Community invited to Sept. 22 open house on the future light rail project

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

By Erik Vidstrand The Southwest Portland Post

Beginning this fall, the Southwest Corridor Plan enters its next phase: the Southwest Light Rail Project. According to project planners, a federally required environmental review process is going to last until the end of 2017. At that time, a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) will be published with a public comment period in early 2018.

"This detailed study," said Noelle Dobson, Metro senior public affairs specialist, "is going to look at both the positive and negative impacts of the built and natural environments. The DEIS will recommend strategies for minimizing or avoiding adverse impacts."

The community is invited to learn about this phase at an open house on Thursday, Sept. 22 at the Wilson High School cafeteria from 6 to 8 p.m.

"A public scoping period has already begun," Dobson explained. "Project staff have been at local farmers markets gathering information and will continue to do so throughout September."

According to Dobson, this is the opportunity for the public and government agencies to provide input on what to study.

A packet will be released that describes the project's background, including its purpose and need. This will include the light rail plan, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and road projects.

Information will also be gathered on air and water quality, traffic and property impacts, ridership projections, and station locations.

"Decisions about final alignment



A MAX light rail train stops at Portland State University in downtown Portland. (Photo by Steve Morgan, Creative Commons license)

choices or station locations will not be made, however, until the DEIS is completed," Dobson remarked.

Dobson said that the decision about whether to run the light rail alignment on Barbur Boulevard or on Naito Parkway south of downtown will not be made at this time.

Alignment options removed during the earlier refinement phase included three potential underground transit tunnels to Marquam Hill, Hillsdale town center, and Portland Community College's Sylvania campus.

While the DEIS is undertaken, the Metro project team will continue seeking funding opportunities for other projects like connective roadways, active transportation, parks, trails, and

Metro partners will continue to work on strategies to implement the comprehensive set of goals and strategies outlined in the 2013 Southwest Corridor Plan Shared Investment Strategy. The next steering committee is not scheduled until November.

"When the DEIS technical analysis is

completed at the end of 2017," Dobson assured, "the public will have multiple opportunities to provide additional feedback and recommendations."

To learn more, visit the project website at www.swcorridorplan.org.

Pokemon Go

(Continued from Page 4)

humorous. She showed this reporter cigarette butts wedged in cracks between her wooden siding and bench potentially causing a devastating fire.

"These players also tapped into my electrical outlet. I'm annoyed at having to turn off my circuit breaker at night because my electric bill is higher."

Another business owner had the same problem and worries that there are no lights on in her business at night for crime deterrence.

"It's hard to say how long this fad will last," she said. "All I ask is that you respect our property and clean up after yourselves.'

For more information on cyber security associated with Pokémon Go, visit www. staysafeonline.org.

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