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MEMO

DATE: September 20, 2012

TO: Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

FROM: Karl Lisle, Stephanie Beckman (BPS); Todd Juhasz (ODOT); Maurico Leclerc (PBOT)

CC: Susan Anderson, BPS Director; Joe Zehnder, BPS Chief Planner; Steve Iwata, Central City Planning Manager; Andrew Johnson, ODOT Major Projects Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed Draft N/NE Quadrant Plan - Response to PSC Questions (pg.1) and Proposed Amendments (pg.8)

The Planning and Sustainability Commission held a public hearing on the N/NE Quadrant and I-5 Broadway/Weidler Plans on September 11, 2012. Because there was not enough time for discussion and questions at the meeting, PSC members submitted questions for staff via email. Those questions are listed below along with staff responses.

Staff has also reviewed all other testimony and the minority reports submitted by the project Stakeholder Advisory Committee. Several amendments are proposed to address some of those concerns, starting on page 8.

PSC Member Questions

Chris Smith

1. I was concerned to see that the public health advocate dropped off the advisory committee. What were the public health questions posed in the process, have they been answered, and why did the advocate seem to feel that we were ignoring health?

Staff Response: The project team recognized that public health would be an important consideration in the process and established a position on the SAC to represent that perspective. Heidi Guenin of Upstream Public Health accepted the position. Ms. Guenin, or her alternate attended seven out of 19 SAC meetings. The team also answered numerous questions via e-mail and at smaller group meetings organized by Ms. Guenin during the process. The health concerns



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raised were addressed to the best of the team's ability and the limits of measurement tools available and from all indications, Ms. Guenin seemed satisfied with the answers provided.

While the term "public health" was not used frequently during the process, it was not ignored. In fact, a number of the major thrusts of the project contribute to improved public health. These include:

- Improving transportation safety for all modes on and around the freeway and on local streets throughout the quadrant. There was significant emphasis placed on improving bicycle and pedestrian safety in areas where there are frequent conflicts between modes.
- Encouraging the use of active transportation through better connectivity (new freeway crossings, "flexible" street network, off-street trails), improved street character, and a dense land use pattern that promotes walking, biking and taking transit. Aggressive mode split targets are also included. This will contribute to improved health through active living, as well as reduced auto emissions.
- Improving access to open space through a new system of public open spaces and by adding incentives for open space within new development. The plan includes a performance target calling for 80 percent of residents in the Lloyd District to be within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a public park.
- Creating a greener and healthier environment through increased tree canopy, the use of green infrastructure and natural resource enhancement. Adding the proposed lids over the freeway can also contribute to reducing the amount of noise and vehicle emissions reaching people crossing the freeway overpasses.

In addition, health impacts related to air quality, safety, and active transportation modes were specifically analyzed in the process of evaluating the different freeway concepts.

- Air quality - Green House Gas modeling (GHG) is not designed to show project level changes in emissions. However, we made the attempt. Analysis showed that changes would be measured at levels deemed insignificant at the regional level, as the plan does not increase freeway through capacity, just improves safety and operations in the study area. However, with reduced crashes and the ability to remove disabled vehicles more quickly with the addition of full shoulders, less idling, and a related improvement in air quality, is a likely result.
- Safety and active transportation - The criteria used to rank and compare the concept alternatives include both specific safety measures as well as "quality of experience" measures for bike and pedestrian modes. These criteria reflect suggestions made by Ms. Guenin. For additional information on the analysis of safety improvements, see the response to #3 below.



Consideration of public health is a new element to planning that has been elevated in importance by the Portland Plan and other planning efforts. BPS is in the process of learning how to incorporate health and the appropriate scale for each project. Staff will continue to look at health issues in future quadrant plan efforts.

2. Both the Eliot and Irvington neighborhoods appear to have significant concerns. Can anything be done to address these concerns?

Staff Response: We did our best to address concerns from all of the neighborhoods within the planning area: Eliot, Irvington, Sullivan's Gulch and Lloyd District Community Association. The Lloyd District Community Association and Sullivan's Gulch support the I-5 Facility Plan. We worked extensively, especially in relation to surface circulation patterns to optimize configurations that would minimize increases in local traffic that were a concern for neighborhoods. As an example, we modified previous alternatives to include a Hancock overcrossing, abandoned other local circulation options the neighborhood did not like and modified designs to avoid potentially negative impacts along N Williams Avenue.

The response from the Irvington neighborhood reflects a philosophy that the existing freeway should not be improved under any circumstance, even for safety reasons. It was determined that no response or change from the project team other than the adoption of the "No Build" option would suffice.

The project team met individually with Mike Warwick, the representative from the Eliot neighborhood, on numerous occasions and presented concept alternatives, answered questions, and made plan revisions based on his input as well as input received at a meeting of Eliot residents.

The final minority report comments submitted by Mr. Warwick indicate "The Facility Plan enjoys Eliot's general support, however; as previously noted, this support is not without reservations." Essentially, Mr. Warwick, as the Eliot representative, asserted that despite our assurances, the neighborhood did not trust that the City would follow through on the installation of traffic control measures designed to limit motor vehicle intrusion onto neighborhood streets. In addition, Mike expressed reservations about the plan as he was concerned about impacts to local businesses during construction, despite assurances that the team would continue to do outreach, work with the neighborhoods etc. to craft the most effective traffic control plan during construction. The proposed freeway lids will help minimize construction impacts by providing flexibility for staging and circulation. In the end, Mr. Warwick took the same stance as Irvington, namely that no response or change from the project team other than the adoption of the "No Build" option would suffice.

The overall process also involved extensive consideration of neighborhood issues that resulted in recommendations for reduced heights along the edge of the historic Eliot and Irvington



neighborhoods and zoning changes to support Eliot businesses. All of the neighborhood representatives voted a "1" (full support) on the N/NE Quadrant Plan, with the exception of Irvington, which voted a "2" (agrees with the proposal, but would prefer modifications).

The primary concern expressed by the Irvington neighborhood was in regards to proposals to increase potential building heights in the Lloyd District. With the exception of the zone change at the PPS Blanchard site, there are no increases in allowed floor area ratio, which represents overall development potential, proposed. The proposed height increases provide flexibility in building design and massing that is intended to encourage development around the new streetcar line, around the Convention Center and in exchange for public open space on the riverfront. The height proposals were supported by a consensus of SAC members.

Written comments from the Eliot and Irvington neighborhood associations are included in the Stakeholder Advisory Committee Recommendations (8/29/12), Appendix B: Letters and Minority Report, which was included in your packet for the 9/11/12 hearing.

3. Some people have expressed concern that the safety improvements claimed cannot be substantiated. Please explain how the reduction in crashes number was arrived at.

Staff Response: The HSM (Highway Safety Manual) has no section related to quantifiable methodology for measuring freeway safety. However, the project team, agency staff, and consultants conducted an in depth examination into predictive methods for safety improvements. Staff conducted analysis on sites in the Portland region similar to the I-5/Rose Quarter area where auxiliary lanes, braided ramps or a combination was built within the last 15 years. The safety analysis evaluated the history of freeway mainline crashes before and after improvements, while controlling for volumes, events, and outliers. The findings were as follows:

- Aux Lane only: 30-70 % reductions
- Braided Ramps 35-85% reductions.
- For auxiliary lanes, larger reductions were found in longer auxiliary lanes.

By identifying the safety improvement (crash reduction) from recently completed projects in the region within similar urban settings, we can infer that in the I-5 Rose Quarter, we can expect a similar magnitude of crash reductions. We chose conservative assumptions and represented crash reductions across a broad band, a 30-50% reduction, as the studied auxiliary lanes and the proposed Rose Quarter auxiliary lane configurations all differ slightly.

The freeway improvement project also includes a number of elements that will improve safety on local streets. They include new traffic signals and marked crossings, enhanced sidewalks and bicycle lanes, as well as new connections over the freeway, one of them an exclusive pedestrian/bicycle bridge. The safety benefits of these have not been quantified as part of this process but they are generally expected to increase safety by providing greater separation from



traffic, a better definition of who has the right-of-way and a better overall travel experience. The SAC's pedestrian and bicycle advocates for this project support the two plans.

4. What TDM measures were explored as alternatives to adding lanes?

Staff Response: The intent of the freeway component of the project is to reduce the number of crashes on the mainline, not increase system capacity. The addition of an auxiliary lane in each direction extends for less than a mile in each direction then returns to two lanes north and south of the study area. With that said, the incorporation of TDM measures into proposed improvements was studied as part of this process and are outlined on page five of the Facility Plan and the assumptions behind TDM modeling are outlined in a draft memo from October 6, 2011, titled, "Transportation System Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Alternative" (see attachment).

Essentially, the team explored aggressive motor vehicle mode split reduction assumptions at two different sensitivity levels and measured the resulting performance improvements. The test were designed to answer the question, "If measures were implemented that could reduce the motor vehicle mode share to and from the N/NE Quadrant, how would that impact operations on I-5 and the Broadway/Weidler interchange?"

A fundamental finding for this TDM test was that a significant reduction in motor vehicle trip making to and from the N/NE Quadrant would not see a corresponding reduction in traffic volumes on local streets and the freeway system during the PM peak period under either sensitivity test scenario. There is a high proportion of through trips on both the city street system and on I-5 through the area that would shift travel patterns to take advantage of the road capacity in the study area made available by TDM measures.

5. Much of the land use benefit from the facilities plan derives from the freeway lids. What assurance do we have that those won't be value-engineered out of the project at a later date?

Staff Response: Funding is a key concern. The project can only be built with the City of Portland and ODOT diligently working to procure funding for the lids and mainline improvements. Phasing of the project will be determined based on the types of funding secured, and any limitations attached to the funding.

The rebuild of the Broadway/Weidler and the addition of the Vancouver/Hancock structures, would typically require that a temporary bridge be built to allow for construction staging and continued vehicular movement through the construction zones. In both cases it was determined that it would be relatively cost effective to build lids that supported stated land use and transportation planning goals and would allow ODOT to stage construction.



Karen Gray

6. The N NE Plan expects 5000 new homes and 10000 new jobs. This is within Portland Public Schools. Did they also figure in building sites for new schools?

Staff Response: Although the plan doesn't specifically identify any sites for new schools within the N/NE Quadrant Study area, there was discussion and concern about meeting the future needs of school-age children in the area. It is possible, though not certain, that at some point in the future, a new school will be needed to serve growth in the Lloyd District.

These discussions included representatives from Portland Public Schools (PPS) and are reflected in the Proposed Draft N/NE Quadrant Plan in Policy 3 "Complete Neighborhoods" on page 36 and in Action HN7 on page 38 which reads, "Monitor residential population growth and the related school needs of the district. Encourage space for early education programs in new development."

This approach, supported by PPS, recognizes several factors including:

- There is such limited housing in the district today, that even with 5,000 additional units, the school needs of the population might be met by existing nearby PPS facilities in existing or perhaps new configurations.
- PPS has several schools and other properties in or very near the study area, some of which are significantly underutilized. Those properties include the Blanchard Headquarters facility, Harriet Tubman School (closed), Irvington School, Buckman School and Benson High School.

This issue will be a good one to take another look at as we near the completion of the Central City Quadrant Plans. It is likely that future growth planned across the Central City, and enrollment projections/capacity at current PPS facilities when taken together will suggest that additional school sites are needed.

7. I saw the Plan for what will happen for everyone but the Rose Quarter. South Albina is staying industrial and Lloyd will be grown in many ways for housing and businesses and buildings. What about the Rose Quarter?

Staff Response: The Rose Quarter is included in the Proposed Draft N/NE Quadrant Plan as part of Lloyd District. It is included in the discussion of the Proposed Concept on page 19 and included in the Lloyd District Concept Diagram on page 30.

Basically, the approach to the Rose Quarter respects the outcomes of the effort led by the Mayor's Office and the Portland Development Commission to determine the future of the Veterans Memorial Coliseum and surrounding area. That effort involved a separate 30-person public advisory committee and produced a draft "Rose Quarter District Plan". The major recommendations for the area included preserving and renovating the Veterans Memorial Coliseum

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and focusing on mixed-use redevelopment opportunities not in the core of the district (where the two arenas are), but in immediately adjacent areas including along both sides of N. Broadway, at the Thunderbird site west of Interstate Avenue and around the Rose Quarter Transit Center to the south. The Rose Quarter District Plan is available here:

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/401679>.

Key policies and actions in the Proposed Draft N/NE Quadrant Plan that relate specifically to the Rose Quarter include:

- Policy 3b: Regional Attractions, on page 32 that calls for supporting the continued success of the Rose Quarter and other regional attractions in the N/NE Quadrant while encouraging new adjacent development to balance the episodic nature of event activity.
- Actions RC1, RC2, RC3 and RC6 on pages 33-34 that recommend adjusting zoning and height limits to encourage redevelopment on properties around the Rose Quarter.
- Action TR14 on page 42 that calls for working with TriMet to reconfigure the Rose Quarter Transit Center area to improve transportation access and provide greater redevelopment activities.

The I-5 Broadway/Weider Interchange Improvements recommended in the Revised Draft Facility Plan also provide significant improvement to the Rose Quarter. In addition to improving access, safety and redevelopment opportunities along N. Broadway, the proposal includes moving the I-5 Southbound on ramp from Winning Way to Weidler, greatly reducing traffic south of Weidler in the Rose Quarter. The plan also calls for a bicycle/pedestrian connection over the freeway between the Rose Quarter and the heart of the Lloyd District on Clackamas Street. This improvement would provide a safe, low-traffic route from the Broadway Bridge, through the Rose Quarter and into the Lloyd District and is indicated as a "flexible street" connection on the Street and Development Character maps included on page 66 of the Proposed Draft N/NE Quadrant Plan.



Proposed Plan Amendments

Amendments proposed by staff in response to comments are listed below, as is the amendment previously described in a 9/6/12 memo to the Commission. The amendments include one change to policy. The remainder clarify implementation actions and plan text.

Policy Amendment

Page 48 - Environment

Policy 2. Revise to read:

“2. Green Infrastructure and Tree Canopy. Increase tree canopy and the use of vegetated stormwater facilities in Lloyd District rights-of-way particularly on designated “boulevards”, “flexible streets” and “tree canopy/water quality corridors”. Encourage the use of bird and habitat-friendly building design and green elements and ~~habitat-friendly design~~ on development sites, including ecoroofs and other vegetated stormwater approaches, roof gardens, landscaped setbacks and courtyards, living walls, and native vegetation.”

In response to comments by: Bob Salinger, N/NE Quadrant SAC member

Implementation Action Amendments

Page 41 – Transportation

Implementation action TR11. Revise to read:

“Implement the Sullivan’s Gulch Trail Concept Plan per City Council Resolution No. 36947 (see also North Banfield Portal action NB3).”

In response to comments by: Portland Parks and Recreation

Page 49 - Environment

Implementation action EN1. Revise list of implementing agencies to read:

EN1*	Evaluate natural resource protection and management options for Sullivan’s Gulch and the Willamette River bank as part of the Central City-wide natural resource analysis.	X				BPS, BES, OHWR, PPR
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In response to comments by: Mike Houck, PSC member



Implementation action EN3, Revise to read:

“Explore approaches to improve the environmental performance of the district. Possible tools include technical assistance and incentives for green infrastructure, energy retrofits, high performance new construction, renewable energy systems, ~~and~~ connections to district energy, and reduced nighttime lighting. Seattle’s “Green Factor” is an example of flexible regulations geared toward green infrastructure.”

In response to comments by: Bob Salinger, N/NE Quadrant SAC member

Implementation action NB3, Revise to read:

“Implement the Sullivan’s Gulch Trail Concept Plan per City Council Resolution No. 36947 (see also Lloyd action TR11). Complete the Sullivan’s Gulch Trail Concept Plan and implement the trail connection through the area.”

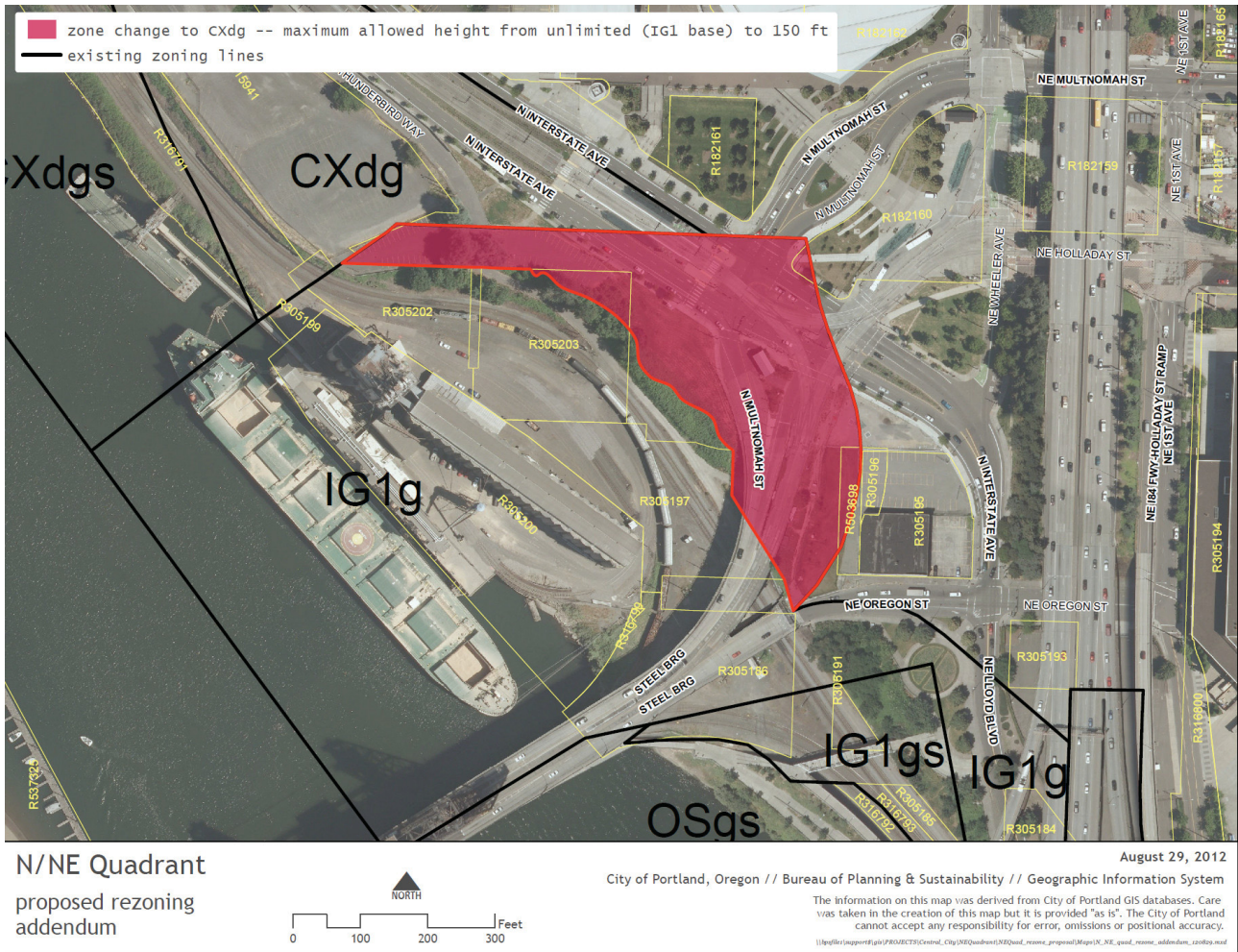
In response to comments by: Portland Parks and Recreation

TR14, Work with TriMet to improve the Street Bridgehead and Rose Quarter Transit Center. Add the following text and map:

“In order to facilitate future reconfiguration of street and lot patterns near the transit center and improve the area’s development potential, the plan recommends rezoning 3.3 acres of land west of the transit center from General Industrial 1 (IG1g) to Central Commercial (CXdg), as shown on the map below. The existing River General (g) overlay zone would remain. Approximately 93 percent of the area is in public rights-of-way. Most of the area is not currently developable but some of the land west of North Interstate could potentially be used for small or interim uses prior to a major reconfiguration of the area. Central Commercial zoning with the Design (d) overlay that matches the surrounding zoning will facilitate future development that takes advantage of regional transit access and supports the plan’s vision of a highly urban and vital Lloyd District.”

Staff recommended amendment, previously described in 9/6/12 Memo.





Page 76 – Appendix B, Implementation Action Details, Lloyd District

UD6, Update the Lloyd District’s 1991 design guidelines. Revise 4th paragraph to read:

“New design guidelines will address the incorporation of “green” site and/or building elements. These elements could include, but are not limited to, native vegetation, bird-friendly design approaches for larger buildings, providing setback space for trees, building orientation to maximize solar performance, energy production systems and stormwater management facilities. The content of these design guidelines would be developed in coordination with the Lloyd Ecodistrict planning and infrastructure implementation efforts.”

In response to comments by: Portland Parks and Recreation



Plan Text Amendment

Page 22 -Street and Development Character Concept

Flexible Streets Section. Revise second bullet to read:

- “Trail - Off street paths contributing and connecting to the regional trail network.”

In response to comments by: Portland Parks and Recreation

