

SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR PLAN

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Committee, said his group had good arguments for both alignments and did not arrive at a consensus.

Some in his team said that the Ross Island Bridge reconfiguration would be more of a factor if the Naito Parkway alignment went through. The Naito Parkway choice also prevents some congestion along Barbur Boulevard, at least at the north end of the route.

Votes were mixed on the whether the route should continue along Barbur Boulevard or adjacent to Interstate 5 after passing Custer Drive.

Many in the room said they still did not have enough information about what might happen with certain businesses especially near the West Portland crossroads (where Barbur Boulevard, Capitol Highway, Taylors Ferry Road, and Interstate 5 meet).

Barbur Boulevard redevelopment was important, according to another team. Pedestrian overpasses, especially at Southwest 53rd Avenue, were specifically mentioned as necessities.

“Costs and mitigation for homes and businesses will be provided after the holidays,” Kehe said.

Arnie Panitch, who represents the TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation, said he hoped there would be a single-ride version of the project where riders could ride all the way from Clackamas to Bridgeport Village without transferring.

“All these choices have tradeoffs,” Panitch said. “There is no one ideal route.”

Dave Unsworth, TriMet director of capital projects, said, “We’re expecting half of the project to be funded by federal dollars so it has to be cost-effective. No more than \$2.6 billion can be raised but we need to raise the other half.”

Unsworth said that a single-ride, that Panitch mentioned, would cost over \$3 billion.



A MAX train passes the Pioneer Courthouse on the downtown Portland transit mall. (TriMet photo)

“We may build one section (of the line) first,” Unsworth said, “then come back at a later time because we might want to build, for example, down to Sherwood.”

Unsworth said that officials want to insure the values that the project entails such as connectivity, speed, and convenience. He said they are looking at ways to lower costs.

“Costs include bridges,” he said. “There are some labor shortages, too, which raise costs.”

The next community advisory committee meeting is Wednesday, Jan. 17 from 6:15 – 8:45 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center.

Proposed bond measure to fund light rail delayed until 2020

TriMet has long believed that a regional transportation measure is necessary to help fund the \$2.4 billion Southwest Corridor light rail project.

The Metro Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation recently made recommendations to the Metro Council on transportation needs in the region.

The committee is recommending delaying a vote on a \$1.7 billion bond measure until November 2020. Metro, rather than TriMet, would be the governmental entity submitting the measure. Metro would then submit an affordable housing bond measure as early as November 2018.

As intended, \$750 million would match half of the project that is expected to be promised by the federal government. The remaining \$950 million would be split among alternative transportation projects, addressing traffic congestion, and safety issues in the rest of the region.

According to Metro, the bond would levy a \$13 vehicle registration fee as well as adding a new property tax assessment within the transit agency’s service area. This is expected to cost the average homeowner an additional \$150 a year.

The biggest single portion of the money raised, \$740 million, would

pay for part of the funding for the Southwest Corridor light rail project.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared to help decision makers understand the environmental consequences of the options under consideration.

When asked whether the corridor design will still progress as planned despite funding delays, Kehe said yes and said she expects the draft statement to be released in late March 2018.

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