GREAT PLACES
SW Corridor Plan

Scoping public involvement report

February 2012

PROJECT PARTNERS

Cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Lake Oswego, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard and Tualatin, Multnomah and Washington counties, Oregon Department of Transportation, TriMet and Metro

Metro is the federally mandated metropolitan planning organization designated by the governor to develop an overall transportation plan and to allocate federal funds for the region.

The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) is a 17-member committee that provides a forum for elected officials and representatives of agencies involved in transportation to evaluate transportation needs in the region and to make recommendations to the Metro Council. The established decision-making process assures a well-balanced regional transportation system and involves local elected officials directly in decisions that help the Metro Council develop regional transportation policies, including allocating transportation funds.

Project website: www.swcorridorplan.org

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Introduction

The Southwest Corridor Plan, launched on Sept. 28, 2011, focuses on the corridor connecting Sherwood and Portland, Ore., integrating:

- local land use plans to identify actions and investments that support livable communities, including Portland's Barbur Concept Plan, the Sherwood Town Center Plan, the Tigard High Capacity Land Use Plan and Linking Tualatin
- a transportation plan to examine potential roadway, bike and pedestrian improvements and including a transit alternatives analysis
- strategies for improving the built environment such as economic development, housing choices, parks, natural areas, trails and health.

Background

This integrated planning strategy continues a decades-long tradition of planning for future growth in a way that makes the most of public resources while preserving farmlands and access to nature.

- In 1973, Oregon Senate Bill 100 mandated the protection of the state's agricultural lands, forestlands and natural areas. Metro implements that vision through a focus on efficient land use within the urban growth boundary and planning for transit, innovative roadway projects, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- In 1974, elected leaders in the Portland metropolitan area rejected an urban freeway project, setting aside plans for 54 new highway projects in favor of modest roadway projects and a network of high capacity transitways.
- In 1995, the region adopted the 2040 Growth Concept, a 50-year land use plan that identifies centers for walkable urban development, protecting existing neighborhoods within the urban growth boundary as well as farms and forestlands outside the boundary.
- The 2010 update to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan works to implement the 2040 Growth Concept by setting policies and priorities that emphasize the mutual advantages in land use decision-making and transportation investments. These policies direct future projects to be developed as multimodal transportation – road, bike, pedestrian, transit and freight – and land use planning efforts with multi-agency collaboration and public participation.
- Following the High Capacity Transit System Plan, a part of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan update, the Southwest corridor was selected as the highest regional priority for further study for high capacity transit investment. The potential investment in the Southwest corridor best meets the livability and community needs, supports the economy, provides environmental benefits and has the highest potential for implementation based on local support, costs and efficiencies of operation.
- In 2010, in addition to prioritizing the Southwest corridor for potential high capacity transit investment, the Metro Council also selected the corridor as

one of its two highest priorities for investment strategies that integrate transportation, land use and other plans and policies to enhance movement in and through the corridor and stimulate community and economic development.

This corridor:

- spans the jurisdictions of cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Lake Oswego, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard and Tualatin; Multnomah and Washington counties; and Metro
- is in the TriMet transit service district, with 18,607 average transit boarding per day in the area outside of downtown Portland[1]
- includes Highway 99W and the Interstate 5 freeway, both managed by the Oregon Department of Transportation
- has a daily vehicle count on Highway 99W of approximately 24,000 near Terwilliger and approximately 50,000 near OR 217[2]
- has a daily vehicle count on Interstate 5 of approximately 134,000 near Terwilliger and approximately 133,000 near OR-217[3]
- has a resident population of approximately 200,000[4]
- has 120,700 jobs as of 2010, with major employers such as Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) and Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania as well as major employment centers including Tigard Triangle, Washington Square, five town centers and the Tualatin Industrial area
- contains key regional educational institutions and universities, including Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania campus, Portland State University, Lewis & Clark College and Law School, and George Fox University.

Existing and future traffic conditions in the corridor are projected to worsen as population and employment continue to grow. The corridor already experiences long traffic queues, poor levels of service and significant capacity constraints at key locations. Travel times through the corridor are unreliable due to congestion on Highway 99W.

The Southwest Corridor Plan takes advantage of partnerships between the cities of Beaverton, Durham, King City, Lake Oswego, Portland, Sherwood, Tigard and Tualatin; Multnomah and Washington counties; Oregon Department of Transportation; TriMet; and Metro. Elected

[1] Downtown Portland boarding was excluded from this number to reflect a more accurate, yet conservative, picture of ridership in the study area. The total average transit boarding within the study area, including the portions of the downtown, is 81,940 per day. While many of these riders are traveling to other portions of the metro region outside of the study area, a number are also boarding lines for destinations within the Southwest corridor.

[2] The approximate daily vehicle count for each intersection was calculated using the average of two points along the roadway: one north of the referenced intersection and one south.

OR-99W		I-5	
0.05 mile south of Terwilliger	31,200	0.10 mile south of Terwilliger	126,600
0.05 mile north of Terwilliger	16,600	1.07 mile north of Terwilliger	141,400
0.03 mile west of OR217	49,100	0.40 mile south of OR-217	156,900
0.05 mile east of OR 217	50,200	0.80 mile north of OR-217	109,300

Source : ODOT 2010 AADT volumes

[3] Ibid

[4] Population represents 2009 counts sited in the Housing existing conditions report.

and appointed representatives from each agency participate in the project steering committee, while staff participate in technical committees, support local community advisory committees and ensure meaningful public engagement.

Public engagement

The purpose of this stage of the Southwest Corridor Plan is to determine the scope, evaluation metrics and goals of the overall plan.

Public engagement at this stage of the plan focused on announcing the integrated planning effort, informing of the background and elements of the plan, and asking residents what they value about their communities. Residents and business people were asked about challenges and opportunities in the corridor and their visions for the future of the area. The information and ideas offered will inform decision-makers as they determine the scope and goals of the plan.

To engage the public and determine the needs of the corridor and values of community members, project partners:

- commissioned three random-sample focus groups which targeted corridor residents, commuters who use the corridor and students who attend school in the corridor (consisting of college-aged participants) (*see* Appendix A, Focus group report)
- held 15 invitee discussion groups representing specific topics or geographic areas (*see* Appendix B, Discussion group report)
- held open houses in Tigard (Sept. 28, 2011) and Southwest Portland (Dec. 6, 2011)
- staffed booths at community events and farmers' markets (*see* Appendix C, Outreach events calendar)
- briefed community groups (*see* Appendix C)
- launched and maintain the project website as a repository for information on the plan (www.swcorridorplan.org)
- initiated and manage a project blog for wider-topic considerations, conversations and facts about the corridor (www.swcorridorplan.blog.com)
- launched and maintain a Twitter feed for quick updates and reminders of events (twitter.com/#!/SWCorridor)
- created and maintain a Facebook page for quick updates, announcements and photos from events (www.facebook.com/SWCorridor)
- convened a community planning forum (Jan. 31, 2012) (*see* Appendix D, Community planning forum).

Additionally, community group briefings were held by municipal staff focusing on the local land use plans but also highlighting the Southwest Corridor Plan as the overarching effort (*see* Appendix C). Public attendance at project steering committee meetings was encouraged and at which public comment was accepted.

Through the public involvement and outreach activities occurring Sept. 28, 2011, through Feb. 1, 2012, the project made more than 350 citizen contacts at the open houses, community events and activities. Additionally, 80 residents, advocates and business owners participated in one of 15 discussion groups focused on specific topics (e.g., affordable housing, business development) or geographic areas (e.g.,

Tualatin, King City). During the public comment period of Sept. 28 through Oct. 28, 2011, respondents posted their thoughts on boards at the open house and community events and submitted 98 public comments via the online questionnaire, mail and email (*see* Appendix E, Transcription of posted comments, open house and community events, *and* Appendix F, Comments, questionnaire and emails).

Summary of outreach activities

Two project factsheets were produced in summer and fall of 2011. The first provided the context for the Southwest Corridor Plan, including the general breadth of the plan and known challenges to be considered as well as the project schedule; the second provided more detail about the work plan approach and component plans that make up the Southwest Corridor Plan (*see* Appendix G, Outreach material).

Project staff and consultants facilitated discussions centered on the Southwest corridor that included residents, students, business owners and subject matter experts in the area of alternative transportation, safety, freight, environment, equity and housing. Three focus group discussions and 15 subject and geographic-focused discussion groups were held.

Metro and project partners presented at community groups, neighborhood associations, business organizations, interested advisory committees and local governments. (*See* Appendix C, Community events calendar for a complete list of presentations.)

Postcards were sent to residents and business owners within the study area in Southwest Portland to inform residents of the Barbur Concept Plan and the Southwest Corridor Plan and invite them to get involved. The City of Portland mailed more than 6,000 postcards on the second week of September 2011.

Newspaper advertisements were placed in the Southwest zone of the Oregonian, the Sherwood Gazette, the King City Regal Courier, the Times (Tigard and Tualatin), Tigard Cityscape Newsletter, Southwest Community Connection, and partner news and press releases were issued in September or October of 2011, announcing community kick-off events and inviting participation in open houses, community events and the public comment period).

Two neighborhood walks were held in September 2011 to provide residents with an opportunity to walk the Barbur Concept Plan areas with City of Portland staff to share ideas and discuss opportunities and challenges along the corridor. Between the two walks, approximately 60 people attended and many comments were received and summarized by City of Portland staff.

Two open houses have been held in local communities to collect comments and priorities from the community to guide the development of transportation and land use alternatives. The community was asked to provide its vision and values for the study area, identify transportation alternatives and prioritize community values. The first was held on Sept. 28, 2011, in Tigard and provided information on the Southwest Corridor Plan, the Barbur Concept Plan and the Tigard High Capacity Land Use Plan. Approximately 75 people attended, adding thoughts to the comment boards. The second open house was held on Dec. 6, 2011, in Southwest Portland. Approximately 50 community members attended, again adding thoughts to the comment boards. The Barbur Concept Plan open house is the first of three open houses that will be hosted in Southwest Portland to provide information on the Southwest Corridor Plan and Barbur Concept Plan

Leading up to and during this time, city partners convened community committees as part of the local land use planning processes.

Tigard convened the Tigard High Capacity Transit Land Use Plan Citizen Advisory Committee, on Jan. 5, 2011. The committee met throughout the process of the Tigard land use plan development with the last meeting held in November 2011. The Tigard Connections Team, which kicked-off on Jan. 30, 2012, has been convened to participate in the Southwest Corridor Plan process.

Portland convened the Barbur Concept Plan Community Working Group Sept. 15, 2011.

Tualatin convened the Linking Tualatin Transportation Taskforce in November 2011.

Sherwood will convene a Sherwood Town Center Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee in spring 2012.

A community planning forum was convened Jan. 31, 2011. Project partners will convene the four local community committees along with interested stakeholders from other jurisdictions over the course of 2012 in a series of Southwest corridor community planning forums. The forums will convene at project milestones for the Southwest Corridor Plan and provide project staff and decision-makers information and insight throughout this process, adding to the work being done by technical and community experts.

Focus groups summary

Three focus groups were organized and facilitated by CFM Strategic Communications Inc. in August 2011. The intent of the focus groups was to assess public opinion about the corridor that was not biased by knowing the project partners, specific project area or scope. These discussions provided overarching opinions on the Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W corridor, identified its attributes, problems and specific ways the community thinks the area should be improved, and explored how people get information about local issues. The three focus groups were comprised of students, commuters and local residents. A complete summary and analysis of the discussions is provided in Appendix A, Focus group report.

Residents that live in or near the Southwest Corridor discussed attributes that contribute to the livability of the area – affordable homes and apartments, easy access to freeways, a variety of convenient shopping options, convenient access to work, friendly neighbors, quiet streets, trees, parks, bikeways, walking paths and proximity to family and friends. Students agreed these are the types of features they will be looking for as they enter the workforce and settle down.

Participants indicated they are frustrated with the congestion and gridlock during rush hours in the corridor. Their perceived cause of the congestion was too many cars from local traffic and those commuting through the corridor. Factors residents and commuters say contribute to traffic congestion are:

- roads that are not designed to handle the amount of traffic using them
- stoplights that are poorly timed and impede the flow of traffic
- intersections that are poorly designed
- too many access points to Highway 99W from primary and secondary streets and from businesses and parking lots
- left-turns that are difficult to make and dangerous
- TriMet buses that block traffic when they stop.

Additionally, people complained that transportation options – biking, walking and transit – in the area are inadequate.

Participants suggested a series of potential solutions to address traffic issues in the corridor: Make walking and biking safer and provide alternative routes for local residents to work, shopping and entertainment. Other recommendations included improvements to livability in the corridor.

Discussion groups summary

Fifteen discussion groups comprised of outside experts, advocates and supporters have been conducted since August 2011. The intent of the discussion groups is to collect expert and local perspectives on topic-specific issues related to the Southwest corridor. Discussions focused on opportunities and challenges in the corridor, a vision for the area and the best way to reach out to community members or stakeholders as the process moves forward.

Discussion groups can be broken into two general categories: those organized by topic and those organized by geographic location. Topic-focused discussion groups were selected based on criteria outlined by the regional guiding principles for creating a great place. Discussion groups covered the topics of affordable housing, active transportation, environment, equity, large educational and medical institutions, major employers/business, and freight. Within each group, experts, advocates and supporters were invited to participate in an open discussion of the Southwest corridor, as related to the specific topic.

Discussion groups within a second category were selected geographically. Each city within the corridor hosted a discussion group to collect feedback from residents and business owners. The intent was to collect a local perspective on the regional and local opportunities and challenges as well as a local vision for each area.

Within both discussion group categories, Metro worked closely with project partners to invite interested and active community representatives. In most cases, both the residential and business communities participated in the discussion of the Southwest corridor.

A brief summary of what was heard from the groups is provided below (*see also* Appendix B, Discussion group report). Topics that were repeated throughout the groups included their perceptions of the Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W corridor, traffic issues, area improvements, suggestions for addressing the problems, and the best ways to communicate change that could require a homeowner to move or businesses to relocate.

On the topic of Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W perceptions, residents, advocates and the business community indicated that the corridor is out of date, congested and lacking a sense of place. Issues facing the area are widespread and deep, but everyone agrees traffic and congestion is the top concern. It is an area people try to avoid, especially during rush hours and peak periods.

Issues compounding the traffic problems were said to be:

- too many and poorly timed traffic lights
- poorly designed intersections
- too many entrances to parking lots from Highway 99W
- poor access to Interstate 5.

Other traffic related problems in the corridor include the following concerns.

- Walking and biking is dangerous.
- Sidewalks and bike lanes have gaps.
- Street lighting is poor.

- Mass transit does not serve the needs of north-south commuters.
- Routes for pedestrians, cyclists and transit to cross Interstate 5 are limited.
- Traffic issues may be discouraging employers from locating in the area, while lack of transit can make it hard for employees to get around.

Non-transportation issues also surfaced.

- The area appears to be a throwback to the 1960's and 1970's: Transportation is auto-centric, and building designs, landscape architecture and businesses along Highway 99W are dated and appear "tired."
- Area development is threatening the environment.

Participants indicated that the key to improving the corridor is fixing issues related to transportation. Recommended transportation improvements included:

- limited-access lanes on Highway 99W
- high capacity transit
- expanded transportation alternatives such as pedestrian walkways and bike lines
- bus and carpool lanes on Highway 99W
- technology or smartphone apps to coordinate car sharing
- infrastructure improvements
- improved signage.

Additionally, suggestions for non-transportation improvements included making the corridor a more attractive place to live. Creating an identity for the corridor will improve the aesthetics but also stimulate economic growth and help promote and revitalize the area.

Groups were willing to think outside the box when recommending changes and improvements to the corridor but not by sacrificing core Oregon values. Policies should be established to:

- incorporate the voice of the community during the planning process
- protect and expand affordable housing
- include business and large employers in the planning process
- protect the environment.

In regards to communication with residents and business owners, the groups concluded that explaining change and its impact focused on three themes: financial compensation for those affected, economic opportunities for the community and, lastly, the public good.

Summary of comments

"[I envision a] truly multimodal corridor with thriving small businesses that are safely accessible by transit, walking, cycling to nearby residents and commuters traveling through the corridor. Transform the corridor to a desirable place to visit, work in or travel through rather than the current congested and dangerous route to be avoided."

The public comment period ran from Sept. 28 through Oct. 28, 2011. The summary below synthesizes what was heard at community events and farmers' markets on comment boards, responses to the questionnaire, and mail and email comments received.

Vision

This inquiry sought to aid decision-makers in determining the goals of the Southwest Corridor Plan. Some respondents to the questionnaire offered specific solutions within their responses, which are captured in the categories below as appropriate.

The comments reflected that the integrated strategy idea put forth for the Southwest corridor is necessary to meet the visions of the residents in the corridor. Respondents reflected a desire to address not only the transportation needs of the corridor but also the need to enhance communities and protect or enhance the green infrastructure and resources in the area.

Transportation

The main theme for transportation was the vision of a multimodal corridor, offering sustainable transportation alternatives and a balancing of needs – including roadway, transit, bike and pedestrian access – while considering both the residential and business aspects of the corridor as well as commercial and commuter transportation. Though automobile transportation needs to be supported in the corridor, safety was often cited as an issue for bikes and pedestrians, with not only visions of good facilities for bikes and pedestrians but also automobile traffic calming techniques to create a safe and welcoming environment for these modes. Some comments stated that Intestate 5 should be the major transportation route, with Highway 99W refocused as a green, visually aesthetic boulevard that supports local businesses and residents. "Cut through" traffic was often cited as a big issue for the neighborhoods off Highway 99W.

Good transit connections – as well as well designed communities, addressed below – were cited as a key to allowing residents to rely less on auto travel. High capacity transit is

generally encouraged as a good investment in the corridor – with respondents often stating support or reservations about an alignment "on Barbur" – with the design of station areas to support local small businesses and community areas seen as both a necessity and a major benefit.

Community development

The major themes presented in the visions for the corridor were the idea of walkable and bikeable communities and the support for local services, small businesses and employment. One comment specifically called out the idea of "20 minute communities" to summarize the ideas that many had that the corridor needed more areas with not only the infrastructure for pedestrians, bicycles and "people friendly" public spaces but also a variety of businesses, services and employment opportunities to create a sense of place and provide options for residents not to drive to meet their needs. One comment highlighted the opportunity to see the corridor not only as a "transit corridor" but also as a "commerce corridor."

When raised, the issue of increased density had proponents and one opponent. A few comments specifically encouraged the idea of increased density, citing the need for multi-use buildings that house residents and businesses. One respondent specifically called out the idea of mixed-age apartments.

Parks and greenspaces

Comments often reflected the vision for trees and greenspaces as part of improving Highway 99W and community areas, but improved or new local parks were also cited as part of residents' visions for the corridor. A few comments also highlighted the importance to protect the natural areas in the corridor in considering transportation improvements.

Values

This inquiry sought to aid decision-makers in creating the evaluation criteria by which potential solutions of the Southwest Corridor Plan will be assessed. As above, some respondents to the questionnaire offered specific solutions within their responses, which are captured in other categories below as appropriate.

The values expressed highlighted the need to protect and improve current benefits of living in the corridor (e.g., safety and access to parks) and opportunities for the corridor (e.g., better multimodal connections and green boulevard improvements).

"[I envision a c]reation of a sense of 'place' within the corridor, more of a neighborhood with its own special look and feel. [The corridor n]eeds to offer services so I don't have to go so far for the things I need. Also the corridor needs to include more housing to support the [high capacity transit] being considered."

"Balance the various needs of the community, including businesses, employers, residents, drivers, bikers, pedestrians, tax payers and nature lovers."

"I value community meeting spaces that attract people of various ages, incomes, races, etc,: farmers' markets, parks and places where people feel comfortable spending a few minutes or an entire afternoon"

"We enjoy the small town feel even though we are part of a big city."

"[I value] a safe comfortable place where a family with kids can choose any means of transportation to use."

"There are great parks and other resources around but it is difficult to access them without a car and being stuck in traffic."

Neighborhoods and community services

Respondents focused on what they valued about their immediate neighborhood, highlighting the importance of protecting or enhancing the sense of community and the unique characters of the neighborhoods and diverse town/village centers. Several people referred to the interrelation of safe options for walking and biking and the importance of local destinations – and local businesses – for shopping, services and leisure activities. Safety was also an often mentioned value: People value the sense of security from crime when walking their neighborhoods, but they emphasized they do not feel safe from the possibility of accidents due to traffic speeds and/or the lack of sidewalks. Respondents also value the good schools in their areas, their large yards, diverse house styles, established trees and the rural/small town feel of their neighborhoods.

Parks, trails, natural areas and green infrastructure

Along with the many comments expressing positive feelings about the established trees in neighborhoods, many people value the tree corridor on the north end of Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W and along Interstate 5. Respondents also pointed to parks, the Southwest trail system, other greenspaces and panoramic views as things they value, stating they could appreciate them more with increased walking access to parks and natural areas with sidewalks and trails.

Multimodal connections

Respondents value a balance of transportation options, highlighting good, convenient transit, safe walkability and bikeability, and efficient, well maintained roadways.

Urban development

Though few comments addressed this topic area specifically, they are worth noting. Two respondents specifically value neighboring farmland but, in contrast, one criticized the protection of the urban growth boundary. Other comments specified upscale, mixed-use development – especially along Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W, permaculture, green construction and sustainable practices.

Project development

A couple of commenters also addressed government's role and project development, expressing that they valued less regulation, more citizen involvement and the pursuit of low cost alternatives.

What these values express

In summary, the values in the corridor communicate the following themes for the Southwest Corridor Plan to consider.

- Protect existing neighborhoods, including the feeling of security, existing lot sizes and the rural feel.
- Create or enhance local destination areas that will add to the sense of community.
- Encourage small businesses that will serve local communities and provide local jobs.
- Protect existing trees in neighborhoods and add trees to enhance the natural feel along Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W.
- Improve access to parks and natural areas.
- Provide transportation choices that allow for active lifestyles while providing good access to downtown Portland and other destinations.
- Improve facilities for safe walking and biking.
- Increase efficiency on Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W and lower traffic impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Challenges

Residents offered many thoughts on the challenges of Southwest corridor. Some of these comments focused on the challenges that would face implementation (money and terrain were mentioned several times), and others focused on the issues in the corridor, such as safety for pedestrians and the need to balance improving auto connections while protecting neighborhoods. Some comments offered specified concerns such as issues at intersections and

"[The value of 'big yards'] is threatened by Metro's ongoing fight against suburban development… Metro hates the idea of expanding the [urban growth boundary]. Metro would have you to subdivide your large yard, or tear down your house on the large lot and put in row-houses instead."

"I value a more upscale vision. Barbur can be kind of a seedy area; I'd like to see nicer businesses and apartments."

"I am tired of footing the bill [for light rail] from the income taxes and property taxes that I pay."

"[The challenge will be n]ot just going for the path of least (and cheapest) resistance that will provide good transit access only to gas stations and fast food chains and require massive parking lots along the alignment… It may be cheaper but in 50 years, our kids will be scratching their heads."

"We need to stop catering to the bike and hike agenda and realize that the average resident still needs to use their car every day in order to manage their

bicycle facilities gaps, which will be analyzed and addressed as packaged solutions begin to emerge through the Southwest Corridor Plan process.

Project management and results

As mentioned, money was seen as a challenge to reach a satisfying outcome for the project. Some specified that it was time for this area to get its "fair share of services" for the taxes paid. Others were concerned the project may not develop into an ideal solution and the end result would not satisfy the needs in the corridor. Regarding a potential transit investment, the issue of who pays (users or tax dollars) was raised as a concern with a few respondents, and one respondent stated that low-density neighborhoods may not justify a major transit investment.

Some comments reflected the challenge of competing interests, a few stating that the focus needs to be on improvements that would benefit auto travel, and others stating their preference to move away from auto dependency.

Transportation and roadways

Several respondents highlighted that transportation solutions would be challenged by the topography of the corridor. Whether thinking that the solution(s) may include widening Interstate 5, increasing auto capacity or pedestrian and bike facilities on Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W, or making space for high capacity transit, comments saw both topography and the current built environment as a challenge. In general, traffic was seen as a major challenge to the corridor, with some comments seeing the solution in making Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W into more of a high-speed thoroughfare, and others seeing the solution in forcing higher speed traffic onto Interstate 5 and slowing traffic and

"The biggest challenges are lack of funding for basic improvements such as completing sidewalk and bike land gaps and safe crossings at frequent intervals… Elected officials and high level jurisdiction management need to shift their priorities to actually align with the policy – improved transportation safety, reduce [vehicle miles traveled] and [greenhouse gas] emissions, promote healthy active living and vibrant communities, create jobs and aid the economy by supporting better and safer access to small businesses."

improving transportation options on Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W. Signal management was addressed by a few comments, which stated that yellow lights turn green sometimes and red others and that better timing was needed for fewer stops and starts. Current transit service is seen as a challenge, both from a transit user perspective (infrequent service, not enough bicycle parking at park and ride lots) and from an auto user perspective (the lack of pullouts for stopping buses delays traffic). Pedestrian and bike safety is also a challenge.

Opportunities

Residents see many opportunities to improve the livability, sense of place and ability to travel in and through the Southwest corridor. Respondents offered recommendations for improvements in specific areas that will be analyzed as city and corridor transportation plans are developed (such as particular areas for new entrances to Interstate 5, freight turnouts in industrial areas, expanded roadways, signals at intersections and sidewalks).

Community development, livability and housing

Residents see an opportunity with the Southwest Corridor Plan to revitalize Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W to create a "greater sense of place." Some of the suggestions included encouraging pocket destinations with retail, services and restaurants, branding the highway as a "Gateway to the Coast, Wine Country, etc." and prioritizing people over cars. One comment suggested that current zoning should be on the table as part of any change, optimizing it to support the corridor prosperity and livability. Housing issues were also raised, with people pointing to the opportunity to increase housing choices and higher residential density, plan to allow people to live closer to where they work and plan, and site multifamily housing around parks to allow both residents and the community feel of the park to benefit.

Transportation

Respondents see several opportunities when it comes to transportation in the corridor. In general, comments highlighted the need to connect neighborhoods, with more ways across Interstate 5 and direct routes to town centers, suggested the consolidation of commercial business driveways

"It is difficult to connect to King City and Sherwood because of traffic on 99W and Tualatin Sherwood Road."

"[This needs] to plan a method to better separate the cars… from the mass-transit… to avoid traffic back up with buses and/or future [high capacity transit]…"

"Plan for the development of "dense business nodes" at major intersection areas along Barbur Boulevard to avoid the single car strip-mall [feel… create more] "Main Street" communities at these nodes."

"It should be turned into something people want to be on. Make it spectacular with cool lights, signage, etc."

"Barbur is all too often used to bypass a congested I-5 – improving/ widening I-5… would cut down on unnecessary traffic on Barbur."

"Make pedestrians and bikes equal to cars in planning these thoroughfares."

"Turn Barbur Boulevard into an actual tree lined boulevard with a median green space or [high capacity transit] down the center. "

to provide safety for pedestrians, cyclists, customers and employees while benefiting traffic flow, and recommended more transportation options, including high capacity transit, that could relieve congestion and give commuters more choice.

Regarding auto traffic, respondents cited specific opportunities such as focusing on clearing up bottleneck areas, optimizing intersections, improving and widening Interstate 5 to relieve traffic demand on Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W, a southern I-5 and 99W connector, possibly from Sherwood, creating safer arterials and improving roads to increase efficiency. Regarding transit, residents suggest targeting transit to the large employers in the corridor, creating a large park and ride facility in Tualatin and adding bike parking at transit malls. For pedestrians and bicycles, comments asked for improved sidewalk facilities, bikeways separated from auto traffic and more, and clearly marked, pedestrian crossings across Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W.

Stormwater and watershed management and green development

Respondents also raised the issue that this is an opportunity to create better stormwater management to prevent street flooding and to make a choice for green development moving forward (such as bioswales, ecoroofs and added trees). Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W is seen as a candidate for a tree lined boulevard. One comment highlighted the connection of nature and quality of life, suggesting that the project could enhance watersheds and residents' experience with nature with greenways, parks, trails and open space.

Transportation alternatives

This inquiry sought to aid decision-makers in determining the transportation alternatives to be considered for the Southwest corridor. The comments received from residents suggested that the majority who participated in the questionnaire and events agreed with the categorization of alternatives by roadways, bikeways, high capacity transit and pedestrian improvements. Within the four transportation alternative categories, responses varied from general

suggestions, applicable to the entire corridor, to specific solutions for consideration. Comments are summarized below; however, priorities are identified and discussed based on the duplication of comments within each of the four categories. Comments offering recommendations for specific improvements will be analyzed as city and corridor transportation plans are developed.

Bikeways

Examples: bike trails; safety improvements

The majority of comments in response to the questionnaire and comment boards at community activities were in support of increased bike connections, bikeway improvements and additional bike facilities (bike boxes, lanes, crossings). An overwhelming majority of the comments requesting added facilities expressed a need for off-road bike paths/trails or separated lanes. Not all respondents stated their motivation for this suggestion, but those who did indicated it was due to not feeling safe riding next to traffic on Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W. Other respondents who were concerned with safety suggested maintenance improvements as a solution.

The topic of bridges was the second most mentioned in the comments for bikeways. Respondents indicated safety and lack of connection within the study area as primary motivation for the comments. Comments varied from identification of the problem to listing the problem and providing specific solutions to remedy it. Suggestions for consideration included new bike facilities on existing bridges as well as new pedestrian and bike bridges.

Respondents also suggested specific connections that they felt would improve access and safety within the corridor and specific bicycle facilities they felt would improve safety and/or ridership in the corridor. Suggested bicycle facilities included lanes, trails, curbed bike lanes, bike boxes, bicycle tracks, sharrow markings and hawk signals at crossings. Fewer suggested improvements like increased signage or better lighting that would provide benefits for pedestrians and bicyclists. Less common were comments stating that bike facilities were sufficient as is, and that resources should be focused elsewhere like sidewalks or non-transportation projects. Others suggested non-infrastructure improvements for safety such as educational programs for bikers and requirements for high visibility

"I would bike if I felt safer with traffic."

"[T]here aren't efficient alternative routes from these main streets in Southwest."

"Do what I and others have been asking for: fix the bridges and the other pinch points on the bike lanes. That is where the limited supply of money should go."

"[L]ight rail along Barbur… [would] keep most of the "fast car traffic" on the freeway so that our other Southwest major streets can better support bus and pedestrian movement."

"Bus rapid transit seems to be a more feasible option along this corridor than rail as it does not require major investments in new infrastructure."

"…No rail. Maybe some bus improvement, maybe some express bus lines. But not rail. Rail is a waste of money and a hazard for bicyclists."

"Better transit – 24 hours – people do work at night"

clothing while riding. A few comments indicated that Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W should have "world class facilities" or be a bicycle "super highway".

Transit

Examples: local bus improvements; rapid streetcar; bus rapid transit; light rail

Comments varied significantly from general statements of support or opposition to details about connections, operational improvements, ridership cost feasibility and alignments. Over three-fourths of respondents supported some level of transit enhancements in the area, and approximately two-thirds supported a form of high capacity transit. The majority of high capacity transit supporters also stated their support for or opposition to a light rail alternative. The majority of those who did not prefer light rail suggested bus rapid transit, streetcar or improved local bus service as an alternative. Opposition to light rail was attributed to cost feasibility and fear the area does not have the density to support necessary ridership rates. Less commonly, residents feared the alignment would take needed vehicle lanes or remove businesses from Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W. Those who favored light rail indicated it would provide a viable commuter option, benefit area business and increase community livability.

The second most common theme related to current or future bus service in the area. Comments focused on building capacity and frequency of local bus service, improving connections and adding east-west connections. Less common but still frequent transit suggestions included rapid streetcar, local streetcar and carpools. One person indicated that enhanced bus service was not the solution as buses are "caught in traffic along with everyone else."

Respondents made specific suggestions for what they preferred to see happen with transit enhancement in the area. One preferred the rail lines shared with a vehicle lane so no car lane would be removed. Another suggested a tunnel under OHSU and Hillsdale with an elevator connection to both. Other comments suggested operation improvements such as increased bus frequency as

"Light rail would be more regular and predictable and much preferred to buses. Light rail needs to go to OHSU, PCC-Sylvania and Washington Square in order to divert car traffic."

an alternative to built transit improvements in the area. Individuals who preferred a less aggressive transit alternative suggested carpooling or indicated current facilities were sufficient or even excessive.

A few respondents expanded on the topic of transit to include safety for bicyclists, improvement to facilities that would improve access to and ridership on transit services. Specifically, suggestions included improvements to Barbur Transit Center, sidewalk connections to facilities and clearer bus schedules.

Roadway

Examples: carpool lanes, with our without tolls; technology that helps make the most of our existing conditions

Responses regarding roadway alternatives were primarily focused on traffic flow and speeds along the corridor. Of these comments, suggestions were split between those who wanted traffic slowed or increased along the corridor; however, the majority would like to see the flow of traffic steady and free of delays. Safety issues and connection improvements made up the remainder of comment types in regards to flow and speeds. Respondents who wanted slower traffic speeds were primarily motivated by their concern for safety, stating the plan should consider improvements that enforce speed limits along the corridor, add traffic features to slow traffic, and increase police patrol of the area. Those who favored higher speeds for through traffic stated that the plan should consider better coordinated signals, limiting or consolidating driveway access points along Barbur Boulevard/ Highway 99W, and dedicated lanes for through traffic.

The survey used carpool lanes and tolls as a prompt for respondents; as a result, approximately half of the residents who responded to the online survey voiced their opinion on carpool lanes and tolls. Of those who commented on tolls, opinions were nearly split down the middle with a slight favor in the direction of no tolls or dedicated carpool lanes.

Several participants indicated the focus of the region's efforts should not be on cars and we should invest in other user

"Add more crosswalks and slow traffic down on Barbur – very dangerous for pedestrians and bikes."

"[We need] better timing of traffic lights all the way to Sherwood."

"Automatic people mover to link Portland Community College with MAX on Barbur… No shuttle busses!"

"No light rail until they make it safe for bikes"

"Parks and ride lots required at each station large enough to accommodate anticipated usage."

"We need rail, but also need good feeder-bus service."

"Slow down traffic with optical changes, like medians, trees, etc."

"Make roads wider."'

"Tolls for everything except carpools"

"Don't do any tolls"

"Gas tax is better. Carpool lanes are okay, but not a high priority"

"[I support] anything that allows autos to share the road safety with other users – light rail, bike lanes, foot bridges, crosswalks, sidewalks."

"I support] green infrastructure (like light rail)."

"Has a beltway for truck traffic been considered?"

"Cross-town freeway from Hillsboro to West Linn"

"[We need] access to schools"

"Overcrossings and better lighting systems activated by pedestrians"

"Fill in missing links; improve crossings"

"A protected bike lane on both sides of Barbur would buffer pedestrians."

"Barbur Boulevard functions as the I-5 relief valve, and its capacity to function in this way needs to be preserved and not reduced by the introduction of [high capacity transit]."

"Strategic capacity and safety improvements on major roadways"

"Look at I-5 freeway ramps and connect them directly to Barbur rather than Taylor's Ferry, Huber, etc. There's too much traffic on these side streets during rush hour."

needs and other modes such as transit and active transportation.

Less frequent issues brought up by respondents included roadway signage, improved road maintenance, and consideration of the close relationship between Barbur Boulevard/Highway 99W and Interstate 5, particularly its susceptibility to an influx of traffic from I-5 when backups occur. Additionally, a few residents expressed concern of congestion on Highway 99W overflowing onto local streets and increasing traffic volumes in neighborhoods.

Individual big ideas included recommendations for a by-pass for large connector streets, modeling transit alternatives after Curitiba, Brazil's transit system, and introducing elevated underground roadways among others.

Pedestrian improvements

Examples: sidewalks; safety improvements

The majority of comments focused on increased pedestrian access and connectivity, facility enhancements and safety. Nearly every comment directly or indirectly supported improvements to the pedestrian environment, with safety as the major underlying motivation.

Respondents who discussed access wanted the transportation alternative to look at filling current infrastructure gaps and ensuring connections to community destinations in the study area. Comments that suggested pedestrian infrastructure improvements were motivated by the desire to improve safety and enjoyment of the pedestrian environment in the study area. Suggestions for facility improvements included, but are not limited to, off-street walkways, appropriate lighting, reflectors at crosswalks, trees and

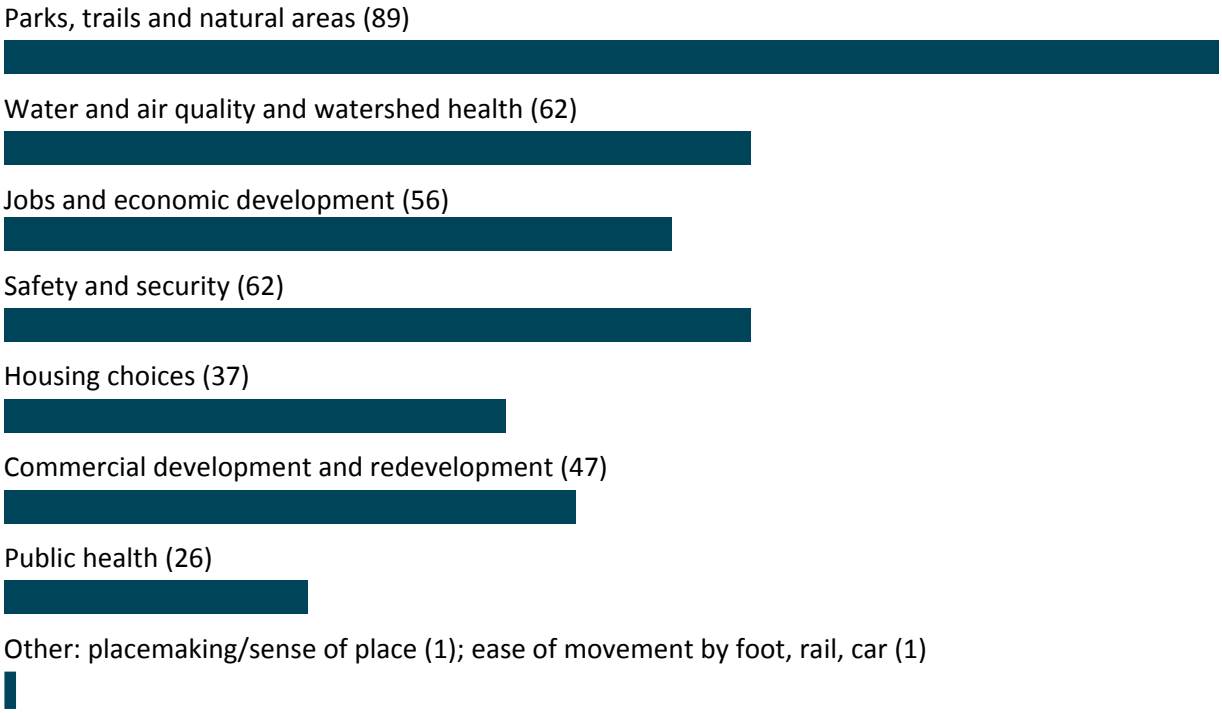
landscaping, grade crossings, pedestrian islands, hawk signals, trails, buffers and pedestrian bridges. A few comments suggested non-infrastructure solutions for the alternatives analysis in order to improve connectivity and safety in the study area. Specifically, safety education and enforcement was mentioned by residents.

What is important (dots exercise)

In order to gain an understanding of what is important to communities beyond transportation, residents were asked to take part in a prioritization exercise. Participants at community events were given three dots and asked to place them next to a non-transportation category they valued the most; respondents could place their dots in any combination they chose, including placing all three dots one category. The questionnaire also offered three chances to prioritize these same categories.

Categories listed were: jobs and economic development; housing choices; parks, trails and natural areas; safety and security; public health; water and air quality and watershed health; and commercial development and redevelopment. Participants also added to the list of non-transportation topics if they felt a category was missing.

The results indicate the greatest non-transportation priority for participants is parks, trails and natural areas. The second largest priority is evenly dispersed between the category of water and air quality and watershed health and the category of safety and security, with jobs and economic development close to these priorities.



Conclusions

Process

Public engagement at this first stage of the plan focused on announcing the integrated planning effort, informing of the background and elements of the plan, and asking what residents value about their communities, challenges and opportunities in the corridor and their visions for the future of the corridor. More than 350 citizen contacts were made during the community events, and 98 public comments were submitted via an online questionnaire, email and mail. Residents were given the opportunity to post their thoughts on boards during interactive discussion and activities held at the September open house and five community events throughout October. Additionally, community members, commuters and business owners offered ideas and insight during the focus groups and discussion group meetings. The comprehensive process of maintaining a physical presence in communities and utilizing a variety of online tools has resulted in a robust effort to inform and engage residents of all ages within each community along the Southwest corridor.

Recommendations

According to respondents, the scope and goals of the Southwest Corridor Plan should reflect an integrated strategy that meets the visions and values of the residents in the corridor. Respondents reflected a desire to address not only the transportation needs of the corridor but also the need to enhance communities and protect or enhance non-transportation amenities and resources in the area.

Transportation alternatives that must be included in the analysis include bus rapid transit, light rail, roadway expansions/new roadways, rapid streetcar and increasing local bus capacity. In conjunction, opportunities for bicycle network expansion and facilities that improve safety must be explored. Respondents also recommend the pedestrian environment be examined for facility and network improvements that prioritize connectivity and safety. Residents also requested that decision-makers consider fiscal realities and develop alternatives that yield the greatest benefit for the cost.

Results indicate the greatest non-transportation priority is centered on parks, trails and natural areas. The second most identified priority included multiple categories: water quality, air quality and watershed health; safety and security; and jobs and economic development. While recommendations for these categories were not discussed in detail, they were clearly highlighted as priorities by the residents who participated in community events and activities. Based on the community event activity and focus group and discussion group feedback, it suggests that the outcome recommendation for non-transportation issues would include planning that fosters job growth and economic sustainability, improves livability within the study area and supports the connection between people to nature.

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Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

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