



**PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE**

March 9, 2015

City of Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission  
1900 SW 4th Ave, Suite 7100,  
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Chair Baugh and Commission Members:

The Portland Freight Committee welcomes the opportunity to provide further comments on the City of Portland Transportation System Plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. We recognize the significance of these plans in providing direction for City decision-making on key land use and transportation issues and setting the framework for future infrastructure investments. The PFC also recognizes that a robust transportation network is critical if we are to continue our goal in supporting Portland's industrial base and grow middle-income jobs for residents of our region. To accomplish this goal, our transportation system needs to facilitate safe and efficient goods movement to support our traded-sector economy and remain competitive with both domestic and foreign markets.

The PFC appreciates the efforts on the part of PBOT and BPS staff in addressing many of the issues that were previously raised and the overall improved recognition of freight transportation in the draft TSP and Comprehensive Plan update. We also appreciate the revisions to the Transportation Hierarchy as it was originally proposed and the inclusion of economic benefit criteria for freight access and mobility to help prioritize transportation projects that provide the greatest return on investment. We would, however, like to bring to your attention the following issues that remain to be addressed:

Transportation Hierarchy

While the Transportation Hierarchy has been revised from the original proposal, much confusion still remains on its overall intent and which street classifications it would be applied to. It's also unclear on the overall utility of the hierarchy in addressing policy conflicts or how it will be applied at the project development and design levels. Since most Portland street corridors are multi-functional, street design is based on the context sensitivity of the surrounding land uses and connecting transportation network. As currently proposed, it's unclear how the hierarchy would help resolve classification conflicts and competing modal needs. Unless otherwise clarified how it will be applied, the PFC requests that the hierarchy be limited to residential districts and excluded from designated freight districts/industrial areas and along major commercial corridors. As an alternative, the PFC is supportive of using the Vancouver B.C. transportation hierarchy as a model to help resolve conflicts between modal needs.

Freight and Civic Corridors

The PFC appreciates that Freight Corridors have been included into the policy language and map in the Urban Form and Design chapter. As stated in Chapter 3: "Freight Corridors are the primary routes into and through the city that supports Portland as an important West Coast hub and a gateway for international and domestic trade." However, many designated freight routes are not identified on the map on page 3-26 and need to be included as Freight Corridors – i.e., N. Lombard Street from Columbia Blvd to Marine Drive, N. Marine Drive

from Lombard to I-5, N. Portland Road, NE Killingsworth west of I-205, NE 47<sup>th</sup> Ave, NE Cornfoot Rd, NE Alderwood Rd, and NE Airport Way.

Many proposed Civic Corridors we previously identified as being in conflict with designated Priority and Major Trucks Streets are still included on the map on page 3-26 – i.e., St. Johns Bridge (US 30), MLK south of Lombard, NE Sandy Blvd, NE/SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Ave, SE Stark, 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave south of Sandy, Powell Blvd (US 26), SW Macadame Ave (Hwy 43), SW Barbur Blvd, and SW Bertha Blvd/Beaverton/Hillsdale Hwy. The PFC remains concerned that by also classifying these important freight streets as Civic Corridors will create policy conflicts and compromise their intended function to provide truck mobility and access to surrounding commercial and employment districts along these corridors.

#### Emergency Vehicles and Over-Dimensional Truck Routes

The PFC believes it is essential for Portland's emergency preparedness strategies to be addressed in a specific section in the chapter on transportation. Over-dimensional truck routes are necessary for emergency response vehicles, police, fire, ambulance, tow trucks and other emergency providers to be able to reach their destinations in an efficient and timely manner. Over dimensional routes are also necessary for transporting over-sized equipment (heavy construction equipment, culverts, transit supports, building materials, etc.) A Regional Over-Dimensional Truck Route Study is currently underway and we request the results be reviewed and policies added or refined as part of the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan (TSP) Updates. Again, the PFC offers Vancouver B.C.'s transportation hierarchy as an example of addressing Emergency and Over-Dimensional Truck routes.

#### Industrial Land

Transportation is critical to Industrial areas. The movement of employees to and from work is just as critical as the flow of goods and services. The quality of life for every Portlander depends on employment along with a safe and reliable transportation network. We ask that policy makers join us in ensuring that Industrial lands are included in transportation planning as they are critical to the economy by providing family wage jobs.

#### Truck Parking and Loading

Truck loading zones are an important element in the movement and delivery of goods and service throughout the City. Policy language needs to be included to protect and provide safe loading zones for delivery personnel. As part of implementing the adopted Climate Action Plan, a Central City Truck Parking and Loading Plan will be conducted in 2015 through 2016. However the finalization of this project may not be soon enough to inform the City Wide Street Parking Project. We ask that parking and loading zones be taken into consideration even if the plan does not consider them. The PFC would like to see the Central City Truck Parking and Loading Plan recommendations incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan and TSP Updates.

#### Transportation System Plan Project List

One of the concerns the committee has expressed is the need for more clarification on the use of the project criteria, how the projects were selected and the project scores. During initial meetings we requested an exercise that would test the criteria and the scoring process in an effort to validate the methodology. We have not received the scores on the projects and request they be shared through this public process. The Freight criteria was taken from the 2006 Freight Master Plan and we consider this a first step, however, it is important that we continue to work with PBOT on improving the selection process and refining the criteria.

The PFC advocates that the TSP remain a list of 20 year transportation needs and not as a programming document for allocating short-term transportation funding. The TSP is a list of projects that are in response to

the needs of the overall transportation system. Establishing transportation system priorities are determined by PBOT leadership and the TSP is used as a resource to determine what projects can fulfill their priorities. The TSP is used as a project resource to determine funding for projects that follow these priorities.

As the population grows both the city and Oregon's transportation system will be challenged. As such we ask for strategic transportation policies and investments that take into consideration the whole system and mitigates appropriately when capacity is displaced.

#### Project Priorities

The PFC understands the challenges in addressing the wide gap that remains between the demand for providing transportation system improvements and the availability of resources to pay for them. As a result, we strongly advocate for the prioritization of those projects that can demonstrate the greatest return on investments in respect to improved freight mobility, access to industrial lands and the ability to leverage multiple funding sources. Based on our review of the TSP project list the PFC recommends the following projects be prioritized for funding:

- **TSP 30084 (Columbia Blvd/Columbia Way Bridge Replacement):** Replace the existing structurally deficient Columbia Blvd bridge (#079) over Columbia Way.
- **TSP 30005 (Columbia Blvd/Railroad Bridge Replacement):** Replace the existing fracture critical Columbia Blvd bridge (#078) over railroad with a new structure, and perform seismic upgrades on parallel bridge (#078A).
- **TSP 10011 (Freight Priority Program):** Improve freight speed, reliability, safety, and access along major freight routes to include signal priority, freight-only lanes, queue jumps, loading zones, and turning radius improvements.
- **TSP 20050 (Southern Triangle Circulation Improvements):** Improve local street network and regional access routes in the area between Powell, 12th, Willamette River, railroad mainline, and Hawthorne Bridge. Improve freeway access route from CEID to I-5 SB via the Ross Island Bridge.
- **TSP 50016 (Airport Way ITS):** Install needed ITS infrastructure to include communication network, new traffic controllers, CCTV cameras, and vehicle /pedestrian detectors.
- **TSP 30038 (Marine Drive ITS):** Install CCTV at N Portland Rd and changeable message signs at Portland Rd, Vancouver and 185<sup>th</sup>.
- **TSP 20002 (I-405 Corridor ITS):** ITS improvements at six signals between Clay and Glisan including communications infrastructure; closed circuit TV cameras, variable message signs for remote monitoring and control of traffic flow.
- **TSP 116590 (Rivergate Blvd Overcrossing):** Build a grade-separated overcrossing of N Rivergate Blvd.
- **TSP 40009 (NE 47th Ave Corridor Improvements):** Widen and reconfigure intersections to better facilitate truck turning movements to the cargo area located within the airport area.
- **TSP 40061 (Columbia/MLK Intersection Improvements):** Complete the unfunded project segment: northbound MLK to eastbound Columbia Blvd.

#### Other Agency Project Priorities

The PFC also supports the following projects from other agencies to form partnerships with other non-city freight infrastructure providers:

- **TSP 30039 (Marine Drive Rail Overcrossing):** Reroute rail tracks and construct an above-grade rail crossing at Rivergate West entrance to improve safety and reduce vehicle and rail traffic conflicts.

- **TSP 30069 (Columbia Slough Rail Bridge):** Construct a rail bridge across Columbia Slough to provide rail connection to South Rivergate from Terminal 6.
- **TSP 103780 (T6 Internal Overcrossing):** Construct an elevated roadway between Marine Drive and Terminal 6.
- **TSP 108840 (I-5/Broadway/Weidler Interchange, Phase 2):** Acquire right-of-way to improve safety and operations on I-5, connection between I-84 and I-5, and access to the Lloyd District and Rose Quarter.
- **TSP 116540 (Time Oil Road Reconstruction):** Reconstruct Time Oil Road to improve industrial land access in South Rivergate.

#### Recommended Studies

The PFC would also like to see the following studies initiated and completed within the next five years:

- **Freight Master Plan Update:** Incorporate freight-related studies and other projects that were initiated after the FMP was adopted in 2006.
- **Transportation System Capacity Analysis:** Evaluate impacts from reduced freight route capacity from completed and planned projects impacting major freight routes and industrial districts, such as North Interstate Avenue, SE 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue and NE Sandy Boulevard.
- **Airport Industrial District Truck Assess and Circulation Study:** Evaluate freight system needs in the PDX area.
- **Columbia Corridor Truck/Rail Access and Circulation Study:** Evaluate the interaction between the UP Kenton line and truck access along NE Columbia Blvd and US 30 Bypass.

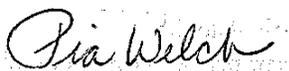
While these projects and studies alone will not address all of our transportation needs, they will help improve the function and resilience of our goods delivery system and traded-sector economy and provide insights to future system needs.

Thank you in advance for consideration. The Portland Freight Committee would appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with the City in any way we can to work through our policy differences as well as support you in the areas of agreement.

Sincerely,



Debra Dunn  
PFC Chair



Pia Welch  
PFC Vice Chair