Service. Would be very hard to find another location for his business such as the property he currently owns.

Speaker 30: Decinie W. - does not support the line running thru the 74th Ave. and Circuit gym.

Speaker 31: Mike W. – speaking on behalf of Circuit gym. Strongly opposes the 74th Ave. route.

Speaker 32: Brian S. – in support of keeping the Circuit Gym.

Speaker 33: Timothy D. – Circuit gym – greatly opposes the route running thru the gym.

Speaker 34: Craig J. – really concerned looking at the EIS that came from TriMet. Local businesses are being displaced.

Speaker 35: Mitchell – in support of keeping the Circuit Gym.

Speaker 36: Ryan S. – Village Inn. Third generation family-owned business since 1977. Opposed to relocation because they are very dependent on his current location.

Speaker 37: Steve – Durham Road provides ample access for busses to run. 74th is not the way to go. 72nd is plenty.

Speaker 38: Cesmarie J. – speaking in support of Circuit Gym. Sense of community and acceptance within the gym.

Review of project status and schedule

Leah Robbins, Project Director

- Work Plan Direction from LPA Adoption
- Project Schedule
- Decision Timeline

Leah described the workplan and timeline, noting it is early in the project – still in the environmental phase and just recently entered Project Development.

Last year the region adopted the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), based on the Initial Route Proposal that was in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Initial Route Proposal was estimated to cost \$2.6-2.8 billion, but with the adoption of the LPA, significant adjustments were made, and with that scope priced into the project, it is now estimated at \$3.1 billion.

The team is working on potential design mitigations that will be part of Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). This includes defining the Marquam Hill Connector, Crossroads (will be asking committee for a decision today), looking at mitigations in Bonita to Bridgeport segment, Park & Rides.

For the Marquam Hill Connector, there is an interdisciplinary group meeting regularly to analyze options for accessibly travelling the complex vertical and horizontal distance between Barbur and Marquam Hill. A Green Ribbon Committee will bring you a recommendation for the type of connector in May.

For Park & Rides, we are beginning technical work to refine potential scenarios for the FEIS.

For Bonita to Bridgeport, we are developing design mitigations, performing technical assessments, and asking for input from the community. We will dig deeper in to this topic at your April meeting, and hope to bring you a recommendation in May. The LPA parallels railroad tracks crosses Upper Boones Ferry Road at grade. The DEIS noted significant traffic and safety issues with that of crossing of Upper Boones, and also generated a lot of comments about the station area at Bridgeport. In response, the team

has developed two alternatives, and are discussing further adjustments based on community input and discussions so far. We will provide information on these alternatives and the same evaluation criteria as in the DEIS. The next community meeting is scheduled for March 28.

Other design refinements in progress include how to reduce costs for the viaducts, station locations and the tie-in with the existing light rail system at SW 4th Avenue. The team will also be recommending a Minimum Operable Segment (MOS), which is needed in FEIS.

Next year we will publish the FEIS, which sets the budget and finance plan. This requires funding commitments from local funding partners. This is important for advancing the regional funding strategy, and approval to enter the Engineering phase of the federal process requires that 30% of local funds be committed.

Light rail alignment at Portland Crossroads

Jeb Doran, Senior Project Manager

- Review design issues, options, community input
- Staff recommendation: Alternative B2
- CAC comments

Jeb Doran shared when selecting the LPA, the Steering Committee kept two options on the table for the Crossroads area (where Barbur and Capitol Hwy cross over I-5). The committee directed more study of alignments known as Alternative B2 (south of Crossroads) and Refinement 2 (north of Crossroads). The CAC also recommended a third idea, the Smith option. The design team evolved those into five options, and applied metrics from the DEIS. The team asked for community input between October and January at three well-attended open houses.

With the first set of options, the metrics and community input identified traffic issues with at-grade crossings. There was also discussion about impacts to Woods creek and park, station locations, pedestrian access and development opportunities. Based on this input, the team narrowed the options to two: Alternative B2 and Collins, on north side of Crossroads. The team developed graphics to show how these options would span over I-5 and other roads.

At community meetings, there was very strong support for Alternative B2, due to concerns with the Collins option from impacts to residences and Woods creek and park.

Early in the process, there seemed to be potential for cost savings with the options on the north side of Crossroads, but after more analysis and understanding of potential bridge structures, there does not appear to be a significant cost difference.

We continue to hear support for B2 from community. Because B2 has no residential impacts and negligible cost difference, the staff recommends B2 alignment.

Comments

Councilor Craig Dirksen – thinking about this area for about 16 years; recognized Crossroads would be a challenge. It took a lot of work to get to this conclusion; there were many ideas that needed to be explored. Agree B2 is best option with the least impact, and pleased that it does not cost more than others.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly: Supportive of B2, along with City Council, but wants further discussion regarding Crossroads, specifically about bike and pedestrian connections to transit center and the balance between parking and housing.

Action

The committee unanimously voted in favor of the B2 alignment.

Committee roundtable

Commissioner Roy Rogers: commends TriMet for looking at all viable options, but we should be looking at the LPA with modifications. The 74th Ave route is not a viable alternative. Suggests City of Tigard look at some up-zoning along 72nd Ave route for impacted properties. This could create more compact form and additional value on those remainder properties. Appreciates the comments today in support of the LPA; agrees that EIS needs work on 74th Ave and focus should be on LPA route.

Mayor Jason Snider: thanked people for comments about 74th Ave. Agree with Commissioner Rogers' comments: we've spend a huge amount of time getting to LPA; understands the obligation to look at alternatives but doesn't view deviating from the LPA as a viable option. We need to figure out how to build the right project and how to pay for the right project.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly: Thanked people for taking time to comment and civil dialogue. Community members don't feel they've been adequately informed or what are best opportunities for input. Encourages TriMet to be as transparent as possible. Notifying property owners does not equal community engagement. All people should have equal opportunity to information.

Steve Witter closed the meeting.