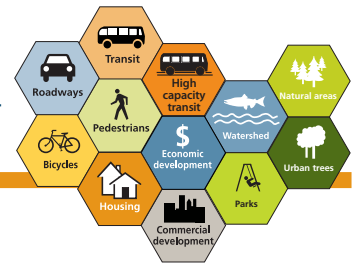




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Refinement phase activities and next steps

The Southwest Corridor Plan will continue in the refinement phase throughout the spring. In this phase, project partners are studying potential route alignments and station areas for light rail and bus rapid transit, narrowing them to the most promising design options. The Southwest Corridor Team will then use public input and technical considerations to prepare a draft recommendation for which narrowed options to advance to the next project phase. The Steering Committee (comprised of representatives from each partner jurisdiction and agency) will consider the draft recommendation, request additional public input, and make a final recommendation to take into the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) phase. We anticipate that the DEIS phase will begin in the summer of 2014.

Project staff has gathered queries throughout the refinement phase regarding the next steps in the planning process, the purpose and need statement and other general issues. The following are responses to frequently asked questions from the public. These answers and much more information can be found on the project website at www.swcorridorplan.org. The website also includes information on public input opportunities. To stay up-to-date on all movements in the project and catch every opportunity for public input, interested parties may join our email list from a link on the project website or by emailing trans@oregonmetro.gov.

Answers to general Southwest Corridor queries

Why is high capacity transit being considered in the Southwest Corridor?

The corridor contains a wealth of amenities, from parks and habitat to job centers and retail destinations. It also houses major educational institutions, including the Oregon Health & Science University and Portland Community College.

The Southwest Corridor is also home to 11 percent of the Portland metropolitan area population, and is growing at a higher annual rate than the region overall – 14.4 percent (compared to 13.6 percent). Additionally, the corridor contains 26 percent of tri-county jobs, a number which is projected to grow significantly in the coming years .

With the area's hills, natural resources, and established homes and businesses, building or expanding roads would prove difficult and disruptive. High-capacity transit is an option that can address some of these challenges, such as limited space and congestion.

As people and employers seek to locate in the corridor, worsening traffic will limit job growth and make it harder for residents to get around. Maintaining the integrity of corridor communities, despite anticipated area growth, geographic landforms, and existing buildings, poses many challenges. To help address growth in the corridor, as well as the accompanying traffic, more and better transit service will be part of the strategy going forward.

What is the time frame and process for the Southwest Corridor Plan?

Fall 2013 to mid-2014

TriMet works with partners and the public to refine the priorities for future local transit service throughout the area, including connections to a potential high capacity transit line.

Mid 2014

Partners identify infrastructure projects (such as sidewalk connections, road improvement projects, etc) to be packaged with the high capacity transit alternative(s) for consideration in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Formal DEIS process begins with formal project scoping period.

2014

Partners develop and seek funding for projects highly supportive of community land use visions, working collaboratively as appropriate. Early actions may include project design and engineering, public outreach and working with regional partners to include the project in the Regional Transportation Plan.





2015 and forward

TriMet implements Southwest Service Enhancement Plan.

Steering committee decisions: high capacity transit

October 2012	July 2013	Early to mid 2014	Early 2017
Narrowed from 10 alternatives concepts to five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direction on Southwest (Transit) Service Enhancement Plan Which modes to carry forward for further study Policy direction on “level” of bus rapid transit for further study Destination 	Refinement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential station locations Funding strategies Design options (Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Naito, Barbur or tunnel? -Direct connection to PCC? -Hall, 72nd or WES right of way?) Operate in mixed traffic or add/convert lanes for transit? 	Draft Environmental Impact Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mode Station locations Transit system connections

Refinement decisions and public input opportunities

November/December	January/February/March	March/April	May/June
 Feedback on the purpose and need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community planning forum questionnaire Project purpose and need statement for refinement phase approval	 Feedback on design options: <p>Which seem most promising? Which can be set aside?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community planning forum questionnaire 	Guidance on narrowing of design options  Feedback on station area planning approach and remaining design options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community planning forum questionnaire 	Draft recommendation on design options for more study  Feedback on draft recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> questionnaire Final recommendation

Visit the project website and click “Creating the Plan” for more on the planning time frame and process.

www.swcorridorplan.org

How will a high capacity transit project in the Southwest Corridor affect land use and development?

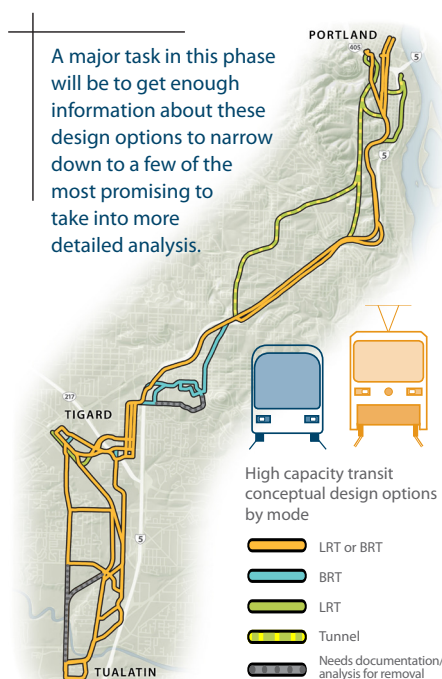
If we do nothing in the Southwest Corridor, the land use changes and economic development desired by local communities cannot occur. High capacity transit options under consideration are compatible with and supportive of local community long-range land use plans.

The public sector can help set the stage for development consistent with community goals through regulations, policies and development incentives that encourage private investment. In the next phase of the Southwest Corridor Plan, project partners will explore specific tools to advance the corridor land use vision and enable the region to compete nationally for scarce federal dollars for high capacity transit.

How will a high capacity transit project in the Southwest Corridor affect traffic?

Traffic projections show an expected 30 percent increase in travel times for driving in the Southwest corridor by 2035 (Metro Research Center). Traffic congestion will continue to worsen unless significant transportation improvements are put in place. Without additional options – including better transit service – people traveling by car and by bus in the Southwest Corridor will spend more and more time stuck in traffic. It will be difficult, if not impossible, for communities to add jobs and housing in key corridor locations.

Adding roadway capacity is certainly part of the solution to address future mobility needs in the Southwest Corridor. However, there simply is not space to accommodate the number of additional roadway lanes and parking spaces that would be needed to accommodate future travel demand without negatively impacting those who live and work in the corridor. To do so would require demolishing homes, businesses and other properties to make room for roadway expansions – at a very high cost. Experience in urban areas around the world has shown that added roadway capacity simply fills up with cars, ultimately resulting in similarly congested, unreliable travel conditions. A new transit line running (at least in part) in a separate right of way would provide people traveling to or through the Southwest Corridor with a reliable transit option that can bypass stuck traffic. This will be especially important as the region grows. Based on initial estimates, future high capacity transit ridership will be 22,500 to 28,900 riders during a typical weekday.



How much will Southwest Corridor projects cost?

TriMet project staff is developing cost estimates for representative light rail and bus rapid transit alignments in the Southwest Corridor. These very preliminary cost estimates will be based on a conceptual level of design because much is unknown at this point in the planning process. Further analysis of design alternatives, public involvement, and steering committee direction will refine conceptual designs as the planning process continues, making it possible to provide additional levels of cost analysis for the design options. Cost estimates, even at the conceptual level, are helpful to a planning process because they allow the public and decision-makers another opportunity to compare options with their values. Cost estimates will be available this spring, and will be shared with the public and the Steering Committee to inform a Steering Committee recommendation on which design options should be studied further in the Draft Environmental Impact

Who will pay for Southwest corridor transit projects?

Project partners will work together to develop a funding strategy that includes local, regional, state and federal sources. This could include innovative financing tools and non-transportation funding for parks and natural areas. The public sector can help set the stage for development consistent with community goals through regulations, policies and development incentives that encourage private investment. In the next phase of the Southwest Corridor Plan, project partners will explore specific tools to advance the corridor land use vision and enable the region to compete nationally for scarce federal dollars for high capacity transit.

Four high capacity transit lines in the Portland metropolitan area were funded in part by competitive grants from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The Southwest corridor project partners would likely seek similar funding for a light rail or bus rapid transit improvement in the corridor. While there is no guarantee that a project will receive funding, the groundwork laid by the creation of the Southwest Corridor Plan will make an application more competitive.

The most recent qualifying high capacity transit project in our region, the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail Orange Line, received 50 percent funding from the FTA's New Starts Program. The remainder has come from a mix of state, regional, local, and non-FTA federal funds. The roadway and active transportation projects included in the recommendation would be funded from the same set of funding sources. Some may be included in a federal funding grant request as part of a high capacity transit line – but most will be funded by a mix of state, regional, and local funds. The “green” projects may be funded from a variety of federal, state, regional and local funds, including grants and funding that are specific to parks, natural area and water quality projects.

When will we see improvements for bicycle commuters on Southwest Barbur Boulevard?

As part of the Southwest Corridor Plan, we have received much public input and explored a range of projects to improve Barbur Boulevard as a multimodal facility. Project partners will continue to consider a range of long-term bicycle improvements on Barbur Boulevard as the Southwest Corridor design work moves forward. In the meantime, ODOT has committed to working with the City of Portland to collect data on the effects of removing one northbound travel lane during the construction of the Vermont and Newbury Bridges Rehabilitation Project. Other projects propose near-term improvements on the Newbury and Vermont bridges, including flashing light beacons to be added in 2014. Green bike lane safety improvements have already been completed at Barbur Boulevard and Capitol Highway, as well as bike lane markings at Barbur Boulevard and SW Bertha.

In 2016, a Regional Flexible Funds Allocation of \$1.2 million will go toward crossing improvements and infilling gaps in sidewalks and bike lanes as part of the Barbur Demonstration Project along Barbur Boulevard from SW 26th to Spring Garden. The area will be carefully monitored to determine the benefits and impacts of the changes before further planning and decision-making.

A number of additional pedestrian crossing improvements may also positively affect bicycle commuters on Barbur Boulevard, including some that are currently being designed (such as at SW 13th and also at Alice Street) and could be seen on the ground as early as spring 2014.

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How will my concerns be addressed for a fair, balanced, and inclusive process?

At every stage of the decision-making process, public outreach is conducted to ensure planners are aware of the goals and visions of involved communities. Feedback from public outreach events and surveys is analyzed for themes to better help jurisdictional staff understand the public's needs and concerns.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process compares impacts from a "no build/ do nothing" alternative with some of the most promising "do something" design alternatives that emerge during the refinement stage. The comparative process helps both decision-makers and the public to evaluate trade-offs and benefits from the alternatives. In the DEIS phase, each alternative is explored using a number of lenses, including specifically the perspective of equity, and with the involvement of a range of stakeholders, community groups and interests. A significant amount of analysis and consideration takes place before a locally-preferred alternative is mutually selected by all jurisdictional partner decision-makers.

Next steps and answers to purpose and need queries

A statement of purpose and need is important because it forms a foundation for planning. It explains why a plan is needed and what it will do. The Southwest Corridor Plan's purpose and need statement lists the needs that a high capacity transit project in the Southwest corridor would address and what the project sets out to accomplish. During the refinement stage, the statement was updated based on public feedback and can be found on the project website under "Project Library." As information is gathered, the project team will evaluate each design option using the purpose and need. The most promising options that meet the stated purpose and need will be carried forward for further analysis of impacts.

Will I have another opportunity to comment on the purpose and need statement?

Yes. Public feedback on the purpose and need statement was gathered in November 2013 as part of the project refinement phase before a formal robust planning process begins as part of National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements. The NEPA process includes preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The purpose and need will be reviewed and potentially revised based on new information from the refinement process for the DEIS, and the public will have an opportunity to comment on the updated version. The comment period will likely take place during the summer of 2014.

Will I have more opportunities to influence decision making regarding high capacity transit in the corridor?

Public feedback is an important part of planning in the Southwest corridor and there will be opportunities for the public to influence decision making throughout the planning process. In March and April 2014, the public will be asked to provide feedback to help determine which high capacity transit alignment and station area design options are the most promising for the corridor. The public feedback will inform the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee in May as they prepare a draft recommendation on design options to carry forward to the formal Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) process for thorough consideration of the benefits and impacts of each design alternative. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the draft recommendation in May, both through an online survey and at a community planning forum. The Steering Committee will consider public comments and then finalize its recommendation to the Joint Policy Advisory Committee (JPACT) and the Metro Council. The public will have an opportunity to provide input to the Metro Council on the Steering Committee recommendation during the Council meeting, prior to their vote. For more details and updated information on opportunities to influence decision making, please visit www.swcorridorplan.org.

You may join the Southwest Corridor Plan's interested parties list by emailing:

trans@oregonmetro.gov

Southwest Corridor Plan

Spring 2014 Involvement Opportunities

Corridor Design Workshop 1

Wednesday, March 12, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Wilson High School Cafeteria
1151 SW Vermont St., Portland
Presentation will start promptly at 6:00 p.m.
and small-group activities at 6:30 p.m.

Corridor Design Workshop 2

Wednesday, March 19, 2014
6:30-8:30 p.m.
Tigard Town Hall
13125 SW Hall Blvd., Tigard
Presentation will start promptly at 6:30 p.m.
and small-group activities at 7:00 p.m.

Corridor Design Workshop 3

Thursday, March 20, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Tualatin Police Department
8650 SW Tualatin Rd., Tualatin
Presentation will start promptly at 6:00 p.m.
and small-group activities at 6:30 p.m.

Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, April 7, 2014
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Beaverton Activities Center
12500 SW Allen Blvd., Beaverton

Portland Working Group

Monday, March 31, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Multnomah Arts Center Rm. 30
7688 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland

Community Planning Forum

Thursday, April 10, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Tualatin Public Library Community Room
18878 SW Martinazzi Ave., Tualatin

SWNI Forum on Southwest Corridor

Tuesday, April 29, 2014
6:00-9:00 p.m.
Multnomah Arts Center Auditorium
7688 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland

Portland Working Group

Monday, May 5, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Multnomah Arts Center Rm. 29
7688 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland

Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, May 12, 2014
9:00-11:00 a.m.
Multnomah Arts Center Dance Studio
7688 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland

Mid-May Activities

-Online survey for design option decisions
-Community Planning Forum (TBD)

Portland Working Group

Monday, June 2, 2014
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Multnomah Arts Center Rm. 29
7688 SW Capitol Hwy., Portland

Steering Committee Meeting

Monday, June 9, 2014
9:00-11:00 a.m.
TBD

Visit the project website to learn more at
www.swcorridorplan.org