

2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Date: June 20, 2024
Department: GAPD
Meeting Date: July 16, 2024

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Length: 45 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

This work session is the first opportunity to discuss Metro Council's objectives for the 2025 Oregon legislative session. The current political climate and possible legislative priorities will be discussed. Additional concepts will be presented at subsequent work sessions later this fall and winter with final adoption of the Council's Legislative Priorities and Principles by the end of 2024.

ACTION REQUESTED

The Council may wish to discuss the current process to develop Council's State Legislative Agenda and direct staff to change or adapt processes. They also may wish to discuss specific legislative concepts or principles or direct staff to develop additional legislative concepts before adopting its legislative agenda prior to the start of the 2025 legislative session.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

Support Metro's policy goals through engagement with the Oregon State Legislature.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

- Does Council wish to confirm or change existing processes to develop their 2025 State Legislative Agenda?
- Does the Council wish to confirm or change existing policy direction under which staff is currently operating with respect to issues that are likely to surface in 2025?
- Are there additional topics for which the Council would like to adopt legislative positions?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

See attached 2023 and 2024 Legislative Priorities with Outcomes and 2024 Legislative Principles. Issue sheets for potential 2025 Legislative Priorities are forthcoming at future work sessions in the fall.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

2025 session

The 2025 session is a regular, long session lasting from January to June. The Legislature is charged with passing a biannual budget and any necessary policy changes. Unlike short sessions, the long session often has more significant legislation under discussion and passage. Typically, a few key large policy and program changes as well as many smaller pieces move successfully through the legislative process into law.

Elections

The 2024 election will impact the 2025 legislative session. In particular this year, a sizable number of Senate Republicans will not be returning. As a result of the 2023 walkout, ten Senate Republicans are not able to run for re-election. Six of those ten Republicans are up for re-election in 2024, and those seats will see new members. In addition, while Democrats have a majority in both chambers, they are currently shy one seat in each chamber to achieve a super majority. This threshold is important because super majorities are required for any revenue raising (tax) votes. Some believe that the Democrats are most likely to pick up a seat in the Senate.

As of the writing of this, it is still undetermined if any initiative petitions will make the 2025 ballot. Initiative Petition 17, which would establish a 3% tax on corporation sales above \$25 million and distribute that money equally among Oregon, is a possible contender to make the statewide ballot. In addition, the Legislature referred three measures to the ballot. First, a measure that would allow for the impeachment of statewide elected officials by a two-thirds vote of both chambers. Secondly, a measure that creates a compensation commission to determine that salaries of various state elected and appointed officials. Lastly, rank choice voting for federal seats and statewide seats, excluding legislative district races.

Legislature overview

The Legislature continues to see new leadership emerge on both sides of the aisle. Compared to more recent sessions, the Metro region is well represented in legislative leadership. Senate President Wagner, newly elected Senate Majority Leader Taylor and newly-elected House Majority Leader Bowman all reside in our region. In addition, both Senate and House Minority Leaders have a, albeit small, portion of Metro in their districts. And both co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means are also from our region.

Unlike prior sessions, this past session did not have a walkout. A few days ahead of the 2024 session, the Oregon Supreme Court decided to uphold Secretary of State rules implementing Measure 113, passed by voters in 2022, that bars lawmakers from reelection if they have more than 10 unexcused absences. While plaintiffs could choose to appeal the Oregon Supreme Court decision, no appeals have been filed yet. Now that the Secretary of State's rules implementing Measure 113 has been affirmed, many hope that walkouts will be a thing of the past.

The Oregon State Capital building is still under construction and is not slated for finish until 2027. While they are still determining what portions of the building will be closed down for the 2025 session, staff anticipates that it will be similar to prior sessions with cramped corridors, large parts of the building inaccessible, and constant construction noise. This continues to make the legislative process challenging for all and makes the Capitol less accessible to the public.

Legislative session priorities

Legislators start sessions with an agreed upon set of priorities. These pieces often dominate session conversations and indicate leaderships' strong commitment to passage. Similar to past sessions, staff anticipates that housing, homelessness and behavioral health will all be top priorities of the Legislature. In addition, the Governor, Senate President and Speaker have all indicted the need for a transportation package. Increased education funding will also likely be a focus as well.

Next Steps

We anticipate that the legislative agenda setting process will be iterative. We are beginning our process with this Council work session. Concurrently and following this, staff will be meeting with Metro departmental leadership to hear their recommendations for Council's legislative priorities. After receiving this initial direction, staff plans to spend the next few months meeting with our local jurisdictional partners, our state partners, and our community-based partners to share our initial thoughts on priorities as well as learn what our partners are pursuing. As part of our commitment to racial equity, part of our outreach will be to culturally specific and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color organizations to ensure that we are incorporating, as appropriate, their legislative priorities. We plan to return to Council in the fall with a draft set of priorities for your continued deliberation.

Staff anticipates that a 2025 transportation package will be of great interest to this Council and a focus of the Legislature. Given its importance, staff has developed a separate, concurrent process in partnership with JPACT to set legislative priorities for the transportation package. Staff anticipates folding those priorities into Council's 2025 legislative priorities. More information about this simultaneous process and the development of transportation priorities are coming to Council in separate work sessions.

BACKGROUND

Council adopts State Legislative Priorities and State Legislative Principles annually. This is the first meeting to discuss the next iteration of Council's legislative priorities and principles.

ATTACHMENTS

[Identify and submit any attachments related to this legislation or presentation]

[For work session:]

- Is legislation required for Council action? ☐ Yes ☒ No

- If yes, is draft legislation attached? ☐ Yes ☒ No
- What other materials are you presenting today? [INSERT]