

Good morning, Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners.

My name is Paul Leitman, I am a co-chair of the Portland Bus Lane Project.

With the new funding TriMet is receiving, it is positioned to make significant investments in transit service. By the middle of next decade it can expect to receive at least \$40M in additional funding from HB 2017¹ and \$43M from the payroll tax² annually.

This is great news for the region, but especially for Portland. Transit use in our city accounts for seven-tenths of TriMet's ridership.³ We have most of the region's frequent service lines, and we have the highest concentration of homes and jobs, which makes transit viable.

It is critical that we seize this opportunity to advance our mode split goals. Although Portland will not directly spend these funds, our cooperation and leadership is essential to deploying them effectively. The City of Portland needs to commit to improving—and, critically, reapportioning—its streets to get buses out of car congestion. People who have a choice will only choose to take the bus if it is reliable, fast and frequent. It has to be reliable and hassle-free. And that is why we are asking the City of Portland to prioritize transit on our city's streets. It should be as invisible to the end user as Portland Water Bureau's services are to residents.

TriMet provides the service for the region, but it is up to individual cities to ensure the road network is sufficient for that service to operate quickly and reliably. If Portland is to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, reduce congestion, reduce the cost of living, and provide increased connectivity to jobs and services for all its residents, transit is a necessity.

If buses are stuck in the same traffic caused by vehicles, and if buses are not reliable and dependable, people will continue to drive cars. This will be true despite the expenditure of 10s of millions of dollars.

None of this is news to you. This Council has already identified transit as an integral part of Portland's transportation future. The 2035 Transportation System Plan has several policies that identify the importance of transit. For example, Policy 9.22, indicates the city will "create conditions that make transit the preferred mode of travel for trips that are not made by walking or bicycling." And Policy 9.24 says Portland should "develop a public transportation system that conveniently, safely, comfortably and equitably serves residents and workers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."⁴

¹ Initial projections estimate TriMet may receive more than \$40 million annually in the first few years of the funding being available. (ODOT. STIF Formula Fund Allocation Estimates. April 2018. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/RPTD/RPTD%20Committee%20Meeting%20Documents/STIF-Formula-Fund-Allocation-Estimates-04-2018.pdf>)

² TriMet's payroll tax has been increasing annually by one-tenth of one percent since 2016. This is expected to provide an additional \$43 million dollars annually by the conclusion of the escalation in 2025. (TriMet. New resources approved to expand transit service. September 2015. <http://news.trimet.org/2015/09/new-resources-approved-to-expand-transit-service/>)

³ TriMet. Fall 2017 Ridership by Jurisdiction. https://trimet.org/about/pdf/census/2017fall/jurisdiction_ridership.pdf

⁴ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/579174>

The Plan also identifies a Transit Priority Program that is meant to improve transit speed, reliability, safety, and access.

Now it is time for you to act on these policy statements and help Portland live up to its vision as a city that prioritizes people over vehicles.

Please be bold. We are asking for four commitments: Bus Lanes, Traffic Signal Improvements, Walkability and Accessibility, and Stop Rebalancing.

- **Bus Lanes** - First, focus on implementing dedicated bus lanes and queue jumps to provide riders with a congestion-free bus trip. This would improve the speed of service, save TriMet money, and increase ridership. The draft Enhanced Transit Corridors (“ETC”) Plan indicates that TriMet spends between 1 and 2 million dollars extra each year to just keep up with increased congestion. Travel times on Portland’s busiest bus lines have increased by more than 7% over the past decade, due to this congestion. Dedicated bus lanes and queue jumps are an inexpensive solution that can dramatically improve transit service.
- **Traffic Signal Improvements** - Second, increase the number of traffic signals that hold the green light for buses. Traffic signals at times can slow down buses and reduce reliability. Holding the light for buses makes trips faster and more dependable. Director Treat has testified that buses can move 100 times as many people in the same roadway compared to private cars. So allowing just one bus to get through the light faster reduces travel times for many people. To take full advantage of this investment, we are asking the city to also move all stops that are located on the near-side of a signal to the far side. This would allow buses to get through the signal first, load and unload passengers, then get moving once the doors are closed, rather than wait for the signal to change.
- **Walkability and Accessibility** - Third, improve pedestrian infrastructure to make it easier and safer to access bus stops. Safe infrastructure is a necessity to ensuring a world-class transit system. If there are no dependable pedestrian walkways or safe crossings to access bus stops, all the other changes and investments we are making will be pointless. In September 2017, this council unanimously adopted the Growing Transit Communities (“GTC”) plan, which identified access improvements on three transit corridors in East Portland. We encourage the City to conduct the same methodology used in this plan to identify additional improvements to make transit access safe and convenient on all other transit corridors throughout the city.
- **Stop Rebalancing** - Fourth, identify corridors for stop rebalancing to remove redundant stops that are too close together. Frequent stops reduce travel speeds and make transit slow. Where pedestrian infrastructure is in place, limiting the frequency of stops can provide a significant improvement to corridor travel times, especially on the city’s busiest corridors. Moving stops always comes with the risk of undermining equity; however,

ensuring the walkability and accessibility improvements are in place on a given corridor before rebalancing can address those concerns.

None of our suggestions above are novel, or even particularly different from the solutions proposed in Growing Transit Communities or Enhanced Transit Corridors plans.

With these four steps, the City can demonstrate its commitment to transit. As transit funding increases in the Portland area over the next several years, you have an opportunity - and the duty - to ensure that our city's streets are supporting that investment.

In order to make sure that the improvements we are suggesting happen, this body and department leadership will need to take a more active role in overcoming institutional inertia at the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

I want to bring up a recent opportunity the city missed to dramatically improve transportation in the center city.

Hawthorne Bridge carries 10s of thousands of transit commuters daily. It has the largest concentration of bus lines in the City. On the West end of the bridge, headed into the city, the stop at SW Second and Main has been a pinch point for users of all modes for many years.

The City recently invested approximately \$500,000 as part of the Fix Our Streets project to improve the pavement at this location, but it did not make any substantial configuration changes that would have addressed the bus-bike-pedestrian-car conflicts on the stretch of pavement between SW First and SW Second. Instead, the City installed an expensive concrete bus pad on the wrong side of SW Second, setting the lousy configuration in stone.

While the project was underway, we asked Council and Director Treat to take the opportunity to improve this critical pinch point for the transit and bike networks. When the City continued with the planned repaving and bus-pad installation, I submitted public records requests to try to understand how this decision was made.

The emails I received were illuminating. They show that Director Treat is trying hard to implement the mode split goals that you have voted for, but engineering culture is conservative. If we are to overcome the inertia, we need to give our engineers something new to measure. Director Treat has suggested a focus on people moved rather than level of service for cars.

In order to meet the commitments to Bus Lanes, Traffic Signal Improvements, Walkability and Accessibility and Stop Rebalancing that we are asking for, the engineering staff at PBOT will need to be told precisely what to measure. Otherwise, we will continue to hear that "capacity analysis," "traffic modeling," or "public outreach" is necessary. Requirements which never seem to get in the way of car-focused infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Paul Leitman (co-chair, Portland Bus Lane Project)
Alan Kessler

From: "Wardrip, Lewis" <Lewis.Wardrip@portlandoregon.gov>
To: "Treat, Leah" <Leah.Treat@portlandoregon.gov>
Cc: "Dellinger, Michelle" <Michelle.Dellinger@portlandoregon.gov>, "Jeffrey, Jamie" <Jamie.Jeffrey@portlandoregon.gov>, "Liles, Todd" <Todd.Liles@portlandoregon.gov>, "Townsen, Steve" <Steve.Townsen@portlandoregon.gov>
Subject: RE: 1st and Main

Hi Leah,

I'm sorry it took me so long to get back to you I have been juggling a lot of things and lost track of this one.

We did look at other more impactful options but they were outside of the scope and schedule of this project. One option was a transit island which would eliminate the bus bike weave but it would have required public outreach and traffic modeling that was beyond the scope and timeline of the project. Another was to look at an alternative route which could still be explored by the Central City in Motion project. I have attached an email from Michelle with more details and drawings. I will be on vacation for 2 weeks but if you have questions you can ask either Michelle Dellinger who worked on the design or Jamie Jeffrey who is familiar with the project.

Lewis Wardrip, PE
City Traffic Engineer

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeffrey, Jamie

Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 7:35 AM

To: Treat, Leah <Leah.Treat@portlandoregon.gov>

Cc: Wardrip, Lewis <Lewis.Wardrip@portlandoregon.gov>; Pearce, Art

<Art.Pearce@portlandoregon.gov>; Townsen, Steve

<Steve.Townsen@portlandoregon.gov>; Brady, John <John.Brady@portlandoregon.gov>;

Geller, Roger <Roger.Geller@portlandoregon.gov>

Subject: Re: 1st and Main

Hi Leah,

Thanks for forwarding. I've been aware of some of the communications we've received in the last week. The space is fairly tight for some of the proposed reconfigurations.

While there are options to consider, they require some capacity analysis to evaluate the impact of losing a travel lane to accommodate a different bus/bike configuration. There is a dynamic with Hawthorne bridge and SW 1st Avenue that is pretty tied together, particularly in the evening peak time. Ultimately we should evaluate the entire system around the Hawthorne Bridge (including Madison, Main and north-south streets 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th). Unfortunately, the Main Reconstruction project did not include the cost or timeline for a broader system analysis.

We may have some opportunities to do this analysis with both the Central City In Motion project and the Transit planning efforts. The result of this evaluation would identify modifications that would likely need design/construction dollars.

I agree we should provide some follow up communication with constituents, especially if this analysis is a priority that we can cover in existing funded planning efforts. I'm happy to work with folks to scope the analysis and a communication message.

Jamie Jeffrey, PE

Portland Transportation
1120 SW 5th Avenue, Rm 800
Portland, OR 97204

503-823-5165; 503-823-7576 fax

Begin forwarded message:

From: Leah.Treat@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:Leah.Treat@portlandoregon.gov>
Date: September 17, 2017 at 8:00:08 PM PDT
To: Lewis Wardrip

<Lewis.Wardrip@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:Lewis.Wardrip@portlandoregon.gov>>, Art Pearce <Art.Pearce@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:Art.Pearce@portlandoregon.gov>>, Steve Townsen <Steve.Townsen@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:Steve.Townsen@portlandoregon.gov>>, John Brady <john.brady@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:john.brady@portlandoregon.gov>>, Roger Geller <Roger.Geller@portlandoregon.gov<mailto:Roger.Geller@portlandoregon.gov>>>
Subject: 1st and Main

Good evening,

We're continuing to get blowback on our 1st and Main design for not doing enough for bikes and transit. If we can't do better than what we're proposing, we need to communicate differently.

I know I pushed back on you already, but I'm just checking in again to make sure we're following our modal hierarchy. Can we do better for transit and bikes? If this is the best use of the limited space, we need to do some outreach with constituents.

Thanks,
Leah

Sent from my iPhone

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Paul Leitman <paul.leitman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 01, 2018 8:39 PM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Cc: Alan Kessler
Subject: Address Council - May 9th - Transit improvements

Karla,
I'd like to register to address the City Council on May 9th. I'm coordinating with Alan Kessler to discuss transit improvements.

Name: Paul Leitman
Address: 1024 NE 75th Ave Portland 97213
Phone: 541-515-8254
Date: Wednesday, May 9th
Topic: Transit improvements

Thank you,
Paul Leitman

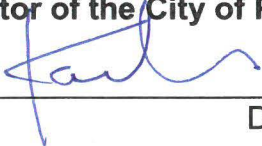
Request of Paul Leitman to address Council regarding transit improvements (Communication)

MAY 09 2018

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAY 01 2018

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		