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To: Portland City Council, Gresham City Council, Trimet Board and Multnomah County

12/6/16

Testimony concerning the Division Bus Rapid Transit Project Locally Preferred Alternative

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility respectfully requests that you consider the following three improvements to the Division Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project:

1) The buses should be battery-electric rather than diesel. We are at the cusp of a major technology shift that will allow bus transit to utilize renewable electric energy and eliminate local toxic diesel emissions. Multiple bus manufactures now offer battery-electric vehicles with good performance and adequate range. These are expected to have a total life cycle cost less than comparable diesel buses, due to lower maintenance and fuel costs. TriMet already has 4 standard size electric buses on order, and since the BRT won't go into operation until 2021, now is the time to specify a preference for a clean fleet. Battery-electric busses will provide cleaner air that ultimately saves lives.

2) The base service frequency should be 10 minutes rather than 15. The current Line 4 base frequency is 15 minutes. In order to justify a significant capital expenditure there must be a significant ridership increase, which will only happen if service is actually improved. The majority of rides occur outside the peaks, this is when additional service is the least costly to provide, and it is through round-the-clock service that residents of high density areas are enabled to live without owning automobiles.

3) Since the existing local bus service will be eliminated, stops must be spaced sufficiently close for adequate access. The BRT will be the only service on Division. The current plan is inadequate along multiple segments, such as between SE 12th and SE 20th, between SE 51st and SE 82nd, and close to Gresham. The maximum stop spacing should be 1/4 mile, not 1/2 mile. Current TriMet stop spacing is typically every 1/8 to 1/10 mile. The relatively few additional stops needed will not have a significant effect on travel time compared with their benefit. A major portion of the travel time improvement will come from signal priority and bypass lanes at intersections, along with more efficient fare collection.

We urge you to condition your approval of the Division BRT LPA on it being amended to address the above three issues.

Sincerely,

Kelly Campbell, Executive Director

