

Multnomah County Bicycle and Pedestrian Citizen Advisory Committee (BPCAC) Minutes

Date	August 13, 2014
Called to Order	6:36 p.m.
Location	Boardroom of the Multnomah Building, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland OR
Attendance	<p>Present: Greg Olson, Andrew Holtz, Carolyn Briggs, Susan Dean, Jeff Owen, Rory Renfro, Jim Couch, and Mary-Rain O'Meara</p> <p>Excused: Art Graves, Matt Picio, Susan Watt, Jane Vale</p> <p>Absent: Roger Averbeck</p> <p>Guests: Tom Mills (Senior Planner, TriMet), Jon Henrichsen (Engineering Manager, Multnomah County), and Ken Huntley (Engineer, Multnomah County)</p> <p>Staff: Kate McQuillan (Transportation Planner)</p>
Minutes/Approval	Meeting minutes for March 2014, May 2014, and June 2014 were approved.
Decisions Made	None
Background/Handouts	Agenda; Meeting minutes for March 2014, May 2014, and June 2014; Updated member roster; TriMet's Service Enhancement Planning handout and draft vision for Southwest subregion; Preliminary designs for Morrison Bridge deck replacement.
Agenda Items	<p><u>Public Comment:</u> None</p> <p><u>Staff Report:</u> Kate had some housekeeping items to share with the Committee. First, new members have been officially appointed and we now have a full Committee. Staff now has access to edit the Committee's website at any time. Kate also has plans on making slight modifications to the format of meeting minutes and agendas to assist the Committee in being more efficient and proactive. Kate would love feedback at any time on how these types of housekeeping updates can best help the Committee.</p> <p>To follow up on the May 2014 meeting which was held at the Skyline Grange, there was interest from Committee members as well as the local community to do a grassroots inventory of existing roadway conditions in the West Hills and propose locations where interim bicycle improvements can help improve bike/ped safety. There may be an opportunity with the upcoming updates of the various Transportation System Plans (TSP) where a community effort such as this can be incorporated into plan. Stay tuned for more information.</p> <p>The Sauvie Island/Multnomah Channel Rural Area Plan is in its final phase. Dates for the Planning Commission and Board hearings on the plan have been postponed for later this year while staff and stakeholders flush out the final policy language.</p> <p>The Powell-Division High Capacity Transit project is nearing a major project milestone where route and mode alternatives will be narrowed down. In light of this, there is a lot of public involvement opportunities planned in the next couple months. Now is an opportune time to give important feedback. Check Metro's website for specific information on public input.</p> <p>Lastly there are two active transportation events in East County coming up that the Committee is invited to. On Wednesday, August 20th the County, City of Gresham, and the National Safe Routes to School Partnership are hosting a "meet and greet" for leaders, staff, and community members in East County. Also, on Tuesday, August 26th, the BTA is holding its annual "Bike Commute Challenge Kick Off" happy hour event in Gresham.</p> <p><u>Chair Report:</u> None</p>

Trimet's Service Enhancement Plans

Tom Mills, Senior Planner from TriMet, presented on TriMet's Service Enhancement Planning effort that has wrapped up for the west side of the region but is currently underway for the southwest and the southeast sub regions. Service Enhancement Plans (SEP) are a 20-year long range vision for TriMet's transit service with the assumption that with the economy growing stronger and continued population growth than the agency will be able to expand transit.

After significant public input, TriMet staffs have just recently released the draft Southwest SEP vision. TriMet staff is heading back to the public this fall to get feedback on the vision. Generally, the Southwest SEP vision includes increasing frequent service, "upgrading" a few commuter bus lines to all day bus service, and rerouting a couple existing transit lines to better service the community. More specifically is it relates to Multnomah County, the Southwest SEP is proposing to reroute the existing Bus Line 56 onto SW Scholls Ferry Road, a County-owned minor arterial.

TriMet staff are also considering a new concept developed with the west side SEP of "Community Connector" service which works with both a local agency and a third party to provide community shuttle service where there is currently demand for transit services but the density doesn't exist yet. Already a successful community connector program has been established for the City of Forest Grove in Washington County.

The Southwest SEP is also currently underway and staff expect a draft vision to be released later this fall. A couple initial findings from the extensive public engagement that has been done for the southeast SEP are more north/south bus services on major arterials such as 148th, 162nd, 181st, 242nd/Hogan and 275th/Kane to complete the grid in East County, expanding service times to be more frequent and run earlier/later; and to focus bus service to the employment and industrial areas of East County.

Some questions and comments BPCAC members had for this agenda topic:

- When doing public engagement with larger employers (for example, OHSU for the Southwest SEP), it is important to work with managers who actually ride transit. Also suggested labor unions as a helpful resource to connecting with employees.
- Are the outreach materials for the Southeast SEP available in multiple languages? Tom replied that yes, the materials for the Southeast SEP are translated into Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean.
- How is LIFT service being considered when planning future transit service improvements? Specifically since the cost of each LIFT trip is substantially more than one trip on a standard fixed bus route, are these cost considerations part of the SEP process and are there plans on how to transition more riders from LIFT service to standard, fixed bus service? Tom replied that yes that is a consideration especially since the agency is considering adding much more frequent service which has the potential to replace some LIFT trips. Currently TriMet offers travel training for its LIFT customers to help the customers learn how to ride fixed bus service. This is an important issue with aging populations.
- Currently there are no sidewalks along SW Scholls Ferry Road. The County completed a SW Scholls Ferry Concept Plan in 2008 that includes a plan for sidewalks along the entire County-owned corridor, partly in anticipation of future transit service as the community desires. How would the current lack of infrastructure impact how soon TriMet could add transit service to SW Scholls Ferry? Both Kate and Tom echoed the fact that if this draft vision is adopted as final, then there will be a "ripple effect" in the County's Capital Improvement Plan and TriMet's Transit Investment Plan where improvements to Scholls Ferry would become a higher priority. The County and TriMet

would work together to partner in both improving the pedestrian facilities along SW Scholls Ferry Rd and adding transit service.

Morrison Bridge Construction Detours

Jon Henrichsen and Ken Huntley from the Multnomah County's Bridge Engineering staff shared plans to temporarily close the Morrison Bridge beginning summer 2015 to replace a faulty bridge deck. Currently County staff is working with a consultant team and have drafted 50% designs while narrowing down the new bridge deck options to two alternatives. The two deck alternatives include an epoxy overlay on an aluminum frame similar to what is currently in place, or fiberglass reinforced panels (FRP) alone steel grating. At this point, staff anticipates the temporary closure to last a total of 5-6 months and will be completed in phases so that two traffic lanes will be open at any given time. With the phasing, staff expects the bike/ped path on the southern portion of the bridge will be closed during the first phase which could last up to 8 weeks. Staff noted that while it could be possible to design closures such that the bike/ped path remained open for most of the construction period would delay the overall construction timeline and the bike/ped path would still experience intermittent closures. Generally the BPCAC supported closing the bike/ped path for all of phase one to ensure the path remains open for the remaining construction phases and that construction can be completed as quickly as possible.

Some questions and comments BPCAC members had for this agenda topic:

- Since the decking on the bike/ped path is still in great condition, why does it need to be replaced as well? Currently there is a guardrail in the bike/ped path that separates bicyclists and pedestrians. This guardrail is physically bolted to the current decking. It would be impossible to replace the decking of the motor vehicle lanes and not temporarily removing the guardrail without threatening the structural integrity (and thus safety) of the bridge.
- Would it be possible to complete the construction in a season other than summer when bicycle traffic is less? Jon replied that generally the County's construction season is summer because of less weather delays. Also one of the decking alternatives (epoxy) needs weeks of dry weather following installation.
- Will the sidewalk on the north side of the bridge be open when the bike/ped path to the south is closed during Phase 1 of construction? Staff replied yes.
- One committee member recommended better signage and messaging to drivers who use the Morrison compared to the 2008 closure as many drivers seemed "surprised" when construction began.
- Many committee members recommended early detour signage for cyclists at key intersection points approaching the Morrison Bridge so that cyclists have sufficient time to reroute without much trouble. Suggested areas with detour warnings are around 11th/12th Ave and along the Eastbank Esplanade.
- Some committee members recommended including either a map on the signage that show nearby open bridges or a QR code that cyclists can scan with their smart phone that would bring up a County website with a map and detour options.
- How can staff get the best information on travel data of the cyclists who use the Morrison Bridge? PBOT has some traffic modeling information that may help. BPCAC members could be a helpful resource for surveying bicyclists on the Morrison Bridge on where they're coming from and where they're going.
- Committee members recommend doing outreach to the business community downtown and also on the central eastside to get buy in on the detours and just to inform them of the closures.
- The Committee appreciates engineering staff attending the meeting and seeking input on the construction detour so far in advanced.

NW Naito Parkway On-ramp to Hawthorne Bridge

Kate and Jon brought up a concern raised by a citizen regarding the NW Naito Parkway on-ramp to the Hawthorne Bridge. .. Earlier this year, a citizen was involved in an accident where as a cyclists who was travelling eastbound in the bicycle lane in front of the NW Naito Parkway on-ramp, a vehicle approaching the stop sign did not stop and hit him. The citizen has requested that staff look into whether there are some engineering improvements that can be made to this conflict point. The citizen recommended either additional signage in the area alerting drivers that cyclists are crossing, or painting the bike lane green.

- Committee members were split on their experiences with this on-ramp while travelling westbound by bike. Some members who ride daily have never had problems, and other members have had close calls. Some members and staff are hesitant to add signage to the area as there already exists several signs.
- Several members like the concept of using the green paint in the bike lane (or installing green hash marks which has become the standard practice to convey a street crossing), but a couple members questioned if the green paint creates slick surfaces when it rains.. Other members noted that there are easy standard treatments that can be done to the paint surface so that it is not slick.
- Some members like the concept of flashing red lights installed next to the stop signs that are activated when cyclists are approaching. Jon can look into this option.
- Several members agreed that the ramp configuration encourages poor driver behavior. Overwhelmingly members agreed that “squaring off” the ramp to be more perpendicular to the bridge would be ideal, even if just paint and raised bumps (or candlesticks) are used to.
- There are also concerns about the pedestrian crosswalk being setback so far such that the first car at the ramp is “sandwiched” between the bicycle lane and pedestrian crosswalk when stopped at the stop sign. One member advocated for locating the pedestrian crosswalk and the bike lane next to one another for greater visibility and less conflict points. Also, members noted that reconfiguring the ramp to be more perpendicular to the bridge could better allow for this suggestion.
- The Committee noted that the sightlines are not great for motorists who are trying to entire the bride from the ramp. The railing along the sidewalk approaching the ramp blocks drivers’ view from seeing cyclists approach from further away.
- One member suggested working with PBOT on traffic management solutions on the west side of the bridge to encourage more motorists to enter the Hawthorne Bridge from SW 2nd/Morrison Ave rather than from Naito Parkway using the on-ramp.

Staff thanked the Committee for their feedback on this particular intersection and will consider the multiple suggestions from the Committee. Kate can follow up with the Committee on what options engineering staff decide to move forward with.

General Project Updates

Andrew shared that since the Westside Trail Master Plan was adopted at both the County and at Metro earlier this year, Metro has successfully acquired easements in the unincorporated West Hills near NW Springville Road for the future trail. Specifically the easement was acquired for the paved trail portion and not for the more soft-surface trail portion.

Kate passed along a few Sellwood Bridge related updates from Mike Pullen, from the County’s Public Affairs team. The interim improvements to the west side Highway 43 bike/ped detour should be in place relatively soon. Specifically, Mike is referring to the improvements to the

	<p>large driveways along the detour that have been the site of increased conflicts. Also, Mike has heard some concerns recently from the larger bike community about the timing of the new Sellwood Bridge opening in 2015 and that not all of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be opened. Mike is planning to attend a future Committee meeting to share these concerns in more details and get feedback for potential solutions.</p> <p>Carolyn shared a general concern regarding permissive left turn signals versus protected left turn signals. In recent discussions, Carolyn has heard of permission left turn signals being proposed as a measure to reduce carbon emissions (assuming there is less idling at an intersection if motorists can travel more fluidly through the intersection). However Carolyn noted that motorist behavior in the permissive left turn signals often creates more dangerous scenarios for pedestrians attempting to cross the street as motorists are concentrating on finding the gap in oncoming traffic to make the turn and not whether or not pedestrians are in the crosswalk.</p>
Next Scheduled Meeting	Wednesday September 10, 2014 at the Multnomah Building
Adjourned	8:35 PM
Submitted by	Kate McQuillan, staff liaison