

**PORTLAND FREIGHT COMMITTEE
NOTES
Meeting No. 201**



WHEN: Thursday, May 7, 2020 @ 7:30 AM
WHERE: On-Line Zoom Meeting

<u>Time:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Lead:</u>
7:30 AM	Welcome and Introduction:	Bob Hillier
7:35 AM	Zoom Meeting Protocol:	Francesca Patricolo
7:45 AM	Hot Topics, Points of Interest, Successes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- N. Burgard Bridge Replacement project – have consultant doing analysis. Bridge will be rebuilt to meet NHS standards and accommodate over-dimensional freight. Project is advancing and will be covered at a future PFC meeting.- June meeting will present on 2040Freight Plan	Jana Jarvis/All
8:00 AM	Cornelius Pass Road and Morrison Bridge Updates: <p>Mike Pullen from Multnomah County provided an update on two projects: 1) Cornelius Pass Road safety project that will require a temporary closure from June 29th - Sept. 4th; and 2) Morrison Bridge painting project that will begin in Jan. 2021 and end in Nov. 2022. Paining project will require a temporary change in the vehicle weight limit.</p>	Mike Pullen

Cornelius Pass Road Update

- Contractor was not able to get all the work done due to a large culvert replacement, so the County is going back to finish the job this summer. Project requires in-water work that requires this work to happen with the covert and the summertime when the fish are not present The detour will be shorter for passenger vehicles.
- Due to a lack of approved freight routes from Skyline to HWY-30, the detour route will result in longer freight trips between Columbia County and Washington County and for fuel trucks between Portland and Washington County. Fuel truck having the longest detours. Detour route is not expected to have any construction.
- County is considering making the intersection of Cornelius Pass and Skyline a four-way stop and having flaggers there. We did have a lot of trouble with illegal truck trips getting over the hills last summer, some resulting in truck roll-overs. It is important keep the big trucks off these narrow and winding side roads for everyone's safety.
- *Is decision to prohibit hazardous materials through the 26 tunnel the state or federal?*
 - o Multnomah County will share info that ODOT provided after meeting.

Morrison Paint Project Update

- This project will be the first re-painting since the bridge was build in 1958. All four river spans will be painted and will conduct steel repairs at the same time. Most of the work is below deck.
- Lane closures are not yet determined, but expecting 3-4 traffic lanes open. There will be a one month closure in Fall 2021 of the Naito and Water Ave. ramps with some night and weekend

closures of bike/ped path closures as well. Hawthorne Bridge will be the logical alternative route for everybody.

- Steel repairs will require limit weight on bridge during construction only. Weight limit of 25 tons will cease when construction is complete. Reduction of vertical clearances for around 4 months is anticipated.
- Vertical clearances must be reduced for a short time while painting sign structures – estimated to be a 4-month period, but likely will be shorter.
- PFC is asked for suggestions on alternate routes from past Morrison Bridge closures

Questions & Comments:

- PFC will connect freight operators with Multnomah County about the impacts on freight and the issue of connecting to I-5 Southbound from the Central Eastside.
- How often might weekend closures happen?
 - o Possibly 8 to 10 over the two year period.
- Is Multnomah County coordinating with PBOT/PFC on Earthquake ready Burnside Bridge?
 - o Burnside Bridge will likely be completely replaced around 2024 and be ongoing for multiple years. Theme for the next 10 years: Morrison Paint project, Broadway deck, then Burnside Bridge.
- Any comments on recently released Multnomah County project list?
 - o There is not a proposal to increase funding for these projects. The list does prioritize projects within the community – Scholls Ferry for example to add pedestrian facilities to Multnomah County-owned section. In 2021 an increase in vehicle fee to help fund Burnside project. Metro regional measure that is planning to go on the November ballot would fund Burnside Bridge Project.

8:20 AM “Potential Implications of COVID-19 for Last-Mile Delivery Innovations”

PSU Professor Miguel Figliozzi presented his latest research on potential last-mile delivery innovation resulting from the impacts of COVID-19.

- COVID-19 has caused large shifts in demand and supply chains. There has been a large increase in e-commerce in general. There have been workforce strikes, complaints, and demands in the shipping and delivery industry. There is uncertainty in what is going to happen with the US Postal Service due to capacity issues and funding shortages.
- Autonomous ground delivery robots deliver items to customers without the need for a delivery person. This has great potential because it reduces safety concerns. There is a huge tradeoff in terms of range, capacity, and payload – or what they are able to carry.
- Testing drones and robot deliveries has expanded. Regulations vary within the US place to place. Generally, there are weight and speed limits and insurance requirements.
- Research on the ideal combination of vehicle fleets depends on density of service area, cost, and time constraints.
- Handling and unloading packages without human contact is an ideal scenario in a pandemic like COVID-19. These companies acknowledge that the technology is not yet ready at scale to deploy. Deliveries are now perceived as an essential service. Cities are now more willing to experiment with flexible curb space. This is an opportunity to think about how cities and states can pilot new and innovative practices.

Questions & Comments:

- The PFC has been talking about last-mile delivery for many years. Last-mile to the consumer technologies have varying applications based on the environment. In a suburban neighborhood, last-mile looks differently than in an urban neighborhood. In a rural neighborhood, it's less practical.
- How many years down the road do some of these options still have before they can be permitted and be in service? Till we have to capabilities to use these technologies in our region?

- It depends on which technology. Some things can be implemented in the very near future if regulations allow. In dense areas with many obstacles it will take longer than rural areas. Thinking about the infrastructure, like curb ramps, needed to accommodate delivery technologies that already helps people in mobility devices and unloading heavy goods on handcarts....
- Do you have a sense of the acceptability of providing more space for these vehicles? Politically
 - People seem to be more sympathetic towards deliveries. It is uncertain what going “back to normal” will look like. We have the opportunity to rethink what we want the city to look like.

8:50 AM

PFC Roundtable Discussion:

All

PFC members discussed the impacts the COVID-19 stay-at-home orders have impacted their respective industries, shared information resources, and potential future actions and next steps from the freight and logistics industries.

- Many businesses closed amidst COVID-19 with the demand curve dropping off
- Freight volumes have fallen 30% while deliveries directly to consumers have risen.
- Port of Portland update: There is still a considerable amount of air cargo moving in freight planes even though passenger air travel is down about 95%. The major capital construction project, PDX Next, is still moving forward. Other capital spending is being pushed off into the future. Weekly container services are doing better than expected. There have been issues with labor shortages on the waterfront and challenges with social distancing and sanitizing. A number of autos are looking for additional storage as people are not buying new vehicles. Hopeful that there will be an uptick in air travel by the end of the year.
- FedEx Update: We have been very busy. We are seeing 2-3 additional flights per day. Business to business is down, but e-commerce has picked up. Large companies have turned to air-freight to capture almost 100% of their volume. Safety has been our first priority. People are going to rethink the way they do business and those changes may be implemented for the future.
- Highway Transport Update: Hard to be proactive. There have been a lot more last minute orders and loads, more trucks on the road and empty miles.
- Rail Update: Down 22%. Grain and food products are still moving well. One major rail company has about half of their trains in storage right now.
- Central Eastside Update: Study had seen growth in food processing previously. Those industries because of the wholesale accounts are really down right now. Some more traditional manufacturing is down because of restaurant closures. There is interest in how businesses are doing with SBA loans. Having difficulty coaching with small businesses on what to do, particularly on PPP loans – whether they should bring employees back or not.
- Mixed bag when it comes to freight movement. Financial advice has encouraged businesses to get all of their information prepared in case there is another round of loan funding made available.
- Focusing on the latter half of the recession, the Freight Master Plan update (2040Freight) could identify a priority list of small and medium size freight oriented development projects that would be potentially funded as stimulus projects that will have influence on encouraging the industrial community to reinvest. Looking at trends in the last three business cycles in the region, the sectors that are affected by the recession will shift. Industrial development and traded sector will be a big part of the stimulus. We should position the region for job growth and recovery.

Suggestion of subcommittee to discuss this topic: Prepare for federal funding opportunity and smaller freight-oriented projects.

- Truck bypass lanes should be considered as small projects. The federal transportation bill, smaller projects, and trying to get the political discussion to not focus on the big picture and how important freight is and how freight can be maybe carved out of those larger projects.
- TriMet Update: Ridership down 65-70%. We are part of the Governor's plan on recovery. Roughly one-third of ridership may be essential trips.
All COVID-19 updates from TriMet: <https://trimet.org/health/> and weekly updates on TriMet ridership by estimated boardings: <https://trimet.org/ridership>
- Additional taxes may be harmful to businesses amidst public funding shortfalls.
 - o Educating decision makers on the impacts of public policy is needed. Previous conversations about creating Freight 101 briefing materials for new elected officials is still very relevant.

9:30 AM Adjourn

Questions about this agenda or other questions about the Portland Freight Committee (PFC):

- Contact Robert Hillier, 503 823-7567 or Robert.hillier@portlandoregon.gov
- Also, visit the Portland Freight Committee website at: www.portlandonline.com/transportation/freight