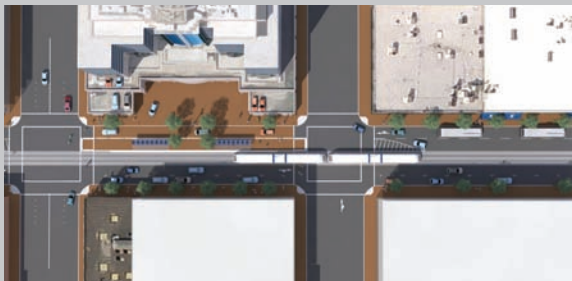


Vancouver Working Group Final Report

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Background

In July of 2008, six local partners reached consensus on a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Columbia River Crossing project from five that were analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Partners selected the replacement bridge with light rail alternative because it offers the best opportunity to meet project goals and serve community needs. The proposed light rail line includes a 2.9 mile extension from the Expo Center in Portland to Clark College in Vancouver.

During the Draft Environmental Impact Statement process, a number of options for a light rail transit (LRT) alignment and termini were considered. For a variety of reasons, including local project partner support, the final choice was to terminate the line at Clark College. The introduction of LRT into downtown Vancouver will require local decision-makers to select the alignment through downtown to Clark College, select the station locations, and determine the appropriate siting of park and ride garages sufficient to provide 2,900 parking spaces for commuters using LRT.

The City of Vancouver, C-TRAN, and the Columbia River Crossing project (CRC) recognized that a high level of community engagement would be necessary to deal with these issues. They were clear that such a process needed to be unbiased, balanced, and transparent. They were also aware that Vancouver is unique, and LRT location and design preferences that had been made elsewhere in the region didn't necessarily fit the needs or values of this community. It was clear that what was needed was a process that looked in detail at how LRT could be integrated into this community so that the assets of the system and the investment would be maximized. In order to accomplish this, the agencies agreed to invite a group of interested citizens, which became known as the Vancouver Working Group (VWG), to weigh the pros and cons of alternatives and arrive at a recommendation. The recommendation would then be considered as part of a final decision-making process by the City Council, the C-TRAN Board of Directors, and the Columbia River Crossing project. The VWG was viewed by the agencies as a forum where the critical issues of impact—alignment, station location, and park and ride garages—could be discussed in full view of the public (all meetings were open to the public and with the exception of the first meeting, all were broadcast unedited on CTVV, the local government access channel).

In order to reflect the diverse perspectives needed to fully explore these issues, the membership of the VWG included representatives of neighborhoods, property owners, transit users, persons with disabilities, business owners, development interests, and concerned public sector entities. While there was no attempt to determine whether any of the invited members were pro- or anti-light rail, the group ended up with both. The decision as to the VWG's final composition was made by staff of the City and C-TRAN, with input from John D. White, the facilitator retained to assist the group. The resulting membership proved to be diverse, opinionated, insightful, creative, demanding, and occasionally argumentative. A listing of the VWG members can be found in Appendix 1.

As reported later in this document, the VWG was successful in developing recommendations on all of the critical issues of impact. The group also presents two minority opinion reports that the decision-makers should consider. Members were able to reach their recommendations and reports by collectively donating hundreds of volunteer hours in meetings and many more hours reading materials and preparing for the meetings. They have provided a valuable service and product to the Columbia River Crossing project, the City, and C-TRAN and deserve acknowledgement for their dedication and willingness to serve their community.

Summary of Recommendations from the Vancouver Working Group

Issue	Choices	Recommendation
North/South Alignment	<p>Northbound and southbound trains on Washington -or- 2-way couplet, northbound trains on Broadway and southbound trains on Washington</p>	2-way couplet
East/West Alignment	<p>McLoughlin Blvd -or- 16th St -or- 17th St</p>	McLoughlin Blvd
Track Location	<p>Center running (down the middle of the street) -or- Side running (immediately adjacent to the sidewalk)</p>	Center running
Station Locations	<p>Washington (between 5th St and 6th St) Washington (between 9th St and Evergreen Blvd) Washington (between 15th St and 16th St) Broadway (between 8th St and 9th St) Broadway (between 15th St and 16th St) Clark College (on McLoughlin Blvd)</p>	<p>Washington (between 5th St and 6th St) Washington (between 9th St and Evergreen Blvd) Washington (between 15th St and 16th St) Broadway (between 8th St and 9th St) Broadway (between 15th St and 16th St) Clark College (on McLoughlin Blvd)</p>
Park & Ride Structures	<p>Clark College: 1,750 spaces Mill District: 560 spaces SR 14: 590 spaces (within SR 14 to I-5 ramp) SR 14 Alt: 590 spaces (on blocks bounded by Columbia, Washington, 3rd St, and 5th St)</p>	<p>Clark College: 1,750 spaces Mill District: 560 spaces SR 14: 590 spaces (within SR 14 to I-5 ramp) SR 14 Alt: 590 spaces (on blocks bounded by Columbia, Washington, 3rd St, and 5th St)</p>

Consensus	Vote	Key Considerations
Not achieved due to two dissenting	15 – 2, with a minority report filed	Focused on retaining on-street parking; high-quality, inviting pedestrian facilities and design; retaining two-way traffic; design with crime prevention and safety in mind; design should be sensitive to context; coordinate closely with adjacent property owners.
Not achieved due to one dissenting	9 – 8, with a minority report filed	Focused on safety for all modes; retain existing McLoughlin amenity package; retain vehicular connectivity; make I-5 underpass inviting; design with possible future station on McLoughlin.
Yes	N/A	Include a design that keeps two-way traffic, but through the use of materials and design elements de-emphasizes the automobile.
Yes	N/A	High quality design; pedestrian-friendly spaces; safety.
Yes	N/A	Project should plan to provide 2,900 spaces; if possible, avoid building Mill District site; if not possible, try to reduce the number of spaces; make ground floor of both downtown sites active uses; use SR 14 Alternative site and build parking underground with convention-compatible use on top; provide aggressive parking management program to manage appropriate use of on- and off-street supply; design Clark College structure with access ramps on freeway side; review ability to move LRT station closer to Clark College site.

Charter and Process

In a public process such as the VWG used, a clear understanding of both the assignment at hand and the process for developing the requested recommendations must be well understood by all parties. To that end, the group considered, discussed and adopted two guiding documents: a charter and a process outline.

The charter (Appendix 2) was drafted by the group's facilitator and described the VWG's responsibilities, both as a group and as individuals. Importantly, the charter stated that the group accepted "the LPA and DEIS as a point of departure for this process." This was critical because it put the VWG beyond the argument about whether LRT should be a part of downtown Vancouver. The VWG acknowledged the fact that the issue might still be contentious and that in all likelihood a vote of the people on providing operating and maintenance funding would be required in the future.

The charter outlined the following guidelines and responsibilities for each member of the VWG:

- Accept the LPA and DEIS as a point of departure for this process.
- Educate themselves on the fundamentals of light rail design and operation and develop an understanding of how those fundamentals could best be incorporated into the fabric of downtown Vancouver.
- Attend, if possible, and receive and evaluate input from two community workshops.
- Discuss candidly the impacts of LRT construction and operation on business and property owners, neighborhoods, and downtown Vancouver as a whole, and develop creative approaches to addressing negative impacts, be they perceived or real.
- Achieve consensus on recommendations for a preferred alignment for LRT, preferred station locations, preferred locations of support and ancillary facilities (e.g., parking facilities), and policy issues pertaining to design and on-going operation of the system that should be addressed prior to final decisions.
- Develop final recommendations on the above-referenced issues and submit them to the Columbia River Crossing, Vancouver City Council, and the C-TRAN Board of Directors.

The charter was presented, discussed, and adopted at the January 6, 2009 meeting of the VWG.

It was also important to have the group agree on a decision-making process. Members were asked to consider a consensus-based decision-making model (Appendix 3) which meant that at key points in the process, they would be asked to indicate their agreement with a proposed position. They would be given three options:

- I agree with the proposition.
- While I may not be fully supportive of this decision or choice, I can live with its consequences and I agree that I will not oppose it.
- I disagree with the proposition.

The group defined achieving consensus to be when no participating members indicated disagreement with the proposition. If one or more members disagreed, discussion would continue until a consensus-supported decision evolved or until a member of the group called for an “up/down” vote of the body. A call for a vote occurred regarding two recommendations: the north/south LRT alignment and the east/west LRT alignment.

To further ensure that the process was workable and transparent, the group’s adopted process included a demand that technical information be sufficient and timely. The staff was asked to have all information to the group one week before the meeting, including an agenda that fully described what would be happening at each meeting. At times, despite diligent efforts technical information was unavoidably delivered beyond these deadlines. The decision-making process also provided for minority reports to be written by VWG members if they felt so motivated. As noted above, two such reports accompany their recommendations.

The group discussed and adopted the process model at its January 6, 2009 meeting.

Summary of Meetings

Initially, the VWG was scheduled to meet monthly but, after February 5, 2009, the group met on a twice-a-month schedule. The following is a brief summary of the areas of discussion and events at each of the 12 meetings.

January 6

Desired Meeting Outcome: Introduction of process and materials.

- Self introduction by each member, including affiliations and perspective on the light rail transit (LRT) issue
- Presentation, discussion, and adoption of the charter (see Charter and Process section of this report)¹
- Presentation, discussion and adoption of the VWG decision-making process (see Charter and Process section of this report)
- Presentations on issues to be kept in mind when making decisions regarding LRT
- Listing by VWG members of questions or additional information they would like to have
- Public comment

February 5

Desired Meeting Outcome: To receive information regarding the overall project status, funding objectives, and long-term transit planning; review and discuss information coming out of the neighborhood workshops; and introduce the concept of guiding principles that will provide a framework for making a recommendation on a preferred alignment.

- Project overview (Columbia Boulevard to SR 500) by Columbia River Crossing deputy project director
- Federal Transit Administration funding overview
- Regional High Capacity Transit study overview
- Summary of January 10 neighborhood workshop
- “Hot Seat” panel discussion regarding overall project issues (unstructured Q&A with technical experts)

¹ Two members expressed concern that the charter locked them into supporting LRT which they were not prepared to do. Once clarified, neither objected to the adoption of the charter.

- Introduction of guiding principles that could be used to facilitate decision-making
- Review of VWG schedule
- Public comment

February 19

Desired Meeting Outcome: To develop a set of guiding principles that will provide a framework for a recommendation of a preferred alignment and to consider the issues regarding a two-way Washington vs. a one-way Washington/Broadway couplet.

- Development of a proposed set of guiding principles to be used in evaluating the alignment options
- Presentation of the two north/south alignment options: two-way LRT on Washington and a couplet (northbound LRT on Broadway and southbound LRT on Washington)
- Responses to information requests and questions from prior VWG meetings regarding alignment
- Public comment

March 5

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at a consensus on a recommendation on a preferred north/south alignment for LRT through downtown Vancouver.

- Presentation by the Port of Vancouver regarding LRT impact on traffic bound for the Port of Vancouver (especially trucks)
- Presentation by City of Vancouver staff on the Vancouver City Center Vision (VCCV) plan
- Discussion, refinement, and adoption of a set of guiding principles
- Discussion, refinement, and adoption of a set of indicators to support each guiding principle
- Description of design alternatives (track locations) within each north/south alignment option
- Public comment

March 19

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at a consensus on a recommendation on a preferred north/south alignment for LRT through downtown Vancouver.

- Review of proposed decision-making process (use of guiding principles)
- Presentation of straw man assessment of scoring of north/south alternatives' fulfillment of guiding principles
- VWG discussion of how alternatives should be scored
- Public comment

April 2

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at a consensus on a recommendation on a preferred north/south alignment for LRT through downtown Vancouver.

- Summary and discussion of results from March 10 community workshop on LRT station design
- Presentation on ridership by mode
- Presentation of photographs of other LRT station designs including PGE Park, Rosa Parks Way, Lloyd District, and Hillsboro
- Review of bus routing memo from C-TRAN
- Continuation of discussion of north/south alternatives and their fulfillment of guiding principles
- Arrival at recommendation for couplet as the preferred north/south alignment (unable to reach consensus; the recommendation was achieved by a vote, 14-2)
- Discussion of key considerations² that should be attached to the alignment recommendation
- Introduction of the issues surrounding the east/west alignment
- Public comment

² Key considerations is a term used by the VWG to indicate an assumption upon which the recommendation was based or an implementation measure that the VWG believes is essential to the ensuring success of integrating LRT into downtown Vancouver.

April 30³

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at a consensus on a recommendation on a preferred east/west alignment for LRT through downtown Vancouver.

- Presentation of technical assessment of east/west alternatives (McLoughlin Boulevard and 16th Street)
- Presentation of staff recommendation for McLoughlin Boulevard
- Discussion of alternatives and a demand to know more about why 17th Street could not be considered a viable alternative
- Public comment

May 14

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at a consensus on a recommendation on a preferred east/west alignment for LRT through downtown Vancouver.

- Walking tour of east/west alignment options
- Presentation by Columbia River Crossing staff of overall project schedule
- “Hot Seat” panel discussion regarding east/west alignment issues (unstructured Q&A with technical experts)
- Discussion whether to use the adopted guiding principles for the east/west alignment discussion
- Discussion of east/west alternatives, including 17th Street
- Arrival at a recommendation for McLoughlin Boulevard as the preferred east/west alignment (unable to reach consensus due to one dissenting; the recommendation was achieved by a vote, 9-8)
- Public comment

³ The next meeting following April 2 would have been April 16. That meeting was cancelled in order to allow staff more time to prepare for the next phase of discussion.

May 28

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at consensus on a recommendation for station block locations and LRT street position.

- Develop key considerations for the McLoughlin Boulevard alignment
- Presentation of station block location design constraints (block length and grades)
- Presentation of station location recommendations from staff
- Review of track location options for the north/south alignment
- Review of north/south alignment minority report
- Public comment

June 25

Desired Meeting Outcome: To gain a shared understanding of the history of the development of the proposed park and rides (locations/number of parking stalls); of the interface between the park and ride facilities and surrounding transportation system (i.e., LRT stations, bike/pedestrian lanes, LRT track, parking); VWG decision on key considerations for north/south and east/west alignments.

- Background on prior park and ride decisions in planning process
- Proposed downtown bus routing
- Exploration of how all modes (bus, LRT, auto, bike, and pedestrian) can be integrated
- Description of existing and future traffic function
- Parking management programs and their implementation
- Public comment

July 9

Desired Meeting Outcome: To provide the VWG with answers to the questions that were asked about park and ride structures in the last meeting; to add additional information about park and ride structures; to agree upon a decision-making process; and to initiate that process for the station location and park and ride decisions.

- Finalizing key considerations for alignment recommendations
- Provision of information requested from prior two meetings including assumptions regarding park and ride demand, parking management strategies, and traffic
- Determination of decision-making process to be followed
- Public comment

July 23

Desired Meeting Outcome: To arrive at final recommendations for station location and park and ride decisions.

- Presentation on high capacity transit and its interface with bus and LRT modes
- History of park and ride decision-making within the Columbia River Crossing project, how park and rides operate, balancing capacity and demand
- Further information on parking management strategies and the City's expectations
- Decision on park and ride logistics, locations, and sizes
- Key considerations for station locations and park and rides
- Public comment

Recommendations

As noted in the introductory comments, the VWG was asked to provide recommendations to the Columbia River Crossing project, the City of Vancouver, and the C-TRAN Board of Directors on three questions.

- What is the best alignment for light rail transit through downtown Vancouver to Clark College?
- What are the best locations for light rail stations?
- What are the best locations and sizes for three park and ride structures in downtown Vancouver?

The recommendations are discussed below. Each recommendation is augmented by a set of key considerations, a term used by the VWG to indicate an assumption upon which the recommendation was based or an implementation measure that the VWG believes is essential to ensuring the successful integration of LRT into downtown Vancouver. It is fair to say that the recommendations cannot be separated from the key considerations. Indeed, some members of the VWG supported some recommendations only so long as the key considerations were included and adhered to.

The discussion that led to each recommendation was extensive, time-consuming, and far-ranging. Because many of the issues involved in the three questions are subtle and nuanced, to the greatest possible extent, the flavor of the discussion is expressed by listing the key discussion points.

Note: At the outset of the VWG process, it was assumed that the north/south and east/west alignments would be examined concurrently. However, it soon became obvious that because the issues involved diverged, it was best to separate them.

North/South Alignment

The VWG was presented with two north/south alignment alternatives which were derived through the development of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Each alternative began with a fixed point, the station on Washington Street between 5th Street and 6th Street. That station is the point at which the LRT line has descended from the bridge and the first place available and suitable for a station location.

The alignment options were the 2-way Washington alignment which would run northbound and southbound trains in the Washington Street right of way, and the couplet alignment which would turn northbound trains east along 7th Street, then north along Broadway. Southbound trains would be routed down Washington. See Exhibits 1 and 2. These alternatives were complicated by the fact that each contained sub-alternatives, which dealt with where the track would be situated on the street. The location of the track (the center of the street versus adjacent to the sidewalk) impacted other urban elements such as on-street parking, access to loading and parking lots, etc. So the group was faced with a daunting set of options.

Rather than leaping into a debate on the merits of each alternative, the VWG elected to first establish a set of guiding principles. These principles were intended to describe the characteristics of the best solution, not focus on the choice itself. Assessing how well either alternative met the guiding principles provided guidance for the VWG discussion. The result of that work suggests that the preferred alternative would fulfill these guiding principles:

- Provides opportunities to increase the vitality of downtown businesses and residential growth over the 20-year horizon of the VCCV.
- Serves as a catalyst for redevelopment and new development congruent with the VCCV plan.
- Creates downtown streets that promote safety and access and balance multiple uses.
- Provides the highest degree of transit efficiency and access via all modes.

Each principle was further defined by a set of indicators—in most cases metrics that could be used to help determine the alternative's level of compliance with the principle. The principles and indicators are attached as Appendix 4.

To kick start the process, the technical staff presented the VWG with a straw man ranking of the alternatives as they complied with the principles. The VWG then completed its own ranking. In the final analysis, the guiding principles were helpful in focusing discussion. But the process did not lead to a simple mathematical summation of points scored.

Key Discussion Topics

The VWG never lost sight of the community's primary objective: an active, accessible downtown that is pleasant, diverse, easy to use, and inviting. To that end, the discussion tended to focus on several key topics.

Existing street width and block size. Downtown Vancouver is based on a system of streets laid out in a grid, where most of the blocks measure 200 feet by 200 feet.⁴ Nearly all of the street width rights-of-way are 80 feet. As the VWG investigation revealed, the right of way width can be a significant challenge when it comes to fitting in transit, bike, auto, and pedestrian facilities without compromise. Many of the schemes, particularly those in the two-way Washington alignment, left pedestrian facilities narrower than the City's minimum standard (12 feet).

Sidewalk widths. Several of the guiding principles and their supporting indicators speak to having room enough for a streetscape that creates welcoming places. The VWG discussion frequently related this welcoming streetscape to sidewalks wide enough for pedestrian movement, street furniture (trees, lights, signs, etc.), and uses such as sidewalk cafes.

Protection of public and private investment. Many downtown businesses rely on on-street parking for customers. Those that do provide off-street parking need convenient access to it. Some businesses rely on on-street loading zones. Retaining as much on-street parking, access to off-street parking, and loading zones was a recurrent theme in the VWG discussions. The VWG, furthermore, was resolute in being clear that the group was not willing to sacrifice the well being of current businesses for the sake of longer-term gains. A balance of long- and short-term interests is required. This includes issues relating to construction disturbance—both in geographic scope and duration.

⁴ In the later discussion regarding station location, some blocks are noted to be less than 200 feet square.

Consistency with existing plans. The City Council adopted the VCCV plan in 2007. The VWG asked City representatives about the consistency of the proposed alignments with that plan. City staff indicated that the plan assumed a two-way Washington alignment. Making a different choice would require amending the plan. Much of the discussion centered on how much of a development incentive LRT would actually create. Regional and national examples can be interpreted as supporting LRT as an incentive for private sector investment or, conversely, LRT having little or no market impact.

Traffic circulation. The City recently modified its downtown auto circulation system to provide more two-way traffic flow through downtown as part of the implementation of the VCCV.⁵ Much of the data presented indicated that with a couplet LRT alignment, that traffic pattern could be retained. To do so with a single street LRT alignment was portrayed as much more challenging and likely not achievable. The VWG expressed a strong preference for retaining the new two-way traffic patterns. (Note: Although not listed as a key consideration by the VWG, maintaining two-way traffic circulation on the streets in question was assumed to be a given as part of the decision making process.)

LRT and pedestrian interaction. The VWG discussed at length how—or if—pedestrian patterns would be enhanced by the alignment choice. Some in the group believed that a concentrated rail alignment would provide more pedestrian opportunities for those businesses along that route. Others expressed a belief that by separating the rail lines, pedestrian traffic would be increased as people walked between the northbound and southbound segments.

Bus interface. To some extent, the alignment alternatives are impacted by how bus transit will serve downtown in the future. Some members wanted bus routes to be perpendicular to the LRT route. C-TRAN, however, responded that its planning shows more effective service is achieved by including bus service on the same streets as LRT.

⁵ Main Street, C Street, and Broadway Street have all been converted from one-way traffic to two-way traffic over the last 18 months.

Recommendation

The VWG was not able to reach a consensus position (all members either supporting or being able to live with one of the alternatives) on the north/south alignment. As a result a vote was taken. Fourteen supported the couplet, while two supported the two-way Washington alternative. Therefore, **the recommendation of the VWG is that LRT use an alignment that routes northbound trains along Broadway after crossing over from Washington on 7th Street, and that southbound trains be routed along Washington.** A minority report arguing for a two-way Washington alignment was drafted by a member of the VWG and is attached to this report. Decision-makers are encouraged to consider that report. See Minority Report 1.

Key Considerations

As noted above, for the VWG, key considerations are an assumption upon which its recommendation is based or as an implementation measure that the VWG believes is essential to ensuring the successful integration of LRT into downtown Vancouver. Decision-makers are advised that in many VWG members' minds, acceptance of the recommendation without due consideration of the key considerations would not be consistent with the intent of the VWG's work. For the north/south alignment, the key considerations are as follows:

- Optimize and balance access to downtown by coordinating parking (type, location, and amount) and use of alternative modes with the City parking management plan and the proposed transportation management area in downtown.
- Work with employers, community groups, schools, and residents to increase ridership via education, support, and incentives. Evaluate whether downtown Vancouver could be a free transit ride zone.
- Optimize traffic flow with intersection signal timing so that downtown remains accessible by limiting automobile and traffic speeds to those consistent with safety in a downtown environment.
- Make sidewalks and streetscapes as welcoming to pedestrians as possible. Make them a good place to traverse as well as spend time.

- Coordinate LRT design with adjacent properties. Work with businesses and developers to create partnerships that will help solve specific challenges. Consider developer incentives to achieve community objectives.
- Ensure landscaping does not obstruct lighting or create unsafe areas. Use the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
- Implement safe and frequently spaced crosswalks. There should be as many crosswalks as possible and they should all use the latest technology (such as allowing crossing pedestrians a head start to ensure visibility).
- Design along specific streets should not all be treated the same; rather, the design should respond, and potentially change, as it moves through unique areas and neighborhoods.
- Preserve loading zone and driveway access for businesses.
- Although not discussed here, a key consideration later proposed relative to park and ride structures that on-street parking that is removed due to the LRT project needs to be replaced in-kind or financially. Please see key considerations in the Park and Ride section.

East/West Alignment

In the case of the east/west alternatives, the VWG was again presented with two alternatives that had been derived through the development of the DEIS. See Exhibits 3 and 4.

- The first was the 16th Street alignment: northbound and southbound trains from the couplet alignment would move east and west on 16th Street, cross under the I-5 freeway in a new tunnel, and move onto McLoughlin Boulevard just in front of the Marshall Center, ending at the Clark College station located on McLoughlin.
- The second was the McLoughlin Boulevard alignment: northbound and southbound trains would move east and west on McLoughlin and remain in that right of way until they reached the Clark College station. The alignment would pass under I-5 in the same underpass as vehicular traffic.

In both options, eastbound and westbound trains would be on the same street, and the track would be in the center of the right of way to allow traffic to move along the alignment and across most intersecting streets. Variations of the 16th Street alignment—intended to avoid a costly tunnel under the freeway—would route tracks from 16th Street north along G Street and then to McLoughlin, or along the west side of the freeway and then pass underneath beneath it in the vehicular underpass.

The group discussed whether the guiding principles used for the north/south discussion would be useful for this phase of discussion. They concluded that many were not applicable and therefore elected not to use them in their evaluation of the east/west alternatives.

Unlike the north/south discussion, the Columbia River Crossing staff elected to provide the VWG with a recommendation for the east/west alignment. For the following reasons, they suggested that the better choice between the 16th Street and McLoughlin alignments was McLoughlin because:

- McLoughlin is already a mix of retail, commercial and office uses.
- This alignment can use the same underpass used by auto traffic.
- This alignment avoids trenching to achieve grades.
- Lower cost than 16th Street options and faster operating times.

Key Discussion Topics

McLoughlin upgrades. VWG members, particularly those who live or work close to McLoughlin Boulevard, spoke about the significant improvement that has come about as a result of the in-street modifications that were made to the street a few years ago. The improvements include traffic calming measures, designated bike lanes, and parking. VWG members noted that the street seems to have much more pedestrian use now and is viewed as a safe and pleasant way to get from the downtown neighborhoods to Central Park. They expressed serious reservations about whether any of that character could be retained or even recaptured with the introduction of two sets of LRT tracks. (Note: there is currently no plan for the inclusion of a station on McLoughlin, although the VWG did talk about it as a long-term possibility.)

Cost. The inclusion of a new tunnel under the freeway for the 16th Street alignment is clearly an increased cost. While no official estimate was provided, a ballpark estimate of \$60 million was discussed. Knowing the project is already very expensive, many VWG members expressed concerns about the cost of the tunnel and whether the 16th Street alignment option was worth the increased cost.

Right of way. Acquisition of right of way was discussed. The McLoughlin Boulevard alignment requires right of way acquisition between Washington and the freeway underpass.⁶ These prospective acquisitions stirred concerns about the project's impacts on continuity and scale along McLoughlin Boulevard.

Land use. The recently adopted VCCV plan envisions opportunities for redevelopment along 16th Street and the City recently rezoned the land adjacent to 16th for higher density and intensity of use (CX zone and 75-foot maximum building heights). On the other hand, the frontage on McLoughlin Boulevard (extending a half-block north of McLoughlin) is zoned CC, with a 50-foot maximum building height as far east as G Street. Areas north of that half-

⁶ Most of the right of way needs in the McLoughlin Boulevard alignment west of C Street are narrow strips from properties fronting the street.

block frontage on McLoughlin Boulevard are zoned to reflect the existing residential use (R-9, 35-foot maximum building height). The VWG debated whether these land use regulations implied an alignment along the denser corridor (16th Street).

Safety. The 16th Street alignment, emerging from a tunnel near McLoughlin Boulevard, was of significant concern. The crossing of the LRT tracks onto McLoughlin and under the freeway presented some geometric design challenges that could create some safety issues, particularly for bicyclists and pedestrians. It was observed that sight distances for train operators could be limited. Some VWG members believed that by placing the Clark station on the south side of McLoughlin instead of in the center of the street, many of the safety concerns being cited could be successfully addressed.

Design. To get the 16th Street alignment underneath the freeway, the grade of the alignment would have to begin to descend at about E Street and the train would be in a fairly deep trench as it moved through the eastern portion of the neighborhood. One sub-alternative—turning the tracks from 16th Street onto G Street to avoid the tunnel—avoided the trench. However, it introduced two right angle turns that increase the travel time for this alignment. The other sub-alternative—along the west side of the freeway—still required excavation that would result in a tall retaining wall on one side. In addition, with the 16th Street alignment, from E Street east, traffic would not be able to cross 16th Street. See Exhibit 5 for sub-alternatives.

Parking removal. The McLoughlin Boulevard alignment would remove the parking that currently exists on the street. This would be only partially mitigated by using D and E Streets between 17th Street and McLoughlin to build double loaded parking areas.

17th Street alternative. The biggest concern for the VWG, however, was why a 17th Street alternative had not been evaluated. In their view, it avoided most of the problems of 16th Street (need for trenching, new tunnel, tight turns, etc.) while leaving McLoughlin Boulevard intact. Members were candid as they assessed the two alternatives that had been provided: one worked (McLoughlin Boulevard) and one clearly had cost, safety and design issues (16th

Street). They did not believe that those alternatives really represented a choice. They asked for a more thorough evaluation of 17th Street as an alternative.

Columbia River Crossing staff returned with the outcome of their investigation of a 17th Street alternative. See Exhibits 6, 7 and 8. This alignment would not use a tunnel but rather would curve back to McLoughlin just prior to the freeway underpass, allowing the underpass to be used for both LRT and vehicular traffic. Right of way acquisition would be required for the 17th Street alignment to accommodate its return to McLoughlin. The safety of the train entering and leaving McLoughlin Boulevard (crossing auto, bike, and pedestrian traffic) would require close attention. At this point, the VWG unanimously agreed to withdraw 16th Street as a viable alternative based on concerns relating to safety, cost, speed, traffic obstruction (trenching), and potential impact to the Clark County Historical Museum.

Recommendation

This alignment choice ended up being perhaps the most controversial of the VWG process. The group was asked to provide a consensus check on the two options (McLoughlin Boulevard and 17th Street).⁷ On the McLoughlin Boulevard alternative, one VWG member did not support the alternative. On the 17th Street alternative, four members were unable to support it. After further discussion, a VWG member called for a vote, which was completely consistent with the operating principles adopted by the VWG at the beginning of the process. The vote was nine in favor of the McLoughlin Boulevard alignment and eight in favor of the 17th Street alignment.

Therefore, the **recommendation of the VWG is that LRT use an alignment that routes eastbound and westbound trains along McLoughlin Boulevard.** A minority report arguing for a 17th Street alignment drafted by a member of the VWG is attached to this report. Decision-makers are encouraged to consider that report. See Minority Report 2.

⁷ The consensus check consists of an expression of support for an issue, willingness to go along with the position even though it may not be the member's first choice, or unwillingness to support it.

Key Considerations

As noted above, for the VWG, key considerations are an assumption upon which its recommendation is based or as an implementation measure that the VWG believes is essential to ensuring the successful integration of LRT into downtown Vancouver. Decision-makers are advised that in many VWG members' minds, acceptance of the recommendation without due consideration of the key considerations would not be consistent with the intent of the VWG's work. For the east/west alignment, the key considerations are as follows:

- Ensure safety for all transportation modes including automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians. The safety requirements for all modes will require a comprehensive approach combining education, engineering, and enforcement. Ensuring safety will require working with adjacent neighborhoods, public agencies, McLoughlin Boulevard businesses and residents, and community groups to make sure community safety needs are met.
- The recommendation should reflect the VWG's split decision and the reasons for dissent from the endorsement of McLoughlin Boulevard as the east/west alignment.
- Adequate sight distances must be maintained along the alignment.
- Maintain McLoughlin's existing amenities—pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly with desirable features such as bump-outs, traffic calming, adequate sidewalk widths, frequent crosswalks, landscaping, and bike lanes.
- Retain north/south neighborhood connectivity and visual access along McLoughlin Boulevard. The design of the alignment must plan for and take into account the possibility of a future station on McLoughlin Boulevard.
- Create the I-5 undercrossing as a safe and welcoming space.
- Maintain east and west left-hand turns onto Broadway and Main streets from McLoughlin Boulevard.
- Work with employers, community groups, schools, and residents to increase ridership via education, support, and incentives.

Track Location within the Street

As part of the alignment discussion, the VWG had also been looking at design work which illustrated alternative track locations. There are essentially two track locations for

consideration: side running, which means the station platform is the sidewalk and the train is immediately adjacent to the sidewalk; and center running, which means the track and station are located in the center of the street with vehicular traffic circulation on either side. The distinction is important in that side running eliminates on-street parking and driveway access along its route. Center running preserves most parking and driveway access, but requires riders to cross traffic to get to the station.

After looking at a variety of options, the VWG reached consensus on concept “5B”, which is illustrated in Exhibit 9A-C.

Station Locations and Park and Rides

Originally, the work plan for the VWG assumed that station locations would be discussed and decided separately from the issue of park and ride locations and sizes. The VWG determined that the issues were so intertwined they could only be dealt with concurrently.

Again, the Columbia River Crossing staff brought forward recommendations for both components. See Exhibit 10. Recommended station locations were as follows:

- Washington between 5th Street and 6th Street
- Washington between 9th Street and Evergreen Boulevard
- Washington between 15th Street and 16th Street
- Broadway between 8th Street and 9th Street
- Broadway between 15th Street and 16th Street
- Clark College (on McLoughlin Boulevard)

Recommended locations and sizes for the park and ride structures were as follows:

- Clark College—1,750 spaces
- Mill District (Washington Street/Main Street/15th Street/16th Street)—560 spaces

- (A) SR 14—Within the freeway access ramp – 590 spaces
- (B) SR 14—Washington Street/Columbia Street/4th Street/5th Street – 590 spaces

Key Discussion Topics—Station Locations

Design Constraints. The Columbia River Crossing staff said that the recommended station locations were the result of a series of design constraints which had been layered in order to yield appropriate sites. Standards dictate that stations should be no closer than four blocks and no further than seven blocks apart. Further, the maximum street grade that can accommodate a station is 4%. Blocks fronting on a turn of the LRT line cannot be used because the radius of the turn requires some taking of the block. Finally, the block face must be at least 200 feet long to accommodate the length of the trains. As noted earlier, downtown Vancouver’s street grid is based on a 200-foot square block. However, several blocks (especially north of Mill Plain) are shorter than that by as much as 20 feet. When these factors are overlaid, the number of blocks eligible as station locations becomes limited.

Adjacent and nearby uses. If LRT is, in fact, intended to spur urban investment, station location can become a catalyst. The VWG looked at the adjacent uses of the proposed station locations and suggested some alternative locations that could perhaps be more effective in inducing investment. In most cases, however, the blocks cited were deficient in length, spacing, or grade.

Bus service. Presumably, a significant number of bus riders will want to change modes to LRT. Given that, there were several discussions about how C-TRAN believes it will route buses in the future to serve downtown.

Key Discussion Topics—Park and Rides

It is fair to say that the issue of providing above-ground parking structures in the downtown core of Vancouver for the use of commuters who are leaving the community created great angst for members of the VWG. That discomfort occurred at several levels.

- From a policy perspective, is it wise to allow uses that take up valuable downtown land but have limited function?
- How do we know the right number of spaces to provide?
- Can these garages be built so that they are architecturally complementary to downtown?
- Can these garages incorporate other uses, particularly at street level, so that they avoid the appearance of just a place that hosts commuters' cars?
- Can there be joint use of the parking—some for commuters and some for employees or shoppers at downtown businesses?
- Can the structures themselves be mixed use, including housing, commercial office, and/or retail?

Working through these complex issues took several meetings. The key topics of discussion included the following.

Necessity. First and foremost, the VWG needed a rational explanation of why any park and ride structures needed to be provided. The assertion from Columbia River Crossing staff was that Park and Rides are an important part of the mix of the way people will access the line. Walk-ons, access by bicycle and transfers from C-TRAN bus lines are important ways of accessing the project, but they need to be supplemented with Park and Rides facilities. Because the proposed LRT line is short—terminating at Clark College—the number of riders who have direct access is limited. As a result, if the line can't go to the riders, the riders will have to come to the line. In order to demonstrate reasonable ridership numbers that lead to a prospect of federal funding, riders must be allowed to drive to a park and ride garage to board the train. The VWG challenged virtually every assumption behind this premise. They asked for examples of: 1) structures that have been built in tier one cities, 2) occupancy rates of other structures in the metropolitan area, and 3) management techniques. The VWG, after completing its investigation, came to support the premise that if LRT is to serve Vancouver, park and ride structures must be provided to ensure ridership.

Supply vs. demand. Although the number of parking spaces that should be supplied is generated by modeling, describing the modeling in a way that is intuitive was difficult. The VWG sought to determine that the 2,900 parking spaces recommended was really the right number: not too many so that spaces go unused, but not so few that the overflow creates problems in the form of parking in nearby neighborhoods and businesses. Ultimately, the VWG came to believe that 2,900 spaces was a reasonable number for planning purposes.

Unintended consequences. The VWG expressed real concern over the ability to manage the parking component effectively so that it would not cause negative financial impacts on the City or Clark College or impact nearby neighborhoods (or, in the case of the Clark College structure, the college itself) negatively. The VWG heard from technical experts who reported on other projects that use park and rides and the utilization patterns that develop around them. These experts explained that they have found from many other examples that after a relatively short period of time (about 3 weeks) a balance between the supply of parking and the demand is achieved.⁸

Parking management. In anticipation of potential conflicts, the VWG asked for a detailed explanation of how parking management would be used to ensure that commuters could not poach parking spaces from adjacent neighborhoods and businesses or at Clark College. Presentations included the City's parking manager and a private parking management consultant.

Fit and design. Having accepted the premise that the introduction of LRT would require park and ride facilities, the VWG's focus moved to making the structures architecturally attractive and highly functional. The Columbia River Crossing technical staff provided a presentation showing examples of parking structures in other downtown areas (most of them not for commuters, however). These examples illustrated the fact that not only can parking structures be attractive, but that there is opportunity for a mix of uses beyond just parking. The VWG emphasized the necessity for the Columbia River Crossing project to recognize that these facilities need to have life at the ground level and, where possible, should be looked

⁸ See July 23, 2009 presentation by Alan Lehto.

at as part of a larger mixed-use development including community-oriented uses, housing and commercial space. If possible, a public-private venture should be pursued particularly for the Mill District facility. Relative to the Clark College site, the VWG was very interested in how the station and the park and ride could be linked more closely, including possibly bringing the train directly into the ground floor of the park and ride. The college also expressed concern that the access ramps (and most of the vehicular movement) be located on the freeway side of the structure, offering a quieter side to the college.

Traffic. Given the amount of new development that is in the pipeline, downtown traffic is projected to grow significantly over the next 10 years. The VWG expressed concern that the traffic generated by the park and ride structures would congest streets adjacent to or near them to unacceptable levels. Columbia River Crossing traffic staff provided information about the current and future levels of service (LOS) at which those streets would operate. In sum, the park and ride facilities represent very little new volume compared to existing traffic volumes. With the exception of Fourth Plain Boulevard at the entrance/exit to the Clark College facility, all levels of service would remain within acceptable standards as set by the City. The Fourth Plain LOS is below standards; on-going engineering studies will be conducted to attempt to improve that.

Location and size. The most troubling site of the three presented was what was called the Mill District site bounded by Main Street, Washington Street, 15th Street, and 16th Street. Initially, several VWG members challenged the necessity of the facility. However, after coming to understand the function of the structures (attract riders), and the fact that without this site, more commuter traffic would likely use local streets to access the other garages, the VWG came to accept its location. The number of spaces provided, however, remained a sticking point with strong sentiment to reduce the number of spaces if possible (see Key Considerations in this section). They would like to see every effort made to avoid providing a park and ride at this location and they suggest that it be downsized if possible. They further suggest that if the alternate SR 14 site is not large enough to take any spaces displaced from the Mill District, that the original SR 14 site (inside the freeway access ramp) be used to

provide capacity. The site at Clark College, and its size, were acceptable to the college and, therefore, also to the VWG.⁹ The site at SR 14, initially indicated to be within an access ramp from SR 14 to I-5, was troubling. Observations included the fact that although the site is already in public ownership, it is too restricted in terms of access and given its odd shape could likely be more expensive to build. Further, the site offered no opportunity to serve as leverage for any additional development. The VWG asked the Columbia River Crossing staff to look at an alternative site bounded by Washington, Columbia, 5th Street, and 3rd Street. That site proved to be more workable and offered the additional opportunity to support some development associated with the City's convention facility directly across Columbia from this site.

Recommendation

The VWG recommends the following:

- **The station locations be established as Washington between 5th Street and 6th Street, Washington between 9th Street and Evergreen Boulevard, Washington between 15th and 16th, Broadway between 8th and 9th, Broadway between 15th and 16th, and Clark College (on McLoughlin Boulevard).**
- **In order to avoid closing existing driveways and save as much on-street parking as possible, the stations should use a center running track.**
- **2,900 park and ride spaces should be provided downtown, with locations and sizes as follows:**
 - **Clark College, housing 1,750 spaces (see Key Considerations)**
 - **Mill District (Washington/Main/15th/16th), housing no more than 560 spaces (see Key Considerations)**
 - **SR 14 alternate site (Washington/Columbia/5th/3rd), housing 590 spaces**

⁹ Although acceptable, the college offered some conditions precedent to its acceptance and they are contained in the Key Considerations.

Key Considerations

As noted above, for the VWG, key considerations are an assumption upon which its recommendation is based or as an implementation measure that the VWG believes is essential to ensuring the successful integration of LRT into downtown Vancouver. Decision-makers are advised that in many VWG members' minds, acceptance of the recommendation without due consideration of the key considerations would not be consistent with the intent of the VWG's work. For the station locations and park and ride garages, the key considerations are as follows:

- The VWG believes 2,900 park and ride spaces is an acceptable number of parking spaces. However, the VWG recommends that WSDOT/C-TRAN commit legally to 1) absorb all costs of administering a parking management program, and/or 2) construct additional park and ride capacity should it be necessary. Such obligations should be at the discretion of the Vancouver City Council for all park and rides except the Clark College park and ride, which should be at the discretion of the college.
- The VWG would prefer that the Mill Station park and ride not be constructed in the proposed location. Understanding that this change is not likely, the VWG could accept this park and ride if the ground floor on all sides, with the exception of parking and service entries, is committed to commercial and community uses and the Main Street side is committed to retail use; dedicated on-site parking should be provided for the commercial and retail uses, and the incorporation of housing on the top floors should be considered during the design phase. Further, there should be a commitment to shared parking for weekends, evenings, and holidays.
- The preferred site for the SR 14 park and ride should be the area between Washington, Columbia, 5th Street, and 3rd Street.
- Regarding the preferred SR 14 site, the City should insist on the park and ride being constructed underground, with the area above the parking made available to the City for the development of an exhibition center to support the current convention facility. Parking in the underground structure should be made available on nights, weekends, and holidays for conventions and exhibition patrons. The City should push back strongly against the argument that underground parking is too expensive. Vancouvercenter and Library Square do or will have underground parking because those are quality projects with significant public benefits. Light rail should be held to the same standard and not allowed to develop for just a narrow transit purpose.

- Downtown park and rides should not be free of charge in order to be consistent with demand management needs and should be coordinated with the City's Transportation Management Association efforts.
- The Clark College structure should be designed so that most of the traffic circulation is kept on the west (freeway) side of the structure. Special attention should be paid to the landscaping on the east side since it faces into Central Park.
- Study needs to be conducted to see if the stop at Clark College can actually be integrated into the park and ride structure. There is great concern about locating the station in the middle of McLoughlin and the pedestrian/vehicular access issues that result.

Minority Reports

As noted earlier, the process adopted by the VWG aspired to achieve consensus on every issue. Recognizing that was unlikely, the process foresaw the need to allow minority reports on any of the issues before the VWG. On both alignment recommendations—north/south and east/west—minority reports have been offered. After their circulation, all 22 members were afforded an opportunity to sign in support of those opposing positions. See Minority Reports 1 and 2 for both the reports and the endorsement forms.

- The couplet north/south alignment was selected by a 14 to 2 vote. The minority report was endorsed by 5 members.
- The McLoughlin Boulevard east/west alignment was selected by a 9 to 8 vote. The minority report was endorsed by 11 members.

The VWG encourages the thoughtful consideration of the minority reports. They illustrate the subtleties of the issues that were dealt with in this process and the judgments required in finding the “right” answer.

Community Workshops

In an effort to reach a broader community, the VWG and Columbia River Crossing sponsored three community workshops during their process. While targeted to those with interests in the area most likely to be affected, the workshops were open to the entire community. The first was on Saturday, January 10, 2009. It included a walking tour of the

alignment alternatives, followed by a workshop at Hudson's Bay High School. The second was on Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at Discovery Middle School. Both of those focused on the question of alignment. The third was on March 10, 2009 and was held at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay. The topic for that workshop was station configuration, although many participants took the opportunity to comment on the alignment.

Full reports on the findings and outcomes from each of those sessions are available. That information was used by the VWG as they deliberated on the issues they were addressing. Summaries of the workshops prepared for the VWG can be found in Appendix 5.

Acknowledgements

The City, C-TRAN, and the Columbia River Crossing project owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the VWG. The process lasted twice as long as they were told to expect, the meetings went from monthly to bi-weekly, and extended from two to three hours in duration. The volume of material provided to them was substantial, and the time it took to evaluate, compare, and absorb it was extraordinary. Attendance was superb throughout and every member came fully prepared and ready to engage in the debate.

This could not have been successfully concluded without the competent assistance of the staff at the City, C-TRAN and the Columbia River Crossing. The VWG kept the staff on their toes, occasionally out-stripping their ability to keep up. But they responded with honest, unfiltered information that made the tasks assigned to the VWG achievable.

Thanks to the members of the public who chose to come and participate in the VWG meetings or community workshops by providing their ideas and opinions and those who watched via CTV. And thanks to the able crews from CTV who made it look effortless.

Notably, there was no predetermined outcome expected from this process. Every participant was aware the group was in uncharted water, addressing issues that were complex and without simple answers. Never once was there any attempt to guide the process toward a preferred solution by a project sponsor if, in fact, they had preferred outcomes.

Appendices

**VANCOUVER WORKING GROUP
FINAL REPORT**



700 WASHINGTON STREET
SUITE 300
VANCOUVER, WA 98660
360-737-2726 | 503-256-2726

Vancouver Working Group Members

Bob Knight, Clark College

Bob Sellers, C-TRAN Citizens Advisory Committee

Charlene Welch, Community Choices

Cirith Sebree, Umpqua Bank/Uptown Business Association

Dave Frei, Arnada Neighborhood Association

Dave Howard, Lincoln Neighborhood Association

Dick Malin, Central Park Neighborhood Association

Geoff Knapp, Clark County Department of Community Services

Jack Harroun, Hough Neighborhood Association

Jeff Arntson, Albina Fuel

Josh Schlesinger, Property Owner

Karin Ford, Vancouver Library

LaVon Holden, Vancouver Housing Authority

Lee Coulthard, Vancouver Downtown Association

Lisa Ghormley, Community Representative

Lonnie Chandler, Java House

Rob Barrentine, American Institute of Architects, Vancouver

Ross Montgomery, East Vancouver Resident

Sara Carter, Commuter

Steve Burdick, Killian Pacific

Terry McCarthy, Esther Short Neighborhood Association

Todd Horenstein, Vancouver School District



Vancouver Working Group Charter

Preamble

The Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project's local partners selected a locally preferred alternative (LPA) that includes a proposed light rail transit (LRT) line extending from the Expo Center, through downtown Vancouver and terminating at Clark College. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project describes the possible alignments for the light rail line. It provides only general guidance regarding the locations of stations and support facilities.

In order to assure that the LRT meets the expectations and needs of the community, the CRC project, the City of Vancouver, and C-TRAN have established an advisory committee called the Vancouver Working Group (VWG). This group will serve as the central clearing house in developing a recommendation to the project and local jurisdictions regarding the best alignment, the best station locations and support facilities and policy issues that should be considered as part of the implementation of LRT in Vancouver.

Charter

Reporting to the CRC project, the C-TRAN Board of Directors, and the Vancouver City Council, the Vancouver Working Group (VWG) will be responsible for the following:

- Accepting the LPA and DEIS as a point of departure for this process.
- Educating themselves on the fundamentals of light rail transit design and operation and developing an understanding of how those fundamentals can best be incorporated into the fabric of downtown Vancouver.
- Attending, if possible, and receiving and evaluating input from two community workshops.
- Candidly discussing impacts of LRT construction and operation on business and property owners, neighborhoods and downtown Vancouver as a whole and developing creative approaches to addressing negative impacts, be they perceived or real.
- Achieving consensus on recommendations for a preferred alignment for LRT, preferred station locations, preferred locations of support and ancillary facilities (e.g., parking facilities), and policy issues pertaining to design and on-going operation of the system that should be addressed prior to final decisions.
- Develop final recommendations on the above referenced issues and submit them to the CRC, Vancouver City Council and the C-TRAN Board of Directors.



Vancouver Working Group Process

Desired Outcome

The purpose of the Vancouver Working Group (VWG) is to allow a diversity of perspectives to help shape critical decisions relating to the integration of light rail transit (LRT) into downtown Vancouver. While the VWG has no vested decision-making authority, we will be called upon to provide recommendations to the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project, the City of Vancouver City Council, and the C-TRAN Board of Directors.

Process to Get There

How then will the VWG make decisions about what to recommend?

The primary objective will be to **achieve consensus** on the issues of the preferred alignment, preferred station locations, preferred locations of support facilities (e.g., parking garages), and recommended strategies dealing with contextual issues. Understanding that consensus on potentially volatile issues may be difficult, we agree that the process to get there will include the following.

Acknowledgement that our job is to reach consensus. The charter is specific about our obligation to achieve consensus. We need to keep this in mind so that discussion isn't framed as a pro and con debate, but more toward the relative benefits of each issue and problem solving our way toward a common (not compromise) solution. We will define "consensus" using this concept:

Either I am fully supportive of this decision or choice.

or

While I may not be fully supportive of this decision or choice, I can live with its consequences and I agree that I will not oppose it.

Using a philosophy of problem solving. These are complex problems and we are fortunate to have some very good minds around the table. We should challenge ourselves to adopt a mentality of *problem solving* as opposed to *problem finding*. While it is important to identify the problems, it is much more challenging to find creative thoughtful solutions to them.

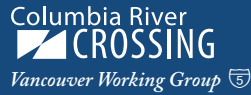
Provision of sufficient technical information. We can't expect consensus where there are gaps in data. It will be up to the technical team to make sure that they can adequately answer each "what if" that comes up in the discussion. While we can't expect the technical staff to know everything, being in a position of not having adequate information provides an easy out for not arriving at a common decision.

Provision of intermediate tools to take the pulse of the group. As discussion evolves and it is apparent there are competing valid viewpoints, we will employ some tools for informally polling the group (thumbs up, down, or sideways, etc.). We should be reserved in introducing these, instead asking ourselves to work our way through it.

Allow voting. While voting has its place, using up and down votes in this context does not help to build the kind of allegiance and ambassadorship that we hope to achieve. However, there are times when an issue can't be resolved without a vote.

Allow minority report. Where there are strongly held positions on a significant point, we should discuss – again, only after exhausting other remedies – preparing a minority report to accompany the majority opinion.

Enforce time constraints. Although there will be a sense of urgency around this entire process, we must assure that it doesn't feel as though we are being force-fed. On the other hand, it is important to define the time we will have for discussion before we must arrive at a solution. We need to be even-handed but consistent in our application of these expectations.



Light Rail Alignment Guiding Principles

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

Provides short- and long-term opportunities to increase the vitality of downtown businesses

- a. Keeps the supply and distribution of parking consistent with the demand
- b. Allows business and residential access and loading to remain where essential
- c. Minimizes right-of-way acquisition and excessive cost
- d. Provides active use sidewalks

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

Provides the highest degree of attractiveness and access via all modes

- a. Wayfinding to light rail is intuitive
- b. All modes can readily access light rail
- c. Design can be made compatible with surrounding properties / facilities
- d. Reinforces existing street grid (doesn't close / reroute)



■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

Serves as a catalyst for investment in redevelopment and new development consistent with existing plans and policies

- a. Achieves the objectives of the Vancouver City Center Vision
- b. Retains logical vehicular access to and through downtown (effective traffic circulation)
- c. Light rail adds development potential

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

Creates downtown "Great Streets," promoting and balancing multiple uses

- a. Allows integrated safe bike, pedestrian, vehicular, and transit use
- b. Creates welcoming places
- c. Allows room for amenities including street trees, street furniture, and art
- d. Calms traffic



US Department of Transportation: Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration
City of Vancouver • City of Portland • SW Washington Regional Transportation Council • Metro • C-TRAN • TriMet

Evaluation Matrix

Indicators Applied to Comparison of 2-Way on Washington Versus Broadway/Washington Couplet Transit Options

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1

Provides opportunities to increase the vitality of downtown businesses and residential growth over the plan horizon

	2-Way Washington		Broadway/Washington Couplet		
	#1	#2A	#3	#4	#5A
a. Minimizes negative impact on parking supply and distribution	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, Two Platforms	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform
b. Allows business and residential access and loading to remain where essential					
c. Minimizes right-of-way acquisition costs					
d. Provides active use sidewalks					
e. Minimizes short-term construction impacts and maximizes long-term positive impacts					

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2

Serves as a catalyst for redevelopment and new development congruent with the VCCV while preserving the character and safety of affected neighborhoods

	2-Way Washington		Broadway/Washington Couplet		
	#1	#2A	#3	#4	#5A
a. Supports the land use objectives of VCCV	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, Two Platforms	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform
b. Supports the transportation objectives of VCCV					
c. Light rail adds development potential					

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3

Creates downtown streets that promote safety and access, and balance multiple uses

	2-Way Washington		Broadway/Washington Couplet		
	#1	#2A	#3	#4	#5A
a. Allows integrated safe pedestrian, transit, bike and vehicular use	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, Two Platforms	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform
b. Creates welcoming places					
c. Allows room for amenities including street trees, street furniture, art and weather protection					

■ GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4

Provides the highest degree of transit efficiency and access via all modes

	2-Way Washington		Broadway/Washington Couplet		
	#1	#2A	#3	#4	#5A
a. Wayfinding to light rail is intuitive	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, Two Platforms	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Side-Running Transit, One-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform	Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, One Platform
b. All modes can safely and readily access light rail					
c. Reinforces existing street grid					
d. Design can be compatible with surrounding properties and facilities					

- 2B: Same as 2A but parking and bus stops are more restricted and sidewalks are narrowed for another block at each station
- 5B: Same as 5A but roadway is raised to sidewalk level. Pedestrian crossing to Island station is integrated with through traffic
- 5C: Same as 5A but discontinuous auto lane and closed driveway accesses and parking on platform side for three blocks at stations
- 5D: Same as 5A but discontinuous auto lane and closed driveway accesses and parking on platform side for one block at stations





Workshop Summary

MEETING: Transit Workshops
DATES: January 10, 2009 and January 14, 2009
LOCATION: Hudson's Bay High School and Discovery Middle School, Vancouver, WA

The following represents the general direction of discussion by date and by topic at the light rail workshops held on Saturday, January 10 at Hudson's Bay High School and Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at Discovery Middle School. Although this is intended to give you the flavor of the discussion, opinions within each group varied widely. It is for this reason that we encourage you to **review the detailed notes that follow this summary carefully** so you can see for yourself the breadth (and depth) of opinion.

LRT Alignment

Saturday, January 10

Note: This workshop was preceded by a briefing on downtown redevelopment and a walking tour of parts of the proposed routes.

In general, most groups preferred a couplet (Broadway – Washington). Reasons ranged from a single street alignment being too crowded (reducing some sidewalks to 9 feet in width) to providing an opportunity to get streetscape improvements in front of more businesses. Support for a single street alignment was clearly in the minority, although one table was not able to reach a consensus position. There was little to no support for a 16th Street alignment as an alternative to McLoughlin.

Wednesday, January 14

While people generally preferred a couplet over a single street alignment, there was less consensus on the issue, believing in part that dividing light rail between two streets provides more access to the system. Single street alignment advocates pointed out that the impacts during construction will be significantly less if the alignment is restricted to just Washington. Opinions supporting a 16th Street alignment over McLoughlin were more vocal in this session.

Station Locations

Saturday, January 10

This session seemed to focus on how well the stations could be integrated into their surroundings both in design and accessibility (pedestrian, bike, and bus). They believe that the stations should be well designed – integrate neighborhood character and use high quality materials. Several tables expressed a need for another station along McLoughlin between Clark College and C Street. One group believed that the spacing between stations on Broadway was too far. Security around the stations was a concern of several participants. The question of center-of-street stations versus those that are adjacent to the sidewalk was debated by several tables.

Wednesday, January 14

Very similar comments as the Saturday session, including a notation that another station on McLoughlin should be provided. There was a caveat to that, however, suggesting that if a station were added there

that it should not be allowed to create a new development node – that only development which respects the character of the existing neighborhood should be allowed. Participants emphasized that stations need to be closely coordinated with bus routing for convenience. Overall, it is fair to say that in both workshops, the jury was still out on the appropriateness of the proposed station locations.

Park & Rides

Saturday, January 10

The focus of the park and ride discussion in this session tended to be on two areas: including mixed uses and design. Several of the tables were concerned that not enough spaces were included in the park and rides – particularly the Clark College location, and that they should be constructed so that they could be expanded if needed. There was a strong feeling that the facilities cannot be allowed to be “dead zones” and that providing ground-level retail or other active uses could help avoid that – particularly at the Mill Station location. Secondly, there were strong sentiments that the design of the facilities be sensitive to their surroundings. In particular, there was discussion around the site across from the museum needing to respect that building in scale and materials. Participants also advocated for making sure that adjacent users, especially Clark College, be carefully consulted in the design, use, and integration of that park and ride.

Wednesday, January 14

In this workshop, there was lively debate about why park and rides should even be allowed in downtown. Some suggested that other sites should be studied, that the Mill Station site should be eliminated, and that the Clark College site should be expanded if it would mean that the Mill Station site could be eliminated. Concerns about the Mill Station site included traffic congestion issues. Beyond that, the groups advocated for making the garages lively through the use of retail and by providing art where ever possible.

Other Issues

Security and safety were frequently mentioned as important issues. There were multiple calls for using high-end materials, making sure that what is done is sustainable and long-lasting and respects the specific character of the neighborhoods. There were several concerns expressed about traffic flow, including protecting existing driveways and loading zones. Many comments also focused on making the system easy to get to and easy to use.



Workshop Summary

MEETING: Community Workshop on Light Rail Station Options

DATE: March 10, 2009

LOCATION: Red Lion Hotel Vancouver at the Quay, Vancouver, WA 98660

Workshop Purpose: The purpose of the meeting to provide an opportunity for the public to work with design experts in defining the key design characteristics that the community believes will be important to make the LRT stations fit with downtown Vancouver.

Process: The event started with a presentation from Brian McCarter of ZGF, who presented computer generated perspective drawings of various alignment options for a two-track alternative and a single-track alternative both shown on Washington Street. There were "variations on a theme" within the two-track and single-track alternatives. Each table of approximately 10 participants was then asked to discuss the design features that they would most like to see in station design. Although we didn't specifically ask for it, we were offered numerous opinions about the alignment options illustrated in the ZFG graphics. Each group then reported their findings to the larger group.

Attendance: About 75 community participants signed in for the 2 ½ hour session.

Outcomes: As was the case with our January workshops, there was a lot of energy in the room and seemingly a good deal of geographic diversity as well.

It is always difficult to provide a general, yet accurate summary of a group session such as this. That said, there were clearly some themes that resulted from the discussion:

- **Pedestrian priority.** Virtually every table referred in some fashion to pedestrian accommodation, accessibility, scale and / or safety. Many groups specifically called for wide sidewalks, not less in width than the city's standard (12 feet). They used terms like "a continuous pedestrian experience" and the "pedestrian experience should take priority." Many expressed concerns about pedestrian safety, especially in crossing travel lanes to get to the stations. They wanted particular attention paid to assure that jaywalking would be made difficult, if not impossible.
- **Parking and Loading.** Many discussed the importance of trying to retain as much on-street parking as possible and access to existing parking lots, delivery zones and garages. It seemed to reflect a heightened sensitivity to the challenges of the small downtown business person. Several tables said we should give up turn lanes if we can get more parking instead. One table thought that substituting parking in garages for what is now on the street was acceptable. There was a clear sentiment to protect and promote neighborhood businesses.
- **Materials.** Several groups commented on materials. One table liked the possibility of a cobblestone surface, at the same time they warned against the use of cobblestone due

to the difficulty it can create in terms of handicap access. There were comments about transparency and lighting for safety, including see-through shelters. Several tables commented on the desirability of including artwork.

- Scale and relationships. Groups encouraged designers to be respectful of the scale of Vancouver's downtown. One group, considering those scale differences, said that in a couplet alignment we should not assume that the line looks the same on Washington as on Broadway. They are two different streets that might call for two different design solutions. At least two tables commented that the transit should not become a barrier to be crossed.
- Traffic movement. Several tables commented that they think it is important to provide consistency for traffic flow and to make sure that drivers aren't surprised by impediments. One table commented that we should "design so pedestrians and automobiles have to be aware of each other."

As noted earlier, although we weren't fishing for opinions on the alignment options, given how the information was presented graphically, people tended to express opinions anyway. In fairness, most options even when supported had a list of "buts" with them. There was, however, a clear consensus around the couplet options. Most opinions centered on being more pedestrian friendly, less intimidating in their scale and allowing more design flexibility.

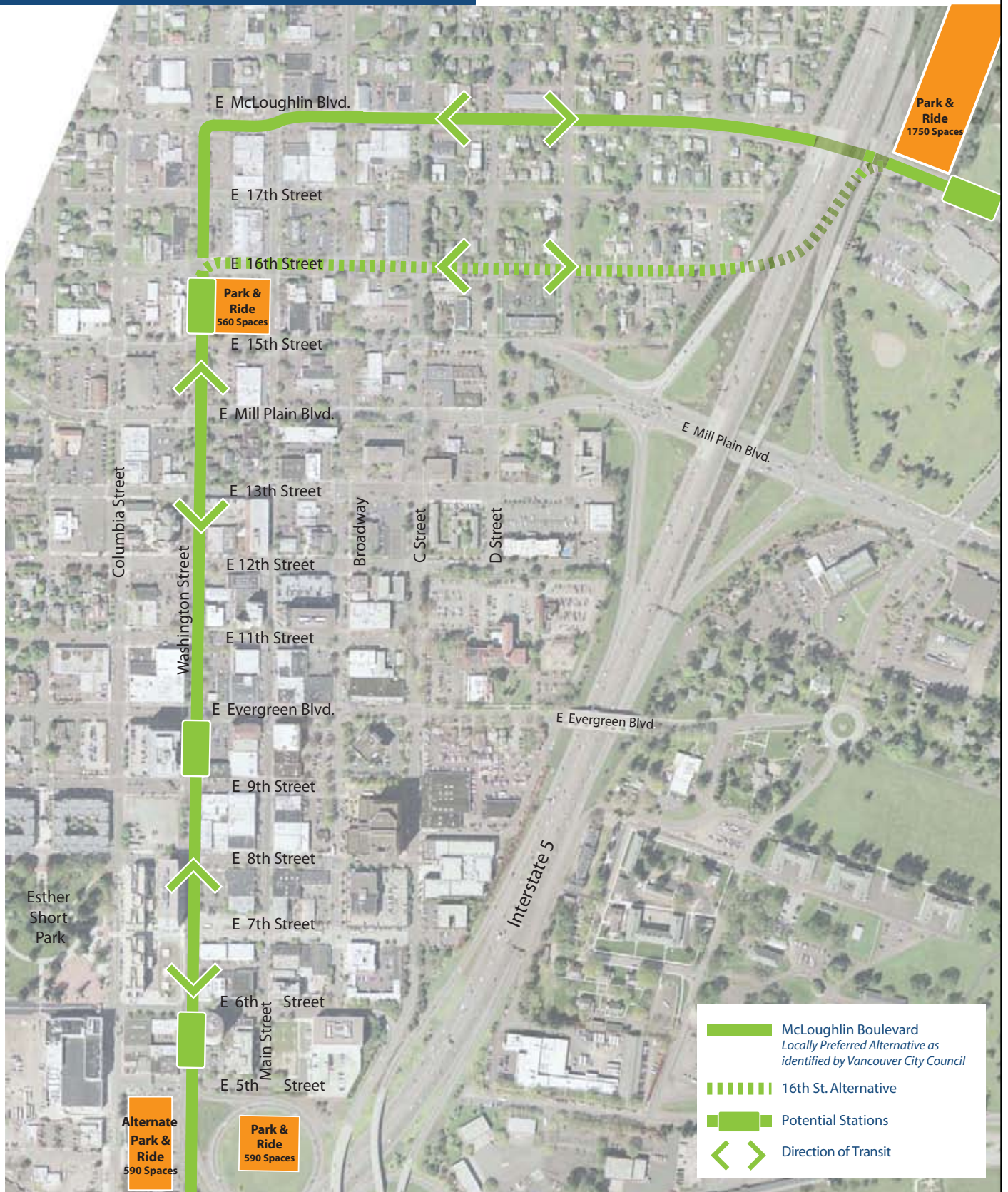
Exhibits

**VANCOUVER WORKING GROUP
FINAL REPORT**

Columbia River Crossing Downtown Vancouver Light Rail

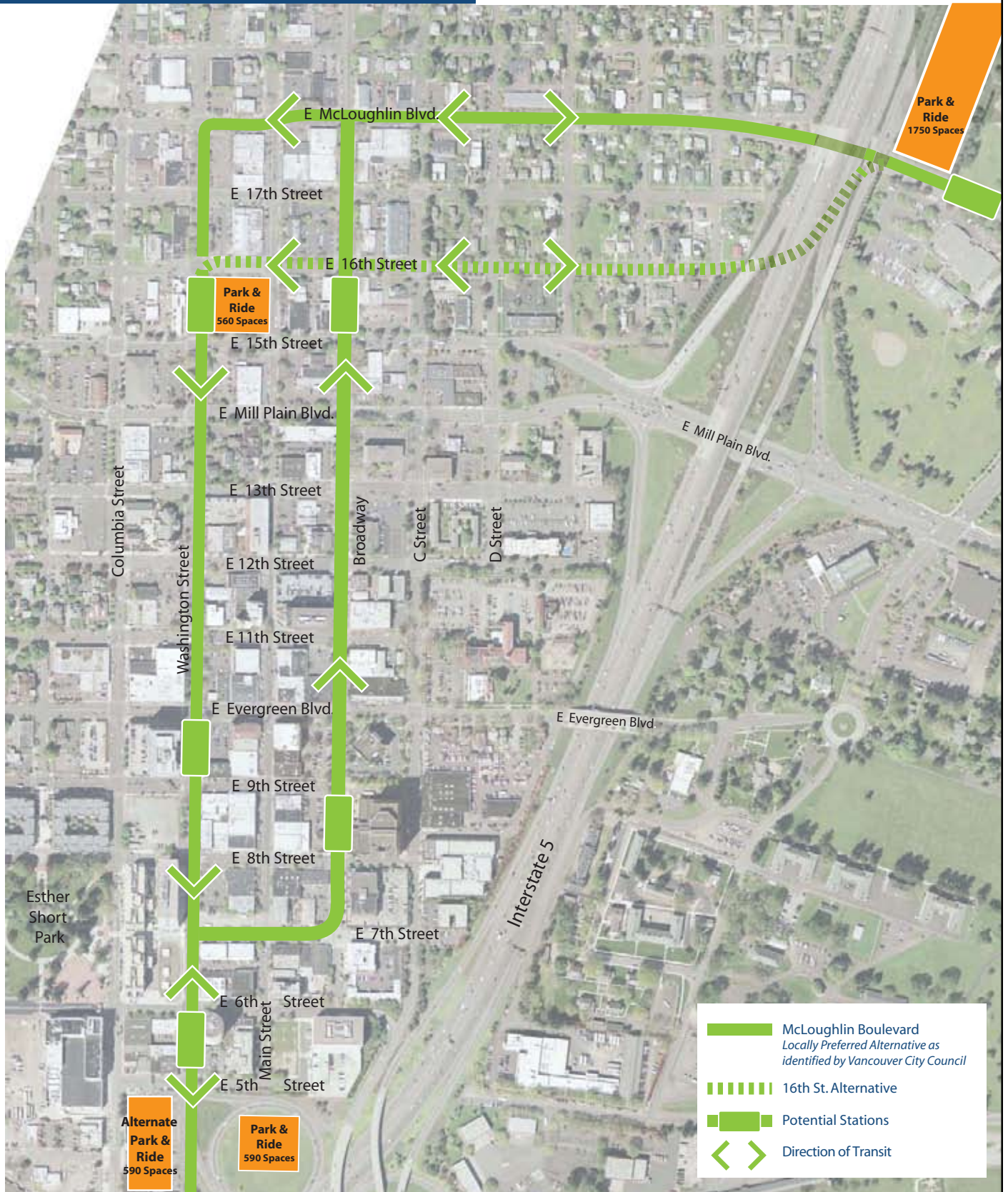
Exhibit 1

Two-Way on Washington



Columbia River Crossing Downtown Vancouver Light Rail

Broadway/Washington Couplet



- McLoughlin Boulevard
Locally Preferred Alternative as identified by Vancouver City Council
- 16th St. Alternative
- Potential Stations
- Direction of Transit

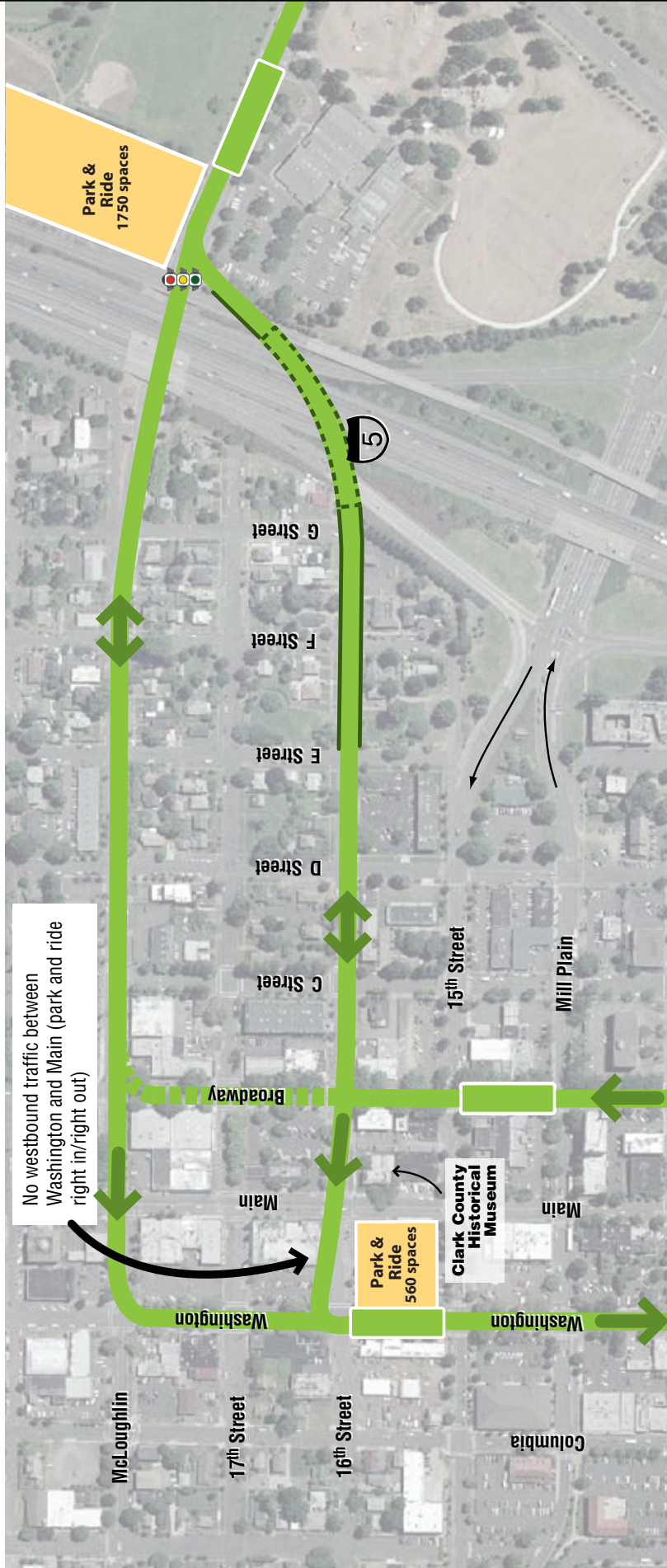
Alternate Park & Ride
590 Spaces

Park & Ride
590 Spaces

Park & Ride
1750 Spaces

16th Street with Tunnel and McLoughlin Boulevard Option

Columbia River
CROSSING



- Transit Alignment
- Direction of Transit
- Proposed Station
- Tunnel
- Walls

For discussion purposes only and is subject to change.

Local Project Partners

Oregon Department of Transportation
 Washington State Department of Transportation

US Department of Transportation: Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration
 City of Vancouver • City of Portland • SW Washington Regional Transportation Council • Metro • C-TRAN • TriMet

East/West LRT Alignment Alternatives

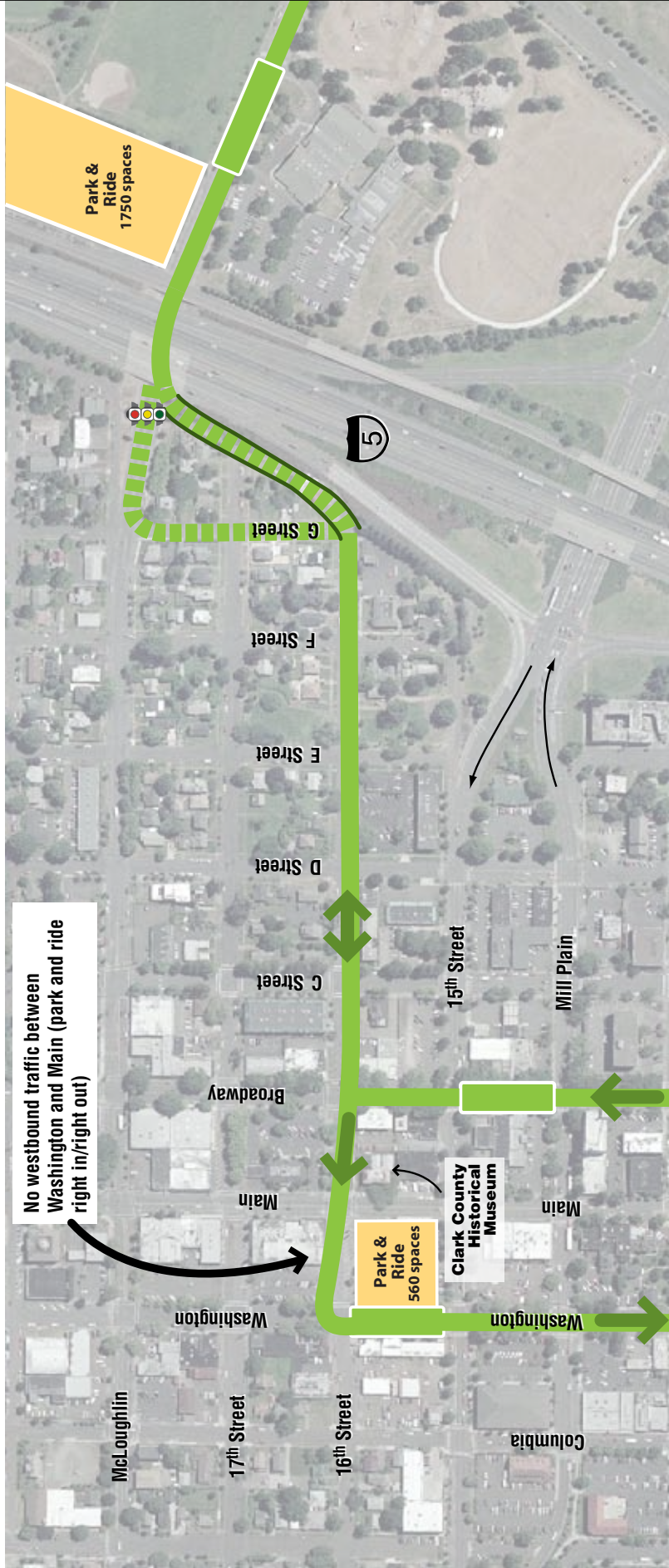


McLoughlin Boulevard Option

16th Street Option

Sketches for study purposes only

Columbia River CROSSING 16th Street (with West of I-5 Approach to McLoughlin Boulevard) and 16th Street (with G Street) Options



- Transit Alignment
- Direction of Transit
- Proposed Station
- Tunnel
- Walls

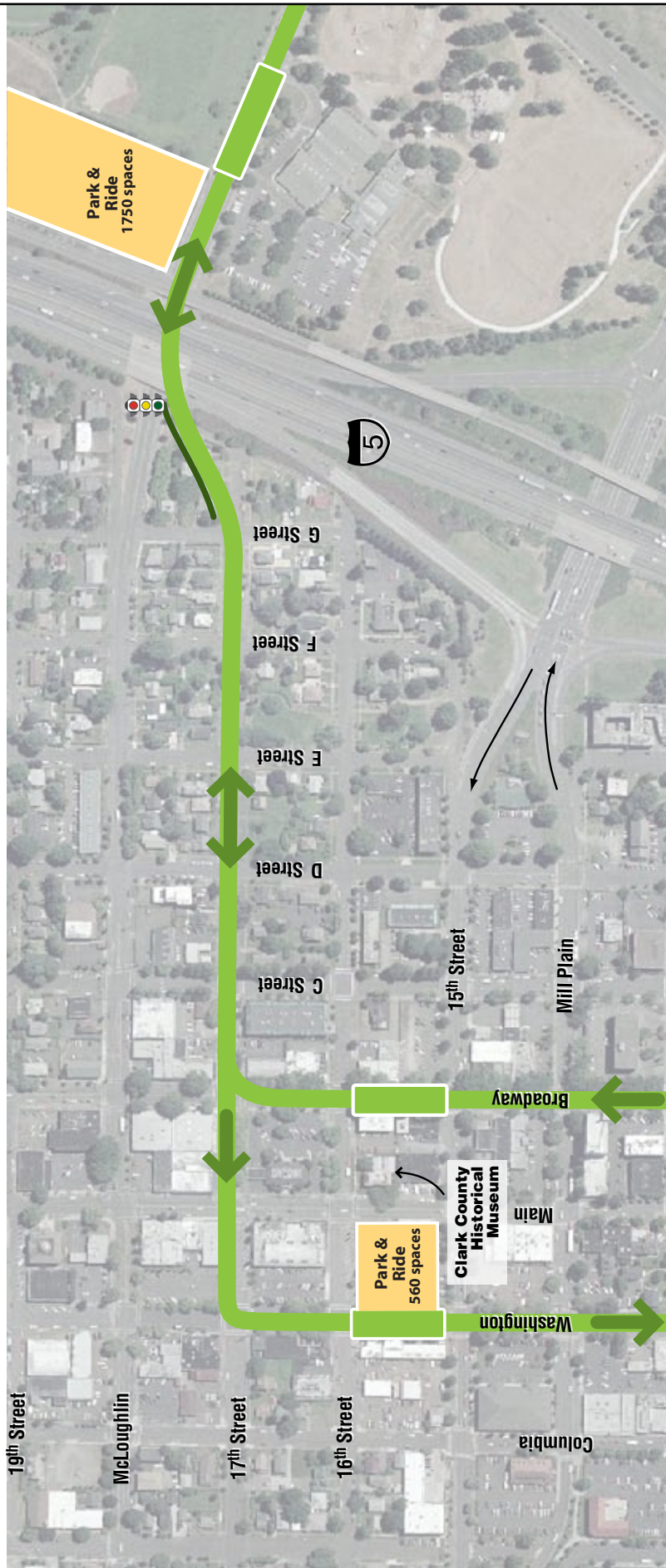
For discussion purposes only and is subject to change.

Local Project Partners

Washington State Department of Transportation

US Department of Transportation • Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration
City of Vancouver • City of Portland • SW Washington Regional Transportation Council • Metro • C-TRAN • TriMet

Columbia River CROSSING 17th Street Option



- Transit Alignment
- Direction of Transit
- Proposed Station
- Walls

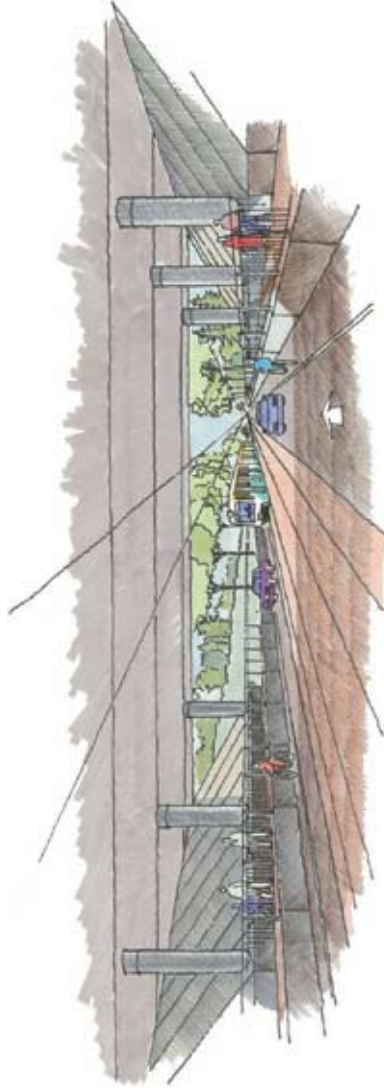
For discussion purposes only and is subject to change.

Local Project Partners

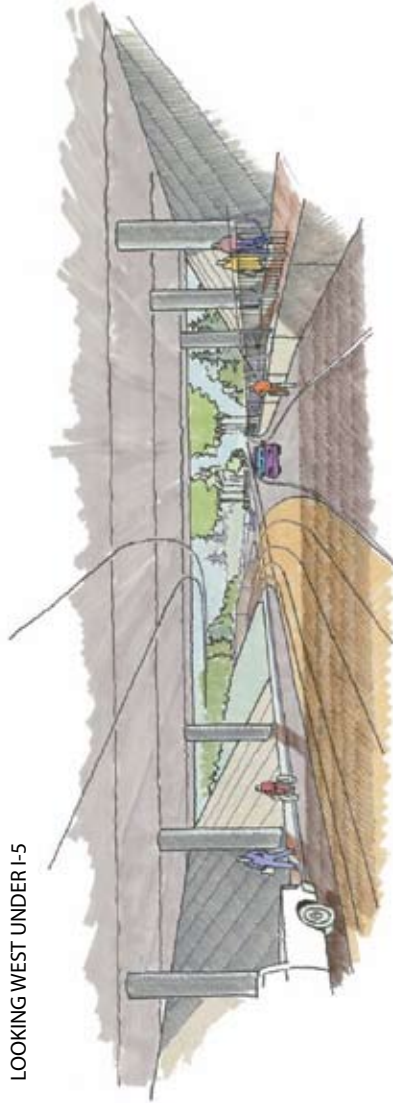
Oregon Department of Transportation

Washington State Department of Transportation
US Department of Transportation • Federal Transit Administration • Federal Highway Administration
City of Vancouver • City of Portland • SW Washington Regional Transportation Council • Metro • C-TRAN • TriMet

View Looking West Under I-5



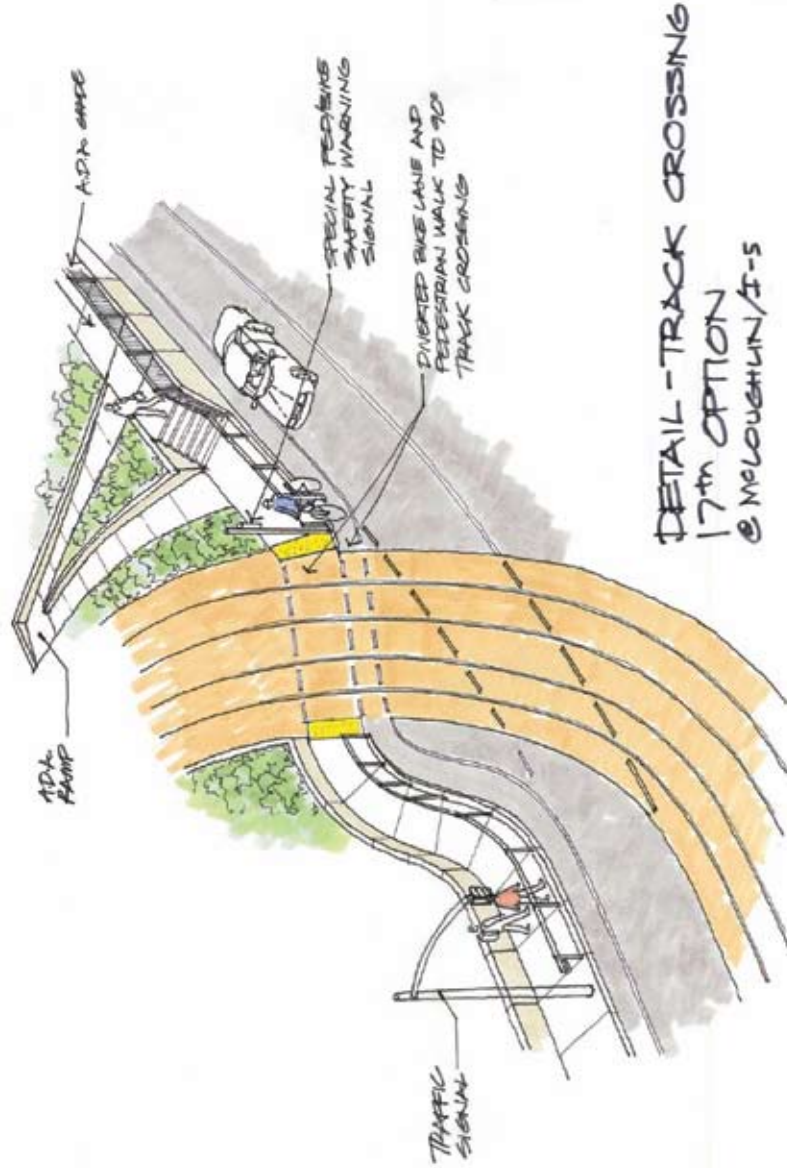
MC CLOUGHLIN OPTION
LOOKING WEST UNDER I-5



17TH STREET OPTION
LOOKING WEST UNDER I-5



Track Crossing at 17th Street



17TH STREET OPTION • TRACK CROSSING

ENTERING M'LOUGHLIN WEST OF I-5 UNDERPASS



#5B Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic, Shared Island Platform Ground View



Columbia River
CROSSING

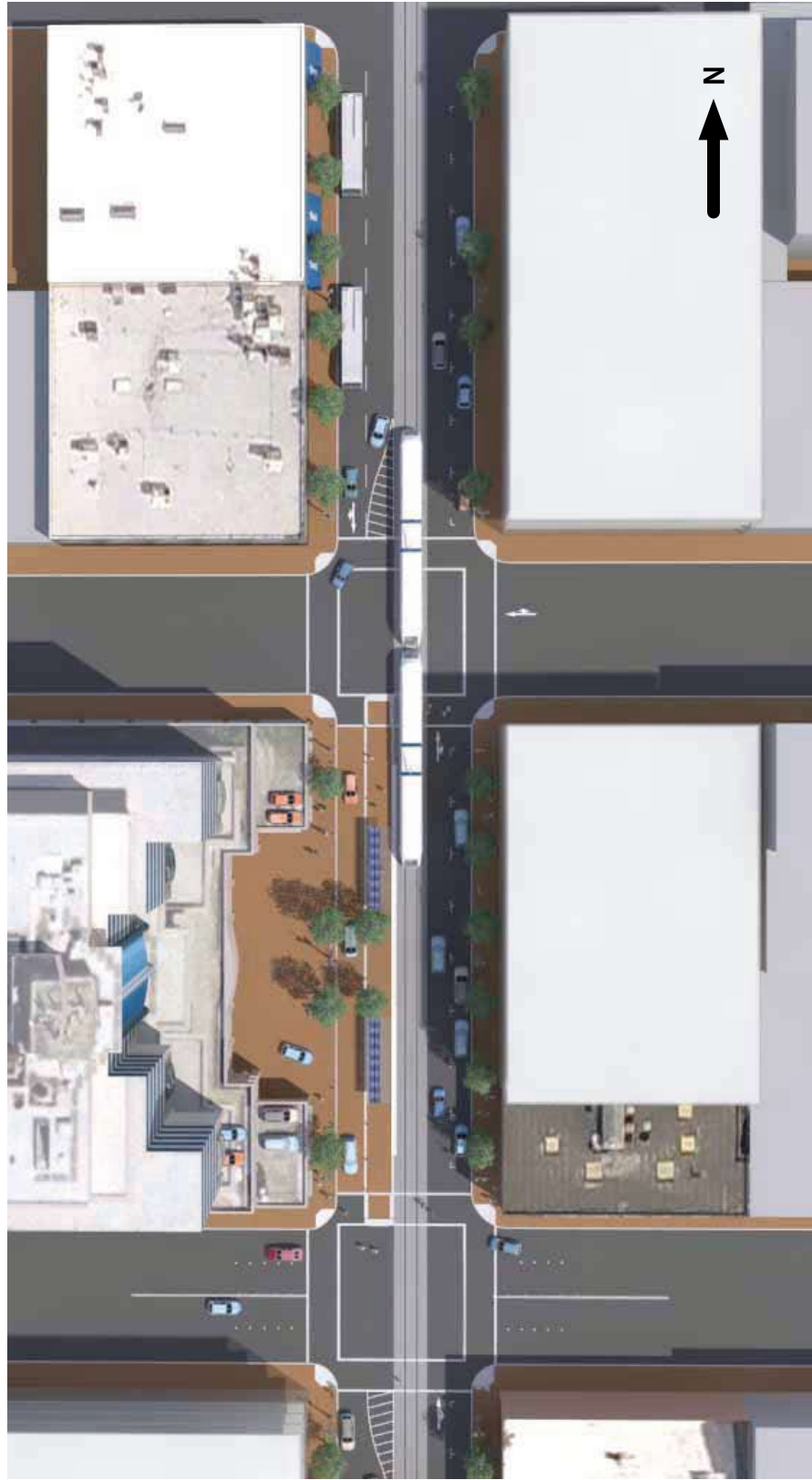
#5B Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic,
Shared Island Platform Aerial View



Columbia River
CROSSING

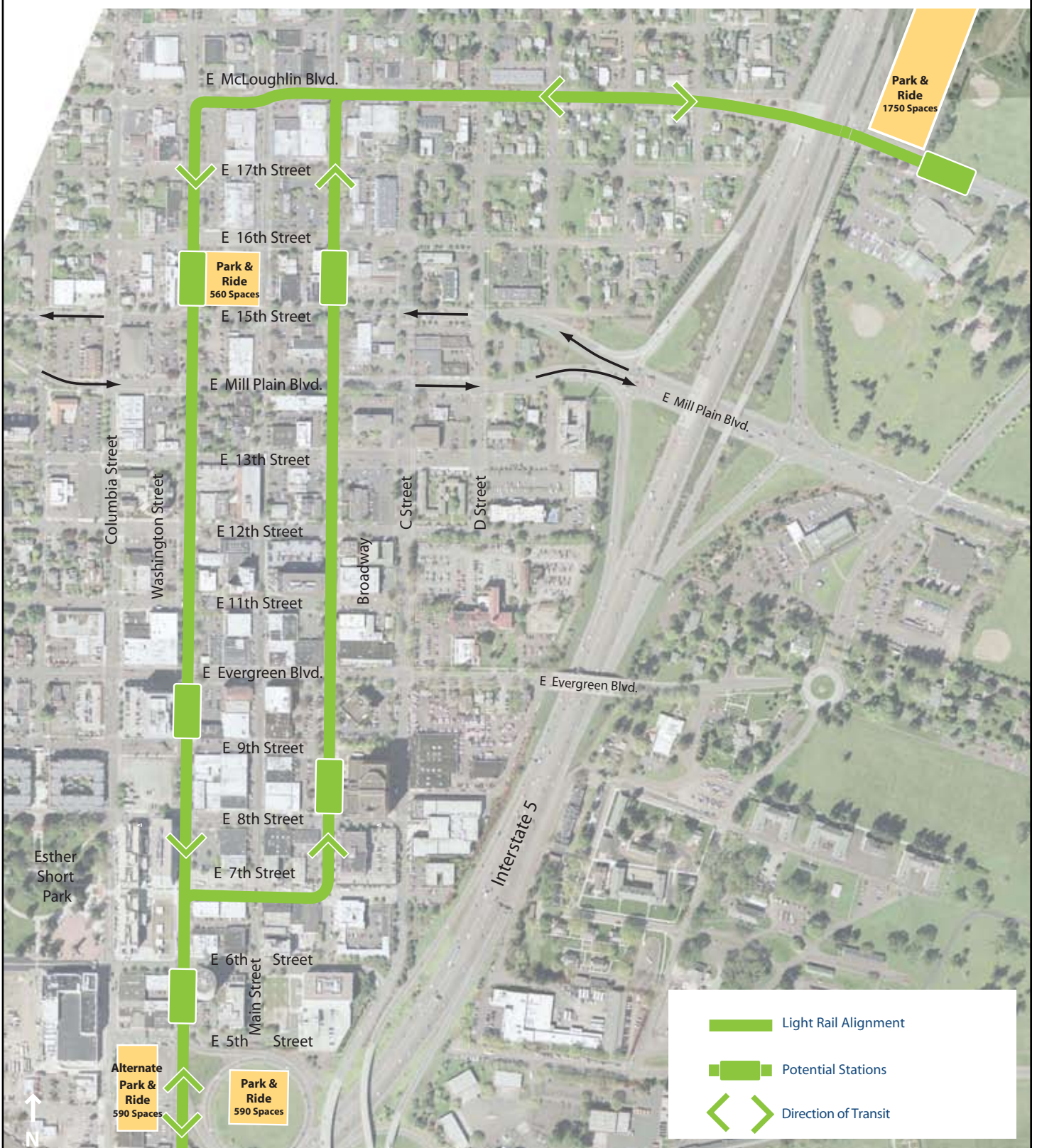
Exhibit 9B

#5B Center-Running Transit, Two-Way Auto Traffic,
Shared Island Platform Plan View





Vancouver Light Rail Station and Park & Ride Locations



Minority Reports

**VANCOUVER WORKING GROUP
FINAL REPORT**

**Vancouver Downtown Light Rail Alignment
Steve Burdick's Minority Report
April 16, 2009**

Argument for Two-Way LRT and One-Way Auto Traffic on Washington



The total negative impact to downtown from the couplet is much greater than the total negative impact to Washington in the two-way LRT option; especially when the impacts to Washington are tempered by reducing automobile travel to one northbound lane. Both alternatives have negative impacts, even accounting for the potential upside, but the sum of negative impacts to two streets is greater than the negative impact to one street.

The upside of the LRT impact on development, requires public investment to insure that each station area has a high quality finish and that each is anchored by complementary land uses. Spreading out to a couplet has the dual effect of increasing the base project cost and, more importantly, doubling the cost (and risk of failure) of trying to make station areas and streets that work. It is not easy, and not all station areas will be attractive and successful.

Sound urban development policy and principles support making one street work really well for LRT, and leaving the other for a more traditional, undisturbed urban streetscape.

ADVERSE IMPACTS

Light rail impacts a downtown environment block by block; its effects are not uniform. Station blocks and areas and non-station blocks and areas are two completely different things.

1. Overall Adverse Impacts: There are 13 blocks (26 block faces) on the Broadway leg. At least 11 of these blocks will not have a LRT station on them; yet the functionality of all of Broadway will be compromised because automobile use is prohibited on LRT tracks. Parking, drive lane widths and turning movements will all be restricted.

As a result, Broadway will look and feel different, and drivers will be discouraged from using it, especially if bus service also crowds out the constrained capacity. These impacts create a distinct economic disadvantage to the businesses, especially retail businesses, on Broadway.

2. Parking Impacts: In December 2008, the *Main Street District Design Handbook* study was completed by Vancouver citizens, City staff, Harper Hoff Regalis engineering and Crandall Arambula, PC. The purpose of this study was to provide, “a tool created by the citizens, stakeholders and City staff of Vancouver to help implement the Vancouver Main Street Improvement Project and foster downtown retail revitalization.” On page A-6 of that study, the authors conclude,

“Sufficient numbers of parking spaces to meet demand for estimated amount of future Main Street District retail development; if no new parking structures are built, the deficit would be 300-500 spaces.”

The most benign couplet alternative eliminates 125 on-street parking spaces; while two-way LRT on Washington with one-way auto traffic eliminates only 58 parking spaces.

Since surface parking lots are a poor parking space replacement strategy in an urban context any replacement of on-street parking should be developed in parking structures. However, the cost to replace on-street parking with structured parking ranges from \$35,000 to \$50,000 per space. Doing the math, the cost to replace parking with the couplet alternative is \$4.4 to \$6.3 million. The cost of the Washington two-way LRT and one-way auto traffic alternative is only \$2.0 to \$2.9 million.

These costs have not been factored into the CRC analysis or presentation to the VWG, yet they should be a critical consideration in our evaluation of what is best for downtown Vancouver. The scarcity of public resources to replace existing parking, let alone the new public parking necessary to “foster downtown retail revitalization”, should be a compelling argument in favor on two-way LRT and one-way auto traffic on Washington.

3. Transit Street Impacts: After tolerating more than 20 years of a bus system based on the 7th Street Transit Center that worked well for C-Tran, but was a blight on downtown, we now have a bus system that works well for C-Tran, for the business and property owners in downtown Vancouver, and for the community. All lines primarily use either Evergreen or Broadway. Both streets are well used by buses,

autos and pedestrians. There is no reason to dramatically change this functioning system if a two-way LRT alignment is developed on Washington.

If we choose the couplet alignment, the tracks, buses, and bus stops on Broadway will functionally convert Broadway to a transit only street. Drivers will be discouraged by that transit dominance and will likely choose other routes. To avoid this outcome, it is physically possible to shift the north / south bus routes and bus stops to C Street, but when the CRC project is complete, C Street will be overburdened as the primary access to and from I-5.

Preliminary designs to move transit to C Street already call for eliminating parking on the west side of C Street. If bus routes and stops have to be accommodated on C Street, it is likely that scarce parking on the east side of C Street will also be reduced or eliminated. Adding this bus traffic to C Street is likely to severely impact the turning movements into the 8th Street alley. This is the only entry drive to Riverwest's proposed 700 space parking garages. This could result in limiting turns into the 8th Street alley to right-in / right-out only. To gain entry into the public and private Riverwest garages, most Vancouver drivers would need to travel south on Broadway, turn left on 8th Street, turn left on C Street and turn right into the 8th Street alley. This pathway to the parking garages would be so illogical that it would most likely render the parking garages functionally obsolete.

4. Automobile Capacity, Access, and Circulation: The core of downtown has 5 north south streets—Columbia, Washington, Main, Broadway, and C.

Once the CRC project is complete and the Vancouver Waterfront is developed, Columbia, in addition to its central function as a through arterial will serve as access to SR14 and the newly developed Vancouver Waterfront.

Washington will not serve I-5, but can serve SR14 westbound traffic with one northbound lane that would complement the opposing southbound to eastbound movement available from Main Street to SR14. Under either alignment alternative, Washington will have reduced automobile capacity because of light rail.

Main Street is the designated retail core for downtown and will also serve through traffic with a new connection to SR14 and Columbia Way on the waterfront.

C Street will be overburdened with traffic to and from I-5 and with service to several large developments, including Riverwest and the public library.

Broadway Street is the only street that does not, at this time, have a designated function, aside from serving general traffic and CTRAN. But, consider the location—it is between Main, the primary retail street, and C, the primary freeway access street in lower downtown. If there is anywhere in downtown where the City will need additional flexibility for automobile circulation, it is on Broadway—to help absorb

some of the demand for circulation around Main and C. Putting light rail on Broadway would rob lower downtown of that essential circulation function.

5. Construction Impacts: From Washington / 7th to Broadway / McLoughlin, more than twice as many properties and businesses are adversely affected by construction. The argument that this impact is offset because construction will take twice as long on Washington is specious.

Whether one set of tracks or two sets of tracks are installed on Washington, the same amount of sidewalks are reconstructed, the same number of street light / LRT overhead cable structure is installed, two side by side track sets can be laid at the same time. Since construction will most likely tear up the whole street from property line to property line, the actual paving period will be of short duration and the number of lanes to pave will have minimal impact on the length of construction.

There are 26 block faces on both the Washington leg and the Broadway leg of the two alternatives. On the Broadway leg there are about 22 block faces that are developed and have active buildings on them. On the Washington leg there are about 15 block faces that are developed and have active buildings on them. In addition, one occupied block face on Washington is the east side of St. James church. So, there are 8 more block faces with active businesses that will be adversely impacted by construction on the Broadway leg than on the Washington leg.

MITIGATING CONSIDERATIONS

There are positive impacts from light rail as well, although there are important caveats that have to be considered alongside the purported positives.

1. The Shopping Light Rail Patron:

It is assumed that people riding LRT will get off at stations and then walk along the Broadway alignment and be enticed to shop along the way.

However, consider the segment of the Broadway alignment between Washington / 7th and Broadway / 9th that will be served by the 5th Street station. The logical routes for riders whose origins or destinations will be the waterfront development, the Hilton Hotel & Conference Center, the Columbian building, Vancouvercenter, Esther Short Park, Esther Short Commons, and City offices at 6th and Esther will take them away from Broadway and 7th, not along that route.

The logical routes for riders whose origins or destinations are the West Coast Bank building, the Frontier building, the Heritage building or Smith Tower are along 5th or 6th.

Only those riders whose origins or destinations are the Murdock Executive Plaza, Bank of America or the Lewis & Clark Apartments are likely to take zig zag paths using portions 5th, 6th, 7th, Washington, Main and Broadway.

So, the properties on 7th (Heritage Way) and Broadway up to 9th are being asked to give up a fully functioning street for exposure to a small segment of the riders using one of the five downtown stations.

This is a losing long term economic trade-off.

2. The LRT Patron Turned Shopper:

The second assumption is that people riding LRT on 7th and Broadway will observe the businesses along the way and be enticed to visit the businesses that they observe even though the business may be one to six blocks from a station.

Vancouver's experience with the 7th Street Transit Center resoundingly defeats that argument. When the card rooms were shut down in the lower Main area in 1979, the 7th Street Transit Center was conceived and proponents theorized that the 7,500 riders passing through the Center every day would spend money around the Center and along the bus routes. It didn't happen. The businesses that operated on the Center consisted of a sub-shop that did OK, a pawn shop that does well, a convenience store primarily known for the magazines and fortified beer and wine that it sold, a bar / club that changed hands often, the Eagles Club and office space that was often more vacant than occupied.

Just because the transit mode changes from bus to a LRT does not mean that the rider profile will change dramatically. There is no reason based on experience in Vancouver that these transit riders will energize downtown businesses along a LRT route anymore in the future than they did from 1982 to 2007 along Main Street and the 7th Street Transit Center. Furthermore, there is no expert analysis to indicate that the businesses on the 22 block faces on the Broadway leg that don't have a LRT station should expect positive economic impacts or increased property values.

3. Induced Development:

Immediately adjacent to the Washington leg are 11 blocks that, because they are mostly vacant or occupied by low value buildings, have good redevelopment potential. Along the Broadway leg there are only 5 or 6.

Blocks that have the most transit oriented development potential are those close to two-way LRT stations where the distance that riders must walk to and from the station is short. The Washington leg has about 5 sites that meet this criterion if two-way LRT is constructed on Washington. The Broadway leg has none.

The couplet alignment compromises the transit oriented development viability of the sites on Washington and leaves the downtown without any sites with high transit oriented development potential.

4. Supportive Development:

Beyond transit oriented development, there are potential development sites in downtown Vancouver that can support LRT viability through increased ridership and support downtown vitality through increased buying power. These are sites with higher density residential and offices development potential. Most of those opportunities are located west of Washington Street including:

- Block 10 between Vancouvercenter and Riverview Tower
- The two blocks immediately north of Heritage Place
- The Wolfe block immediately west of Java House
- The County owned block immediately west of Heritage Place
- The Angelo owned properties between 8th, Evergreen, Franklin and Harney
- The old Columbian property south of 8th and west of Esther Short Commons

A couplet alignment would require people living or working in these future developments to walk at least an additional two blocks to reach a station on Broadway. A 2002 C-Tran survey of their riders who walk to a bus stop showed that 41% of those riders walked one block or less and an additional 46% walked 2 to 5 blocks. The additional minimal walking distance of two blocks would put most of the blocks listed above sufficiently distant from LRT boarding on either a “to” or “from” trip that, based on the actual ridership survey, only a small percentage of potential transit riders would choose to actually use the LRT system.

Because of the I-5 freeway, the blocks where supportive development is most likely to occur east of the Broadway leg face onto C Street – the Academy site and Riverwest at Evergreen Boulevard and C Street. Depending on the location of the mid-leg station on Washington, the people in these future developments would need to walk 3 to 4 blocks and they would potentially have multiple C-Tran bus routes connecting that station to Evergreen and C Street. Potential ridership from these two large sites would not be nearly as compromised by access to a two-way station on Washington as the potential ridership from the multiple sites west of Washington would be compromised by the couplet alternative.

The Fort Vancouver Main Library will be constructed at this intersection and their location is now exceptionally well served by the existing bus routes on Evergreen and on Broadway. While this library branch anticipates an eventual annual patronage of about 700,000 people, it is logical that they will almost all arrive by means other than LRT. There will be 200 free parking spaces at this branch. So, it is not logical that anyone from Clark County would choose to park & ride and then take LRT. Multiple bus routes stop either at the library’s intersection or one block away at Broadway and Evergreen and those routes serve bus stops spread throughout Vancouver and Clark

County. So, it is not likely that these library patrons would choose to transfer from a bus to any of the downtown LRT stations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The VWG evaluation applied a “shades of grey” measurement tool that teased out many of these issues. It represented varying degrees of positive impact of the two options, but failed to adequately account for the potential negative impacts. Positive and negative impacts occur block by block, property by property. The so-called “couplet or two-way decision” is an inappropriate and unintentionally deceptive simplification of urban economic development dynamics.

As I have outlined above, and stress to the group in the most urgent way, the challenges presented with the couplet alternative are many, many times greater than making light rail a success on Washington Street.

Finally, the two-way on Washington alignment would cost significantly less than the couplet alignment. Given recent comments from Rep. Brian Baird and Sen. Patty Murray, cost is a very significant issue—as it should always be with public investments. If cost savings can be obtained by the less costly alternative, then some of the savings could potentially be used to provide higher quality materials and more friendly environments along the Washington route.

East-West LRT Alignment

Dave Frei's Minority Report: Argument for 17th Street

The key issue that seemed to drive the narrow majority preference for the McLoughlin Blvd alignment over 17th Street was sight-line safety concerns as the alignment crossed back onto McLoughlin prior to passing under I-5. This is a valid concern, but one which can be either addressed through design and mitigation options or eliminated by locating the Marshall Center station on the south side of McLoughlin. It was disappointing the Vancouver Working Group (VWG) was not allowed to discuss the southern station location more fully prior to voting on the alignment, especially considering several very important strengths of the 17th Street alignment over McLoughlin.

First consider the overall function of the two streets. Placing LRT on 17th Street provides a much better balance of uses between McLoughlin and 17th. McLoughlin is currently, and for the foreseeable future, designated a minor arterial, bus route, bicycle route and also acts as a primary east/west pedestrian corridor crossing I-5 for the Arnada Neighborhood. Currently with on-street parking and comfortable sidewalks McLoughlin works well. Adding LRT to McLoughlin requires something to be given up. In this case the partial Right of Way (ROW) taking of 6 feet from properties all the way from C to G Street and the removal of all on-street parking between Broadway and I-5 (relocating it to E and F Streets south of McLoughlin). In addition, to maintain left turn lanes from McLoughlin onto both Main and Broadway will require more sacrifices at these intersections. Parking will surely be compromised and the ROW takings could be major. All of these impacts can be significantly reduced or avoided by placing LRT on 17th Street. 17th street is not a minor arterial, bus route or bicycle route yet has virtually the same ROW width as McLoughlin. It can accommodate LRT in the existing ROW while retaining some on-street parking and eliminate the need for partial ROW takings on the 4-blocks east of C Street. In addition there is no need for left turn lanes from 17th onto either Main or Broadway which significantly reduces the impact of the LRT alignment as it crosses both of these streets.

Looking past LRT's function to neighborhood fit, it becomes very clear that the 17th Street alignment is a much better one. Moving north to south from 19th to 17th streets the character of the neighborhood makes a dramatic yet clearly transitional change. A review of the zoning and building height restrictions makes that very clear. On the north, 19th street is predominately R-9 single family residential (which the Arnada Neighborhood Association will continue to passionately defend) and building heights are limited to 35 feet. McLoughlin Blvd is the transition street with CC (community commercial) zoning and building heights limited to 50 feet. Currently most of the houses along McLoughlin have been converted to commercial uses with a few residential and purpose build commercial buildings. These zoning and height restrictions mean that most likely any future higher intensity redevelopment along McLoughlin will be in the form of smaller 3-story single property or partial block projects. Further south on 17th Street the zoning is CX (City Center Commercial) with building heights up to 75 feet. Considering the zoning and number of vacant and underutilized properties in the area between 17th and 15th streets, this area is well suited for partial, whole or even multi-block high density redevelopment. With that in

mind it is clear, in both physical and functional scale, that 17th street is much more compatible with LRT than McLoughlin.

Looking into the future, the placement of LRT on 17th street provides a much easier and more likely opportunity for adding a LRT station. At this time an additional station along the east-west alignment would be inappropriate but as the blocks south of McLoughlin take on the high density, mixed use character put forth by the Vancouver City Center Vision the need, and desire, for an additional stop will grow. According to the CRC project staff, adding a station to McLoughlin will be more difficult and require additional ROW takings while a station on 17th can fit in the existing ROW. This is further testament to how overburdened McLoughlin will be if LRT is placed on it. Also, depending on the situation when an additional LRT station becomes viable, there could be an opportunity for the station construction to be a public-private partnership, possibly in conjunction with one or more future Transit Oriented Development projects in this area.

With regards to the safety concerns of the 17th Street alignment as it crosses back onto McLoughlin, the issue needs to be put into perspective. Looking at the entire LRT alignment through downtown Vancouver there are over 30 un-gated intersection crossings. Even though the site distance restrictions coming from 17th Street back onto McLoughlin Blvd makes this crossing a bigger safety concern than others it should not be enough to outweigh the benefits of the 17th Street alignment. In addition if the Marshall Center station is located on the south side of McLoughlin this issue goes away. Even with the Marshall Center station located in the center of McLoughlin it was clear from questioning members of the CRC project team during our discussion that there are ample designs and engineering solutions available to mitigate this situation.

In closing the 17th Street is clearly a better long term solution for the east/west alignment of LRT because it:

- allows the retention of on-street parking on McLoughlin Blvd.
- does not require left turn lanes onto Main and Broadway.
- is a better fit with neighborhood zoning and building height restrictions.
- reduces the cost of adding a future station along the east/west alignment.
- provides an estimated \$2 million savings in ROW costs.
- has 22 fewer potential partial ROW acquisitions.
- has comparable capital costs.
- has comparable LRT travel time.
- has a comparable CEI.

The sightline safety issue clearly must, and can, be addressed but should not be a barrier to an alignment that is more cost effective, has less ROW impacts and is a better fit for the community.



East/West LRT Alignment Minority Report

In order to make sure that the decision-making process adopted by the Vancouver Working Group is completely transparent, the group decided to allow for dissenting opinions to be expressed in writing as minority reports. I have read the minority report on the east/west LRT alignment and I support that minority viewpoint.

Name (First and Last) <i>DICK MALIN</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Jack A Harroun III</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Charlene Welch</i>	Signature <i>Charlene Welch</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Michael The Carty</i>	Signature <i>Michael The Carty</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Dave Frei</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>KARIN FORD</i>	Signature <i>Karin Ford</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Stephen M. Burchard</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Sara Carter</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Lith Anderson-Sebrae</i>	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) ROB BERRETTRE	Signature <i>[Signature]</i>
Name (First and Last) <i>Lisa M. Ghormley</i>	Signature <i>Lisa M Ghormley</i>
Name (First and Last)	Signature
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