

Lake Oswego to Portland

TRANSIT AND TRAIL STUDY



The Lake Oswego to Portland Transit and Trail Alternatives Analysis is a federally and locally funded study that will develop and evaluate transit and trail alternatives in the Lake Oswego to Portland corridor and select one or two preferred alternatives to advance into the federal environmental analysis process. Metro is leading the study with Metro Councilors Rex Burkholder and Brian Newman serving as co-chairs of the project Steering Committee. The cities of Lake Oswego and Portland, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, the Oregon Department of Transportation and TriMet are partners with Metro in this study.

The process begins with scoping, the definition of a range of transit and trail alternatives to be considered in the study, including a no-build option. An upcoming community workshop and small group discussions will provide an opportunity for community members to suggest options and comment on proposed alternatives to be included in the analysis. Once scoping is complete, staff will analyze options and provide the public and decision-makers with information to help narrow the wide range of alternatives to a few that best address needs in the corridor. Eventually, a locally preferred option will be chosen.

NO-BUILD OPTION

The no-build alternative serves as a reference point to gauge the benefits, costs and impacts of the build alternatives. The no-build alternative includes existing transit services and facilities and only those transit and highway improvements that are part of the financially constrained Regional Transportation Plan, improvements that are deemed achievable within financially constrained resources by the year 2025. Selection of no-build as the preferred alternative for the Lake Oswego to Portland corridor would mean that additional transit service would not be studied further.



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Project Advisory Committee

To begin identifying critical issues and effective opportunities for engaging stakeholders in the study area, 32 interviews were conducted with stakeholders and interest groups. The interviews used open-ended questions to identify community concerns and solicit potential solutions from residents and business owners in the study area.

Following these meetings, a project advisory committee was formed. The committee includes some people who participated in the interviews along with other community members and interest group representatives.

Dave Jorling, a resident of the First Addition neighborhood and member of the Lake Oswego Downtown Transit Alternatives Advisory Com-

mittee was elected chair of the project advisory committee by the members.

Three vice chairs were also chosen from the 20-member project advisory committee. They will represent the views of and provide vital liaison roles to their respective geographical areas as defined below:

John's Landing – vice chair is **Vern Rifer**, a member of the John's Landing Condominium Association

Clackamas and Multnomah counties' unincorporated areas – **David Reinhart**, a Willamette Shoreline right-of-way resident

Lake Oswego – **Rick Saito**, Foothills property owner and Chair of the North Macadam Urban Renewal Advisory Committee

Other members include:

Don Baack, Southwest Trails
Jack Caldwell, Mary's Woods resident

Jim Condon, Macadam business property owner
Neale Creamer, Riverdale resident, Water District committee, transit user
Bill Danneman, Corbett Terwilliger Lair Hill neighborhood association transportation chair
Bob Duehmig, OHSU Office of Government Relations
Sam Galbreath, Macadam Bay Homeowner's Association
Roger Hennigan, Friends of the Trolley
Colleen Labbe, Oswego Pointe Condo Association
Brian Lantow, Riverdale neighborhood
Ken Love, Corbett Terwilliger Lair Hill neighborhood association president
Jessica Roberts, Bicycle Transportation Alliance
Chris Schetky, Foothills resident
Debbie Stellway, right of way resident
Sandy Stallcup, right of way resident
Bill Washburn, John's Landing Condo Association

Background

In the Lake Oswego to Portland corridor, Highway 43 serves as the primary north/south route for cars, busses and trucks between Lake Oswego and Portland.

Existing traffic volumes on Highway 43 within the corridor create substantial congestion in the peak hours of travel. Forecasts of future traffic volumes in the corridor suggest congestion will continue to increase in the future. Substantial roadway improvements and tolling for Highway 43 have been ruled out in earlier studies. However, multiple studies have recommended consideration of transit along the existing Willamette Shoreline right-of-way. Given the public ownership the railroad right-of-way within the corridor, transit alternatives, including, but not limited to streetcar service, are being studied.

The Willamette River Greenway has been designated along the river between Portland and the Multnomah County line. The Willamette Greenway Plan identifies a continuous trail to extend the full length along the river.

In 1988, a consortium of local government agencies including the cities of Portland and Lake Oswego, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, the Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet and Metro purchased the Willamette Shoreline railway, located between Highway 43 and the Willamette River. The Consortium manages and maintains the rail right-of-way and the Oregon Electric Railroad Society operates an excursion trolley service between Lake Oswego and Portland.

Purpose and need statement

In October 2005 the Project Advisory Committee adopted a purpose and need statement for the study and evaluation criteria. These tools will be used to measure the relative performance of each alternative and to distinguish which alternatives should be studied further and which should be dropped from consideration.

Evaluation and development of the pedestrian and bicycle trail portion of the analysis will proceed independently from the transit portion, because it is not part of the federal transit alternative analysis process. Bike and pedestrian trail options will be carried forward based on how they would be constructed together with the preferred transit alternative. Once a preferred transit alternative has been selected, a complementary trail option will be further developed as part of a local planning process.

Purpose of the transit study

The purpose is to develop a community-supported transit project that meets future travel demand in the Lake Oswego to Portland corridor and supports local and regional land use plans.

Specifically, this means that the project will accomplish several objectives:

- Provide improved transportation access to and connectivity among significant destinations and activity centers
- Minimize traffic and parking-related impacts to neighborhoods
- Support and enhance existing neighborhood character in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Leverage investment in the existing transit system to cost-effectively increase riders in the corridor and across the system.
- Support transit-oriented economic development in Portland and Lake Oswego.
- Support community goals related to transportation, land use and development.
- Increase mobility
- Provide additional transportation choices in the corridor
- Provide access for persons with disabilities
- Be part of an integrated multi-modal transportation system
- Anticipate future needs and impacts and not preclude future expansion opportunities

For a variety of reasons, past studies have determined that widening Highway 43 is not feasible:

- Physical constraints including steep slopes on one or both sides of the highway, inadequate space for surface water drainage facilities associated with more lanes and other environmental issues create significant engineering challenges.
- Highway modernization projects are required to meet certain standards with regard to number and width of lanes, left turn refuge lanes, center medians or a median barrier, bike paths, sidewalks, shoulders, and access for road and driveways. Meeting these standards in the current right of way would be very difficult and would likely require acquiring substantial additional right of way from a number of adjacent properties.
- Widening would adversely impact neighborhoods. The widened highway would create a perception, and likely the reality, of increased traffic while significantly limiting or eliminating access to existing driveways and roads.
- In 1996 and 1999, Oregon Department of Transportation studies ruled out substantial highway improvements on Highway 43. Additionally, in order to widen a highway, the project must be listed in the State Transportation Improvement Plan and must be funded. Widening of Highway 43 is neither listed in the plan nor funded. The first opportunity to be added to the state plan is in 2008 and funding a highway widening project could take many years under current financial constraints.

Purpose of the bicycle and pedestrian trail

The purpose of the pedestrian and bicycle trail is to provide a connection between the Willamette River Greenway trail at the north end and the Lake Oswego Town Center at the south which will:

- Significantly improve the access, safety and quality of experience for cyclists, pedestrians and persons with disabilities
- Create a connected, high-quality facility that is compatible with the transit alternative and which makes bicycling and walking a viable transportation and recreation choice.
- Enhance the value of the existing transportation system by successfully integrating the bicycle and pedestrian trail
- Be compatible with and serve the needs of surrounding neighborhoods
- Connect and improve access to important pedestrian and bicycle destinations in the corridor

Background report

The background report provides context for the study by compiling, summarizing and analyzing past, present and future transportation and land use plans and policies. The report will be used to assist with the development and narrowing of potential alternatives. It will assist in pinpointing issues that have been put to rest and identify issues that need further development. The Alternatives Analysis will be able to build upon the previous work done and avoid “re-inventing the wheel.”

Public Involvement

Community involvement in the study begins with the scoping process where transit and trail alternatives are identified and refined. Ultimately, the goal is to reach a mutually agreed upon recommendation for transit and trail improvements in the corridor.

The process is designed to ensure that community concerns and issues are identified early and addressed in the analysis process. Different levels and types of participation will be used throughout the project to ensure adequate opportunity for full participation.

Visit www.metro-region.org/transportation to read or download project reports such as the purpose and need statement and the background report.

Community design workshop

5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday, May 30, 2006

Riverdale Elementary School
11733 SW Breyman Ave.
Portland

Draft locations for a bus line, rail line, trail and river transit that were developed by the 20-member, citizen Project Advisory Committee will be presented along with information about the project timeline, possible mitigation measures and future public involvement opportunities. Participants will have an opportunity to comment, provide ideas and share concerns and identify issues regarding potential transit and trail alternatives.

To be added to the project mailing list, send an e-mail request to trans@metro.dst.or.us or call (503) 797-1756.

2006 PROJECT TIMELINE

April – June

Define and refine potential transit and trail alternatives. Hold a community design workshop and small group discussions throughout the corridor

July – August

Continue small group discussions and refine alternatives before measuring each one against the evaluation criteria developed by the project advisory committee in the purpose and need statement

September – October

Share evaluation results with the public and ask for preferences, draft a locally preferred alternative recommendation, submit the recommendation to project partners for consideration

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