

City of Milwaukie Transportation System Plan Update
Transit Working Group
Meeting #2 May 10, 2007

Agenda

6:30pm	Welcome and introductions	Jamie Damon
	Purpose of meeting	Kenny Asher
	▪ Where are we going?	
	▪ Overview of meetings 2 and 3	
	Understanding Existing Conditions	Young Park and Phil Selinger, Tri Met
	Working Group discussion	All
	▪ What needs improving (part 1)?	
8:30pm	Next steps/Close	Jamie Damon

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was attended by twelve people, and six staff.

Jamie Damon welcomed the group, reminded them of the meeting protocols developed at the kick off meeting in February and reviewed the agenda.

Kenny had group members introduce themselves. Kenny outlined the purpose of this meeting and the next as providing an important knowledge base from which to make policy recommendations. This meeting is focused on existing conditions – what kind of transit system we currently have. The next meeting will be focused on future conditions – transit needs based on local and regional trends.

Kenny referenced the outcomes of the survey, the community briefings and the input from the last meeting that went into creating a worksheet of priorities that he distributed. The worksheet is a work in progress for this group to add to over the course of the next few meetings.

Kenny gave an update of the overall project process - highlighting that all of the working groups have met.

Existing Conditions

Young Park from Tri Met presented a power point focused on existing conditions for transit in Milwaukie. In addition to the information presented in the slides attached) Young shared the following information:

- There is a strong connection between street design, sidewalks and how Tri Met makes decisions about shelter placement.

- The current transit center has been updated and Young showed plans for the future transit center.
- Tri Met is transitioning to a new signage system including a “transit tracker” that allows riders to check the status of their bus using a cell phone. Shelters will have more detailed schedules and other information.
- Tri Met is evaluating how they determine where sign poles will be placed including the spacing of poles which is not dependent on where utility poles are placed.
- Tri Met has the ability to partner with local jurisdictions to make improvements to the pedestrian system to better coordinate with their bus stops.
- Bus stops are located where there are sidewalks.
- Young highlighted some creative ways that Tri Met is addressing the issue of bus parking downtown.
- Solar lights have been added to shelters to improve safety. Tri Met is considering other uses for solar lights and solar panels.

The working group had the following questions and comments following Young’s presentation (answer’s in italics):

- Do you contact the homeowners when setting up a new stop in the area? *No – when we are creating a shelter environment or adding system amenities, we coordinate with the adjacent property owners.*
- Why is there a discrepancy with DKS’ information regarding the number of shelters? *DKS reports six shelters, Young reports fifteen. DKS data has come from Metro’s mapping information. This will be updated after this discussion.*
- Are there level three amenities in the downtown transit center? *There are two kinds of amenities: “externally managed features”, such as mail boxes, coffee shops, and landscaping and “Tri Met managed features”, such as benches, shelters, bike racks, vending machines, restrooms, and artwork. At the downtown transit center there are benches and shelters only. We are working to install more amenities.*
- How many bikes can a bus support? *Two. We are looking into racks with more carrying capacity.*
- How accurate is the tracking system? *It uses a GPS system that is attached to the buses so it knows where the bus is at all times.*
- Why don’t we have more bike racks? *We are planning for more – we need to decide where.*
- We need to better understand where riders will get on light rail from new communities such as Damascus. This will have implications on our transportation system if we need to absorb regional cars coming to Milwaukie to take light rail. *The regional transportation model helps predict how and where people will use transit. The model takes into account inconveniences of transfers and how far people will drive to get to a stop. The light rail process will help illuminate the question of ridership and traffic. We understand the concern of bringing more traffic into Milwaukie. Tri Met conducts periodic on board surveys and also counts the number of riders getting on and off at any bus stop. We also have conducted license plate surveys of cars in park and rides to have a better understanding of where drivers are coming from.*
- Will 333 parking spaces at the new park and ride be enough? *Probably not – we continue to assess how to add more park and ride lots.*
- What is the definition of “corridor”? *Basically there are two – Highway 99 and Highway 224 and their associated road/trail connections.*

Phil Selinger, from Tri Met, presented information about transit centers. Transit centers are placed generally in a town center – where transit services come together. A place where bus routes terminate and transit operators can take a break. In Milwaukie, the transit center has long needed a more permanent off street design. Tri Met has reduced the number of buses lingering in downtown although the buses are still taking up parking spaces. We need to “de couple” the transit center from downtown in order to decrease the need to find more places for buses to linger. Phil then presented a proposal that would shift layover buses to the back of the existing park and ride and include a comfort station for operators.

The working group had the following questions and comments:

- When will the layover bus plan go into effect? *There isn't money identified for the project yet.*
- What is the status of moving the downtown transit center? *In a flux! Our hope is that we will have two bus stops with an architectural shelter downtown or move most of the shelters to another street location or move line 33 out of downtown which makes it difficult for crossing highway 99 to make a connection. We basically have two choices – create a “super stop” or do a “disbursed arrangement.”*
- What can be done to minimize loiterers and gathering by folks at stops who are not riders?
- Think that a “super stop” is a better approach because then there are more eyes in one location to address potential problems. *There are design options we can consider to make stops more open and safe.*
- Is it an option to move the downtown transit center out of downtown completely? There may be an opportunity to combine stops with the potential future light rail.
- What modifications
- Is there a code that limits the number of compact spaces versus other types of parking spaces? Not a city code, it is a park and ride methodology to provide a range of spaces.

Phil shared an overview of Tri Met’s financial situation (see attached slides.) Phil made the following additional comments:

- 20% of the cost of operation is covered by the fares.
- \$4 million has been added in capital for projects such as light rail and commuter rail.
- Lift service is 4.5% and growing rapidly. Federal law requires curb to curb, Tri Met offers door to door.
- Federal “New Starts” revenue requires a local match - \$65 million on average per year is being brought in from federal dollars for light rail over the past fifteen years.
- Tri Met likes to have two months of working capital, currently we are down to one month.
- 6/10 of the 1% payroll tax helps fund Tri Met. This will be increased by 1/100% each year for the next ten years up to fiscal year 2014.
- The new payroll tax must be used for new services.
- The payroll tax covers the urbanized Tri Met service area.
- There are big commitments on the horizon which limit our ability to add more service.

What Needs Improving?

Kenny and Jamie lead the group in a discussion about where improvements are needed. The working group had the following input:

- Fix data sets on transit disadvantaged map to coincide with other maps
- Don't lump Bike/Ped with transit. It is difficult to figure out the transit needs
- Fold in updated sidewalk inventory
- There are potential opportunities to improve RR Avenue and Monroe Streets to provide transit route Clackamas Town Center. 37th does present a problem in this scenario. Perhaps improve Johnson Creek Blvd to better accommodate transit as well.
- Focus on the policy level direction to solve the disadvantaged areas.
- If we have been able to identify our community's priorities for street improvements we are in good shape to partner with Tri Met to get the improvements built.
- Improve the level of service on routes such as 32nd to full day – don't drop due to low ridership. Consider "partner" routes to provide more coverage.
- Consider improvements to service for Clackamas Community College evening classes – 32nd all the way to the Milwaukie Transit Center.
- Fill in neighborhood routes with small buses rather than the larger buses.
- How do we make a better connection between street design decisions and our ability to accommodate transit?
- Ensure that we are looking at all the needs – even if areas are not represented in person at meetings.
- Can a neighborhood adopt a bus stop?
- Potential for an intergovernmental agreement with other transit providers?

Next Steps

Next meeting May 29th 6:30pm – 8:30pm in the Public Safety Building conference room.

Homework

Mark on the "disadvantaged" map the transit needs. Where are bus routes needed? How do we connect to street design issues? Look around the community in the coming weeks – what needs improving – routes? Stops? Designs? What are the future needs?