



## CITY OF LAKE OSWEGO Sustainability Advisory Board Minutes

January 20, 2011

### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Co-chair Bruce Brown called the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) meeting of January 20, 2011, to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Main Fire Station, 300 B Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

Members present:	Co-chair Grant Watkinson, Co-chair Bruce Brown, Dorothy Atwood, Daniel Gottlieb, and Vidya Kale
Members excused/absent:	Sarah Asby, Gary Bachofner, Matt Briggs and Gregory Monahan
Council Liaison:	Sally Moncrieff
Staff present:	Susan Millhauser, Sustainability Coordinator/Staff Liaison; David Donaldson, Assistant City Manager; Brant Williams, Director, Economic and Capital Development Department; Christine Kirk, Public Affairs; and Alex Deley, AmeriCorps worker

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Moncrieff commended Co-chair Brown for his excellent presentation of the 2011 SAB Work Plan and Goals. Deley announced the SAM steering committee would meet the following Wednesday.

PUBLIC COMMENT (None)

### REGULAR BUSINESS

#### **Lake Oswego to Portland (LOTP) Transit Project Briefing**

Brant Williams, Director, Economic and Capital Development Department, and Christine Kirk, Public Relations Department talked about the transit Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the Health Impact Assessment of the DEIS, and Foothills redevelopment. Co-chair Brown disclosed that his firm was working on the Foothills District Framework Plan.

Williams explained the Highway 43 corridor was too constrained to be expanded to provide more capacity for the future, so three transit alternatives were being considered: No Build; Enhanced Bus Service; and Streetcar service. The DEIS reported the impacts of each alternative. Both Enhanced Bus and Streetcar alternative called for a park and ride facility at Albertsons. Most of the Streetcar line would be over the existing Willamette Shore line right-of-way, but portions of it might be routed over Macadam at Johns Landing; over a Dunthorpe

street; and to a park and ride in Foothills. During the discussion Williams clarified it would be a single track line. Co-chair Watkinson cautioned that the projected ridership of the streetcar might be understated. Highway 43 would be almost at capacity when the new line was operational. Williams recalled that actual ridership of the Portland Streetcar had been higher than projected. Brown anticipated fee-paying ridership on the the new east side line would show Lake Oswego what to expect. He suggested the comparisons should factor in the cost of parking in Portland and the cost of the carbon footprint per passenger mile. Kale suggested factoring in the projected future increase in the cost of fuel.

Williams talked about the capital cost of the streetcar. The fact the City and its partners already owned the Willamette Shore right-of-way, an anticipated Federal Transportation Agency (FTA) contribution of 60% and anticipated state participation would likely reduce the City's part of capital cost to 3% or 4% (\$12 to \$17 million). Watkinson questioned whether the FTA would contribute 60%. Williams explained the agency was paying 50% of the cost of the Milwaukie rail project because of the way that project had been categorized. The standard federal percentage of a project the size of the Highway 43 project was 60%. He clarified for Councilor Moncrieff that the Highway 43 project was too big to be classified as a "Small Start" federal project (which had a smaller funding limit). He advised it would be three or four years before the City would have to start paying for it and between now and then there were multiple decision points where the City would decide whether to keep the project moving forward. The next decision point was when the Council chose the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). After that Council would have to decide if it wanted to fund the next step of the project to move forward with the preferred alternative. Atwood suggested combining the operations and maintenance and capital costs and amortizing them over 50 years to better compare the alternatives. Buses would likely have to be replaced more frequently than a streetcar. Williams confirmed that if the Willamette Shore right-of-way were no longer used for rail purposes ownership would legally revert back to the adjacent property owners. The City would have to purchase those rights from them if it wanted to use the right-of-way for a trail. That was not being explored right now due to cost. He confirmed that the project had heard from some residents of Dunthorpe who supported the Dunthorpe design option, but there might be other residents who did not support it.

Williams pointed out Chapter 3 of the DEIS described impacts to areas such as the Kincaid trail, wetlands, and waterways that would have to be mitigated. He clarified that some trail proponents wanted a trail as part of the streetcar project because the streetcar project would benefit from federal funding and a separate trail project would have to be paid for with local funds. He confirmed the Highway 43 corridor was subject to landslides and retaining walls and appropriate drainage facilities would be necessary. He agreed that one advantage of having a streetcar was that it would offer alternative transportation capacity if the highway was blocked by a landslide. He said the project would work to minimize impacts on Tryon Creek. He suggested it would be nice to replace the existing culvert with a bridge that allowed fish passage and served pedestrian and bicyclists, too. He advised the project would have to mitigate its impact on the floodplain in Foothills. Atwood suggested making air quality comparisons between the alternatives in actual numbers of carbon dioxide emissions and fuel consumption. She wanted to know where the hazardous sites were that the streetcar alternative would deal with. Williams clarified the DEIS focused on reporting on the things that

the federal agency required it to report on. The 60 day DEIS public comment period was to end on January 31. He encouraged the Board to submit written comments to Metro via mail or [www.oregonMetro.gov](http://www.oregonMetro.gov) or at a public meeting at the Lakewood Center the following Monday; then participate in the LPA process. If the project moved forward there would be a Final Environmental Impact Statement, then engineering and design phases. Construction would start in 2015-2016. Atwood wanted to know what would happen if one of the participating jurisdictions said “no” to the project. Williams anticipated if Lake Oswego said “no” the project would not happen because Lake Oswego benefitted the most from it.

Brown suggested the SAB point out on what data was missing. He suggested comparing the savings that could be attributed to carbon reduction for each alternative as well as potential cost of future carbon tax that may be avoided by each alternative. Watkinson suggested assessing the operational cost of an alternative in a similar manner as the Board talked about the operational cost of a building. He did not see anything in the report that discussed the projected cost of fuel, which he assumed was going to ramp up to five or six dollars a gallon by 2035. Kale wanted the comparisons to factor in that the streetcar line would be built to last long past 2035 – perhaps for 50 years. He suggested the cost of the toxic dumps cleanup in the streetcar alternative be factored into the analysis. That would have to be done sometime in the future and the streetcar project offered an opportunity to pay for it. Atwood suggested factoring in the cost of repaving Highway 43. Brown suggested factoring in the wear and tear on streets from buses. Kale reasoned that Enhanced Bus was not an option because as the population grew Tri-Met would have to buy more buses.

Christine Kirk reported that West Linn had studied its transit options and found that most riders going west or to Portland transferred in Lake Oswego. Board members asked if Lake Oswego would also be the hub for the future Washington Square to Clackamas Town Center line. Williams advised that was many years in the future. The next major Tri-Met regional rail project would be through the SW Barbur corridor. When asked, he advised the water taxi alternative had been studied, but it would not work very well because of permitting requirements and because it required infrastructure in many places to get commuters to the riverfront.

Kirk presented information about the Health Impact Assessment of the DEIS, prepared for Metro by the Oregon Public Health Institute. She suggested the SAB refer to it as they were doing a sustainability assessment of the transportation project. She pointed out there was a contact person who would welcome their questions. She highlighted aspects of the Assessment. It discussed the relative safety of mass transit over cars and the health benefit of walking or biking to and from transit. It looked at pollutants and construction impacts. It recommended mitigation for construction impacts. The consultants’ conclusion was that enhanced bus or streetcar service was better than the No Build option in most cases. Atwood observed that construction impacts would only last a couple of years. Kirk suggested the SAB assess Foothills, too. She observed that the DEIS did not factor in lost opportunity for growth and additional density there or the benefits of having a walkable community. It did not discuss how redeveloping Foothills would improve quality of life in Lake Oswego because it would expand the tax base, benefit the School District and retail there would help sustain the economic base of the community.

Williams reported that the City, a developer, and five Foothills landowners had partnered to explore developing Foothills. They had agreed to a common vision. They agreed that a streetcar would be a key element in creating the vision. A citizens' committee was considering what Foothills should look like. He did not anticipate it would be another South Waterfront high-rise area, but he observed that it could feature eight or nine story high buildings and still not intrude on the view corridor from downtown because of the topography. When asked how forming an urban renewal district there would impact the City, he observed that current property values were very low and generated low tax revenue, but as soon as the industrial area was rezoned land values would rise and so would the revenue. It might be redeveloped to 60-80 units per acre. He cited studies that showed a streetcar spurred development. Part of the project was to find ways to work with Portland to mitigate the sewer plant. It might provide irrigation for Foothills. Atwood suggested it could supply energy too. Councilor Moncrieff recalled that Oswego Point used to be the site of a cement plant and tax increment financing had been used to redevelop it. Williams clarified the consultants were planning where flood waters would be directed when a 100 year flood happened.

When asked if there was a plan to put affordable housing in Foothills, Williams anticipated that Section 8 housing was not very possible because of the necessary subsidies and high land prices. But the citizens' committee had talked about "work force housing" that City staff and other people who worked in Lake Oswego could afford. He pointed out one of its guiding principles was residential diversity. He anticipated the City Council would consider what kind of income brackets to target for Foothills. Atwood recalled participants at the recent design charrette wanted to make it a live/work place that encouraged entrepreneurial activity. A Board member suggested the Embarcadero was a good model for that. Williams said the planners wanted to see a variety of buildings and public spaces in Foothills. Watkinson saw a need to eliminate "eyesore buildings" along Highway 43. Williams explained that the streetcar would benefit Foothills and Foothills development would benefit the streetcar. He reported that Portland had seen increases in ridership each year. He advised the DEIS was not a decision-making process. But the City Council was going to hold a work session and then a public hearing on the LPA – likely in March or April.

Watkinson suggested the approach that each Board member offer his/her individual comments about what the DEIS missed at the Lakewood meeting the following Monday night or via email to Metro so more voices would be heard.

### **LOTP Sustainability Analysis / Special Meeting – When and Who**

Options for evaluating the DEIS were discussed. The group agreed to review the materials and the sustainability filter and then reconvene to discuss results and formulate a Board recommendation for the Council. Millhauser agreed to check dates of the pending Council meetings related to the DEIS to determine whether the Board needed to schedule a special meeting to evaluate the Transit project prior to the next regular Board meeting.

**Goal Setting – Update on Meeting with Council and Next Steps**

Watkinson gave a brief overview of the goal setting session with the Council. He noted that the follow up meeting for January 22 was cancelled, and encouraged Board members to attend the Luscher Farm Plan workshop instead.

**Update: Sustainability Action Month Planning**

This was tabled due to lack of time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting was scheduled on February 17, 2011. There being no further business Co-chair Watkinson adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Millhauser  
Sustainability Coordinator

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