

PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE

NOTES

Meeting No. 211

WHEN: Thursday, March 4, 2021 @ 7:30 AM

WHERE: Virtual Zoom Meeting



<u>Time:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Lead:</u>
7:30 AM	Welcome and Zoom Meeting Protocol:	Stephanie Lonsdale
7:35 AM	Hot Topics, Points of Interest, Successes:	Jana Jarvis/All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- February meeting notes approved- Rail issues exist in Southeast Portland due to 6,000 and 7,000 foot long trains. SE 8th, SE 11th, and SE 12th get blocked, and this is a problem considering TriMet is planning to have the Division Transit Project cross at SE 8th. Businesses on Water Ave been contacting CEIC about the delays caused by trains in the CEID.- EcoNorthwest completed Marine Industrial Study and the findings are mixed. BPS is conducting workshops on the draft report and seeking public comment.- Statewide "Every Mile Counts" project by DEQ working to understand barriers to alternative fuels for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. Technical aid and a grant program to help businesses are the desired outcomes.- Renewable diesel bill is in the State Legislature that would require renewable diesel as a replacement.- The Oregon legislative session has many interesting discussions. The Joint Transportation Committee meets on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and their agenda is published in advance.	
7:50 AM	Update from PBOT Director Chris Warner	Chris Warner (PBOT)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <u>Presentation</u>- The pandemic has had an enormous impact on the bureau. Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty has shared her vision for the bureau to continue our work around equity, sustainability, safety, and innovation. PBOT's executive leadership team is comprised of six directors, key leaders of initiatives including communications and public involvement, equity, asset management, strategy and innovation, and government affairs. The bureau of more than 900 employees is divided into six major groups: Business Services, Development Permitting and Transit, Engineering Services, Maintenance Operations, Parking and Regulatory, and Policy, Planning and Projects.- PBOT maintains our assets around the clock. The bureau is responsible for bridges, roads, the tram, streetcar, a dock, staircases, hundreds of miles of streets, thousands of streetlights, and tens of thousands of signs. Our maintenance crews have been out there every day during the recent snow and ice storm keeping our roads passable and safe.- PBOT's Strategic Plan, Moving to Our Future has three main goals: safety, moving people and goods, and asset management shaping our core values. The bureau wants to make the streets safer, deliver smart investments to maintain the system, and make them in the most cost effective manner.	

- PBOT's Transportation Justice framework has been elevated as a part of the bureau's equity work, and we use this to think about how we distribute assets, talk about projects, and how we center race and accessibility. We know that there are significant disparities within our transportation system for BIPOC communities and people with disabilities. Through our Transportation Justice Framework, we call upon ourselves to be proactive in ensuring access for all Portlanders. We always ask ourselves, *"Will it advance racial equity and address structural racism?"* and *"Will it reduce carbon emissions?"*
- In the initial weeks of the public health emergency, we had to fundamentally alter the way we worked. We also created the Safe Streets Program to allow Portlanders to safely shop, exercise and travel through the pandemic. We promoted 700 businesses to expand their operations outdoors, and extended the program through the winter. Additionally, PBOT staff have spent a lot of time at the Emergency Coordination Center, working hard to help the city get through this unprecedented challenge.
- The Oregon Transportation Commission is in the process of creating the budget. Multnomah Commissioner Vega Pederson and myself signed a letter supporting additional improvements on 82nd Ave. We recommended to increase the funding for this critical need, those are left behind in many ways and they are critical to the city. My understanding is they created a \$45 million set aside for strategic investments and other improvements. OTC will continue to develop criteria on how to allocate that funding and identify projects.
- The Fixing Our Streets measure which was renewed last year is enabling us to invest \$74.5 million on street repaving and lighting thanks to Portland voters.
- Build Portland program includes four major freight projects, including NE 42nd Ave Bridge, other Cornfoot improvements, N Columbia Blvd, work on Columbia/Cully/Alderwood intersection improvements, and Columbia railroad crossing.
- As we strive to meet our strategic goals, the bureau is also working to strike the balance between maintaining our assets and adding new elements to the transportation system. This is paralleled by the growth of our structural deficit. The Bureau's financial challenges become more acute in six to ten years. The bureau is able to balance a 5-year forecast, but at some point, we have to look for new revenues.
- We cut \$8.8 million from our budget this year and will soon face tough budget decisions. Commissioner Hardesty is very focused on figuring out our financial challenges.

8:10 AM Discussion with PBOT Director Chris Warner All/Chris Warner (PBOT)

- How do you recognize freight needs in the organizational structure? How can the PFC best serve the bureau in identifying and addressing freight needs? There is a general lack of understanding of freight.
 - o **CW:** We are looking at ways to keep all modes moving. PBOT is working on the 2040 Portland Freight Plan Update, and we are in the process in recruiting a freight coordinator. We know we need to reach out to the freight community as we develop plans and projects. I am open to your feedback and suggestions where this could improve.
- What does PBOT mean when they use the term Transportation Justice? What is the goal?
 - o **CW:** As we are doing our work we keep two things in mind: How do the decisions we are making impact structural racism, and how does it reduce carbon emissions? A lot of decisions we have made have affected communities of color and BIPOC communities, so we are striving to bring these communities into the planning and implementation process and that means doing outreach differently. We use this framework in the way we do

business and the way we show up in community. We want to make sure the system works for everyone, and there is still a lot of work to be done.

- The Central Eastside has a major parking problem and we are working to change the modal split to get people out of their cars. What are the conversations around how to support transportation demand management amidst reducing revenue sources?
 - o **CW:** We are looking for additional ways to raise money, such as dynamic parking pricing. Commissioner Hardesty really wants to make the leap that transportation agencies have tried to make; to move to a more sustainable source of funding. The state is having discussions around congestion pricing and tolling, and perhaps that is part of the answer. As you said, we really need to manage congestion. We get very little general funds, so we are dependent on parking revenue and gas taxes.
- When you are picking your priorities around overpass and underpass reconstructions, are you looking at creating a seismically reliable corridors?
 - o **CW:** Yes, we have completed a seismic study of our bridges and we have identified the ones for regional transportation routes. We keep these in mind as we are making investments. The Burnside Bridge replacement project will be very important in terms of our seismic resiliency.
- Where does PBOT's responsibility lie in terms of the encampments that are in place on public land?
 - o **CW:** PBOT is not the agency in charge of any of the camp cleanup; the Office of Management and Finance. The Mayor is looking at ways to find more permanent and sustainable places for people to be.
- Where is City Council at on the Rose Quarter project discussions? The position that auxiliary lanes are going to increase our carbon footprint keeps coming up. Does City Council share that view?
 - o **CW:** Commissioner Hardesty is looking again at the City's role in the Rose Quarter Project and having discussions about reengaging. I do not know where Council is at on your other question.
- Given PBOT's reliance on parking revenue and its drop since the pandemic, was that reflected in the financial forecast slide you shared? And does it make assumptions about parking revenue post pandemic?
 - o **CW:** Yes, our forecasts did take that into account. We don't think it will flip back on, but more likely ramps back up.
- Regarding infrastructure investments to support recovery, does PBOT has a list of ready projects that encourage business reinvestment and recovery?
 - o **CW:** Absolutely, we are working through a number of projects. We don't know what a stimulus bill would look like, and often funding requires some kind of match. Our system development charge (SDC) funds are not as robust as we had hoped. We are working with our partners in the region to be ready to address any type of stimulus.
- Is the City thinking about the pandemic impacts on where people live, work, how they shop, etc?
 - o **CW:** PBOT and BPS have to take a look at the impacts, because we can't expect things to go back to normal. We can continue to innovate and be on the forefront.

8:50 AM 2040Freight Project Update

Francesca Jones (PBOT)

- [Project website](#)
- The 2040Freight Community Advisory Committee will have their third meeting next Thursday, March 11, 2021. Members of the public and PFC members are encouraged to join. The meeting will review what has been accomplished since the 2006 Freight Master Plan, then move into breakout groups where we will do some initial brainstorming on the vision, goals, and objectives for the plan.
- A subgroup of PFC members met with the 2040Freight project team to brainstorm strategies to elevate informed public feedback in this planning process. There were some great ideas that came out of the discussion, such as telling the story of how goods that Portland is really proud of move by freight, or how local businesses get their ingredients and move their goods.
- For Women's History Month, 2040Freight is looking for three women for a panel discussion on gender representation in transportation and materials movement. We would like to recruit local women with less than a four-year college degree to join the conversation.
- The project team would like to bring the safety component of the Existing Conditions Report to a future PFC meeting.

Questions and Comments

- PBOT website should reflect the importance of freight and be a starting point for telling the story.
- The plan needs a tagline that grabs people's attention and provides consistent messaging.
- Juxtaposing what a freight vehicle can hold versus a car, or showing the different amount of emissions produced.

9:05 AM Draft Freight Considerations Letter: Burnside Bridge Mark Lear (PBOT)

- [Finalized letter](#)
- PBOT committee liaison led discussion on the contents of the draft letter to be refined and submitted to Multnomah County on behalf of the PFC. Letter contains two recommendations concerning 1) accommodation of normal freight and over-dimensional vehicles, and 2) design to allow effective and efficient use by freight.
- PFC members suggestions were incorporated: emphasis on freight access to the bridge and the needs of the road network supporting access.

Questions and Comments

- We need to emphasize that freight must be able to get on the bridge.
 - o Liaison will add language about access to the bridge.
- Seismic resilience in the network leading to the Burnside Bridge will be just as important.
- The 2040Freight Plan could think about a seismically resilient designated freight route.
- Metro has been working on identifying emergency transportation routes for a Cascadia event or another disaster event.

9:20 AM Public Comment

Jana Jarvis

Michelle Sprague: Hi, I'm Michelle and I live in Clinton industrial area, which sits between Brooklyn Yard and the Central Eastside. In the hot topics portion they were talking about the blockage of 8th, 11th and 12th and in the 2040 Freight Plan, they haven't talked about this, but one of the high areas of freight is SE Milwaukie Ave, which is in the Brooklyn Neighborhood and it connects to our neighborhood and turns into SE 11th and 12th. I think Jana had asked how your committee could help with the conversation. What

we have in our area is one freight mode blocking another freight mode. These intersections, 11th and 12th, and specifically 8th move a lot of freight trucks. When those intersections get blocked, there are only two places that the freight trucks can go. They can go over 99, which is McLaughlin overpass to get to Powell, which is where they see a high amount of freight trucks. The other place they can go to southeast 21st which connects to Powell again. I think there is a relationship between a lot of freight trucks on the Ross Island Bridge and Powell and the blockage of 11th, 12th and 8th of freight trucks. Thank you.

9:30 AM Adjourn

Questions about this agenda or other questions about the Portland Freight Committee please contact:

- Mark Lear, Mark.Lear@PortlandOregon.gov
- Also, visit the Portland Freight Committee website at:
<https://www.portland.gov/transportation/freight-committee>