

Metro

*600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov*



Metro

Minutes

Thursday, March 19, 2026

10:30 AM

**Metro Regional Center, Council chamber;
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> (Webinar ID: 615079992) or
253-205-0468 (toll free), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=SMyiYuMB_wl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMyiYuMB_wl)**

Council meeting

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Council President Hwang called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

Present: 6 - Acting Council President Duncan Hwang, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Christine Lewis, and Councilor Ashton Simpson

2. Public Communication

Chris Christensen asked Council to consider alternatives to the Interstate Bridge Project and to work closely with Clackamas County partners. He also spoke about the 2026 election for the Metro Council President.

3. Consent Agenda

3.1 Resolution No. 26-5569 For the Purpose of Amending Two Projects to the 2024-27 MTIP to Meet Federal Project Delivery Requirements

Attachments: [Resolution no. 26-5569](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Exhibit B](#)
[Staff Report](#)

3.2 Consideration of the February 19, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [February 19, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes](#)

3.3 Consideration of the February 26, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [February 26, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes](#)

A motion was made by Councilor Lewis, seconded by Councilor Gonzalez, to adopt items on the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Presentations

4.1 Interstate Bridge Replacement Project Update

Presenter(s): Carley Francis, Interim Program Administrator, Interstate Bridge Replacement Program
Brent Baker, IBR Financial Structures Lead

Attachments: Alan Keizur, IBR Cost Estimate Validation Process Risk Lead
[Staff Report](#)

Carley Francis, IBR Interim Program Administrator, described her colleagues' expertise in financial structures and financial modeling. She reviewed the updated program schedule and a core set of projects, including the Record of Decision pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, and a Request for Qualifications for the Columbia River Bridge.

Alan Keizur, Cost Estimate Validation Process Risk Lead, provided details about the updated cost estimate, including increases to account for risk and escalation, and Brent Baker, Financial Structures Lead, described the available and prospective funding sources and strategies for closing the funding gap.

Presenters clarified for Councilor Nolan that although risk accounts for half the project costs under the allocated categories presented, the typical 30% additional cost for materials and other escalations is not included. They described four individual factors that account for the risk category and examples of past projects that have relied on similar projections.

Councilor Nolan also asked about project additions since 2022, and presenters noted a greater understanding of temporary project elements, sequencing, and engineering detail.

Councilor Lewis expressed concern about diversion to I-205 during and after construction. Presenters noted that travel behaviors have already changed on the two highways, and they emphasized expertise across both states in managing the project. Presenters also confirmed for Councilor Lewis that the construction schedule envisions in-water work in 2028.

Presenters shared a brief conversation with Councilor Rosenthal about potential applicants to construct the bridge. They explained

that a design-build RFP was likely to result in a single applicant; instead, the team will ask applicants to bid on a less complete design along with risk management, hoping for two to three applicants total.

Presenters also provided feedback to Council about the timing of light rail investments and removal of the old bridge. They noted that to construct light rail facilities to the desired terminus, they would need to build through a narrow section of right-of-way, requiring a phased approach. They also pointed to the need to construct stations and to conduct testing prior to opening light rail to the public. They anticipated bridge removal to occur in 2035.

Councilor González shared his perceptions from earlier that day, in his role as Chair of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. He shared that JPACT members were excited about partners coming together across governments to build the bridge, jobs, share prosperity, and for the overall impact of the generational investment. He described JPACT as committed to the project.

Malu Wilkinson, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Research, and Kelly Betteridge, Investment Areas Manager, joined the Council discussion. They clarified for Councilor González the timeline ahead, including a mid-June decisions before Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation. Staff and presenters identified work in the coming months related to tolling, closing the funding gap, making commitments to include the project in the next iteration of regional and local transportation plans, construction sequencing and phasing, and securing federal funds.

Councilor Nolan asked for greater clarity on areas for Metro Council to lead on the project, aside from approving or denying it,

emphasizing the importance of transit as a core function of the project. Presenters noted that detailed timelines are available to the public and that many connections and interchanges support light rail. They reiterated the difficulties associated with constructing light rail near the terminus. Acting Council President Hwang invited presenters to return to Council to share more information about light rail, including schematics, sometime in the spring.

Councilor Rosenthal asked whether financial challenges could lead to cutting light rail to reduce project costs. Presenters shared that light rail will be a core element of the project and the chosen contractor will help reduce costs through design rather than by cutting light rail.

5. Resolutions

- 5.1 **Resolution No. 26-5553** For the Purpose of Amending the FY 2025-26 Budget and Appropriations Schedule and Fiscal Year 2025-26 Through Fiscal Year 2029-30 Capital Improvement Plan to Provide for Changes in Operations

Presenter(s): Brian Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer
Amanda Akers (she/her), Budget Manager

Attachments: [Resolution No. 26-5553](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Exhibit B](#)
[Exhibit C](#)
[Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)

Staff presented the details of the changes in full-time equivalent positions and changes in appropriations by department and to the capital improvement plan. They explained that the November budget amendment would be re-adopted as part of the legislation to ensure all public notice requirements were met.

Staff noted for Councilor Rosenthal that funds for affordable

housing are already committed and that no new dollars are identified. They also noted for Councilor Lewis that Metro has been aggressive in its reimbursement requests to the federal government for energy projects.

Following the vote, Councilor Lewis recognized Metro's Chief Operating Office, Brian Kennedy, for being named one of the 250 Best Public Servants in America. CFO Kennedy thanked the National Academy of Public Administration for their support.

A motion was made by Councilor Lewis, seconded by Councilor Rosenthal, that this item be adopted. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Acting Council President Hwang, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Lewis, and Councilor Simpson

5.1.1 Public Hearing on Resolution No. 26-5553

There was no public testimony.

5.2 Resolution No. 26-5584 For the Purpose of Declaring a Vacancy in the Office of Metro Council President

Presenter(s): Kristin Dennis, Chief of Staff
Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney

Attachments: [Resolution No. 26-5584](#)
[Exhibit A](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Councilor González declared a potential conflict of interest prior to introduction of the resolution, due to his campaign for the Office of Metro Council President. Kristin Dennis, Chief of Staff, presented possible timelines for filling the vacancy.

Councilor Rosenthal expressed a desire to appoint a new Metro Council President between the May 19, 2026, primary election and the June 11, 2026, deadline for the appointment, as required by Metro Code. Councilors Simpson and Lewis agreed with this timeline.

Acting Council President Hwang accepted public comment on the agenda item. Chris Christensen, resident and candidate for Metro Council President in the 2026 primary, spoke in favor of appointing a new Metro Council President after the primary election to avoid influencing the election.

Regarding the application for the position, Metro Attorney Carrie MacLaren provided a brief overview of past processes. Councilor Lewis added her preference that the application include a short cover letter with specific topics to address, rather than requiring essay questions; Councilor Nolan supported a page limit for the cover letter.

Councilor Nolan moved to amend the resolution to specify the timing as “after the May 19, 2026 primary election,” seconded by Councilor Simpson. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Acting Council President Hwang, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Simpson, Councilor González, Councilor Lewis, Councilor Rosenthal

A motion was made by Councilor Rosenthal, seconded by Councilor Nolan, that this item be adopted. The motion passed by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Acting Council President Hwang, Councilor Nolan, Councilor Rosenthal, Councilor Gonzalez, Councilor Lewis, and Councilor Simpson

6. Chief Operating Officer Communication

Chief Operating Officer Madrigal shared that she attended a Sport Oregon and EcoNorthwest presentation about sports spectators and the economy.

7. Councilor Communication

Councilor Rosenthal shared he felt optimistic about the future after the “Imagine the River” event; he appreciated the connection

to Metro's existing projects.

Councilor Lewis expressed continued concern about funding availability for long-term rental assistance in the wake of a regional meeting with the Departments of Housing and Urban Development. She also described a new opportunity to invest in programs for transitional housing.

8. Adjourn

Acting Council President Hwang adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.



Anne Buzzini, Council Legislative Advisor
April 6, 2026