

October 2014 - May 2016 Public Engagement Summary

In fall 2014 Southwest Corridor project partners defined an 18-month workplan to refine the proposed set of high capacity transit (HCT) alignments and roadway, bicycle and pedestrian projects that would enter federal environmental review in the fall of 2016. Another major milestone of this refinement period was to determine if light rail or bus rapid transit would be the preferred mode. The purpose of this public engagement summary is to document the activities and outcomes of Southwest Corridor Plan outreach from October 2014 through May 2016. This work builds on public engagement activities conducted from the beginning of the Southwest Corridor Plan process.



Creating a Preferred Package

Six years ago, regional leaders began envisioning a set of transportation and land use solutions to address key challenges and enhance livability in the Southwest Corridor. The Southwest Corridor Plan is a package of transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian solutions that can help reduce congestion, improve circulation and improve quality of life in the corridor. The Southwest Corridor Plan defines transportation investments to help realize the local land use visions adopted by each community in the area. Community members, business leaders, transit providers, the state and local governments are working together now to plan for these transportation and community development improvements in this corridor.

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Overall themes

Throughout the refinement period staff repeatedly asked the public what they felt were the most important outcomes that the Southwest Corridor Plan should deliver. In multiple online and in-person settings, key desired benefits rose to the top:

- Delivers fast, reliable transit travel times
- Attracts a significant number of new transit riders
- Increases access to employment and education centers in the corridor
- Results in fewer cars on the road
- Includes walking and biking improvements to transit stations and throughout local communities.

Much of our outreach was place-based, asking residents to tell us what they valued about their neighborhoods, what they wanted to preserve and how they hoped high capacity transit could bring benefit. While each community has unique history and perspective, here are some key themes that emerged from our conversations:

- Desire for less congestion on the roads
- Concern that HCT may take away driving lanes
- Provide fast, reliable transit service with adequate park and rides
- Improve local bus service



- Safety concerns for people who take transit, walk and ride bikes
- Residents want to maintain the local character of neighborhoods and businesses
- Provide benefit to neighborhoods, don't just pass through on the way to someplace else
- Avoid or mitigate negative impacts to local traffic and business access
- High capacity transit should link parts of the community together, not be a wall that divides the community
- Improved sidewalks and bike lanes are important to local livability and safety
- Interest in how transportation investment can serve other communities not immediately on the HCT alignment, including Lake Oswego, Kruse Way, Wilsonville, King City.

Public Engagement Objectives

- Provide relevant information to the public about upcoming project deliberations
- Generate public feedback and ideas and ensure that feedback is presented to decision makers
- Communicate with stakeholders in a way that generates understanding and enthusiasm for the project
- Build on existing relationships with engaged members of the public and build new relationships with public whose perspectives have been underrepresented to date
- Demonstrate that decision makers are receiving and considering community input when deliberating decisions

Public Engagement Desired Outcomes

- Input on key issues and trade-offs specific to each key community in the corridor
- Summary of stakeholder perspectives on HCT alignment choices
- Input on desired benefits that Southwest Corridor Plan investments can bring to communities in the region
- Elevated voices of champions for the project
- Public stakeholders feel they have access to project details, technical staff and decision makers
- Decision-makers understand and consider public input in their decision making

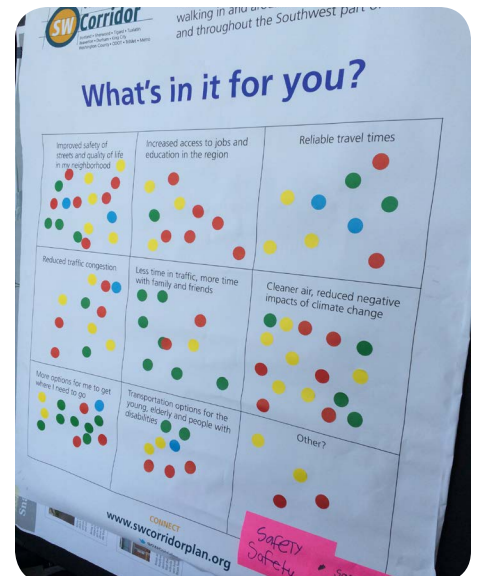
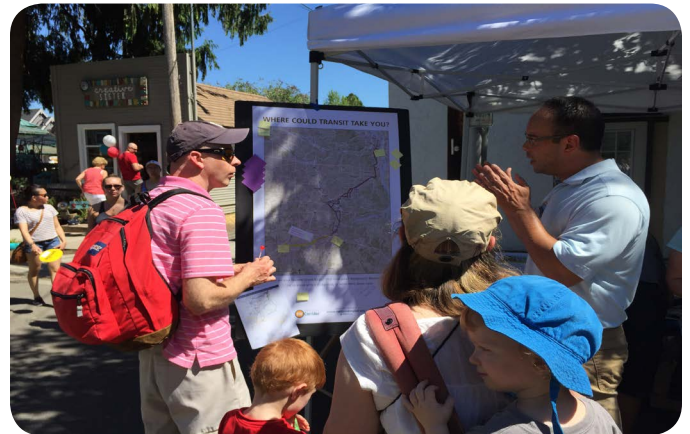
Tabling events

Throughout the year project staff attends a number of tabling events at communities, local colleges and business centers, especially in the summer months when we can connect with residents at the area's farmers markets and community celebrations.

These events are a great opportunity to meet people who may not be familiar with the project and to ask people what benefits they want to see a Southwest Corridor project deliver to their community. Here's what we heard at our tabling events:

- Improve safety and quality of streets in my neighborhood
- Reduce negative impacts of climate change, improve air quality
- Provide more options for me to get where I need to go
- Reduce traffic congestion
- I want to spend less time in traffic, more time with family and friends
- Increase access to jobs and education in the region
- Provide transportation options for the young, elderly and people with disabilities
- Provide reliable travel times.

- National College of Natural Medicine, November 2014
- PCC Sylvania Earth Day, April 2015
- Tualatin Movies on the Commons, May 2015
- OHSU Farmers Market, June 2015
- Tualatin Farmers Market, July 2015
- Sherwood, OR Robinhood Festival, July 2015
- Tigard Farmers Market, September 2015
- Orange MAX line opening day, September 2015
- PCC Sylvania Student Welcome Day, September 2015
- PCC Sylvania Staff In-service Day, September 2015
- Well and Good Coffee House, Tigard June 2016



Key themes on major steering committee decisions

Each major decision by the steering committee is informed by a public comment period that includes public forums or open house, online surveys and solicitation of public testimony regarding the upcoming decision. The following is a summary of input received for major steering committee decisions July 2015-May 2016. Summaries of each outreach period and the input we received have been previously published in multiple documents available on our website, and collected into the online appendix of this document.



July 2015 steering committee decisions

Should the Marquam Hill-Hillsdale light rail tunnel continue to be part of the project?

Should the Hillsdale loop cut-and-cover tunnel for bus rapid transit and light rail continue to be part of the project?

When asked via online surveys, an open house and other community dialogues which factors were most important for decision makers to consider, respondents highlighted:

- High construction cost: input was divided among those who felt tunnel cost was too high and others who felt the cost was worth the benefit
- Desire for high ridership
- Desire for fast travel times
- Desire for direct connection to Marquam Hill

- Need to include walk and bike improvements to Capitol Highway and Barbur Boulevard
- Neighborhood construction impacts: input was divided among those with strong concern over neighborhood construction impacts and others who felt this should not be a major factor in decision making.



January 2016 steering committee decisions

Should the Ash Avenue, Branch Service, Clinton Crossing, Commercial Loop and Downtown Loop alignment options in Tigard continue to be part of the project?

Should the downtown Tualatin terminus be removed from consideration?

When asked via online surveys and the online map tool which factors were important to consider when selecting Tigard alignments for further study, respondents highlighted:

- Faster travel times
- Better connected streets, bicycle and pedestrian facilities between downtown Tigard and Tualatin.

When asked which factors were most important for decision makers to consider when deciding where a future high capacity transit line should end (called the terminus), respondents highlighted:

- Ease of access by bikes and pedestrians
- Effect on travel times
- Potential for extending line in the future
- Effect on ridership.

People also highlighted additional issues including concern for removing auto lanes for transit capacity, concerns about potential property impacts, support for viable alternatives to driving to reduce congestion and questions about how a high capacity transit line will interact with WES.



May 2016 steering committee decisions

What is the preferred mode—bus rapid transit or light rail—for the Southwest Corridor?

Should a light rail tunnel directly serving the PCC Sylvania campus be advanced into the Draft Environmental Impact Statement?

When asked via an online survey, open house and other community dialogues about the choice between light rail and bus rapid transit, respondents echoed the desire for overall project benefits including fast, reliable travel times, high ridership and access to key places. Other important factors regarding the mode decision included:

- Capacity to serve future rush hour demand
- Capacity to extend the line in the future
- Lower ongoing cost to operate per rider
- Flexibility under road blockages and extreme weather.

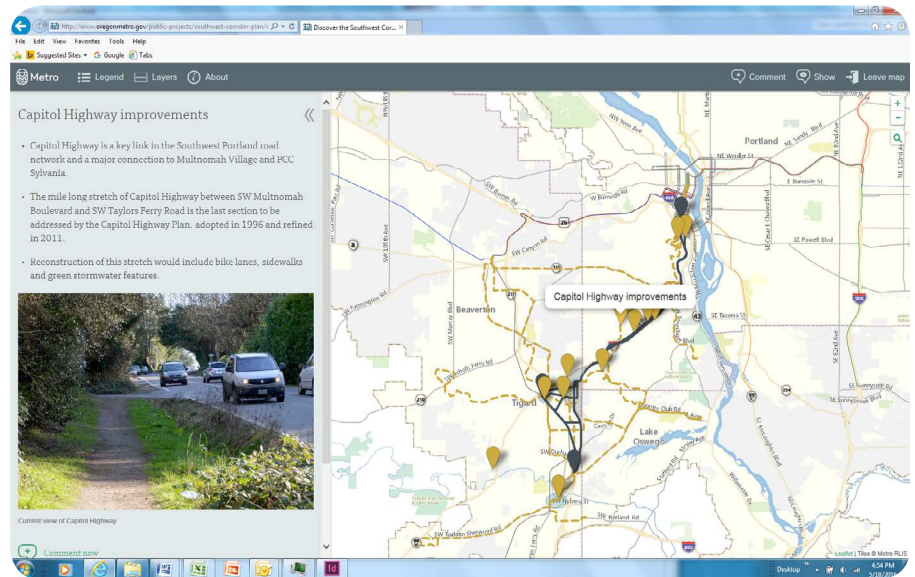
The public had a diverse set of opinions regarding the benefits and trade offs of a light rail tunnel to serve the PCC Sylvania campus. Overall themes from online surveys, open houses and community dialogues include:

- Finding ways to improve transit service to campus is very important
- Many felt the high cost of tunnels exceeded their benefit; others felt the cost was worth the long term benefit to the region
- Some residents felt strongly that negative construction impacts to neighbors should be a major factor in deciding to build a tunnel
- Improving connections to the campus from communities in Washington County is important.



Southwest Corridor map tool

In 2015 the project team launched an online map tool where users can click on various points throughout the corridor to learn more and provide feedback. Thousands of people have visited the map and shared input through survey questions and open ended comment boxes throughout the map. In spring 2015 the map tool provided information on HCT alignment options and gathered feedback on HCT tunnels being considered. In fall 2015 staff updated the map to focus information and survey questions on HCT alignments in the Tigard and Tualatin areas and possible HCT terminus locations. In spring 2016 staff updated the map again to highlight a variety of bicycle, pedestrian and roadway projects that are crucial components of the Southwest Corridor Plan.



We want to continue to better understand how our online map tool can be a useful resource for project stakeholders and an opportunity to provide feedback. Please let us know what you think and how we can continue to improve the map tool.

Transit rider intercept surveys

In Spring 2016, Metro public involvement staff worked with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance and TriMet to design a transit rider intercept survey that assessed the following:

- Current ridership habits including how frequently riders use transit and how they access their current transit stop
- Desired safety/access improvements at existing Southwest Corridor-area transit stops
- High-priority destinations in the Southwest Corridor
- Riders' feelings on potential negative impacts of a new light rail line.



A total of 134 rider surveys were completed at four different transit stations in the Southwest Corridor during late afternoons in April 2016. Of the 134 respondents:

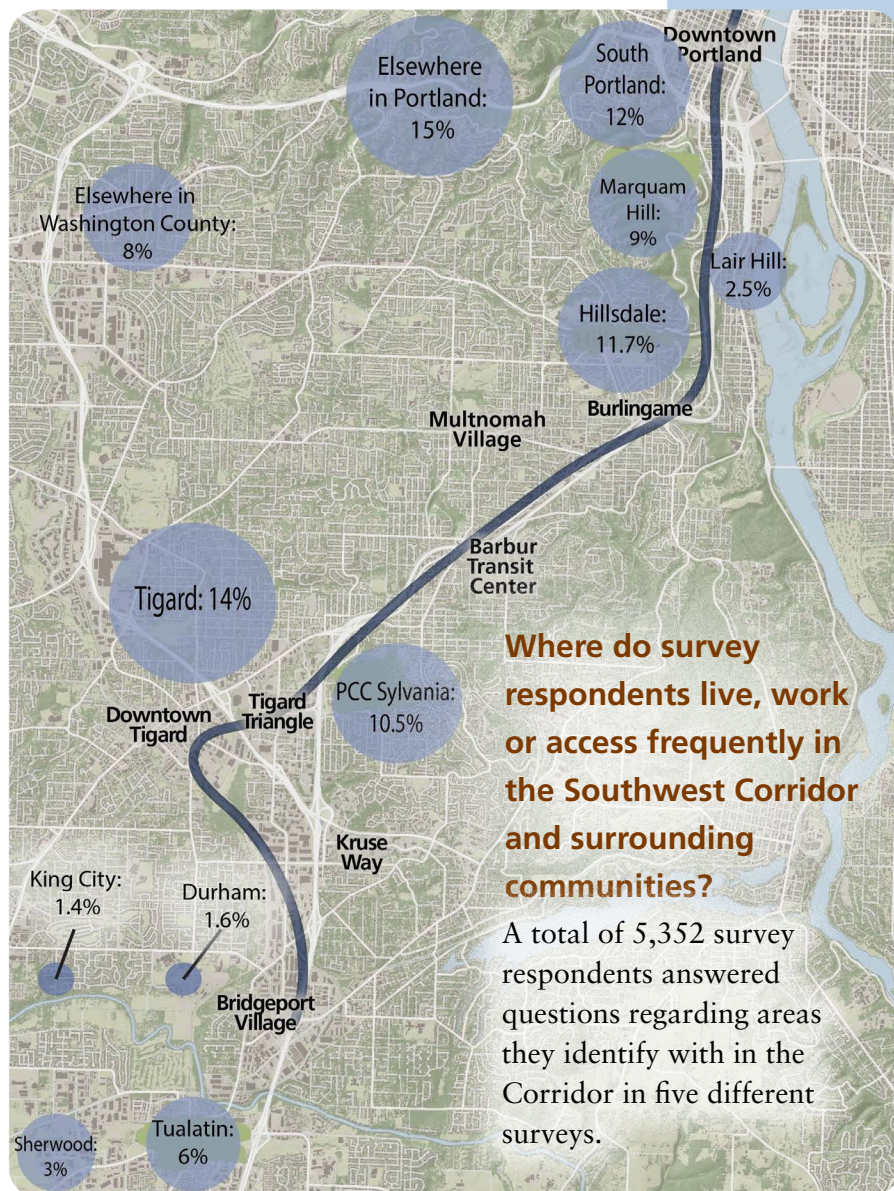
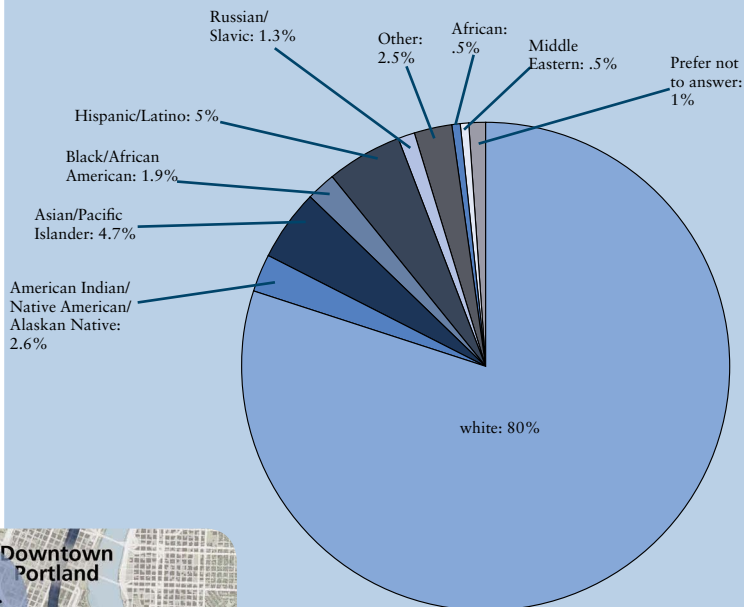
- 83% frequently ride transit ("Most Days")
- 75% walk to their bus stop
- 49% did not identify any needed improvements to access their stop, while 27% said complete sidewalks were needed to access their stop
- 31% identified downtown Portland as a priority destination, 28% identified PCC Sylvania, 21% identified the Tigard Triangle and 18% identified Bridgeport Village
- 35% had no concerns about negative impacts, 28% chose air quality as a priority impact to address, 21% chose impacts to homes and 19% chose interference with auto traffic.

Who did we hear from?

Project online surveys include a set of optional demographic questions. Asking respondents for their age, income, race/ethnicity, gender, and areas where they live and work in the corridor helps us improve our outreach and strive for full participation by potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process. The charts on this page combine demographic data from multiple surveys. We realize that some of the same people responded to multiple surveys and there may be duplicate representation. Our intent in providing these charts is to provide a general sense of who is responding to project surveys.

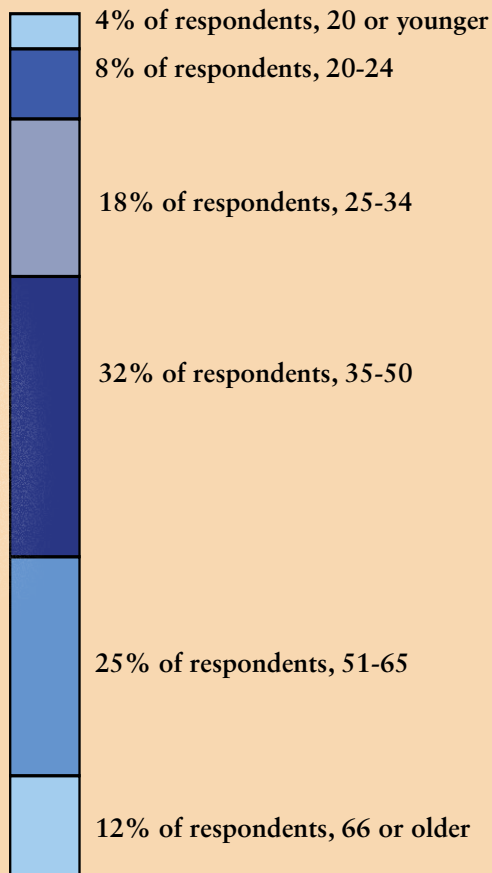
Racial/Ethnic Demographics

A total of 4,284 survey respondents answered questions regarding race/ethnicity in five different surveys.



Age Demographics

A total of 3,460 survey respondents answered questions regarding age in five different surveys.



Tools/Methods

My Place Dialogues and Community Conversations

Meetings with formal and informal civic, business, resident and youth groups to connect with the public in key places in the corridor. These events focus on geographic, social and cultural issues to elevate the unique local benefits and impacts of the project and also set each community's choices in the context of corridor-wide project performance and decision-making.



What we did/Who we met with

- National College of Natural Medicine
- South Portland Neighborhood Association
- Hillsdale Neighborhood Association
- Far Southwest Neighborhood Association
- Homestead Neighborhood Association
- Markham Neighborhood Association
- Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. Transportation Subcommittee
- Hillsdale residents
- Concerned Citizens for Social Justice
- Drinking Liberally in Tigard
- Portland Business Alliance
- Tigard Downtown Alliance
- Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee
- Westside Economic Alliance
- Washington County Coordinating Committee
- Tigard City Center Advisory Committee
- Tualatin Youth Advisory Council
- Tigard Youth Advisory Council
- Supa Fresh Farm, Youth Source
- Oregon Somali Family Education Center
- Greenburg Oaks residents, Community Partners for Affordable Housing
- Somali American Council of Oregon
- Lair Hill residents and business owners
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Coalition for a Livable Future
- Center for Intercultural Organizing

Online information and surveys

Online surveys to generate specific feedback to staff and decision-makers on project decisions. Up-to-date web site that provides access to project materials, upcoming events and summaries of steering committee decisions. See appendix for online survey data.

- Online survey, May 8-22, 2015
- Online survey, June 12-26, 2015
- Online survey, September 15-October 5, 2015
- Online survey, October 19-November 9, 2015
- Online survey, December 4-31, 2015
- Online survey, January 4-February 15, 2016
- Online survey, April 18-28, 2016
- Monthly updates to web site design and content

Tools/Methods

Corridor-wide planning forums

Structured events geared at large numbers of public stakeholders, opportunities to provide in-depth project detail and generate feedback.

Open houses and tabling events

Semi-structured opportunities for interested people to drop by to talk and ask questions of staff and decision makers.



ID Southwest

Appointed committee of community leaders who can activate local dialogue that shapes transportation and land use investment in the corridor, and can make the most of public-private partnerships.

Focused discussions

Public meetings with a specific focus on technical or special interest topics.

What we did/Who we met with

- May 12, 2015, Wilson High School
- October 19, 2015 Tigard Public Works Building
- April 6, 2016, Southwest Community Center
- Southwest Corridor Plan Open House, June 2015
- National College of Natural Medicine, November 2014
- PCC Sylvania Earth Day, April 2015
- Tualatin Movies on the Commons, May 2015
- OHSU Farmers Market, June 2015
- Tualatin Farmers Market, July 2015
- Sherwood, OR Robinhood Festival, July 2015
- Tigard Farmers Market, September 2015
- Orange MAX line opening day, September 2015
- PCC Sylvania Student Welcome Day, September 2015
- PCC Sylvania Staff In-service Day, September 2015
- Well and Good Coffee House, Tigard, June 2016
- ID Southwest Meetings, May 2015, October 2015, March 2016
- Membership in ID Southwest is representative of communities and expertise throughout the study area.
- Technical Workshops: Southwest Neighborhoods Inc., April 2015, May 2016
- Marquam Hill Design Connection: Ahavath Achim synagogue, Friends of Terwilliger, OHSU, Veterans Hospital, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc.

