



**PMLR Steering Committee Meeting Notes
TriMet, 710 NE Holladay Street, Conference Room 1
June 22, 2009**

Present

Fred Hansen, TriMet
Commissioner Jim Bernard, Clackamas County
Councilor Robert Liberty, Metro
Commissioner, Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County
Rian Windsheimer, Oregon Department of Transportation
Mayor Alice Norris, Oregon City
Councilor Susan Stone, City of Milwaukie
Rick Williams, CAC
Sue Keil, City of Portland
Bruce Warner, Portland Development Commission

Not Present:

Jason Tell, Oregon Department of Transportation

Fred Hansen (TriMet General Manager) Welcome and Introductions

Fred asked for comments on notes from the last steering committee meeting. The committee did not have any comments.

Neil McFarlane referred to the handout, which is a comparison of the 60/40 and supplemental 50/50 finance plans. Neil stated that we are continuing to advance financial commitments with our partners. Neil asked Sue Keil to talk about the meeting with the Portland City Council.

Sue Keil (Steering Committee member): We took our proposed financial plan to the city council last week to confirm their commitment. Based on the 60/40 plan, the council unanimously adopted a \$30 million commitment as a local match from the city. We will lock down with the council where individual dollars will come from in the next few months. We think \$30 million is an amount we can produce from Portland.

Neil McFarlane stated that we've had a number of conversations with Clackamas county staff and will be working with them over the summer. Milwaukie was first to report in with its contribution plan. We have anticipated a gap between committed finances and the project goal. We will continue to look for sources of revenue. We are talking to ODOT to find out if there are other projects that should be part of the LPA construction that could help the funding of this project as well. We are watching the OUS proposal in the legislature as well. Regarding the 60/40 vs. 50/50 financial plans, we are continuing our conversation with the FTA.

Fred Hansen stated that there would be a \$100 million dollar difference at 50/50 financing on the project so this gap needs to be filled if we don't get 60/40 financing. A new designation called Mega Projects, projects over a billion dollars, means the government is currently entertaining projects at a 50/50 match. We had to put together a proposal for 50/50 even though we always intended to go for 60/40 financing.

Neil McFarlane stated the issue between getting 50/50 and 60/40 financing has to do with policy not money.

Leah Robbins (TriMet) East Segment presented an Update on the East Segment (See handout.)

Powell (17th Avenue) Overcrossing

The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) established a single track alignment retrofitted to include one lane of traffic and a bike/ped lane as well. TriMet operations were concerned that this might be a choke point. The City of Portland was concerned about the lack of space for bike/ped traffic. ODOT was concerned with the width of the traffic lane for freight, etc. All the jurisdictions agreed to separate auto and pedestrian traffic from the light rail traffic. The solution would be to put light rail on east side. A new structure would be built for north auto traffic and a wider bike/ped path. This plan will require additional right of way. We are working to design most efficient structure for the overcrossing. We've looked at options within our budget range, which is \$2-5 million over the original budget.

UPRR

Union Pacific toured the project alignment last week. The task for preliminary engineering (PE) is to reach an agreement on technical issues.

Tacoma North: We are adjacent to UP right of way. Our preliminary engineering task is to reach an agreement on grade crossing details and the Brooklyn Yard intermodal Facility. We worked with the City of Portland and Milwaukie to create grade crossing details that would be ready for a quiet zone.

Tacoma South: We are purchasing part of UP property that is now part of their Tillamook branch line. One of the issues we are dealing with is the amount of space between the center of our track alignment and the center of UP's track alignment. UP is concerned about derailment and has requested a 50 foot offset between freight and light rail track centers. We provide this separation on some portions of the alignment but not on other parts of the alignment. This is not an issue on private property but on this part of the Tillamook branch the UP owns the area adjacent and wants to 50 foot minimum. We are working on alternative solutions with UP on this issue. We believe that there are safe alternative in the 25 foot range.

Neil McFarlane

One option UP is asking us to look at is installing a safety barrier between the railroad and light rail tracks. Protective rails along the rail track are another option. We think there is some combination of tools we can put together and come to an agreement with UP to make this section of the alignment successful. FTA will require the basic points with the UP to be agreed upon by the time we reach final design. We need them to be part of the 30% design package expected in March 2010.

Leah Robbins discussed the alignment going through Milwaukie and crossing the UP tracks in the vicinity of SE Roswell. There are options to go over or under at the crossing, but the crossing cannot be at grade for a number of reasons. It is not yet known whether going under the tracks is viable.

Comments:

Susan Stone (Steering Committee member) expressed concern about the track being elevated at this point. The neighborhood thinks it will be too visible and noisy.

Park Avenue Park and Ride Configuration

Team is working to reflect community input, i.e. how we operate the terminus, where to put the station and garage size and design. We continue our conversation with the Elks about the configuration of the park and ride. We are also exploring

whether the station location should be on the north or south side of Park Avenue. Design team is considering traffic, structural, and cost impacts of concepts.

Rob Barnard (TriMet) presented the West Segment Update (See handout.)

At our Willamette River Bridge Committee (WRBAC) Meeting in February of 2009 we were given two assignments: to validate the viability of the hybrid structure and to take all we've learned about cable stayed design and make the best cable stayed bridge design. Rob goes over the features of the two bridge designs including, tower height and design and how this affects the catenary system and pier size and placement.

Bridge type

Cost estimate was done on the cable stayed refined bridge just like with the other bridge types.

Cost estimates are:

- Hybrid refined: (3% over budget) at \$139 million
- Cable Stayed Refined (18% under budget) at \$110 million

WRBAC gave majority support for the cable stayed refined design and minority support for the hybrid refined.

Comments:

Rick Williams (Steering Committee member and Portland Milwaukie Citizens Advisory Committee Chair) said that there was a unanimous concurrence for the cable stayed refined bridge design. There was one abstention.

Sue Keil (Steering Committee member) stated that the WRBAC's feeling was that there wasn't enough difference between the cable stayed refined and hybrid refined to account for the gap in cost. Also, some committee members simply preferred the cable stayed design.

Pat LaCrosse (WRBAC member) commented that the center of the bridge is supported differently in the two designs. The structural strength of the hybrid is at its limit in this design the cable stayed is not. When you blend two structural systems as the hybrid design does, you no longer get the structural strength that each system has when it exists on its own.

Robert Liberty (Steering Committee member) commented that blending two structural systems as the hybrid design does diminishes the structural strength that each system has when it exists on its own.

Rob Barnard stated that the next step is to refine the details of the bridge design, i.e. the shape and size of the towers, how the bridge touches the greenway, and bridge railings. Because the bridge will be used by slower paced pedestrians, bikers and rail users, these kinds of details are important.

Vertical Clearance

We continue to do extensive analysis on the vertical clearance of the bridge. We've been using river data from the last 30 years to determine the vertical clearance need for river traffic. Landside impacts for the height of the bridge were also explored. It appears from our research so far that 77.36 feet is the optimal height. This height provides optimal advantages on land and in water. Higher bridge height allows more boat access, but also creates negative landside impacts including higher retaining walls, increase in right of way purchases, streetcar integration is more difficult, and slopes on the bridge and platforms are more difficult for mobility devices. The next steps include researching future river navigation needs. We plan to come to the Willamette River Bridge Advisory Committee (WRBAC) with a recommendation for bridge height in August 2009. A recommendation will be made to the PMLR Steering Committee this fall.

Bike/Pedstrian Supplemental Path Width

Metro and City of Portland did a demand analysis to see what the best width would be for the bike/ped path considering all the possible uses of the bridge. The engineers said they could reach 14 feet on each side without changing structure type. An estimate of \$3.25 million to build the proposed bridge path was accepted by the PMLR Steering Committee, WRBAC, and PMLR Citizen's Advisory Committee. The path width is stretched as much as possible, but still remains within budget. The next step will be to decide what the programming of the bridge path will be. For example how the line between pedestrian and bike traffic will be delineated.

Comments:

Jim Bernard (Steering Committee member) wants to be sure that the committee stays focused on the goal of light rail reaching Park Avenue.

Robert Liberty (Steering Committee member) is very satisfied with the result of the work on the bridge thus far and would like the aesthetics of the entire alignment to remain a priority.

Susan Stone (Steering Committee member) agreed with Mr. Liberty's statement that aesthetics should remain a priority. I am particularly interested in the aesthetic aspects of the project in Milwaukie.

I am not completely satisfied with the result of the work on the bridge. I continue to think the bridge should be *truly* multimodal. It should be designed to allow all modes of transportation (i.e.-cars) to use it.

Fred Hansen reminds the Steering Committee that a number of members of WRBAC preferred the aesthetics of cable stayed design from the very beginning.

Rick Williams (Steering Committee member) also reminded the Steering Committee that the PMLR CAC recommended the cable stayed bridge.

Fred Hansen asks the committee if they have any concerns about proceeding with the refinements discussed by Leah and Rob on the east and west segments. Committee agrees to proceed with all the directions talked about in the east/west segments.

Neil McFarlane (TriMet Executive Director, Capital Projects) presented Looking Ahead

The project will be coming back to the Steering Committee regarding a number of issues including the Park & Ride configuration at Park Avenue, the Powell overpass, and bridge height.

Train horn noise mitigation in SE Portland for light rail and freight train noise is being pursued by our team. This includes looking at the design of the alignment as well as creating quiet zones. We have to adhere to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations because we are at the same grade crossing with the heavy freight rail. We will try to get FRA to change some of their regulations with regard to horn noise so that, in some cases, we may not need to use horns at all. There are tools like traffic signals and barriers that can be used to keep drivers safe without sounding a horn. It is more challenging in SE Portland to do this than in Milwaukie because of how the streets are skewed.

Streetcar integration on the bridge is also being worked on. An Automatic Traffic Stop (ATS) system needs to be installed to have streetcar and Max traffic integrate smoothly on the bridge. There is a list of other issues to be considered and problems to be solved regarding this integration including funding. We will keep the committee posted on our progress.

Comments:

Robert Liberty expressed his desire to see an east side connection to the new bridge.

Claudia Steinberg (TriMet) presented on Public Involvement

Claudia gives an update on all the committee and stakeholder meetings that her team is involved in (see handout). Claudia stated that each week her team meets with project partners to keep everyone informed about the project.

Comments:

Rick Williams stated that Claudia's team has been very proactive and responsive to comments and suggestions from stakeholders and Citizen Advisory Committee members. Rick commends Claudia and her team for all their efforts.

Public Comment:

Jim Lears (Citizen) complimented the WRBAC and project directors for their great work on the bridge thus far. Mr. Lears commented that the bridgescape of the lower Willamette is very important and doesn't want the team to lose sight of the aesthetic challenge of building a modern bridge that is appropriate for the site.

Dan Yates (Portland Spirit) states that vertical clearance is still an issue for the Portland Spirit. The height of 77.36 being discussed is unacceptable to the Portland Spirit. Portland Spirit will be writing a letter to TriMet about this issue. We need a bridge height that the marine community can live with. We have questions about TriMet's methodology in collecting data regarding environmental issues. We will ask for 85feet height for bridge

Rick Williams mentioned a letter from the Ardenwald neighborhood. They have issues with the Tacoma Park & Ride, traffic and safety issues at Tacoma and 32nd

and the elevated trackway. These topics will become agenda items for the PMLR CAC.

Kathryn Notson requested information on accessibility for the Portland Fire Department station under the Hawthorne Bridge.

Teresa Boyle stated that this will be solved during the Preliminary engineering (PE) process.

Fred Hansen closes the meeting.