

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

**RESOLUTION NO. 06-118**

Adopting the Eastside Transit Project Locally Preferred Alternative, Located within the Portland Central City and Endorsing the Eastside Transit Project Work Program Considerations

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:**

- a. In 1988, the City of Portland adopted the *Central City Plan*, which identified the need and desire for an inner city transit loop, specifically citing the location for such transit loop on the Eastside as "...possibly on Grand Avenue."
- b. In 1995, the City of Portland adopted the *Central City Transportation Management Plan* (CCTMP) to implement the Central City Plan to improve transit circulation and distribution throughout the Central City districts. The Plan stated the need to: "Identify a strategy for developing the Central City streetcar system and integrating it with other transit services."
- c. In 1997, the Portland City Council approved a locally funded streetcar that was opened for service on the west side of the Central City in 2001.
- d. On June 25, 2003, the Portland City Council adopted an *Eastside Streetcar Alignment Study* that recommended the locally funded streetcar be extended to the Eastside with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) assistance.
- e. The Metro Council approved Resolution No. 03-3380A (For the Purpose of Adopting the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan to Meet Federal Planning Requirements) that includes in the Financially Constrained System projects 1106 and 1107, "Portland Streetcar – Eastside," constructing a streetcar to the Lloyd and Central Eastside districts.
- f. TriMet's five-year *Transit Improvement Plan* adopted by the TriMet Board of Directors on June 22, 2005, includes expanding high capacity transit service, specifically including streetcar as a priority.
- g. The recent SAFETEA-LU reauthorization adopted in 2005 includes the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Small Starts program for transit projects less than \$250 million with a maximum of \$75 million federal share that could possibly provide a source of federal support for Eastside transit improvements.

- h. On April 28, 2005, the Metro Council approved Resolution No. 05-3541, For the Purpose of Approving the FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program, and this work plan included, on pages 41 and 42, the preparation of the Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis.
- i. In 2005, an Eastside Transit Alternative Analysis, consistent with FTA requirements, was initiated to assess the feasibility of a transit circulator for the whole Central City including the Eastside districts.
- j. In May 2006, Metro published the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Evaluation Report* for the purpose of evaluating potential transit modes, alignments and terminus locations.
- k. Public comments were received on the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Evaluation Report* and compiled in the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Draft Public Comment Summary* published June 2006.
- l. On May 31, 2006, the Eastside Project Management Group (PMG) recommended a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) including the *Eastside Transit Project Work Program Considerations* which generally includes a streetcar loop connecting downtown to the Lloyd and Central Eastside districts via the Broadway Bridge and the Weidler/Broadway and MLK/Grand couplets.
- m. On June 1, 2006, the Eastside Project Advisory Committee (EPAC) recommended an LPA consistent with the PMG and made minor amendments or revisions.
- n. On June 5, 2006, the Eastside Project Steering Committee recommended an LPA consistent with the PMG and EPAC and made minor amendments or revisions.
- o. The Portland Development Commission (PDC), the City of Portland Planning Commission, the Portland City Council, TriMet Board of Directors, and the Portland Streetcar Inc. Board recommended an LPA including the Eastside Transit Project Work Program Considerations which generally includes a streetcar loop connecting downtown to the Lloyd and Central Eastside districts via the Broadway Bridge and the Weidler/Broadway and MLK/Grand couplets.
- p. The Metro Council has considered the LPA recommendations including the *Eastside Transit Project Work Program Considerations*, and Metro Council concludes the reasons included in the LPA recommended by the Steering Committee dated June 5, 2006, for selecting this project are compelling.

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:**

1. The Board adopts the Eastside Transit Project Locally Preferred Alternative in the attached Exhibit A, the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Locally Preferred Alternative Recommendation*, that includes a streetcar loop connecting downtown Portland to the Lloyd and Central Eastside districts via the Broadway Bridge and the Weidler/Broadway and MLK/Grand couplets as shown in the attached Exhibit B.
2. The Board endorses the *Eastside Transit Project Work Program Considerations*, attached as Exhibit C.

ADOPTED this 29th day of June, 2006.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

  
Diane M. Linn, Chair



REVIEWED:

AGNES SOWLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
Matthew O. Ryan, Assistant County Attorney

# Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis

## Locally Preferred Alternative Recommendation

Adopted by the Steering Committee  
June 5, 2006



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## I. Overview

This document presents the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) recommendation for transit improvements for the Eastside transit project in Portland's Central City. These recommendations are based on information documented in the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Evaluation Report* (Metro, May 2006) and from public input received during the public comment period and in the hearing held May 10, 2006 before the Eastside Project Advisory Committee (EPAC).

The LPA decision consists of three distinct decisions on project implementation and phasing. The **mode decision** chooses between streetcar, and the no-build bus network. The **terminus decision** addresses whether the project can be completed in one phase or in construction segments defined by three minimum operable segments (MOS). The streetcar alternative includes two potential alignments through the Central Eastside, the MLK/Grand Couplet and the two-way Grand design option and the **alignment decision** will choose between them.

## II. Eastside Transit Project Locally Preferred Alternative

### A. Transit Mode - Streetcar

Streetcar is the preferred transit mode for the Eastside project as defined by the **Full Loop Streetcar Alternative**. This alternative best meets the project's purpose and need and goals and objectives as outlined in the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Evaluation Report (Evaluation Report)*. The project also garners significant public support as shown by the public comment received.

The **streetcar mode** is preferred because:

- The streetcar mode results in approximately 30% higher ridership than an equivalent level of bus service operating in the same Central City mixed-traffic environment, indicating an inherent preference, or modal bias for streetcar
- A streetcar line would leverage higher levels of economic development and would provide better opportunities for land use that fosters compact urban form, reduced vehicle miles traveled and higher transit mode split than bus transit alone could provide, as shown by the experience of the existing Portland Streetcar
- A streetcar line has garnered strong community support, and the support of adjacent property owners, as evidenced by support for the current streetcar line through participation in local improvement districts, and through the stated intent of property owners along the Eastside line to participate in such a district.

The **Full Loop Streetcar Alternative** performs better than the no-build or MOS options in several key areas:

- Highest streetcar ridership and highest ridership per mile of operation
- Most cost-effective project by all three measures evaluated – annualized capital and operating cost and capital cost per new streetcar rider, federal capital cost per new streetcar rider and operating cost per new streetcar rider

- Best implements land use and economic plans and policies for the Central City
- Provides best potential for economic development given the geographic extent of the line
- Provides the greatest travel time improvements due to a new Willamette River crossing
- Provides potential for the highest level of local funding through a local improvement district and possible amendment of urban renewal areas
- Best meets the transit circulator function outlined in the Purpose and Need for the project.

## **B. Terminus**

### **1. Interim Project Terminus – OMSI MOS**

The **Full Loop Streetcar Alternative** is the project's ultimate objective. However construction of the project will need to occur in shorter segments to respond to the anticipated availability of federal and local funds and the timing of the Milwaukie Light Rail Project and construction of the new Caruthers Bridge across the Willamette River.. The **OMSI MOS** is the logical interim terminus for the full project until such time that the proposed Caruthers Bridge or other Willamette River streetcar crossing is viable. Current estimates for completion of the Milwaukie Light Rail Project put completion at 2014. The OMSI MOS would have a capital funding gap between project costs and anticipated revenues of \$37 million. It is recommended that major component costs and funding be reviewed seeking to reduce the overall cost and to identify additional revenue sources for the construction to OMSI as soon as possible.

### **2. First Construction Segment – Oregon Street MOS**

The **Oregon Street MOS** is recommended as the first construction segment for the project for the following reasons:

- The Oregon Street MOS would require \$60 million in FTA Small Starts funding, less than the statutory maximum of \$75 million for a single project. All other MOS options and the Full Loop Alternative would require the maximum level of FTA participation.
- The City of Portland needs to complete key analyses regarding the alignment south of Oregon Street. The Oregon Street MOS is the only MOS that could be advanced expeditiously independent of additional analyses for the MLK/Grand couplet in the Central Eastside.

### **C. Alignment – MLK/Grand Couplet**

The preferred alignment through the Central Eastside is the **MLK/Grand couplet**, contingent on the conditions set forth in section D below, for the following reasons:

- The MLK/Grand couplet alignment enjoys a higher level of community and business support than the two-way Grand Alignment.
- The MLK/Grand couplet alignment better supports existing city policy in the Portland Comprehensive Plan, Transportation System Plan and Central City Transportation Management Plan
- The two-way Grand alignment would result in greater local and neighborhood traffic impacts, would require major improvements on SE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue including transitions to and from Grand Avenue, and would add \$17 million to the cost of the Morrison or OMSI MOS options or the Full Loop Alternative.
- The added cost of the two-way Grand alignment would strain finite local and federal funding sources and could delay the ultimate completion of the project.
- The MLK/Grand couplet would allow for a wider Local Improvement District and could enhance the ability to acquire local funding for the project.

Although MLK/Grand is the preferred alignment, the Steering Committee has raised some concerns regarding the MLK/Grand Couplet alignment and construction of the project through the Central Eastside including:

- Quality of the pedestrian environment, particularly on MLK Blvd, and its effect on the ultimate success of the project
- Connectivity with east-west bus routes at the bridgeheads, particularly from MLK Blvd
- Commitment of urban renewal funding, parking meter revenue and other sources to solidify local funding to construct the alignment south of Oregon Street.

### **D. Conditions for Extending the Project to OMSI**

Extension of the project south of Oregon Street is therefore, contingent on the City of Portland addressing the following Steering Committee concerns regarding the Central Eastside alignment:

- Progress towards a signed development agreement between the Portland Development Commission and the developer of the Burnside Bridgehead project
- Development of an MLK/Grand Transportation Management Plan that will:
  - Improve pedestrian access to the streetcar
  - Improve pedestrian safety and increase pedestrian crossing opportunities at streetcar stops, with special attention paid to the needs of the elderly and handicapped and connections to the bridgeheads
  - Provide for efficient streetcar operations through evaluation of transit priority measures that could include capital improvements such as curb extensions and operational improvements such as signal timing and spacing, or other measures

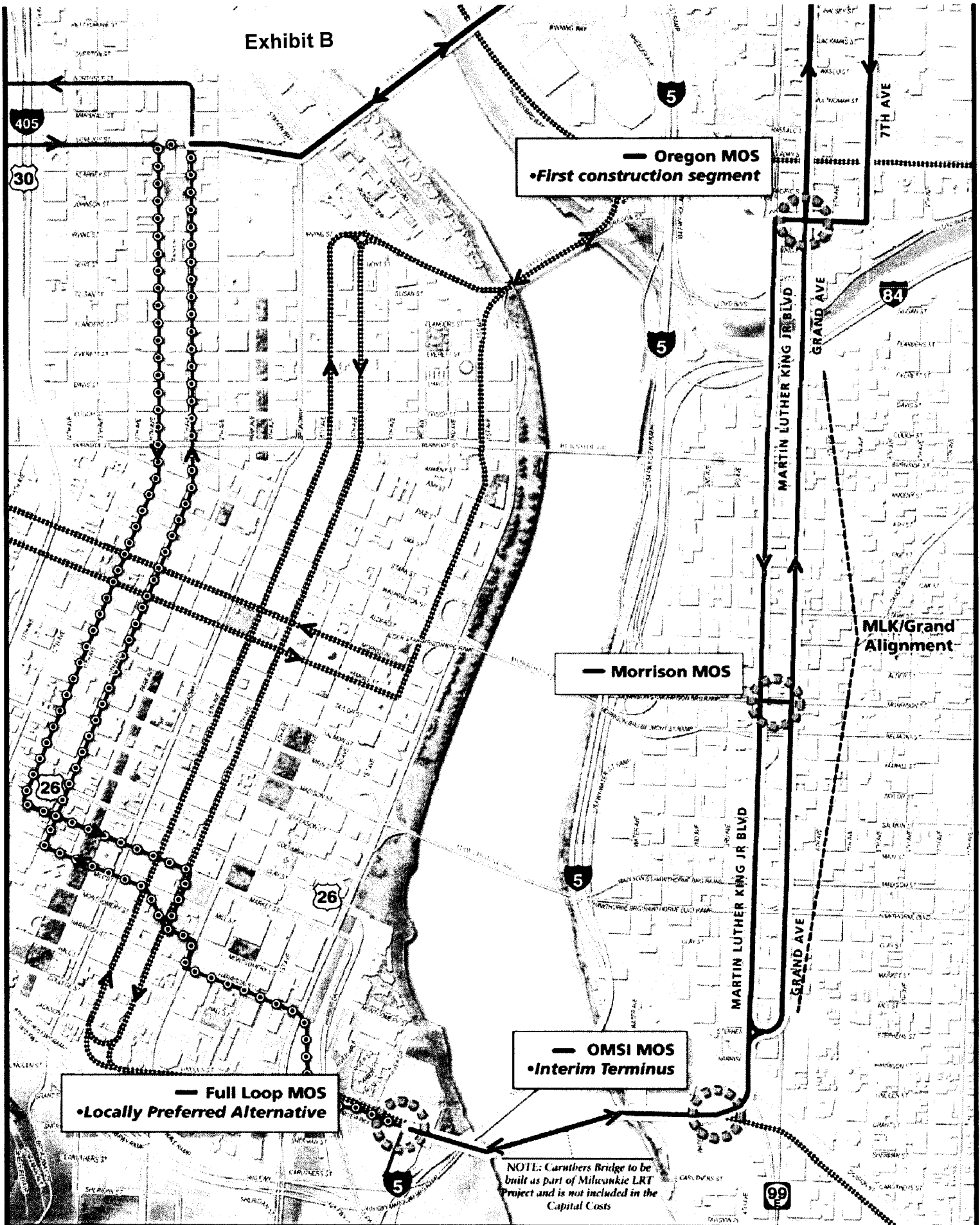
- Provide for efficient vehicle and freight movements through coordinated signalization, or any other operational improvements that will address the issues
- Identification of additional private and public redevelopment opportunities and projects along the corridor in addition to the proposed Burnside Bridgehead project
- Amending the Central Eastside Urban Renewal District to facilitate development objectives within the District
- Development of a parking management plan that includes a plan for raising revenues to help fund streetcar operations

When the project Steering Committee determines that the conditions have been met, project sponsors will seek to immediately extend the project to the OMSI MOS. If that is not possible for financial reasons, the shorter Morrison Street MOS should be considered as an interim terminus. The overall short-term goal is to proceed with the project to the OMSI MOS until such time that the Caruthers Bridge or other Willamette River streetcar crossing is available.

If the preceding conditions are not met or are not met satisfactorily, the Steering Committee will evaluate other alignments and measures, which will meet these conditions.



**Exhibit B**



# Eastside Transit Project

## Work Program Considerations

Adopted by the Steering Committee  
June 5, 2006



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## **Overview**

These future work program elements and the issues they address are defined here because the Steering Committee wants to ensure continuity as the project moves beyond the Alternatives Analysis and Conceptual Design phases of project development. The following outlines issues and work program elements that have emerged from the Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis process. Specific requirements to report back to the Steering Committee are noted below. The Steering Committee anticipates that this issues list will change as current issues are addressed and as new issues are identified.

### **1. Coordination with Ongoing Planning Efforts**

Project staff will need to coordinate with other planning efforts that may be taking place along the project alignment and in the surrounding area. The City of Portland will be undertaking an update to the Central City Plan and Central City Transportation Management Plan. As part of this planning, the City may re-examine the land use and zoning along the Streetcar alignment to increase development potential and employment density.

Proposed Action: City of Portland staff should brief the Steering Committee if and when changes are proposed that could affect the streetcar project.

### **2. Preparation of Alternative User Benefit Measures**

Project staff should develop a rationale related to streetcar's effect on redevelopment and the "trip not taken" for consideration by the FTA. This work needs to strengthen the project's justification and should be focused on affecting the Transportation System User Benefit (TSUB) number.

Proposed Action: The Steering Committee should be briefed on the progress of developing this measure prior to submittal of an application to enter the Project Development phase of FTA's Small Starts program.

### **3. Refinement of Capital Costs and Funding Plan**

The City of Portland should finalize the capital funding plan with a focused review of the capital cost estimate related to a likely schedule for FTA approvals (risk assessment.) This capital cost should include costs inherent in the fleet management plan and finance plan. The capital funding plan should also identify the funding sources for the "by others" pedestrian and transportation improvements included in the Conceptual Design for the Alternatives Analysis.

Proposed Action: A capital cost review and draft funding plan should be submitted to the Steering Committee for review prior to submittal of an application to enter the Project Development phase of FTA's Small Starts program, and should be completed prior to the end of Project Development.

### **4. Definition of Operating and Maintenance Revenue Sources**

The Steering Committee acknowledges TriMet's constrained operating revenue situation for the first years of project operation, given the demands of opening both the Portland Mall/I-205 Light Rail Project and the Wilsonville to Beaverton Commuter Rail line.

These are in addition to increasing service for fixed route bus lines, the LIFT and other dial-a-ride services as well as other fixed-guideway projects under consideration by the region such as Milwaukie Light Rail, Columbia River Crossing and Lake Oswego streetcar. Prior to applying for construction approval and funding, both the full capital costs and a 20-year operating plan will need to be finalized. This plan may need to identify new funding sources that reflect that the project is as much about development as it is about transportation. The goal of the funding plan should be to provide for streetcar operations in a manner that allows TriMet to implement its adopted five year service plan, fund operations of the South Corridor Phase II Milwaukie Light Rail Project, and meet other regional transit needs.

Proposed Action: The Steering Committee requests that it be briefed by Portland Streetcar, Inc and the City of Portland prior to submittal of an application to enter Small Starts Project Development, regarding the status of the capital, operations and maintenance funding plan. Prior to applying for construction funding, the Steering Committee also requests that it be briefed by the City of Portland on capital, operating and maintenance funding plans and briefed by TriMet regarding any potential service cuts or reallocations that might be required to share in the operating costs of the Eastside Project. , The operations funding plan should be finalized prior to the end of Project Development. Any concerns raised at the Steering Committee would need to be resolved prior to applying for Small Starts funding.

## **5. Traffic and Streetcar Operations**

The Alternatives Analysis identified a number of key intersections that may need additional operational improvements to maintain streetcar reliability. The City of Portland will analyze the traffic and transit operational considerations described in Chapter 4 of the *Eastside Transit Alternatives Analysis Evaluation Report* including cost, potential impacts and speed improvements and their effect on streetcar reliability. In particular, northbound Grand Ave. is already congested between NE Oregon and NE Broadway. At a minimum, such congestion requires a detailed plan for mitigation if streetcar is expected to operate northbound on Grand Ave. without further deteriorating auto movement or compromising streetcar's ability to maintain its schedule.

Proposed Action: A proposed plan for capital and operational improvements to maintain the reliability of streetcar operations should be prepared prior to submittal of an application to enter the Project Development phase of FTA's Small Starts program and should be completed prior to the end of Project Development.

## **6. Refinement of Streetcar Alignment and Capital Cost Reduction**

Recognizing that capital cost reductions may be necessary in order to advance the project to the OMSI interim terminus, the City of Portland should investigate modifying the proposed Streetcar Conceptual Design (*URS, April 2006*). Specifically, streetcar operations on the left side of Grand Avenue and on the right side of NE Broadway and Weidler streets should be evaluated for their potential to save construction costs associated with utility relocation. Traffic impacts of this alignment modification should

also be assessed. In addition, cost reductions should be pursued for proposed modifications to the Broadway Bridge.

Proposed Action: An evaluation of potential alignment modifications and a proposed plan to evaluate and implement capital cost reductions should be prepared prior to submittal of an application to enter the Project Development phase of FTA's Small Starts program. This information will be critical to inform any Steering Group action to advance the project to the OMSI interim terminus.

**7. Evaluate Emergency Shared Light Rail and Streetcar Operations Between Rose Quarter and the Caruthers Bridge**

The Steering Committee requests that TriMet and the City of Portland evaluate the potential for shared light rail and streetcar operations between the Caruthers Bridge and Rose Quarter in the event of an emergency that closes the Steel Bridge. The ability to use a new Willamette River streetcar crossing and the Central Eastside streetcar alignment for all light rail lines builds an important safeguard in the event of an emergency situation. The Steering Committee requests that this evaluation be conducted prior to applying for FTA Small Starts funding.

Proposed Action: Prior to entering Small Starts Project Development, the Steering Committee will review the feasibility of including provisions for joint emergency operations with light rail in the project scope. TriMet and the City of Portland should evaluate the feasibility of shared light rail operations. This evaluation should inform the design standards to be used in Project Development and identify any special design and operational considerations for joint operation of streetcar and light rail.