

Clackamas County LIT Meeting 3: McLoughlin Boulevard

Meeting: Metro Local Investment Team, Clackamas County

Date/time: July 30th, 2019, 5:30 pm to 8 pm

Place: Milwaukie City Hall, Council Chambers

Purpose: Tour corridor, review possible projects and gather LIT feedback

Attendance

LIT Members

Bradley Bondy

Nina Carlson

Greg Chaimov

Martine Coblenz

Jeff Gudman

Chips Janger

Nicole Perry

Staff

Margi Bradway, *Metro*

Kate Fagerholm, *Metro*

Karynn Fish, *Metro*

Camilla Dartnell, *Kittelson & Associates, Inc*

Brian Ray, *Kittelson & Associates, Inc*

Allison Brown, *JLA Public Involvement*

Jenny Clark, *JLA Public Involvement*

General Public

Steve Adams, *City of Milwaukie*

Matt Bihn, *Metro*

Karen Buehrig, *Clackamas County*

Laura Edmonds, *NC Chamber*

Christine Lewis, *Metro*

Tessie Prentice, *City of Milwaukie*

Claire Prihoda, *Office of Representative McLain*

Walter Robinson II, *Getting There Together Coalition*

Paul Scarlett, *ODOT*

Paul Savas, *Clackamas County*

Bob Stacey, *Metro*

Jamie Stasny, *Clackamas County*

Pam Treece, *Washington County*

Dayna Webb, *Oregon City*

Summary of Discussion

A prominent theme that emerged was how to make transit more accessible for many kinds of users and prioritizing safety improvements. Some concern was expressed around taking full advantage of the opportunity and in making cost-effective, practical decisions. There were multiple perspectives around what type of transit should be prioritized, especially on whether increasing capacity at the Park Avenue Station is a viable consideration in comparison to other options. Other key areas of focus were freight travel and job creation, equity for historically marginalized communities, and community impact concerns.

Meeting

The meeting began with quick introductions followed by a brief presentation from Brian Ray and Camilla Dartnell (Kittelson and Associates) on proposed projects along the McLoughlin Boulevard corridor with focus on the Clackamas county portion. The group then went on a tour of the corridor led by Margi Bradway (Metro). The LIT members returned for a discussion of potential projects and their priorities, facilitated by Allison Brown (JLA Public Involvement).

Presentation

The following elements were presented regarding the McLoughlin Boulevard corridor:

- Regionally, McLoughlin Boulevard connects communities in Clackamas to jobs, housing, and transit, and serves as an alternative to routes such as I-205 between Portland and Clackamas County.
- Locally, McLoughlin Boulevard serves as a downtown or major street for several areas.
- It is a high crash corridor with 9 total fatalities (7 pedestrian) and 87 serious injuries from Milwaukie to Oregon City, and 2 fatalities with 6 serious injuries on the Powell to Milwaukie stretch. The following systemic safety opportunities were overviewed:
 - Access management such as median islands or narrowing/consolidation access points
 - Consistent and more visible crosswalk striping
 - Continued bicycle lane striping through intersections and other intersection treatments
- Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) projects and local project opportunities included:
 - Boulevard improvements in Oregon City for walkability
 - Intersection improvements at River Road
 - Reedway Street pedestrian/bicycle overcrossing
 - Kellogg Creek Dam removal and pedestrian underpass
 - Expand Park Avenue Park & Ride Station
 - Clackamas River Bridge and improved connectivity for bikes and pedestrians
 - I-205 overcrossing and improvement on pedestrian/bicycle facilities

- Portland to Milwaukie Trail (Trolley Trail) gap closures and crossings
- Connect pedestrian and bike routes for improved safety and comfort
- Improved pedestrian crossings
- Enhanced transit corridor (ETC) elements such as bypass lanes, business access transit (BAT) lanes, and bus shelters.

Tour

The group attended a 60-minute tour of the corridor. LIT members, as well as elected officials and the general public were able to ask questions about the corridor and associated projects planned for the area. No notes were taken during this part of the meeting and members were encouraged to share their thoughts in a group discussion after the tour.

Group Discussion

The group reassembled after the tour to discuss what they had seen, as well as review additional information from the technical team. Below is a bulleted summary of comments and questions raised by LIT members, followed by responses of the technical team. Responses from Metro or Kittelson are shown as a sub-bullet.

Safety Issues

LIT members discussed the need for safety considerations for future projects. The key points were:

- The need for safe crossings. One member commented on the long stretches between stoplights down the corridor as presenting the opportunity for pedestrian bridges.
- Another member emphasized center turn lanes were confusing and made left turns more hazardous.
- The need to prioritize safety over aesthetics, especially along the stretch from Milwaukie to Oregon City.
- One member asked about the costs for Enhanced Transit Corridor options (ETC) and what funds could accomplish.
 - Brian (Kittelson) responded that due to the length of the corridor, ETC improvements would be a collection of smaller projects. He continued, from a safety standpoint, the high-value/low-cost and low-impact elements associated with making small changes along the corridor is a huge benefit.

Efficient Travel and Accessibility

Members discussed topics of transit accessibility and efficiency along the corridor. There were multiple viewpoints on what to prioritize. The key points were:

- There should be consistent bike lanes, sidewalks, transit facilities and pedestrian crossings.
- One member commented that getting people from A to B in an efficient manner should be prioritized, which does not include pedestrian and bike development. The member continued how the urban growth boundary will continue to densify, so as the region grows there will be a need to focus on moving people in a cost-effective, efficient way.

- There was interest in River Road and Oatfield serving as alternatives to McLoughlin in order to minimize congestion.
- One member was interested in improving light rail, extending grade separation, and BAT (business access transit) lanes in tandem with improving accessibility for bikes and pedestrians.
 - Brian (Kittelson) noted a critical component of future projects would be to make McLoughlin a continuous corridor through consistency in lights, bike lanes, sidewalks, and crossings that collectively bring the corridor together, so it is a roadway that supports all users and can help drivers make better decisions.
- One member was concerned that incremental changes made down the corridor would be more artificial than in prioritizing high capacity bus transit system (such as Bus Rapid Transit, or BRT), and expressed interest in taking full advantage of the opportunity to make real change happen for the community. It was also noted that light rail improvements may be expensive.
- Transit will have to be more accessible for many kinds of users to reduce single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs).
- Some disagreement arose around prioritizing the opportunity to improve the Park Avenue Station.
 - There was interest in better connecting communities to transit options, specifically how to get transit users to the Park Ave Station (i.e. the 'last mile').
 - One member commented most people get to MAX stations by walking or biking, and adding parking at the station should not be prioritized over pedestrian and bike lane improvements.
 - Another member noted that a lack of parking can make using transit difficult for people who do have the option to drive. By adding parking, the station could be more accessible and help increase ridership.
 - One member asked about TriMet completing the Park Avenue Station project and what other sources of funding exist.
- There was interest in exploring autonomous vehicles or new technologies as a way to help with 'last mile' issues.

Efficacy and Economic Growth

The topic of project efficacy and practicality arose, as did considerations around economic growth and cost-effectiveness. Key points were:

- The need to be aware of changes to zoning laws or practices that may interfere with project completion.
- The need to accommodate freight travel and freight jobs for local markets. More data was requested on freight routes.
- One member commented on making the best use of funds, and hoped to prioritize projects based on their cost-effectiveness.

- Discrepancy between growth and development in the McLoughlin corridor versus other corridors was noted. One member expressed interest in prioritizing projects in areas where there is less development.
- The need to consider land use opportunities, including residential/commercial development.

Equity and Community Concerns

LIT members were especially interested in improving equity and in getting community buy-in for projects. The key points discussed were:

- One member expressed concern around equity in Jennings Lodge and Candy Lane communities: *I want to be sure we're prioritizing for historically marginalized communities.*
- There was concern around engaging small businesses along the corridor and the importance of small business owner buy-in for projects.
- One member emphasized the desire to keep corridor communities as a 'sense of place.'
 - Brian (Kittelson) emphasized each community can have a character identity along the corridor while also maintaining continuous opportunities for crossings and other road improvements.

Additional Member Feedback

MLIT members were invited to share additional feedback outside of the meeting. Comments collected via email include:

- More frequent and safe pedestrian crossings, ideally over-road crossings.
- A separate lane for right turns and buses.
- An extension of the MAX line farther into Milwaukie / Gladstone.
- Projects that reduce congestion at the tightest points, including where the 3 lanes merge to 2 right before the tree-lined portion of the street near the big park.
- I really appreciate the focus that we had on safety improvements; however I do not believe the proposed improvements are adequate. They are great stop gap measures, but the proposed Bike/Ped improvements are not enough to make the corridor safe for all road users of all ages and abilities.
- Buffered bike lanes, while an improvement over the status quo, are not enough for a child, or even most adults to feel safe riding in. And importantly when a cyclist reaches an intersection, what little separation existed before disappears, and cyclists are forced into a space where very little thought has been spent on the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. Again this is fine as a stop gap to bring improvements to the corridor quickly, but we've been tasked with thinking boldly, and a bit of re-striping of the roadway is not bold thinking.
- What McLoughlin needs is protected bike lanes, street trees, and intersections that are thoughtfully designed to ensure that vulnerable road users, including children and people with mobility difficulties, can cross safely. I've attached an image of what a cross section of McLoughlin should become.
- I also want to stress that the Orange Line should be extended to Oregon City, and even if that doesn't happen as part of this measure, care should be taken to ensure that what's built doesn't preclude that from happening. As a stop gap BAT lanes are fine, but the proposed

mile of a southbound only BAT lane isn't adequate as a short term project, let alone as a long term one. They need to go all the way from Downtown Milwaukie to Oregon City's transit center, and they need to go in both directions. I'm also interested in allowing freight to use these lanes, as trucks make up a small percentage trips on the corridor but are critical to the corridor's commercial and industrial businesses.