

# MPAC Worksheet

**Agenda Item Title:** Community Connector Transit Study: Policy Framework and Assessment

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## **Purpose/Objective**

Provide an update on the Community Connector Transit (CCT) Study to support a discussion that will help shape the role in the regional transit vision for community connectors (improving access to the regional transit network) and mobility hubs (creating comfortable, convenient connections within that network), guide how areas of opportunity are identified for both tools, and influence the approach for engaging community in that work.

## **Action Requested/Outcome**

Staff is seeking MPAC's feedback on: 1) the developing policy framework, 2) the proposed opportunity area and mobility hub assessment methodologies and 3) the planned engagement approach. The study will make recommendations for updates to the Regional Transportation Plan.

## **What has changed since MPAC last considered this issue/item?**

The CCT Study is being updated in four key phases, ending in Spring 2026 to align with the timeline for the 2028 Regional Transportation Plan update (see Attachment 1). In November, MPAC (and Metro and County advisory committees and regional partners) received an introduction to the study. Staff heard it was important to consider: recent urban growth boundary expansion areas and cities at the regional edge, coordinating with the Regional Housing Study, and reaching out to business organizations for input.

Since then, staff has been working with the Transit Working Group (a group of agency partners) to incorporate what was heard from decision-makers, advisory committees, regional stakeholders, and community to create a draft policy framework, develop and begin to implement the approach for re-envisioning the regional community connector transit network, and implement the engagement strategy. This study is leveraging a foundation of work by regional and local partners to explore improved coverage and connection solutions for the local element of our transit vision.

## *Updating the Local Transit Policy Framework*

There are many tools in the transit toolbox for implementing the regional vision to better serve growing communities and achieve regional goals of equity, climate, economy, safety, and mobility in the future. Community connector transit is one of these tools. To understand how to best use this tool, the project team leveraged existing work done to identify needs through regional and local plans (e.g., Washington County Transit Study, Clackamas Transit Development Plan, Forward Together) and community feedback (from the [summary](#) of the past ten years of transit input).

This work led to the development of four key themes that guided regional and national best practices research to explore where and how community connectors have been successful and what elements contributed to that success. In addition to informing future recommendations by the study, this insight gave shape to the role that community connectors can play as part of our regional transit system (see Attachment 2). In addition to facilitating first and last-mile connections to frequent and high-capacity transit to extend the reach of the existing network, community connectors can provide mobility solutions for: lower-density suburban and exurban areas at the

regional edge (including both neighborhoods and community places), industrial and/or shift work jobs, and major recreation sites. In areas where local bus service is planned but does not yet exist today, community connectors can bridge the gap to build ridership for future service.

As we plan for shuttles to link to frequent and high-capacity transit – it will also be important to ensure there is space to facilitate convenient connections and connection points are comfortable. Mobility hubs are places where people can access and efficiently transfer between different types of transit and transportation options. A forthcoming Mobility Hub Toolkit will provide concepts and guiding principles to encourage cooperative partnership by regional and local agencies to implement mobility hubs together in ways that respond to local character.

#### Identifying Opportunity Areas Using the Framework

Building from the emerging vision for the role of community connectors, the project team has developed approaches for identifying opportunity sites for both community connectors and mobility hubs to update the regional transit network vision map to include more solutions meeting community needs and contributing to our transportation goals (see Attachment 3).

Identifying community connector opportunity areas involves answering three key questions:

- Where are areas today not served by transit, but where people may need it?
- Within these unserved areas, what locations demonstrate demand for and/or the different transit-supportive ingredients that are part of the recipe for success?
- Within these unserved areas, what do other resources tell us about existing or future markets for community connectors?

The outcome will be a map of opportunity areas in four categories: current opportunities today, temporary opportunities where bus service is envisioned in the future but connectors can build ridership near-term, and future opportunities that anticipated to build that market in the future.

Identifying potential mobility hub locations involves the following factors (see Attachment 4):

- **Connectivity:** Being well-integrated into the broader transportation network where seamless connections are needed between different types of transit and different modes of transportation.
- **Land use and regional significance:** Aligning with areas planned for higher-density, mixed-use development with strong transit connections, creating ideal conditions for integrating multimodal transportation services and enhancing regional mobility.
- **Equity and community impact:** Serving historically marginalized neighborhoods, reducing transportation barriers for underserved communities and improving connections to key destinations like jobs, healthcare, and education.
- **Transit access:** Enhancing seamless access to and from the regional transit system, including bus, light rail, and other high-capacity modes.

The result will identify regional hubs supporting a mix of transit services (e.g., Beaverton Transit Center), town hubs bridging regional and local travel with vibrant public spaces (e.g., Orenco Station), and local and emerging hubs connecting local travel modes (e.g., Tualatin Park & Ride).

#### Next Steps

Following community outreach, staff will return to MPAC this fall to discuss the outcomes of both assessments through the lens of regional priorities that will guide study recommendations.

#### **What packet material do you plan to include?**

1. CCT Study Workplan (Updated)
2. CCT Best Practices Research Technical Memorandum
3. CCT Opportunity Area Assessment Criteria Technical Memorandum
4. CCT Mobility Hub Evaluation Criteria Presentation