

REVISED DRAFT
Eastside Transit Project Alternatives Analysis
Purpose, Need, Goals and Objectives
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I. Purpose

The purpose of the Eastside Transit Project is to develop a project that enjoys a high level of public acceptance and community support and will:

- Reduce reliance on the auto for trips to and within the Central City
- Improve Central City transit circulation, capacity, connectivity and local access that facilitates economic development and promotes the vitality of the Central City, and
- Support existing and future streetcar and light rail investments in the region by expanding the system and increasing ridership in a cost-effective manner.

II. Goals and Objectives

A. Reduce Reliance On Single-Occupant Vehicle Trips To and Within the Central City.

- By providing transit access between jobs and housing in the Central City, increase transit ridership and reduce growth in demand on regional road and highway facilities characteristic of suburban to Central City auto commute patterns that would occur otherwise.
- Support continued and on-going growth in the 2040 Centers that encourages mixed used development in the Downtown, Pearl District, South Waterfront, Lloyd District and Central Eastside areas of the Central City that encourages pedestrian and transit trips and reduces reliance on automobile trips.
- Provide Central City transit investments that facilitate business and residential location decisions that result in an overall increase in transit trips compared to what would occur without improved transit access and mixed-use development in the Central City.

B. Improve Central City Transit Access and Circulation

- Improve transit access and circulation within the Central City by extending the rail transit system to connect destinations on the line such as the Downtown core, North Macadam, RiverPlace, the Pearl and River Districts with the Central Eastside and adjacent inner SE Portland neighborhoods, the Lloyd District and Rose Quarter.
- Serve important visitor destinations including Downtown, Rose Garden, Coliseum, Oregon Convention Center, Lloyd Mall and OMSI with a clearly identifiable fixed-route transit service.
- Link lodging opportunities in Downtown Portland with visitor destinations in the Lloyd District, Rose Quarter and Central Eastside.

- Provide possible alternatives to light rail on the Steel Bridge by adding rail crossings of the Willamette River via the Broadway Bridge to the north and eventually to the Hawthorne Bridge or a proposed new light rail bridge (Caruthers) to the south.
- Improve north/south transit connectivity and capacity through the Central Eastside without having to travel into and out of Downtown.
- Provide increased transfer opportunities and strengthen the eastside transit grid.
- Provide better, more reliable and more identifiable transit service to residents, workers, and visitors to, from and within the central city area.

C. Support Existing and Future Transit Investments.

- Maximize the utility of existing streetcar and light rail investments by continuing to incrementally expand the system in a cost-effective manner.
- Provide future capacity to complement the Milwaukie LRT line.
- Improve direct access from the southeast part of the region through the Central Eastside to Rose Quarter, north Portland and eventually Vancouver via connections with the Interstate MAX Yellow Line.
- Serve as a “crosstown” transit line that complements the eastside transit grid.

D. Support Economic Development

- Provide economic and transportation benefits to residents, public institutions and businesses.
- Facilitate economic development in the Central Eastside, Rose Quarter and Lloyd District.
- Provide fixed public infrastructure as an anchor for new development and redevelopment.
- Leverage publicly funded transportation infrastructure improvements to spur development at higher intensity that would otherwise occur.
- Provide alternatives to auto access and reduce private costs by reducing the demand for parking.
- Provide a transit link that would support the regional tourism industry by connecting areas currently served by the streetcar including the Downtown core, RiverPlace, PSU, the west end cultural district, the Pearl District and River District with regional destinations including the Convention Center, Rose Garden arena, Memorial Coliseum, Lloyd District, the MLK/Grand shopping and home improvement retail district, PCC and OMSI.
- Provide a strong transportation presence for future investment in the eastside area and along the existing streetcar line including the proposed Burnside bridgehead redevelopment, Lloyd District redevelopment, and continuing development in the Pearl and River Districts as well as future extensions south from RiverPlace through the North Macadam residential and employment redevelopment area including a new OHSU campus currently under construction.

III. Need for the Eastside Transit Project

(Example Outline Only – to be expanded and completed in Phase II of the AA)

A. Central City growth requires better internal circulation and transit access.

- As the Central City on the east side of the Willamette River develops and increases in density, a higher percentage of trips circulating within the Central City will need to be carried on transit to ensure a high level of access for all trips.

B. Private development must be leveraged through public transit infrastructure. .

- The Portland Streetcar has been a powerful development catalyst for the Pearl District and Downtown's West End. The quantity and quality of development realized in these areas would not have been possible without public transit infrastructure investments.
- Developer agreements in the Pearl District, South Waterfront and North Macadam areas show a direct link between the presence of the streetcar and the willingness of private developers to invest in these areas.

C. A transit project directly connecting Downtown with the Rose Quarter, Lloyd District and Central Eastside would build upon and enhance existing and future transit infrastructure.

- A transit project providing circulation between the east and west sides of the Central City would provide an improved circulation and distribution function, reducing the peak burden on light rail and bus lines.
- Future light rail extensions such as Vancouver and Milwaukie would benefit from the increased capacity of an eastside connector and would reduce the need for downtown transfers while providing new transfer opportunities.
- Adding transit capacity on a short transit circulator is more cost effective than adding peak light rail service on a more lengthy route. For example...

IV. Federal Evaluation Measures

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is taking a high level of interest in Alternatives Analysis level planning studies. In guidance issued to local alternatives analysis sponsors, FTA outlined five evaluation factors that they see as key to a project's advancement. These include:

1. ***Effectiveness*** - the extent to which alternatives solve the stated transportation problems in the corridor;
2. ***Impacts*** - the extent to which the alternatives impact --- positively or negatively - nearby natural resources and neighborhoods, air quality, the adjacent transportation network and facilities, land use, the local economy, etc.;
3. ***Cost effectiveness*** – the extent to which the costs of the alternatives are commensurate with their benefits;
4. ***Financial feasibility*** – the extent that funds required to build and operate the alternatives are likely to be available; and
5. ***Equity*** – that is, the costs and benefits of the alternatives are distributed fairly across different population groups