



Meeting: 82nd Avenue Transit Project Policy and Budget Committee

Date/time Friday, February 13| 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: PCC Southeast – Community Hall Annex

Members

Sam Desue	TriMet
Chris Ford	ODOT
Duncan Hwang	Metro Councilor
Millicent Williams	City of Portland
Franklin Ouchida	CAC Co-Chair
Diana Helm	Clackamas County Commissioner
Christine Lewis	Metro Councilor

Presenters

Michael Kiser	TriMet
Jesse Stemmler	TriMet

Welcome and Project Updates

Sam Desue welcomed the committee and thanked members and members of the public for their continued engagement with the 82nd Avenue Transit Project. The General Manager emphasized the importance of the committee's role in helping guide the project through a critical phase of design, funding, and project readiness.

Committee updates included continued work on the economic development-focused study being developed by the 82nd Avenue Coalition, Metro, the Portland Metro Chamber, and local businesses. ODOT also provided an update on the ongoing state legislative session and the potential implications for transportation funding, maintenance, operations, and transit systems.

Project Timeline and Design Approach

Jesse Stemmler provided a refresher on the project timeline and key takeaways from the previous Policy and Budget Committee meeting. The project is currently in 60% design, which is anticipated to be completed in June, with construction planned for spring 2027.



The project team is also beginning work with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to demonstrate project readiness and advance the Small Starts grant agreement process. A key component of this work is establishing a project cost that aligns with the available budget while continuing to assess risks, funding needs, and schedule.

The team reiterated that improved safety and accessibility remain top priorities. The proposed design approach also recognizes the importance of BAT lanes in improving transit travel time and long-term reliability while balancing regulatory requirements, community and business considerations, project schedule, and available funding.

Proposed BAT Lane Design Approach

Jesse Stemmler presented the proposed approach for advancing BAT lanes through design. The approach seeks to maximize BAT lanes to the greatest extent possible while maintaining flexibility as the project moves through design, regulatory review, and funding development.

The proposed approach includes retaining BAT lanes throughout most of the corridor, including minor widening at Stark and Washington, while dropping BAT lanes at 82nd Avenue and Powell Boulevard due to the significant regulatory, schedule, cost, and traffic diversion risks identified at that intersection. The approach would continue the design exception process at other locations where needed.

The project team emphasized that the proposed approach is not intended to preclude further changes. Additional BAT lane reductions could be necessary if design exceptions are not approved, additional widening is required, or a significant funding gap remains.

The team also emphasized the importance of continued coordination with ODOT and regular updates to the Policy and Budget Committee as the technical and regulatory review progresses.

Committee Discussion and Direction

Committee members generally expressed support for moving the project forward while recognizing the need to balance transit benefits with regulatory requirements, funding, schedule, and broader transportation system impacts.

ODOT reiterated its preference to avoid BAT lanes where they would create significant operational or system impacts, particularly at 82nd and Powell. ODOT emphasized the importance of understanding potential traffic diversion and ensuring that the overall transportation system continues to function effectively across modes.



Commissioner Helm appreciated the project team's engagement with businesses and recognized the project's safety and reliability benefits. Her primary concerns remain traffic diversion and funding, along with potential impacts of medians on business and freight access.

Members recognized that the project is already a strong investment in the corridor and emphasized the importance of maintaining momentum toward construction and federal funding. The committee also highlighted the importance of continuing to engage businesses and understanding potential economic impacts as the project advances. Overall, the discussion reflected support for advancing a balanced approach that maximizes BAT lanes where feasible, addresses regulatory and operational risks, maintains project readiness, and preserves flexibility as additional information becomes available.

Funding, Project Readiness and Next Steps

The project team emphasized that the more extensive BAT lane approach creates a funding gap that must be addressed to maintain the project schedule and scope.

Beginning in May, TriMet will work with FTA to demonstrate project readiness and advance the Small Starts grant agreement process. During this period, the project team will work to establish a project cost that aligns with the available budget and identify potential sources of additional funding.

The team noted that the period between May and August will be particularly important. Addressing risks and funding needs early will provide greater flexibility to make adjustments before the project reaches a point where significant scope reductions may be required.

TriMet also reported that it has continued to pursue potential additional funding opportunities, including conversations related to Portland's Clean Energy Fund. However, additional funding would not eliminate the need for continued work to fully fund the project.

The committee emphasized that any recommendation must include a credible funding strategy

Public Comment

Public testimony continued to reflect strong support for BAT lanes throughout the 82nd Avenue corridor. Speakers emphasized safety, transit reliability, accessibility, climate, equity, and the importance of creating a transformative multimodal investment.



Several speakers questioned the regulatory basis for reducing BAT lanes at 82nd and Powell and encouraged TriMet and ODOT to continue exploring design exceptions and other approaches that could preserve BAT lanes.

Public commenters also emphasized the importance of transparency regarding the regulatory review process and requested continued public access to information and discussions related to the project.

Business and community perspectives emphasized the importance of understanding potential economic impacts and ensuring that businesses remain engaged as the project moves forward. Public testimony generally supported advancing the project while continuing to address business access, economic impacts, and other community concerns.

Closing Remarks

Sam Desue thanked the committee and members of the public for their thoughtful feedback and continued engagement. He emphasized that TriMet remains committed to maximizing BAT lanes wherever feasible while addressing community concerns, managing regulatory and project risks, and positioning the project to secure federal funding.

Sam Desue directed the project team to advance design for BAT lanes along the majority of the seven-mile corridor between Lombard and Clackamas Town Center, while not pursuing BAT lanes at 82nd Avenue and Powell Boulevard due to the unacceptable level of regulatory risk identified at that location. He also emphasized that the decision does not end the conversation regarding BAT lanes or the broader vision for 82nd Avenue. TriMet will continue working with committee members and project partners to address the funding gap, pursue additional funding opportunities, and advance the project toward construction.

Adjourned