

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Thursday, October 2, 2025

10:30 AM

The 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), [www.youtube.com/watch?
v=_Fos3L0cS7c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Fos3L0cS7c)**

Council work session

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Deputy Council President Simpson called the work session to order at 10:33 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 Metro's Cooling Corridors Study**

Presenter(s): Malu Wilkinson, Deputy Director
Kim Ellis, Climate Program Manager
André Lightsey Walker, Senior Transportation Planner
Joe Gordon, Principal GIS Specialist
Jai Daniels, Associate Climate Planner

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1- Cooling Corridors Executive Summary](#)
[Attachment 2 - Project Schedule and Engagement](#)
[Attachment 3 - Draft Recommendations Supporting Actions September Council](#)
[Attachment 4 - Draft Report \(September 2025\)](#)
[Attachment 5 - Appendix B Draft Engagement Summaries](#)

COO Madrigal introduced Metro's Cooling Corridors Study and described her active engagement on the project. Staff reviewed the core aims of the study and divided the presentation into three sections.

First, staff described how the team evaluated the region's hottest areas. They presented a series of maps that demonstrated disparate heat effects across the region and clarified for Council some of the non-temperature factors considered in the drawing of each map. In response to specific questions from Councilors Nolan and Rosenthal, presenters explained that these factors include employment land uses (and a resultant lack of human activity in the evening) and wind patterns. Presenters emphasized that grey

areas on the map represent contiguous natural areas and tree canopy, which provide natural mitigation, even if the areas also experience increased heat effects.

COO Madrigal elaborated the significance of a natural area larger than 10-acres. These areas provide particularly important cooling benefits and have a greater impact on nearby areas, particularly when those nearby hot spots are small.

Councilor Lewis asked if the analysis considered whether properties are publicly or privately owned and whether the analysis includes water temperature. Staff said the maps use high-level aggregate data but that public ownership of properties would be a good next step. Staff clarified that water temperature is included in the surface temperature model but not measured directly; Deputy Council President Simpson added that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may have water temperature data available.

Councilor Nolan suggested the possibility of applying these tools and data to map Metro's homeless services data analysis.

In the second portion of the presentation, staff described the study's desired engagement outcomes.

Councilor Rosenthal asked whether community education focused on personal actions, available resources or scientific information about heat effects. Staff said each of those categories are part of the education, with particular emphasis on personal actions and how to recognize signs of heat illness.

Councilor Hwang remarked that hot areas are prone to gentrification and displacement if cooling amenities and tree canopy are added. Staff relayed that they heard the same concern from community based organization representatives, who advocated for anti-displacement strategies alongside investment.

Councilor Lewis raised a concern as to whether low-income residents, including those who have received air conditioners

through government programs, hesitate to use them due to high energy costs, even when temperatures are dangerous. She also wondered what people or organizations would be most effective at sharing safety information about air conditioning use. Staff responded that trusted partners in health care and at community groups would be best-suited to relaying those messages.

The last presentation topic included nine recommendations and five proposed near-term actions for Council consideration.

Deputy Council President Simpson asked about strategies to encourage cities to adopt heat-reducing building standards, specifically for pavement. Staff suggested that government projects that demonstrate those approaches and benefits could spur interest and a changing standard.

Councilor Hwang also asked how cooling work will be incorporated into the Future Vision and suggested a program to support community-led projects for cooling, in the structure of the Safe Routes to School program. Staff said that the newly appointed Future Vision Commission would learn about the Cooling Corridors Study in the near future. Councilor Hwang also asked where the recommended Climate Officer might sit within the agency. Staff deferred to COO Madrigal but advocated for a position that could work across departments.

Councilor Lewis reiterated that a Climate Officer would need a high level of authority to implement solutions across existing programs. She cited as an example the work underway to build reuse depots across the region, which could provide cooling opportunities. She stressed that the creation of a Climate Officer role should plan for continuity.

Councilor Rosenthal asked about the approach for mitigating heat effects in the areas most affected, which span jurisdictional boundaries. Staff described coordination as a possible role for Metro, and Councilor Rosenthal urged transferring responsibility to cities as quickly as possible to ensure swift implementation. COO Madrigal and Councilor Rosenthal agreed that focusing on

opportunities with more resources would be more beneficial for saving lives.

Councilor Nolan appreciated the recommendation to apply a heat-reduction lens to agency priorities, and they further advocated for departments to include recommendations to slow heat effects and climate change in all project plans, from the early planning stages. COO Madrigal agreed that incorporating this lens into work is necessary.

Councilor Gonzalez pointed to the state of current federal funding opportunities and the financial capability of regional partners to implement heat-reduction strategies. He expressed support for the recommendations but suggesting setting measurable goals that reflect these challenges. He also highlighted existing programs that support heat-reduction and climate goals, such as conservation and habitat restoration. COO Madrigal agreed that these programs are critical to Metro's contributions to cooling in the region.

COO Madrigal suggested measuring progress against the baseline maps presented by staff, as well as tracking reductions in heat-related injuries and death. Staff added that goals can also be measured using increases in tree canopy.

Councilor Hwang asked whether the Cooling Corridors Study would be integrated with the Climate Justice Task Force. Staff explained that task force subcommittees would deliver their respective recommendations in the coming months to the COO Madrigal.

Deputy Council President Simpson agreed with his colleagues that it is important to bring urgency to this issue and to apply a heat-reduction lens to all programs and projects.

3. Chief Operating Officer Communication

None.

4. Councilor Communication

Deputy Council President shared his experience visiting Minneapolis on an economic development trip. He highlighted the need for prioritizing self-determination for residents seeking affordable housing.

Councilor Rosenthal reported that the Regional Disaster Planning Organization expressed concerns about reductions in federal grants, amounting to as much as a 40% reduction in funding for some localities. He also shared that he attended the Community Warehouse gala and toured improvements at the Oregon Convention Center.

5. Adjourn

Deputy Council President Simpson closed the meeting by acknowledging the federal workers in the region who are working without pay.

There being no further discussion, Deputy Council President Simpson adjourned the work session at 12:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne Buzzini".

Anne Buzzini, Council Legislative Advisor