Effective use of the Capitol Highway Corridor between SW Barbur and SW Cheltenham

We are pleased PBOT seeks to discuss the Rose Bus Project on Capitol Highway with the Hillsdale Communities of HBPA and Hillsdale Neighborhood Association. We have discussed it at length among ourselves and have come up with several questions to which we would like to have written answers before we schedule our respective meetings to discuss it further with you.

Our main concerns are on the westbound route. There are few questions on the eastbound changes which will actually increase safety by eliminating racers passing on left to the signal at Sunset and then racing out when the signal changes to beat the vehicle in the center lane to the merge point, the same area where the east bound busses are reentering traffic after on/off loading passengers at Sunset.

On the westbound part of the plan we are very interested in the details and how the implementation of Rose Lane in Capitol Hwy will affect livability for our residents, the greenhouse gas impact, the safety of our pedestrians, and bicycle users on the affected streets the economic impact on our struggling businesses and especially our growing percentage of vulnerable seniors.

Issues that we seek answers to under PRE- PANDEMIC (PP) traffic and Bus conditions:

1. What were the PP daily vehicle speeds and count of traffic East Bound, EB, and West Bound, WB, on Capitol Hwy west of Terwilliger. We know there were counts done pre pandemic but cannot find them in the PBOT traffic count on-line data. Same question during evening rush hour.
2. What were the westbound PP TriMet passenger counts that would have been affected during evening rush hour? Please provide the details of how the transit rider time saving was calculated. We would appreciate receiving all the data used to calculate the time savings for each line including differences in travel time and passenger counts for the rush hours being considered.
3. What was the average PP time delay of TriMet busses due to the bus que at Sunset awaiting a berth to unload?
4. What were the PP vehicle speeds and counts on SW Westwood Drive, SW Cheltenham and Burlingame Avenue?
5. What was the PP status of the traffic seeking to turn left from Burlingame Avenue on to westbound Capitol Highway during evening rush hour?
6. What was the PP status (Travel speed and counts) of SW Bertha between SW 13th and SW Barbur?
7. What was the PP vehicle speed and counts on Terwilliger north and south of Capitol Hwy? What was the average delay for evening rush hour traffic?
8. How many vehicles PP turned right onto westbound Capitol Hwy from Terwilliger during rush hour?

We seek the same data as above for the same questions using current data (CD) for traffic and Bus conditions:

9. What were the CD daily vehicle speeds and count of traffic East Bound, EB, and West Bound, WB, on Capitol Hwy west of Terwilliger.

10. What were the westbound CD TriMet passenger counts that would have been affected during evening rush hour? We would appreciate receiving all the data used to calculate the time savings for each line including differences in travel time and passenger counts for the rush hours being considered using CD.

11. What was the average CD time delay of TriMet busses due to the bus que at Sunset awaiting a bus to unload?

12. What are the CD vehicle speeds and counts on SW Westwood Drive, SW Cheltenham and Burlingame Avenue?

13. What will be the CD status of the traffic seeking to turn left from Burlingame Avenue onto westbound Capitol Highway during evening rush hour? Do the PBOT traffic engineers believe it will be safe to make a left turn from Burlingame Ave during evening rush hour?

14. What was the CD status of SW Bertha status? Travel speed and counts? between SW 13th and SW Barbur?

15. What was the CD vehicle speed and counts on Terwilliger north and south of Capitol Hwy? What was the average delay for evening rush hour traffic?
Additional Questions to which we seek answers:

A. The anticipated time delay on the numerous Express Busses carrying transit riders to and from OHSU/VA via Terwilliger? With only one lane available for non bus vehicles, We anticipate frequent cases of vehicles stopping part way through the Terwilliger/Capitol Hwy intersection like presently is a frequent occurrence at Sheridan & Barbur/4th Ave.

B. The time delay ambulances traveling on Terwilliger will incur due to increased congestion at Capitol Highway. Terwilliger is an important ambulance route.

C. How much delay does PBOT anticipate will occur on Terwilliger under the assumed conditions. How does PBOT anticipate the Terwilliger vehicle traffic turning movement onto Capitol Hwy Westbound. Do you anticipate they will turn into the Bus lane? How much bus delay might this cause?

D. How many vehicles coming southbound on Barbur will be diverted during rush hour traffic due to a lack of capacity on Capitol Hwy for both PP and CD conditions? How many extra miles will they have to travel due to the diversion and what is the quantity of greenhouse gas pollution they will generate due to traveling the extra miles?

E. Under PRE- PANDEMIC traffic, what will the expected increase in travel time and associated green house gas generation for the vehicles in the single lane going uphill toward Hillsdale.

F. For the vehicles in the single lane, under PP conditions, what is the quantity of additional greenhouse gas pollution they will generate due to stopping and going on a steep grade?

G. Under PP traffic conditions, how many additional vehicles will choose Westwood or Cheltenham as alternative routes to avoid time delays and congestion at Terwilliger/Capitol Hwy. How much additional traffic would we see on Westwood Dr, Cheltenham Ct, Pendleton and 18th Drive as vehicles attempt to find alternative routes. What mitigation is proposed to reduce traffic speeds and congestion on these narrow streets with no sidewalks that are used by many walkers and bicyclists?
H. Using PBOT’s traffic projections under PRE- PANDEMIC traffic conditions how many fewer vehicles will pass through Hillsdale commercial area on Capitol Hwy during evening rush hour? The Hillsdale Business Community is very concerned the reduced traffic will seriously affect their businesses.

I. Data used to calculate the time savings. We would appreciate receiving all the data used to calculate the bus rider time savings for each line including differences in travel time and passenger counts in each direction for the rush hours being considered.

**How do we make the most effective use of Capitol Highway from SW Barbur to SW Cheltenham?**

Our initial current investigations suggest the passenger time savings being claimed for this improvement are seriously overstated. For example, driving at speed limit takes 1 minute, driving during current rush hour 1:20. That is a 20 second savings, not 1-2 minutes. Doing the math, a 2 minute delay means the bus would be averaging 10 miles per hour. That has not been the case! This historic route of old Slavin Road, now Capitol Highway, has been developed without the creation of a network of supporting streets allowing for community circulation by car, bike, or walking.

Now let’s talk about what the commercial and residential communities of Hillsdale need: safe sidewalks or pedestrian walking space between SW Cheltenham and Terwilliger. The need for this connection between the town center and major park, exercise, and recreational areas which SW Terwilliger and George Himes Park provide was highlighted in the long-ago approved (1999) Capitol Highway Plan and 1999 Hillsdale Town Center Plan. Portland has identified Pedestrians as the most important part of our transportation system. Devoting resources to create this much needed pedestrian connection is the most effective safety improvement Portland can make to this congested corridor.