

Eastside Project Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 22, 2006, 825 NE Multnomah, Second Floor Conference Room, 2:00pm

Members in Attendance: Joe Angel, Hank Ashforth, Brian Bennett, Dick Cooley, Kathie Eastman, Wayne Kingsley, Tom Markgraf, Rod McDowell, Bill Medak, Rick Parker, Susan Pearce, Mike Powell, Chris Smith

Others: Lee Perlman, Sarah Evans, James Koski (Congressman Blumenauer's office)

Staff Attendance: April Bertelsen, Kay Dannen, Vicky Diede, Joyce Felton, Peter Finley Fry, Rick Gustafson, Denyse McGriff, Tom Miller, Ross Roberts, Dave Unsworth, Karen Withrow, Gina Whitehill-Bazuik

1. Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by our co-chair, Rick Parker. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Tom Markgraf, seconded by Chris Smith and approved by majority. Rick introduced guests James Koski, Deputy Chief of Staff from Congressman Blumenauer's office in Washington, DC and Kathie Eastman from Congressman Blumenauer's Portland office. Kathie has been added to the Eastside Project Advisory Committee. Introductions were made by all present in the meeting.

2. Travel Demand Estimates from Metro.

Ross Roberts from Metro indicated that travel demand estimates will be presented at the March 15 Eastside Project Advisory Committee meeting. Instead, Ross articulated and shared information regarding the Small Starts Issues for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

SAFETEA-LU provisions for small starts include:

- \$200 million/year (FY07 to FT 09)
- Expands eligibility for funding (arterial bus rapid transit) (BRT)
- Provides for simplified evaluation and rating process
- Removes \$25 million and under exemption after final rule becomes effective

Ross spent time reviewing Small Starts issues and possible direction, eligibility, eligibility-project definition, eligibility-other key issues.

SAFETEA-LU provisions, project evaluation & ratings – option 1: adapt current framework; option 2 – development new framework. Project Evaluation and Ratings, land-use vs. economic development, option 2 possible measures:

- Nature of the problem/opportunity
- Mobility
- Economic development
- Cost-effectiveness
- Risk and uncertainty
- Financial capability

Project evaluation and ratings – scaling the analysis to project size

- Option 1: traditional methods regardless of size
- Option 2: simplified methods where possible
 - data and simple analysis (not models)
 - calculate time savings & cost-effectiveness

- Option 3: develop “warrants” for very small projects
 - hard to measure benefits
 - improvements demonstrably effective
 - time savings and cost-effectiveness would be given an automatic “pass” IF:
 - minimum existing ridership
 - cost under some maximum amount for each element

Planning and Project Development:

- Alternatives analysis
- Interface with NEPA
- Approving entry into project development
- Project management and oversight
- Project construction grant agreement

Ross indicated there are questions about interim rules criteria as FTA rules for Small Starts is not expected until early 2007. Rick indicated the current administration is not pro-transit; however, Seattle streetcar received a \$13 million dollar grant this year. Rick indicated that the eastside has many economic development area opportunities along the proposed streetcar alignment without needing to change any of the current land use zoning.

3. Progress on Local Improvement District Support.

Rick provided an update on the Local Improvement District (LID) support. 25 property owners were targeted which represents 60% of all property owners within the probable LID formation district. Hank and Rick Parker indicated that the support has been positive. Rick Gustafson indicated that the eastside LID is being formed under the same guidelines as the Westside streetcar LIDs. Cost is \$3.00 per \$1,000 of assessed property value for property within 2-3 blocks of the alignment and \$6.00 per \$1,000 of assessed property value for property within 1 block of the alignment. The proposed LID includes \$6 million for Lloyd District, \$2 million for Oregon to Morrison and \$1 million for the OMSI MOS for a total of \$9 million. The assessments are based on current values and the Burnside Bridgehead project has not yet been included.

It is important to have good support from property owners for the streetcar plan. Assessments are reevaluated at the conclusion of construction and property owners are given the option to make a one time payment or finance over 20 years with the City. Where land is zoned industrial sanctuary, the LID rates are 2/3 of the rates listed above. Previous LID’s exempted owner-occupied housing – Rick indicated they are expensive to collect and unproductive. The eastside LID is not capped as yet; however, all past streetcar LID’s have been capped. Rules and regulations for the eastside LID need to be resolved and financial commitments in place by at least 51% of current eastside property owners by the end of 2006 and it is planned these LID rules will be formalized by the fall of 2006. One rule that LID participants may want to have included is that LID property owner participants are not responsible for streetcar operations. It was again emphasized that initial support is very important. The financial plan is to be completed by the

end of Dec. 2006 which includes LID money, \$5 million from MTIP/COP/HUD, \$25 million from PDC Urban Renewal districts and \$65-75 from the federal government.

4. Public Process Schedule.

The alternative analysis decision making process in March/April/May 2006 includes consensus on mode, alignment, phasing strategy and an outline of the funding strategy, with a target of December 2006 to have the funding strategy in place. Operating funding commitments need to be identified for 20 years. The beginning of the public hearing process begins with an Eastside Project Advisory Committee sponsored open house which will be held in March or April 2006, followed by the eastside steering committee recommendations going to Portland City Council, TriMet Board, PSI Board, Multnomah County, PDC, Planning Commission and JPACT for resolutions. In May 2006, Metro Council will be expected to make the locally preferred alternative (LPA) decision. Rick indicated it is important to agree on all key documentation prepared before submittal to FTA including firm data available for the public.

5. Other Business.

Kingsley had alignment questions near the OMSI MOS. He also indicated that the Bureau of Planning and PDC raised the issue at the last North Macadam Urban Renewal Advisory Committee meeting that they were looking at moving the light rail river crossing further to the south, possibly the Ross Island Bridge. Ross indicated that Metro has not seen any evidence of any changes and the Caruthers Bridge crossing for light rail is still on the regional transportation plans. It is intended that streetcar and light rail will share the Caruthers Bridge for the river crossing, with the bridge landing on the westside near to the RiverPlace district.

6. Public Comment Opportunity.

There were no comments presented by the public-at-large.

Next Meeting: March 15, 2006 at 2 pm, 825 NE Multnomah, Second Floor Conference Room.