

CITY of TACOMA
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP (TODAG)
MEETING NOTES

(Reviewed and Approved on August 17, 2020)

MEETING NO.: 06-2020
MEETING DATE: January 27, 2020

Members Present: Amber Stanley, Cathy Reines, Chris Karnes, Daren Crabill, David Daniello, Don Erickson, Evette Mason, Imad Bahbah, Janice McNeal, Justin Leighton, Kerri Hill, Adam Cook (for Kim Bedier), Rick Semple, Ryan Givens

Visitors: Sue Comis (Sound Transit), Tina Lee (Pierce Transit)

Staff Support: Brian Boudet (PDS), Lihuang Wung, (COT), Dana Brown (PW), Pat Beard (CED)

Facilitator: Keith Walzak (VIA-Architecture)

ITEM 01: INTRODUCTIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Meeting called to order at 4:02pm in Room 248 of TMB by Keith Walzak
- No Public Comment
- Announcements: Brian indicated a conflict with the upcoming February meeting date.
- Attendance Correction; Ryan Givens and Chris Karnes were both in attendance at the Dec. 2019 regular meeting.

ITEM 02: CHAIR – CO-CHAIR SELCTION

- Members elected to select 2 Co-chairs. Co-chairs: Imad Bahbah and Don Erickson.

ITEM 03: ST CENTRAL LINK STATION CONCEPT INPUT
PORTLAND AVENUE STATIONS (Option A and B)

- Diagram shows a pedestrian connection. Is this proposed as over the freeway?
- Multi-modal connections are critical – need to improve pedestrian connections in vicinity (i.e. sidewalks / pedestrian refuge islands)
- Don't wait for pedestrian improvements / provide improvements now
- Portland Option 'B' – provide opportunities to improve pedestrian connections on both side of Portland Ave.
- ST committing funding for the design of site improvements – actual implementation of improvements is unknown. Local jurisdictions need to work with WSDOT and ST to coordinate.
- Lighting enhancements are needed
- Question; has the Casino committed to providing any funding for infrastructure improvements in the area?
- Unlikely that ST will contribute funding for pedestrian crossing (bridge over I-5)

- Question; will pedestrian movement up and down the station platform be easily accommodated?
- TODAG requested that WSDOT attend future meetings to provide updates on 1-5 improvements such as pedestrian connections under the freeway.
- Proposed 16 ft. wide openings on both sides.
- Pedestrian underpasses should be reasonably accommodated (friendly)
- Pierce Transit: Concern that bus circulation / stop locations may hinder operations. Option 'B' is better in that it does not require transit buses to enter the development block. Bus passenger pick-up and drop-off locations are important.
- Both options provide good redevelopment potential. Option 'A; development potential is somewhat impacted.
- Question; Does ST have mode split data for each location? Safe to assume that more traffic in and around the station will be expected.
- Pedestrian safety east of access should be a priority.
- From a pedestrian circulation perspective, Option 'B; overall is a better option.
- Question; Will future traffic signals and/or signal upgrades be anticipated or programmed for the area? If so, what intersections?
- Generally, need to reconfigure the street / blocks in the area before major transit improvements are realized. Street vacation options should be explored further.
- Access study – defining ingress and egress points on Portland Ave. - is needed. WSDOT should be involved (may be beyond the scope of ST, but ST should be involved).
- The TODAG could (should) advocate for further study. A Portland Ave corridor study is likely needed.

TACOMA DOME STATIONS (Option 1 - 4)

TD 25th Street West

- This is the ST preferred location (prior to Closer to Sounder option development)
- Awkward alignment with cavernous feeling and impacts on the 25th Street corridor
- Overhead structure will create a shadowing effect – negative impact on the street environment below.
- Amtrak Station design includes roll-up doors as façade elevation feature. The shadow effect from the structure above will be detrimental to the intended Amtrak Station street frontage and activation. Negative impacts on placemaking intent.
- This location is considered as the best in terms of proximity to other mode connection points.
- Question; What is the future urban form and density vision for this core area? What zoning change will be need to be considered o help achieve the development vision (for all options).

TD 25th Street East

- Least painful of over street options
- Too far from Tacoma Link / Amtrak and Sounder platform
- Grade change on E 'G' St. south of station
- Economic redevelopment potential with parcel between E 'G' St. and McKinley Ave.
- Good adjacencies to parking
- Run-out (tail tracks) would not cross E 'D' St. – (note, the long-term vision is for the alignment to extend beyond the Tacoma Dome area which would result in shadowing and impacts on adjacent structures).

TD 26th Street

- Bad option for neighborhood
- Covers E 'D' St.
- Will not necessarily help to improve access to the Dome
- Visual impacts on apartment building at 'D' St.
- Significant safety issues with covered walkways
- Taller track system structure over 26th St. due to future crossing over I-705
- Key priority is to ensure connections to other modes. This option is not ideal.

TD Close to Sounder

- This option must retain Amtrak in its new location
- Would be a new ST station concept – to retain existing uses and incorporating new programmed uses. ST has not done this type of development before.
- Optimizes multi-modal connections
- Does not take away real estate while revitalizing the Freighthouse Square. May impact portion of the structure to the west but overall, the opportunity is greater than the negative impacts. Save the west side of Freighthouse Square – the most iconic segment/corner of the structure. Redevelop FS as a new contemporary, mixed use station facility.
- Narrow lots to the east are challenging sites, but are developable.
- Station could be a catalyst project
- Tail track (400 ft. length) would not extend over E 'D' St. Note, assume future needs and ST 4 that would extend the tracks east and under I-705.
- Keeps 25th St. corridor open.

SUMMARY INPUT

PORTLAND AVENUE OPTIONS

Based on the defined Design Principle, **Portland Ave. Option 'B'** was determined to meet the criteria the best.

- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Best served with the over Portland Avenue option
- **Economic Development:** Land development opportunities are optimized with the over Portland Avenue option

TACOMA DOME OPTIONS

Based on the five defined Design Principle, Close to Sounder Option was determined as a priority.

Multi-Modal Connectivity

Exceeds Expectations

- Provides the best opportunity for safe pedestrian connections and access to multiple modal options in the area

Economic Development

Meets Expectations

- E. 'G' St development opportunities are retained
- Limits any negative impact and retains key land parcels

Placemaking + Urban Form

Meets Expectations

- Provides a unique urban experience integrating the Freighthouse Square
- Opportunity to create a safe and enjoyable pedestrian feel
- Potential for developing an integrated and iconic station design
- Least impactful urban form w/greatest potential for creating something unique
- Options over streets creating shadowing affect are least preferred

Social + Cultural

Meets Expectations

- Amtrak Station open door façade design is best utilized with this option
- Allows for street level activation opportunities
- Opportunity to retain/regenerate Freighthouse Square as a destination place

Community Benefit

Meets Expectations

- Public spaces under track system are important spaces
- Group consensus that the west end of the Freighthouse Square could be modified as a community benefit

Next steps

The TODAG members instructed the Co-Chairs to work with city staff to develop a 'preliminary recommendations letter' to be forwarded to the Transportation Commission for consideration with copies distributed to Sound Transit, City Council, Planning Commission and other appropriate groups. It is understood that the recommendation is preliminary and is based on the information available at this time. Additional opportunities will be made available to the TODAG to continue to review and provide input into the process.

ITEM 04: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (HOT TOPICS)

- TODAG group Site Tour: Feb 24th from 4-5PM. Meet on site.
- Co-Chair to meet w/Brian to define next agenda items for March
- Review ULI-TAP recommendations for the Dome District
- TODAG 2020 Work Plan

Meeting ended at 6:00pm