



Portland – Milwaukie

LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Questions and Responses to the March 12 Station Area Planning Meeting Rose Villa Fellowship Hall, Oak Grove

Background and History

Why is there no plan to travel down 224 to Clackamas Town Center to service the growth areas heading east from Town Center and south toward Oregon City?

Between 1990 and 1996, Metro studied multiple variations of light rail alignments in downtown Milwaukie for the South/North Light Rail Project. The study included an alignment that followed Highway 224 and was a part of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that was adopted in 1998 and approved by the Milwaukie City Council. After the funding mechanism for the project failed to be approved by voters statewide, Metro completed an alternatives analysis on a wide range of transit options for the South Corridor. The options included busway, bus rapid transit, and light rail. This culminated in a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and the adoption of a new LPA in 2003. Phase I of the LPA included construction of light rail along I-205 to Clackamas Town Center. The Portland to Milwaukie corridor was designated as Phase II. Extension of light rail along Highway 224 became redundant given the alignment to Clackamas Town Center.

We in Oak Grove voted this down years ago, what part of no don't you understand?

During the 1990s, ballot measures to fund the development of light rail in the south corridor failed by a few percentage points in a statewide vote. However, there remained a growing need for high capacity transit in the corridor. Below is a brief description of those ballot measures and the resulting processes to meet transit demands.

Between 1994 and 1998, there were three Oregon votes and one Washington vote on the financing of a bi-state south-north light rail corridor. Each vote was different in its scope and nature, as described below:

1994: Voters in the TriMet service district approved Measure 26-13 with a 63% yes vote. A proposed \$475 million bond measure would have built a 26-mile light rail line from Clackamas County into Clark County, Wash. The measure represented only one piece of the proposed funding. Other funds were anticipated from Clark County, the state of Washington, the state of Oregon and the federal government.

1995: In 1995, Clark County, Wash., voters rejected (2 to 1) a ballot measure that would have raised \$237 million for the Washington portion of the south-north light rail line plus a 9-mile extension north from Vancouver to Hazel Dell.

1996: Following the Clark County defeat, TriMet and Metro restructured the south-north light rail project and, in August 1995, the Oregon Legislature passed a \$750 million transportation package. The package included \$375 million in lottery-backed bonds for the project and \$375 million for rural transportation projects around the state. Opponents of the package gathered enough signatures to refer the package to voters as 1996 State Ballot Measure 32. In November 1996, Oregon voters rejected the legislative package by a vote of 53 percent to 46 percent. While

the measure failed statewide, it was approved by a majority of the voters within the TriMet service area. TriMet then began to focus on an “Oregon only” extension.

1998: Measure 26-74 was placed on the November 1998 ballot for an Oregon-only project. The TriMet board called for a new vote on the south-north light rail line funding because the project no longer included an extension to Clark County as provided for in the 1994 proposal. The Oregon-only proposal was divided into two phases: phase I was the Rose Quarter to Milwaukie; and phase II was Milwaukie to Clackamas Town Center. The measure failed in Clackamas and Washington counties, however it passed in Multnomah County, failing overall (52 percent to 48 percent).

1999: In light of the failed 1998 measure, elected officials hosted “listening posts” throughout the region to find out how community members thought transportation needs in the south/north corridor ought to be addressed. The feedback led policy makers to move forward with a light rail project in the northern portion of the corridor with local funds (Interstate MAX, from 1999-2000). Also in 2000, a study of non-light rail options in the southern portion of the corridor began.

An alliance of neighborhood and business groups from Southeast Portland and Milwaukie pushed Metro Council to reconsider light rail between Portland and Milwaukie and along I-205. They expressed support for light rail at the listening posts and other public meetings held in the corridor.

2002-2003: An alternatives analysis of a wide range of transit options reviewed busway, bus rapid transit and light rail options and culminated in a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and the adoption of a locally preferred alternative (LPA) in 2003. The LPA put forth a light rail alignment between Portland and Milwaukie as a solution to meet growing transit demands. The LPA was adopted by all affected local jurisdictions.

2008: The current study is an update to the 2002 SDEIS. It evaluates the discrete alignment and station options and lays out impacts of the project. It will be available for public review in May of 2008.

Project Study

End of the line is?

The light rail will terminate either at Lake Road in Milwaukie or at Park Avenue in Oak Grove, as studied in this SDEIS. The project’s Steering Committee will make a recommendation on a terminus based on SDEIS results, a recommendation from the Citizen Advisory Committee and the Project Management Group, and public input.

Will this relieve congestion?

As population grows—as it is expected to grow by 1 million over the next twenty years—traffic will continue to grow. This project would provide transportation choices for the ever-growing population, increase capacity, and improve reliability in the corridor. Transit mode share for corridor trips will increase by 9 to 17%. This project would result in a 3% reduction in traffic volumes on McLoughlin Blvd during the PM (2-Hour) peak period in the year 2030, compared to conditions without light rail. When a roadway approaches congestion, delays grow exponentially. A small percentage of reduction when a roadway is approaching capacity can make a significant difference. Additionally, the study shows the project reduces daily vehicle miles traveled by 46,000 to 69,000, meaning that people are driving less. The study also shows a decrease in the

vehicles hours of delay by 300 to 460 hours, meaning that people would be spending less time traveling. Additionally, the light rail line would operate in an exclusive right of way, thereby avoiding congestion on McLoughlin.

If this goes through, will this make money for the community within the next five or ten years?

Yes, the light rail project would result in short-term regional income and employment benefits from the impacts of construction. These include direct added income associated with new construction jobs, and indirect added income from jobs created in industries that supply goods and services to the construction firms. The project would produce about 10,000 to 12,000 construction jobs and about \$400 million in income.

Light rail lines themselves do not produce cash revenue for local communities but experience shows that the public investment often leverages private investment.

Will the Bluebird station be used?

Ridership for the Bluebird station is being studied in the SDEIS. Ridership numbers at this station are lower here than at other stations. Measured in average weekday station usage (ons and offs), the study shows a Bluebird station at 1,400 and a Park station at 6,300. A full comparison will be detailed in the SDEIS. SDEIS results, a recommendation from the Citizen Advisory Committee, and public input will inform the Steering Committee as they recommend stations along the alignment.

Oatfield Road with the terrible "S" curves already is heavy with traffic. Will this increase traffic?

There is an existing traffic problem at Oatfield Road and Parke Avenue that will continue to exist in the future. As a result, the current design proposes a new traffic signal at the intersection of Oatfield Road and Park Avenue that will facilitate access in and out of the neighborhood. Because of existing land uses, intersection geometry and low speeds in this area, this route is expected to be used by neighborhood residents. Additional traffic is expected to access the Park Ave park and ride from other areas.

Additionally, the study does not anticipate any safety or sight distance issues with this proposed intersection. The two roads, Oatfield and Park, intersect at an approximate 90 degree angle and speeds are low, allowing for plenty of sight distance for the traffic signal.

How do you go about purchasing properties in Island Station for commercial development? How do you determine appropriate development and getting neighborhood feedback?

TriMet is the lead agency for acquiring properties needed for transit projects. The process includes inspection, valuation, acquisition, payment, and if needed, relocation. A property acquisition agent is assigned to work with each property owner. More information about this process is found in TriMet's brochure, Acquisition and Relocation, found online at <http://www.trimet.org/pdfs/publications/acquisition-relocation.pdf>.

Development around the stations is entirely determined by individual property owners and the communities in which they are located, based on local land use plans and zoning.

Neighborhood feedback is encouraged through participation in the Station Area Planning workshops (held in Oak Grove and Milwaukie in March 2008) and throughout the public comment period (May through June 2008).

Will Metro use eminent domain to take park land? If so, how much land? What will the impact of daily trains have on habitat and wildlife for that corridor?

The Federal Government has established policies for the protection and preservation of significant parks, recreation areas, nature refuges, and cultural resources that must be considered during planning and construction of federally funded transportation projects. This process, commonly known as Section 4(f), applies to publicly owned resources. The project is following Section 4(f) procedures for all park resources, including the Trolley Trail. Disclosure of the impacts to park land will be a part of the SDEIS, and will be discussed during the public comment period. Determination of the amount of land needed to accommodate light rail adjacent to the Trolley Trail will be part of ongoing discussions with the North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District through the Final Environmental Impact Statement, Preliminary Engineering, and through construction.

Could we “give” you that park land in exchange for you to remove the dam and restore the watershed from the river up to the eastern end of the lake?

The project will be responsible to mitigate any and all impacts along the corridor. The details of what the mitigation is, and how it is implemented, is developed through the Final Environmental Impact Statement and in coordination with the local, state, and federal agencies. There has been discussion of the dam project, and this and other potential mitigation ideas, would have to be coordinated with local, state and federal agencies in the next project plans.

How do peds access [the stations] from the eastside?

Pedestrians would cross McLoughlin Boulevard at a signalized intersection at Park Avenue.

How would [the] Bluebird [station] affect work being done on McLoughlin now?

This depends on the alignment options for the light rail crossing of McLoughlin. If the light rail crosses on a grade-separated structure over McLoughlin, there would not be an impact to the work done through the ODOT Preservation Project. If the light rail crosses McLoughlin at-grade, the project would be responsible for some reconstruction along McLoughlin as well as modifications to the SE 22nd Avenue and SE River Road intersections with McLoughlin.

How does the [Trolley] trail get through?

This depends on the alignment options for the light rail crossing of McLoughlin. If the light rail crosses on a grade-separated structure over McLoughlin, there will be room for a wide trail under the elevated station. If the light rail crosses at-grade across McLoughlin, the trail would be located immediately to the west of light rail. Both options provide opportunity for good connections to the station area and station amenities.

What is the impact of LRT on River Road? Especially southbound from Park.

The current study does not address impacts to River Road. If extension of light rail to Park Avenue is selected, this may be included in the scope of study for the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Traffic light needed on River Road and Park?

The current study does not examine River Road in detail. If extension of light rail to Park Avenue is selected, this would be included in the scope of study for the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Safety and Security

County security force – Is it adequate?

If the proposal to extend light rail to Park Avenue is advanced to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, TriMet will coordinate with all the jurisdictions along the alignment, including Clackamas County, to define police and security resource levels.

TriMet has already committed to add ten percent to their police force upon opening the Green Line (I-205 and Downtown Mall light rail lines) in 2009.

As you may know, TriMet recently hosted a safety summit in Clackamas County (as well as Multnomah and Washington counties) to discuss current and anticipated safety and security needs.

The summit focused on light rail and provided an opportunity for TriMet and Clackamas County to agree to partner on all aspects of the introduction of light rail into Clackamas County, including safety and security. The summit was attended by TriMet officials, local elected officials, police chiefs and the county Sheriff. As a result of the summit, TriMet has committed to considering a South Police Precinct upon the opening of the Green Line, similar to the precincts already in operation in Hillsboro and Gresham. Coordination occurring through a South Police Precinct would continue if the Portland-Milwaukie line is built.

The Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail has the distinct advantage of benefiting from lessons learned about safety and security on past light rail projects. TriMet continues to learn about and refine its use of safety and security practices as they apply them in new areas and as industry practices adapt to changing conditions.

Will police cost more with these stations?

Cost for Sheriff's deputies will be determined by Clackamas County. Cost for TriMet police and security forces will be determined by TriMet.

What crime data is Metro using? Same as Sheriff's?

Yes. Metro gathered crime data from the City of Portland, City of Milwaukie, and Clackamas County Sheriff's Office.

What is the cost [for policing the stations]?

Cost will depend on the level of need and available resources at the time of opening, estimated to be 2015.

What police force would be allocated for the Park and Ride?

Based on current boundaries, the Clackamas County Sheriff's Department would have jurisdiction over a park and ride at Park Avenue. In addition, TriMet's transit police officers and contracted security personnel patrol TriMet vehicles and facilities.

Light Rail and Station Construction and Operations

So the tallest structure on 99 is a 4- to 6-story parking garage? Height restrictions?

In the residential areas of Oak Grove, residences are limited to a height of 35 feet. The park and ride structure would be located in a C3-zoned area (general commercial) where there is no height

restriction unless one is requested or required by a service district, e.g., the fire district, for safety reasons.

How many stories will the Park and Ride be?

To accommodate 1,000 parking spaces, current designs estimate the park and ride structure would be 5 floors.

Intent to collect money from riders?

This question may be interpreted two ways. First, will light rail riders incur the cost for the project? The cost for the project is divided among federal, state and local partners. The federal government provides 60% of the project's cost, roughly \$750 million. The state of Oregon has committed \$250 million of proceeds from lottery bonds to the project. The remainder will be funded by the local jurisdictions including the City of Portland, the City of Milwaukie, Clackamas County, Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet, Metro, and perhaps Multnomah County.

The other interpretation is: Will TriMet collect fares from riders? Yes. TriMet fares on the light rail line will match those on existing lines. In addition, TriMet is making a concerted effort to have more of a presence at the stations to check for fares. They have also made a commitment to increase the reliability of the ticket vending machines at stations.

Will stations bring clutter to neighborhood? Overhead wires, noise, more people?

Stations serving neighborhoods often bring more pedestrian activity to an area and, as a result, there can be both positive and negative impacts. TriMet works closely with the communities it serves to reduce any negative impacts that occur.

There are both wires and noise associated with the operation of a light rail. The wires are positioned directly above the train only. The noise created by a train varies depending on its activity—its speed or whether it is accelerating or decelerating. The SDEIS includes analysis of noise and vibration impacts along the entire alignment.

Art work, maybe voted on by those who will see it day to day?

An art advisory committee composed of community representatives, members of the art community and TriMet will oversee the development of the program and approve projects with guidance from the art program manager.

Why not use bio-diesel electric?

TriMet's light rail trains use only electricity. TriMet buses do use a biodiesel fuel blend: five percent biodiesel and 95 percent petroleum diesel. The blend, including the petroleum-based share of the fuel, meets new federal standards for ultra-low-sulfur diesel (ULSD), and reduces emissions, especially carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulates (smoke).