

## IMPACT STATEMENT

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**Legislation title:** Adopt the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project and Conditions for Approval. (Resolution)

**Contact name:** Jean Senechal Biggs, Portland Bureau of Transportation

**Contact phone:** 503.823.7211

**Presenter name:** Jean Senechal Biggs and project partners from City bureaus, Metro, and TriMet

**Purpose of proposed legislation and background information**

The purpose of this item is to adopt the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project as recommended by the project's Steering Committee and accept Conditions of Approval identified by TriMet, Metro, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), the Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) and the Portland Development Commission (PDC) to address community concerns and enhance the project.

On November 7, 2016, the Powell-Division Steering Committee recommended the 2016 Powell Division Transit and Development Project LPA. The recommended Locally Preferred Alternative for high capacity transit in the Powell-Division corridor is bus rapid transit with stations at the locations indicated on the attached map (Exhibit B), operating between downtown Portland and the Gresham Transit Center. The route will operate on the transit mall (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> avenues) in downtown Portland, cross the Willamette River, and run on Division Street from SE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Portland to the Gresham Transit Center.

Implementation of the transit project reinforces the proposed *2035 Comprehensive Plan Update* and supports strategies and policies identified in the *Portland Plan*, *East Portland Action Plan*, *East Portland in Motion*, and the *Powell-Division Transit and Development Project Portland Local Action Plan*.

**Project Partners**

Metro and TriMet are the local lead agencies and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the federal lead agency for project. The cities of Portland and Gresham, as well as Multnomah County and the Oregon Department of Transportation are the local partners in the project.

The Powell-Division Steering Committee is comprised of elected and appointed officials of the participating jurisdictions, Mount Hood Community College, Portland Community College, the Johnson Creek Watershed Council, business and student representatives, and local community representatives from Gresham Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Division-Midway Alliance, Catholic Charities, Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Coalition, Upstream Public Health, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, East Portland Action Plan, and the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon.

The Steering Committee met for three years with the role of defining the LPA and shaping related actions on development and community stabilization.

### Project Goals and Needs

This project's goals, identified by the Powell-Division Steering Committee, are:

- **Transportation:** People have safe and convenient transportation options – including efficient and frequent high capacity transit service that enhances current local transit service – that get them where they want to go and improves the existing system.
- **Well-being:** Future development and transit improvements create safe, healthy neighborhoods and improve access to social, educational, environmental and economic opportunities.
- **Equity:** Future development and transit improvements reduce existing disparities, benefit current residents and businesses and enhance our diverse neighborhoods. There is a commitment to prevent market-driven involuntary displacement of residents and businesses and to equitably distribute the benefits and burdens of change.
- **Efficiency:** A high capacity transit project is efficiently implemented and operated.

There are many needs that this project seeks to address. Current transit demand on the Line 4-Division exceeds capacity; many buses in the PM peak period are at or over-capacity, riders experience pass-ups, and on-time performance suffers. Congestion in the corridor leads to delays of 16-17 minutes in the evening peak for the Line 4-Division.

Projected population and employment growth will exacerbate these issues. In the Powell-Division corridor, currently (2015) there are an estimated 32,500 households and 35,500 jobs within ½ mile of the proposed stations east of SE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. These residents and job locations are not currently served with any high capacity transit (except for a portion of the MAX SE Division Green Line station area and MAX Blue Line Civic Drive, Gresham City Hall, Gresham Central Transit Center, and Cleveland station areas). Growth in this corridor is expected to increase to 45,500 households and 48,500 jobs by the year 2040.

### About the Project and the Planning Process

The Powell-Division Transit and Development Project is proposed as a faster and more reliable transportation choice for residents and employees traveling in southeast Portland and Gresham. This Project proposes a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project stretching 14.8 miles if using the Tilikum Crossing alignment (or 14.2 miles if using the Hawthorne Bridge alignment), and with 35 stations between SE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue / SE Division Street and the Gresham Transit Center.

Station locations are based on: a) existing ridership at current bus stops, using average daily riders/offs and monthly ramp deployment data, b) locations of key destinations and major transfer points, c) access to stations, such as sidewalk infrastructure and marked/signalized street crossings, d) spatial analysis to maintain reasonable station spacing and e) community input.

The Project serves many important destinations in the corridor and would provide bus rapid transit service to PSU, OHSU, PCC-Southeast, Warner Pacific College, and the South Waterfront; to the City of Portland's Hosford-Abernathy, Richmond, Mt. Tabor, South Tabor, Montavilla, Powellhurst Gilbert, Hazelwood, Mill Park, and Centennial neighborhoods; and to the City of Gresham's Northwest and Central City neighborhoods.

Metro's 2009 *High Capacity Transit System Plan*, a 30-year plan to guide investments in light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit and rapid streetcar in the Portland metropolitan region, identified a route from Portland city center to Gresham in the vicinity of the Powell Boulevard corridor as one of three near-term regional priority corridors.

In 2013, Metro initiated the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project to develop a planning vision for future transit service and related investments in the corridor with project partners from TriMet, the cities of Portland and Gresham, Multnomah County, and the Oregon Department of Transportation. To support this work, the Metro Council awarded the City of Portland a Community Planning and Development (CPDG) Grant to participate in and complete work during the Planning phase. This CPDG project engaged the community to create a concept plan for the Inner Powell – Outer Division corridor that identifies a preferred transit mode and concept alignment, and potential transit station areas with the greatest development and placemaking opportunities.

In September 2014, BRT was selected as the preferred mode due to its ability to improve capacity and reduce travel times, while having lower costs and fewer impacts than streetcar or light rail projects would.

In March 2015, the committee recommended a route running along inner Powell Blvd, with a preferred transition to Outer Division St at 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave. However, in January 2016, technical analysis found that travel times on inner Powell and 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave would actually increase travel times for many trips compared to the existing Line 4-Division. This led to a revision of the preferred route to run entirely on Division between SE 8<sup>th</sup> Ave and the Gresham Transit Center.

In May 2015, the Portland City Council adopted Resolution No. 37123 to support entering the Project Development Phase of the transit project and authorized a letter to Metro stating the City's two-year commitment to provide Transportation System Development Charge (TSDC) funds towards the transit project.

In September 2015, the Portland City Council passed Ordinance No. 187348 to authorize an Intergovernmental Agreement with Metro for the Project Development Phase of the transit project. The project is in the City of Portland's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Staff from the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability (BPS), PBOT, PHB and the PDC have been directly involved in the Project Development phase, partnering with staff from TriMet, Metro, Multnomah County, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the City of Gresham.

Additionally, in September 2015, the Metro Council approved an additional CPDG for the Cities of Portland and Gresham, for the "Building Healthy Connected Communities Along the Powell-Division Corridor" project. This CPDG project seeks to maximize the impact of the Powell-Division bus rapid transit by realizing local community visions, promoting district design, activating business districts, and jumpstarting catalytic developments that can take advantage of the transit investment.

In spring 2016, the project team discovered more information about federal and local funding constraints which limit the overall project cost to less than \$175 million. The result was the

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terminus being changed to Gresham Transit Center, with the BRT no longer continuing to a terminus at Mount Hood Community College.

In July 2016, the Portland City Council adopted the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project Local Action Plan, a companion plan that focuses on land-use concepts and community development actions for the Powell-Division transit corridor in the City of Portland. Testimony from community leaders focused on the need for affordable housing investments and economic development actions by the City to ensure that current residents could enjoy the benefits of new high capacity transit investment.

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*If this Resolution is Approved*

Approval of this Resolution would allow the project to be advanced into Preliminary Engineering and for the project partners to begin: 1) preparation of a documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE); 2) completion of the details of the finance plan and final design; and 3) other actions to advance towards construction of the project.

With the timely completion of a DCE, Record of Decision and a Full Funding Grant Agreement, construction could begin in 2019 and operation could begin as early as 2021, initiating over 14 miles of new bus rapid transit service.

*If Resolution is Not Approved*

If this Resolution is not approved and the City does not adopt the Locally Preferred Alternative, this would either halt the project entirely or substantially reduce the extent of the project and the City's role in this regional transit project.

**Financial and budgetary impacts**

The FTA Small Starts program offers an opportunity to leverage local funds with future federal funding toward a transit project in the corridor. The project is currently in FTA Project Development and any project-eligible expenses are counted as match toward a future federally-funded grant of up to \$100 million under Small Starts. PBOT is contributing an estimated \$2.0 million in Transportation SDCs in Fiscal Years 15/16 and 16/17 towards the effort which has a total estimated cost of \$7.15 million and is funded by the project partners.

Up to \$8.394 million of City of Portland Transportation SDC (TSDC) funds are available for the project and are included in the City's 5-year CIP. TSDCs are eligible for capacity increasing improvements to the transportation system along SE Division Street such as safer pedestrian crossings, new sidewalks and street lighting, and enhanced traffic signals to accommodate transit

service. The TSDC funds require a 25% match over the life of the project. [note: Procurement of rolling stock (e.g. buses) is not an eligible expense and other project funding will be required.]

#### Project Implementation – Future Years

Upon the adoption of the LPA, the project partners would advance the project to final engineering and construction, and make a formal application to the FTA for a Small Starts Construction Grant in Summer 2017.

In order to qualify for the Small Starts program and an FTA grant of up to \$100 million, the overall project cost must be less than \$175 million. TriMet is preparing formal cost estimates based on a refined design and preliminary engineering.

Additional funds from the City of Portland are anticipated in order to meet the project's local match. The Resolution instructs PBOT to work with TriMet, Metro and project partners in the development of a Finance Plan for the project, to work with other city bureaus to develop a financial strategy for the City of Portland's contribution, and to report back to the Council on the City's financial contribution to the project prior to finalizing any commitment by the City.

This Resolution does not amend the budget and does not authorize additional spending or financial obligations.

#### **Community impacts and community involvement**

Extensive public involvement has been provided throughout the duration of the project and was based on four major goals:

- Communicate complete, accurate, understandable and timely information
- Gather input by providing meaningful opportunities to participate
- Provide timely public notice of opportunities to participate
- Facilitate the involvement of low income populations, communities of color and people with limited English proficiency

#### Public Involvement with Diverse Communities Shaped Project Decision-Making

During the planning phase, the project partners worked with communities along the corridor through broad and inclusive engagement. Public engagement activities, led by Metro with support from all of the project partners, included numerous input opportunities in inner Southeast and East Portland. Multiple agency and community partners helped to shape and implement a variety of outreach activities that included:

- Produced multiple fact sheets, email newsletters and regularly updated information on the project web site
- Held more than 270 community briefings
- Conducted eight online surveys reaching more than 10,000 people
- Produced an interactive map comment tool that generated more than 1,500 comments
- Held culturally specific community events in multiple languages that reached members of the Latino, Russian-speaking, Chinese, Vietnamese, African American, African immigrant, Chuuk, Tongan, Bhutanese, and Native American communities
- Held eleven focus groups on proposed station locations

- Conducted multiple other outreach activities including business canvassing, student and youth engagement, bus stop surveys and tabling at community events.

Summary reports on the public involvement activities can be found on the project website:  
<http://www.oregonmetro.gov/public-projects/powell-division-transit-and-development-project>

Important themes emerged during engagement activities that contribute to Portland Plan goals for a prosperous, educated, healthy, equitable Portland:

- 1) People see the transit project and supporting action plan work by the City as a means to advance desired community outcomes including:
  - mixed income neighborhoods
  - intentional affordable housing
  - safer, more welcoming streets and community spaces
  - more jobs in the corridor
  - support communities of color
  - protecting existing small businesses, especially ethnic businesses at the heart of communities
- 2) People want safer, more comfortable transportation that includes:
  - safe sidewalks, crossings and bike facilities
  - continued or improved mobility for all road users
  - faster, more reliable transit
  - better access to transit
- 3) There are places that could be made safer, more welcoming, healthier and better connected, which could present opportunities for business development and community building.

#### Response to Community Concerns

The Project Steering Committee weighed public input and technical information to recommend the LPA for adoption by the Portland City Council, the Gresham City Council, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, the TriMet Board and the Metro Council.

The Project's Steering Committee voted on final elements of the LPA on October 24, 2016 and November 7, 2016 using a consensus-based decision making process where green cards indicate support for the consensus statement, yellow cards indicate support for some elements of the consensus statement but with reservations or strong concerns, and red cards indicate that the Steering Committee member cannot support the consensus statement unless certain conditions are met. Steering Committee members voting red cards are required to provide recommendations or conditions that would need to change in order for them to consider changing their vote to a yellow card or green card.

On the October 24<sup>th</sup> vote there were 11 green cards, two yellow cards and four red cards. Comments and concerns fell primarily into six categories: project benefits, affordable housing commitments, small business support and local hiring, decision-making structure, reallocation of Division Line 4 service hours, and safety and mobility.

Discussions with the members who voted as red cards followed. Commitments to formalize actions to address their concerns were shared by the project partners and documented in the attached "Conditions of Approval" (Exhibit C).

On November 7, 2016, three of the red card votes amended their votes to yellow cards and the final Steering Committee vote on the LPA recommendation was 11 green cards, five yellow cards and one red card. With the shift in votes, the Steering Committee Co-Chairs determined that there was sufficient support to advance the project to adoption.

### Groups Testifying

Several members of the Project's Steering Committee are expected to testify, including Co-Chairs Metro Councilors Bob Stacey and Shirley Craddick, as well as representatives from APANO, the Jade District, the Division-Midway Alliance (DMA), the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), and Southeast Uplift (SEUL). Other members of the community may also testify from neighborhood associations along the route, including Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood Development (HAND), as well as OHSU and Portland State University.

Statements of both support and opposition to the project are expected.

- OHSU and PSU have submitted a letter indicating their support for the project and a desire for the new BRT service to use the Tilikum Crossing.
- OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon has stated that access to transit is their top priority, and although they would have hoped for new transit service with a dedicated right of way, they are supportive of the project.
- DMA has also indicated support for the project and wants to see further commitments from TriMet to implement transit service enhancements on other routes in East Portland.
- APANO/Jade District has stated support for the project with the condition that there are affordable housing and economic development goals that the City of Portland must achieve.
- EPAP has taken a position to not support the project without further commitments from TriMet to transit service enhancements on one of two new routes in East Portland on either 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue or 162<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.
- SEUL has taken a position to not support the project citing concerns about the choice of SE Division Street west of SE 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave with its narrow lanes and congestion during peak hours.
- HAND has expressed their strong reservations about the proposed changes to the Line 4 Division and that the proposed service does not properly address the transportation challenges that SE Division Street presents.

Metro is the lead agency for public involvement activities. Metro's primary contact for public involvement is Noelle Dobson, Senior Public Involvement Specialist (503-797-1745; [Noelle.Dobson@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:Noelle.Dobson@oregonmetro.gov))

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**Budgetary Impact Worksheet**

**Does this action change appropriations?**

- YES: Please complete the information below.
- NO: Skip this section

Fund	Fund Center	Commitment Item	Functional Area	Funded Program	Grant	Sponsored Program	Amount

KK 11-21-16



Staff 12/7

**December 7, 2016 Hearing: Four proposed amendments to item [1367](#):** Adopt the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project and Conditions for Approval (Resolution introduced by Commissioner Novick)

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**MOU: Enter into an MOU to memorialize actions identified by June 15, 2017**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council directs PBOT, PHB and the PDC to work collaboratively with community stakeholders from the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP), the Division Midway Alliance (DMA), the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) and OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon (OPAL) to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to memorialize commitments to actions by the City identified in Exhibit C to address community concerns. Council directs staff to bring the MOU before City Council for a hearing for adoption with a shared target date of completing the MOU no later than June 15, 2017; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council requests that TriMet and Metro also work collaboratively with PBOT, PHB, the PDC, EPAP, DMA, APANO and OPAL to prepare and enter into the same MOU to memorialize commitments to actions by TriMet and Metro identified in Exhibit C to address community concerns with a shared target date of completing the MOU no later than June 15, 2017; and

**Housing Investment Strategy: Add a timeline**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as the preservation and development of affordable housing in and around the corridor is critical, the City of Portland through PHB will make implementation of the housing-related actions contained in Exhibit C a priority and will seek to have the affordable housing units identified in Exhibit C substantially into construction or occupied within five years; and

**Business Technical Assistance: State priority for it in the early stages of the project**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that supporting and strengthening small and minority owned businesses, especially the most vulnerable businesses east of 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave along the corridor, is critical due to market pressures and impacts from the transit project, the City of Portland through PDC will make the business technical support programs and economic development actions identified in Exhibit C a high priority for implementation in the early stages of the project and through project construction; and

**Transit Service Planning: Strengthen commitment**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as increasing transit service and building the transit network serving in East Portland is critical for Portlanders to access work, school, shopping and services, Council requests that TriMet work with the community to determine the best opportunities to reallocate the vehicle hours that will be made available by replacing the 4-Division with the Division transit project (approximately 1,400 weekly vehicle hours) following the commitments outlined in TriMet's November 7, 2016 memo attached as Exhibit E with the goal of 1) increasing service on existing lines and/or inaugurating new lines within the corridor, 2) adding service on new north/south line(s) connecting to the Division BRT service along 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue and/or 162<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, 3) barring any unforeseen changes in the economy or major funding sources, delivering this substantial reinvestment in service to the corridor no later than when the transit project opens for service, currently scheduled for Fall 2021, and 4) should unforeseen changes occur, consult with the community about how to prioritize service needs before any service changes or reductions are made.