



SW Corridor Light Rail Project Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

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

Meeting Summary

Present

Rachael Duke – Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH)
Calista Fitzgerald – Designer Former Tigard Planning Commission Chair
Bill Garyfallou – Property/business owner
Angela Handran – Tualatin renter Transit commuter to PSU
Michael Harrison – Oregon Health & Sciences University (OHSU)
Melissa Moncada – Engineer, West Portland Park Neighborhood
Julia Michel – Portland State University (PSU)
Elise Shearer – Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee, St. Anthony Parish
Eric Sporre – PacTrust
Ramtin Rahmani – Tigard resident, bicycle commuter to OHSU
Lindsey Wise – Tigard Transportation Committee, transit commuter to PSU

Not Present

Chris Carpenter – FocusPoint Communications
Debra Dunn – Synergy Resources Group Business Consultant
Ethan Frelly – Tigard Chamber of Commerce, business owner
Chad Hastings – CenterCal Properties Bridgeport Village
Bob Ludlum – Washington County resident, Veteran's advocate
Rebecca Ocken – Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania Campus

Welcome

Brandy Steffen, Facilitator, JLA
Brandy reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment

Two members of the public addressed the committee.

Dolores – If the goal is to relieve traffic congestion, the solution is not light rail, but expanded bus service. Buses have many advantages including the ability to run on clean energy alternatives like natural gas or battery, whereas light rail is subject to electric grid overloads, weather conditions and power outages. An expanded, improved bus system is a more practical, versatile, reliable, cost-effective, immediate and safer solution to traffic congestion than light rail.

Gary – I am the brother of CAC member Bill Garyfallou. We own land and run businesses between SW 19th Ave and Barbur and Fred Meyer/Safeway. We have been developing plans to build 230 units of apartments across from Fred Meyer on SW Barbur Blvd and the biggest issue



is the cost of parking. We tried to partner with TriMet on parking for a public and private option but received push back because it is too close to the city and will increase traffic congestion. We used our own private funds to hire Kittleson to complete a traffic study and concluded 400 parking units would be a great place for a park and ride, but it is currently cost-prohibitive for us to do so without partnering with TriMet. If the goal is to reach out all the way to Bridgeport, TriMet needs to work with private sector because congestion is going to be huge down the corridor. This vision is beautiful and something I've always wanted, but TriMet needs to reach out to and partner with the landowners and families who have lived there.

Brandy thanked the CAC for their outreach to different communities during the last two months, especially Bill Garyfallou and Melissa Moncada for their extra effort.

Recommendation to close cost/funding gap

Kelly Betteridge, Southwest Corridor Program Manager, TriMet

Scope reductions

Kelly provided a high-level overview of project updates and timeline. She noted that at the previous CAC meeting, the project team heard from the CAC that it was very important that the project terminate at Bridgeport and they must find a way to bridge the \$462M funding gap without removing traffic lanes on Barbur Boulevard.

Project staff's draft recommendation is to move forward with original locally preferred alternative (LPA) that terminates at Bridgeport, with the following:

1. Incorporate \$129M in scope refinements.
2. Incorporate additional \$240M in funding.
3. Continue discussions to help close 100M gap.
4. Continue to minimize impacts and costs through design.

Ramtin asked for specific details on scope adjustments because he is concerned about impacts and reductions to bike and pedestrian plans, particularly if the width or right-of-way has changed.

Kelly showed a high-level overview of scope cuts and gains, and explained that as the design advances, the right-of-way assumptions are refined.

Scott Robertson added that the project is not removing bike, sidewalks or auto lanes from the designs. There are instances where the project design will adjust in order to avoid existing walls and houses, some of which are historic.

Kelly and Scott provided a more detailed explanation for each scope cut and gain item. This overview included the following:

- Reduced track crossovers by six.
- Paving, grading and rebuilding the road at Upper Boones Ferry Road is estimated to cost \$50M less than original scoped.
- When the footprint is reduced, stormwater is reduced as well.
- The footprint of the operations and maintenance facility was reduced to avoid additional property impacts. This saved \$10M.
- The project team worked with the City of Tigard to keep the transit center where it is and saved \$5M.



- An \$11M structure spanning Red Rock Creek is needed to avoid the floodplain and environmental impacts.
- Newer substation designs were utilized to reduce the number of substations which saved \$10M.
- One left turn lane on Barbur (near Under Armour) was removed and a parking garage was avoided.
- The Custer station was moved 10' to the south and avoided two properties, saving \$6M.

Elise asked about the City of Tigard's offer to donate their public works building as a station.

Scott explained that the City's concept was for a Downtown Tigard interim terminus and would have been an \$80M increase because it would have required additional elevated tracks and station.

Ramtin asked if any of these changes increase the estimate travel time?

Scott noted that recent estimates are still at 30 minutes.

Ramtin asked if removing substations hamper how many trains can run?

Scott answered no and explained that the new substation design included the failsafe of two substations taking over if one failed.

Kelly also explained that the Barbur Refinements are no longer being considered and the Steering Committee agreed to remove them from further consideration at their November 4 meeting. The CAC's concerns about congestion were echoed by other partners; as the design phase progressed savings decreased and impacts increased. In summary, the project is moving forward with the original LPA with the scope adjustments summarized above.

Adjustments to funding assumptions

Kelly provided an overview of the additional project funding adjustments.:

- Incorporate jurisdictional transfer funds = \$65M
- Metro staff's recommendation for the regional funding measure increased assumed funding for this project by \$125M.
- The project team also increased the assumed federal discretionary funding amount..

Elise asked if the project's ask is still competitive for federal funding?

Kelly responded that the project team feels it is reasonable to ask for an increased amount; however, they will not know how that will be received until the project moved forward into the Engineering phase.

Ramtin asked if the project's medium/high rating drops because the funding ask is increased.

Kelly confirmed the increased funding ask will not affect the rating and the project is believed to be competitive.

Kelly provided a visual overview of scope and funding changes. She explained that the remaining \$93M gap will need to be addressed by continuing to reduce project scope and having conversations with partners about additional funding opportunities.



Interim terminus

Kelly explained that the Steering Committee will also recommend an interim terminus – also referred to by the FTA as a minimum operable segment (MOS). The FTA asks that projects identify a less expensive project, which could operate effectively on its own.

The project team has recommended the interim terminus for this project is Bonita/Upper Boones Ferry Road. However, partners have every intention to deliver a project that terminates at Bridgeport Village.

Brandy reminded the group that the interim terminus is a “worst case scenario” and, but the project goal is still to terminate at Bridgeport.

Michael asked how Bonita and Upper Boones Ferry can be listed as one terminus when they are two different locations?

Kelly responded that the graphic refers to a general area and, if the project had to end at the MOS there would be further refinements. Bonita and Upper Boones Ferry Road stations are currently designed as stops and the designs would have to change if they became a terminus since a terminus needs more infrastructure than a stop.

Lindsey asked how the project team can state the interim terminus is the most “cost-effective” without a design?

Kelly clarified that “cost-effectiveness” is defined by the FTA as a measurement defined by ridership rather than construction cost. By that definition, the interim terminus is the second most cost-effective option to Bridgeport. “

Elise asked if the number of riders of Bonita/ Upper Boones Ferry Road are greater than if the MOS ended at Hall?

Kelly responded the further south the terminus is, the more ridership the project captures.

Elise noted that terminating at Bonita/ Upper Boones Ferry Road is acceptable because of employment district, but residential populations are non-existent in that area.

Kelly reiterated that the project goal is to end Bridgeport, but the interim terminus is the second-best option.

Melissa asked how likely is it to end at the interim terminus?

Kelly responded that the team is hopeful it’s not likely and identifying an interim terminus is an exercise to satisfy the FTA request.

Rachael asked about the cost difference between Bridgeport and the interim terminus?

Scott replied that Bonita/ Upper Boones Ferry Road is about \$120-150M less, which might be enough to close the gap.

Lindsey asked if federal funding is all-or-nothing or can they give less?

Kelly responded that it is an iterative process and the first formal request is in November, but funding isn’t locked in until the full funding grant agreement.

Lindsey asked if the group should be thinking about getting less funding?



Kelly responded that the committee should continue to talk about this. The Orange Line received 10% less funding than expected and TriMet made it work, but if they only received half of what was expected, it would be very difficult to complete the project as planned. She reiterated that the project team will continue to discuss these options with the group if things change in the future.

Committee Discussion

Brandy asked the group to share their concerns and what they are hearing from their community groups.

Overall, the group was happy with the project's return to the original LPA terminus at Bridgeport and the removal of Barbur Refinements from consideration. Below are the detailed comments from members followed by a summary of recommendations to be presented to the Steering Committee.

Bill commented that he made an effort to go to the Hillsdale and Multnomah Neighborhood Association meetings and their main concern is how traffic spillover will transform their neighborhood. One of the main suggestions from the community was the viaducts. Is there a cost savings with minimal impacts? The other idea is to reduce the amount of Park & Rides by integrating with the private sector to disperse them and eliminate choke points. We would like to see TriMet work with private property owners.

Scott responded that the project team has examined the potential of eliminating viaduct replacement from the project scope. Initial estimates were \$150M in savings but it would increase congestion because it requires two more signals. The viaducts are very old structures that will be on ODOT's replacement list, but they will be harder to replace if light rail is built next to them.

Michael asked if the entire project corridor includes sidewalks, raised protected bike lane and stormwater facilities.

Scott responded that the project will include sidewalks, bike lanes and stormwater facilities when it aligns with existing streets. This occurs in two areas – along Barbur and 70th Ave; otherwise the project aligns next to railroads.

Kelly provided an overview of the next steps for the project including a Steering Committee meeting on November 18 [*NOTE: this meeting was canceled after the CAC meeting and CAC members were alerted to the change*]. After recommendations are approved by the Steering Committee, the project team will begin to draft Inter-governmental Agreements (IGAs), complete the environmental process, and apply for the next step in the federal funding process in 2020.

Brandy confirmed with the group that there are no major concerns about the recommendation moving forward and asked the group to suggest possible topics to dive into during future meetings.

Kelly confirmed there are still many decision points left and recommendations to be made as the project moves forward.



Bill commented that designs should take future congestion pricing on I-5 into consideration. How can we create design that mitigates spillover in neighborhoods and makes it easy for people to use this incredible investment? Barbur and surrounding neighborhoods will be most impacted by possible future tolling.

Calista asked for more information on the cross-sections of raised bike lanes. Very interested in how we're going to make Barbur multi-modal.

Scott responded that will be addressed in conceptual design report.

Lindsey commented that at one point, the project website hosted GIS maps that could be zoomed in and out with different layers. If the project team would do something similar with the updated alignment, that would be helpful. She was also interested to learn more about how the bus system will interact with this project.

Ramtin expressed concern about Line 8 bus as it is frequent service used by a lot of elderly and veteran populations to get to OHSU. It is listed as a cut in the DEIS.

Brandy asked the group if the next scheduled meeting on December 5 still works and does the following meeting on January 2 work? January 9 was proposed as an alternative meeting date.

Libby invited the group to let TriMet know if there are other places they would like to tour.

Rachel asked is there is work to be done during the December 5 meeting?

Angela commented that she loves the idea of tours.

The group agreed to move the January 2 meeting to January 9, at which time preliminary designs in the Draft Conceptual Design Report should be available.

At the request of **Calista** and **Elise**, CAC members were asked to individually declare if they agreed with recommending the draft LPA and interim terminus to the Steering Committee, as presented at the meeting. All present members expressed support and consensus was reached.

Caveats included the following:

- **Ramtin:** concern about scope reductions to bike and sidewalk widths
- **Lindsey:** uncertain about the MOS

CAC members who were not present for the informal vote included Eric Sporre, Chris Carpenter, Debra Dunn, Ethan Frely, Chad Hastings, Bob Ludlum, and Rebecca Ocken.

TriMet agreed to send this summary out to the CAC members who were not present to allow them to provide feedback on the recommendation.