

Metro

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Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, March 17, 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=EgqqflcTSqE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgqqflcTSqE)

Council work session

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Council President Hwang called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.

Present: 5 - Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Councilor Mary Nolan, Councilor Ashton Simpson, Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, and Councilor Duncan Hwang

Excused: 1 - Councilor Christine Lewis

2. Work Session Topics:

2.1 Regional Tonnage Forecast, Operational Strategy, and System Funding Review

Presenter(s): Marta McGuire, WPES Director

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

Corrie Coston, Garbage and Recycling Operations Program Director, joined Dr. McGuire to present the tonnage forecast and proposed strategies for addressing emerging challenges.

Matt Tracy, Operations Site Superintendent for Metro South Transfer Station, presented the operational impacts of public operations at Metro South, highlighting flexibility and future development opportunities.

Brian Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer, elaborated on procurement practices, long-term financial stability, contract structure, and risk structure.

Councilor Nolan asked a series of questions about employment or contract models and risk management. Staff explained that Metro’s existing agreements prevent employees from supervising private contractors, adding that Metro bears the responsibility of risk regardless of whether work is performed by staff or contractors, although control over the system is limited in a partnership. Staff added that because only one proposal was received during the call for proposals, there was not an opportunity to compare the most competitive terms across

companies.

Councilor Rosenthal asked how a change in management would affect efficiency in the short-term. Staff pointed to an upcoming site redevelopment study and the potential opportunity to move commercial waste off-site with greater control of operations. Staff added that a new contract would delay work to develop community depot at the site.

Councilor González asked clarifying questions about the RFP process, and staff specified that the process was paused following a tonnage forecast update showing sustained declines. Staff also shared with Councilor González that revenue debt bonds can be used to finance costs over time, not including operating costs, although bonds are more expensive in the face of tonnage declines. Councilor González also expressed interest in ensuring strong bids are solicited and that existing employees, including contractors, are considered.

Staff detailed the timeline of a possible transition for Councilor Simpson, and Chief Operating Officer Marissa Madrigal recommended reopening the previous RFP for the existing proposer to resubmit. Councilor Simpson excused himself from the remainder of the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Councilor Nolan recalled past support by Council and the regional waste advisory committee to prioritize public-private partnerships; staff described support for policies that balanced partnerships with cost. Councilor Nolan pointed to Metro's ability to structure the contract differently to achieve different goals. Acting Council President Hwang asked for historic reasoning behind Metro's contracted structure. Staff noted that the existing structure provides flexibility to remain in or leave the solid waste industry, along with a past belief that a contractual model would reduce risk.

Councilor Rosenthal emphasized that public-private partnerships and a contracting model are distinct. He favored exploring both options in the short-term but was generally supportive. Acting Council President Hwang asked if the Council agreed that comparing the two options financially was the best next step; Council agreed.

Josh Hardwood, Fiscal and Tax Policy Director, noted that the Portland region's economy is among the worst metro area in the country in terms of job growth and other economic factors, reminiscent of 2010.

2.2 **2026 State Legislative Recap**

Presenter(s): Anneliese Koehler, she/her, Legislative Affairs Manager
Kyung Park, he/him, State Affairs Advisor

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)
[Attachment 2](#)

Staff provided an overview of state budget conditions, outcomes on key bills and Metro Council priorities.

Acting Council President Hwang asked whether there were any surprises and lessons learned during the session and how Metro can prepare for urban growth boundary bills in the upcoming session. Staff noted that it can be difficult to forecast what parties will contribute to or change any given bill, and that the legislative team plans to engage Council in discussions about urban growth, housing and economic development prior to the next session.

Staff confirmed for Councilor Rosenthal that the extended producer responsibility legislation for batteries includes an educational component. Staff committed to providing additional information about the transit and lodging tax in the future. Councilor Rosenthal also expressed interest in Acting Council

President Hwang's question about land use bills in the coming session.

3. Chief Operating Officer Communication

COO Madrigal highlighted two upcoming events at Metro parks: Reimagining Birding and Free Parking Day.

4. Councilor Communication

Acting Council President Hwang previewed an upcoming discussion on the vacancy in the office of Metro Council President.

Councilor Simpson recognized the life and passing of Senator Avel Gordly, and Councilor González shared economic updates from about the region's tourism recession.

5. Adjourn

Acting Council President Hwang adjourned the work session at 12:30 p.m.



Anne Buzzini, Council Legislative Advisor
April 17, 2026