

**Johnson Creek Boulevard Traffic Meeting
February 11, 2010
Ardenwald Elementary**

Staff:

Leah Robbins - TriMet
Claudia Steinberg - TriMet
Amy Fandrich TriMet
Jennifer Koozer - TriMet
Wendy Hemmen - City of Milwaukie
Grady Wheeler - City of Milwaukie
Teresa Boyle - City of Portland
Mark Turpel - Metro
Ralph Drewfs - ODOT
Alan Snook - DKS Associates

History:

Claudia: Two prior meetings regarding traffic issues on Johnson Creek Boulevard (JCB): Oct. 26th, and Oct. 12th.

- Citizens provided a lot of good direction at both of those meetings, and project staff committed to coming back and communicating what has been learned.
- Also explained a letter was sent to various Neighborhood representatives committing to address the issues that have been raised.

Claudia went on to explain the agenda:

The traffic consultant, Alan Snook of DKS Associates, has reviewed a number of scenarios for JCB and has narrowed them down to two different options.

- Alan will explain them and after the options are presented the meeting will be opened up for questions.
- Claudia asked that questions be held until the end.
- She encouraged people to use the comment cards to jot down their questions to be addressed at the end of the presentation.
 - Checked in with the crowd to see if that was an all right way to proceed.
 - Also encouraged people to submit comments via the cards if they weren't comfortable with speaking in front of the group.

Claudia pointed to a list of issues that were outside the purview of the meeting - the focus of tonight's meeting is to mitigate the traffic impacts created by the Tacoma Station and Park & Ride facility. These issues noted as outside the scope of the light rail project are:

- Tolling
- Spring Water Trail Crossing down by 45th
- Moving the road into the gully
- Springwater Trail lighting
- Collector classification of the roadway
- Emergency vehicle designation of the roadway

What We've Learned

Leah explained the size of the Tacoma Park and Ride has been reduced to 800 spaces, and added that the reduction in size doesn't alter the traffic discussion on JCB -- the same impacts exist.

- However the structure is not as tall as originally shown, and will therefore represent less of a visual impact.
- 30% Design will show a very preliminary design of the structure.
- Access in and out of the site is still being looked at.

- The station is parallel with Johnson Creek, the Park and Ride is south of the station.
- The access road uses the existing ramp off of Tacoma, comes down into the site, crosses the track at grade, into the Park and Ride.
- Another access point is off of McLoughlin.
- Comments received suggest a right-in only access.
- The project is continuing to work on these kinds of access details.
- Leah asked if there were any questions.

Question: Only a right turn going in from McLoughlin, not going out. Why?

Response: Leah - Traffic analysis shows that in the a.m. more than 50% of the traffic is coming from the south on McLoughlin.

- Conversely, that same traffic will be heading southbound in the p.m., and the traffic is going up onto Tacoma, over McLoughlin, before heading down a ramp to head south on McLoughlin.
- Only 5 cars in the peak hour are projected to use that exit.
- Challenges arise with weaving from this exit with traffic utilizing the Tacoma off ramp.

Question: Has the floodplain been identified?

Response: Leah - It has and the whole site is required to be 50% pervious.

Leah went on to explain that ODOT has been working on the northbound connection from McLoughlin to Tacoma.

- ODOT has a plan to create an acceleration lane to address this issue, but it's part of a larger project that's been in a planning process for many years - the Regional Transportation Plan - that takes McLoughlin from a 4 lane to a 6 lane section.
- The plan would preserve the row of Oak trees, however this project is not funded.
 - If ODOT tried to implement an acceleration lane by itself, it would impact 16 of the oak trees - which are eligible for heritage status.
 - The Light Rail project does not preclude this project from happening, but ODOT feels this would be too great an impact to the area.

Question: Aren't the trees in question Chestnut trees, and not Oak trees?

Response: Leah - Portland's arborist identified them as Oak trees - there was some clarification about the tree types in the area.

Question: You just mentioned that 50% of Park and Ride users head south on McLoughlin.

Response: Leah - We're getting to that next.

Leah showed another map showing a proposal at ODOT that's still undergoing review.

- ODOT is considering a shift from where the roadway currently moves from a two lane to a three lane section.
 - The lane change would move south to Umatilla, and the stop sign at Umatilla would be removed to create a drop line for southbound traffic entering McLoughlin.
 - A concrete median would be constructed to create a protected lane for motorists entering McLoughlin and heading south.
 - Also introduces a refuge area for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Comment: It was suggested an elevated crosswalk be constructed there.

Question: The 50% number has been talked about, how many cars is that?

Response: Leah - It depends on the time of day.

Response: Alan - P.M. peak: is about 200-250 coming out of the Park and Ride.

Question: How many trips would be coming from the north?

Response: Alan - Very little, less than 1%.

- 30% coming from the east, 20% from the west.

Question: Do these percentages represent additional cars?

Response: Alan - The percentages represent trips from the Park & Ride.

- The percentages could be absorbing existing trips.

Comment: There was a lot of input provided at the previous two JCB meetings and a lot of questions were posed.

- The commitment was to follow up on those questions and to report back on the input that has been given at tonight's meeting.
- There was also a commitment that the notes would be mailed to those who requested copies.
 - This hasn't been done.
 - Having copies of that document at tonight's meeting would have aided tonight's discussion.

Response: Claudia - Apologized for not having the document available.

- Informed people that the document has been posted on the TriMet website.

Response: Leah said those documents will be available at the upcoming Open Houses, and the information shared tonight reflects the process' evolution.

- Many of the questions and concerns that were raised at the previous meetings are captured in tonight's presentation.

Question: Since the majority of us were under this impression, when will that information be mailed to us?

Response: Leah - Some of those questions will be addressed in the presentation.

- This meeting is true to the letter that was sent out.
 - We are following up on previous questions posed and sharing new information that analysis has revealed, and sharing options.

Question: When will the answers be provided, when will they be mailed?

- You specifically said you would directly respond to the questions posed.
- You need to address those things and need to have another meeting to directly respond to those questions because new information is being presented tonight.

Question: What do I ask for specifically in order to receive the notes of the Oct. 26th meeting?

Response: TriMet will mail the notes to those who want copies.

Traffic Options

Alan presented the analysis and the options the analysis informed.

- He explained traffic terms used in the presentation.

Question: What will the impact be on the number of people riding bikes - will there be an increase of ridership along JCB?

Response: The hope is that more people will ride their bike to the Park & Ride facility.

Alan explained intersection impacts and when mitigation is required.

INTERSECTION IMPACTS & WHEN TO MITIGATE			
	Meet Standard?		Mitigate?
	No-build	Build	
Example 1	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	No
Example 2	✓ Yes	✗ No	Yes
Example 3	✗ No	✗ Less than 10 seconds delay	No
Example 4	✗ No	✗ More than 10 seconds delay	Yes

In terms of queuing, mitigation is required if the 'no build' scenario doesn't push cars through another signalized intersection, but would after the project is built.

Alan explained the History of Options slide - spanning three to four months.

HISTORY OF OPTIONS					
	Park and Ride Access	32 nd Ave	36 th Ave	42 nd Ave	45 th Place
Existing					
Potential Option	+				+
Potential Option	+				+
Potential Option	+				+
Potential Option	+	+			+
Potential Option	+	+			+
Potential Option	+	+			+

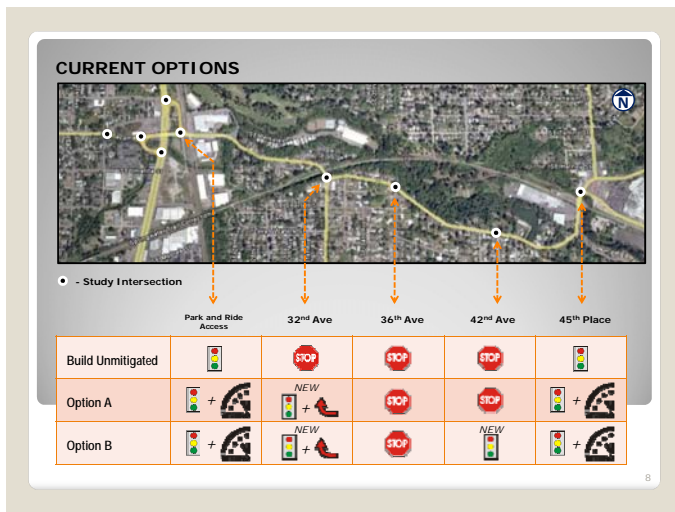
Alan explained that when developing and analyzing options the technical and community goals need to be balanced with one another.

- The options developed are based on input that has been gathered and the technical analysis that has been completed.
- The technical and community goals as stated in Alan's presentation:
 - Keep speeds slow
 - Reduce potential impact to neighborhood
 - Be able to get in/out of driveways
 - Balance all modes (TSP goal as well)
 - Safe environment (TSP goal as well)
 - Maintain livability (TSP goal as well)

Current Options:

All include a stop sign at 36th in response to community input that stop signs be maintained.

Looking at the PM Peak in 2030 with no roadway changes -- each intersection has an operation level of F - or Fail.



Comment: You're calling queuing a problem - neighbors want to preserve the queuing.

Response: Alan - In 2030, the queuing into McLoughlin Boulevard is a safety problem that has to be addressed.

- Having traffic back up and stopping on McLoughlin is a life endangering condition.

Looking at the a.m. peaks, by 2030 all of the intersections fail.

Technical Recommendation

Alan - After balancing project needs with the community needs, the technical recommendation is Option B:

- Signal modifications at Tacoma
- Light at 32nd Ave with right hand turning pocket
- Maintaining the STOP Sign at 36th
- New traffic signal at 42nd
- Signal timing adjustment at 45th Place.

Questions/Discussion:

Comment: We're trying to reduce volumes and slow down speeds.

- You're talking to the Neighborhood Association and the emphasis is on moving people through the area.
- This isn't what the Neighborhood is concerned with.

Response: Alan - Also talking about access onto JCB for the Neighborhood.

- JCB accommodates through traffic and Neighborhood access.

Question: How do your numbers compare to previous studies? What about the JCB Ph I, II, and III studies?

Response: Alan - I have no personal knowledge of when JCB Ph I, II, and III were forecasted for, but our study is for the planning horizon of 2030 (both AM and PM) and utilizes the latest assumptions for land use within the entire Metro region.

Comment: A member of TriMet's Committee on accessible transportation voiced concern about not hearing from TriMet enhancing bus service to get people to light rail to get to their destination.

- The question: how is bus service being improved to encourage light rail ridership?

Response: Leah - The focus of these presentations has been traffic on JCB, that's why that issue isn't of focus at tonight's meeting.

- However, the project is taking into consideration how LIFT would get in and out of the station, and after the Sellwood Bridge is improved, TriMet is considering adding a bus line.

Comment - These MAX projects should make use of the major thoroughfares like 99E and Hwy. 224.

- The Park and Ride will attract more traffic on JCB, the aim should be to reduce the traffic on JCB, not increase it.
- The location of the Park and Ride creates more JCB traffic.
- Your solution moves traffic more efficiently, which is a negative for the Neighborhood.

Comment: A resident at 33rd Ave. and JCB - I don't think there's any way to reduce the traffic on JCB.

- We have to figure out how to manage it, and the Project is trying to figure out how to make it safer.
- Encourages others to consider both points - never going to reduce traffic on our street, but need to try to temper it.

Comment: Make sure you keep in mind that all of these things you're talking about will impact Sellwood as well.

- There isn't any way to get to this station from Sellwood.
- Walking to it takes 20 to 30 minutes, and it's a dangerous walk.
- It's Sellwood's station as well, and we need to have safe access to it.
- Driving to it from such a short distance defeats the purpose of MAX.

Response: Leah - The focus of pedestrian access is the Springwater trail.

Question: Are the projections for 2030 based on population increase or from the impact of the Park & Ride?

Response: Alan - A Metro model for expected regional growth and associated traffic is used, as well as focused traffic forecasting of the immediate area.

- Also includes trip reductions from the introduction of MAX service.

Comment: JCB is already full of cars, if you make it easier to travel additional traffic is going to come.

- Don't understand the logic of signal at 32nd and 42nd and how the queues would be managed.
- An additional stop should be added at Brookside where many children take transit.
- It's a small portion of the day where there's an issue with a queue, otherwise it's a peaceful roadway.

Response: Leah - The people who are here tonight represent, ODOT, Metro, TriMet, City of Portland, and City of Milwaukie.

- All have different jurisdiction of different portions of the roadway.
- If you have bad queuing on JCB, traffic will spill over into other parts of the neighborhood.

Comment: Appreciate the discussion of speedbumps, but the condition of the roadway is already crumbling.

- If you keep the stop signs, it will discourage additional traffic from using JCB.

Response: Alan - The goal is to not open a pipeline that will introduce much more traffic.

- The goal is to manage the traffic that is expected.

- If the queue did not enter McLoughlin, it would be a different conversation.
 - When the queue extends into McLoughlin, something has to be done, because lives would be at risk if cars were forced to stop on McLoughlin.

Question: What's unsafe about queuing on JCB?

Response: It's queuing that stacks up on JCB, forcing cars back onto McLoughlin.

- It's a corridor wide problem.

Comment: One of the key focuses should be speed mitigation.

- Between 41st and 32nd, speed is already a problem
- What is being proposed in the way of speed mitigation.

Response: Leah - Depending on the section of JCB, there are multiple things the project can look at.

- There are different versions of speed humps that are still passable for emergency vehicles.
- The Project is committed to figuring out what kind of traffic calming would work for the corridor.
- There is money in the budget for traffic calming of some sort.

Response: Alan - The stop sign at 36th is a form of traffic calming, it will slow down speeds at this location.

- This is a product of previous input - we are listening to you.

Question: Has there been further discussion about the speed cushions - previous meetings suggested Milwaukie and Portland needed to discuss this further.

- Has it been decided if Portland would accept these?

Response: Teresa - Portland has been looking at the speed cushions and how they would function on JCB. Portland cannot guarantee the effectiveness of speed cushions.

- The City of Portland believes it's viable to look at speed cushions further, but there are other options to be looked at as well.
- Speed feedback signs that show the vehicles current speed next to a sign with the posted speed, is an option.
- The City of Portland is getting more comfortable with the speed cushion option.
- The City of Portland and City of Milwaukie will continue to work together developing options for traffic calming.

Question: Resident at 43rd and JCB - Can understand the technical reason behind the light at 42nd Ave., but what about the off-peak hours, daytime hours and weekend hours, when it is green people can travel right through the intersection and gain speed quickly.

- Does the recommendation still hold with that being the case?

Response - Alan said the signal can be timed to come up red on JCB to create more stopping, and adding green time on 43rd.

Question: Will there be additional traffic analysis?

- There are concerns with the existing traffic analysis.
- Observes the traffic backup in the peak, but in the off-peak hours traffic moves freely.
- The accidents occur in off-peak times, not when there are long lines of traffic.

Response: Alan - The timing of the signal at 42nd can be manipulated in a lot of different ways to regulate traffic flow.

Question: Will the lights be pre-timed or triggered by traffic?

Response: Alan - There are lots of different options available.

Comments/Comments: The three-way stops along JCB as they exist in the City of Milwaukie, and the City of Portland, act as traffic calming.

- There is no enforcement of the 25 mph speed limit - citations are only written if speeds exceed 35 mph.
- What about the safety issue at JCB in 2010 and 2030 if you install the stop lights.
- In terms of cost, the stop signs are much more feasible than the addition of signals.
 - Three way stop signals would be much more feasible.
- Smart Signals need to be examined.
- How will the green time on JCB be adjusted to allow southbound turns onto 42nd Ave?
- Installing a right hand turn lane in the westbound lane of JCB at 32nd would not allow enough room to accommodate a lane for those who want to head southbound on 32nd.
- There is room available for a right hand turn pocket, to create a third lane.

Response: Alan - Eastbound traffic, wanting to head south will have a left/thru lane next to the right turn to Tacoma. Adequate right-of-way exists on this leg of the intersection.

On the Tacoma side of the intersection the bridge would have to be reconstructed to fit a left turn lane and a thru/right lane. There is only room for about 1 car which does not change the function of the intersection as analyzed.

Response: Regarding the Smart Signal, a green arrow could allow access on to 42nd from JCB.

Question: Would it be automatic every time?

Response: It could be setup that way.

Question: Why was Tacoma chosen as a site for a station and Park & Ride? Why not choose Holgate, why can't it be a different stop along McLoughlin?

Response: Claudia - Through previous processes there was an adoption of an LPA, an SDEIS has been conducted, now in the FEIS process, design is at 30%, the station and Park & Ride locations have been determined.

Wendy explained the queuing problems and that cut-through traffic would find its way on several Neighborhood streets.

- She attended the Lewelling Neighborhood Association Meeting and outlined the traffic discussion, the cut-through problems, and the suggested fixes.
 - Residents at the Lewelling meeting were supportive of the recommended fix.
- JCB has 13,500 cars a day, and it's not expected to change very much in the future.
- JCB is important to three different NDA's, and it would be a shame if all of these other cars cut-through the Ardenwald Neighborhood.

Question: A shame for whom?

Response: Wendy: All those who live on Roswell, Filbert and other east-west streets south of JCB.

Comment: The traffic problems that you're working to solve were created by traffic engineers from past projects.

- Nobody wants a full-fledge traffic light in the middle of a neighborhood.
- You're saying we don't have the funding for changing an intersection, or for a roundabout that will create an additional take, but this is a very expensive project.
 - Milwaukie deserves to get what they want to see.
 - Money should not be spent on the bridge in Portland - a bridge that doesn't even carry a single car.
- A lot of the problems were dealing with could be corrected by removing engineering solutions implemented years ago.
- All the suggestions the Neighborhood has offered are falling on deaf ears.

Response: Leah - This is the technical recommendation and people are encouraged to continue to let their opinions be known.

Question: Would the intersection at 32nd create backup on McLoughlin without the project in 2030?

- Retaining a stop sign there is not a valid solution?

Response: Alan: It doesn't reduce the queues that back up onto McLoughlin.

Comment: We have to have a solution to that, period.

- It's important for the Neighborhood to understand that issue.
- It can't stay that way today.
- A traffic light at 32nd, or a roundabout at 32nd, something has to be done.

Comment: Another positive thing about queuing is that people won't use JCB.

Question: The fact that several speed control options are available was mentioned -- what else can be looked at?

Comment: How about a Portland motorcycle cop -- never see any in this area.

Response: Police enforcement, speed feedback signs, speed cushions, additional signage.

Comment: Creating a right turn lane on JCB at 45th for eastbound traffic so people could get to 82nd Ave. and I-205 would greatly change the existing traffic pattern.

- Do a small project and see the results before a major change is implemented.

Response: Alan - The signal can be adjusted at 45th to allow more eastbound moving traffic. To retain the pedestrian refuge at the trolley trail crossing of JCB and install a right turn lane - a new bridge would be needed over Johnson Creek.

Question: Has any vehicle speed analysis been associated with these options?

Response: Alan - There has not. With the new Park & Ride size, the focus has been on recalculating the data.

Comment: Traffic should be channeled to Hwy. 224 and the Sellwood Bridge.

- JCB, Hwy. 224, Powell, all serve different trips and needs.

Response: Alan - This has been taken into account.

- Future projections on JCB don't go up a whole lot more than what's out there today.
- The corridor is congested, there's not a lot more traffic that can be accommodated.

Question: What about those who enjoy walking the neighborhood?

- Will there be improvements to help pedestrian movements?

Response: Alan - If a new signal goes in, crosswalks will be added, as will pedestrian lights, and curbs.

Comment: Not much talk about 42nd Ave. and traffic on 42nd Ave.

- Driveway access is an issue as the fourth leg of the intersection.

Response: Alan - The signal can be set up as a four-way control so that direct, safe access, onto JCB would be provided.

Comment: The light would be more dangerous than a stop sign.

- Aren't there signs that read, Right Turn Permitted Without Stopping? This would be cheaper than a new signal.

Response: Alan/Teresa - Doesn't address eastbound moving traffic and creates additional safety concerns. These are no longer installed in Portland.

Question: Is there going to be a signal at 32nd and JCB?

Response: Leah - Yes, Signal at 32nd. Option B is the technical recommendation.

- Keep the feedback coming.
- There are a pair of Open Houses coming up.
 - Feb. 25th

Comment: Based on what the information provided tonight says, there wasn't going to be that much additional traffic on JCB.

- Suggest changing the stoplight on 45th Ave. to let more cars make the right turn onto JCB and then conduct more analysis and collect updated data.
- If changes were made now that proved effective, how would that effect the analysis - that being said there's not that much additional traffic.
- As of right now a project is being based on skewed data.
- What's proposed right now might not be the solution.
- Doing these simple fixes right now would save a lot of taxpayer money.

Response: Alan - It's not skewed data, it's data based on future 2030 projections; based on how much traffic would be on the roadway in 2030. The analysis already takes the issues into account and looks at effects of specified traffic control.

Response: Teresa: The City of Portland doesn't have money to pay for these improvements. Some of the other options, such as timing adjustments, could be looked at.

Comment: The models include signal timing modifications, it doesn't address the queuing. If the bumpout is taken out at 32nd, the right hand turn pocket will allow traffic to make that movement.

Response: Alan - That small of a pocket will only fit a car or two, and will not adequately address the queuing problem. Removal of the bumpout reduces pedestrian safety.

Claudia closed the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and project staff remained to have conversations with meeting attendees for approximately half an hour.

Flip Chart Notes:

- Traffic should be encouraged to move to 224
- Ped access? Signals would include pedestrian crossing
- 42nd queuing? (~100 ft.?) Slightly longer with all way stop
- Signal for driveway entering JCB @ 42nd
- 32nd @ Westbound JCB: right turn permitted without stopping? - Cheaper than signal
- Speed Control Options:
 - Humps
 - Your Speed signs
 - Enforcement
 - Traffic calming
- Queue @ 45th, right onto JCB. Fix this to reduce queue
- Need to analyze speeds on options A & B
- Think about Sellwood. Traffic impacts; ped access; bus access doesn't exist
- Making traffic flow will encourage more traffic
- Need stop sign at Brookside
- Need to SLOW traffic down
- Signal @ 42nd during off-peak could encourage speeding
- Observed more accidents during non-peak hours
- Neighborhood wants lower volume and slower speed
- JCB Ph I, II, III - planning horizon 2015 Different assumptions
- Need good bus service to station; not parking focus
- Maximize use of 224, 99E, minimize traffic on JCB
- Can't avoid increased traffic on JCB. Need to focus on making it safe
- Other Problems
 - Loss of RT Lane @ JCB/45th
 - Queue @ NB McLoughlin entrance ramp
- Try signal timing adjustments @ 45th NOW, then reassess traffic analysis
- Keep speeds low
- Don't have queues so long that cars try to sneak thru n'hood
- Keep queue off McLoughlin (safety)