

Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2015, 3:30-5:00 p.m., City Hall, Pettygrove Room

Members in Attendance: Owen Ronchelli, Chair; Lenny Anderson; David Brandt; Bill Danneman; Reza Farhoodi; Jon Joiner; Gerik Kransky; Janet McGarrigle; Susan Pearce; Zoe Presson; Vern Rifer; Ian Stude

Staff Attendance: Dan Bower, Julie Gustafson

1. Meeting to Order:

Ronchelli called the meeting to Order. The minutes from the May 21, 2015 meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

3. Central Loop Closure Update

Bower updated the committee on the Central Loop (CL) closure. The line is currently closed and should reopen mid-August. There are two other projects going on during the closure. The first is repairs to the decking on the lift span that needs to be performed by the City and may slip beyond the 15th or 16th of August and could delay the reopening of the CL. Repair work will require the full closure of the Broadway Bridge roadway.

Ronchelli asked how the public has reacted and what comments have come in about the closure. Bower responded that there have been numerous complaints about the CL closure from the public. Gustafson added that additional complaints have been coming in from riders along 10th and 11th who didn't realize the importance of the Central Loop but have noticed an increase in riders and a difficulty with finding room on streetcars during the day. Gustafson added that staff have been working with riders on trip planning and directions as well to help ease the angst.

4. Loop Service - Naming and How it Works

Bower reported that the name of the Loop will change with the opening of the completed alignment over the Tilikum Crossing. Rather than Central Loop (CL), the lines will be called "A Loop" and "B Loop". The North/South (NS) will remain the same. The name change came after studying different loop alignments from around the country and how they were represented. No matter the name, there needs to be a differentiation between the two directions of travel to help riders understand the direction the streetcar will travel. Bower added that there have always been issues with the Central Loop (CL) as many people think "Central" signifies downtown rather than the entire Central City.

Farhoodi asked why keep NS if the name of the Loop is changing. Bower responded that changing the name of the NS was considered but that the service was not changing and people seem to understand the NS and where it goes. Brandt stated his concern that the naming has gone away from distinct descriptors and two letter historical designations. Ronchelli asked if the use of color on the maps is arbitrary or if it has more significance. Bower responded that the colors are just within the streetcar

marketing family and will not be included on the overhead signage as they do not have the capability of displaying colors. The committee discussed alternate naming options that could have a stronger sense of identity, eventually agreeing that “A Loop” and “B Loop” are ok for place holders. They expressed a desire for more creative names in the future.

5. Loop Opening Celebration

Gustafson reported that Portland Streetcar will be hosting a “Selfie Loop” contest on opening day. Rather than competing with TriMet’s large events, Streetcar will have a table at the OMSI celebration and then have the contest. The contest is about getting people off of the streetcars and into the neighborhoods. The Grand Prize for the contest was donated by Hassalo on Eighth is a 5 night trip to Waikiki including airfare. The contest will have official selfie locations all along the alignment and will be about getting people off the trains and exploring the neighborhoods and businesses along the lines. Brandt suggested including in the rules that submissions will be available for use by Portland Streetcar for marketing uses moving forward. Pearce asked who will judge the entries to determine a winner. Gustafson responded it will be a random drawing and that staff are still soliciting additional prizes for the contest.

As part of the opening celebration, Portland Streetcar, Inc. is producing a video for the opening celebration that will tell the story of how Portland Streetcar came to be from the first concept through to the opening of the Loop over the Tilikum Crossing.

6. Staff Updates

Bower updated the committee on the PBOT Strategic Plan. He shared the letter of comments from the PSI Board and the CAC that was submitted to the City. PBOT has asked PSI to draft the strategic plan and submit to them. Anderson asked for the chance for the CAC to review the draft.

7. Other Business

Ronchelli pointed out the ridership numbers in the packet and that June ridership had dropped and that there are most likely a number of factors including the confusion over the Central Loop closure date and the unseasonably nice weather in June. Bower added that previously numbers were taken quarterly and that we never had monthly data before. Rifer requested a segment by segment ridership analysis to explain why the ridership is down and which portion of the line was the most impacted. Gustafson added that annual ridership was up over the past fiscal year at over 4.6 million riders.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Thursday, August 20, 2015, 3:30pm-5:00pm at City Hall, Pettygrove Room. Please call Julie Gustafson at (503) 222-4200 or email at julie.gustafson@portlandstreetcar.org if you have any questions regarding this committee. The CAC meetings are open to the public.