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May 13, 2014

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It was brought to the attention of the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) that the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update process does not reflect the Portland Plan's overarching plan of equity in planning for new streetcar alignments. The Portland Plan's Healthy Connected City strategy, in the 5-year Action Plan, Action #130 states: "Begin planning for two corridors identified in the Streetcar System Concept, with at least one of the corridors serving neighborhoods outside the Central City."

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) generated an extensive update to the RTP, which included a new specific streetcar category. However, as we understand from PBOT, the Metro RTP process provided insufficient time for analysis to incorporate equity objectives and create alignment with the Portland Plan. The result is that there are no streetcar projects on the current PBOT RTP list that they submitted to Metro that do not radiate from the Central City.

While the PSC understands the RTP is an important plan in terms of influencing the current regional discussions about transit, we believe any significant public investment would benefit from inclusion of equity in the discussion about citywide investment priorities and how an investment in transit fits within those priorities of the Portland Plan.

We have requested that PBOT include equity in their Transportation System Plan evaluation of streetcar investments for the City of Portland's Comprehensive Plan update, which is scheduled to be heard before the PSC in September 2014. The PSC will be asking PBOT to update the RTP with new priorities if there are changes upon acceptance by PSC and City Council.



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In the meantime, it is imperative that Metro review its evaluation process to include an equity lens in the transportation investment process to ensure alignment of goals and values are consistent with partners.

We appreciate Metro's understanding and would offer further discussion with PSC.

Sincerely,



Andre' Baugh
Chair, Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

Cc: Mayor Charlie Hales
Commissioner Steve Novick
Bureau of Transportation Director Leah Treat

