



NORTH/CENTRAL Service Enhancement Plan

Final Report



Dear Reader,

I am proud to present the North/Central Service Enhancement Plan, one of five such plans in the TriMet district, with recommendations to get you and your fellow community members where you need to go. This report provides a vision for future TriMet service in North Portland, Northwest Portland, parts of inner Southwest Portland, Northeast Portland west of I-205, and Southeast Portland west of I-205 and north of Division Avenue (for other areas, see www.trimet.org/future).

This vision for future service in the North/Central Service Enhancement Plan is the culmination of many hours of meetings with key voices from the community. Community members provided input through in-person meetings, surveys, focus groups, and individual discussions. Extra effort was put into getting input from the entire community, especially youth, seniors, minorities, people with low incomes, and non-English speakers. The City of Portland and business organizations provided input on future growth areas.

The final result is a plan that calls for bus service that connects people to more places more often, earlier and later. The plan also recommends new community-job connectors to serve areas that are not appropriate to serve with fixed-route TriMet service.

The service enhancement plans are a shared vision for future service; they are also commitments to grow TriMet's system. This commitment was recently bolstered by employers' support for an increase in TriMet's payroll tax rate. This new revenue will be used to implement recommendations from the service enhancement plans, making steps toward this vision each year for the decade to come. New improvements to the system began in March and September 2016 and are planned to continue each year for the next decade.

In the following months, TriMet will be completing visions for the Eastside and Southeast Service Enhancement Plans based on data analysis and discussions with neighborhoods, employers, social service providers, educational institutions, cities, and counties. Those visions, together with the already-completed Southwest and Westside Service Enhancement Plans, will serve as the template for each year's Annual Service Plan during this new era of growth for the TriMet system. As you read through this plan, I hope you are as excited about the future of transit in the Portland Metro Region as we are.

Regards,



TriMet General Manager
Line 12, 43, & Orange Line MAX Rider



*A note from
TriMet
General Manager,*
Neil McFarlane

Introduction

Between 2014 and 2016, TriMet engaged with riders, businesses, and community organizations in North and Central Portland to develop a shared vision for how transit will continue to support the growth of the city and get people where they need to go. This part of the TriMet district carries the most riders in our system of any of the Service Enhancement Plan areas today. TriMet will be enhancing service in all five Service Enhancement Plan areas during the next decade. It is imperative to the health and quality of life of this region that more and more people in this area have access to transit to meet their daily needs.

Much of North and Central Portland was developed during a time when transit and walking were people's primary modes of transportation. Many neighborhoods such as Hawthorne, Albina, Mt. Tabor, and St. Johns were developed along streetcar lines, and some of TriMet's highest ridership bus lines follow the historic streetcar routes where shops and homes continue to concentrate. Most of North and Central Portland has good sidewalk coverage and a street grid that is easy to navigate, making it generally very walk-friendly – which, in turn, makes it very transit-friendly. In addition, the City of Portland projects substantial

growth in both residents and jobs in this area with no real chance for adding new roads for all those extra people to drive on. In order to support the city and the region's vision for future growth in Portland, transit service must carry more and more people. This vision will guide our decisions on how we will expand service to meet the City's and the region's goals.

Creating the Service Enhancement Plan

Between the fall of 2014 and the spring of 2016, TriMet worked hard to refine this shared vision of the future for transit service in the North/Central area. By working with transit riders, neighborhoods, businesses, and community-based organizations we developed a shared vision for how service should be enhanced for the future.

Phase 1: Gather Input

In this phase, we asked people to give us all of their ideas for ways to make transit better. The response was resounding: new bus routes, more frequent service and more hours of service. We heard from over 3,000 survey respondents and hundreds more through in-person meetings including a community forum in North Portland, emails and phone calls. During this



Many neighborhoods throughout North and Central Portland were developed at a time when transit and walking were people's primary modes of transportation. Transit service continues to be vital to maintaining quality of life in these areas today.

“We are delighted to see many of the transit concerns expressed by our community members being addressed for the North and Central regions. Clearly TriMet has been listening to our concerns and has acted to develop a progressive plan to address the needs of our community and surrounding neighborhoods.”

— **Laura Young,**
Cully Association of
Neighbors

phase we also looked at other information sources to help us understand how people travel within North and Central Portland and throughout the region. This included data from the Oregon Household Activity Survey and journey-to-work data from the U.S. Census describing commuting patterns. All of this information was used to inform Phase 2.

Phase 2: Draft Vision

We released a draft vision for future service in June 2015 and asked for feedback throughout the summer. We talked to riders at bus stops and on buses throughout North and Central Portland, hosted surveys and attended multiple community meetings and events to talk with people about their opinions on the vision. Over 2,000 people commented on our survey and we heard from hundreds more in other ways. All of this feedback helped refine the vision in Phase 3.

Phase 3: Refined Vision

Our refined vision for future service was released in November 2015 and included several changes made in response to community feedback.

How this Plan Supports North and Central Portland

Most transit riders and community members in North and Central Portland have told us that they value the same things: transit service that gets them where they need to go; that’s quick, convenient, and efficient; that runs frequently enough to allow flexibility in when they travel. This plan will help North and Central Portland in the following ways:

Making it easier to access transit throughout the city and get to jobs that are located outside of downtown.

Our transit network today does a good job bringing people into and out of Downtown Portland. Downtown will continue to be an important



This vision for future service calls for improvements that would make it easier to access industrial and manufacturing jobs, such as the ones shown here at Purdy Brush in the Rivergate Industrial Area of North Portland.

location in the future, but this plan also strengthens connections to locations where many jobs are more spread out including Swan Island, Rivergate, the Columbia Corridor and the Northwest Industrial Area. This vision also includes new service in the North and Central Portland neighborhoods where some people must walk much farther than ¼ mile to reach their nearest bus stop.

Providing more freedom and flexibility in when people can use transit.

North and Central Portland is growing and there is little space available to expand roadway capacity. Strengthening transit service will be critical in ensuring that people can still move around the city and get where they need to go.

Vision for Transit in the Future

The sections below describe the specific improvements that will make it easier for North and Central Portlanders to access and use transit.

1. Making it easier to access transit

The vision calls for two new bus lines and more changes to existing bus lines. These changes will provide new service coverage and new connections in the following places:

Delta Park Center on N Hayden Meadows Drive

There are multiple businesses and shopping centers in this area and many people have told us that they would like to access this area by transit. The vision calls for 6-Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard to provide new service coverage here.

Rivergate and the Columbia Corridor

There are thousands of jobs spread out along the Columbia Corridor and many people have asked us to make it easier to access them via transit. This vision calls for more frequency on 11-Rivergate/Marine Dr and a substantial extension of the line east to Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center, where it will make connections with several bus lines that serve East Portland and Gresham.

Swan Island

This vision includes replacing 85-Swan Island with 70-12th. 70-12th is a cross-town line that runs more

frequently, later in the evening, on weekends, and connects to a substantial number of bus lines along its route from Milwaukie.

North, Northeast, and Southeast Portland neighborhoods

This vision includes changing the routing of several existing bus lines that together will strengthen the bus network throughout Northeast Portland and provide access to many more people.

A new bus line (shown on the map as line “Z”)

Will provide service connecting Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center to downtown Portland via NE Prescott, NE 33rd, NE Alberta, NE MLK and the Steel Bridge.

71-60th/122nd Ave

Routing will change in the Cully neighborhood and will provide new service coverage on NE Cully Boulevard. It will connect to Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center via NE Killingsworth.

17-Holgate/Broadway

Will shift from NE 24th to NE 33rd Avenue and will continue to run to and from downtown Portland.



Laura Young of the Cully Association of Neighbors stands outside the Bison Coffeehouse, a local landmark on Northeast Cully Boulevard. This vision for future service includes many improvements in the Cully area.

Future Vision for Better Transit in North/Central Portland

4-Division/Fessenden

Later and earlier service

6-Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

New coverage in Delta Park

10-Harold St

New service on NW Raleigh and in the north Pearl District

11-Rivergate/Marine Dr

More service to Rivergate and extended route along Columbia Boulevard

15-Belmont/NW 23rd

More frequent service in the Northwest Industrial District and later and earlier service on the whole line

16-Front Ave/St Helens Rd

More frequent service and new Sunday service.

20-Burnside/Stark

Upgrade line to Frequent Service and add later and earlier service

24-Fremont

New connection between NE and NW and weekend service

70-12th

More frequent service and weekend service to Swan Island

71-60th/122nd Ave

New service on Cully Blvd

72-Killingsworth/82nd Ave

Later and earlier service

75-Cesar Chavez/Lombard

Later and earlier service

77-Broadway/Halsey

More frequent service

New bus line (Line Y)

Service connecting NE Portland to Sellwood via NE/SE 20th

New bus line (Line Z)

Service connecting Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center to downtown via Prescott, Alberta, MLK, and the Steel Bridge

New community/job connector services in the East Columbia/Bridgeton areas, the Hayden Island area, the Northwest Heights area, and the Airport Way Industrial Area





This vision for future service would make it easier for people to access key services like grocery stores, such as the Albertsons in the Cully neighborhood and the Wal-Mart in the Delta Park shopping center.

A new bus line (shown on the map as line “Y”)

Will provide service on NE 24th and NE 27th Ave and connect to new service on NE/SE 20th Ave. This will create a new continuous north-south transit connection between NE Portland and Sellwood connecting many neighborhoods and neighborhood commercial centers in both NE and SE Portland.

Northwest Portland neighborhoods

This vision includes extensions of two bus lines into Northwest Portland to help increase access to transit for this very vibrant and transit-oriented part of our region.

10-Harold St

Will be extended from its existing route in SE Portland to provide new service in the northern part of the Pearl District and the alphabet district, via NW 12th, NW 14th, and NW Raleigh.

24-Fremont

Will be extended from its existing route in NE Portland across the Fremont Bridge and connect to Providence Park via NW 18th and NW 19th.

Passing Through Flexible Federal Funds for Transit Service

There are areas in our region where the businesses and/or homes are so scattered or use so much land that there aren't enough people within walking distance of bus stops to cost-effectively provide fixed-

route bus service. In other cases there aren't enough roadway connections to let people walk to and from bus stops. Unfortunately, these areas are often the same places where housing is more affordable or where there are well-paying, entry-level jobs. However, even when TriMet cannot operate fixed route bus service, it has a long history of helping communities by passing on federal funds to other organizations to operate their own smaller, flexible services that can meet the unique needs of residents and employees. Connector services like these currently operate in Hillsboro, Forest Grove, and Tualatin. In the North/Central area, opportunities for shuttle services include the areas listed below. These areas are shown on the map on page 6 as “community/jobs connector service areas.”

Airport Way Industrial Area

A community/jobs connector service could provide transit access to businesses along streets such as NE Cornfoot and NE Alderwood.

East Columbia and Bridgeton neighborhoods

A community/jobs connector service could connect residences along NE 13th Ave and Marine Drive to TriMet's fixed-route system.

Hayden Island neighborhood

A community/jobs connector service could connect residences in the Hayden Island neighborhood to TriMet's fixed-route system.

Northwest Heights neighborhood

A community/jobs connector service could connect residences along Miller Road to TriMet's fixed-route system.

Walking to your local bus stop or MAX station

Most TriMet riders begin and end their trip by walking (or rolling using a mobility device). TriMet doesn't control where sidewalks and crossings are built, but we work with local cities, counties and the Oregon Department of Transportation to encourage construction of sidewalks and safe crossings where people can use them to get to bus stops. TriMet created a Pedestrian Network Analysis (trimet.org/walk) to help prioritize where to make sidewalk and crossing investments, based on needs and opportunities including higher ridership locations.

2. Providing more freedom and flexibility in how people can use transit

Freedom and flexibility to a transit rider are determined by the frequency of service provided, the hours of the day the service is provided and the days of the week the service is provided.

More frequency

Many of our bus lines today function well, but would be more useful to riders with more frequency. As part of our standard practice, we regularly



Line 4 on North Mississippi Avenue is one of the most ridden bus lines in the entire TriMet network today. This vision for future service calls for later and earlier service on Line 4.

look at adding trips on all of our existing bus lines when we see that the number of people riding the bus exceeds the capacity that we currently provide. Because demand is lower during the midday, early morning, late evening, and weekends, we provide less service during those days on many lines. However, we envision additional frequency for these lines:

11-Rivergate/Marine Dr.

Line 11 currently provides service along Columbia Boulevard, Lombard, and Marine Drive in the Rivergate Industrial Area. This is an important line for providing access to jobs. However, many of the jobs in this area start and



“The Columbia Corridor provides more middle income jobs to communities of color than any other sector in Portland. Getting people to those jobs has always been a challenge. The new transit improvements focus on making the link between home and jobs that pay family wages. It’s great to see TriMet understand the problem and provide some of the solutions.”

— **Corky Collier**,
Executive Director,
Columbia Corridor
Association

“Many native African American Oregonians have been displaced and now live further away from where they grow up, went to school, shopped or had family functions. The options of having more frequent bus transportation on busy routes and small shuttle buses for communities that live a distance from a bus stop as described in this plan will help people get where they need to go.”

— **Laquida Landford**,
Community Health Worker
and Community Organizer

end at times when the Line 11 does not currently run. This vision includes adding more trips to this line during times that it doesn't currently run so that more people can get to and from their jobs on transit. (Also, as is described above, the vision for Line 11 is to extend it eastward to the Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center.)

15-Belmont/NW 23rd in the NW Industrial District

The Northwest Industrial Area end of Line 15 currently has less frequent service than the main part of the line on Belmont and NW 23rd Avenue. In order to help improve access to jobs in the NW Industrial District, this vision includes increasing the frequency of service on that portion of Line 15.



Groundworks Portland, Executive Director Edward Hill (pictured) and Laquida Landford, facilitate a conversation about transit in North and Northeast Portland. Results from this conversation added to the shared vision in this Plan.

16-Front Ave/St. Helens Road

Line 16 provides a fast trip for riders between St. Johns, Linnton, and downtown Portland. This vision includes more frequent service on this line to help strengthen this important travel option.

20-Burnside/Stark

This line provides a key link between many neighborhoods and destinations throughout North and Central Portland and connects Beaverton to Gresham. Line 20 today provides over 10,000 rides on a typical weekday on its full length. This vision includes upgrading this line to a full Frequent Service line.

77-Broadway/Halsey

Line 77 connects Troutdale to downtown Portland and provides service to important commercial areas in the Hollywood area, the Lloyd District, the Pearl District and in the alphabet district of Northwest Portland. As the population in these areas increase, so does the demand for transit

service. This vision includes continuing to add more frequency to this line.

More weekend service

Most, but not all, of the bus lines in the North/Central area currently run 7 days per week. This vision includes adding weekend service to lines 24-Fremont, 16-Front Ave/St. Helens Rd and 63-Washington Park/Arlington Heights so that more people can get where they need to go on Saturdays and Sundays.

Service in the early morning and late night

Many people have told us that they want to be able to ride transit in the late night and early morning hours. This vision includes adding later and earlier service on lines that together serve the majority of North and Central Portland, including 4- Division/Fessenden, 15-Belmont/NW 23rd, 20-Burnside/Stark, 72-Killingsworth/82nd and 75-Lombard/Cesar Chavez.

3. Making transit more attractive and efficient

TriMet will continue to work with cities, counties and the Oregon Department of Transportation

to identify opportunities for transit signal priority and other construction and service improvements to help our bus riders get to their destinations quickly, efficiently and with minimal delay. Opportunities could include intersection improvements, limited stop services, and even more significant bus line projects. TriMet will generally focus on the highest ridership and most frequent lines for these kinds of improvements to maximize the number of people who benefit from our efforts.

Conclusion

Transit has been an integral part of the communities in North and Central Portland since the time they were founded. Transit service needs to grow as these communities continue to grow. Implementing the vision put forward in this plan will support mobility and quality of life in North and Central Portland in the decades to come.



Transit service is an integral part of life on Southeast Belmont now and will continue to be in the decades to come.



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