

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

10:30 AM

This Council work session will immediately follow the Council
Meeting

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber;

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615079992) or
253-205-0468 (toll free), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=gyNYvJE8k-olt](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyNYvJE8k-olt)

Council work session

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Deputy Council President Hwang called the work session to order at 11:45 a.m.

Present: 6 - Councilor Christine Lewis, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Ashton Simpson, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, and Councilor Duncan Hwang

Excused: 1 - Council President Lynn Peterson

2. Work Session Topics:**2.1 2028 Regional Transportation Plan Update: Scoping Phase**

Presenter(s): André Lightsey-Walker (he/him)
Kim Ellis (she/her)

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[RTP 2028 Engagement Schedule](#)
[RTP 2028 Factsheet](#)

Deputy President Duncan Hwang introduced the presenters, who shared the proposed planning process for the 2028 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. They discussed what the RTP is and does, why the scoping phase matters, and the anticipated key outcomes. The presenters asked the Council to discuss desired policy outcomes to ensure alignment with Council priorities and to provide additional feedback.

Councilor Nolan shared that the Council plays a major role in achieving the state's climate goals and asked the presenters to more clearly address how the RTP goals align with those objectives.

Councilor Lewis shared that the Council will need to grapple with the revenue side of climate policy, including identifying tradeoffs and acknowledging priorities that may not be feasible without sustainable funding. She noted that the planning process should involve working with creative practitioners to support innovative and engaging outreach methods.

Councilor Rosenthal noted that the transportation vision should

be compatible with the Coordinated Economic Program (CEP). He emphasized the need for clarity when navigating tradeoffs, particularly in light of funding mechanisms, and stressed the importance of continuing to evaluate funding options for the region's specialized transportation needs. He also stated that, while safety is important, the RTP should explicitly include a priority to maintain equity and promote racial equity in transportation projects and measures.

Councilor Gonzalez noted that the 2023 RTP emphasized the need for programmatic solutions, not just projects, to meet regional climate goals. He stated that congestion pricing and tolling are essential tools and that the region cannot meet its goals without them. He added that the Council should also address what it means if the state fails to meet its own goals and that the RTP update is an opportunity for regional leadership and to raise awareness of the urgency.

Deputy Council President Hwang spoke about the constrained fiscal environment and asked what the most tactical investments are that could generate the greatest return on investment. He drew parallels to housing development, noting that regulatory requirements and high costs make even straightforward projects difficult to deliver, and emphasized the need to find ways to deliver transportation projects at greater scale and efficiency.

Councilor Rosenthal added that the region has an obligation to support the economy.

Councilor Gonzalez noted that as the world of work continues to change, discussions in JPACT highlight the importance of focusing on transit service levels and ridership trends.

Councilor Lewis responded that while transit ridership has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, the region is performing similarly to its peer regions.

Councilor Rosenthal asked for greater clarity around the RTP goals and what actions will be taken if the region is unable to achieve them.

Kim Ellis shared that staff are actively working on those issues.

Councilor Nolan noted that there is a common misconception that roads and highways are self-propagating assets. She stressed the importance of being clear about the costs of adding lane miles compared to improving transit and cautioned against fostering a mindset that transportation infrastructure does not require sustained financial investment.

The presenters asked whether the Council's priorities align with the proposed RTP goals.

Councilor Nolan stated that the RTP should, at a minimum, do no harm and should not create additional safety concerns or traffic congestion.

Councilor Hwang shared that the region should pursue fewer large projects overall and refocus on delivering a well-maintained, safe, and high-quality transportation system. He also suggested examining opportunities to remove regulatory barriers that slow project delivery.

Councilor Rosenthal shared that the feasibility of these approaches depends on identifying a sustainable funding strategy.

The presenters asked what outcomes the Council would like to see from the Call for Projects phase of the RTP update.

Councilor Lewis emphasized the importance of engaging smaller cities and providing technical assistance so that the application process does not become a barrier to participation. She also stressed outreach to community-based organizations and the recognition of tribally led transportation projects.

Councilor Rosenthal asked how project prioritization might be influenced by the Future Vision work and whether that work should affect the RTP update.

Andre Lightsky-Walker shared that he works closely with the Future Vision partners.

Kim Ellis noted that not all Future Vision work will be completed in time to fully inform the RTP process. She shared that the RTP update will conclude within a year of the Future Vision work, requiring some issues to be addressed in the current update while others may need to be deferred.

Councilor Hwang stated that not all proposed projects will be funded due to limited resources. He emphasized the importance of understanding both the true needs of the transportation system and the aspirations of community members, while also engaging in civic education and meeting voters where they are.

The presenters asked whether Council had any additional feedback on outreach and engagement for the 2028 RTP update.

Councilor Rosenthal shared that he plans to engage legislators from his district.

Councilor Gonzalez noted that the Council's role is not to define individual projects but to set regional priorities and establish the policy framework that guides project ranking. He emphasized the importance of addressing tensions around community engagement and empowering community members to serve as champions within their own communities.

Councilor Lewis shared that creative engagement approaches are important and emphasized the need for authentic outreach that encourages residents to share specific concerns, such as issues at particular intersections, potholes, or sidewalk improvement needs.

3. Chief Operating Officer Communication

COO Madrigal reminded staff to complete the annual required forms by March 13 and shared that food carts would be available daily from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 825 Multnomah throughout the week.

4. Councilor Communication

Councilor Rosenthal shared that he attended a town hall hosted by Congressman Bonamici, who discussed ICE in the region.

5. Adjourn

Deputy Council President Hwang adjourned the meeting at 12:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Georgia Langer".

Georgia Langer, Legislative Coordinator