

PROJECT PARTNERS

Cities of Lake Oswego and Portland
Clackamas and Multnomah counties
Oregon Department of Transportation
Portland Streetcar Inc.
TriMet
Metro



Answers to frequently asked questions

Several questions have come up during the public involvement process for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which has included meetings with local neighborhood and business groups, the project's community advisory committee and outreach at farmers' markets, local grocery stores and other community events. Project partners have compiled these questions and responses to help the public begin weighing the benefits and trade-offs of the no-build, enhanced bus and streetcar alternatives. The answers to these questions will be addressed in more detail in the DEIS, to be published in early fall 2010.

Purpose and need for the project

Why is additional transit service being considered for the corridor between Lake Oswego and Portland?

The four counties of the Portland-Vancouver region are expecting an increase of 1.3 million people in the next 25 years. Eight percent of that growth is projected to occur in the Highway 43 corridor, in places like the South Waterfront area in Portland, downtown Lake Oswego and areas south of Lake Oswego. With more people and jobs, traffic congestion is also expected to increase significantly.

The Highway 43 corridor serves the growing Lake Oswego town center and Portland central business district and provides the primary north/south connection between the two centers. Existing traffic volumes on Highway 43 within the corridor currently create substantial congestion during the morning and evening commute. Peak period traffic volumes on Highway 43 are forecast to increase by approximately 40 to 99 percent, depending on location, by 2035.

How can transit help manage traffic congestion along Highway 43?

As population increases so does congestion. It isn't feasible to widen Highway 43 or otherwise improve it to accommodate more automobile traffic. Improving transit service allows for a higher percentage of travel in the corridor to occur on transit and reduces the demand for automobile travel in the corridor. Since transit can more efficiently move people through the corridor given the limited roadway space, this will minimize the span of peak congestion periods and improve the quality of life by providing better transportation choices, particularly during peak travel periods.

Has this corridor been studied before?

Numerous studies have been conducted over the years to evaluate potential options for alleviating traffic congestion in the corridor and have recommended transit and transportation demand management strategies to improve mobility. In 1988, a consortium of seven public agencies purchased the rail line paralleling Highway 43 between Lake Oswego and Portland to preserve it for future passenger rail use. A 1996 study by the Oregon Department of Transportation concluded that no broad scale expansion of Highway 43 was feasible. In 2004, Metro identified this corridor for future high capacity transit in its Regional Transportation Plan.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement builds on these previous studies and the project's alternatives analysis, which looked at the wide array of potential solutions to the future travel demand, including reexamining Highway 43 for expansion and even river transit.

Project process

When will a decision be made about which transit alternative will move forward? When would construction begin?

Once the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is released in early fall 2010, the project will begin a 45-day public comment period. During this time, comments on the DEIS will be accepted at public hearings, by mail and electronically. At the close of the public comment period, the community advisory committee and project management group will make their recommendations about which option should move forward.

The project steering committee will consider the DEIS analysis, community advisory committee and project management group recommendations, and public comment before making its recommendation. This recommendation will be reviewed by each affected local government (the cities of Lake Oswego and Portland, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet and Portland Streetcar

Inc.) before consideration by the Metro Council. The Locally Preferred Alternative process concludes with final adoption by the Metro Council.

If the streetcar is selected, construction could begin in 2015. The enhanced bus alternative would be implemented through TriMet after additional study of the bus system to make a final decision about the enhanced bus scheduling and routing, with operations most likely beginning in 2017.

Is public input really taken seriously?

Public input on transit projects plays an important role in the process for arriving at the best decisions possible. It provides the opportunity for residents to discuss and influence the alternatives studied in the DEIS and to make recommendations on the final decision.

Community input has already had significant influence on the alternatives and alignments being studied for this project. During the alternatives analysis, ideas provided by the community and the project advisory committee were examined and influenced the final selection of alternatives to be included in the environmental analysis. Specifically, community input influenced the development of a design option that would put the streetcar route on Macadam Avenue in the Johns Landing area and a design option that would put the streetcar route on a section of Riverwood Drive in the Dunthorpe/Riverdale area, as well as the terminus location in Lake Oswego.

Metro Councilor Liberty discusses the project with corridor business leaders



Transit operations

What would the fares be for either the streetcar or the bus?

Fares for streetcar or bus would follow the TriMet fare schedule. The current fare schedule is at www.trimet.org and is updated by the TriMet board of directors as needed. Today's rates are: Adult all zone: \$2.30 | Honored Citizen: \$0.95 | Youth/ Student \$1.50

What would the streetcars look like? How would they operate?

Streetcars that would operate between Portland and Lake Oswego are the same vehicles that operate in Portland today. Photos of the streetcar and more information about its current route can be found at www.portlandstreetcar.org.



Between South Waterfront and Lake Oswego, the streetcar would operate in different ways in different parts of the corridor. In a few short segments, the streetcar may run in the street with cars as it does in downtown Portland today. In most areas the streetcar would be in an exclusive right of way, generally using an existing rail line right of way, separate from traffic. Speeds would vary from 10 to 20 miles per hour to as fast as 40 miles per hour in places where traveling at that speed is safe.

How can I stay informed about this study?

Ask to be added to the study mailing list: Send e-mail to trans@oregonmetro.gov or call 503-797-1756. Visit Metro's website at www.oregonmetro.gov/lakeoswego.

Why is the enhanced bus route similar to the streetcar route?

The enhanced bus alternative includes a similar number and location of stops as those of the streetcar alternative in order to achieve travel time savings over the existing local bus service. The enhanced bus follows a similar route to the streetcar in downtown Portland to provide service to similar destinations to aid in comparing the two choices. If the enhanced bus is selected as the preferred alternative at the conclusion of this process, TriMet would conduct additional study of the bus system and make a final decision about the enhanced bus scheduling and routing.

How many stops would there be between Lake Oswego and downtown Portland? Can more be added? Can stops that are included be eliminated?

The streetcar and enhanced bus alternatives under study in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement include 10 stops and two optional future stops between Lake Oswego and South Waterfront. The station locations being studied in the DEIS were developed as part of previous processes that included input from the community.

Community and resident input is critical to defining station locations. After the DEIS is published, there will still be opportunities to add or eliminate stops prior to the final design of a streetcar or enhanced bus project.

Service

Travel time projections, downtown Lake Oswego to Portland State University

	No-build bus	Enhanced bus	Streetcar – Macadam in-street through Johns Landing	Streetcar – Willamette Shore Line through Johns Landing
2005	29 minutes	26 minutes	31 minutes	29 minutes
2035	42 minutes	40 minutes	33 minutes	29 minutes

What would the travel times from Lake Oswego to downtown Portland be for both streetcar and enhanced bus options? How does that compare to the existing bus?

For comparison of the three options, the analysis compares what the travel times were (for the current bus) or would have been (for the enhanced bus or streetcar) in 2005 and the travel time projections for the alternatives in 2035. The table above shows these travel times from downtown Lake Oswego to Portland State University in downtown Portland, currently the most used transit stop for riders in this corridor. Since differences in the streetcar design options through Johns Landing affect travel times, both the Macadam in-street and Willamette Shore Line options are shown.

How frequent would enhanced bus or streetcar trips be during the peak and non-peak travel times? What would the hours of operation be?

Enhanced bus. In the first year of operation, the enhanced bus would likely run every 10 to 12 minutes during the peak hours (7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.) and every 15 to 20 minutes during most other times. Service frequency for the enhanced bus would decrease in the late evening and early morning. The enhanced bus would likely operate from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. with some minor differences between weekend and weekday schedules.

Streetcar. In the first year of operation, the streetcar would likely run every 10 to 12 minutes during the peak hours (7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.) and every 15 to 20 minutes at other times. Service

frequency for the streetcar would decrease in the late evening and early morning. The streetcar would be an extension of the existing streetcar route to Northwest Portland and likely follow that same hours of operation, which are similar to the bus system.

How would the enhanced bus or streetcar work for existing Line 35 bus riders that come from Oregon City and West Linn?

Enhanced bus. For the enhanced bus, service would be similar to today. Riders traveling through Lake Oswego from Oregon City or West Linn that wish to continue to downtown Portland would not need to transfer; riders that wish to continue to Beaverton would need to transfer to the Line 78 as they do today.

Streetcar. With the streetcar alternative, riders traveling through Lake Oswego that wish to continue to downtown Portland would transfer from Line 35 to the streetcar at the stop near Albertsons in Lake Oswego. Plans for bus routes to serve the streetcar in the future would be determined by TriMet during final design and construction based on market/ridership demand and costs at that time to make the best connections and eliminate transfers where possible. For instance, more riders transfer from Line 35 to Line 78 than on any other route today. If current trends continue, future transit plans could facilitate this movement, potentially allowing riders from Oregon City or West Linn that wish to continue to Beaverton to do so without a transfer.

How many transfers would be required to get from Lake Oswego to Portland State University? To Pioneer Square?

No transfers would be needed to get to either Portland State University or Pioneer Courthouse Square. Both the streetcar and enhanced bus would have a stop at Portland State University and a stop three blocks from Pioneer Courthouse Square (at the Portland Central Library); this is similar to Line 35, which stops two blocks from the square today. If someone wishes to use transit for those three blocks, he or she could transfer to the MAX Blue Line or Red Line at the Portland Central Library. Another option would be to transfer from the streetcar at the PSU Urban Center to the MAX Yellow Line or Green Line or one of six buses for a connection to Pioneer Courthouse Square with a one-block walk.

Would passengers be able to find seats on the streetcar, or would most be required to stand, as is often the case with the existing streetcar?

Each streetcar vehicle can comfortably hold about 70 to 90 people, with 30 sitting. Generally, those passengers that get on first have longer rides and are more likely to find a seat. Similarly, those that get on the streetcar closer to downtown often would have shorter trips and would find standing less inconvenient. As is the case with the current streetcar and all TriMet vehicles, the seats closest to the doors would be reserved for seniors and people with disabilities to ensure those riders have seats or wheelchair space.

Funding

How would the operations of the streetcar or enhanced bus be funded?

Transit operations are funded through TriMet's operating fund which is made up of a combination of payroll tax, farebox and advertising revenues and federal grants. It is expected that TriMet will fund the operations of whichever alternative is selected. An operations budget and funding plan for both alternatives will be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

How would construction of the enhanced bus or streetcar be funded? How much would each jurisdiction be expected to contribute?

The finance study is underway. Estimates and plans will be available in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Local jurisdictions have a variety of ways from which they might choose to pay for their portion, such as system development charges or creation of urban renewal districts.

The funding needs for the enhanced bus and streetcar alternatives are slightly different.

Enhanced bus. The enhanced bus would require a smaller capital investment, using a combination of federal, regional and local funds for bus purchases and other capital improvements.

Streetcar. Funding for the streetcar would come from a combination of federal and local sources. Project partners are seeking funding for 60 percent of the capital cost from federal grants. The assessed value of the existing Willamette Shore Line rail right of way would also be used as "match" against the federal money, so less capital would need to come from local or state governments.

Safety and security

What kind of budget impact does safety and security implementation have? Where does the funding come from?

The City of Portland Police Bureau provides police service and response for streetcars. During all streetcar operating hours, Portland Streetcar Inc. supervisors are present to deter unlawful behavior, support system safety and security, and respond in the event of an incident or emergency.

TriMet allocates approximately \$15 million a year to security staff for its bus, light rail and commuter rail system. This includes 58 Transit Police Division officers, a district attorney and contracted security staff. TriMet also invests about \$4 million for supervisors who check fares, provide additional presence, and support system safety and security.

What would be the difference in the crime rates for the three alternatives – no-build, enhanced bus and streetcar?

There are few reported incidents on the transit system, with less than one reported incident per 100,000 trips. Transit agencies work closely with the community to ensure the security efforts are integrated with the communities being served.

The incidence of reported crime on TriMet's system reflects that of the surrounding community. For example, when Interstate MAX opened in North Portland, crime rates along that corridor dropped as the community experienced substantial new public and private investment. New home owners were attracted to this corridor as well, in part because of the light rail service.

Are there statistics about other transit projects that tell about increases in crime or crime rates related to nearby schools?

TriMet tracks crime reported on its system as well as specifically along the MAX lines. In 2009, there were 413 reported incidents along the entire MAX system, down from 507 during 2008, a 19 percent decrease. This followed an 18 percent decrease from 2007 to 2008 (with 620 incidents in 2007). Based on national data, crime levels along rail corridors typically relate to the existing conditions that prevail in the surrounding community. For example, a study of Los Angeles' Green Line light rail revealed that inner city stations showed a decrease in crime that generally followed a decrease throughout Los Angeles County, and crime in the higher income western suburbs did not increase after the Green Line was built.

Three schools are within a four-block distance of the current streetcar system. Seventy-seven schools are within one-quarter mile of the MAX light rail system, with 155 schools within one-half mile of the system. Thousands of students use the transit system everyday throughout the region in the wide range of communities served by the system. Since transit stations reflect their communities, it is hard to isolate and quantify the relationship between

a school's proximity to transit and crime rates on transit or at the school.

Is there data about project impact on crime for areas that have not previously been visible but transit would make more public (for example on this project, the Stampher Road area)?

Since there is no streetcar station proposed along Stampher Road, streetcars would be passing through the area and not stopping at a station. The Westside MAX extension from Southwest 185th Avenue to downtown Hillsboro takes riders through areas that were previously relatively isolated from the general public. The same is true as WES Commuter Rail travels between Tualatin and Wilsonville. In both of these cases, TriMet has had no indication that criminal activity increases when a transit vehicle passes through or near locales that were not along previous transit routes.

How would streetcar/auto intersections and station access be regulated to ensure safe crossing?

Station access would be oriented to streets and sidewalks and all crossings would be clearly designated. The station and the streetcar alignment would feature warnings and physical barriers to discourage people from crossing directly across the tracks from the station or onto private properties.

The streetcar alternative and design options include segments running in the street as well as within separated right of way. Audible warnings, signing, striping, traffic controls, enforcement and education would be used to clarify these transitions and assure safe movement. After station platforms have been sited, the pedestrian network may be re-evaluated and the pedestrian crossings refined.

Thirty-five public and private roadway, railroad and pedestrian track crossings have been identified in the proposed alignment. Proposed crossing treatments include closure or relocation, grade separation, stop signs, gates, traffic signals and pedestrian Z-crossings. Treatment selection criteria include sightlines, traffic volumes and speeds,

transit vehicle speed, proximity and suitability of alternative routes, and convenience for pedestrians and transit patrons. Where there are private crossings, most typically a driveway or access road, appropriate private crossing treatments would be developed in conjunction with individual property owners.

Other community effects

How would noise impacts be addressed?

In the summer and fall 2009, a consultant visited nearly 40 different sites in the corridor to collect measurements of existing noise and vibration. The consultant will use these existing measurements to model what noise and vibration levels would be like in the corridor with either streetcar or enhanced bus. In some cases, a noise wall or other strategies may be used to address potential impacts. These impacts will be reported in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for public review in early fall 2010.

Are there statistics about other transit projects that tell about impact on property values?

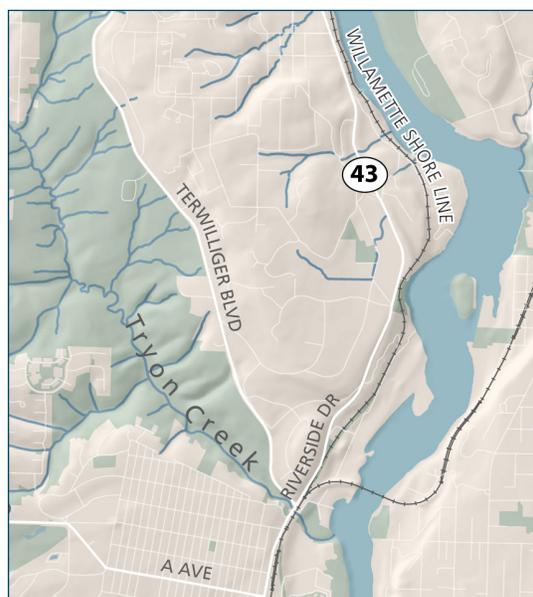
Transit, particularly rail, is known to have a positive impact on property values and development. Even during this recent deep economic recession, the media has reported that homes located closer to transit have maintained their value better than property without access to quality transit (see: <http://blog.smartgrowthamerica.org/2009/07/20/real-estate-service-finds-walkable-transit-accessible-homes/>).

Additionally, more than \$3.5 billion in development has occurred near streetcar and another \$8 billion near light rail stations since 1980 (uninflated).

Natural environment

How would environmental impacts be addressed, especially along Tryon Creek, Powers Marine Park and Stephens Creek?

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, to be released in early fall 2010, will document impacts to the natural environment with both the streetcar and enhanced bus alternatives. The Final Environmental Impact Statement will include strategies for avoiding or minimizing impacts; it will also identify potential mitigation measures to address impacts that cannot be avoided.



Lake Oswego

Why would the streetcar terminus be located at Albertsons instead of either the Safeway or at the existing Willamette Shore Line trolley station?

In summer 2009, the project steering committee selected the terminus location after technical study and a series of public meetings to discuss the trade-offs between the possible locations. The Albertsons site offered the opportunity to intercept commuters from the south before they enter downtown Lake Oswego and the benefit of simplifying streetcar operations, as it would not require the streetcar to turn west across the existing freight rail tracks and Highway 43 to operate on A and B avenues.

Is there a park and ride included in the enhanced bus alternative?

The enhanced bus alternative includes a 300-space park and ride facility near the Lake Oswego Albertsons.

How big is a 300-space park and ride garage? Would it be above ground or below ground? How would this garage affect traffic on Leonard Street and State Street?

Both the streetcar and enhanced bus alternatives include a 300-space multi-story parking garage. Through an agreement with the property owner, the garage could include additional parking spaces – beyond the 300 stalls reserved for transit riders – to support commercial businesses. For perspective purposes, the existing parking garage at Lakeview Village in Lake Oswego has 366 parking spaces.

TriMet would work closely with the owner of the site, the City of Lake Oswego and adjacent neighborhoods to coordinate the park and ride facility with future development plans, including strategies for managing park and ride traffic to minimize the effect on State and Leonard streets.

The streetcar alternative also includes a 100-space park and ride facility in Foothills, which would similarly be coordinated with future development.

Trail

What is the status of the trail between Portland and Lake Oswego?

A trail component was part of the project's alternatives analysis. While the trail is now being analyzed separately from the transit project, Metro and the local jurisdictions are continuing to advance the trail concept. Currently, the project team is working to propose an updated trail alignment, phasing options and possible funding sources. Trail design has been advanced far enough to ensure that construction of either transit alternative would not preclude a trail in the corridor.

Willamette Shore Line

Would the Willamette Shore Line trolley continue to operate if the streetcar is built?

Under the streetcar alternative, the Oregon Electric Railway Historical Society would no longer operate the vintage excursion trolley.



What is legally allowed on the Willamette Shore Line right of way?

The right of way for the Willamette Shore Line was purchased from the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1988 by a consortium of local jurisdictions and agencies including the cities of Lake Oswego and Portland, Clackamas and Multnomah counties, the Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet and Metro.

There are various ownership types and easements along the 7-mile rail alignment. Some are tied to different types of uses of the Willamette Shore Line right of way. Since the right of way was formerly used as a freight and passenger rail corridor, all of the property owned by the consortium allows rail transportation. Legal review of potential uses along the Willamette Shore Line right of way will be included as part of the environmental analysis as needed as it becomes clear which design options are preferred and whether the streetcar alternative will advance.