

My name is Don Baack from Hillsdale in SW Portland. I am a retired professional Civil Engineer and Wood Products/Timber executive.

I founded the all-volunteer non-profit SWTrails 29 years ago to improve the pedestrian facilities in SW Portland. We continue to be very active today.

SW Corridor was seriously flawed and should not be included in the 2025 transportation package without major changes!

1. SW Corridor used questionable ridership assumptions that all can see have gotten far worse post-pandemic, with record office vacancies in downtown, and record numbers of office workers working from home.

2. The planners ignored the impact of likely tolling on I-5. The SW Corridor analysis of traffic on Barbur and SW Portland arterials totally ignored the impact of tolling on I-5. This will make many SW arterials overcrowded and unsafe in that only 25% of SW streets have sidewalks and they also lack adequately marked crosswalks. This is a fatal flaw in the proposal.

3. The plan to put light rail on Barbur and eliminate 2 way traffic will not serve the needs of SW Community or Tigard.

4. While bus service increased on some key major streets, TriMet has reduced the bus service in many areas of SW Portland. This has left swaths of SW Portland even more car dependent!

5. The SW Corridor plan poorly or incompletely addressed service to OHSU and the VA, the largest employer node in the city. Future transit riders would have to make a transfer to an incline elevator then either walk hundreds of feet or transfer to yet another as-yet-to-be-determined bus to reach OHSU or the VA. This might work for some employees but is inappropriate for those with limited mobility and sick people!

6. The SW Corridor plans to serve the Portland Community College Campus are a joke! Riders would be required to walk more than a half mile to the classrooms of PCC the second largest client base of the corridor!

7. The SW Corridor excluded without public process the City Council Adopted plans for a multi modal bike-ped route between SW Portland, Beaverton and Tigard and the Portland waterfront and downtown Portland. This facility, called the Red Electric for the rail line it generally follows, would be much safer, family friendly, and less noisy and polluted than a route along Barbur Blvd. The use of bicycles by SW residents likely will increase dramatically with such a facility.

8 Barbur bridge replacement: the wooden structures, the Vermont and Newbury bridges, have a ODOT 70 rating the last I was given an update. Wooded structures tolerate earthquakes much better than concrete structures that have not been seismically upgraded.

In my opinion, a reasonable and cost-effective alternative would to build a new 2-lane-plus-transit-lane bridge designed for train loading beside the existing structures, and when the inevitable earthquake comes, assess the wooden bridges and replace them if necessary. This will save a very large amount of money by reducing the structure capital investment and greatly reducing the cost of traffic management entailed in using part of the existing bridges while building a new structure on the same footprint.

In conclusion, a prerequisite for state funding Barbur improvement is a revised SW Corridor plan that provides SW Portland and Tigard efficient community supported transit, vehicle capacity and appropriate bike and pedestrian facilities.

Don Baack