



600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov

February 10, 2022

Phillip Ditzler
Federal Highway Administration Division Administrator
530 Center St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Ditzler:

We recently received USDOT's letter announcing updated Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs) for 2021. We are very supportive of this direction and its emphasis on equity, environmental justice and climate change. I am happy to share how our region has been incorporating these areas into our transportation planning work in recent years and point to relevant program areas in the attached Unified Planning Work Program for FY 2022-23.

Climate and Resiliency

As you know, Metro has been a leader in Climate work and adopted the region-wide Climate Smart Strategy in 2014 to create a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The strategy continues to be a centerpiece of our Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Other highlights include:

- Advancing progress in achieving our regional climate goals - see attached Climate Smart Implementation Program narrative
- Planning for a more resilient system for responding to climate related weather events - see attached Emergency Transportation Routes Phase 2 narrative
- Using Regional Flexible Funds for programs that reduce GMGs such as Regional Travel Option and Transportation System Management & Operations

Equity and Justice in Transportation Planning

As part of our 2018 RTP, Metro conducted the most extensive equity analysis to date as part of implementing our regional diversity, equity and inclusion goals. As we approach the 2023 RTP update described in the draft UPWP, we plan to build on that work by further expanding the RTP equity analysis. The Civil Rights and Environmental Justice narrative in the draft UPWP also describes how we will be applying a strong equity lens to our public engagement activities across MPO programs in the coming fiscal year, including how we convene and engage our local government partners at Metro's technical and policy advisory committees. Other highlights include:

- Updating and refining the RTP equity analysis for 2023 RTP update
- Planning for corridors that have large Black Indigenous & People of Color (BIPOC) populations, e.g. see attached narratives for 82nd Ave, TV Hwy

- Providing community engagement stipends for BIPOC members to participate in committees / community outreach events

Complete Streets

Metro completed a major update to our regional street design program in 2018 to expand the resources and incorporate new best practices for design in our region. The Complete Streets Program narrative in the draft UPWP describes upcoming activities planned in the region to apply these tools and best practices through outreach, education and partnerships with local project sponsors. Other highlights include:

- Ongoing implementation of Metro’s Designing Livable Streets & Trails guide
- Managing a regional traffic safety program, including annually updates highlighting areas where Complete Streets investments are needed, and ongoing refinement of high injury corridors.
- Investing federal flexible funds in Complete Streets projects

Public Involvement and Agency Coordination

Metro has a long and innovative tradition of extensive public involvement. Looking ahead to the coming fiscal year, our Public Engagement program described in the draft UPWP will build upon that tradition and help Metro adapt to a post-COVID era where virtual meetings and interactive online content will become the norm. We will also be applying these new approaches to our engagement and coordination with other public agencies and partners. Other highlights include:

- Engaging community-based and culturally-specific organizations working in Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities early in the Regional Transportation Plan update process to identify priorities and proven strategies to engage communities.
- Dedicating resources for language interpretation and translation.
- Partnering with community organizations representing communities of color, people experiencing homelessness and people with disabilities) for developing a Social Vulnerability Tool which nuances our approach to disaster management.

Data in Transportation Planning

Our planning work has long been supported by nationally recognized geodata systems and transportation models. The Data Management & Visualization program, Travel model program, Land Use and Socio-Economic Modeling program, and Oregon Household Travel and Activity Survey program described in the draft UPWP outlines our plans to continue to modernize these tools, while also adding new, emerging data sets and sources to our planning process to complement our legacy tools. Other highlights include:

- Employing the RTP Emerging Trends work to understand how these trends might influence travel models and planning.
- Using an equity lense for the household travel activity survey for the first time.
- Innovating how we model congestion pricing and tolling

We look forward to working with your team in the coming fiscal year to carry out these projects and other work described in the draft UPWP. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Bradway', written in a cursive style.

Margi Bradway
Deputy Director, Planning, Development and Research

CC: Rachael Tupica, FHWA
Jeremy Borrego, FTA
Ned Conroy, FTA