



Business Inventory and Needs Assessment: Barbur Transit Center Station and West Portland Town Center

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Executive Summary

As the Southwest Light Rail (SWLRT) project moves towards breaking ground, the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Prosper Portland commissioned students at Portland State University to meet with business owners and community members to understand the existing business context of the corridor. With a specific interest in multicultural businesses, the team sought to understand the overall landscape of businesses in the area and the business needs that could prevent displacement due to the construction and economic impact of the transportation project. The Barbur Transit Center team conducted a windshield tour of the area and then conducted six in-person interviews with businesses. The team also conducted a review of case studies and lessons learned from other transportation projects around the world to inform the series of recommendations.

The findings from the observations and interview process are:

- There are a diversity of business types and culturally-specific businesses in the area, some of which serve communities and customers from all over and beyond the metropolitan area
- Many businesses were not aware of the light rail project, but when informed about the project expressed generally positive views
- There was confusion about the agencies responsible for various projects proposed in the area and the projects' individual and cumulative impacts. Businesses are generally in good financial health and anticipate being in the area for 5-10 years, though there is a willingness to leave if the health declines
- There is no formal business association in the region, and businesses operate independently of each other
- The explicit demand for a business association is low, but some suggested a willingness to partake in services a business association might provide

From these findings and the review of case studies and best practices, the next steps recommended are:

- Conduct additional outreach to businesses in the area about the project and its impacts
- Ensure clear communication and coordination between the various agencies, such as TriMet, ODOT, PBOT, BPS, and Prosper Portland
- Find ways to bring together the businesses in the area - particularly culturally-specific businesses - to encourage relationship building and demonstrate ways the City of Portland could support businesses in advance of a light rail project
- Conduct additional interviews to understand the full range of needs. This may require building deeper trust with culturally-specific businesses.
- Ensure the built environment benefits the businesses in the area through the investment in walking and bicycling infrastructure and thoughtful car infrastructure that engenders the building of a community.
- Despite the area's "crossroads" nickname, culturally-specific businesses are bringing customers into the neighborhood, presenting an opportunity for building WPTC as a destination and not just a route

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Site Description

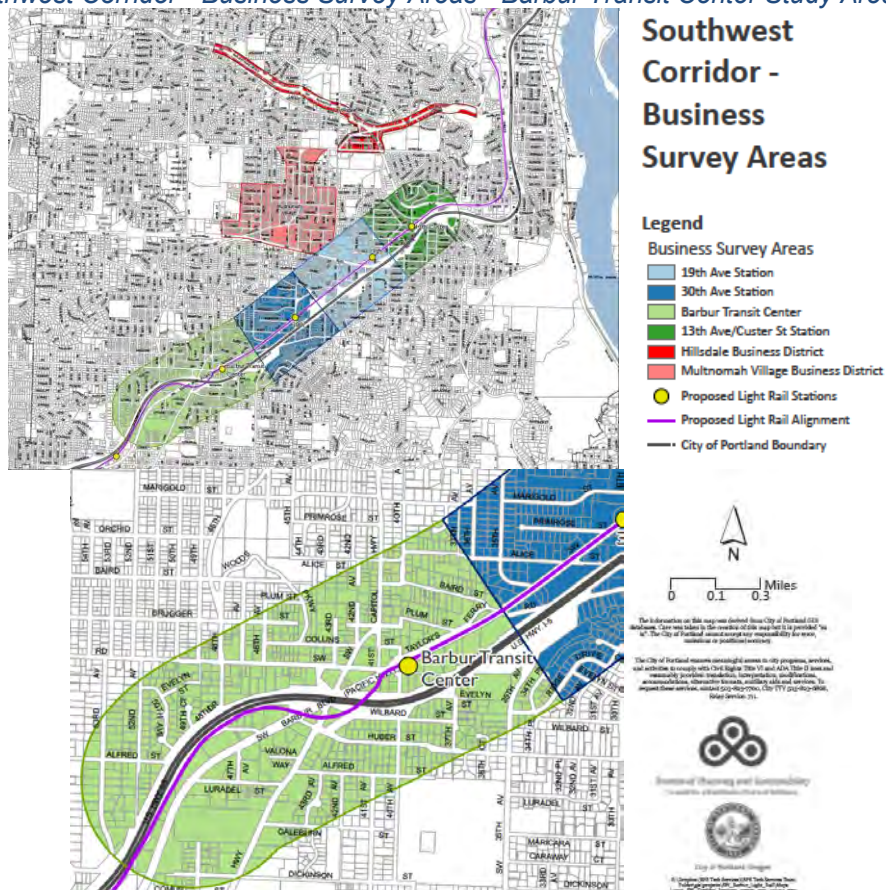
The Barbur Transit Center (BTC) station is located in West Portland Town Center (WPTC), in the far Southwest quadrant of Portland. The existing West Portland Town Center is bounded by Barbur Blvd. and 45th st on the east, Dickinson St. on the south, and I-5 on the southwest.¹ The WPTC area is nicknamed “The Crossroads,” aptly describing its land use and transportation

¹ West Portland Town Center Plan Overview. <https://beta.portland.gov/wpdx-town-center/west-portland-town-center-plan-documents-and-resources>

conditions as it is divided by Interstate 5 (I-5) and trisected by three major southwest Portland streets.

The intersection of SW Barbur Boulevard and SW Capitol Highway, the site of West Portland Town Center, is an area of cultural, religious and economic diversity.² The study area covered in this report is situated around the existing Barbur Boulevard Transit Center and Park & Ride and within a half-mile radius of the proposed light rail station.

Figure 1. Southwest Corridor - Business Survey Areas - Barbur Transit Center Study Area



Source: City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Existing Conditions

Southwest Corridor and the Region

The southwest corridor lies in the outer southwest quadrant of the City of Portland. Before the existence of I-5, Barbur Boulevard was the primary highway link between the city of Portland and southwestern Oregon. Due to geographic features, the corridor is the only major route between Portland and the southwestern suburbs. The SWLRT can become an important link between the central city and southwest neighborhoods. It will connect a diverse and historically

² Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. "SW Corridor rich with economic and cultural diversity".Article 700412, accessed on October 11, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/700412>

underserved population of the SW region to the main commercial and economic region of Downtown Portland, offering greater access to higher education, health services, and jobs concentrated in the central city.

Historical Development

The early settlers in West Portland and Hillsdale cleared much of the area that now houses many business and residential buildings in Multnomah village. One such early settler was John Slavin, for whom Slavin Road was named after - now known as Capitol Highway.³ Thomas Alexander Wood, who platted most of West Portland area around 1889, was responsible for West Portland Motor Company railway which ran from the beginning of Hamilton Street in Multnomah Village to the West Portland Park neighborhood.

Figure 2. City and West Portland Park Railway ca. 1893



Source: Oregon History

Project.org

The West Portland Park neighborhood was annexed by the city of Portland in the late 1970's.⁴ At that time, parts of the area were already developed with single story residences built by early settlers. Commercial activity was concentrated in neighborhood commercial nodes on Barbur Boulevard and Capitol Highway. Most commercial activities in these nodes included auto-oriented businesses, hotels, motels, and restaurants. Today, the character of the neighborhood has continued to be defined by car-oriented infrastructure and businesses.

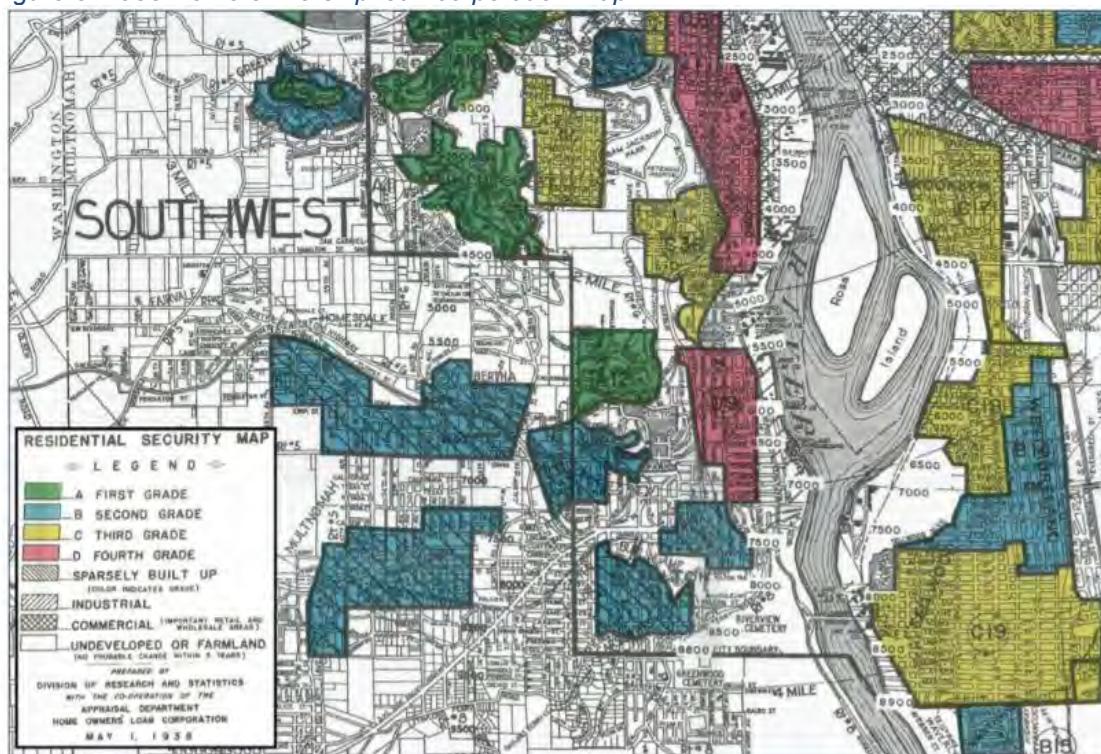
A close look SW Portland's development pattern reveals vast disparity of development between neighborhoods adjacent to the central city. Some neighborhoods boast great schools, business centers, parks, and other infrastructural developments while others, such as the communities near the SW corridor, suffered due to lopsided investment caused by freight and automotive

³ M. Davis. "History of the Community of Multnomah, Oregon". *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 47(4), 407-416. 1946. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/20611710

⁴ "Annexation by Decade," Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Article 51673, accessed on October 13, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/51673>

transportation corridors. Historically, the Southwest neighborhoods avoided redlining, a policy that denied investment to low-income or minority communities.

Figure 3. 1938 Home ownership loan corporation map



Source: [Next city.org](http://Nextcity.org)

The widening of Barbur Boulevard, Naito Parkway, and the construction of I-5 later in history further divided the neighborhoods where the SWLRT corridor is planned. These corridors generate noise and vehicular pollution, impacting vulnerable citizens. The negative impacts caused by major automotive corridors can harm land value and reduce neighborhood desirability.

The SW Community Plan, published in July of 2000, led the revision of zoning and land use for the area. As a result, the plan enabled infrastructure and development to reach the community - however, significant progress remains to grow the community.

Demographics⁵

Portland was home to 647,805 residents in 2017⁶. That same year, 9,434 residents, or 1.2% of Portland's population, called the WPTC home.

Men and women are equally represented in the WPTC. Those aged 25-34 comprise the largest age group in the WPTC. The second-largest populations by age are 35-44 and 55-64. Youth

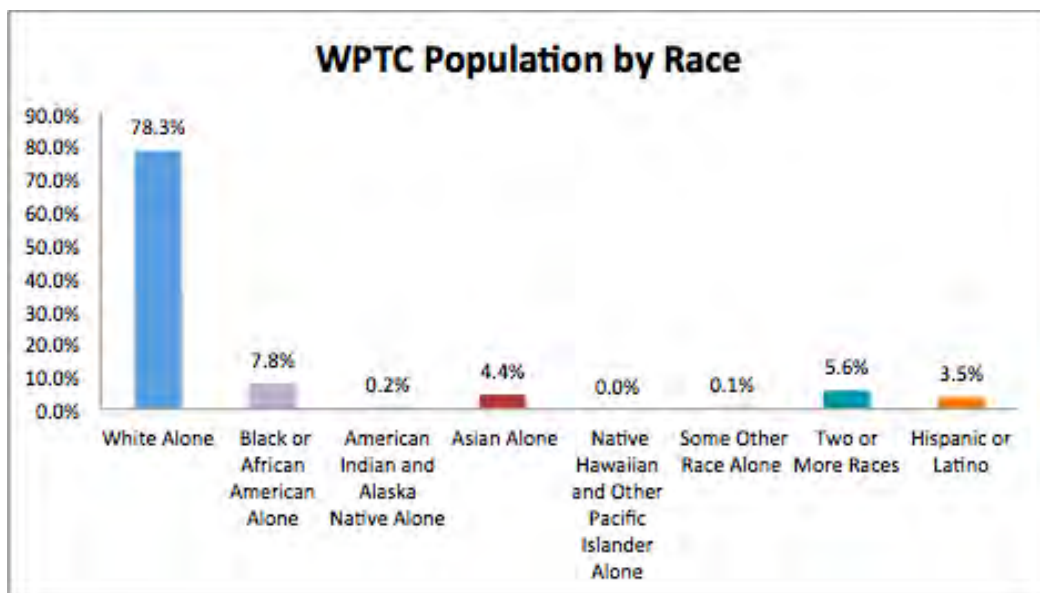
⁵ The geographic scale that is used in this data analysis is mostly census block, with some references to the SW Corridor scale and Multnomah County, Oregon. All data in this section are derived from the 2010 Census and 2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates collected from Social Explorer

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed October 2019.

under 24 years of age represent only 27% of the population. A considerable proportion of WPTC residents are in their prime earning years.

In WPTC, 78% of the population is White Alone, closely mirroring Multnomah County as a whole. Persons of color in the area represent 22% of the population. 3.5% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino, 7.8% of residents are Black or African American Alone, and 4.4% are Asian Alone.

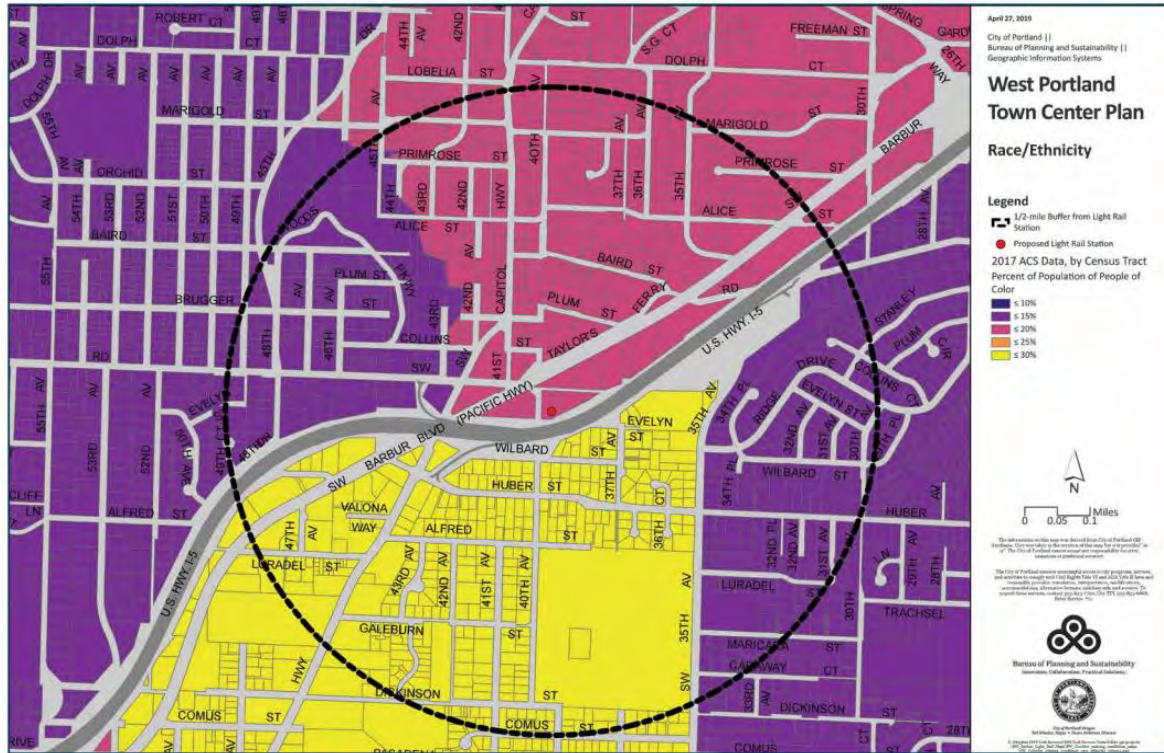
Figure 4. Race/ethnicity of WPTC



Source: Author's analysis using U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

West Portland Park is one of the most diverse communities in WPTC (colored yellow in Figure 5). This area is considered one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Portland with communities of color making up an estimated 31% of the population. Although the area experienced a population decline in the early 2000's, SW Portland has been growing since 2010 - albeit at a smaller rate than other areas in Portland. This growth has brought a noticeable increase of foreign-born residents (~17%), many coming from countries in Africa.

Figure 5. West Portland Town Center Plan, Race & Ethnicity



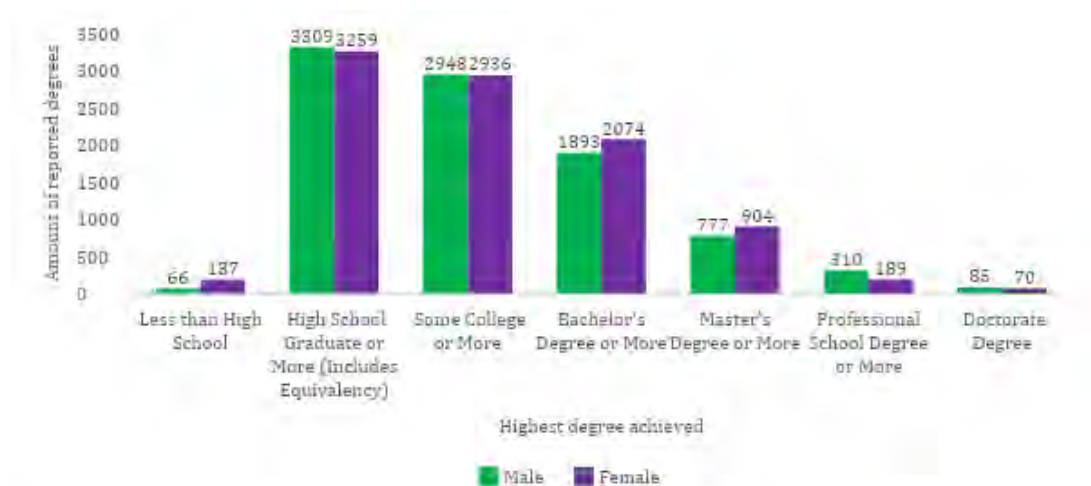
Source: *West Portland Town Center Plan: A Plan*⁷

Education

Residents in the WPTC have high educational attainment: more than 64% of residents achieved a bachelor's degree or higher. Analyzing education attainment by sex, the graph shows that women have higher share of a respondents with bachelor's or master's degree. However, the number of women who reported not graduating from high school is three times higher than men.

Figure 6. Education by sex

⁷ "West Portland Town Center Plan: A Plan for "The Crossroads" that Benefit the Entire Community," Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Article 731552, accessed on October 13, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/731552>

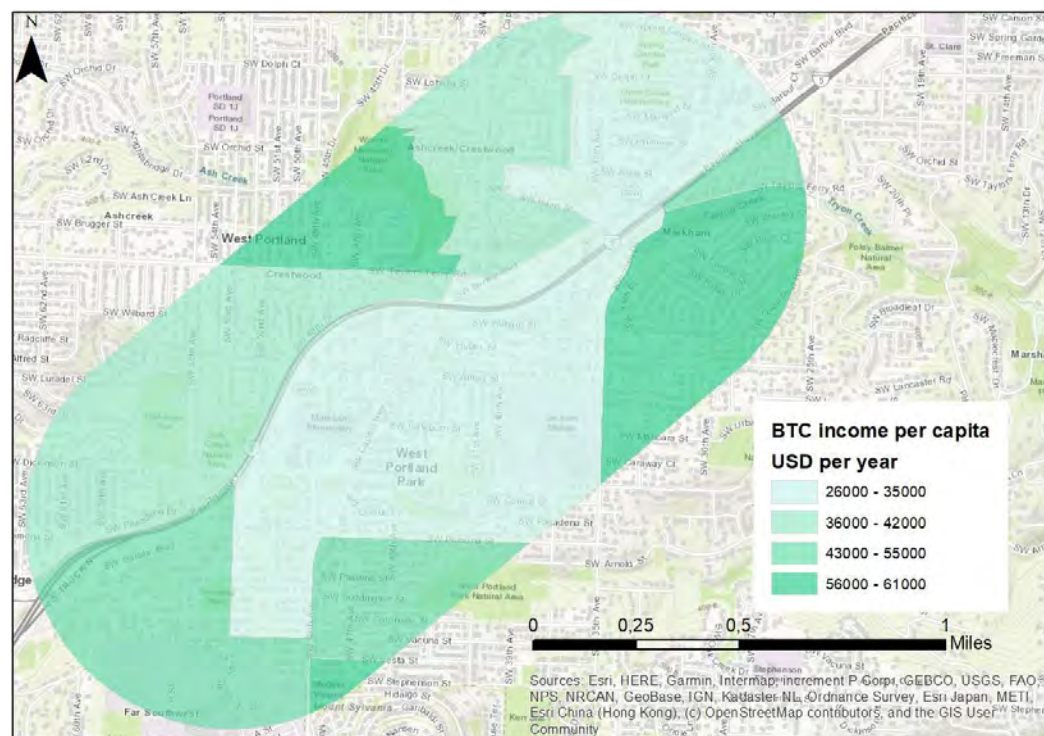


Source: Author's analysis using U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Income

Annual per capita income in WPTC was \$46,000 in 2017, higher than the annual per capita income of \$34,848 in Multnomah County. Incomes in the WPTC fall in a wide distribution, ranging from \$26,000 - \$61,000. Lower incomes prevail in the more diverse West Portland Park neighborhood.

Figure 7. WPTC income per capita



Source: Author's analysis using U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Housing

There are 4,088 households in WPTC, 43% of which live in an owner-occupied units. Approximately 82% of homeowners in the WPTC identify as non-Hispanic White.

Table 1. Households and Renter-Occupied Housing Units by Race and Ethnicity

		White Alone	Black or African American Alone	American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races	Hispanic or Latino	White Alone, Not Hispanic or Latino
Households	4088	3480	234	3	182	0	21	168	169	3350
			6%	0%	4%	0%	1%	4%	4%	82%
Renter- Occupied Housing Units	1577	1169	217	0	75	0	20	96	87	1102
			14%	0%	5%	0%	1%	6%	6%	70%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Residents of renter-occupied units are more diverse than owner-occupied units: 70% of renters in the WPTC are white, 14% black, and 6% Hispanic.

Land use and Transportation

Existing Land Use and Zoning

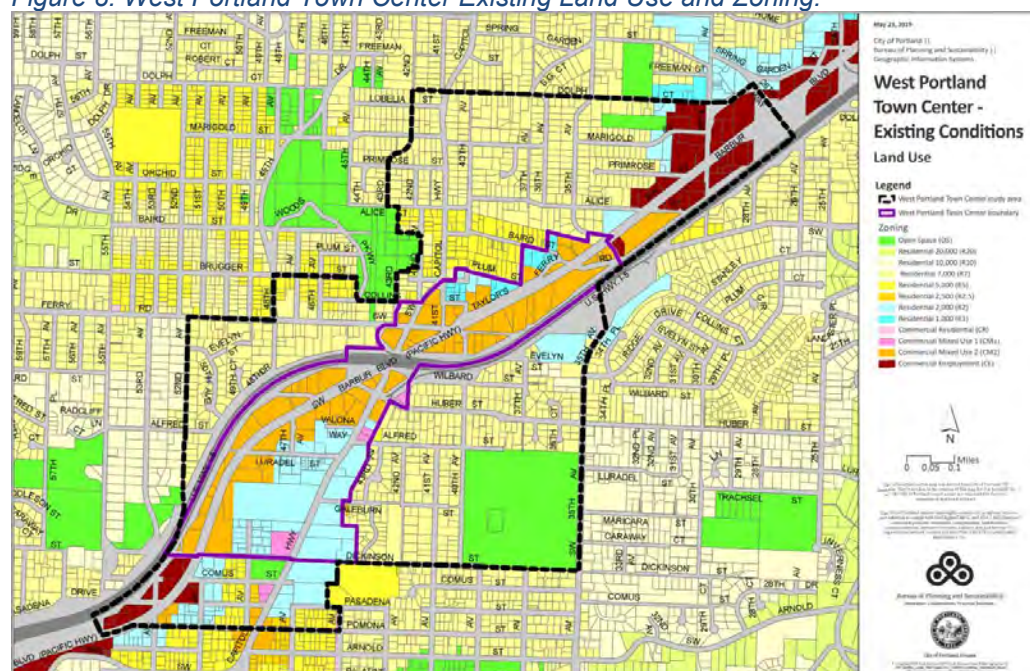
The WPTC area is zoned for a mix of residential and commercial employment zones. Its residential zones range from R20 (large-lot single-family-housing) to R1 (multi-family housing). Almost all the zoning directly adjacent to Barbur Boulevard is zoned Commercial Mixed Use. The Commercial Mixed Use zones tend to be underdeveloped, as they have “auto-oriented uses separated by parking lots and driveways,” and “Shopping and services are generally limited to single destination places, and convenience or drop in businesses. As such, Barbur lacks stop and stroll shopping districts”(Figure 8).⁸

Over half of the land area within ¼ mile of the two proposed Light Rail stations is zoned for residential; of that residential zoning, over ¾ is zoned for single family. The Barbur Boulevard and I-5 corridors are zoned for commercial mixed-use. A small amount of commercial residential

⁸ Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS). “Barbur Concept Plan,” April 2013. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/635864>, 10.

zoning is permitted along Capitol Highway south of I-5. Lastly, a significant portion of the land area within the WPTC area is devoted to roads, living up to its nickname.⁹

Figure 8. West Portland Town Center Existing Land Use and Zoning.



Source: BPS. "West Portland Town Center Data Atlas"

Transportation

Regional Context

The WPTC study area lies southwest of downtown Portland. All arterials that serve the outer southwest suburbs run through WPTC - namely I-5 and 99W (Barbur Boulevard) - are forced to flow through the WPTC due to topographical limitations. However, there is limited automotive accessibility from the WPTC: cars can enter northbound or southbound I-5, but this is the first southbound entrance to I-5 after downtown, causing additional congestion on southbound Barbur Boulevard through WPTC. ODOT retains jurisdiction over Barbur Boulevard, an "orphaned highway" after the completion of I-5.¹⁰ While I-5 parallels Barbur, the configuration and location of interchanges sometimes impedes hierarchical traffic flow (i.e. local vs. longer distance trips).¹¹ Some features of Barbur Boulevard were designed to have a scenic feel meant to give the sense of a gateway into the city of Portland for drivers from the south. For this purpose, land near the highway was "zoned down" to thin out businesses and offer greenery along its edges.

⁹ Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. "West Portland Town Center Data Atlas," May 23, 2019.

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/733629>, 11. Note that the numbers in this paragraph are approximates and were calculated visually. Author lacks full GIS knowledge to conduct more complete calculations.

¹⁰ BPS. "Barbur Concept Plan," 11.

¹¹ BPS. "Barbur Concept Plan," 11.

Highway/Car Infrastructure

The WPTC was developed post-WWII with automobile-centric construction.¹² 130,000 cars travel on I-5 through the area each day.¹³ 25,000 cars daily travel on Barbur Boulevard through WPTC in 2010, a figure likely higher today.¹⁴ Common among orphan highways, drivers routinely exceed the posted speed limits for Barbur Boulevard.¹⁵ “Speeding is a common concern expressed by the community.”¹⁶

As stated in the [Existing Land Use and Zoning](#), commercial developments in the WPTC are auto-oriented with parking lots and driveways. Many buildings have large setbacks from the street, giving the feel of a strip mall. While the area has relatively good public transportation (see [Transit Access and Ridership](#)), most of Barbur Transit Center’s acreage is dedicated to a 368-stall Park & Ride. The Park & Ride is known to fill up quickly each morning.¹⁷

Transit Access and Ridership

The WPTC is relatively well-served by transit: most of WPTC is in close proximity to the Barbur Transit Center, which includes a bus pullout and a Park & Ride facility. Buses from the Transit Center include:

- Line 94, an express bus with direct service to downtown Portland or downtown Tigard
- Line 64, with direct service to Marquam Hill (OHSU)
- The high-frequency Line 12 which runs along Barbur Blvd, and
- Two local routes running along Taylor’s Ferry Road (Line 43) and Capitol Highway (Line 44).

Each bus route begins or ends in downtown Portland, and from Barbur Transit Center one can directly access Washington Square Transit Center, Tigard Transit Center, Sherwood/Sherwood Park and Ride, and the Portland Community College (PCC) Sylvania campus.¹⁸ “However, the buses are often at or near capacity throughout the day, and due to congestion on the route, buses are frequently off-schedule. Many stop locations are not well connected to adjoining neighborhoods and neighborhood bus service is also lacking due in part to low ridership densities and the circuitous street layout.”¹⁹

Bicycling and Walking Infrastructure and Conditions

WPTC does not have complete bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure. The area is considered a “high crash corridor,” with a pedestrian fatality in 2008 at the crossroads of Barbur Boulevard and Capitol Highway.²⁰ While Barbur Boulevard has unprotected painted bike lanes, these end abruptly at the Barbur Boulevard bridge over I-5. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT)

¹² Ibid., 1.

¹³ Ibid., 11.

¹⁴ Ibid., 12.

¹⁵ Ibid., 12. Calculated by the speed of cars in the 85th percentile (85% of drivers are at this speed or lower, while 15% of drivers are higher than this speed). Result is 47mph despite a posted speed limit of 40mph.

¹⁶ Ibid., 11.

¹⁷ Rose, Joseph. “Commuter Q&A: 100 Spaces Vanish at TriMet’s Barbur Boulevard Park-and-Ride; Seeing Yellow near Grant High School.” oregonlive, April 24, 2012.

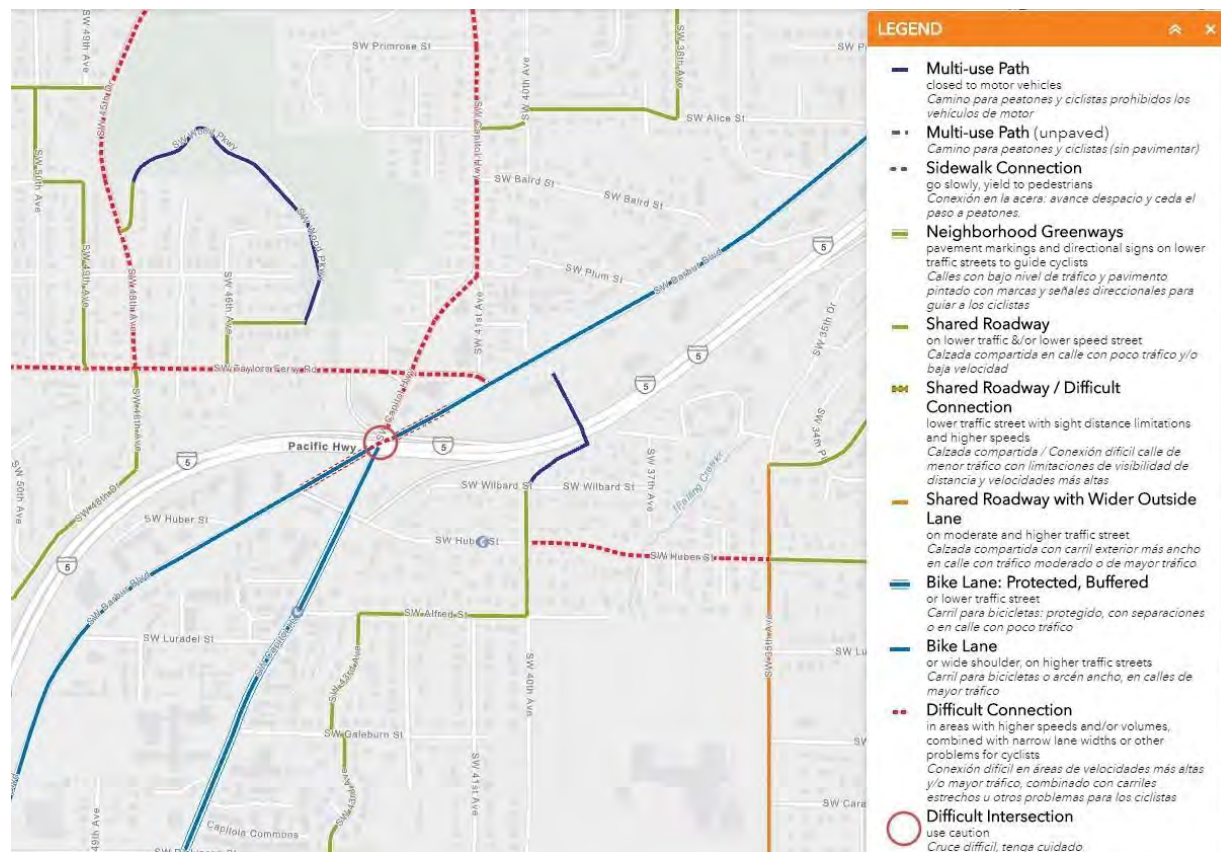
¹⁸ <http://trimet.org/maps/img/trimetsystem.png>

¹⁹ BPS. “Barbur Concept Plan,” 11.

²⁰ PBOT. SW Barbur Boulevard. Accessed October 2019. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/59286>

shows this as a difficult connection and intersection (Figure 9). Similarly, Capitol Highway is considered a difficult connection for cyclists.²¹ Both recreational cyclists and pedestrians do, however, have access to off-road trails in the Woods Memorial Natural Area within the ¼ mile radius of West Portland Town Center.

Figure 9. Bicycle Connections through West Portland Town Center.



Source: Portland Bureau of Transportation²²

6 miles of Barbur Boulevard lack sidewalks - over half of the corridor.²³ What sidewalks do exist are frequently interrupted by driveways and are flush with the curb, providing no parkway or buffer between pedestrians and speeding drivers. I-5 also represents a major connectivity barrier for pedestrians. While there is a pedestrian- and bicycle-dedicated crossing directly from Barbur Transit Center to the south side of I-5, there is no pedestrian crossing of I-5 for over a mile west of Capitol Highway.

²¹ PBOT. Portland by bicycle.arcgis. Accessed October 2019.

<https://pdx.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=b51534aa6e1f4dd4ad4d83c4a084d9a6>

²² Ibid.

²³ BPS. "Barbur Concept Plan," 24.

Jobs and Business Context

Business Types and Economic Focus

Businesses in WPTC are primarily oriented towards providing services and dining opportunities for the surrounding residential community, though there are some smaller offices and white-collar employment in the area. There are 250 businesses located in the proposed WPTC area,²⁴ with the largest NAICS sector by employee count being Health Care & Social Assistance.

Table 2. Largest industries in the WPTC by employment

Sector	# of employees	% of area employment
Health Care & Social Assistance	215	13.6%
Accommodation & Food Services	204	12.9%
Professional/Scientific/Tech Services	166	10.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, retrieved through ESRI Community Analyst²⁵

Within the proposed Barbur Transit Center Area, there is an unemployment rate of 3.8% compared to the overall unemployment rate of 4.5% in the Portland Urban Growth Boundary.²⁶

Though there are 3,502 jobs located in the study area, most commute outside of the region for employment.²⁷ This suggests the area is an employment and retail center.

As of 2017, jobs are primarily located along Barbur Boulevard and greater concentrations of jobs are located in the northeast section of WPTC, closer to the city center. Fewer jobs can be found around the western edge of the neighborhood, which is mostly residential.

Figure 10. Jobs location in WPTC

²⁴ Infogroup, and Esri Total Residential Population Forecasts for 2019. "Barbur Business Summary." Redlands, CA, October 11, 2019.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.



Source:

LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) from OntheMap

Regional Context

Within the Portland Urban Growth Boundary, the largest NAICS employment sectors include Health Care & Social Assistance, Retail Trade, and Accommodation & Food Services.²⁸ The WPTC economy closely matches the greater employment trends in the UGB, sharing two of those three top employment sectors. The exception for WPTC is the greater size of Professional/Scientific/Tech Services in the Barbur area.

Retail Leakage/Surplus Analysis

In a retail leakage/surplus analysis, a region's retail strengths and weaknesses are compared to the overall economy. When a local economy experiences retail surplus, it is providing a greater proportion of retail services than the overall economy, indicating that customers are travelling to that region from outside to shop. When leakage occurs, customers are leaving that region to find products in other areas. Retail in the WPTC area has a leakage/surplus factor of 12.4, indicating surplus. However, certain subgroups of retail are stronger than others in the Barbur TC area.²⁹ Three of the thirteen NAICS retail sectors analyzed had a retail surplus: Health & Personal Care Stores, Gasoline Stations, and Food Services & Drinking Places.³⁰ One industry,

²⁸ Infogroup, and Esri Total Residential Population Forecasts for 2019. "Portland Urban Growth Boundary Business" Redlands, CA, October 11, 2019.

²⁹ ESRI and Infogroup, ESRI 2019 Updated Demographics, and ESRI 2017 RetailMarketPlace. "Barbur Retail MarketPlace Profile." Redlands, CA, October 11, 2019. Summary." Redlands, CA, October 11, 2019.

³⁰ Ibid.

Building Materials/Garden Equipment & Supply Stores, closely matched the overall economy.³¹ The other nine NAICS retail industries experience retail leakage; these industries included Motor Vehicles & Parts Dealers, Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores, Electronics & Appliance Stores, Food & Beverage Stores, Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores, Sporting Goods/Hobby/Book/Music Stores, General Merchandise Stores, Miscellaneous Store Retailers, and Nonstore Retailers.³²

The business analysis builds a profile of the WPTC with strengths in retail, particularly in social gathering places such as restaurants, drinking establishments, and health & personal care stores, which include pharmacies, beauty supplies, and cosmetics. The area's close proximity to Exit 295 on Interstate 5 has also led to a greater occurrence of gasoline stations and auto service locations in the area. The number of restaurants, drinking establishments and stores that can be classified as cultural specific business is notable in the study area.

Community Organizations

WPTC is an area of cultural, religious, and economic diversity with several non-profit, faith-based, and culturally-specific organizations contributing to the life and composition of the community.³³

Non-Profit Organizations and Public Agencies

Several non-profit organizations in the area focus on family, housing, disability, and employment services. Additional services are provided by the many faith-based institutions, including four Christian churches, two Islamic mosques (Masjid As-Saber/Islamic Center of Portland and Ahmadiyya Muslim Community), the Islamic School of Portland, and the Islamic Social Services of Oregon State in the area.³⁴

Table 3. Non-Profit Organizations around Barbur Transit Center, as separated by primary area of service

Family (3)	Housing (1)	Disability (2)	Employment (2)	Safety (1)
- Girl Scouts of Oregon & SW Washington - Boys & Girls Aid - YMCA of Columbia-Willamette Association	-Neighborhood House Inc.	- Danville Services of Oregon - RISE Services, Inc.	-Oregon Healthcare Interpreters Center -Young Entrepreneurs Business Week	-Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

Source: Author's analysis using Google Maps

There is a notable absence of public agencies in the WPTC, such as the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), or emergency services, such as police, fire, or medical response.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

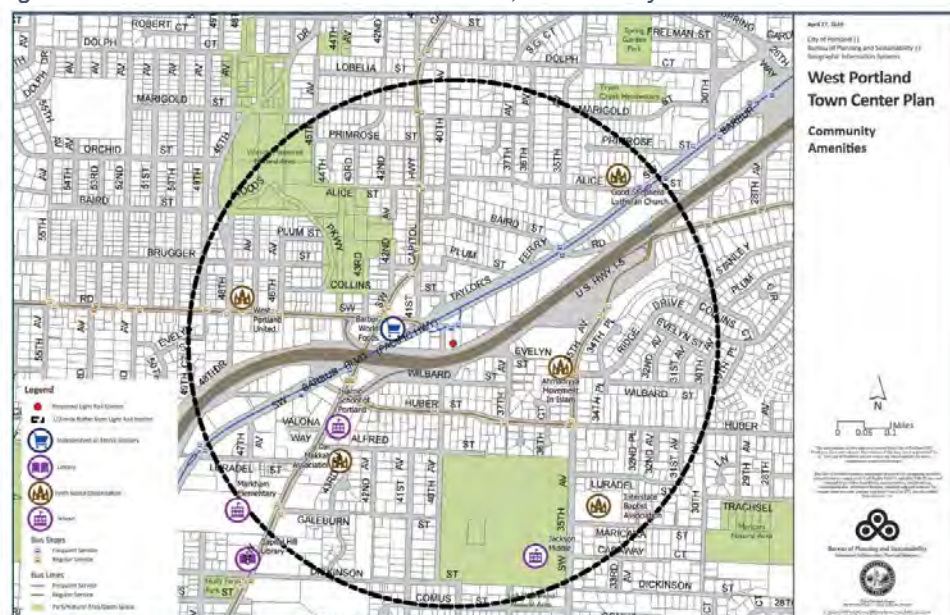
³³ "SW Corridor rich with economic and cultural diversity," Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Article 700412, accessed on October 11, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/700412>

³⁴ "West Portland Town Center: Existing Conditions Analysis: Demographic Assessment, Draft Report," Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Article 743943, accessed on October 13, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/743943>

Culturally-Specific Organizations

Culturally-specific organizations serve the Muslim and Jewish faith communities. The strong Islamic cultural presence in the area, specifically for communities originating from East Africa, have the Islamic Social Services or Oregon State (ISOS) which provides refugee adjustment services, needs assistance, family crisis support, and community connections. Additionally, HAKI Community Organization is located on the border of the geographic zone and provides tenants' rights training for Swahili-speaking community members. Another culturally-specific organization is the Jewish Outreach & Welcome which helps connect unaffiliated Jews to their nearby Jewish communities and necessary resources. There are several ethnic restaurants in the area.

Figure 11. West Portland Town Center Plan, Community Amenities



Source: Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. "West Portland Town Center Plan"³⁵

Landscape & Asset Inventory

Situated along the base of the steep hills, WPTC has access to several parks including: Woods Memorial Natural Area, Spring Garden Park, Maricara Natural Area, Loll Wildwood Natural Area, Holly Farm Park, Dickinson City Park, and Tyron Creek Headwaters (Figure 11). Most residents in the area can access these parks within a half-mile of their home.

There is one public library, the Capitol Hill branch of the Multnomah County Library, approximately a ½ mile from the transit station, which acts as local a "civic center".

Despite being a small region, WPTC includes two public schools, Markam Elementary and Jackson Middle. However, high school age students in the area must commute to other surrounding neighborhoods for school, primarily to Wilson high school. There are also several independent schools such as Montessori School serving children under nine and the Baby Sign Language in Play. The Islamic School of Portland serves a wide range of ages. Finally, there

³⁵ "West Portland Town Center Plan: A Plan for "The Crossroads" that Benefit the Entire Community," Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Article 731552, accessed on October 13, 2019, <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/731552>

are several adult education facilities in the area such as the Oregon School of Massage and CPR LifeLine. Portland Community College: Sylvania Campus lies 1.5 miles away, but is still accessible for most community members.

Existence Conditions Conclusion/ Takeaways

WPTC can be considered an incomplete neighborhood long envisioned to become a civic corridor and town center. Today, the character of the neighborhood is defined by heavy auto traffic on Barbur and Capitol Hwy, as evidenced by a lack of pedestrian infrastructure and strong presence of auto-oriented businesses.

The demographic condition of the area allows us to understand the people who live and will be impacted by the South West Corridor project. Residents of WPTC generally reflect the demographic breakdown of Multnomah County as a whole. While more diverse in race and income than surrounding areas, WPTC remains mostly white, middle income, middle age, with an equal gender balance. Still, there are several culturally-specific businesses, nonprofits, and faith-based and culturally-specific organizations that contribute to the life and composition of SW Portland. Finally, WPTC is an area in Portland with one of the highest concentrations of Muslim and East African-origin community members, concentrated in the West Portland Park neighborhood.

The region is nicknamed the "Crossroads," a place for passing through. That narrative reveals the transient nature of the corridor and the struggles to generate an identity and sense of place in the area. The forthcoming SWLRT project will add to the transportation options for the area, though additional effort must be made to improve pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure that the area demonstrably lacks.

Lastly, the business composition of WPTC suggests a strong agglomeration of certain business types which may serve as an anchoring point for a commercial hub. The strong retail presence, that can be leveraged as a foundational identity for the neighborhood as it transitions into a civic town center. Further, this retail strength is centered around culturally-specific businesses not found in adjacent neighborhoods, offering further comparative advantages.

Equity Lens

The drive behind gaining insight into the status of businesses in the Barbur Transit Center/West Portland Town Center area is understanding the impact of the light rail project and understanding business needs to minimize displacement. Given structural racism realities, it would be expected that the most vulnerable businesses to displacement are the culturally-specific businesses in the area. From [Demographics](#) research, the area is more racially diverse in comparison to other neighborhoods in Southwest Portland, with populations of color comprising between 15 and 30 percent. Our role will include assessing the diversity of the business owners, an area where data does not exist. The results of past Portland-area high capacity transit projects led to displacement of low-income communities, communities of color and businesses owned and operated by people of color.

Planning processes for decades engaged residents of the West Portland Town Center and Barbur Corridor more broadly. However, that engagement has not always reached all the diverse communities. Even the SW Corridor Housing and Equity Assessment omits disaggregated data for two prominent minority communities - the Muslim community and East

African Community. This history leaves ample opportunity to expand engagement with commercial businesses.

To advance equity through this project, we attempted to identify the minority-owned businesses to secure their feedback and oversample this population. We brought forward our team's diversity, including speaking seven languages across the group in order to achieve the best interviews. With the support of an existing local contact, Mohammed Salim Bahamadi of HAKI, we utilized his existing relationships with diverse businesses to secure interviews. During the process, we kept equity and positionality in our conversations and planning, sharing and learning from each other.

In the end, as our [Interview Results](#) show, it still proved difficult to achieve the oversampling of culturally-specific businesses that we desired. Language barriers and hesitation to speak with us prevented us from an idealized interview portfolio. However, we succeeded in talking with several culturally-specific businesses and feel there were significant learnings from those interviews. Overall, we followed research best practices, were transparent with our interviewees, made honest and strategic attempts to secure interviews with high priority businesses, and reflected on our process throughout the project.

Lastly, this report fulfills a goal for transparency in the research project. The report includes documentation of the research process, decisions, and rationale for the decisions. We included demographic information from our interviews in order to address concerns around equitable participation in the research. Lastly, our research stands alongside five companion research reports that allows for comparison of practices and an assessment of outlier results.

Field Observations

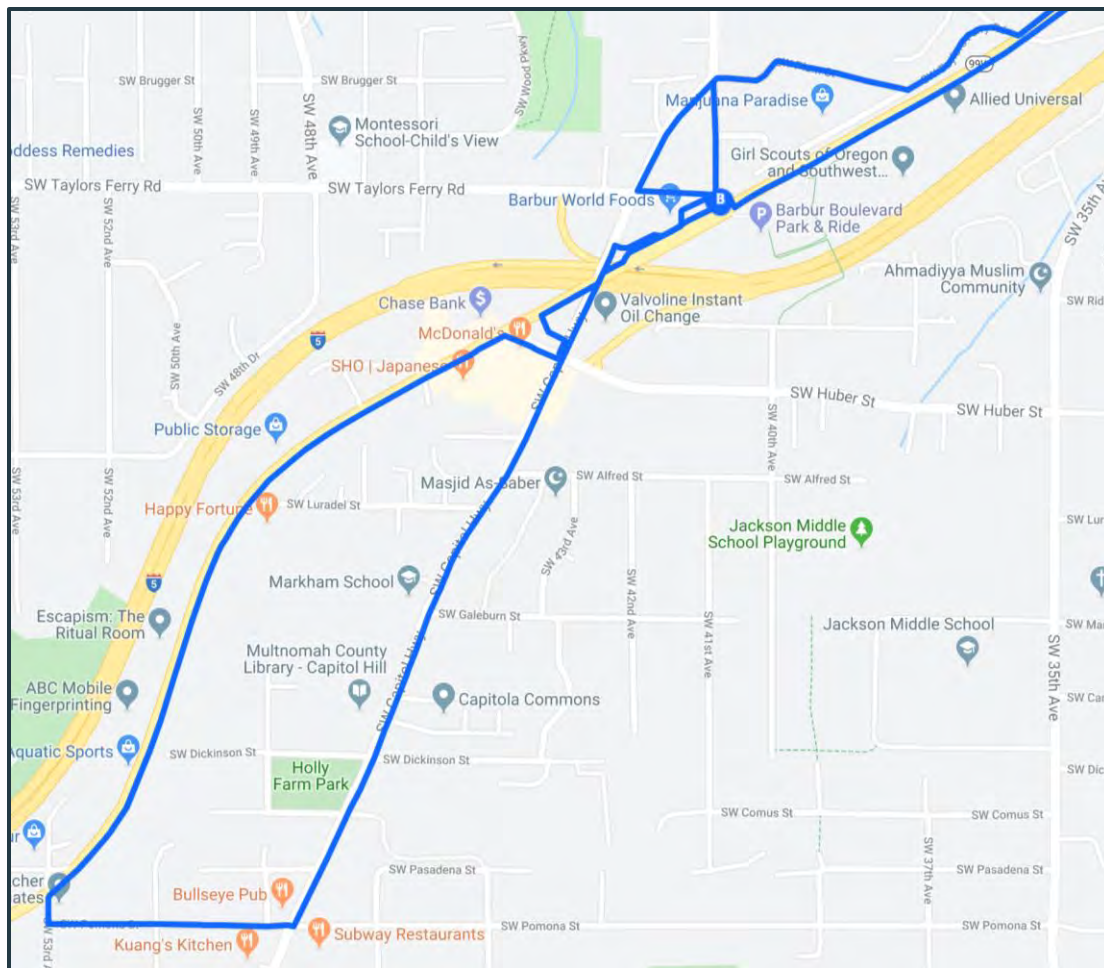
On October 24, 2019 between 4:00-6:00pm, the WPTC group conducted a field observation. The purpose of this observation was to get a better understanding of the environment and started to familiarize with the study area.

The field research strategies used were:

- Walking tour
- Non-participant observation
- Business inventory collection
- Photo survey

The group split into two subgroups (3 and 2 individuals each) and divided the territory based on the north and south sides of I-5. The group collectively covered approximately 3 miles of roads in the study area (Figure 12). However, despite that distance, significant portions of the neighborhood were not observed, limiting the full inventory.

Figure 12. Field Observation Walking Route

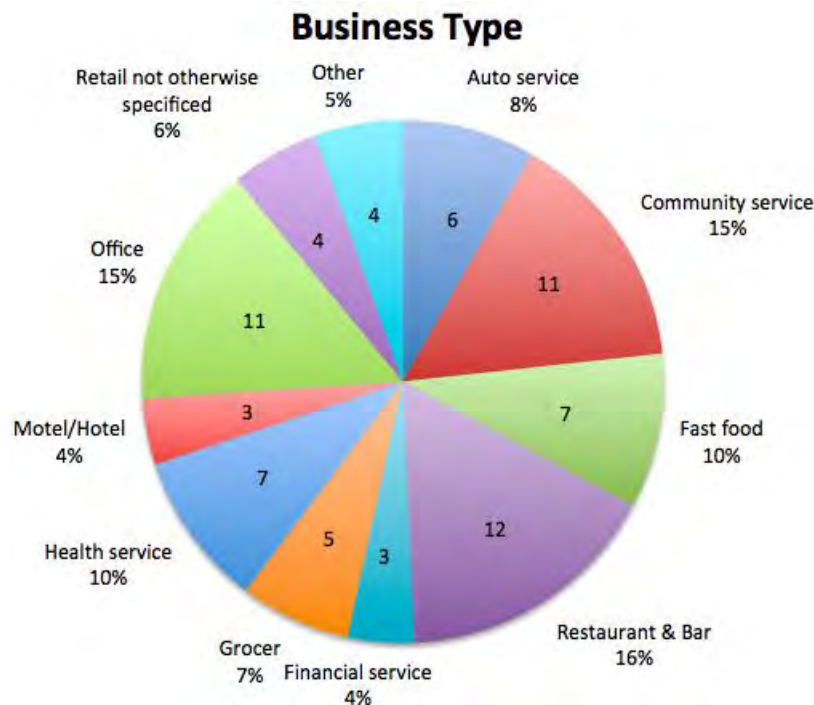


Source: Author's Analysis of field observations using Google Maps

Business Diversity

As a result of the field observation, the collected data in the accompanying Excel file shows information for 73 business in the WPTC area. The team observed a variety of business types, many service based, as well as several business plazas with offices. While the team observed most businesses to not be culturally-specific, there were a number of ethnic-based restaurants and a culturally-specific grocery store.

Figure 13. Business types of WPTC



Source: Field Observations

Of the 73 business, there is a variety of scale of businesses: some chains, locally owned businesses. Many are classified as independent business (Figure 13), illustrating the diverse scale and types of business sectors part of the economy of the WPTC. Showing a strong service industry presence along major corridors.

In terms of the characteristics of the buildings of the business from WPTC, nearly all were occupied, with few vacancies noted, and a build quality mostly ok or excellent. However, there was evidence of grime from air pollution. Primarily the business operate out of large buildings over 2000ft², and the rest with a size variation between 500 - 2000ft². There is high variance in building age, with a predominance built between 1970 - 1990. Nearly all were built before 2010.

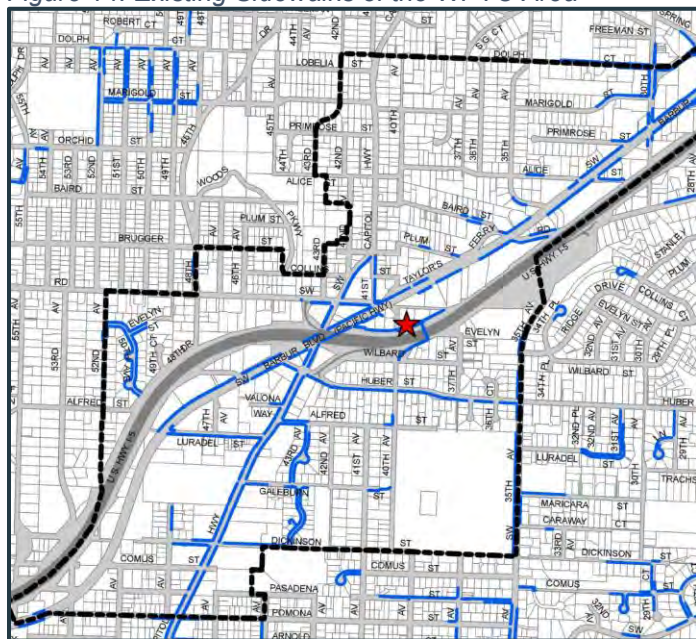
The team identified eight business as culturally-specific:

1. Barbur World Foods - Lebanese (Middle-Eastern)
2. Round Table Pizza - Italian
3. SHO Authentic Japanese Cuisine - Japanese
4. Thai Orchid Restaurant - Thai
5. Happy Fortune Chinese Restaurant & Lounge - Chinese
6. The Hummus Stop - Middle Eastern/East African
7. Baba Fresh Mexican & Mediterranean - hybrid Mexican and Mediterranean
8. Kuang's Kitchen - Chinese

Car-Oriented Area

WPTC is an extremely car-oriented area and can be dangerous for pedestrians, as we experienced during our walking tour. It proved difficult to reach adjacent businesses without a car. The group walked along roads without sidewalks and stepped into unprotected bike lanes to navigate around car parking. Crossing the two major roadways (SW Capitol and SW Barbur) required long crosswalks of 30+ seconds and even then felt rushed as cars trying to turn right were constantly inching forward.

Figure 14. Existing Sidewalks of the WPTC Area



Source: BPS West Portland Data Atlas

One group was nearly hit by a left-turning car while in the crosswalk with the pedestrian signal. The few marked crosswalks were infrequent, making it difficult to cross Barbur and Capitol. A comparison of the walking route (Figure 12) and the existing sidewalks (Figure 14) shows the infrastructure gap.

Noise from traffic reached high decibels. The team found it difficult to hold a conversation due to the constant vehicle noise. In considering the creation of community, these pose significant obstacles to making the area welcoming.

Businesses Cater to Cars

Businesses catered to cars in both form and function. The team observed many auto-service shops such as repair shops and gas stations, as well as drive thrus and substantial parking lots. There are 8 mechanic shops in the area, and many of the chain restaurants such as McDonald's, Wendys, Black Rock Coffee, Craving PDX, were primarily drive-through oriented. One coffee shop, Cravings PDX, was drive thru only.

Figure 15. L - Metro Car Care Sign - 10040 SW Capitol Hwy Portland OR 97219
R - Black Rock Coffee 10020 SW Capitol Hwy - looking SE



All of the identified business prioritize access to drivers. Most business plazas had parking and were not easily accessible via foot. Minimum ADA standards were met, and many did not appear to provide ADA access at all. The orientation of the Transit Center felt more like a transfer point than a destination in itself.

During the observation window, the team observed more traffic along Capitol and Barbur than along I-5, an unexpected finding. Additionally, as it was the end of the school day, many high schoolers were getting off buses and observed walking next to cars in the street due to a lack of sidewalks.

Incomplete Neighborhood

Overall, WPTC can be described as an incomplete neighborhood based on existing infrastructure conditions that do not allow all non-work trips to be completed by walking or biking.³⁶ Within the community, amenities are not evenly distributed, with more parks, schools, and other community institutions based in the West Portland Park side of I-5. The area also provides a better sense of walkability due to its sidewalks and single-family housing stock. The northern side of I-5 is dominated by the Barbur Boulevard commercial corridor and multifamily housing lacking a community-oriented design.

If the area is to develop into a vibrant neighborhood with a strong commercial and residential feel, it has assets to build upon. The area is accessible by transit, provides good access to job opportunities, and has necessary car infrastructure. It lacks the things that make it a

³⁶ Definition found in the Portland 2015 Climate Action Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, and Multnomah County. "Climate Action Plan," 2015. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/531984>, 78.

neighborhood - community spaces that are accessible by foot and pedal, as prioritized in the City's transportation mode prioritization plans.³⁷

Figure 16. L - Holly Park - 10900 SW Capitol, looking NW; - Starbucks - 10010 SW Barbur Blvd - looking NE; R - Barbur Business Center III - 9570 SW Barbur



³⁷ City of Portland Bureau of Transportation. "PedPDX: Portland's Citywide Pedestrian Plan," 2019. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/72504>.

Interview Results

Overview of Interviews

The West Portland Town Center group conducted a series of interviews over two weeks with businesses in the study area. 18 interviews were attempted and 5 were successfully completed. As a result of the interviews, we organized responses around six themes:

- Light Rail Awareness & Assumptions
- Business Association
- Business Health
- Cultural & Ethnic Businesses
- Relationship to neighborhood
- Jobs

Key findings from our interviews include the following:

- The level of knowledge about the SWLRT was mixed, but reactions were generally positive.
- No existing business association operates in the area, and there was little enthusiasm for the creation of one, though this may partially be attributable to lack of knowledge about how an association would work. There was some specific support businesses were interested in the city providing.
- Most businesses stated they were in strong financial shape and not concerned about possible displacement.
- There is a diversity of business types and culturally-specific businesses. However, it proved difficult to conduct interviews with many culturally-specific businesses due to language barriers and perceived risk of divulging information, requiring further relationship-building.
- Many of the businesses are well-liked by the neighborhood, although businesses hinted a willingness to leave the neighborhood if too impacted by changes related to the project.
- Lack of sense of community and belonging to the city from the business
- Many jobs at the service-businesses were minimum wage or slightly better. We did not have an opportunity to interview any white-collar-type businesses. Of these employees, many commute into the neighborhood, suggesting a possible disconnect between employees, job opportunities, and housing that requires further study.

Interview Approach

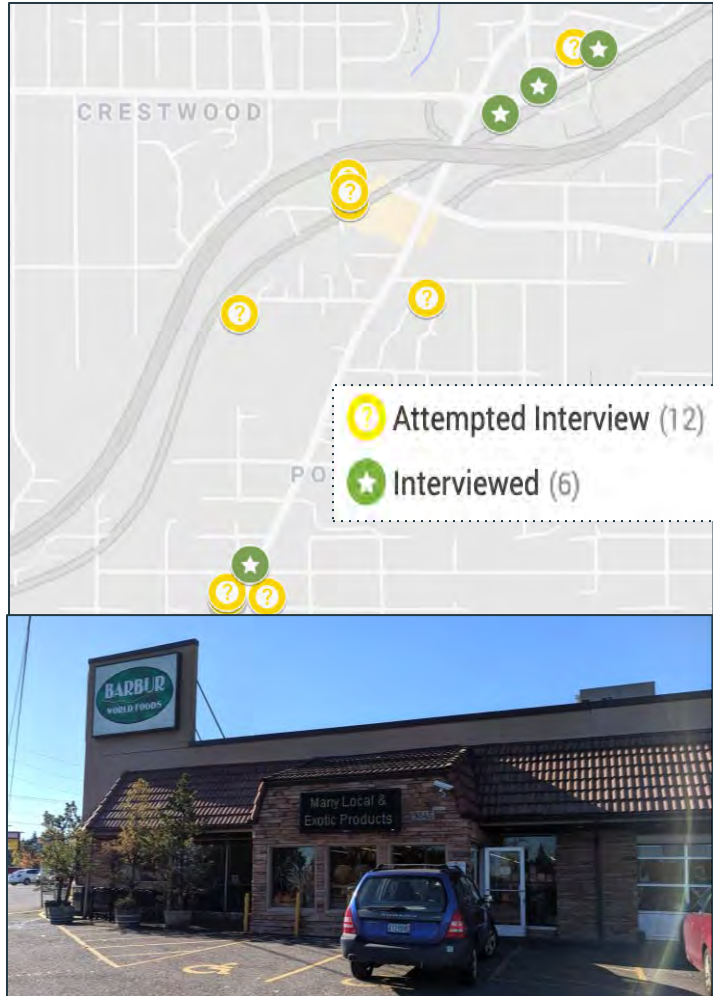
The team conducted interviews between November 4 - 15, 2019 in groups of 2 or 3 people and one interview conducted by the whole group. The team set up interviews by stopping in person and working with community liaisons to schedule interviews. Mohammad Salim Bahamadi from HAKI was especially valuable in setting up interviews with immigrant-owned

businesses in the area. Many business owners were not available, but we were able to speak with managers or above in all cases.

The team was comprised of a diverse group of individuals who bring language skills in: Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Hindi, Gujarati, French, Sango, and Swahili. Interviews were conducted in English, Swahili, and Somali. However, several of the businesses in the area appeared to be owned by Chinese individuals, creating a significant language barrier.

The businesses that participated in interviews were: Barbur World Foods, Bullseye Pub, HAKI Community Organization, Marijuana Paradise, and Nana's Market. A brief conversation was had with Master Wrench Auto Repair, but they did not complete a full interview. In addition, the group attempted interviews with:

1. Pamoja House
2. Thai Orchid
3. Brother's Wings & Bings
4. Happy Fortune
5. Baba Fresh
6. Kuang's Kitchen
7. Pacific Veterinary Hospital Inc.
8. Masjid As-Saber (Mosque)
9. Capitol Nails
10. The Hummus Stop
11. PBDC Cleaners
12. Masjid As-Saber Mosque



Additional businesses that we hoped to interview but were not able to include:

1. Sho Japanese
2. Valvoline Instant Oil Change
3. Aquatic Sports
4. Oregon Massage School
5. Ranch Inn
6. Hospitality Inn
7. Portland Value Inn & Suites
8. Kirsten Plaza

Interviews were conducted by team members in business casual attire who identified themselves as students from Portland State University. Each interview had a designated leader

and designated note taker. Standardized questions were asked of each interview, and the list of questions can be found in Appendix A.

Interview Themes

Light rail awareness/belief

The study team focused on business perception of light rail during analysis, and began by probing businesses about their existing understanding of light rail proposals in the community. There was a high variance in awareness about the project among businesses, with two businesses unaware of the project, one marginally aware, and two actively participating in the process. Interviewees held generally positive or neutral feelings towards light rail and its potential impact on business. Some acknowledged personal benefit it could have on their commutes, and one interviewee was excited customers may be able to more easily access their business.

The interviewees also voiced concerns. One business was concerned about proposed traffic pattern changes, though the team learned after the fact this concern was actually regarding a separate ODOT project that would have far bigger impacts on the business' traffic pattern than light rail. This suggests a need for clearer coordination and communication between agencies. The same interviewee was not convinced light rail would be good for the store, partially due to skepticism that transit riders would be ideal customers. Other interviewees wanted to ensure adequate car access, noting that most employees access the business by car. One interviewee was concerned the current light rail proposal did not do enough to serve the community, specifically calling out the lack of station at PCC Sylvania, but appreciated that at least a shuttle bus will be offered.

Among positives responses, some hoped for a Multnomah Village-type of community. One business lauded the recent road-diet on Capitol Highway and hoped similar could be implemented with the light rail project. A final comment came from an interviewee appreciative that light rail was the decided mode, as they said, "I'm not going to ride the bus."

Though construction impacts were concerns for businesses, they weren't immediate considerations. Aside from traffic pattern changes at Barbur World Foods, most believed they would be fine. Marijuana Paradise stated that, "We don't have a problem. We have a parking lot. We are back here, it will be fine." It was notable, however, that a business along Capitol Highway expressed concern for their colleagues along Barbur, perceiving increased construction impact.

Business Association

Interviewees confirmed that there was no formal business association in the area. The opportunity for a business association to form does exist, though it may take time and effort to fully implement. One organization, HAKI, is specifically interested in the formation of an association, and has tried to coordinate efforts among culturally-specific nonprofits and businesses in the area; however, nothing concrete has yet emerged.

Beyond HAKI, enthusiasm for a formal association was low, reflected by few relationships among businesses in the area. There may be micro-networks to build from, such as relationships between businesses sharing complexes or facilities, among clusters of stores

where some owners know one or two fellow owners, and for the stores that patronize one another.

There is an independent mindset in the area. Few relationships exist between businesses. Businesses in there area have a competitive nature: one interviewee acknowledged doing price checks at competitors' businesses and another proceeded to "trash talk," trying to downgrade their competitors. Another noted that interactions with businesses over shared parking lots and concerns for dedicated parking spots made collaboration seem more of a hassle than a benefit. Interviewers also sensed that businesses could just leave if things get tough, which makes it hard to invest in the neighborhood or an association.

The businesses stated a lack of interest in forming an association. Despite businesses disinterest in a business association, it may still be beneficial to pursue the formation of one, due to a misperception of the role of associations and the expressed interest by interviewees for the types of services an association could provide. When describing a business association, one interviewee made it sound like a Homeowners Association, more focused on regulations about appearance and operations than a supportive or advocacy group. One business stated "I'm not interested in a business association," they later on suggested they would like a voice at the city and opportunities to market their business at outreach events. When asked about specific things that the city may be able to provide, businesses voiced interest in opportunities to market their products and services to potential customers. They also wanted a presence in local governance. Another demonstrated a desire for additional foot traffic and complimented the recent road diet on Capitol Highway.

Despite the overall disinterest from businesses to participate in Business Associations, their desire for certain supports show that there could be a way forward in forming a Business Association. It could be beneficial for the city to explore this option further, possibly facilitated focus groups and bringing representatives from nearby Business Associations, such as Multnomah or Hillsdale, to explain their role and what services such a group could provide.

Business health

Of the businesses we interviewed, most reported good financial health. The exception was Haki, who, typical of a small non-profit, was always on the search for stable funding and donations. The rest were very positive, and they generally attributed their health to the good economy. One business did acknowledge that their health tends to run countercyclical to the broader economy, but even so they were doing okay.

The businesses shared little concern for the future of their business. All expected to be there for the next 5-10 years. They shared little concern for the light rail construction's impact on business health. However, one businesses located on Capitol Highway did express concern for those businesses along Barbur that would be more impacted by the light rail construction.

In terms of possible support for businesses, one business expressed interest in reorienting the business to face the main street (Capitol Highway) instead of inward to a parking lot. And finally, there was an underlying "unless" in the answers about future plans - the businesses planned to stay unless things got bad. To that, one business stated that they expected to be in the area as long as the owner wanted to be and the money stayed good. Another suggested that if the traffic pattern were too disrupted, they would leave for another location. To that end, to prevent business displacement, it seems critical that TriMet minimize construction and take steps to ensure strong business sales during the disruption period.

Ethnicity

As detailed in the [Demographics](#) section, the area does hold a diversity of people. Likewise, there is a diversity of businesses in the area, both in type and in community served. “We are a gourmet, special ethnic business,” stated one. Overall, our [Observations](#) found a diversity of business types and culturally-specific businesses. There may be an underrepresentation of certain neighborhood demographics in the business composition. Though we identified eight businesses as culturally-specific, that is disproportionately lower than the overall diversity of the neighborhood and most of these were oriented around food services, including restaurants and groceries.

Many businesses are serving customers of diverse backgrounds who live in the neighborhood. The diversity can add layers of difficulty, as one manager stated: “Sometimes we have a language barrier between customers and employees, but we work on that.” Some culturally-specific businesses bring in more than just customers from the neighborhood. Barbur World Foods maintains customer relationships who drive from hours away because of their unique selection of goods. “They come because we are a big Middle Eastern Grocery, and that is not common. There are other Mideastern groceries but not as multicultural as this one.” Businesses also depend on the through-traffic to bring in new customers passing through, meaning visibility is important.

There are several anchor institutions in the neighborhood for the East African and Islamic community in the Mosques and the Islamic School. Mohammed Salim Bahamadi of Haki wishes there were more active participation and engagement from the East African community, but feels they are resistant to be involved, especially towards long-range planning. It can be difficult to get them involved in planning when there is a need for more immediate support or outcomes.

Staff are of all backgrounds as well. Some staff are neighborhood residents but many commute into the area for their jobs from surrounding suburbs and other areas of Portland. Certain jobs are heavily racialized, such as the all-Latinx kitchen crew at one of the businesses. An area to explore further would be the rate of employment of neighborhood residents within the neighborhood.

Relationship to Neighborhood

There is both a strong relationship between the businesses and the neighborhood and a tenuous relationship that only persists as long as it is mutually beneficial. Most stores maintain a strong local customer base, but many also rely on customers passing through the area. Many employees do not live in the neighborhood, and “commute from Portland,” said one business owner, adding to the perspective that WPTC is separate from Portland as a whole.

The site that now hosts Barbur World Foods has had a grocery store in operation for over 50 years, and the grocer is incredibly important to the neighborhood. Though not an official part of our interviews, area residents who attended the West Portland Town Center Community Workshop spoke effusively of the store and its importance to the area. The building owner also owns a neighboring liquor store and barbershop property. However, it’s unclear how mutual that relationship is: the interviewee with Barbur World Foods stated that if an ODOT project went through that altered the traffic pattern, they would likely leave the area.

Although a little outside of the immediate study area, this group approached businesses in the Mountain Park Plaza as well. This was due to the connection made with Mohammed Salim Bahamadi who runs a local non-profit called HAKI. The plaza is tucked away off of Capitol

Highway, near the turnoff to PCC Sylvania. One business in the plaza expressed interest in changing their facade to be more inviting to the neighborhood. Due to the building's built form, the business was not visible from the main road and had limited signage. This business felt it was only able to cultivate a local customer base as outsiders may not know the business exists.

HAKI, given its advocacy role, knows many of the area businesses and business owners and proved to be invaluable in connecting the team to the businesses both in the plaza and provided useful context information to the area. HAKI is accessible by car and foot, and spends a great deal of time visiting people at their homes, utilizing the office more as a training space. Mohammed Salim Bahamadi developed deeper relationships with other businesses in the Mountain Park Plaza, suggesting some ability to form micro-associations.

Jobs

The jobs at the businesses interviewed tended to be lower income. This speaks to one of the limitations of the interviews, as no white collar businesses were interviewed. The employees of the businesses we contact generally earned hourly wages of minimum wage or slightly better.

Businesses mentioned several challenges in finding employees. Due to the overall economy, potential hires were “ghosting” the businesses, meaning the business was willing to offer the candidate the position but the candidate never responded.

Given the service nature of the businesses interviewed, businesses were highly occupied with finding employees with strong customer service skills. “One bad employee drives away 500 customers,” stated one business. Similarly, trustworthiness was highly valued. For one business, employees were often alone, and the business had issue with theft by past employees.

For other businesses, they were owner-operated. And HAKI, as a non-profit, was interested in volunteer support to achieve its programs.

Limitations

There are limitations to the interviews. The biggest is a question of extrapolation - these six interviews do not represent the entirety of the business needs in the area. There are significant business sectors not interviewed at all, and no interviews were conducted with culturally-specific Asian or Latinx businesses known to be in the area. Second, we were not always able to speak to the owner, sometimes just a manager or other high level employees. As such, the responses may not reflect the owner's feelings. Lastly, these findings are filtered through our identities and experiences, which may distort the feelings of the interviewee.

Positionality and Reflection

During the interviews, the team called upon its diverse backgrounds, language skills, and identities. Our role as students also likely helped us secure access to businesses that may not otherwise have been available.

The team leveraged overlapping identities with interviewees. This included perceived similarities between interviewer and interviewee and establishing shared interests that opened up dialogue. Intentional efforts were made to match participants around language, culture, and experience. One team member noted a shared overall outlook with an interviewee, a relaxed, everything will be okay outlook.

The team was also aware of mismatches with interviewees. There were unspoken power dynamics, both with race and class, but also the perception that we could make a difference with this report and we could be lobbied. The team also disrupted workdays for interviewees, taking them away from immediate organizational needs. Lastly, one interview included a translator and intermediary, which impacted the topics discussed and translation of results.

Finally, the results were filtered through our memories and notes. Similar ideas were combined that may have removed nuance. Not every team member participated in the interviews, meaning the review of the notes may not have captured every idea. And team members brought their own thoughts and beliefs about light rail, businesses, and commercial displacement that inevitably impacted the findings.

Still, the team attempted to maintain a fidelity to the interviews and present as accurate a set of results as possible.

Best Practices and Case Studies

Overview, Importance, and Findings

Strategies and lessons exist to meet business needs and prevent commercial displacement from transportation projects, with applicability to the SWLRT project. In combination with the interviews conducted, these best practices can form the core set of strategies to be implemented by Prosper Portland and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. As documented in the following case studies, many municipalities have successfully confronted the concerns of business displacement, multicultural business development, and community business advocacy.

From the best practices and case studies, we find the following items can best meet the goals of preventing commercial displacement.

- Consider an inclusionary zoning-type approach for commercial space with affordable workspace policies that ensure small, culturally-diverse businesses can maintain their place in a changing community.
- Mitigate the impacts of construction by:
 - Leveraging regional purchasing power and directing support to businesses in the construction zone.
 - Setting equitable hiring policies and goals for the project to ensure public investments benefit diverse business contractors and residents in the area of the investment.
 - Encouraging the emergence of a business association to advocate for business needs during and after construction. In addition, allocate funding for business loans and improvements to set businesses up for success after project completion.
 - Market businesses in the construction area during construction to drive customers and mitigate business losses due to accessibility impacts.
- Work with locally-trusted nonprofits to lead the community design of transportation investments.
- Utilize Business Improvement Districts to empower local businesses to set their own goals and meet their own service needs.

What is commercial displacement?

Before addressing best practices to prevent commercial displacement, we reviewed the research that discusses how to identify commercial displacement and a standard process it follows. The research of Dr. Karen Chapple, UC Berkeley, looks into the relationship between Transit-Oriented Development and Commercial Gentrification as broad themes, examining results from similar projects in Los Angeles and San Francisco.³⁸ Chapple's analysis focuses on

³⁸Karen Chapple, Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Silvia R. Gonzalez, Dov Kadin and Joseph Poirier. "Transit-Oriented Development & Commercial Gentrification: Exploring the Linkages." University of California, Berkeley (UCB) Center for Community Innovation & University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Lewis Center. September 2017. Accessed on November 15, 2019 from: <http://ucconnect.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/research-papers/TOD%20and%20Commercial%20Gentrification.pdf>

how small, often culturally-specific businesses are affected by the transit development. A key consideration examined by this research is which type of displacement comes first: the displacement of small businesses--commercial gentrification - or the displacement of residential communities - residential gentrification.

Residential gentrification, as defined by Dr. Chapple, is the “transition of working-class, low-income neighborhoods because of an influx of capital and new residents of higher income and educational attainment.” Commercial gentrification is then looking at the transition of small businesses as new or larger businesses enter the area. This can be measured in two ways: first by examining the number of business turnover--with a focus on minority-owned businesses--and secondly by the change in the type of businesses. The types of businesses referred to in this article are grouped into four categories: necessary (everyday needs such grocery stores or gas stations), frequent (quick visits, such as bank or pharmacies), discretionary (non-essential goods, such as speciality foods or recreational services), and infrequent (serve a larger community than the neighborhood, such as furniture stores). A common trait of commercial gentrification in neighborhoods is seen as businesses change from necessary/frequent types to more discretionary/infrequent types. There are four common scenarios how this plays out: “retail upscaling”, “space commodification”, “art districts”, and “transit-oriented districts.”

Chapple points out that residential gentrification is generally viewed as an issue, whereas commercial gentrification can sometimes be described as positive by using terms such as “neighborhood revitalization” or “economic development.” The replacement of smaller businesses by larger businesses serving higher-income consumers often leads to overall economic growth. In some cases, the replacement of smaller businesses has brought more business diversity and larger stores to an area allowing local residents more choice and more employment opportunities. On the other hand, there are examples where the new businesses do not cater to the needs of the local residents or offer goods outside of their budgets thereby not serving them and forcing them out.

Case Study 1: Affordable Workspace Policies³⁹

The Borough of Hackney is located north of central city of London and west of London Olympic Stadium, the site for the 2012 London Olympic Games. Hackney is an inner borough of London with a thriving small and medium size business community, startups, and a strong cluster of creative businesses. It includes the famous Shoreditch area historically known for its theatres, silk and textile industries.

Figure 17. Location of the Borough of Hackney, north of London

³⁹Development Management Local Plan for the Borough of Hackney, July 2015. <https://hackney.gov.uk/development-management-dpd>



Source: Google Maps

Because of its proximity to the central city, Hackney was an obvious choice for northward expansion of the central city. The case study focuses on the guided growth of mixed use development without causing gentrification of existing businesses in the area.

Affordable Workspace Policies in Hackney, London

In early 2000, an “Affordable Workspace Policy” was adopted by the borough’s council as a strategy to ensure supply of workspace in terms of type, size, and, most importantly, cost. It was the “core” strategy adopted by the council to make sure that businesses in the borough are not displaced as a result of mixed use redevelopment and rising property values. The council employed registered workspace providers who could lease employment workspace for a set period of time and then sub-lease them to start-up, small, and medium sized businesses if they are a local business. The policy protects 10% of the redeveloped floorspace as affordable workspace to be leased to registered workspace providers.

When this policy was adopted, Hackney’s economic position was not secure and it was seen as one of the most crime-ridden boroughs of London. A 2006 report which assessed the Borough’s economic health revealed about 47% of children living in low-income households. Today, the economic position of the borough is going strong and commercial gentrification especially among creative businesses has been curbed.

Weaknesses

The Affordable Workspace policy requires new development only provide for affordable employment floorspace. While this has prevented business displacement, rising land value due to redevelopment led to household displacement which this policy did not address.

Another weakness of this approach was the lack of secure funding from financing agencies. While developers and registered workspace providers are bound by the legal planning and development processes, financiers avoided funding projects in areas affected by the policy due to revenue related concerns.

Lastly, developers may find it difficult to secure a workspace provider-partner willing to work on a long term lease. The workspace provider may have different interests than the developer, which can make collaboration difficult. These disagreements can inhibit success of such policies.

Applicability and Transferability to the Southwest Corridor

With SWLRT, the project anticipates transit oriented development along the corridor, which would include residential, commercial, and employment-center development. Much like Hackney, the SW corridor faces the danger of displacement by new development.

Identifying small and ethnically diverse businesses that serve the neighborhood and population vulnerable to displacement is necessary. These businesses can benefit from the “Affordable Workspace” policy and may even thrive with the increased traffic brought by light rail.

Similar to the Southwest Corridor, the Borough of Hackney is also racially diverse, with residents from Jewish, Irish, Turkish, Kurdish, Vietnamese, South Asian and African communities all living and thriving as a local community in the area. The SW corridor has the potential to become a more racially diverse and thriving neighborhood provided appropriate measures are taken to foster its cultural identity and prevent displacement.

Another very important similarity is that Hackney used to be a bus transit corridor prior to the opening of the Overground rail system in 2007. Prices of local properties increased by almost 50% after the transit development. Similarly, the Barbur Transit Center is a bus anchor for the region, and light rail expansion may cause similar circumstances.

Recommendations & Best Practices

- The “Affordable workspace policy” worked for the borough of Hackney but it had its shortcomings: the borough secured 118,400ft² of affordable workspace between 2004 and 2008, but it lost 4,908,000ft² of industrial floorspace between 1998 and 2008 due development. Protecting gains made by the policy is essential.
- The policy must outline stakeholders and approved affordable space providers who can identify and help vulnerable business owners and renters find an affordable place in the same neighborhood.
- Focused aid should be provided to businesses most affected by changes in light rail, eg. auto-oriented businesses. Such businesses may need to evolve and transition into the changing needs of the neighborhood and require technical or economic assistance.
- This policy is most effective with forethought, requiring preparing and planning for the changes brought by light rail.

Case Study 2: Business Support Strategies Before, During, and After Construction of Minneapolis-St. Paul's Green Line Light Rail

40

Overview: Minneapolis-St. Paul (MSP) Green Line

The Green Line light rail, built between 2010 and 2014, runs from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul along the University Avenue corridor. The area includes a diversity of neighborhoods and land uses, anchor institutions, and ethnic communities. During planning, significant consideration was given to the financial sustainability of businesses along the corridor, the direct result of a lawsuit by local businesses in which the Metropolitan Council (referred to as the Met Council) was found to have insufficiently analyzed business impacts when developing their 2006 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As a result, the court mandated an additional set of analysis and reporting, and the Met Council issued funding to support businesses before, during, and after construction.

Local businesses formed a working group under the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC) to advocate for business interests related to the light rail. This case study will examine three actions the CCFC undertook. Beginning in 2008, the CCFC began issuing grants related to the Green Line. Comprised of fourteen local and national foundations, the Collaborative's first working group became the Business Resources Collaborative which, in 2009, filed the lawsuit that found the Met Council inadequately planned for business impacts. As a result, the Met Council announced that it would provide \$1 million to the CCFC to protect businesses along the corridor, and the CCFC pledged a match of another \$500,000 to the cause. The foundations' funding increased during the duration of the project, eventually totaling \$12 million. In total, the foundation pooled the \$12 million in grants into a "Catalyst Fund" that supplied over 160 grants focused on four categories of programs:

1. Access to Affordable Housing
2. Strong Local Economy
3. Vibrant, Transit-Orient Places
4. Effective Communication and Collaboration

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative sought to bridge the divide between community members and government decision makers by acting as a mediating third party that helped to build new relationships and align goals. The group attributes the successful completion of the Green Line to this collaborative leadership model.

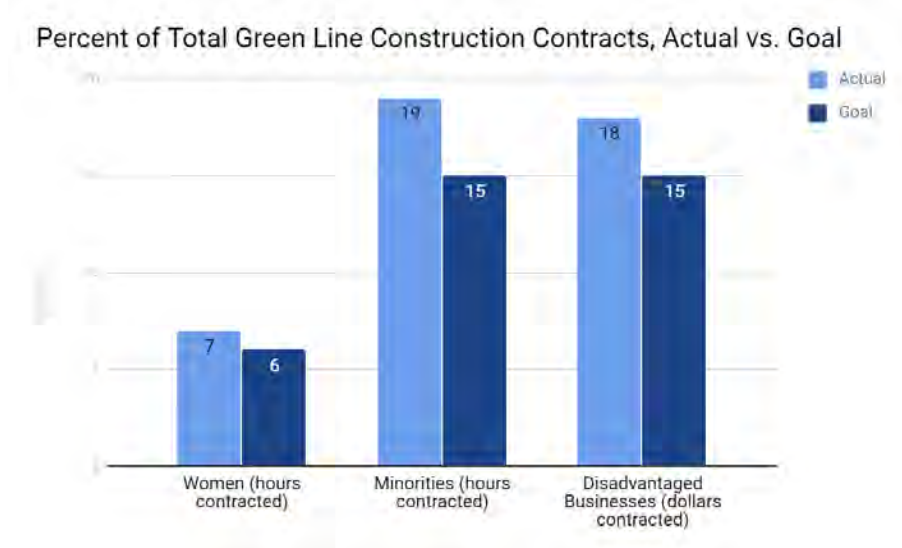
The Joint Committee on Equal Opportunity

One of the working groups that emerged from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative sought to maximize the participation of people of color and minority and women-owned contracting firms in the construction of the light rail. The goal of this project was to ensure public investment dollars benefited the communities light rail would impact, supporting residents with good-paying jobs to prevent displacement. The Joint Committee on Equal Opportunity pursued this goal in a three step process. First, the Met Council, local non-profits, and construction companies held information sessions to recruit minority and women workers. Second, they built

⁴⁰ Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation. Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. About Community, Not A Commute: Investing beyond the rail. 2016, June. Retrieved from <https://www.spmcf.org/sites/default/files/Resources/CCFC2016-LegacyReport-Final-Web.pdf>.

a website that helped to match workers to jobs with unions and construction companies. Finally, they set up monthly oversight meetings between contractors, government officials, and advocacy groups to evaluate progress. The effort was seen as successful, ultimately exceeding hiring goals (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Employment rate of targeted populations during construction of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Green Line



Source: Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation, Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, *Investments (2008-2016)*⁴¹

This process resulted in greater rapport between contractors, government officials, and advocacy groups - so much so that the approach was replicated in the construction of the U.S. Bank Stadium two years later. A weakness that emerged, however, was that prime contractors were slow to make payments to subcontractors, which created cash-flow shortages. Leaders quickly learned from this experience, and during the construction of the U.S. Bank Stadium established a working capital fund for minority contractors to borrow from. Both of these strategies to increase the participation of people of color in construction could be applied to the SW Corridor project. As these strategies are primarily a function of relationship building and opportunity creation, Prosper Portland would be a well-positioned policy implementer.

The Central Corridor Anchor Partnership

A working group within the CCFC was the Central Corridor Anchor Partnership. This group consisted of 13 organizations, each prominent medical or education organizations along the Green Line corridor. Together, group members adjusted operations in ways that enhanced business and community health in the corridor. The goal was to support local businesses during and after construction in order to ensure spending supported the local economy and local workers.

During and after rail construction, members began buying a greater proportion of their \$300 million in annual purchases from businesses along the corridor. They estimate that this action

⁴¹ Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. *Investments (2008-2016)*. 2016, March 31. Retrieved from <https://www.spmcf.org/sites/default/files/Resources/PDF/Mar-31-2016-INVESTMENTS-TO-DATE.pdf>.

alone added over \$4 million in annual sales for local businesses, and believe they can expand the initiative by shifting an additional \$16 million in purchases to locally-based businesses.

Anchor members also sought to strengthen the local economy by participating in the Central Corridor College Fellows Program, an equity-focused hiring and training initiative. Through the program, members hired local community-college students preparing for careers in health care at corridor-based medical institutions. 72% of students were low income, 68% were people of color, and 34% were first-generation college attendees. By hiring such students, anchor members contributed to equitable workforce development.

A strength of local buying/hiring programs is that they are relatively low cost. Assuming roughly equivalent prices for local and non-local goods and labor, the decision to shift spending to local businesses and employees is budget neutral for members, yet beneficial for the local economy. Both actions improve community ties between anchor institutions, local businesses, and nearby disadvantaged communities. However, if anchor institutions already leverage their hiring and buying power to maximize the returns for the local economy, there may be little room for growth.

Still, Prosper Portland and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability could research local hiring and buying patterns, then convene a working group to promote improvements in support of SW Corridor businesses and communities. “Eds and Meds” institutions along the corridor, such as PSU, OHSU, PCC Sylvania, National University of Natural Medicine, and Lewis and Clark, represent excellent initial members. Prosper Portland and BPS should consider expanding that pool to other types of anchors as well - the Portland, Tigard, and Tualatin city governments might have willingness to expand equitable buying and hiring initiatives related to the corridor.

Access to Capital for Business Improvements

The first working group to emerge from the CCFC was the Business Resources Collaborative. Motivation for this working group came after “official predictions that construction would have little effect on business activity along University Avenue [the Central Corridor]. Those hard-to-believe assumptions enraged business owners and created an increasingly tense environment. But some community leaders faced the inevitable and adopted a strategy of preparing to survive the approaching disruption.” After winning the lawsuit forcing the Met Council to better take business disruption into account, significant resources were dedicated between the Met Council and the CCFC to support local businesses. The working group then used a model called “Plan, Survive, Thrive” to organize their efforts and take advantage of the project.

The results are detailed in the CCFC report and replicated below:

- 450 businesses made preparations and improvements prior to and during construction, receiving \$3,135,430 in loans, \$260,000 in façade grants, and thousands of hours of training and technical assistance.
- 128 street-level businesses opened along the Green Line during the four-year construction period, 13 more than closed or relocated. Of businesses receiving the most intensive assistance, only 1% of businesses closed during the construction period.
- 212 businesses were aided by \$3.9 million in Ready for Rail forgivable loans.
- 9 façade improvements, and a \$160,000 matching grant program leveraging additional investments of \$1,197,000 in local properties

These results show the scale of funding leveraged to support businesses along the corridor. Various partners provided marketing for businesses along the corridor during construction to drive foot traffic and customers to the area, mitigating foot traffic decreases due to construction

disruption. While businesses still reported decreases in customers during construction, businesses would have likely closed without these efforts. Instead, more businesses opened than closed during construction and 80% of businesses believed they would grow in the first five years after the Green Line opened.

Applicability and Transferability to the Southwest Corridor

Prosper Portland and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability are asking questions about commercial displacement in a way that the Met Council had not. Given the two bureaus' emphasis on collaboration and equity, it seems very possible to replicate this case study with locally-relevant adjustments. By having these discussions now before the EIS is accepted, the SWLRT project can think forward and build upon the success of the MSP Green Line, making the project a success for local businesses and residents.

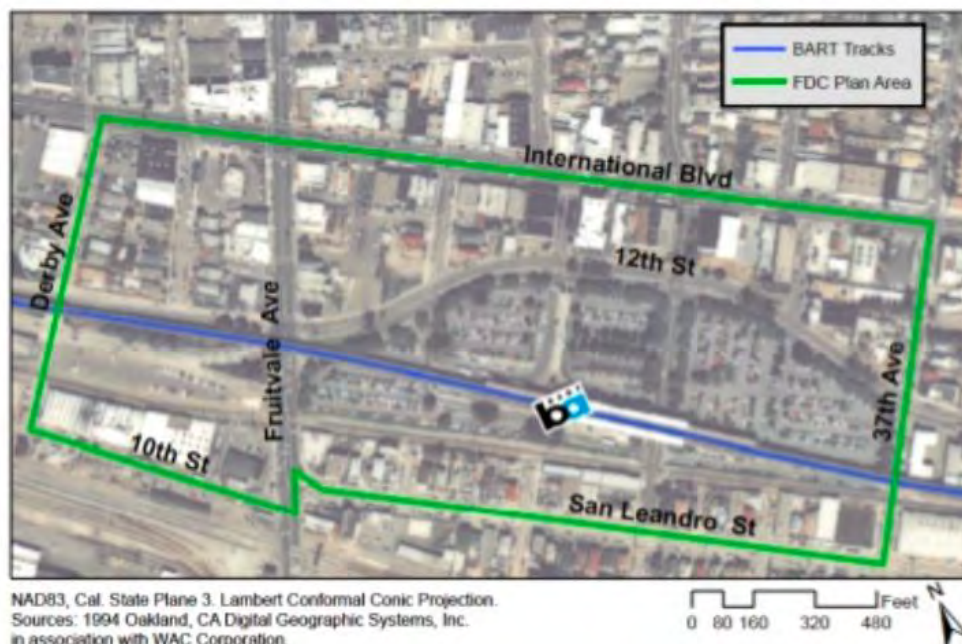
This case study does highlight some significant differences between Minneapolis-St. Paul and Portland, providing a sense for a gap that BPS and Prosper Portland can fill. The existence of the capital and marketing support came from an organized business association that was willing to push the Met Council. In advocating for their needs, businesses were able to lead in making the improvements they believed they needed to thrive.

Case Study 3: Transit-Oriented Development Corporations⁴²

Fruitvale is predominantly low-income Latino and Chicano community in Oakland, California. The Unity Council created the Fruitvale Development Corporation (FDC) to develop the local economy around the Fruitvale BART station, anticipating construction of new station parking.

Figure 19. Fruitvale Development Corporation Planning Area.

⁴²ULI—the Urban Land Institute. Cases studies, Fruitvale Village I. 2005. Retrieved from <https://casestudies.uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/C035004.pdf>



Source: North Oakland community analysis, UC Berkeley.

The Unity Council

The Unity Council is a community development corporation with close ties to the Oakland. Today, it serves as a delegate agency managing many city programs and has built a reputation as a housing and community developer. Its overall orientation is to promote high-density mixed uses, housing, jobs, and retail but with a focus on distributing job centers. Proactively ahead of the parking garage construction, the community sought to develop and implement solutions for managing traffic, pollution, and impacts on local business. In addition to building mixed-use infill development around the BART, the Unity Council started a Public Market small business incubator program in Fruitvale that supports small businesses and artisans.

The Unity Council's focus on small business retention grows out of its holistic approach to servicing the community. The Public Market builds on prior work with the Main Streets program in the 1990s which largely served immigrant-owned businesses. Activities included litter and graffiti reduction programs, education and assistance on business signage, beautification, and negotiations with the city to implement tax assessments that provided funding for cleaning.

To further its planning efforts, the Unity Council applied for and was awarded a \$185,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the city of Oakland. In the fall of 1993, the Unity Council secured \$470,000 in U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) funds. The CDBG funds and the grant from USDOT were critical to the project's success. While the overall revitalization of the Fruitvale district would end up costing upwards of \$100 million, the initial funding for planning helped the development team obtain larger grants later on.

Fruitvale also collected resources from a tax increment financing (TIF) district. The FDC took out a \$4 million Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) bridge loan with the TIF funds. The project also obtained, through the city of Oakland, a HUD Enhanced Enterprise Community economic development initiative grant of \$3.3 million, matched by a \$3.3 million HUD Section 108 loan. The city of Oakland was also the issuer of \$19.8 million in tax-exempt 501(c)(3)

bonds. After construction began, the city approved a \$4.5 million, 20-year prepaid lease that allowed the FDC to pay down the 501(c)(3) bonds by \$2 million soon after the completion of construction and reduce its interest payments and fees on the bond.

Results

- The transit village has been a boon to the surrounding neighborhood without resulting in gentrification.
- Fruitvale lost only 1 percent of its Latino population, 4 percent of its black residents, less than one percent of its white residents, and gained 6 percent new Asian residents. The community stayed Latino, “even with all these benefits.”
- As of 2011, Fruitvale saw a 10-20% increase in businesses by microentrepreneurs.
- After project completion in 2005, the Fruitvale neighborhood generates the second-highest level of sales tax revenue in the city.

Strengths

- The Fruitvale Village is a national model for livable communities. This renowned TOD is a pioneer in equity planning. TOD is uniquely positioned to benefit low to moderate income (LMI) communities: it can connect workers to employment centers, create jobs, and has the potential to spur investment in areas that have suffered disinvestment. TOD reduces transportation costs, a significant boon to LMI households who spend a larger share of their income on transportation relative to other households.
- The leadership of a non-profit organization with deep roots in the community helped the project gain acceptance. Given its long history of service within the community, many residents were familiar with the work of the Unity Council. The village’s success can be attributed to the level of trust the council established among residents and businesses.
- This program was deliberate in applying an equity lens to its policies. If equity is the goal, designing policy strategies around that philosophy is a necessary step to ensuring success.

Weaknesses

- A limitation of working with nonprofit associations is the challenge of obtaining funding and financing. In securing project financing, the FDC experienced many hurdles that traditional developers do not.
- As a result of the financial struggle, the Fruitvale Village development process took longer than expected. 24 years passed between the conception of the community plan and the Fruitvale Transit Village completion.

Applicability and Transferability to the Southwest Corridor

The context of the Fruitvale project is comparable to the SW corridor. Both are transportation interventions in a central corridor area between two cities that are conurbed with direct implications for people from marginalized communities.

It is crucial to understand the differences of the market forces - particularly the pressure of the Bay Area's booming economy. The diversity and equity perspectives are different, as well as different levels of political activism and public involvement to see a project like this through.

It is relevant to notice that Fruitvale's uniquely strong community organizational presence was crucial to the success of equitable TOD. For the SW corridor, strategies would need to work in local conditions and generate the political and community engagement to support the project.

Recommendations & Best Practices

- Partnerships are key to gaining community trust. Create a holistic and integrated intervention to engage the community as part of the process and reflect on results. To achieve local rapport, partner with social/business organization in the area before creating one.
- Make the community part of the project: Shift the concept of a transportation project towards the idea of integrating the transit into the surrounding community. As there does not appear to be as prominent an organization in SW Portland as there was in Fruitvale, work with an existing SW Portland non-profit to develop its capacity to work with the city and the developer. This will integrate community concerns using a community benefits agreement that stipulates the commitments from developers regarding project benefits to the surrounding community.
- Guarantee that equity strategies are financially realizable – always make sure that the equity strategies are included in the financial model of the project. This protects the project from economic issues that could affect outcomes or the marginalized population.

Case Study 4: Special Service Areas

Special Service Areas (SSAs), otherwise referred to as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), are local districts that collect tax revenue, often at a neighborhood scale, for the purpose of providing enhanced services and programs. These services and programs are in addition to the baseline set of services a city or regional government already offers, usually covering issues that a local area may feel are inadequately addressed. In Chicago, local neighborhoods are allowed to initiate the formation of Special Service Areas to be operated by local neighborhood non-profit organizations.

What is a Special Service Area (SSA)/Business Improvement District (BID)?

A BID is a broad resource for local businesses and is only limited by what it wants to accomplish. Across the world, BIDs focus on a variety of goals and objectives that vary based on a community's needs. BIDs collect resources from an additional property tax levy for performing these services, and are usually formed by collective agreement by the businesses affected by or located within the BID.

BIDs usually form at the neighborhood scale. When a community begins the process of forming a BID, support from a majority of businesses in the affected community is needed. A local government then assigns operation and management of BID resources and programs to a

neighborhood organization, typically a nonprofit or a quasi-governmental organization. This organization is traditionally led by a board or a committee of business leaders.

Neighborhood Scale of Chicago's Special Service Areas

According to Chicago's Department of Planning and Development, the Chicago Special Service Area (SSA) Program - their Business Improvement District system - is contracted to local nonprofits, called Service Providers, to manage SSAs. The services that these organizations provide is broad: business retention/attraction, facade improvements, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure construction/maintenance, and economic development. Chicago presently has 53 different SSAs across the city.

One Service Provider, Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council, manages Special Service Areas 7, 10, 13, and 39.⁴³ Each of these SSAs serve a specific group in the Hispanic Back of the Yards neighborhood on Chicago's Westside; SSA 13, for example, is located in the historic Stockyards Industrial district and as a result offers services related to industrial business retention and development. Conversely, SSA 39 is the heart of the Brighton Park and Archer Heights neighborhoods, and provides more relevant services such as business advertising rebates, shopper shuttle busses, and graffiti removal.

Special Service Areas and Diverse Communities

SSA 10 covers 47th St and Ashland Ave in Chicago, the historic center of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood and a central Hispanic cultural hub in Chicago; it offers services related to its diverse community that celebrates its identity and preserve it for future generations. The SSA provides resources to host Fiesta Back of the Yards, an annual celebration that provides a place for community interaction as well as an opportunity business sales. Other resources provided in the SSA include adult education for workforce development, commercial real estate services, a resource directory, and a business development center each focused on supporting Hispanic businesses and entrepreneurs working in Back of the Yards.

Strengths

SSAs and BIDs offer communities agency to decide for themselves what services that they need or want and are failing to be provided adequately or at all by other governmental entities.

Weaknesses

SSAs and BIDs live and die by the support and involvement of local businesses. An SSA or a BID is only formed when it has a majority of support among business leaders. Even after formed, an SSA or BID is still traditionally governed by a committee of local businesses. In a neighborhood where multicultural businesses are a minority, this has a threat of other interests derailing an SSA or BID initiative focused specifically on equity.

Applicability and Transferability to the Southwest Corridor

Business Improvement Districts aren't new to Portland. The Downtown Portland Clean & Safe District has operated since 1988, providing security and community justice services, retail marketing and advocacy, and visitor engagement resources in the heart of Portland. It has

⁴³ Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council. <http://www.bync.org/>

shown that business improvement districts are achievable and feasible in Portland. Where a Southwest Portland Light Rail Business Improvement District would differ, however, is in the fact that it both prioritizes multicultural businesses and flows down a corridor rather than focusing on a central region or node, taking lessons from organizations like the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council.

Appendix A - Interview Notes

Barbur World Foods

Name of the Interviewee: Nick (General Manager)

Name of Business: Barbur World Food

Type of Business: Grocery Store (culturally specific food items)

Local or Franchisee: Local

Age range:

Live in the neighborhood? No (Lives in Milwaukee)

Racial/ethnic and other aspects of cultural identity: No

Languages, preferred language: English

Email address and phone number for follow-up:

Tel:

Phone:

Prefer to be contacted in the store

- How many years have you owned the business?
 - 50 years (Family own business - Dad retired - Son and daughter). Nick joined the business as a general manager about a year ago
- How many employees are there in your business? How many hours do they work?
 - 50 employees
 - Full time - 40 hours/week
- What are the employee wages?
 - Different types of positions - above minimum wage
- Do the employees represent mixed ethnicity?
 - Yes, multiethnic employees like Syrian, Lebanese, Arabic, Farsi Speaking (Note-taker's thought : most probably Iranian)
- What other languages can the employees speak?
 - English and Arabic
 - "Sometimes we have a language barrier between customers and employees, but we work on that"
- Where do they live? How do they commute to work?
 - A lot of employees from the neighborhood,try to hire from neighborhood
 - They walk and drive
- How many customers do you get each day? Where do they generally come from (neighborhood or other parts of the city/metro region)
 - A lot, depends on the day
 - Thousands of customers all over Portland and near areas, they come from different part i.e., Salem, washington county
 - "They come because we are a Big Middle Eastern Grocery, and that is not common. There are other Mideastern groceries but not as multicultural as this one"
 - This location (they have another World Food in the Pearl) busier than the other one. They work differently. The Pearl one is more walkable.
- Do you own the property or rent the property? For how long?
 - The property is owned by the business owner. Also leases out adjacent buildings.
- What is the rent?
- Who is the property owner? How is your relationship with the owner?
- What are your business's transportation considerations?

- A small company that depends on people driving by for advertising. People see us all day when they pass by. We don't need to invest a lot of money in advertisement
 - "We show them what we have to offer, and they come back."
- Freight and delivery
 - Trucks deliver goods from California. (Goods come from as far as the Middle East and Europe)
- Customer- car, parking, walking, transit, bicycle, other
 - Customer mainly came in their car.
 - Transportation pattern concern- removing the store from the main thoroughfare will affect business. [this is somewhat in reference to an independent ODOT project that would really disrupt the traffic pattern around the store.]
- What relationships with other businesses in the area do you have?
 - The owners of World Food are also the owners of Barbur Liquor store.
 - We don't interact with other Business -> competition
 - Relation mostly with restaurants
 - Doesn't want an association, you want to be able to be independent, push boundaries. If you are part of a big business franchise or association, you can not push those boundaries.
 - "People don't do association anymore. People are not involved; they are pretty selfish."
- Are there any existing business associations, whether formal or informal?
 - There is a business association Ayaan Group . Manager does not know if the owner is a member of a formal business association
- Are you aware of any culturally specific businesses in area?
 - This business is a small store not as big as a trader joes.
 - Manager's quote, "We are a gourmet, special ethnic Business."

Independent store

Do you have an interest in a geographically specific, or culturally specific business association along this corridor? Explain.

- What would help you have a good/positive relationships with other businesses?
- Do you see yourself doing business here in 5 years, 10 years? If no , why?
 - Constant growth
 - Success because of the service
 - Monthly positive numbers
 - We would be in Business in 5 and 10 years
 - Sales increases
 - Financial health is good. increase in cost to profit ratio
 - Cost sharing between multiple business (Barbur World foods and Barbur Liquor)
- What challenges do you experience? Is it easy to find employees for the business?
 - "Every day is a challenge."
 - The bigger challenge is to retain customers and gain new customers. Be careful of the experience of people. They will share if they have a bad experience. People share more negative things than positive ones.
 - Manager's quote, "1 bad employee drives away 500 customers"
 - Finding labor is difficult. Ghosting by new hires is very common.
- What skills are needed that are hard to find?
 - Math, computer, and basic communication skills to give a good service and be able to have a good conversation.
 - Extroverts are good who can go above and beyond to attend the customers.
- What would help you stay and grow here? (generally)

- How do you see the potential of light rail in the future affecting your business?
 - A station for more passenger, but maybe not good customers
- Do you have a concern for light rail alignment?
 - "People are talking, but I'm not worried about that."
 - For me having a Max line would be better; I would not need to drive, and that would save me money.
- But "I'm not going to ride the bus." If you are the landlord- reflect on your Willingness to Sell, Relocate, Redevelop.
 - N/A
- What resources might help you improve your business/expand/stay on the corridor/survive and thrive in a new light rail era?
 - Any type of city event, opportunity to advertise their products

Bullseye Pub

Name of the Interviewee:

Name of Business:

Type of Business:

Local or Franchisee:

Age range:

Live in the neighborhood?

Racial/ethnic and other aspects of cultural identity:

Languages, preferred language:

Email address and phone number for follow-up:

Tel:

Phone:

- How long has the business been operating and how long have you been here?
 - Interviewee worked on site for 4 years, business operated for 7-8 years
- How many employees are there in your business? How many hours do they work?
 - Everybody is full time
 - Front of house 30-35 hours
 - Kitchen staff 40+ hours
- What are the employee wages?
 - Front of house makes minimum + tips
 - One front of house staff member also does additional administrative work for pay
 - Kitchen staff makes above minimum
- What are the background of the employees here? Is the staff local?
 - Most employees from out of town
 - Front of house from ID, eastern OR, NV; kitchen entirely from Mexico
- Where do customers come from? Do you get a lot?
 - Mostly local
 - Plenty of business
- What's rent look like here?
 - "I don't know, but it's high, I know that much."
- Who is the property owner? What's the relationship look like?
 - Don't know owner of property
 - Silent
 - Does some repairs
- What are your business transportation considerations?
 - Everybody drives

- Some local freight from local liquor stores
 - Employees grab food for sale in store on way to work
- What are your customer transportation considerations?
 - Everybody drives
 - Nearby bus stop
 - Offer to pay cabs for inebriated regular customers
- What relationships with other businesses in the area do you have?
 - Owner knows neighbors, friendly
 - We do price checks locally
 - Little regular contact
- Are there any existing business associations, formal or informal?
 - No
- Are you aware of any culturally specific businesses in the area?
 - There's a hummus place down the road
 - Not much other than that
- Do you have an interest in a business association on the corridor?
 - Unknown, lean no
- Do you see yourself doing business in 5-10 years?
 - Yes, as long as the owner wants to
- What challenges do you experience?
 - Fluctuation of business; bad economy is good for alcohol sales, good economy isn't helping sales
 - High employee turnover
- What skills are needed that are hard to find?
 - Honesty
- What would help you stay and grow here?
 - More foot traffic
 - More activity, ie. little shops
- How do you see the potential of light rail affecting your business?
 - Light rail will be good, recent changes have helped

HAKI Community Organization

Name of the Interviewee: Mohamed Salim Bahamadi

Name of Business: HAKI Community Organization

Type of Business: Nonprofit Organization, providing tenant's right trainings, and general assistance for Swahili-speaking immigrants

Local or Franchisee: Local

Age range: (guess: 50's?)

Live in the neighborhood? Yes. Although looking to buy a home soon, wants to stay in the area if possible.

Racial/ethnic and other aspects of cultural identity: Somali/Yemen, lived in Kenya, came over as refugee 6+ years ago.

Languages, preferred language: Swahili, English

Email address and phone number for follow-up:

Tel: msbahamadi@hakicommunity.org

Phone: 888-970-4254

- How many years have you owned this business?

- 2 years
- How many employees are there in your business? How many hours do they work?
 - Just him, done as an “extra” activity to support his community. He has a full-time job as well which is driving a bus for elderly.
- What are the employee wages?
 - No wages, receives some small grants to run different activities such as Tenant Rights & Responsibility classes and Home Ownership IDA informative sessions.
- Do the employees represent mixed ethnicity?
 - Yes. Only him.
- What other languages can the employees speak?
 - Swahili, English
- Where do they live? How do they commute to work?
 - Lives in the neighborhood.
 - Drives to work (also has another job where he is a bus driver for elderly/seniors).
- How many customers do you get each day? Where do they generally come from (neighborhood or other parts of the city/metro region)
 - N/A, is a community member so is often out helping people as they contact him, does run some various activities, but not necessarily regularly.
- Do you own the property or rent the property? For how long?
 - Rent. Have been there 2 years (received a grant to start his non-profit initially and then small grants and out-of-pocket expenses have allowed him to continue leasing his space).
- What is the rent?
 - Ask Bob (this is the Mountain Park Plaza landlord).
- Who is the property owner? How is your relationship with the owner?
 - Bob, who has an office in the same complex.
 - Relationship is very good, he is on site, and friendly, “very nice.”
 - Andrew’s Note: many comments in this section are similar to Fowzia’s from Nana’s Market as he was there for that interview and also contributed his opinion on some aspects and also rents a space in the same plaza.
 - Andrew’s Note: there are many businesses in the Mountain Park Plaza, 11830 Kerr Pkwy, Lake Oswego, OR 97035, and the space HAKI leases is just one of them.
- What are your business’s transportation considerations?
 - No major concerns, there is plenty of parking at the plaza (has an underground garage as well with more spaces).
- Freight and delivery
 - See above question, no major concerns.
- Customer- car, parking, walking, transit, bicycle, other
 - Plenty of parking in the business plaza, but other stores have begun “reserving” spots so that there’s signs saying “parking only for XX customers.”
- Relationships
- What relationships with other businesses in the area do you have?
 - Overall good relationships, Mohamed personally knows most of the business owners in the plaza where his office is based.
- Are there any existing business associations, whether formal or informal?
 - No known business associations, but he has partnered with other non-profit and the city to secure funding for his non-profit.
 - Recently brought together individuals from the Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, and Congolese communities to discuss coordinated efforts, resource sharing, and lessons learned (had a meeting at his office the week prior to this interview);

- Are you aware of any culturally specific businesses in area?
 - Besides the two Halal stores, and ethnic restaurants, there are not many other culturally specific businesses in the area, although most people shop at Barbur World Foods for speciality food items of culturally specific foods.
 - There is also the Mosque and the Islamic School of Portland in the area, and many East African residents, but not many businesses catering to their specific needs or wants.
- Do you have an interest in a geographically specific, or culturally specific business association along this corridor? Explain.
 - Mohamed wants to see more action/participation from the Swahili-speaking community, but feels they are resistant, especially to participate in long-term planning.
 - Gave an example: they don't want to come to community planning events because there is no immediate reward or incentive, but he wants them to engage so that they participate for their future.
- What would help you have a good/positive relationships with other businesses?
 - Motivate others to participate (most want tangible results/reward now, and are not interested in something that will come by in a few years).
- Do you see yourself doing business here in 5 years, 10 years? If no , why?
 - Hopefully. He wants to secure funding and continue providing services.
 - Wants to do it full-time eventually, as long as he can secure funding (right now he drives a bus as a job so doing HAKI activities is an extra activity for him);
- What challenges do you experience? Is it easy to find employees for the business?
 - Doesn't have funds to add employees to his organization so it is just him that runs
 - Usually one-time grants to provide a set number of trainings (most recently he received \$1500 to conduct 3 tenant-right trainings in Swahili);
 - It's been a challenge to find funding and when he does get small grants, he said that they are often geographically limited (such as have to be used in Portland) whereas his community is scattered across multiple towns in the area.
- What skills are needed that are hard to find?
 - Did not ask this question.
- What would help you stay and grow here? (generally)
 - Secure funding to provide more services.
 - Is working on connecting with other leaders from various African communities to form an African coalition of sorts to advocate and work together (connected with Congolese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, as well as IRCO/Africa House).
- How do you see the potential of light rail in the future affecting your business?
 - More movement, would be good, as long as people are not displaced.
 - Thinks it will be a good thing, but is sad for businesses on Barbur if they get displaced, believes that the city should give money to those that are displaced to help them move.
 - Very aware of light rail possibilities as he has participated in various planning/community sessions with BPS and Trimet.
- Do you have a concern for light rail alignment?
 - No, just want to make sure that displacement is avoided, especially for businesses along Barbur Blvd.
- If you are the landlord- reflect on your Willingness to Sell, Relocate, Redevelop.
 - N/A
- What resources might help you improve your business/expand/stay on the corridor/survive and thrive in a new light rail era?

- Shuttle Bus that stops outside the plaza (connecting PCC and the Barbur Transit Center, with frequent service);
- Cost assistance (loan scheme to expand business, energy assistance).

Marijuana Paradise

Name of the Interviewee: Manager (name not given)

Name of Business: Marijuana Paradise

Type of Business: Retail not otherwise specified

Local or Franchisee: Local

Age range: 1990-2010

Live in the neighborhood? No

Racial/ethnic and other aspects of cultural identity: African American

Languages, preferred language: English

Email address and phone number for follow-up:

Phone: (503) 206-7462

Business Health

- How many years have you owned this business?
 - 7 years in business
- How many employees are there in your business? How many hours do they work?
 - 3- 5 employees the day
- What are the employee wages?
 - Regular ones
- Do the employees represent mixed ethnicity?
 - No
- What other languages can the employees speak?
 - Just English
- Where do they live? How do they commute to work?
 - Most of the employees commute from Portland
 - They Drive
- How many customers do you get each day? Where do they generally come from (neighborhood or other parts of the city/metro region)
 - The number of customers fluctuates. Depend on the day, 50 averages a day
 - Most of the customers are local
- Do you own the property or rent the property? For how long?
 - Own the property
 - (Ana note: He said that in a different tone of voice, a proud tone of voice)
"I Own this place"
- What is the rent?
 - N/A
- Who is the property owner? How is your relationship with the owner?
 - N/A
- What are your business's transportation considerations?
 - Haven't thought about transportation concerns

"We don't have a problem, we have a parking lot."

- Freight and delivery
 - We just get our staff
- Customer- car, parking, walking, transit, bicycle, other
 - *"We are back here, is fine"*
 - People come and get their stuff and leave. Mostly driving
- What do you think of being closer to the street, maybe having a store front that people can walk by?
 - I haven't thought about that scenario
 - (Ana note: For this question Rob explain the concept of a more walkable neighborhood)

Relationships

- What relationships with other businesses in the area do you have?
 - Not connect to other business
- Are there any existing business associations, whether formal or informal?
 - I don't know, I don't really care
- *"I'm not interstate in business association"*
- Are you aware of any culturally specific businesses in the area?
 - No
- Do you have an interest in a geographically specific, or culturally specific business association along this corridor? Explain.
 - (Ana Note: We did not ask this question since he was clear that he is not interested in a business association)
- What would help you have a good/positive relationships with other businesses?
 - (Ana Note: We did ask this question because he made clear that he is not interested in being connected with other business)

Future Plans

- Do you see yourself doing business here in 5 years, 10 years? If no , why?
 - We would stay 5-10 years in business
- What challenges do you experience? Is it easy to find employees for the business?
 - No challenges, no problems. Everything cool
- What skills are needed that are hard to find?
 - Did not ask this question.
- What would help you stay and grow here? (generally)
 - (Ana note: Didn't understand the question, Rob rephrased and mention the term financial health and how is the business doing)
 - Strong financial health
- How do you see the potential of light rail in the future affecting your business?
 - I don't know what it is
- Can I tell you really quickly about the project ?
 - Yeah sure
 - (Ana note: We explain him really briefly SW Corridor project and give him the brochure for more information)
- So, How do you see the potential of the project in the future in terms of your business?
 - It would be positive
 - It would give easy access to the business
 - Do you have a concern for light rail alignment?

- Did not ask this question since he did not have previous knowledge about the project
- If you are the landlord- reflect on your Willingness to Sell, Relocate, Redevelop.
 - Did not ask this question since he did not have previous knowledge about the project
- What resources might help you improve your business/expand/stay on the corridor/survive and thrive in a new light rail era?
 - Don't get it, Don't know
- You want me to give you some examples?
 - Yeah sure
 - (Ana note: Robe explains some implications of the project and challenges that a business might have, and give him some examples of the resources that the city might have)
 - Not interested in city resources
 - (Ana note: Negative reaction with the example of loans)

Nana's Market

Name of the Interviewee: Fowzia (interpretation provided by Mohamed Salim Bahamadi, founder of HAKI Community Organization)

Name of Business: Nana's Market

Type of Business: Halal Market (culturally specific food items, clothing, miscellaneous household goods)

Local or Franchisee: Local

Age range: owner laughed, said she was unsure, maybe in her 50's?

Live in the neighborhood? Yes.

Racial/ethnic and other aspects of cultural identity: Somali

Languages, preferred language: Somali, Swahili, some Arabic, some English

Email address and phone number for follow-up:

- Tel: nanasmarket503@gmail.com
- Phone: 503-452-5571

Business Health

- How many years have you owned this business?
 - 6 years
- How many employees are there in your business? How many hours do they work?
 - The business is owned by two sisters, who work it full time.
- What are the employee wages?
 - No wages, the sisters split whatever profit they make.
- Do the employees represent mixed ethnicity?
 - Yes, both sisters are originally from Somalia.
- What other languages can the employees speak?
 - Somali, Swahili, some Arabic, some English
- Where do they live? How do they commute to work?
 - They live in the neighborhood a few blocks away.
 - They walk to work.
- How many customers do you get each day? Where do they generally come from (neighborhood or other parts of the city/metro region)
 - Really depends on the day, sometimes no one, sometimes a lot;
 - Maybe an average between 5-15 customers a day;

- Most come from the surrounding neighborhoods and walk to the store from where they live, or from school (such as PCC Sylvania) or after visiting the mosque.
 - Customers sometimes walk from the nearby Pasha restaurant (Iranian and Persian customers)
- Do you own the property or rent the property? For how long?
 - Rent. Have been there 6 years.
- What is the rent?
 - Fowzia laughed, and said we should ask Bob (the landlord).
- Who is the property owner? How is your relationship with the owner?
 - Bob, who has an office in the same complex.
 - Relationship is very good, he is on site, and friendly, “very nice.”
 - (Andrew’s note - there are many businesses in the Mountain Park Plaza, 11830 Kerr Pkwy, Lake Oswego, OR 97035, and this market is just one of them.)
- What are your business’s transportation considerations?
 - No major concerns, there is plenty of parking and when they have deliveries it is usually in cars and/or small trucks that can drop things off right at their store’s entrance;
 - (Andrew’s note: not very large shop so inventory is small, i.e. no need for large pallets or teams to move items)
- Freight and delivery
 - See above question, no major concerns.
- Customer- car, parking, walking, transit, bicycle, other
 - Plenty of parking in the business plaza, but other stores have begun “reserving” spots so that there’s signs saying “parking only for XX customers,” but Fowzia did not feel that it was a detriment to business as there was plenty of parking and many clients walked to her store.
 - Suggested some ‘interbusiness’ conflict in regards to parking, but overall relationships were good between the businesses at the plaza;

Relationships

- What relationships with other businesses in the area do you have?
 - Overall good relationships, although the bar next door (Walter Mitty’s) is often not very friendly, but besides that, it is comfortable with other businesses in the area;
 - There is another Halal store on Barbur Blvd (not too far away) that offers similar products, but their main business is as a money transfer shop. They are both small businesses so there is not too much competition and they know each other/have an informal relationship.
 - Barbur World Foods offers more food products, but not as specialized (different products, so not in direct competition generally).
- Are there any existing business associations, whether formal or informal?
 - No business association.
 - Is not interested in joining one.
 - Has informal relationships with other businesses (such as the other Halal shop nearby) but nothing concrete.
- Are you aware of any culturally specific businesses in area?
 - Besides the Halal store on Barbur, and ethnic restaurants, there are not many other culturally specific businesses in the area
- Do you have an interest in a geographically specific, or culturally specific business association along this corridor? Explain.
 - No, not really interested in joining a business association.

- (Andrew's note: maybe she is unsure of what it is, what it does, if it would take fees, etc... we tried to explain but Fowzia was not really interested).
- What would help you have a good/positive relationships with other businesses?
 - They are pretty culturally different so hard to connect with the other businesses.
 - Change the layout of the plaza (currently it is inward facing) so that the doors would be on the main road and allow for people to see the stores and walk-in (or drive) as right now they are hidden.

Future Plans

- Do you see yourself doing business here in 5 years, 10 years? If no , why?
 - Not sure, why not? As long as business continues and they can make profit it makes sense for them to keep it open. They are near a large Somali community who need what they offer.
- What challenges do you experience? Is it easy to find employees for the business?
 - Don't need employees, only the two sisters manage and run the shop completely.
- What skills are needed that are hard to find?
 - Did not ask this question. N/A
- What would help you stay and grow here? (generally)
 - Diversify their products (many Iranians live in the area and come in for small things but always tell her that she needs to add a shelf of Iranian products/items);
 - Outward facing door as Plaza faces inward and so it is hard for people to see the store or know that it is there when they are driving on Capitol or walking.
 - (Andrew's Note: potentially a loan that could help them expand their business and diversify, bring in new products for different customers).
- How do you see the potential of light rail in the future affecting your business?
 - More movement, more Somalis could access the store.
 - Thinks it will be a good thing, but is sad for businesses on Barbur if they get displaced, believes that the city should give money to those that are displaced to help them move.
- Do you have a concern for light rail alignment?
 - No. Fowzia thought it would go right to PCC campus, we didn't confirm.
- If you are the landlord- reflect on your Willingness to Sell, Relocate, Redevelop.
 - N/A
- What resources might help you improve your business/expand/stay on the corridor/survive and thrive in a new light rail era?
 - Shuttle Bus that stops outside the plaza (connecting PCC and the Barbur Transit Center, with frequent service);
 - Opening the building so businesses face main road (as it is right in between the transit center and PCC.
 - Cost assistance (loan scheme to expand business, energy assistance).
 - Have light rail go through PCC.

Appendix B - Observational Data

Business type	# of Business	%	Business
Auto service	6	8%	Master Wrench Attainable Autos, LLC Central Auto Body Valvoline Instant Oil Change Metro Care Tire Pros Jackson's/Shell
Community service	11	15%	Barber on Barbur Springdale Cleaners Goodwill Donation Express Capitol Nails Barbur Boulevard Veterinary Hospital Aquatic Sports Eco Friendly Cleaners Mai Hair, Nails, Massaging, & Waxing PBDC Cleaners Pacific Veterinary Hospital Girl Scouts
Fast food	7	10%	Black Rock Coffee Starbucks McDonalds Dominos Pizza Subway Cravings PDX Taco Time
Restaurant & Bar	12	16%	Round Table Pizza SHO Authentic Japanese Cuisine Thai Orchid Restaurant Brothers Wings & Bings Happy Fortune Chinese Restaurant & Lounge Boulevard Pub Five Points Coffee Roasters The Hummus Stop Baba Fresh Mexican & Mediterennean Kuang's Kitchen Bullseye Pub The Old Barn

Business Inventory and Needs Assessment: Barbur Transit Center and West Portland Town Center

Financial service	3	4%	Wells Fargo Chase Bank Parkside Insurance, LLC
Grocer	5	7%	Barbur World Foods Barbur Liquors Walgreens Capitol Highway Deli Market 7-Eleven
Health service	7	10%	Kashi Clinical Laboratories Novus Center for Molecular Diagnostics Acadia Northwest, LLC Serenity Lane Mountain Park Health Clinic Portland Rheumatology Clinic Barbur Vista (or Peaks & Valleys LLC)
Motel/Hotel	3	4%	Ranch Inn Portland Value Inn & Suites Hospitality Inn
Office	11	15%	Colonial Office Campus Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council JPM Real Estate Services Westview Plaza Maxim Healthcare Services AFT Oregon Barbur Business Center Kristin Square Kristin Square II? Unnamed Office Building Capitol Park
Retail not otherwise specified	4	5%	Nectar Marijuana Paradise Typewriters State Farm
Other	4	5%	Pixel Security Solutions Public Storage Commercial Laundry Services Williamsen and Bleid
Total	73		

Find in the following link the Field Observations and Business Contacts SW Corridor PM1 2019 Excel sheet of the Barbur Transit Center and West Portland Town Center.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MDY7gkUuPodvRkhLtE4QMZBiMmrMiGC98yeb4ry-iDQ>

Appendix C - Photo Library

Find in the following link the photo library of the Field Observation.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19kDM3_69wcpZ1QBSV6nc9NdE5MORYBSB?usp=sharing