STAFF REPORT

2023 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN: REPORT ON PROJECT LIST INPUT AND DRAFT SYSTEM ANALYSIS ACROSS MOBILITY, SAFETY, EQUITY, ECONOMY AND CLIMATE OUTCOMES

Date: May 1, 2023

Department: Planning, Development & Research

Meeting Date: May 16, 2023

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Presenters:

- Tom Kloster, Regional Planning Manager
- Kim Ellis, RTP Project Manager
- Eliot Rose, Senior Transportation Planner
- Molly Cooney-Mesker, Senior community engagement specialist

Length: 45 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

A major update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is underway and must be completed by Dec. 6, 2023 when the current plan expires.

The RTP is the state- and federally-required long-range transportation plan for the Portland metropolitan area. The RTP is the blueprint for transportation in our region and a key tool for implementing the region's 2040 Growth Concept and Climate Smart Strategy. Together, these plans will help ensure that greater Portland thrives by connecting people to their jobs, families, schools and other important destinations and by allowing business and industry to create jobs and move goods to market.

Draft 2023 RTP Goals developed by JPACT and Metro Council with input from MPAC and CORE

Now that the RTP Call for Projects to our city, county, state and special district partners is complete, Metro staff are seeking input on the draft project list on how these investments align with the policy framework set forth by Council and JPACT at their joint workshops in 2022. Staff is also conducting a technical analysis of how these investments collectively and individually meet our transportation needs[1] and advance RTP goals.

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[1] Factsheets summarizing the regional transportation needs assessment are available at:
https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2022/11/29/2023-RTP-Needs-Assessment-fact-sheets.pdf
Research about trends and needs of the region's urban arterials is available at:
https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2022/10/24/Safe%20and%20healthy%20urban%20arterials%20policy%20brief.pdf

This information will help inform local, regional and state partners as they consider whether to make further refinements to their draft project lists before the public review draft of the plan is released this summer.

This work session is an opportunity for Council to discuss key takeaways from the May 11 JPACT/Metro Council workshop and continue discussion of public input on the draft project list and findings from the draft system analysis.

ACTION REQUESTED
Metro Council feedback on the draft project lists submitted during the Call for Projects for the 45-day public comment period.

POLICY QUESTIONS
- What observations do you have from the May 11 JPACT/Metro council workshop discussion?
- What projects and investment types best align with community priorities and the policy framework set forth by Council and JPACT? What projects and investment types could be better aligned?
- How can the proposed set of investments be improved to best align with our regional goals and community priorities, particularly in the near-term?

ANTICIPATED EFFECTS
In addition to updating the RTP project and program priorities, technical work, community engagement and policy discussions will continue through May to further improve new policies related to mobility and pricing, climate and high capacity transit in the public review draft of the 2023 RTP. MPAC, JPACT and Metro Council will have additional opportunities to provide policy feedback on development of key aspects of the public review draft prior to releasing the document for comment.

In June, JPACT will be requested to make a recommendation to the Metro Council to support releasing the draft RTP and project lists for a 45-day public comment period. On June 29, Metro Council will be requested to take action on JPACT's recommendation on release of the draft plan and project list for public review beginning in July. Staff will then compile public comments received and make recommendations for revisions to the draft plan in early fall to begin the final adoption process for the 2023 RTP.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION
During the past year, the RTP project team has worked with stakeholders and policymakers to update the region's vision and goals for the transportation system and understand the region's transportation trends[2], needs[3 and 4], and priorities for investment.

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[2] The emerging transportation trends research summary is available at:
https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2022/10/12/Metro-Emerging-Trends-summary-final_1.pdf
[3] Factsheets summarizing the regional transportation needs assessment are available at:
https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2022/11/29/2023-RTP-Needs-Assessment-fact-sheets.pdf
[4] Research about trends and needs of the region's urban arterials is available at:
https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2022/10/24/Safe%20and%20healthy%20urban%20arterials%20policy%20brief.pdf

In December 2022, JPACT and Metro Council accepted the RTP policy framework (shown in **Attachment 1**) to guide the Call for Projects.

A number of activities are underway and will continue in 2023 to finalize the 2023 RTP. Following is a summary of this work and upcoming discussions and engagement activities with links to more information.

Draft project list development, evaluation and refinement

- **Call for Projects completed in February.** Staff completed the initial RTP Call for Projects, working with the counties, cities, TriMet, ODOT and other agencies to update the region's project priorities based on direction provided by the Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT). A total of 1,066 projects were submitted during the Call for Projects, with 769 projects proposed for the RTP Constrained List. The projects include capital projects and programmatic investments, projects devoted to increased transit service and shuttles, and projects that maintain and operate the region's streets, highways and transit systems to keep the transportation system in a state of good repair.

- **Project list information is available online in a variety of formats for partners, policymakers and the public:**
  - **RTP project list summaries** are provided in **Attachment 1.** The summaries include aggregate information such as the distribution of projects across different types of investments and different cost categories. These summaries provide information on the spending profile of the RTP as well as context to help understand the project list assessment and system analysis being conducted. A regional map is also provided for reference.
  - **Interactive map** of the projects submitted is available online at: **https://drcmetro.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=9cde 84c8845c4c66a2ed1c41baedc956**
  - **Interactive Airtable** that presents information about each project in tabular form, including a description, estimated cost, timing and the high-level assessment results. The Airtable can be found at: **https://airtable.com/shrE3wFe9bla5ghTM/tblIiY1vwSuxgqFIf/viwTeTj2keSfc 0D0m**
  - **An excel workbook that contains the results of the high-level project list assessment** is available here: **https://oregonmetro.sharefile.com/d-s45a9a9bbb1594d54abbe709412aaadd0** The workbook also contains the results of a federally-required environmental assessment[5] that will be summarized in Appendix F of the 2023 RTP.

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[5] In accordance with federal regulations 23 CFR 450.320 (development of programmatic mitigation plans) and 23 CFR 450.324 (development and content of the metropolitan transportation plan) Metro developed the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) environmental assessment and mitigation activities. This is not a NEPA analysis. The purpose of the assessment is to identify vegetation, aquatic, and terrestrial wildlife species and habitat, wetlands, floodplains, and other biological, Tribal, and historic resources that projects

- o **An excel workbook of the projects and all the information submitted** by jurisdictional partners can be downloaded here: **https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2023/04/07/2023-RTP-Project-List-2023-03-23readonly.xlsx**

  Links to all of these resources are also available on the project website at: **oregonmetro.gov/rtp**

- **Governing body endorsements of project list submissions due by May 24.** All agencies, cities and counties that submitted a project for consideration in the RTP must have their governing body (e.g., Board, Commission, Council) endorse those projects by providing a letter of support to Metro by May 24. This step supports transparency and awareness of the process and projects for the public, community partners and elected and appointed officials responsible for implementing the projects.

- **Project list refinements (if any) due by May 24.** Agency partners are requested to send Metro staff a list of changes (if any) by this date to allow time for Metro staff to prepare a revised draft project list for the June TPAC, JPACT and Metro Council meetings. Metro staff will update the RTP project list to reflect these changes in coordination with agency staff.

  This step in the process is an opportunity to make technical corrections and to make changes to advance regional goals**.** Refinements may include technical corrections, updates to estimated costs, project descriptions, design features, implementation timing, and other revisions in response to findings from the technical analysis and/or feedback received from the public, policymakers' or an agency's governing body. If an endorsement letter has already been submitted, agency staff should inform their respective governing body of any changes.

- **High-level project list assessment completed in April.** This assessment takes a simple, yes-or-no approach to reviewing whether individual RTP projects have certain features that support RTP goals, and on the share of the RTP spending devoted to different types of projects. As noted in the previous section, an excel workbook that contains the results of the high-level project list assessment is available to download.

- **System level performance evaluation continues through May.** The system analysis is focused on assessing how the overall package of projects advance regional goals and make progress towards the regional performance targets. This includes detailed equity, environmental and climate analyses that are required by the federal and state regulations that govern the RTP. The system analysis uses Metro's travel model and other analytical tools, as well as the information from the high-level assessment. The system analysis accounts not only for the projects and policies in the RTP, but also for factors such as projected population and job growth. Initial findings from the system analysis are provided in **Attachment 1.** These findings will be presented in May, and Metro staff will continue to refine results for some measures over the summer, as described in the policy and technical work section below.

The high-level project list assessment and system analysis in combination with public feedback received will inform policymakers and regional technical and policy advisory

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intersect with and may be affected by projects in the plan and identify potential mitigation activities to address the potential environmental impacts of future transportation projects.

committees as they work together to finalize the draft RTP and projects lists for public review.

Engagement and outreach

▪ **Public engagement and outreach activities continue.** Several activities are underway, including:

Community partnerships (through November 2023). Metro partnered with seven community-based organizations: Centro Cultural, Community Cycling Center, Next Up, OPAL, The Street Trust, Unite Oregon and Verde. These community partners have engaged people of color, youth and other marginalized communities in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties, with a focus on engaging people at the intersection of multiple communities who have been underrepresented in decision-making processes. Organizations primarily engaged community members in the draft project list and the High Capacity Transit Strategy.

- **In-language community forums:** Metro worked with community engagement liaisons to hold four in-person culturally specific forums in Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish and Russian languages that included participants from all three counties. These are communities who are typically underrepresented in online survey feedback. The forums focused on receiving feedback on similar questions to those in the online survey including near-term investment priorities. The forums also provided opportunities to hear community members experiences traveling around the region and their ideas for improving the system.

Online interactive public survey (April 3 – May 1, 2023). A third interactive public survey for the 2023 RTP provided an opportunity for the public at-large to provide feedback on the RTP goal areas and the draft project list. The survey was promoted through Metro's email lists, website, social media and project partners. More than 800 people responded to the survey.

Community Leaders Forum (April 13, 2023). Metro convened community leaders forum in early April will focus on the draft RTP project list and outcomes of the high level assessment of the draft project list Results of the forum will be reported to decision-makers at their meetings leading up to the release of the draft plan and project list for public review in July.

Consultation meetings with Tribes and Federal, State and regional agencies (multiple dates in April and May 2023). Metro consulted with Tribes, in coordination with Metro's Tribal Liaison, resource agencies, and with Federal, State regulatory agencies to share process information and review the draft RTP goals and policies, project list and the technical analysis completed to date, including methods and data sources. Metro will also review the updates made to the draft 2023 RTP responding to the feedback and information provided by Tribes and consulting agencies during the scoping phase in 2022.

Business Leaders Forum (May 25, 2023). Metro is partnering with the Portland Business Alliance to convene businesses and business organizations from across the region to discuss the draft RTP project list and findings from the technical evaluation and from the [Regional Freight Delay and Goods Movement Study](). Feedback received at

the forum will be reported to decision-makers at their meetings leading up to the release of the draft plan and project list for public review in June.

Summary reports documenting these engagement activities and feedback received are being prepared and will be provided to policymakers and regional technical and policy advisory committees for consideration as they work together to finalize the draft RTP and projects lists for public review starting in Summer 2023. **Attachment 1** summarizes the feedback received to date.

Policy and technical work

- **Update to the Regional High Capacity Transit Strategy continues**. The HCT Working Group reviewed a draft HCT Strategy report on April 19. The draft was informed by feedback received through advisory committee meetings, the HCT Vision Tiers survey, and outreach events conducted through the joint RTP community-based organization contracts between January and March. A summary of this and other feedback received throughout the update process is being prepared as a forthcoming Appendix to the report. Additional events in May will identify further community implementation priorities for the vision corridors. Presentations on the feedback received, the draft report, and next steps will be made at County Coordinating Committee and Metro advisory committee meetings in May.

- **Review and update to the Climate Smart Strategy continues.** Work continues to setup the VisionEval (VE) regional model in consultation with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) to support the climate analysis for the RTP. The model is currently being developed to reflect the draft 2023 RTP project list, telework assumptions and new modules developed by ODOT during the Oregon Transportation Plan update, and consider changes to pricing related state-led actions identified in the ODOT Statewide Transportation Strategy (STS). This work aims to reflect the RTP Constrained investments included in the regional travel demand model and policies that are included in the RTP and STS. Specific VisionEval inputs are tested for compliance with the Target Rule and consistency with the travel demand model.

  Findings and recommendations from this research will be discussed this spring and summer. Staff are working to report draft results of this analysis at the May 10 TPAC workshop and May 11 JPACT/Metro Council workshop.

- **Regional Freight Delay and Commodity Movement Study continues.** Staff continue to work with a Stakeholder Advisory Committee and conduct research exploring how the global pandemic has caused disruptions to the movement of vital commodities, the supply chain, and retail shopping. The study identified regional mobility corridors that are carrying the highest volume and highest value of commodities, and how groups of certain types of commodities like food and electronics flow through the transportation system in the region. The study is exploring how e-commerce is impacting and benefiting the transportation system and regional economy, and how unreliability and mobility on the regional transportation system impacts commodity movement. Presentations on findings and recommendations from this research will continue this spring and summer.

- **Testing of the draft regional mobility policy measures is underway.** ODOT and Metro staff are developing a methodology to calculate initial observed (rather than modeled) travel speed metrics for throughways and regional freight routes designated in the RTP. This work supports further testing and refinement of the draft regional mobility policy and research being conducted in support of the Regional Freight Delay and Commodity Movement Study (CMS) that is underway. This will help inform development of a travel speed methodology for the RTP system analysis that is underway. Staff are developing an approach for reporting VMT/capita regionally and by subdistricts as part of the RTP system analysis. ODOT has also begun work to develop a VMT per capita estimation tool to support statewide implementation of the Transportation Planning Rule. More information about the statewide work and presentations on findings and recommendations from the RTP testing will be discussed at future meetings this spring and summer.

- **Development of the draft 2023 RTP continues.** Since May 2022, TPAC, the Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC), the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and the Metro Council have developed new and updated policies related to pricing, mobility, climate, and high capacity transit through regular meetings and workshops. Metro staff are now working with TPAC and MTAC to update Chapter 3 (System Policies) of the RTP to incorporate these new and updated policies. Other chapters are also being updated to prepare a public review draft plan. These draft chapters are planned to be available in June, in advance of the public comment period: Chapter 2 (Vision and Goals), Chapter 3 (System Policies) and Chapter 5 (Funding). Other chapters and appendices will be available at the start of the public comment period in July.
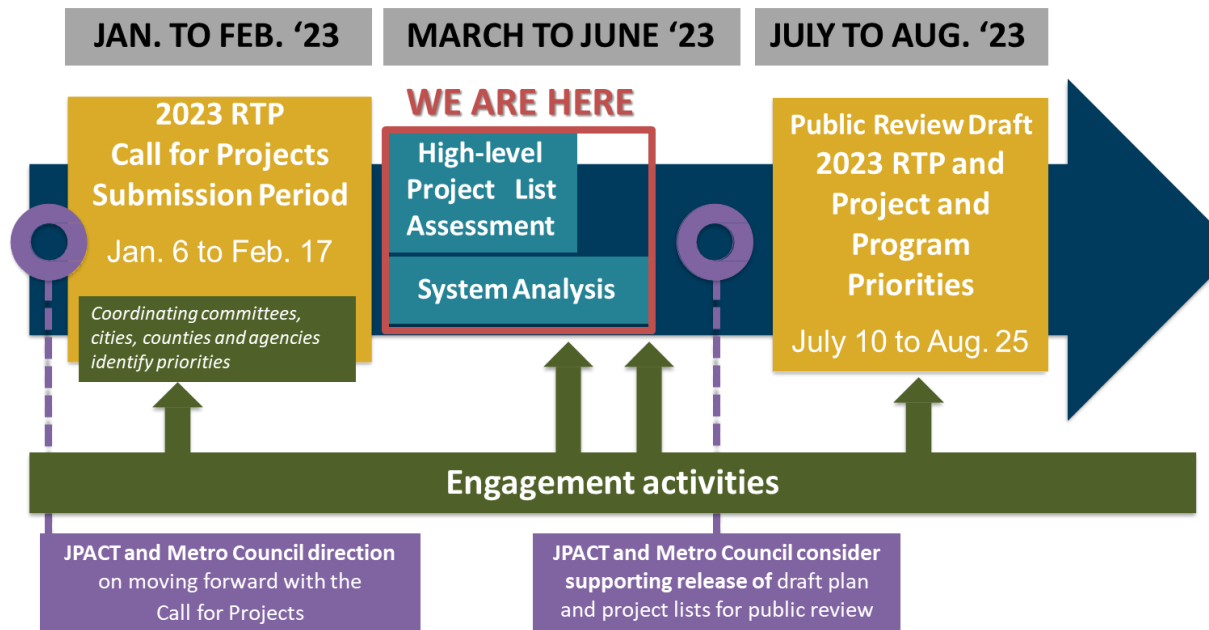
Final public review and adoption process

- **Planning of the final 45-day public review period and adoption process is underway.** In June, staff will seek JPACT and Metro Council support to release the Draft 202 RTP and draft High Capacity Transit Strategy for public review and comment. The comment period is planned for July 10 to August 25. The comment period will include a public hearing and consultation with tribes and federal and state agencies.

  In early fall, staff will present a summary of public comments received and recommendations from staff on changes to the draft plan to TPAC and MTAC. These advisory committees to JPACT and MPAC will be asked to affirm staff recommendations and identify any other remaining policy issues to be discussed by MPAC, JPACT and the Metro Council prior to adoption of the 2023 RTP and HCT Strategy. The 2023 RTP will be adopted by Ordinance as a land use action to meet federal and state requirements. The HCT Strategy will be adopted by Resolution.

  MTAC and TPAC will be requested to make final recommendations to MPAC and JPACT, in October and November, respectively. MPAC and JPACT will be requested to make final recommendations to the Metro Council in October and November, respectively. The Council is anticipated to consider final action on 2023 RTP and the HCT Strategy on November 30, 2023.

NEXT STEPS

A summary of key dates and next steps for the 2023 RTP project and program priorities follows. These are also listed in **Attachment 2**.

March-May 2023   Metro conducts outcomes-based technical analysis of the draft project list and system performance and engages members of the public, regional advisory committees, county coordinating committees, policymakers and other stakeholders on the draft project list and the technical analysis, including:

4/3 to 5/1: Online public survey on investments RTP project priorities

5/5 and 5/10 TPAC: Report on project list input and draft system analysis: mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes

5/11 JPACT/Metro Council workshop: Report on RTP project priorities, draft analysis findings and community priorities

5/16 Metro Council: Report on project list input and draft system analysis: mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes

5/17 MTAC: Report on project list input and draft system analysis: mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes

5/18 JPACT: Report on project list input and draft system analysis: mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes

5/24 MPAC: Report on project list input and draft system analysis: mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes

5/24/23 DEADLINE:

1. Agencies that submitted a project for consideration in the RTP must send Metro staff **a letter of support from their Board or Council or other governing body** that endorses those projects by this date.

2. **A list of proposed refinements (if any) to the project list** must also be sent to Metro by this date.

5/25 Business Leaders Forum: Report on draft project list across mobility, safety, equity, economy and climate policy outcomes and findings from Regional Freight Delay and Commodity Movement Study

June   Input on the assessment of projects, along with public input on the system analysis findings will be considered by decision-makers and project agencies as they continue to work together to finalize the draft RTP project priorities for public review in Summer 2023

JPACT and Metro Council consider public input and technical analysis before providing direction on release of the draft RTP and list of project and program priorities for public review

July 10 to Aug. 25 45-day public comment period on the public review draft plan, draft list of project priorities and the draft High Capacity Transit Strategy with hearing(s)

Sept.-Nov. 2023 Metro staff document public comments received and work with TPAC and MTAC to develop recommendations for consideration by MPAC, JPACT and Metro Council

November 2023 JPACT and Metro Council consider adoption of the 2023 RTP and updated project and program priorities (by Ordinance) and High Capacity Transit Strategy (by Resolution)

For more information about the update, visit oregonmetro.gov/rtp.

/Attachment
- **Attachment 1.** Briefing Book for JPACT and Metro Council (5/5/23)
- **Attachment 2.** Project Timeline and Schedule (5/3/23)