

**Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Project
Citizen's Advisory Committee
Thursday, May 21, 2009
Holgate Plaza, 1625 SE Holgate Blvd**

Meeting Notes

PMLR CAC Members Present:

Rick Williams – CHAIR, Lloyd District Transportation Management Association
Heather Andrews, Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA)
Lina Bensel, TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT)
Ray Bryan, Historic Milwaukie Neighborhood
Barbara Dimick, Oak Grove
David Edwards, Oak Grove
Neil Hankerson, Dark Horse Comics
Greg Hemer, Milwaukie Lumber
Michole Jensen, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood
Reid Kells, Sellwood-Moreland Neighborhood (SMILE)
Lance Lindahl, Brooklyn Neighborhood (BAC)
Eric Miller, Island Station Neighborhood
Dan Packard, Eastmoreland Neighborhood
Susan Pearce, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood (HAND)
Valeria Ramirez, Portland Opera
Henry Schmidt, Oak Lodge Community Council
Dan Zalkow, Portland - Portland State University (PSU)

PMLR CAC Members Absent:

David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Neighborhood
Valerie Chapman, Oak Grove
Debbie Cronk, South Waterfront Neighborhood
Ken Love, South Portland Neighborhood
Rod McDowell, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry (OMSI)
Joe Traverso, WW Metal Fab
Dee Walsh, Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC)

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Rick Williams announced that this is the last meeting at Holgate. The next meeting of the CAC will be held on June 18 at Carvlin Hall, St. Philip Neri Parish, 2408 SE 16th Avenue, Portland.

Rick Williams introduced Bob Richardson, a citizen who will be making comments at beginning of the meeting because of special circumstances.

Bob Richardson (Citizen) provided CAC members with a handout, asking them to consider the aesthetics of the overpass over Kellogg Lake, McLoughlin Boulevard and River Road. He encouraged the committee to consider naturalistic treatments to the overpass structures, such as those used on the Bybee Bridge. He advocated for enhancement of the natural features like Kellogg Lake and the timber in this area.

Shelly Lomax (TriMet Operations Support Director) made a presentation on TriMet's safety and security efforts, with handouts (*Light Rail Safety and Security Report – May 2009* and *Maintaining a Safe and Secure System.*)

Shelly explained that the TriMet security program has oversight from the FTA. From the very beginning of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail project, we have been designing safety and security into our system. "Safety" is defined as freedom from unintentional harm. "Security" is defined as freedom from intentional harm. We build a security program as we progress through a project by meeting with committees like this one and asking people what we should take into consideration.

In last 18 months, TriMet has aggressively enhanced safety and security on its MAX and bus system. Some examples of security updates include: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to increase lighting and lines of sight on MAX platforms, increasing the number of security cameras to 332, graffiti removal within 24-hours whenever possible, and increased number of Rider Advocates and police officers.

Eighteen months ago we had one crime reported per 100,000 rides. Today we are at 0.65 reported crimes per 100,000 riders. In 2008 there was a 17% decrease in crime system-wide on MAX. As crime is trending down, TriMet will continue to make improvements.

Commander Vince Jarmer (Transit Police Commander) spoke about the transit police structure and plans for the South Precinct.

The transit police unit is a unique design. Thirteen police agencies in the Portland metropolitan area participate by adding personnel to the transit police unit. TriMet fully funds the police that are assigned to the Transit Police. There are 53 total sworn officers as of today. An addition of two more agencies will bring the number of officers up to 58 by July 1, 2009.

Commander Jarmer explained that the officers are given specific areas to cover along the transit system. Five officers will be dedicated to the Green Line when it begins operation in September. A new police reporting station is being built with federal stimulus funding at the Clackamas Town Center Station. The priority for the Transit Police is putting uniformed patrol people on the system as much as possible. Our target amount of time spent on the system is 70%. Since our police staff has increased, we should be able to meet this goal. Funding for the transit police has been stable. There have been no cuts. Our main focus has been MAX since the buses do not have the

same amount of problems, but Transit Police also work buses and park and rides. Commander Jarmer noted that he looks forward to working on the PMLR project, as he will be involved from the very beginning and he is a Clackamas County resident.

Reid Kells (CAC Member) asked who is allowed to enforce fares on the system.

Shelly explained that certain TriMet personnel, fare supervisors and inspectors, and any sworn police officer can enforce fares and TriMet Code. Currently, the Wackenhut officers who patrol the system cannot enforce fares due to labor union issues, although there will be efforts to negotiate this.

Susan Pearce (CAC Member) asked who is watching the 332 security cameras that are installed along the MAX.

Shelly explained that not all 332 cameras are being watched at the same time. The Controllers, working in the Control Center running the trains, each select a “tour” of cameras to flip through at the beginning of their shifts.

Commander Jarmer explained that if somebody commits a crime on the system somewhere there is almost a sure bet that we have caught it on camera. We’ve made many cases from the evidence found on the film we have.

Shelly added that when TriMet gets a call that something is happening at a station, this is a cue for the Controller to pull up that camera view to observe the current situation. In addition, our security team can search the film for that station for evidence of the crime and run off prints for police. We often have the evidence by the time police are questioning the suspects.

Henry Schmidt (CAC Member): Congratulated TriMet on bringing crime incident number down, but noted that there is still a perception that light rail will bring more crime into the already high crime area of Oak Grove. There is a concern that the officer/s Clackamas County is providing for the Green Line will be shifted to the Clackamas Town Center area and, therefore, there will be no one for Oak Grove.

Commander Jarmer explained that Clackamas County will be providing one sergeant and one deputy to the Green Line, as part of the total five officers dedicated to this project. The Clackamas County sergeant will be in charge of the unit. Because TriMet pays 100% of transit police salaries, the participating agencies can simply hire another officer to fill the void because TriMet provides the money to do that. Agencies often do this, but it’s up to the Clackamas County Sherriff’s Department.

Barbara Dimick (CAC Member) asked if an officer station might be built at Park Avenue.

Shelly explained that don’t know yet, but it’s something the CAC could suggest. We don’t make that decision.

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) suggested that since there is so much interest in security issues that Shelly Lomax and Commander Jarmer could return at some point in the future and the committee can have a question and answer period. Shelly agreed that this would be a good idea.

Leah Robbins (TriMet East Segment Director) made a report on the Park Avenue Station meeting.

Leah Robbins reported on the stakeholder meeting held May 7, 2009, which was very well-attended. Staff provided information on the design to date. Some things we heard from the public were concerns about safety and security, traffic issues stemming from the Park & Ride, traffic issues in/around the neighborhood, the importance of an appealing gateway design for this south entry on system, and the interface with the trolley trail.

The next workshop on Park Avenue station is scheduled for June 4, 2009. Some of the things that the design team is working are: the design of the operator break room in the light rail office, footprint of the garage and how it fits into the site, and will there be ground space for retail or a precinct office. We are looking forward to getting feedback from our stakeholders at this next meeting.

Leah Robbins (TriMet East Segment Director) presented an update on the elevated tracks near Ardenwald-Johnson Creek Neighborhood.

Leah explained that residents from the Ardenwald-Johnson Creek neighborhood and the City of Milwaukie have expressed concern regarding the size and scope of our elevated structure in the North Milwaukie area where light rail is adjacent to the freight tracks.

In the last few weeks, our staff, along with Metro and the City of Milwaukie have been working with design team to develop visual simulations of these tracks in more locations than were shown in the SDEIS. We are working on getting more views from different areas by the elevated structure for people to see. We hope to be reviewing these new views with the neighborhood in early June.

Greg Hemer (CAC Member) asked how high the bottom of the track has to be.

Leah answered that bottom of the structure has to be 23 feet, 6 inches off of the top of the existing freight line. In our LPA plan, the structure depth is 9 feet, so that's 32 feet up in the air with the train on top. The height of the structure is relative to the existing freight tracks and follows the Tillamook Branch alignment.

Michole Jensen (CAC Member) asked many homes will see the train/tracks and what would be the noise level.

Leah answered that we are working on getting that information. The FEIS report will include information on noise levels.

Leah Robbins (TriMet East Segment Director) made a report on the stakeholder meeting for the Tacoma/Springwater station.

The primary issues were about size of the station structure, the number of parking spaces, and how to mitigate traffic generated by the Park & Ride. Traffic calming on Johnson Creek Boulevard, safety and security of the site and bike connections were also discussed. Our design team is being augmented by a transportation growth management consultant (TGM) who will be helping us look at future redevelopment for the site to the south of the station.

Henry Schmidt (CAC Member) asked if there is a plan for mixed use development there.

Leah answered that the project is planning a garage with potential for something else on the ground floor. The TGM grant will help us explore options to activate the area.

Reid Kells (CAC Member) asked if anybody proposed putting in a transit police office in the parking garage?

Leah answered yes, someone did make the suggestion at the stakeholder meeting in response to the proposed consolidation of Portland's Southeast Precinct. The Sellwood-Moreland and Brooklyn neighborhoods are concerned they will lose some of their police coverage and short response times.

Leah Robbins (TriMet East Segment Director) made a report on the PMG decision regarding the bus stops at Bybee station. (Please see handout.)

Leah reported that the LPA-level design included a pair of new bus stop pull-outs on the east side of the Bybee Bridge for bus transfers at the Bybee station. The construction of these pullouts would be very costly and create an environmental impact to the park/golf course (under Section 4(f) of the National Environmental Policy Act. To avoid these impacts, staff from TriMet, Metro and the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation and Fire Bureaus developed alternatives for the bus stop locations that would eliminate this impact, retain bus stop connectivity, and not create additional traffic impacts.

The staff recommended that the pull-outs be eliminated from the plans, and instead a new bus stop should be added in the westbound direction on top of the structure, at the stair/elevator to the station. Eastbound bus stops would be provided on either side of the overcrossing structure (not on the structure, due to the Fire Bureau's concerns

about potential impacts to response times to Eastmoreland if an eastbound bus were stopped on the overcrossing.) There are already stops on either side of the overcrossing; we will work to optimize those locations.

Eliminating the pull-outs eliminates the 4(f) impact and is estimated to save the project approximately \$460,000.

Dan Packard (CAC Member) asked if a shelter would be provided for weather protection at the westbound stop on the overcrossing structure. Also, will the bus block the travel lane?

Leah answered that bus stop amenities would be considered later in the design process. One factor in determining whether or not there is a bus shelter is the volume of ridership. The bike and auto lane will be blocked when bus is stopped to pick up/drop off. We will continue to try to optimize the final bus stop location as we move along the project.

Leah Robbins (TriMet East Segment Director) made a report on the PMG decision regarding the 17th Avenue Station. (See handout.)

Leah reported that soon after our last CAC meeting a stakeholder meeting was held regarding the station locations on 17th Avenue. The LPA included two light rail stations on 17th Avenue: at SE Rhine Street and SE Holgate Boulevard. The City of Portland (COP) recommended that staff optimize station locations by shifting the Holgate station away from the intersection to help address concerns with freight access at the intersection of SE 17th & Holgate. Staff proposed combining the station into one new station at SE Boise Street; however the community did not receive this idea favorably.

At a second stakeholder meeting, staff proposed keeping two stations, one at Rhine and one at Holgate, but the Holgate station consisting of a single, center platform either north or south of the intersection. The community seemed pleased with this approach and there was no consensus on whether the station should be north or south of Holgate.

The staff recommends retaining the two stations along SE 17th Avenue, with the Holgate station as a single center platform north of the intersection. Further traffic analysis is still underway. There will be cost savings in building one platform.

Lina Bensele (CAC Member) asked if bus service will be similar to what it is today.

Leah answered yes, Lines 17 and 70 will continue to serve 17th Avenue like they do today. Neighborhood riders headed downtown would be better served by a station north of Holgate, so they could choose whether to take light rail or Line 17.

Reid Kells (CAC Member) asked where truck traffic is headed.

Leah answered that we are in middle of a truck access study. We don't know volumes yet going north and south. This is another piece of the design puzzle.

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) noted that the 17th Avenue station recommendation and the Bybee bus stop recommendation save a combined amount of \$2 million.

Rob Barnard (TriMet West Segment Director) presented an update on bridge type and width path width for the Willamette River Bridge. (See slides 1-27)

Rob reviewed the Willamette River Bridge Advisory Committee (WRBAC) recommendation to advance the cable-stayed bridge type into preliminary engineering. The group was tasked with taking the best features of the cable-stayed 2- and 4-pier designs and combining them into one bridge type ("refined" or "modified" cable stayed).

The best features of the 4-pier design are that piers are in deeper water and the shorter span of the bridge make it more cost effective. The best feature of the 2-pier design is the placement of the cables between the transit way and bike/pedestrian path, which improves safety and user experience. Because of new cable technology the towers of the refined cable stayed bridge can be shorter because the anchors no longer have to be installed in the towers. This way the towers can be smaller (no internal stair tower to access anchor points) and more efficient.

The splayed shape of the towers on the refined cable stay gives more clearance to the overhead centenary system that powers light rail and is attractive. This is just an example of a design option for the towers.

We don't yet have a cost estimate for the refined cable stayed bridge type, but will be able to provide this at the June CAC meeting.

Dan Packard (CAC Member) asked if the splayed cables would cause rainwater to drip onto the lanes.

Rob replied that such details still need to be designed and researched.

A **citizen** asked if these bridge types have the ability to withstand earthquakes.

Rob replied that more research will be done on this issue, but in general the cable-stayed bridge type responds very well to earthquakes. They are light structures and, therefore, have more "give."

Rob went on to discuss the pedestrian/bike pathway on the bridge. The basic cost assumption allowed for a 12-foot wide path, but there was some concern this was not adequate for safety. The bridge slope of 4.75% results in "conflict events" between faster and slower cyclists creating a need for passing.

Rob provided examples of guidelines for standard pedestrian and bicycle pathway widths. A demand analysis was performed to understand how many users the bridge would need to carry. We analyzed upper and lower limits of projected population growth, downhill and uphill traffic patterns, passing areas, and varying space allocations for bike/pedestrian throughways.

The engineering team determined that the maximum width of a cantilevered pathway (i.e., attached to a cable stayed structure and not requiring additional support) would be 14 feet.

We then discussed options with a variety of stakeholders focused on bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and most agree that a 14-foot pathway is appropriate for the projected demand. A 14-foot path will improve safety and user experience. Passing events can occur in the designated bicycle travel area and avoid encroachment into the pedestrian designated zone.

The updated estimate for the bike/ped path is an additional \$3.255 million at year of expenditure.

Henry Schmidt (CAC Member) asked if there would be any physical barrier between pedestrians and cyclists? Would there be enough space for passing?

Rob replied that yes, there would be space for passing, but we are working on how the bike and pedestrian spaces would be delineated, while still allowing flexibility for events like Bridge Pedal, the Portland Marathon and maintenance vehicles.

Lina Bensei (CAC Member) asked if mobility devices were considered for the pedestrian pathway.

Rob confirmed that mobility devices were taken in account. The bridge slope is at 4.75%.

Sue Pearce (CAC Member) asked for clarification whether the 14-foot pathway would be provided on both sides of the bridge.

Rob confirmed that both sides would have the 14-foot pathway.

Heather Andrews (CAC Member) shared her wholehearted endorsement of the 14-foot path width. The Hawthorne Bridge is the only bridge we have now that is inadequate for bikers.

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) summarized that the CAC is comfortable with the 14-foot path width and that this can be communicated to the WRBAC.

Sean Batty (TriMet West Segment Director) made a report on the PMG decision regarding the Harbor Drive overcrossing structure and bike/pedestrian path. (see handout)

We were asked to consider adding a bike/ped path on the shared transitway structure between South Waterfront and Naito Parkway. We looked at the network of existing and planned ped/bike facilities and found there are (and will be) many options. We also found that the cost of adding a pathway to the structure would be very high and the technological challenges would be enormous. We also talked with PSU and OHSU, who generally concurred with these findings. PMG agreed not to proceed with adding a bike/ped path on the new structure.

Sean also mentioned a good idea came out of discussion which is to allow someone to develop the space underneath the structure as a secondary bike/ped path or connection. We will be keeping our eye on that space for a future connection that would augment the existing network.

Reid Kells (CAC Member) noted that the City of Portland is re-doing the bike path master plan this summer.

Greg Hemer (CAC Member) suggested that OHSU be required to add bicycle infrastructure as a condition of development.

Heather Andrews (CAC Member) commented that bicycling from south part of PSU to the waterfront is very dangerous. What street improvements will the project include, and how will cyclists access the Willamette River Bridge? Why is the cost for a path on the shared transit structure so high compared to adding width to the Willamette River Bridge?

Sean replied that we will discuss bicycle routing in more detail at a future meeting. Our goal is to improve the whole network over time. The cost to add width to the Willamette River Bridge is based on pushing the cantilever 2 feet farther than the existing 12 feet (4 feet total). The cost for a path on the shared transitway structure would be for a full 16 feet of width and, due to the likely kind of bridge (which is different from the Willamette Bridge), the full 16 feet of width likely to cost the same on a square foot basis as the rest of the structure.

Claudia Steinberg (TriMet Community Affairs Manager) provided a brief public involvement update, referring to the public meeting log handout. Please remember to give me your comments about the stakeholder meetings. These meetings will continue and we want them to be meaningful.

Rick Williams (CAC Chair) noted that the designated time for adjourning had passed and asked the CAC members if they would like to proceed with the roundtable listed in the agenda. The CAC committee agree to save roundtable for next meeting.

Public Comment:

Glen Ellis (Property Owner/Citizen) noted that he'd been concerned about the potential elimination of a station on 17th Avenue and that the stakeholders would not be heard. However, the stakeholder meetings have been very effective. I've talked to almost all the business owners and other people concerned with this issue and everyone is happy that the process is working for them and their voices are being heard.

John Ghormley (Citizen) noted concerns about the Bybee station being similar to the 82nd Ave MAX overpass, where there are problems with pedestrians crossing.

Rob Barnard noted that the current plans for the Bybee station include facilities for accessing the station on both sides of the structure, so there would be no need to cross on the bridge. We will continue to study options.

Dustin Posner, Architect (Citizen) noted that local blogs including Portland Architecture and Portland Spaces have red flags going up about the bridge type selection process. TriMet staff should be aware that the message out there is that Miguel Rosales has been taken off the project. I encourage you all to engage the folks in the design community now so you don't have to struggle with an adversarial relationship later.

Reid Kells (CAC Member) commented that it would be great if we could get designers to pay attention to the whole project and not just the bridge. There are a lot of opportunities for their input on other parts of the project.

Rob Barnard noted that a letter will be going out tomorrow to update the public on where we are on the project, which will help the problem with rumors and misinformation.