



## **WESTSIDE TRAIL MASTER PLAN**

### **October 2012 open house summary**

#### **Introduction and overview**

In October, the Westside Trail master plan project team and stakeholder advisory committee members hosted two open houses at the following locations:

- Stoller Middle School on Oct. 29 from 6 to 8 p.m.
- Deer Creek Elementary School on Oct. 30 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Approximately 120 people attended the open houses and offered preferences on potential trail routes and priorities for trail funding. By show of hands, most of the participants were new to the project, having not attended the previous open houses in May.

Open house materials included project maps, estimated trail costs and a questionnaire. The same information was provided through a virtual open house posted on the project's web page for those unable to attend one of the meetings but interested in providing feedback. The questionnaire was available online from Oct. 24 to Nov. 12.

Sixty-one questionnaires were completed: 22 at the open houses, 36 online and three that were mailed to Metro. This document provides a summary of the feedback from the questionnaires and comments recorded on flip charts and maps at the open houses.

#### **Open house outreach**

18,000 postcards announcing the open houses were mailed to neighbors and local businesses within one half-mile of the trail study segments. An email was also sent to the project's interested person list.

Information about the project and the open houses appeared in the newsletters for CPOs 1, 4k, 4b and 6 as well as in the Oregonian. The open houses were also advertized in the Asian Reporter.

An announcement about the open houses was posted on Metro's website. A link to the online questionnaire appeared in a number of blogs and web pages including ouroakhills.org, oregonlive.com and bikeportland.org. Posters were distributed along portions of trail completed by the Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District and on their

website. A media release was issued to local newspapers the Thursday prior to the first open house.

### **Open house format**

Metro staff, project consultants and members of the project stakeholder advisory committee staffed the two open houses. Metro councilors Kathryn Harrington and Carl Hosticka welcomed participants during a brief presentation followed by a question and answer session. Attendees also talked with staff and members from the advisory committee and marked up maps with ideas about the proposed trail routes.

There were five stations at each open house:

- Station 1 – welcome/sign-in. Staff at this station welcomed participants and made sure they signed in. Participants were given a questionnaire and asked to fill it out before they left. Greeters also oriented attendees to the station flow and pointed out the children’s activity area and refreshments.
- Station 2 – project background. This station included a map of the study area and boards describing public feedback from the May open houses.
- Station 3 – trail segments. The open houses had aerial maps showing potential trail routes for the public to review and provide comments.
- Station 4 – children’s activity table. This station provided art supplies and activity books.
- Station 5 – refreshment table.

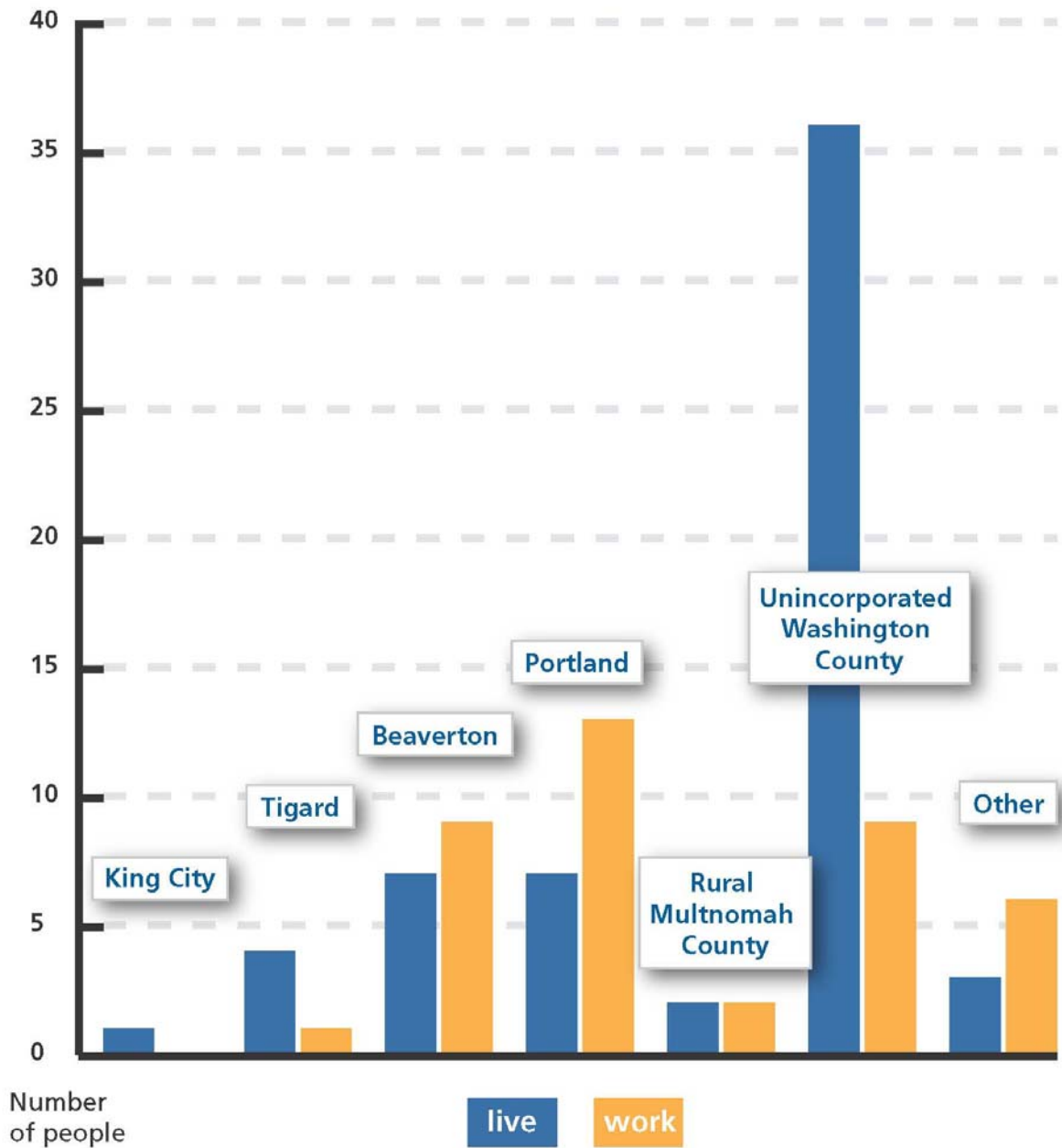
### **Respondent profile**

The questionnaire asked commenters where they live and work. As shown in Figure 1, almost two-thirds of respondents reported living in unincorporated Washington County. Beaverton and Portland were the second most-identified areas of residence. Few respondents reported living in Tigard, rural Multnomah County or King City.

One-third of respondents reported working in Portland, with Beaverton and unincorporated Washington County also commonly identified work locations. Overall, more commenters reported where they lived than where they worked. More than one-third did not identify a work location, many noting they were retired. Several respondents reported more than one work location.

Figure 1.

## Which community do you live/work in?

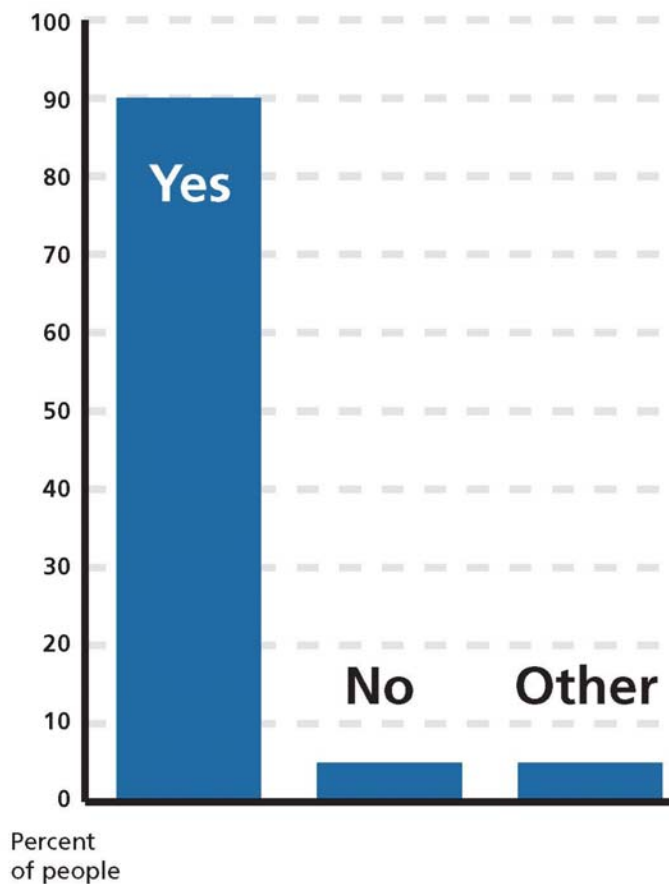


## Feedback on the open houses

The questionnaire asked about the effectiveness of the open houses. Of those who completed a questionnaire at the events, 90 percent responded they were able to share information with project staff (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.

### Were you able to share information with project staff that you feel was important?



## Responses to open-ended questions

The questionnaire posed five open-ended questions:

- “What areas of the Westside Trail are you most interested in?”
- “Other than trail alignments, roadway and stream crossings and cost estimates, what else would you like to know about the project?”
- “Do you prefer a specific route?”
- “Which part of the trail is the highest priority to you to complete?”
- “Please give us your thoughts about the open house.”

A summary of responses is included below.

### “What areas of the Westside Trail are you most interested in?”

Respondents expressed interest in the entire Westside Trail, including portions that have been built or will soon be built by the Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District (THPRD). The proposed extension north from the MAX Blue Line (see Figure 3) received the most comments, especially the portion through Oak Hills and from Bethany to Forest Park. Interest was also expressed on the southern extension, from SW Barrows Road south to the Tualatin River. A number of commenters mentioned the trail segment from NW Kaiser Road to NW Springville Road that is currently being designed by THPRD.

Figure 3.



**“Other than trail alignments, roadway and stream crossings and cost estimates, what else would you like to know about the project?”**

Commenters asked for information on a range of topics. They were particularly interested in the project timeline, including when portions of the trail might be designed and built. A number of Oak Hills–related questions were submitted, such as how West Union Road can be crossed safely and whether costs can be reduced by routing the trail around this neighborhood. Respondents were also interested in potential trailhead locations and amenities; how shared-use trails can safely accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians and equestrians; and impacts to private property adjacent to the trail.

**“Do you prefer a specific route?”**

Attendees were asked to identify potential trail routes they prefer. Most of the responses focused on areas in the proposed northern extension, from the MAX Blue Line to Skyline Boulevard, and included:

- Support for the existing 153rd Street crossing of the MAX Blue Line instead of a new crossing through a wetland area.
- Mixed feedback related to crossing Sunset Highway. Many favored a new crossing along the powerline corridor while others preferred to use existing crossings such as Bethany Boulevard, Murray Boulevard or Cornell Road. Those favoring existing crossings tended to also support realigning the Westside Trail around the Oak Hills community, either by using the Waterhouse Trail corridor, Bethany Boulevard or NW 143rd.
- Support for staying within the steep powerline corridor north of Skycrest Parkway. Commenters stated this route provides better trail access for those living nearby and results in fewer impacts to wildlife and an adjacent farm.
- Different opinions on potential routes in Multnomah County. Commenters supported the Springville Road and Skyline Boulevard improvements as well as the steeper, direct soft-surface trail. Other suggestions included a bridge from Springville Road to Skyline Boulevard and connecting to Forest Park at the Springville Road Trailhead instead of at Saltzman Road.

**“Which part of the trail is the highest priority to you to complete?”**

Respondents had different priorities for trail construction. Many commenters supported extending the trail south from Forest Park first, with a few commenters prioritizing the route from the Tualatin River north. Respondents also identified specific crossings (Sunset Highway and the MAX Blue Line) or routes within specific communities (Bethany and Bull Mountain) as priorities. In addition to pinpointing specific parts of the trail, commenters prioritized building first those parts that:

- Are easier and cheaper to construct because they are flat.
- Allow bicyclists and pedestrians to avoid heavy auto traffic.

- Connect residential areas with schools and shopping.
- Intersect with other existing trails.
- Travel through neighborhoods with more families with children.

**“Please give us your thoughts about the open house”**

Feedback on the open houses was largely positive, with respondents stating that the meetings were informative, the maps were helpful and that staff (including local police) were available for discussions. Those with concerns felt that trail route decisions had already been made and questioned the purpose of the events. Some commenters also wanted more information on segments of the trail that are currently being designed by THPRD.