

## Minutes

### SMILE Transportation Committee Meeting 1/15/25, 6:00-7:20 PM at the SMILE Station

In attendance: Grant Huling (Chair), Scott Kelly, Ruth Kaser, Keith Walker, Jason Pendergrass, Elaine O'Keefe

Minutes from the 11/20/24 meeting were approved.

**Claybourne Plaza Discussion:** Ruth Kaser provided an update on the plaza project group's progress in developing a Gino's-style PBOT plaza at Claybourne & Milwaukie. (See previous minutes for context.) The AARP Flagship Grant, which is one path to fund improvements such as string lights and a bench, is taking submissions now and has its deadline in March. This will be for movable items, or items that do not permanently block the right of way, until PBOT allows new permanent plaza again. The grant has paid out a few hundred dollars to \$20,000 in the past. The group had a planned meeting with Mark Lakeman to discuss a design mock-up for the plaza space, which Keith indicated a desire to attend. This meeting would determine what items the group will apply for from the AARP grant, and will produce a mock-up that can be used when soliciting designs for street murals. This prompted a productive discussion about what functions the plaza should provide, as this will shape its furnishings. Keith said it could have a rotating use, and pointing out how even overhead string lights would visually indicate to oncoming cars that this is a dead end with pedestrians. *[Update: The mock-ups that Mark Lakeman and Communitecture produced are attached. The Plaza Group ultimately declined to seek the AARP grant as a funding source.]*

Regarding anticipated timing: Phase 1 will be the mural only, painted by volunteers in summer 2025. From this point on, hours-long PBOT shutdowns could be requested for music of farmer's market-related event planning. Phase 2, hopefully also completed in 2025, will consist of improvements to the curb strips. Phase 3 would require a PBOT permit and would consist of a permanent shutdown of the road to cars, with benches, etc. added permanently.

**Plaza Mural Design Contest:** Ruth and Grant gave details on how the Claybourne Plaza will arrive at a design for the street mural. The six members of the Plaza Group will judge submissions. The contest was launched March 4th at the SMILE General Meeting, and will continue taking submissions until April 15th. The theme is "Local Food Heritage." Finalists (anything the Group sees credibly working for the spot) will be voted on by the general community at the May 7th SMILE General Meeting. Jason mentioned it was important that the mock-ups provided clarify what space can be activated so those submitting can visualize. *[Update: Contest details are now available through the SMILE home page here: <https://sellwood.org/2025/03/04/clayborne-st-plaza-project/>]*

**Leadership:** Grant said that the person he had met with, to potentially step in as Chair ahead of Grant's third child arrive in April, had declined. Grant said his plan is to remain as Chair. Thanks to generous paternity leave that has him working less than full-time through the summer, there may be more time

available. He is open to the idea of a co-Chair, to provide redundancy and more energy towards the wide range of topics relevant to the Committee, if anyone would like to approach him with interest.

**TriMet Interview on Line 40:** Grant followed up from an email to the Committee and noted that TriMet had asked him to be interviewed for a YouTube/TriMet website short video about the restored Line 40, and the role SMILE played in ensuring it best met residents' needs. Grant gave an overview of the talking points he planned to cover (it enables the mixed use and density Sellwood-Moreland loves; it lightens bridge traffic; it is improved from the previous less frequent service). *[Update: The TriMet page that was later published is provided as Attachment B]*

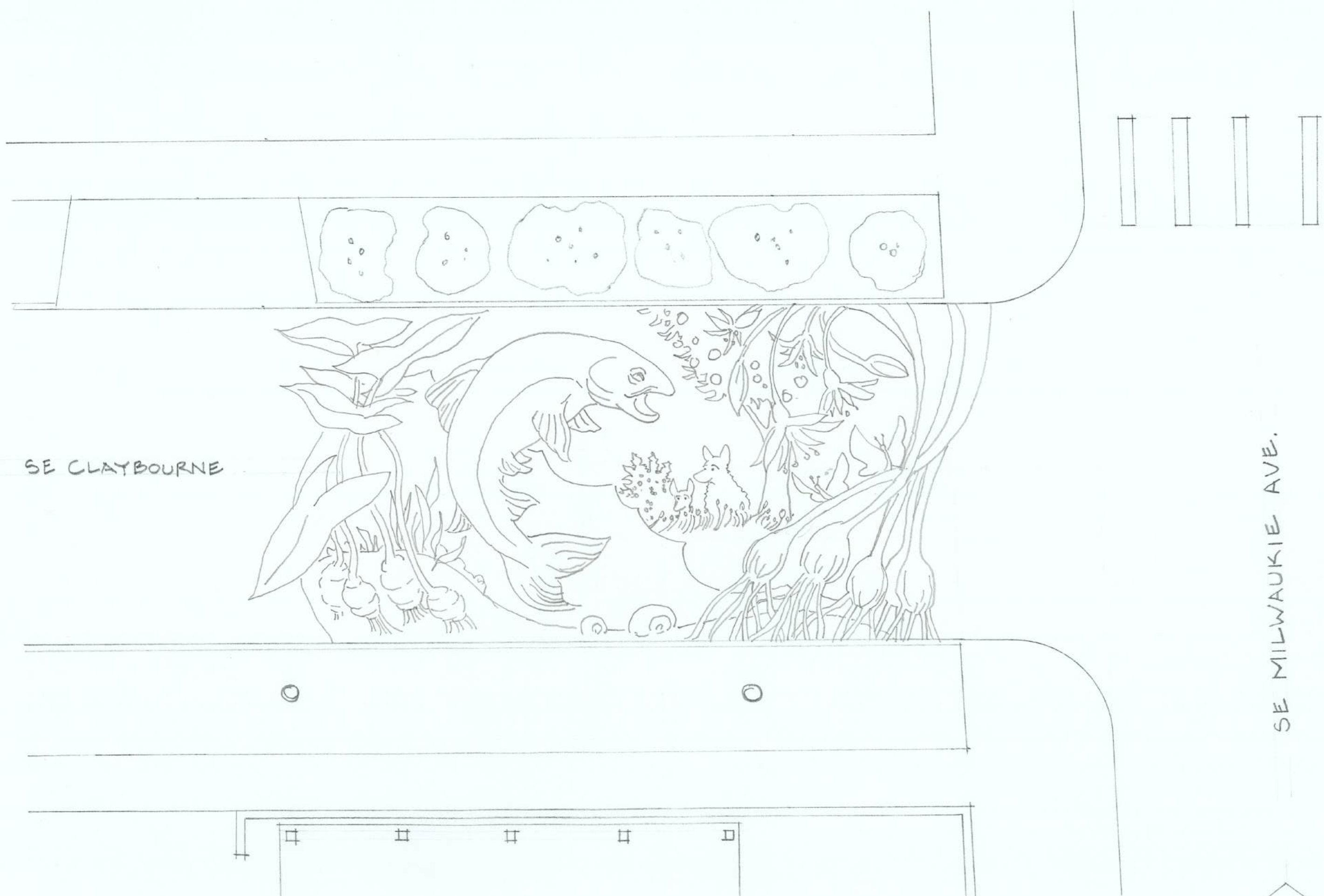
Grant said that the next meeting would take place in a month, on February 20th via Zoom, instead of in two months as is the default, due to the evolving plaza work, and overall number of items to be discussed. Scott had mentioned earlier that the Committee should invite its four newly elected District 4 Counselors to visit a SMILE General Meeting – this item will be on the February agenda.

## **Attachment A**

**Claybourne Plaza Artistic Mock-Ups  
By Mark Lakeman & Communitecture**



SE CLAYBOURNE, "BEFORE"



SE CLAYBOURNE

SE MILWAUKIE AVE.

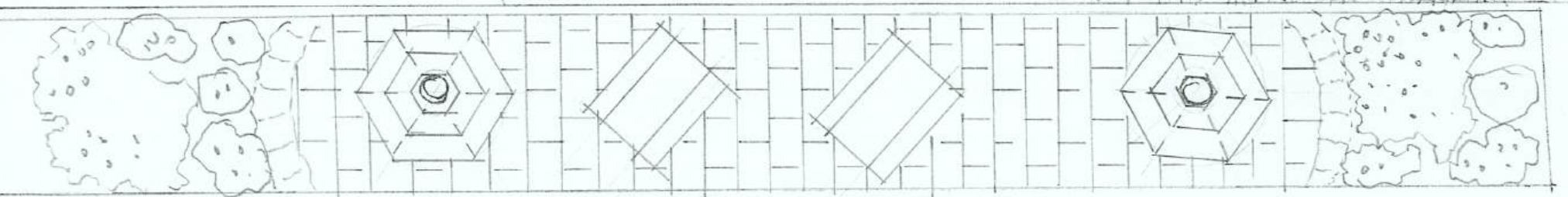
SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, STREET GRAPHIC PLAN



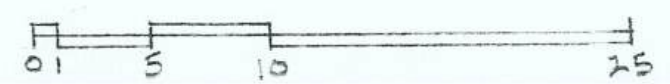
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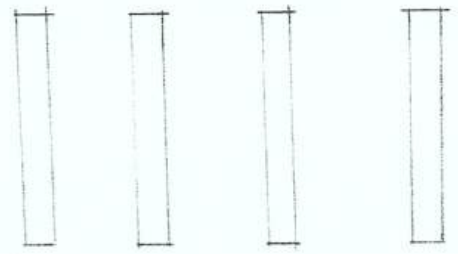
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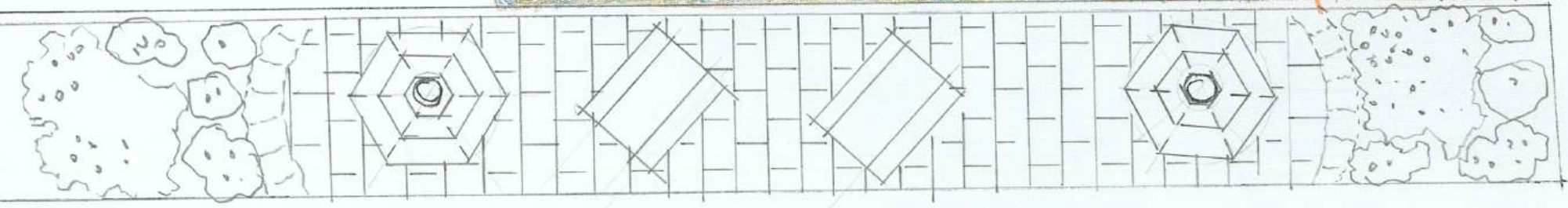
SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, STREET GRAPHIC PLAN w/ MORE



SE CLAYBOURNE



SE MILWAUKIE AVE.



SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, STREET GRAPHIC PLAN w/ MORE



NORTH



SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, PHASE 1





SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, PHASE 2



SE CLAYBOURNE PLAZA, PHASE 2

## **Attachment B**

**“TriMet connects communities, commuters on Line 40”**

**<https://news.trimet.org/2025/02/video-trimet-connects-communities-commuters-on-line-40/>**



[Home](#) : [Bikes](#) : [Bike Parking](#) : (VIDEO) TriMet connects communities, commuters on Line 40

## TriMet News

# (VIDEO) TriMet connects communities, commuters on Line 40

February 25, 2025 by Mark Miller

*New bus line, with weekly ridership over 5,000, runs from Sellwood to Swan Island*



TriMet rolled out new bus lines in 2024, as we continue to implement our [Forward Together service concept](#).

The most popular of these new lines, so far? [Line 40-Tacoma/Swan Island](#), with service connecting Portland City Center to the Sellwood neighborhood in Southeast Portland and the

Swan Island industrial area in North Portland.

Line 40 replaced service on two lesser-used bus lines (85 and 99). It serves commuters from early in the morning to late at night, improves connections for riders, and connects some of Portland's most iconic neighborhoods.

Since Line 40 began serving riders in August 2024, it has averaged over 5,000 weekly rides. Ridership has grown as people get to know the new line!

### Line 40: Connecting Jobs and Homes



## Community support

The new Line 40 was created with the support of the Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League (SMILE), one of Portland's neighborhood associations.

"We're not just a suburban neighborhood," explains Grant Huling, who chairs SMILE's Transportation Committee. "We have a mix of renters and owners, apartments and single-family and townhomes, which we're proud of and really creates our character."

Huling adds: "The perennial transit issue for Sellwood and Moreland is that we're bisected by Tacoma Street, which is what feeds onto the Sellwood Bridge."

Line 40 provides reliable service across the Sellwood Bridge, seven days a week. Residents can leave their cars at home, or at the SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek Park & Ride, and take the bus across the bridge instead. That means less traffic — and more opportunities for people in the community.

“Having a bus that actually goes over the bridge consistently and not just during rush hour is super-helpful to me,” says community member Frankie Spurbeck.

Spurbeck has been riding the Line 40 nearly every week since it started service. They take the bus to travel between neighborhoods and visit friends on the other side of the Willamette River.

## Convenience and connectivity

Spurbeck says they’ve been amazed by how fast and easy it is to take the new Line 40. The line has reduced the time it takes them to travel between the South Waterfront and Sellwood to mere minutes.

“It’s ridiculous how quickly I can get around with it,” Spurbeck says. “I think it rocks.”

Huling describes Line 40 as “a true commuter-reliable line.” The line serves largely residential neighborhoods like Sellwood, as well as employment areas like Swan Island, connecting jobs and homes. On weekdays, Line 40 runs about every half-hour, from 5 a.m. until after midnight, using a shortened route late at night.

Line 40 connects with all five of TriMet’s MAX lines: the MAX Orange Line at SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek, and the MAX Blue, Green, Red and Yellow lines at the Rose Quarter Transit Center. Riders can also transfer between Line 40 and other bus lines, as well as MAX and the Portland Streetcar on the [Transit Mall](#).

It’s easy to plan your trip at [trimet.org](#), including transfers.

## Meeting people where they live

Huling and Spurbeck see people from all walks of life using the new Line 40. Workers take Line 40 north to jobs in the Swan Island industrial area. Students ride Line 40, too, with stops at

Portland State University. Students and commuters alike can also ride Line 40 to Oregon Health & Science University. The line connects to Marquam Hill via the Portland Aerial Tram.

“It’s a way to make the city more livable for people who don’t have cars, and an easier place to live,” says Spurbeck, who doesn’t own a car and prefers to take TriMet.

“The only option to maintain that character of a small, tightknit city with neighborhoods is to not double down on cars,” adds Huling.

As an advocate for Line 40 and other bus service improvements, Huling appreciates that Portland has sought to preserve neighborhoods like Sellwood, investing in transit and multimodal transportation rather than widening roads.

“We have a pretty light roadway footprint here, and that enables everything else you love about Portland,” Huling says. “The less gray, the more green.”

## Forward Together

The new Line 40 was developed with community input through Forward Together.

TriMet is revamping bus service with Forward Together. We’ve enlisted the help of community members and leaders in this effort. Public feedback helps to shape our service! Our goal is to increase ridership and create a better bus system — especially for people with low and limited incomes. Line 40 is a cornerstone of that improved network.

SMILE gives TriMet credit for listening to the community’s wishes and working with residents to create a line that meets their needs.

“TriMet stepped up,” Huling says.

TriMet will roll out [additional service improvements](#) on Sunday, March 2. The improvements include new routes for [Line 6-Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd](#) and [Line 47-Main/Evergreen](#). Stay tuned for more news on improvements to come later this year!

3/16/25, 11:48 AM

(VIDEO) TriMet connects communities, commuters on Line 40 - TriMet News

Posted in TriMet News