

Portland Streetcar Loop Project Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 5, 2007, 2:00-3:30 p.m., Lloyd Tower, 825 NE Multnomah, 2nd floor conference room

Members in Attendance: Joe Angel, Hank Ashforth, Chair; Mike Bolliger, Dick Cooley, Rick Gustafson, Deek Heykamp, Wayne Kingsley, Susan Lindsay, Tom Markgraf, Sarah Masterson, Rod McDowell, Ann Niles, Mark Ontiveros, Susan Pearce, Brad Perkins, Owen Ronchelli, Chris Smith

Others: Kristin Belz, Nancy Chase, Irvington NA; Eryn Deeming Kehe, JLA; David Obern, Construction Services Manager, PDC; Lee Perlman, Kia Selley, PDC; Bill Whipple, Cornelius

Staff Attendance: Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson, Lloyd Lindley, Denyse McGriff, Patrick Sweeney, Dave Unsworth

1. Meeting to Order:

Meeting was called to Order by Rick Parker. The October 17 minutes were approved by majority.

2. FTA rating:

FTA has rated the Portland Streetcar Loop Project on cost effectiveness as medium-low which would mean no recommendation for funding. We expect to be in the President's Budget which is out in February 2008. Congressmen DeFazio and Blumenauer as well as Senator Smith have offered their assistance with this process. Our cost-effectiveness rating needs to be revised (improved to medium) in order to get federal funding. Ann Niles asked about the biggest stumbling block to this process. Gustafson responded that it is showing comparative advantage to having Streetcar versus busses. Perkins asked about possible involvement of oil industry. Gustafson said it's not the oil industry; it's the people who don't prioritize transit or who believe busses are more cost effective. Perkins also asked about the positive economic development along an alignment and if that is taken into consideration. Cost-effectiveness is 50% of FTA's decision-making process and if that doesn't pass, the remaining criteria is not considered.

- a. The next scheduled re-authorization of the Federal Transportation bill is 2009. The bill is re-authorized every 6 years. The re-authorization is looking at urban transportation (mainly streetcars).
- b. We're the first Streetcar applicant for Small Starts (2005 legislation)

The preparation of the FTA construction grant agreement will be done in February 2008. The Loop Project is expecting a construction grant agreement in June 2008.

3. City 3rd Party Review of Cost Estimates:

Kia Selley and Dave Obern from PDC have retained the services of Faithful + Gould for a 3rd party review of the cost estimate being prepared for the Portland Streetcar Loop. They will be discussing the project with the constituents as well as releasing media announcements including a press release about the whole project. They are working with PDOT as well as PSI and SOJ. This process is typical for major funders to undertake before actually taking on the project.

Obern led the tram 3rd party review. In September a scope was developed and Faithful + Gould was selected in November to lead this effort.

The review will take part in two phases: 1) The current status up to November and; 2) the status once all risks and ratings are reviewed. Each phase will generate its own report with the Phase 1 report due February 1, 2008 and the Phase 2 report due in early April 2008.

Risk assessment is not: an audit (fiscal or performance); an investigation.

Risk assessment is: proactive, quantitative and a qualitative process to analyze all risks; forecasting of likelihood of impacts; looking for both negatives and opportunities (positives).

This is a middle of the road assessment – some structural interviews, but not a full blown (Monte Carlo) investigation. The estimated cost is \$68,000.

Stakeholder and Technical team: Some people have been given questionnaires to fill out, please get those completed as soon as possible.

Upcoming Meetings:

Dec 13 - 1 hour – Stakeholder hearing

Dec 14 - 4 hour – Detailed PDC session with Faithful + Gould.

Discussion:

Heykamp asked if this is a regular process for PSI. Gustafson responded that this is a first, but it's a regular process for other projects. Also it's good for budget confidence and knowledge since there is a \$75,000 cap on the federal government's monetary support.

Chris Smith asked about Federal input into risk assessment. Dave Unsworth from TriMet responded that this may help prevent the need for a federal review.

4. Steering Committee meeting:

- a. MLK/Grand corridor option is accepted by the Steering Committee.
- b. Their big concern is travel time. They expressed some interest but no real opinion about the Lovejoy/Northrup loop option. The Steering committee supports the local neighborhoods and business districts in their opinions on these matters.

5. Parking Management Concepts:

- a. The resolution on Parking Management Concepts was provided to all Project Advisory committee members. It was moved by Tom Markgraf, and seconded by Rick Parker to adopt the resolution. This motion was approved by majority.
- b. Two big issues:
 - i. Maintaining parking for businesses
 - ii. Expanding the plan to cover the entire district.

Susan Lindsay: supports the resolution; however, neighborhoods are worried about the effect on their parking and would like that to be included in the report.

Joe Angel made a motion to amend the approved resolution to make it explicit that the resolution includes the local neighborhoods and their needs as well as to include local involvement. Susan Pearce seconded the motion. The amended resolution passed with unanimous approval.

6. Convention Center Design:

Current design: exclusive streetcar lane from Lloyd Blvd to Davis St along MLK (bridges are wide enough). Largest delay in operations was Lloyd to Davis on MLK depicted by a traffic simulation report. An exclusive lane could result in a 5-7 minute travel time savings in afternoon peak between 4:30pm – 7:30pm. Gustafson indicated 61 – 68 minutes for roundtrip operations between OMSI and Lovejoy.

One constraint is a bus loading zone which is very important to the convention center. There is plenty of room to move the curb back (leaving more than enough sidewalk) and have an exclusive Streetcar lane as well as the bus loading zone. There is a canopy issue, but the architect has already stated that a panel can be removed to allow the passage of the streetcar. The only other issue is the potential removal of three mature trees (30-40 ft tall) in the area. More trees would be planted by the project to compensate.

Gustafson also discussed the possibility of making the track median grass since it's an exclusive lane. The technique has been improved to be able to protect the track from erosion. This type of track is still experimental but is a potential. It is being used in Minneapolis. Also something similar is being used in Eugene.

Gustafson has met with the Convention Center people and they are supportive. Traffic creates the most unreliability in transportation operations.

Joe Angel motioned that we highly encourage this option as long as it stays within the budget. He feels that minimizing operating headway is the key to a successful system. Susan Pearce seconded the motion with a strong emphasis on the trees and the tree canopy. Susan Lindsay would like to amend the motion to request an investigation into the possibility of moving these trees and its cost. Susan Pearce seconded the motion. This amended motion was passed unanimously by the committee.

7. NW Lovejoy Design Options:

The baseline option that is being priced: Turns right at 10th, goes to Northrup, comes back to Lovejoy at 11th (following the planned future couplet). Discussion of staying on Lovejoy and not turning continues. The Steering committee requested study on transit rider impacts. Lovejoy option has not been eliminated.

PSI has met extensively with business and neighborhood groups in the Pearl District and they are supportive of the Northrup option. We are still in communication with other groups about this. Ridership is affected by the Northrup option because of future development to the north in the Pearl District.

Concerns were brought up about the different plans. With the current plan of the Northrup option, eastside riders are left with a transfer and a 3 block walk to the nearest southbound station. A 2nd option with continuing straight on Lovejoy, turning left at 11th and turning around at Hoyt leaves a common station for the 2 loops (no walking). Preference on many fronts is the Northrup option. The Northrup option is in the baseline and costs \$3.9 million more than the Lovejoy option.

8. Other business:

Perkins asked for an update on the OMSI loop and the river crossing at the next meeting. Our option to get into OMSI (the MLK viaduct) connects with every option TriMet is evaluating for the transit bridge crossing. Unsworth updated us on the process for the crossing. The intention is for the transit bridge to carry bicycles, pedestrians, busses, streetcar and light rail. Environmental Impact Statement report should be out in early April 2008.

Streetcar has evaluated alignments to OMSI: 3rd Street or the new viaduct. The preference is the new viaduct at Stevens. Most of the challenges would be avoided with this option and it would still connect easily with wherever the proposed Milwaukie Light Rail transit bridge is located.

In relation with the city we've created a new project called "Close the Loop" which will work on the cost for linking the loop. To fully run the loop we need an added 5 vehicles (on top of the 7 we've already budgeted for). It could potentially cost around \$30-35 million dollars for this new project which will focus on the transit bridge and modified new streetcar alignment in the South Waterfront district especially as it relates to OHSU's development of the Schnitzer Campus.

Dave Unsworth, on behalf of TriMet, thanked the committee for their involvement and their input into this process.

Hank Ashforth, chair thanked the committee for their work and looks forward to continuing the work next year.

There will be no meeting December 19, 2007.

Next Streetcar Loop PAC meeting: 2:00 – 3:30pm, Wednesday, January 16, 2008, Lloyd Center Tower, 825 NE Multnomah, 2nd floor conference room.