

# Burnside/Couch Alternatives Urban Design Streetcar Alignment Alternatives



Draft

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Prepared for:  
Commissioner Sam Adams

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## Streetcar

Rail transit is incrementally expanding to serve the region and the Central City. Today, Streetcar service traverses the City from the South Waterfront District through downtown and on to NW 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. Plans for expanding the streetcar system to the eastside over the Broadway Bridge to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Grand Avenue to Station 'L' are approaching the Preliminary Engineering Phase. MAX Light Rail extensions are underway on the Bill Roberts Transit Mall and southward along I-205. The mission of Portland's streetcar system is to participate in high density – mixed use urban development by supporting safe, reliable and cost effective streetcar development. Streetcar serves as a catalyst for development as experienced historically with Portland's early development patterns and as seen today in the River and South Waterfront Districts where development density increased from 30% of allowable floor area to an average of 90% of allowable density.

Three potential streetcar alignments serving northwest and southwest Portland were analyzed. Modal interchange, access, service area and development potential were evaluated for each alignment. Of the three alternatives, the Burnside and Couch alignment provided the greatest modal interchange with four connections including LRT, streetcar and bus, most improved access, most convenient walking distance to destinations and highest potential for stimulating new development and regeneration of existing underutilized properties.

The Burnside/Couch alignment could be phased to extend to the east side of the Willamette River and on to Hollywood or the Interstate 205 Park and Ride via Sandy Boulevard. The Sandy Boulevard corridor appears to have considerable development potential based on previous work by PDOT on the Sandy Streetscape project which is currently under construction.

Streetcar service provides connectivity between destinations. Each of the streetcar alignment options was evaluated based on connections between different modes of transportation, destinations and development potential.

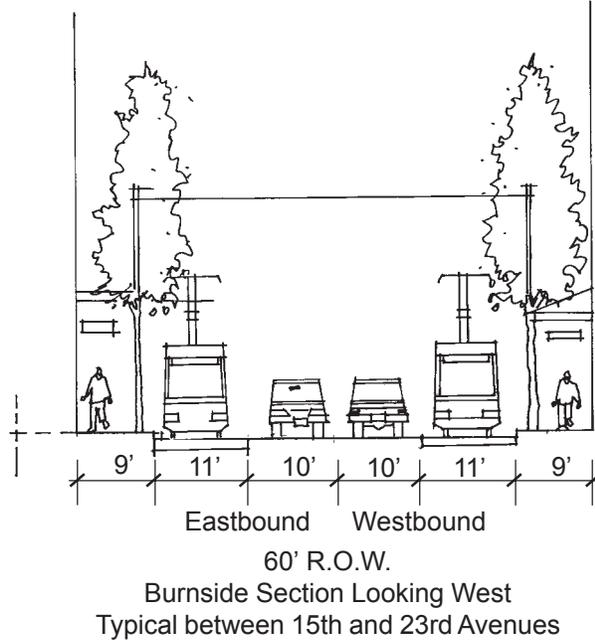


Existing Streetcar at SW 10th and Burnside

## Key Findings

The Glisan/ Everett and Everett/Davis streetcar alignments would provide:

- some modal interchange with LRT, bus and the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenues streetcar lines,
- excellent connections to the Classical Chinese Garden, the Greyhound Bus terminal, the Pearl District, and NW 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenues shopping
- support for catalyst development areas in Old Town/Chinatown and at the UNR Blocks

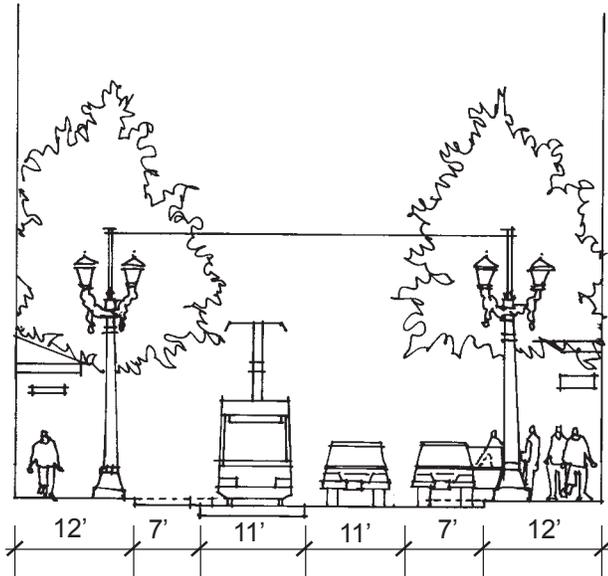


However, there is limited potential for expanding service or supporting the magnitude of development potential found along Burnside and Couch streets.

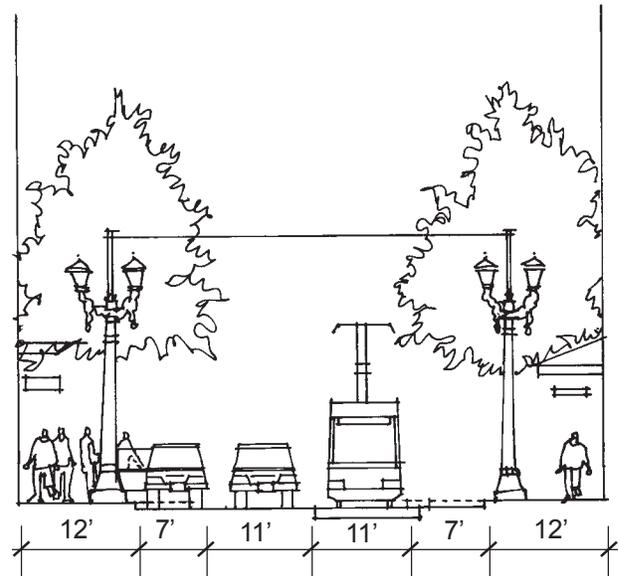
The Burnside and Couch alignment would conveniently link most of the destinations of the above two options but would also connect areas such as Saturday Market, the future major attractor at Waterfront Park, University of Oregon Portland Center, the West End, the Civic LRT transfer station at SW 18<sup>th</sup> and Morrison and PGE Park. Five catalyst development sites of the Burnside Couch option compared to one or two catalyst development sites of the above two options has the greatest opportunity to be influenced by future streetcar service. An economic and market analysis was prepared for the five areas along Burnside and Couch.

## Streetcar Alignment Options

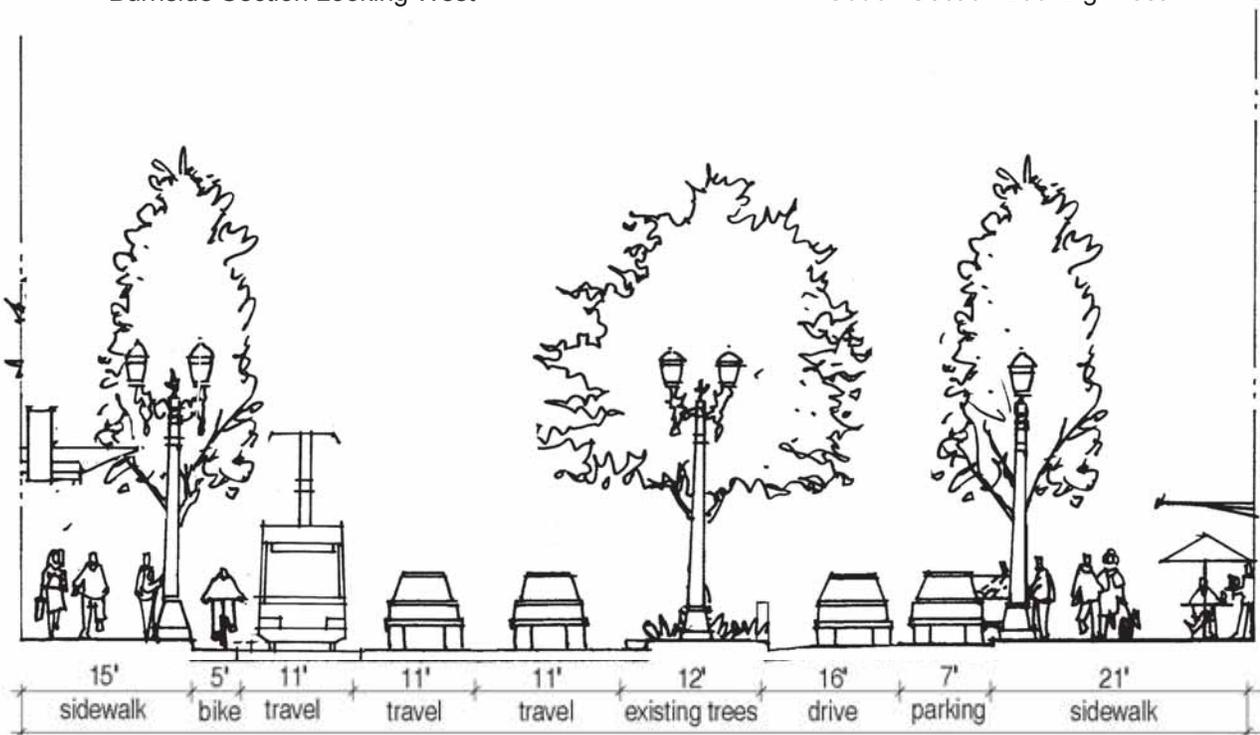
Streetcar alignment alternatives are shown on the following pages with detail descriptions found in the Potential Streetcar Alignment Summary Evaluation dated October 9, 2006.



60' R.O.W.  
Burnside Section Looking West



60' R.O.W.  
Couch Section Looking West



100' R.O.W.  
Burnside Section Looking West  
Between 3rd and 4th Avenues