



Portland Streetcar Advisory Committee
1031 NW 11th Ave
Portland, OR 97209
(503) 222-4200

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

David Brandt, Chair
Reza Farhoodi, Vice Chair
Lenny Anderson
Bill Bagrnall
Raymond Becich
Carolyn Brock
Michael Cannarella
Clint Culpepper
Sorin Garber
Susan Pearce
Zoe Presson

Debra Unverdruss
Stephen Weber
Erik Wilson

STAFF:

Dan Bower
Natasha Kelly
Connie LaValley
Kathryn Levine
Andrew Plambeck

March 15, 2018

Oregon Department of Transportation
Attn: Megan Channell, Major Projects Manager
123 NW Flanders St.
Portland, OR 97209

Dear Ms. Channell:

On behalf of the Portland Streetcar Advisory Committee, we write to provide feedback on the draft Environmental Assessment for the I-5 Rose Quarter project. The Committee comprises neighborhood leaders, representatives for people with disabilities, representatives from educational institutions and the business community, and other Portlanders with a variety of perspectives.

For the duration of the project's construction, it is imperative that streetcar operations are maintained as reliably as possible. Specifically, the streetcar should be accommodated to run as scheduled across temporary tracks built on the structures provided during construction to maintain motor vehicle travel. The ability to accommodate normal streetcar mobility should be a minor addition to the mitigations provided for motor vehicle travel. This is far preferable to forcing riders to leave the streetcar and board a bus, only to then transfer yet again to the streetcar on the other side of the project area.

Furthermore, the end result of a project of this scale should not simply provide the same level of service for transit that exists now. The project team should seek ways to improve not just I-5 travel times and reliability but also better service for streetcar operations. Given that both Broadway and Weidler are Major Transit Streets facing potential reduction in the number of travel lanes for auto, streetcar and bus traffic to accommodate new bicycle facilities, we recommend that the project, in partnership with the City of Portland, develop a cross-section that provides a dedicated lane for the streetcar. The dedicated lanes should be accompanied by signal priority or a dedicated streetcar signal phase at Victoria, Williams and Vancouver, along with the elimination of driveways and other proven tools to speed up transit.

Thank you for your full consideration of these measures as the project moves into the design phase. We appreciate your efforts to ensure that the project benefits the streetcar system during and after construction to the extent possible.

Sincerely,

David Brandt
Chair

Reza Farhoodi
Vice Chair