



CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON BUREAU OF PLANNING

VERA KATZ, MAYOR
GIL KELLEY, DIRECTOR
1900 S.W. FOURTH AVENUE, ROOM 4100
PORTLAND, OREGON 97201-5350
TELEPHONE: (503) 823-7700
FAX: (503) 823-7800
E-mail: pdxplan@ci.portland.or.us

May 22, 2002

Mayor Katz and City Commissioners
City of Portland
1221 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

Re: Resolution on a Process for Consideration of a Suspended Cable Transportation System

Dear Mayor Katz and City Commissioners:

At our recent work sessions on the Marquam Hill Plan (MHP), the Planning Commission discussed the process and policy needs for further consideration of a suspended cable transportation system linking Marquam Hill and North Macadam. I'd like to share our conclusions with you to inform your consideration of the Office of Transportation's (PDOT) resolution on this project.

Overall, the Planning Commission concludes that conducting a public process to evaluate a suspended cable transportation system linking the two locations is appropriate. The Commission also recommends coordinating this process with the evaluation and development of citywide policy and regulations to guide the development of these types of transportation systems.

Based on public testimony and discussions at our work sessions, Commission members concluded it is premature to include policy support and Zoning Code amendments related to a suspended cable transportation system as part of the MHP. Commission members felt that a comprehensive analysis of existing policies and regulations relating to these systems was necessary and that a work program to develop new policies and regulations that would apply citywide should be implemented. The Planning Commission also believes that PDOT should proceed with a project assessment phase for the proposed suspended cable transportation system linking Marquam Hill and North Macadam which will be in the form of policy and regulation development work. As part of this analysis the Planning Commission believes strongly that alternative alignment and technology decisions need to be studied as well as a "no-build" alternative. The "no-build" alternative might study a non-suspended cable system alternative, such as increased use of shuttle buses, to move traffic.

Included with this letter, please find two processes for the consideration of a suspended cable transportation system discussed by the Planning Commission. The Commission was encouraged by the amount of public involvement included in both processes as well as the expected coordination between PDOT and Planning. You will notice that the difference between the two attached processes involves the timing of the policy and regulation evaluation/development phase. The Planning Commission envisions taking an active role in this phase. Both processes provide the potential for a recommendation that suspended cable transportation systems undergo land use review.

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The Planning Commission also reviewed the evaluation factors PDOT proposes to include as part of the project assessment phase. Overall, the Commission suggests that the project assessment phase for the consideration of a suspended cable transportation system mirror the requirements of a Federal Section 106 or Environmental Impact Statement process which require specific attention to mitigation efforts. Evaluation factors to determine the appropriate alignment, technology, mid-way stops and mitigation necessary for a potential system include neighborhood impacts; transportation access and efficiency; project feasibility; implementation costs; maintenance and operations considerations; and public safety. Commission members advised PDOT to add parking as a potential impact that a suspended cable transportation system may have on neighborhoods as well as the need to evaluate security from both a passenger perspective as well as from the perspective of those located under the system.

I hope you have found this information helpful. The Planning Commission's *Recommended Marquam Hill Plan* will include the Commission's conclusions on the suspended cable transportation system outlined above. You can expect to receive the recommended plan on June 7, 2002.

Sincerely,

Planning Commission President, Rick Michaelson