

# MPAC Worksheet

**Agenda Item Title:** 2028 Regional Transportation Plan Work Plan: Scoping Kick-off

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## Purpose/Objective

Metro is initiating the scoping phase for the 2028 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update. As the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the Portland metropolitan area, Metro is required to update the RTP every five years to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements. The next update must be adopted by November 30, 2028.

This worksheet provides an overview of the proposed scoping approach and timeline, RTP implementation activities that are underway or have been completed since 2023, and priorities identified by the Joint Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and Metro Council for the upcoming 2028 RTP update.

This kick-off discussion is an opportunity for MPAC to shape the work plan and engagement strategy that will guide the update. MPAC feedback is requested on these questions:

1. Do you have feedback on staff's proposed process for scoping and updating the RTP?
2. Are the current RTP goals for safety, equity, mobility, climate and thriving economy still MPAC's shared goals for the RTP?
3. Do the policy outcomes and priorities identified by the Metro Council and JPACT also reflect MPAC's priorities for this RTP update? Is anything missing?
4. Do you have suggestions or comments on outreach and engagement for update?

Staff will continue engaging Metro policy and technical advisory committees, community leaders, and other partners to further shape the work plan and engagement strategy.

A draft work plan and engagement strategy will be presented to MPAC for further feedback in June. JPACT and Metro Council will be requested to consider approval of the work plan and engagement strategy in July. The outreach and engagement strategy will build on past Metro and partner engagement and identify opportunities to be coordinated with and help leverage other engagement efforts across Metro and by jurisdictional and community partners as much as possible. It will also seek to be more inclusive of underserved community voices as well as business and economic development leaders.

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

The 2028 RTP update has not yet been introduced to MPAC.

## Background

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a state- and federally-required long-range transportation plan for the Portland metropolitan area. As the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Portland metropolitan area, Metro is responsible for leading and coordinating updates to the RTP. The Metro Council and JPACT must adopt an updated RTP every five years to maintain compliance with federal and state requirements.

As the regional government responsible for regional land use and transportation planning under state law, Metro is also responsible for developing a regional transportation system plan (TSP), consistent with the Regional Framework Plan, statewide planning goals, the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR), the Metropolitan Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Rule, the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP), and by extension the Oregon Highway Plan (OHP) and other state modal plans. As a land use action under the statewide land use planning program, MPAC serves in an advisory role to the Metro Council.

The RTP is a key tool for the implementing the 2040 Growth Plan and Climate Smart Strategy. In that role, it serves as the region's long-range blueprint for planning and investing in a safe, reliable, multimodal transportation system that serves everyone, whether they drive, walk, roll, take transit or transport goods and services throughout the region, connecting people to their jobs, families, school and other important destinations. The RTP defines the outcomes the region aims to achieve with investments in the transportation, and the investments needed to support our region's residents and businesses today and into the future. |

The RTP is a significant policy document that covers multiple key areas, including: |

- Shaping how people move and live by identifying the projects, programs, and policies that support access to jobs, housing, education, essential services, recreation, and nature.
- Setting shared goals for transportation that align with broader values and desired outcomes related to equity, safety, climate action, mobility, thriving economy, and regional housing and land use goals.
- Coordinating billions of dollars in federal, state, regional, and local transportation funding by determining which investments are regionally significant and priorities for the near- and long-term.
- Measuring our progress over time through goals, objectives, and performance targets that ensure accountability and guide future policy and investment decisions.
- Supporting coordination across jurisdictions and agencies, ensuring that cities, counties, tribal governments, transit providers, freight agencies, and state and federal agencies work together toward a safe and connected transportation system.

Together, these elements make the RTP one of the region's most influential policy tools, establishing the long-term goals and near-term investment priorities that will shape mobility, safety, community well-being, and climate outcomes for decades to come.

The current RTP establishes five overarching goals – equity, safety, climate, mobility and thriving economy– and supporting objectives, performance targets and policies that together guide planning and investment priorities to meet current and future needs of

our growing and changing region. The plan identifies local, regional, state and federal transportation funds the region expects to have available to pay for those investments.

### **Current Regional, Local and State Planning and Research Informing the 2028 RTP**

In November 2023, JPACT and the Metro Council adopted a significant update to the RTP following two years of engagement that included numerous touch points with community members, community and business leaders, tribes, and local, regional and state jurisdictional partners. Built around key values of equity, climate, safety, mobility and economy, the 2023 RTP provided the policy foundation for several planning activities identified in Chapter 8 that have since been completed or are underway that will inform the 2028 RTP update, including:

- Endorsement of locally-preferred alternatives for three major transit projects – 82nd Avenue Transit Project, the Tualatin Valley Highway Transit and Safety Project and the Montgomery Streetcar Extension (*completed in 2025*)
- Regional Freight Strategy Update (*completed in 2025*)
- Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (*completed in 2025*)
- Cooling Corridors Study (*completed in 2025*)
- Regional Rail Futures Study (*completed in 2025*)
- Regional Mobility Policy Action Plan Implementation (*some actions completed in 2025 and 2026; others anticipated completion in 2027 as part of the Oregon Highway Plan update*)
- Regional Emergency Transportation Routes Update (*Ph 2. anticipated completion in Spring 2026*)
- Regional Transportation Demand Management Strategy (*anticipated completion in Spring 2026*)
- Regional Vanpool Strategy (*anticipated completion in 2026*)
- Community Connector Transit Study (*anticipated completion in Fall 2026*)
- Future Vision update (*anticipated completion in Winter/Spring 2027*)

Other local, regional and state efforts have been completed or are underway since 2023 that will also inform the update, including local and state implementation of the Oregon Transportation Plan and Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) planning rules through local transportations system plans and the Oregon Highway Plan update. The city of Tualatin completed a TSP update in 2025. Several TSP updates are underway – including the cities of Beaverton, Gresham, Milwaukie, and Portland, and Clackamas County. The OHP update, anticipated to be completed in 2027, will include new policies and performance expectations that will be addressed in the next RTP update (due in 2032).

In 2025, the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) approved Metro’s 2023 Major CFEC Implementation Report – developed following the 2023 RTP update. The report identified corrective actions to be addressed as part of the 2028 RTP update, including updating the 2014 Climate Smart Strategy and improving the process of developing and evaluating projects with the RTP project list consistent with state requirements.<sup>1</sup> These actions and recommendations are also reflected in Chapter 8 of the 2023 RTP.

Finally, Metro received corrective actions and recommendations directed toward the 2028 RTP update as part of the Federal Certification Review completed in 2025. The actions are related to the financial planning, documenting how project priorities in the plan align to the RTP goals and advance the region's congestion management process. The corrective actions must be addressed as part of this RTP update to ensure continued federal compliance and the recommendation should be addressed as part of the RTP update to ensure they do not become corrective actions in the next Federal Certification Review in 2029.

### **Relationship to the Future Vision Update**

This RTP scoping effort is occurring concurrently with Metro's Future Vision update, which is intended to articulate the region's long-term direction for growth, prosperity, equity, and climate leadership. Early scoping decisions will therefore need to coordinate alignment between the evolving Future Vision, including how transportation supports access to opportunity, compact development, resilience, and economic vitality. However, full implementation of the new Future Vision will occur in subsequent RTP updates.

### **Policy Priorities and Tradeoffs**

In March 2026, Metro Council and JPACT expressed support for the current RTP goals and identified a set of priorities for the 2028 RTP, including elevating safety, strengthening economic outcomes, advancing transit, clarifying funding constraints, improving transparency around ability to meet, and progress toward, state-mandated climate goals, and tradeoffs in a constrained funding environment.

From a technical perspective, advancing these priorities will require translating them into clear evaluation criteria and performance measures that can inform RTP decisions. This includes documenting how project priorities in the plan align with the RTP goals. Given current funding uncertainty and growing local and regional needs, the RTP needs a renewed, collaborative approach to defining investment priorities in a constrained funding environment. To build this approach together, Metro staff propose working with partners to:

- Consider updates to the prioritization process and analysis that was used in the 2023 RTP to better document how projects in the plan align with regional goals and support community priorities.
- Consider refining the project list assessment that was included in the 2023 RTP to better demonstrate how projects advance regional goals. The analysis qualitatively assessed how each capital project on the list advanced the 5 RTP goals (mobility, safety, equity, thriving economy, climate).
- Consider refining the system analysis performance measures to better evaluate the RTP's overall progress toward meeting regional goals and performance targets.
- Consider changes to the RTP process that foster partner coordination and collaboration to align project list updates with regional and community priorities.
- The process and analyses involved in project prioritization must meet relevant state requirements and federal certification requirements; be transparent and implementable; align with policy direction from JPACT and the Metro Council; and

reflect the decision-making authority of local governments, the Oregon Transportation Commission and the Legislature.

Input is vital to guide the development of these potential approaches for consideration by JPACT and the Metro Council. This discussion is intended to partner in identifying key considerations and perspectives, rather than reach final decisions, and will help shape the draft work plan and engagement strategy for the RTP update.

### **Engagement, Technical Coordination and Collaboration**

The RTP update will include a robust engagement strategy that builds on past efforts, including the previous RTP, while expanding meaningful participation opportunities for underserved communities, business and freight interests, and regional partners. The intent is to leverage and align with ongoing engagement led by local jurisdictions, agencies, and partner organizations, rather than duplicating efforts.

Partners will play a key role in supporting both technical coordination and alignment with existing engagement activities across jurisdictions and agencies, as well as helping elevate key themes and insights already emerging from related planning efforts.

Feedback is requested on:

- Identifying opportunities to align RTP engagement with existing local, regional, and agency led engagement efforts
- Key themes, concerns, or priorities already being raised through ongoing plans, projects, or community engagement
- Data, tools, or technical resources agencies can contribute to support engagement and analysis
- Potential coordination challenges, gaps, or risks that should be addressed early

We appreciate your continued partnership in shaping the RTP. Input received will help guide next steps and ensure the approach is technically sound and responsive to JPACT and Metro Council priorities for this update.

### **Outcome**

The identified policy outcomes for scoping the 2028 RTP are to reaffirm regional commitments to building and maintaining a 21st century transportation system in which everyone has safe, reliable, affordable, efficient and climate-friendly travel options; to measurably advance the five adopted goal areas of Mobility, Safety, Equity, Thriving Economy, and Climate Action and Resilience; to prioritize restoration and expansion of transit service and capital investments that improve access to jobs and key destinations; to increase completion of pedestrian, bicycle and trail networks especially in equity focus areas and near transit; to maintain and operate the existing system as a foundational investment; to support freight reliability and access to industrial and employment lands; and to implement an outcomes-based, performance-tracked approach that aligns transportation investments with the RTP goals, the 2040 Growth Concept, and regional climate commitments.

**Metro Council and JPACT Priorities for the 2028 RTP Update:** In March 2026, Metro Council and JPACT expressed these priorities for the update to focus on:

- Elevating safety as a priority.
- Strengthening the plan’s economic focus by improving access to jobs, services and opportunities.
- Setting the table for updating the region’s transit vision and strategy.
- Providing clarity on available revenues to support future efforts to bring more transportation funding to the region to fund critical investments.
- Navigating tradeoffs created by state and federal funding uncertainty and changing federal priorities by balancing large-scale capital projects with ongoing system maintenance needs and local spending priorities, recognizing local, state and transit agencies’ decision-making authority.
- Communicating clearly and transparently about what it will take to meet state and regional climate goals, and the urgency of meeting them given the growing impacts of climate change.
- Elevating community voices and priorities with creative engagement practices that combine digital and story-based engagement to bring to life the experiences and transportation needs of people living and working throughout the region.
- Supporting and optimizing local participation by coordinating Metro outreach, partnering with local governments and community-based organizations, and providing partners and community a multitude of ways to meaningfully engage whether that is in-person, virtual and hybrid convenings.

**2023 RTP Deliberations:**

During the adoption of the 2023 RTP, the Metro Council, JPACT, and the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) engaged in extensive deliberations regarding the region's long-term transportation strategy. At the time of adoption, the RTP faced significant scrutiny regarding the balance of investments, with stakeholders raising concerns over the prioritization of roadway capacity over transit, walking, and biking infrastructure, as well as the plan's overall progress on safety and climate goals. Public opposition specifically targeted major projects such as the I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement, the I-5 Rose Quarter Project, the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, and the I-205 Toll Project, alongside criticisms of the 2023 RTP’s climate modeling assumptions related to state-led pricing. Key policy discussions centered on expanding efforts to secure stable funding for RTP priorities and addressing concerns related to congestion pricing. Leaders also committed to advancing climate analysis tools, implementing the adopted regional mobility policy, and refining the project evaluation process before the next update.

**Changes since 2023:** Since 2023, the region’s funding outlook and planning needs have dramatically changed, including:

- federal and state revenue uncertainty and federal volatility
- concerns about the region’s economy
- reduced transit funding (and related service reductions)
- changing travel patterns
- recurring death and serious injury on the transportation system
- growing impacts of climate change and expectations.

The policy concerns at the end of the 2023 RTP update and factors that have changed require the 2028 RTP update to be more explicit about tradeoffs and what projects and goals are realistically attainable. It will be important to establish a transparent decision-making process that ensures thorough, inclusive, and well documented engagement at every phase of the scoping and plan development process. Early and sustained engagement with community members, partner agencies, Tribes, business leaders, business and community organizations, and advocacy groups will help build shared understanding of tradeoffs, surface potential concerns, and strengthen the credibility of and support for the final plan.

Early scoping decisions will shape how the RTP balances ambition and credibility, and how effectively it sets the region up to make measurable progress on safety, equity, mobility, climate, and economic prosperity over the next 25 years.

### **Known Opposition and Support:**

There is no known opposition. With each update, the RTP consistently draws significant regional interest and scrutiny. As the long range blueprint that makes projects eligible for federal and some state funding, guides billions of dollars in transportation investments, and establishes the policy framework for mobility, safety, equity, economic vitality, and climate action, the RTP is closely followed by local governments, state and federal partners, business and freight interests, transit providers, advocacy organizations, and community-based groups.

Historically, there has been strong support for transparent decision-making, clear performance expectations, and meaningful community engagement throughout the development of the RTP. At the same time, there are often differing perspectives regarding project prioritization, funding allocation, the balance between major capital projects and local improvements, and the pace of climate and mode shift goals.

### **Explicit list of groups and individuals who will be involved shaping the 2028 RTP.**

This information will be described in more detail in the draft engagement plan developed for Metro Council, JPACT and MPAC discussion and consideration. To date, the project team has identified these agencies and groups to engage in the update:

- **Community leaders and community-based organizations** for underserved communities<sup>1</sup>, health and equity interests, environmental protection, affordable housing, transportation, and social, climate and environmental justice (through engagement activities).
- **Business, economic development and freight groups**, including large and small employers, freight shippers, business organizations, associations and chambers of commerce (through engagement activities).
- **Local jurisdiction staff and elected officials representing counties and cities in the region** (through county coordinating committees, TPAC/MTAC workshops and regional technical and policy advisory committees).

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<sup>1</sup> Underserved communities include people of color, people with low incomes, people with limited English proficiency, youth, older adults and people experiencing a disability.

- **Tribal governments** (through consultation and engagement activities in coordination with Metro Tribal Affairs team)
- **Special districts**, including TriMet, SMART, Port of Portland and Port of Vancouver (through TPAC, MTAC, JPACT and MPAC briefings and consultation activities).
- **Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) and other Clark County governments** (through Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC), SW RTC, TPAC, JPACT and MPAC briefings).
- **State agencies**, including the Oregon Department of Transportation, the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), the Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC), the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) (through TPAC, MTAC, JPACT and MPAC briefings and consultation activities).
- **Federal agencies**, including the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other federal resource agencies (through TPAC briefings and consultation activities).

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

- 1- 2028 RTP Proposed Planning Process and Scoping Engagement Schedule
- 2- 2028 RTP Factsheet
- 3- 2023 RTP Goals