



## **PMLR Steering Committee Meeting Notes March 5, 2009**

### **Present**

Fred Hansen, TriMet  
Jim Barnard, Clackamas County  
RJ Cervantes, Multnomah County (sitting in)  
Catherine Ciarlo, City of Portland (sitting in)  
Ralph Drewfs, Oregon Department of Transportation (sitting in)  
Councilor Robert Liberty, Metro  
Mayor Alice Norris, Oregon City  
Councilor Susan Stone, City of Milwaukie  
Bruce Warner, Portland Development Commission

### **Not Present:**

Rick Williams, CAC  
Sue Keil, City of Portland  
Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County  
Jason Tell, Oregon Department of Transportation

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Fred noted the key topics to be addressed during this meeting, including finalizing the financing for the project. The project will need commitments by the end of the calendar year.

**Neil McFarlane** (TriMet) provided an update on the project and reviewed the project financing plan. The FTA has asked the project for two funding scenarios – one that includes a 50/50 match and a second that is a 60/40 match. Neil noted that the project is working closely with the FTA to secure a commitment for a 60/40 match and that this funding scenario is critical to the success of the project.

Neil explained in detail the differences between the two funding options. In the 50/50 match, less interim financing is required, which is captured in the Local Contributions section of the chart.

**David Knowles (WRBAC Facilitator)** attended the meeting in place of WRBAC Chair Vera Katz, who was unable to be there. David reviewed the eight-month process the WRBAC committee.

From July 2008 to February 2009 the WRBAC met seven times. In our first meetings, we developed criteria to apply in the selection process. The criteria addressed key issues such as urban context, aesthetics, greenway impacts, navigational clearances, cost and risk. During the course of our meetings, the group narrowed the list of bridge types to two: wave frame and cable-stayed.

Many members of the Committee initially preferred the wave frame because of its aesthetic qualities for this particular location. At the same time, the Committee felt that the cable-stayed would also be a remarkable bridge type. A challenge for the wave frame turned out to be its costs. The consultant team and TriMet staff estimated that the wave frame would cost 30 to 40 percent more than the cable-stayed type. The Committee asked tough questions about the underlying assumptions and requested the consultants and staff to explore every opportunity to bring the wave frame costs in line with the project budget. The WRBAC is satisfied that the TriMet team thoroughly researched the cost issues.

TriMet also explored some design concepts for the cable-stayed type. TriMet presented a cable-stayed-suspension hybrid that was particularly attractive. TriMet's work convinced the Committee that a cable-stayed design would not only be acceptable for this location and budget, but with some additional effort could also be designed to be special.

The Committee's recommendation to the Steering Committee is that a cable-stayed bridge type be advanced into the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Preliminary Engineering with the following considerations:

- There must be additional design refinement substantially influenced or led by an architect. The purpose of this is to ensure that the project continues to exercise maximum creativity in the refinement of design
- WRBAC should continue to meet on an occasional basis to review design work as the design advances to and through Preliminary Engineering.

The WRBAC will meet one more time in the spring to consider the costs and design issues between the cable-stayed-hybrid suspension bridge and the cable-stayed.

**David Unsworth** (TriMet) reviewed key issues that will be addressed during Preliminary Engineering and the process for arriving at decisions, including when the Steering Committee will need to weigh in on these issues. The issues were divided into three groups: Early PE, Middle of PE and Late in PE. Dave briefly touched PE topics outlined in the packet and noted that technical staff would be working closely with various stakeholder groups to be able to provide a recommendation to this body during the next meeting.

Example of issues reviewed in the meeting include:

- Willamette River Bridge vertical clearance
- Bike/pedestrian path width on bridge
- SE 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue station locations
- SE Park Avenue Park & Ride configuration

**Bridget Wieghart** (Metro) provided a brief update on the timeline for completing the Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Environmental Assessment.

**Claudia Steinberg** (TriMet) provided a brief overview of the public involvement team, which consists of members from the City of Milwaukie, Clackamas County, Metro, the City of Portland and TriMet. Each month, the group participates in dozens of meetings throughout the alignment. Additionally, a 24-member Citizens Advisory Committee continues to work closely with the project to counsel project staff on a variety of key issues. Finally, the public involvement team is beginning stakeholder meetings throughout the alignment. Project staff will lead detailed workshops with stakeholders. These work sessions are scheduled throughout the spring to tackle many of the key issues Dave noted earlier.

**Fred Hansen** closed the meeting by asking if there were any other issues to discuss. None were requested. The next meeting would be held late spring as the technical staff and WRBAC have more time to consider the bridge type and other key issues.