



# City of Tigard Memorandum

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**To:** Project Team

**From:** Judith Gray, Sean Farrelly, Marissa Daniels, and Tim Lehrbach

**Re:** Stakeholder Interview Report

**Date:** March 21, 2011

Between November 2010 and February 2011, City of Tigard planners interviewed more than 45 local stakeholders as part of the High Capacity Transit (HCT) Land Use Plan. The stakeholder interviews were conducted for multiple purposes. First, planners wanted to hear from a broad cross section of the community about their ideas, concerns, and priorities related to transit and planning for the community. Second, the interviews identified the most effective and convenient ways to maintain engagement with stakeholders. Finally, many stakeholders offered suggestions about additional citizens or community organizations that might want to be engaged.

Stakeholders were selected to represent a broad cross section of the community. They include elected and appointed officials; citizens and neighborhood volunteers; employers, business owners, developers, and representatives from institutions. Members of, and service providers to, environmental justice populations were included in the stakeholder list. Some citizen stakeholders also serve in leadership roles in community associations, though it should be noted that the opinions they expressed in the interviews are considered their own and do not necessarily represent their organizations. The stakeholders included in the interviews are listed in Appendix A.

The interview questions are reproduced below in Exhibit 1. A summary of the themes which were heard in the interviews follows.

1. Describe a place you like and what you like about that place.
2. Describe a place you think needs improvement and describe how it might be improved.
3. Describe your vision of a vibrant neighborhood.
4. Describe the changes you would like to see for your community.
5. What role do you see public transit playing in the future of Tigard. Describe any positive and negative aspects.
6. Which of the following goals are important to you?
  - Create Vibrant Communities
  - Reduce the negative impacts of traffic congestion on the community
  - Promote affordable transportation to areas where housing and transportation costs are high.
  - Support placemaking and efficient urban form
  - Reduce travel times
  - Provide alternatives to driving an automobile.
  - Improve air quality/reduce greenhouse gases.
  - Accommodate growth away from established residential neighborhoods
7. Are you, your organization, or your organization's membership interested in participating in future planning activities or events?
8. What is the best way for the City to communicate with you or your organization's membership about the project? (Open houses, farmer's market, bus surveys, web, factsheets, etc.)

### **Exhibit 1. Stakeholder Interview Questions**

## **Places people like**

Stakeholders identified a wide range of places they like throughout the region and beyond. Downtown Lake Oswego was frequently mentioned, as were several Portland neighborhoods. Not all places were of urban character; open spaces and natural areas were identified, including resort settings as well as more natural areas. Stakeholders also valued open spaces located within urban areas. In two cases—where Portland's Pearl District and Downtown were mentioned—stakeholders noted these are desirable places but are not, perhaps, appropriate models to the character of Tigard. Some of the places that were mentioned include:

- Downtowns: Lake Oswego, Portland, Tigard, Vancouver, WA
- Established neighborhoods: First Addition (Lake Oswego); Hawthorne, Hillsdale, Ladd's Addition, Laurelhurst, Multnomah Village, Northwest District (Portland); Summerfield (Tigard)
- Transit-oriented and other planned developments: Bridgeport Village (Tualatin), Orenco Station (Hillsboro), Pearl District (Portland), NewPort Village (Port Moody, B.C.)
- Parks and open spaces: Cook Park, Pioneer Courthouse Square, Oregon Coast, Black Butte, Tualatin River Wildlife Refuge

## Characteristics of places people like

The most common theme that cut across the spectrum of responses was the desire for comfortable, easy walking conditions. This was the case whether people were talking about urban or natural areas. Most responses about vibrant neighborhoods in particular made reference to activity of and interaction between people at street level. Availability of good restaurants was mentioned often as a trait of a good neighborhood. Access to natural areas and open spaces was also a common theme. The majority of stakeholders expressed a desire to know their neighbors, share a sense of community, work, shop, and recreate together. Some specific desired characteristics include:

- Walkable: continuous and well-maintained sidewalks, bike paths, and streets
- Active and safe streets
- Neighborhood village scale and feel: compact form, single-family homes well-connected to small business and retail
- Variety of businesses for shopping, eating and drinking, entertainment
- Access to open spaces--parks, dog parks, trails, etc.--on foot and by bike or transit
- Flexible public spaces for community gathering and events
- Activity and diversity of people
- Equity and economic diversity, especially in housing
- High quality architecture that promotes community and fits in with existing buildings
- Strong feeling of community identity
- Close proximity to work, schools, churches, parks
- Well-connected to transportation of all modes

## Community Improvements

When asked to describe areas in need of improvement, most stakeholders focused on issues within Tigard. Answers reflected a deficiency in well-defined, walkable areas (particularly active commercial zones) and a lack of community identity. An underdeveloped downtown core and strip mall development along Pacific Highway were often cited as limitations. Another central concern was getting around: too few places to walk, too much traffic congestion (especially in the Pacific Highway corridor), and too many transfers for transit service that also takes too much time. Additionally, some areas outside of Tigard (Fairview Village, Quatama Station) were noted as examples of planned communities that did not fully succeed in achieving the intended qualities of urban and/or transit-oriented development.

Solutions sought by stakeholders focused on concentrating development Downtown, creating destinations for community and shopping, and redeveloping outdated or underutilized properties and areas, including the Washington Square Regional Center. Stakeholders especially want to see Downtown become a vibrant center for Tigard. A large number of comments pointed to a need for more community amenities—parks, events,

multiuse and recreation facilities. Aesthetics in new and existing development were given consideration.

Better access to reliable transit service was another high priority, especially improving connections to underserved areas. Several stakeholders, who identified traffic congestion on Pacific Highway, Highway 217, and I-5 as a major problem in Tigard, targeted infrastructure improvements in these corridors. Complete streets to accommodate bikes and pedestrians were desired.

Some essential themes that emerged for improving Tigard are summarized below.

### **Create community destinations**

- Well-defined, active commercial and retail zones Downtown and around Washington Square with residential in between
- Neighborhood retail featuring restaurants, coffee shops, pubs—focus on storefronts
- Continuity in development aesthetics, but don't want everything to look the same
- Mix of housing types; ensure quality, affordability
- More community events and planned activities
- More parks, multiuse facility, plaza, amphitheater, community center, sports complex, ball fields, places and programs for everyone to recreate—connected to multimodal transportation

### **Upgrade infrastructure**

- Enhance walkability with sidewalks, paths, trails, parks
- Improve connections between places for all transportation modes
- Increase business visibility by calming traffic, reducing visual clutter (signs)
- Maintain automobile infrastructure and expand where needed to relieve traffic congestion
- Provide parking (for businesses and transit riders): structured or tuck under, no “seas of asphalt”

### **Enhance transit access and efficiency**

- Reduce distances between, and remove pedestrian barriers to, transit stops
- Faster, more reliable transit with fewer transfers
- Better bus connections to underserved areas, especially to Durham Road and Bull Mountain
- Improve access to transit for seniors, low income populations, and people with disabilities

## Role of Public Transit in Tigard

Stakeholders reported anticipating a wide range of benefits from high capacity transit to Tigard, the variety of which reflects different perspectives on its purpose. Many stakeholders said high capacity transit is a necessary response to inevitable growth in population, traffic, and transportation costs. Stakeholders varied on how they prioritize the potential benefits of high capacity transit. A large number sees its role primarily consisting in containing traffic congestion, while many others view it as a special opportunity for expanding living options and transforming development patterns. Some specific benefits of high capacity transit mentioned in the interviews included:

- Reduces congestion throughout Tigard and King City, especially on Pacific Highway, and to the greater metro area
- Makes it easier for customers to reach businesses in Tigard
- Provides an alternative to driving, making transportation more convenient, efficient, and cost-effective for all users
- Contains sprawl, allows the region to grow without corresponding automobile traffic growth
- Offers high quality transit user experience
- More choices, more lifestyle options
- Huge role in branding Tigard and spurring new development, especially at station sites
- Gives people a reason to stop and stay in Tigard instead of just passing through
- Rejuvenates and best utilizes Pacific Highway, Downtown, and the Tigard Triangle.

Stakeholders were also asked to share their concerns about the potential for adverse impacts of high capacity transit. Most stakeholders believe that high capacity transit will ease traffic congestion, act as a catalyst for desirable development, or do both. At the same time, stakeholders stated frequently that achieving any benefits depends on doing high capacity transit right and that planning or design failures could undermine its benefits. Some stakeholders worry that high capacity transit could fail to address—and may even contribute to—traffic congestion. Others pointed to existing high capacity transit corridors, especially in east Multnomah County, as evidence that it may not achieve the development benefits expected of it. In addition, many stakeholders raised public safety concerns. Another major concern is the high cost of building high capacity transit. Specific concerns about high capacity transit mentioned in the interviews included:

- Corridor may not match commuting patterns—many in Tigard do not work in Portland, and corridor misses Washington Square
- More activity in the corridor may increase congestion
- Infrastructure could be ugly and create more barriers to moving around Tigard (and further divide Tigard at Pacific Highway)
- Reduces, eliminates, or duplicates other transit service on which people rely

- HCT is for through traffic, not local; cut-through traffic will increase (especially off Bull Mountain)
- Transit carries unfamiliar/undesirable people who make other users or potential users and residents uncomfortable
- Could bring personal and property crime to transit and station areas
- Creates danger for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Capital cost up front is expensive, especially after Milwaukie LRT, CRC, Lake Oswego streetcar; will it be worth it when WES was not?
- Light rail would consume residential land, open spaces, and existing homes and businesses
- Transit-oriented development creates “seas of apartments” with MAX access, but people still have to drive to most services
- Don’t devastate local business traffic—LRT on Interstate hurt businesses in between station nodes

## Survey of goals

Stakeholders were presented a list of eight Goal Statements and asked to identify which are important to them. They could choose none, some, or all of the statements. The responses are summarized below.

Goal Statement	Number of Responses
A. Create vibrant communities	22
B. Reduce the negative impacts of traffic congestion on the community	27
C. Promote affordable transportation to areas where housing and transportation costs are high	13
D. Support placemaking and efficient urban form	17
E. Reduce travel times	20
F. Provide alternatives to driving an automobile	21
G. Improve air quality/reduce greenhouse gases	15
H. Accommodate growth away from established residential neighborhoods	10

### Exhibit 2. Goal Statements

Responses reveal the prominent place of traffic concerns in the minds of stakeholders. Among the eight statements provided “Reduce the negative impacts of traffic congestion on the community” was selected most frequently, by more than half of the stakeholders, and reducing travel times and providing alternatives to driving also ranked high. At the same time, a few stakeholders expressed reservations about combatting congestion to such extent that it might hurt corridor businesses, and a few others said that having reliable transit is more important than achieving reduced travel times. The other Goal Statement selected most often was “Create vibrant communities,” and several stakeholders suggested that all of the other goals are functions of a vibrant community.

Accommodating growth away from established neighborhoods was chosen least often, by less than one quarter of the stakeholders. It was suggested by some that this goal does not apply to all neighborhoods, or that it might only be considered a goal to the residents of established neighborhoods. While stakeholders frequently selected statements A and D, it was pointed out multiple times that the language is not commonly used among non-planners.

Stakeholders were also invited to share additional goals that were not represented in the list provided. A few suggested other goals, including ensuring Tigard's business and residential communities complement and benefit each other, emphasizing a high quality transit experience (and so mitigating the importance of Goal Statement E), taking care of roads and highways (in support of the other Goal Statements), and fostering pride in the Tigard community.

## **Community involvement**

Finally, stakeholders were asked for their preferred method of contact for updates about high capacity transit, as well as for their ideas on the best ways to reach the community. E-mail updates were preferred by many stakeholders for their ease of circulation and suitability for frequent updates. The Cityscape newsletter, direct mailings, and press releases in area newspapers were considered important print tools for wide dissemination of timely information. The City of Tigard website should be utilized for project updates, conducting surveys, and receiving online comments. People also suggested town hall or brownbag meetings and presentations to local boards and committees for greater interaction with the public.

A number of stakeholders emphasized the need for personal interaction between the project agencies, residents, and business owners in Tigard. The project needs to be informed by a nuanced understanding of the places and people it will reach. The public needs to be provided information and given a visual sense of the final products.

## Appendix A. High Capacity Transit Land Use Plan Stakeholders Interviewed

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Affiliation/Perspective</b>
Jonae Armstrong	Senior Property Manager, Macerich/Washington Square Mall
Roger Averbeck	SW Portland Resident; Board Member, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
Pam Brown	Vice President/Branch Manager, West Coast Bank
Gretchen Buehner	Tigard City Council, Council President
Vince Chiotti	Oregon Housing and Community, Metro Region Advisor
Amber Crudelle	Tigard Resident; Property Manager, Arbor Heights Apartments
Craig Dirksen	Tigard Mayor
Margaret Doherty	Tigard Planning Commission
Marianne Fitzgerald	Portland Resident; Transportation Chair, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.
Jay Gilbertson	Director, Tigard Senior Center
Chris Girard	CEO, Plaid Pantry
Sheila Greenlaw-Fink	Exec. Director, Community Partners for Affordable Housing
Stuart Hasman	Tigard Planning Commission
Marland Henderson	Tigard City Council
George Hetu	Store Manager, Tigard Fred Meyer
Stefan Lidington	Tigard Resident; Neighborhood Network Area 6
Jim Long	Tigard Resident; CPO4M Chair
Debi Mollahan	Exec. Director, Tigard Area Chamber of Commerce
Matthew Muldoon	Tigard Planning Commission
Tom Murphy	Tigard Resident; Vice Chair, City Center Advisory Commission
Susan Peithman	Bicycle Transportation Alliance
Steph Routh	Executive Director, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
Karen Ryan	Tigard Planning Commission
Rob Saxton	Superintendent, Tigard Tualatin School District; Employer
Buster Scholibo	Owner, Buster's Barbeque
Don Schmidt	Tigard Planning Commission; Tigard Transportation Advisory Committee
Richard Shavey	Tigard Planning Commission
Elise Shearer	Tigard City Center Advisory Committee
Father Leslie Sieg	Pastor, St. Anthony Parish and School
Eric Sporre	Vice President, PacTrust
Dave Walsh	Tigard Planning Commission
Sydney Webb	Tigard City Council (2002-2010); Director, Good Neighbor Center
Brian Wegener	Watershed Watch Coordinator, Tualatin Riverkeepers
Greg & Maureen White	Owner, Davidsons Restaurant
Nick Wilson	Tigard City Council
Marc Woodard	Tigard City Council
Dar Young	Tigard Resident; Summerfield Civic Association Board Liaison
Margaret Barnes	City of Tigard Library Director
Mike Bell	City of Tigard Assistant Chief of Police
Dennis Koellermeier	City of Tigard Public Works Director
Toby LaFrance	City of Tigard Finance and Information Services Director
Loreen Mills	City of Tigard Assistant to the City Manager, Risk Management
Liz Newton	City of Tigard Assistant City Manager
Alan Orr	City of Tigard Chief of Police
Craig Prosser	City of Tigard City Manager; Employer
Sandy Zodrow	City of Tigard, Human Resources Director; Employer