

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING THE)	RESOLUTION NO. 18-4915
SOUTHWEST CORRIDOR LIGHT RAIL)	
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)	Introduced by Councilor Craig Dirksen and Councilor Bob Stacey

WHEREAS, the Metro Council identified the Southwest Corridor, located between downtown Portland and Sherwood, as the region's top priority for consideration for a high capacity transit investment based on the 2009 Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan;

WHEREAS, in June 2010, the Metro Council adopted Ordinance No. 10-1241B, amending the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to comply with federal and state law, which amendments included adoption of the Regional High Capacity Transit (HCT) System Plan;

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor includes portions of the cities of Portland in Multnomah County and Tigard, Tualatin, King City, Durham, and Sherwood in Washington County, and includes a broad north/south travel corridor generally along Interstate 5 (I-5) and Pacific Highway (OR-99W)/SW Barbur Boulevard;

WHEREAS, the communities in which the Southwest Corridor light rail developed land use plans to identify their local visions for high capacity transit in order to inform the Southwest Corridor planning process, including Portland's Barbur Concept Plan, Tigard's High Capacity Transit Land Use Plan, and the Linking Tualatin plan;

WHEREAS, in December 2011, the Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee, including representatives of the cities and counties in the corridor, as well as Metro, TriMet and ODOT, adopted a charter agreeing to use a collaborative and publicly inclusive approach to developing the Southwest Corridor Plan;

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor Plan process has been intended to lead to the adoption of a locally preferred alternative under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) for a high capacity transit investment in the Southwest Corridor, and consideration of inclusion of the Southwest Corridor Plan in Metro's revised 2018 Regional Transportation Plan;

WHEREAS, in fall 2013, the Metro Council endorsed the *Southwest Corridor Shared Investment Strategy* (Metro Council Resolution No. 13-4468A), directing staff to coordinate and collaborate with project partners on refinement and analysis of high capacity transit alternatives and local connections in the Southwest Corridor;

WHEREAS, in June 2014, the Steering Committee unanimously adopted for further study the *Southwest Corridor Transit Design Options*, a package of the most promising high capacity transit design alignment options and associated roadway, bicycle and pedestrian projects and potential station areas that support the Southwest Corridor Land Use Vision;

WHEREAS in June 2014, the Metro Council adopted the *Southwest Corridor Transit Design Options*, directed staff to complete a focused refinement period of the *Southwest Corridor Transit Design Options*, and, pending Steering Committee direction on the results of the focused refinement analysis and timing of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), directed staff to study the *Southwest*

Corridor Transit Design Options under the National Environmental Policy Act in collaboration with the Southwest Corridor Plan project partners and with the involvement of stakeholders and public.

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor project partners collaboratively funded the further study of the options set forth in *Southwest Corridor Transit Design Options*, as demonstrated in the actions of their governing bodies;

WHEREAS, in December 2014, the Steering Committee directed staff to implement an 18-month workplan for the focused refinement of the *Southwest Corridor Transit Design Options* using a place-based approach to narrow alignment options and select a preferred transit mode and terminus;

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2016, the Steering Committee endorsed a *Southwest Corridor High Capacity Transit Proposed Range of Alternatives for Environmental Review* that describes the high capacity transit mode, preferred terminus, and transit alignments, as well as associated roadway, bicycle and pedestrian projects to be considered under NEPA;

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2016, the Steering Committee adopted an updated project “Purpose & Need” statement, reflecting refinements made to the high capacity transit project since the Steering Committee adopted the original Purpose & Need January 2014;

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2016, the Metro Council endorsed the *Southwest Corridor High Capacity Transit Proposed Range of Alternatives for Environmental Review* and the updated project Purpose & Need statement (Metro Council Resolution No. 16-4713);

WHEREAS, on September 2, 2016, the federal environmental review process began with the publication of a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement, issued by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with FTA, Metro and TriMet as lead agencies, and with the public scoping process soliciting public and agency comments on the *Proposed Range of Alternatives for Environmental Review* and on the revised Purpose & Need, prior to commencing work on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS);

WHEREAS, FTA published the Draft EIS on the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Project in June 2018, documenting the anticipated beneficial and adverse effects of the proposed light rail route alternatives and potential measures for reducing adverse effects;

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor has 11 percent of the region’s population and 26 percent of the region’s employment, 23,800 people commute daily between Portland and Tigard/Tualatin for work, the corridor is projected to grow by 70,000 residents and 65,000 jobs between 2015 and 2035 and transit demand is projected to grow by over 70 percent over that time, high levels of congestion exist in the corridor today and 13 to 17 hours of congestion per day are expected on I-5 between Portland and Tigard in 2035;

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor light rail is expected to provide fast reliable high capacity transit service with a 30 minute trip between Portland State University and Bridgeport Station regardless of congestion, and is projected to carry 43,000 daily weekday riders in 2035, and is projected to carry about 20 percent of PM peak southbound commuters from downtown Portland or the equivalent of one freeway lane’s worth of drivers, in 2035;

WHEREAS, the Metro Council is supportive of inclusive engagement in its planning process and equitable development as an outcome of high capacity transit investments;

WHEREAS, a public involvement process was a component of each phase of the Southwest Corridor planning, including a 45-day public comment period following publication of the Draft EIS and a focus on equitable engagement of underrepresented community members, such as non-English speakers;

WHEREAS, 1,015 comments were submitted during the public comment period via web comments, emails, and letters, or at one of 33 hearings, open houses, information sessions, and other meetings held;

WHEREAS, after the Metro Council created the Southwest Corridor Community Advisory Committee (Metro Council Resolution 16-4751) to advise the Steering Committee and to assist with the identification of the locally preferred alternative, which committee represented businesses, community groups, and institutions in Portland, Tigard, Tualatin, and Washington County, the committee met monthly beginning in February 2017, and on July 30, 2018, the committee provided a consensus recommendation for a light rail alignment for the Southwest Corridor;

WHEREAS, equitable planning includes not only shared distribution of the benefits and burdens of growth and investments, but partnership in the process resulting in shared decision-making and more equitable outcomes for the region; and

WHEREAS, to increase the likelihood that a new Southwest Corridor light rail line will benefit rather than displace vulnerable households and businesses, Metro received a grant from the FTA to collaborate with the community to create an Equitable Development Strategy for partners to implement in coordination with the light rail project;

WHEREAS, the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Project Steering Committee heard public input and testimony on the Draft EIS and the proposed project, received the Community Advisory Committee recommendation, and received recommendations from project staff representing Metro, TriMet, ODOT, Portland, Tigard, Tualatin, Washington County and Sherwood, and made recommendations for a locally preferred alternative on August 13, 2018, including the mode of transportation, alignment, and station locations as attached in Exhibit A;

WHEREAS, on September 10, 2018, the Tualatin City Council adopted Resolution No. 5398-18, to support the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, on September 25, 2018, the Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution and Order No. RO 18-95, to endorse the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, on September 26, 2018, the TriMet Board of Directors adopted Resolution 18-09-66 recommending that the Metro Council adopt the Locally Preferred Alternative as shown in the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, on October 16, 2018, the Beaverton City Council adopted Resolution 4533 supporting the Locally Preferred Alternative as shown in the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2018, the Portland City Council adopted Resolution 37393 adopting the Locally Preferred Alternative as shown in the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, on November 13, 2018, the Tigard City Council adopted Resolution 18-47 supporting the Locally Preferred Alternative as shown in the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report; and

WHEREAS, FTA requires that the locally preferred alternative be included in the Regional Transportation Plan's financially constrained project list and in the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan, in order to be considered for a Capital Investment Grant project rating; and

WHEREAS, in December 2018, the Metro Council is anticipated to consider Resolution No. 18-4892 (For the Purpose of Adopting the 2018 Regional Transit Strategy and Replacing the 2009 High Capacity Transit System Plan) and Ordinance No. 18-1421 (For the Purpose of Amending the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan to Comply with Federal and State Law and Amending the Regional Framework Plan); now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that, the Metro Council:

1. Endorses the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Locally Preferred Alternative as described in the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Project Steering Committee Preferred Alternative Report, attached as Exhibit A to this resolution and that generally includes the following:

a. An extension of the existing MAX light rail southward from SW Fourth Avenue and SW Lincoln Street, largely traveling within the SW Barbur Boulevard right-of-way until the Barbur Transit Center, then serving the Tigard Triangle and downtown Tigard before terminating near SW Bridgeport Road in Tualatin; and

b. Continuous bicycle and pedestrian facilities constructed along the light rail alignment between downtown Portland and the Barbur Transit Center; and

c. A new pedestrian connection from a light rail station to OHSU facilities on Marquam Hill, an improved pedestrian and bike connection to the Portland Community College Sylvania Campus via SW Fifty Third Avenue, and a new mechanized shuttle service connecting one or more light rail stations to the Sylvania campus; and

d. A shared transitway in South Portland to provide exclusive right of way to select TriMet buses in addition to light rail.

2. Directs staff to include the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Locally Preferred Alternative as described in Exhibit A, in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan financially constrained project list (RTP #11587 and #10907) and in the depiction of the Regional Transit Network in the Regional Transit Strategy (which is the transit component of the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan);

3. Directs staff to add the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Locally Preferred Alternative to the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan;

4. Expresses its appreciation for the commitment and extraordinary efforts of the Southwest Corridor Steering Committee and the Southwest Corridor Community Advisory Committee, finds the charges of both committees to be complete, and dissolves both effective immediately;

5. Directs Metro staff to work with FTA and TriMet to complete the federal environmental review process and to support TriMet's new role as the planning lead on the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Project, as provided by agreement between Metro and TriMet;

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 15th day of November, 2018.

Tom Hughes, Council President

Approved as to Form:

Nathan A.S. Sykes, Metro Attorney