

**MILWAUKIE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
APRIL 2, 2001**

The work session came to order at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Conference Room.

City Council present: Council President King and Councilors Lancaster, Marshall, and Newman.

Staff present: City Manager Pro Tem Swanson, Assistant City Manager Bennett, Neighborhood Services Manager Gregory, and Program Specialist Wachs.

Information Sharing

1. Councilor Lancaster provided information on the upcoming Natural Step Conference on Sustainability.
2. Council agreed to schedule its retreat for May 19.

Government Education Series and Youth Involvement

Wachs reported on several locally available community leadership courses including those offered by the League of Oregon Cities and Chamber of Commerce. He found these to be rather broad and recommended staff develop an in-house education series designed for interested residents who want to learn about their city. The Neighborhood Association Leadership group is supportive of the concept and feels it might increase trust between citizens and local government. City departments reported they could gather necessary material in about one month. He sought Council direction on beginning the series of weekday classes in the fall and asked the level of elected official participation.

Councilor Marshall recommended offering the series more than once a year. The group discussed scheduling evening and weekend classes, and Wachs suggested taping the sessions for replay on the government channel as well.

Councilor Marshall suggested a scaled-down version of the earlier Land Use Committee training to temper some of the frustrations people feel when dealing with land use issues. He further recommended each department explain how it interfaces with the community.

Councilor Lancaster felt each department should relate how its activities accomplish the Community Goals.

Council President King thought training should include guidelines on how to access city departments directly, the city code and charter, and how the democratic process

works. She hoped once trained, people would act as point persons in their neighborhoods.

Councilor Newman felt new councilor orientation would be helpful and suggested highlighting the benefits of being an active Neighborhood District Association (NDA) participant.

Councilor Marshall recommended explaining “confusing jargon” in understandable terms.

Council President King thought any local business giving its employees time off to attend these classes should be publicly honored.

The group agreed a three-day education series should be held three times a year. The City Council directed staff to schedule the first session in early September.

Wachs has also been working with North Clackamas School to Careers staff to involve youth with neighborhood leaders. This type of preliminary work will help determine if a youth advisory council is needed.

Councilor Newman discussed the feasibility of a youth summit to determine if an actual board is needed.

Council President King volunteered to participate with the Milwaukie High School staff in program development.

The group discussed the Langford Team's success and agreed it is important to recognize the members for any ideas that are implemented.

South Corridor Study Update

Bennett gave an overview of the South Corridor Study process. Metro is the lead agency and is partnering with the Cities of Milwaukie, Oregon City, and Portland, Clackamas County, Tri-Met, and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Originally, 7 non-light rail alternatives were considered for high capacity transit options in the area. In December, the policy group narrowed the options to 3: busway, bus rapid transit (BRT), and high occupancy vehicle lanes (HOV). Light rail was added as a fourth option. She discussed potential advantages and disadvantages of each option.

The option of a new, less expensive light rail alignment between Portland and Milwaukie uses the Hawthorn Bridge and runs along Main Street. Finding a suitable stop that would support rather than negatively impact downtown Milwaukie businesses is a challenge. This option is estimated to cost about \$360 million and, with additional funding, either BRT or busway to Oregon City and the Clackamas Town Center could be added easily. Light rail is the most expensive of all options but has strong support for Portland neighborhoods.

Gregory gave a report on March 28 quarterly Neighborhood District Association (NDA) Leadership meeting at which attendees discussed the South Corridor Study. She noted David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell NDA chair and Corridor Study participant, provided a lot of input on the process. Peter Koonce, Ardenwald Chair, offered relevant technical information.

At the request of the NDA leadership, Gregory prepared a statement for the City Council. The first part of the discussion was venting at the way the Study unfolded. Next, the NDA group gave its opinions on the 4 options. These were: (1) HOV does nothing for Milwaukie; (2) busway is expensive and requires elevated structures; (3) BRT seems to be a short term fix; and (4) light rail will not be acceptable until its advocates are willing to do something for Milwaukie. The terms for accepting the light rail alternative include no light rail in the neighborhoods; no station community planning or social engineering; consider future connectivity; no Harmony/Linwood park-and-ride; and no station or bus transfer at Safeway.

The group also discussed what actions regional partners could take to make things better for Milwaukie such as McLoughlin Boulevard improvements and Southgate park-and-ride. Another idea was to have the light rail station at Southgate with an extension to the Jr. High site while continuing to explore circumferential rail to Lake Oswego and eventually Beaverton. Some participants want the City to purchase the Safeway property for development as the downtown catalyst project. Others want to maintain focus on the I-205 corridor and not unnecessarily move all of the traffic west. Gregory added the NDA leadership felt strongly about having a broader community discussion.

Bennett recommended dropping HOV and asked for direction on what to pursue with the 3 remaining options.

Teresa Bresaw and **Rob Kappa**, Lake Road NDA, supported the Neighborhood Leadership statement. They were in favor of revisiting the Southgate/Hanna site for parking, bus transit, and light rail station. The impact to the downtown would be too great because the Safeway site is too small. There is no support light rail in residential areas.

Dave Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell NDA, urged all the parties to stop bickering and work together on the issues. He was in favor of moving the regional transit center to Southgate because of the connectivity to Hwy 224, McLoughlin Boulevard, and downtown. A limited bus station at the Jr. High site is feasible. In response to earlier comments, Metro staff was clear in trying to direct the working groups away from light rail during the study. He was a member of the Milwaukie - Clackamas Town Center group, and its final comments only had to do with cost comparisons between bus and light rail. Busways with dedicated lanes could be used in a limited fashion.

Councilor Newman asked, for clarification, how Clackamas County's plan of elevated busways was generally accepted.

Aschenbrenner said people questioned elevating the busway except in the most congested areas.

Bennett explained station siting does not take place until the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

Aschenbrenner believed the regional hub should be on a sufficiently large site to support a parking structure as well as allow for growth. He discussed circumferential rail and connectivity to Lake Oswego via the old railroad bridge. The Jr. High site would offer connectivity.

Councilor Newman summarized: people would prefer transfers north of Safeway with light rail continuing to the Jr. High site for the southern terminus.

Bennett said staff recommends identifying and telling the regional partners what the potential community impacts are.

Councilor Newman was interested in the idea of the regional partners buying the Jr. High property for a light rail station and donating the remainder to the City.

Zumwalt said \$15 million has been spent on getting light rail into Milwaukie. Regional partners need Milwaukie as the hub, so they should pay for it.

Aschenbrenner was willing to spend time on this project to bring collaboration and trust back into the community. Safeway is too small, and he recommended a focused regional center that could be expanded.

Donald Hammang, Hector Campbell NDA and Planning Commissioner, said revitalizing Milwaukie's north industrial area has been a concern for many years, and he felt Tri-Met and Metro could help. Milwaukie never asks for enough, and he urged getting something with a definable benefit to the City. He is concerned about including the Jr. High site in transit planning. Safeway, in reality, is too small.

Tracy Cook, Linwood NDA and Planning Commission Chair, added people have spoken eloquently about impacts to the Masonic Lodge and Ledding Library. She supported focusing transit efforts on the north end of Milwaukie.

Kappa expressed concerns with creeks, the riverfront, and water quality. He encouraged the City Council and NDA leadership to have conversations with SE Uplift. All the residents he contacted unanimously supported the NDA leadership's recommendations.

Councilor Marshall commented it sounds as if people want Tri-Met and Metro to buy off Milwaukie. How will the alternative proposals help redevelop downtown Milwaukie? At one time, the community did accept light rail until it was shoved into the

neighborhoods. Light rail will have to be sold to the community with assurances plans will not change.

Councilor Lancaster said regional partners need to compensate Milwaukie for its sacrifices. Other agencies will have to talk to the City not work around it.

Bennett said staff needs direction on all of the alternatives. Milwaukie should have a strong position on all of the modes as they advance through the process.

Aschenbrenner added a Southgate regional hub works with each of the alternatives.

Councilor Newman noted Milwaukie has a reputation for knowing what it does not want but not what it does want. This project should be done on Milwaukie's terms. He was confident the community could solve the problems, and each point should clearly reflect what Milwaukie wants to see happen. The City should be concerned about both the unoccupied industrial land as well as the downtown. At the end of the day, he wants to ensure an excellent connection to downtown.

Bennett urged resisting the temptation to look only at Southgate because there are other sites.

Aschenbrenner said the main regional hub needs to be north.

Council President King pointed out that Gresham did not want light rail in its downtown and suffered for that decision.

The group commented on all the options:

1. HOV -- No.
2. Busway -- concerned with blight of elevated structures and ramps going into neighborhoods; concerns with noise and exhaust; if region is willing to spend that much money, support light rail.
3. Park-and-ride -- explore K-Mart location; adamantly against Harmony/Linwood site.
4. BRT -- additional bus impacts would have to be mitigated; no bypass lanes in Milwaukie that would widen streets; concerned that pedestrians would not be able to cross Hwy 224 at Oak; least expensive option, but question if this option really accomplishes anything long-term; want dedicated route so buses do not get stuck in traffic; might give leverage to underground pedestrian crossing to riverfront. BRT is not the total answer but supports other solutions.

Zumwalt thought Metro should just forget the public outreach and get down to business.

Bennett suggested getting transfers out of downtown Milwaukie and pushing them to Tacoma. Make sure there is adequate parking so it does not spill over into the neighborhoods. Make all possible connections, but make it clear the high capacity route is not between the Clackamas Town Center and Milwaukie.

The group discussed people coming from Damascus and Happy Valley to work downtown. There are other options than bringing these commuters into Milwaukie. Councilors were unanimous that light rail should not go through neighborhoods, and they will demand mitigation for any impacts. Council President King had concerns about Johnson Creek Boulevard.

The group discussed parking structures, pass through traffic, and Milwaukie's willingness to absorb a second parking structure when Tacoma, if that site is selected, is full.

Bennett asked if Council wanted to look at the Jr. High site as a transit center option. Is light rail contingent upon a Jr. High stop.

Councilor Newman did not believe bus transit was compatible with the Jr. High and felt light rail was the only option for a stop at that site.

Swanson suggested there were linkages between light rail and the Jr. High site that could be explored. The group discussed a terminus at that location and link to commuter rail. They believed the transit station should be moved north.

Councilor Lancaster said it is important to make it clear there have been no reasonable proposals.

Council President King wants to express a willingness to be at the table to discussion the options.

Councilor Marshall wants the City Council to meet with the NDA leadership at its next quarterly if not before.

Adjournment

It was moved by Councilor Marshall and seconded by Councilor Newman to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The work session ended at 7:45 p.m.

Pat DuVal, Recorder