



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
Portland, OR 97232-2736

# Meeting minutes

Meeting: JPACT  
Date/time: February 19, 2026  
Location: Zoom

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**Chair Juan Carlos Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.**

## **Attendees**

Commissioner Shannon Singleton  
Commissioner Nafissa Fai  
Commissioner Paul Savas  
Mayor Keith Wilson  
Mayor Travis Stovall  
Mayor Jef Dalin  
Mayor Joe Buck  
Rian Windsheimer  
JC Vannatta  
Dan Eisenbeis  
Ali Mirzakhali  
Councilor Juan Carlos Gonzalez  
Councilor Christine Lewis  
Devin Reck  
Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle  
Scott Patterson

## **Absent**

Sam Desue  
Curis Robinhold  
Councilor Ashton Simpson

## **Public Communications**

There was no public communication.

## **Updates from the Chair**

Metro staff Ted Leybold provided the Fatal Crash Report.

Members enjoyed the Transit Minute.

Gonzalez provided details on the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan Amendments coming to JPACT for action in March. The amendments will incorporate into the RTP Locally Preferred Alternatives for 82nd Avenue Transit Project, Tualatin Valley Highway Transit and Safety Project and Montgomery Park Streetcar Extension. He also referred to the memo in the packet.

Gonzalez provided information on the Community Transportation Academy and referred to the document in the packet.

Gonzalez reported that he is making calls this week to invite a few JPACT members to participate in a work group about the provision of transit service in areas not served by fixed route service. This is following up on a request made by our Clackamas area members last summer. Gonzalez committed to keeping the full JPACT committee updated on the proceedings or any recommendations for further JPACT consideration.

Gonzalez noted the memo in the packet with an updated 2026 JPAC work program that incorporates members' feedback from the January meeting.

### **Consent Agenda**

Resolution no. 26-5562 For the Purpose of Adding, Amending, or Canceling Seven Projects to the 2024-27 MTIP to Meet Federal Project Deliver Requirements

Consideration of the January 15, 2026 JPACT minutes

Motion: Stovall

Second: Lewis

Action: Motion passed

### **Information/Discussion Items**

#### MPO Certification Action Plan Update

Leybold provided a [presentation](#) on the MPO Certification Action Plan.

Vannatta shared that we need to find funding for TriMet and the smaller providers, and he hopes the work groups will discuss this. Leybold responded that funding will be discussed.

Mirzakhilili asked how staff would prioritize the work. Some of it won't be done until 2029, and he feels some of the work, such as public participation, is worth investing in earlier. what the timeline will be for recommendations and implementation. Leybold replied that mostly the things he highlighted we can get to in the next year or year and a half. Updates to the public engagement guide are on a 5 year cycle, and so those will happen in 2029.

Dalin shared that he believes TriMet's participation is critical, but that we also need participation from the small transit providers. He would like to see a Small Transit representative at the JPACT table. He's also concerned about the proposal for a prioritization process in the RTP. For the last RFFA process, the region came up with a scoring system together. That was successful. The mayors and the county representative looked at what Washington County was going to spend on projects and which projects were of importance. That allowed the cities to look at how their projects were interacting with each other, and then they could give the county direction and feedback.

Windsheimer expressed having a similar concern. Jurisdictions have limited resources to engage in these things, but that one in particular is a very important conversation we need to make sure people understand and are engaged. It's about where people are allocating their own money. So we're talking about where Washington County is going to allocate their funds, where they are choosing to allocate their financial constraint. It's a different

conversation than how we would spend regional flexible funds that come to this body.

Savas shared that he concurs with Mayor Dalin's points. He also shared concerns that money alone isn't going to fix this problem when it comes to the operational aspects. He noted we're 10 years in practically on the HB 2017 STIF funds, and we just saw a marginal increase through that period of time when it comes to connecting people that otherwise wouldn't be connected. And now the trajectory seems that it's going to even be less service than we've had in the past. He believes we need to look at the paradigm, and that the local small transit agencies can be partners in trying to find a more efficient means to get the most bang for the dollars that we do have. Savas thinks we need to sort that out, but he's concerned that throwing money at the problem alone isn't a solution. He believes we need some discussion about performance measures. He feels we need more meaningful metrics as opposed to aspirational.

Singleton said she wanted to piggyback a little bit on what Ryan was saying and maybe be a little blunt about it, but there's just a huge problem. This came up in SHS as well. The idea of taking legislative budget authority out of county commissions to direct them how to spend money is a huge problem. She would definitely welcome more conversation about that before anything further happens with that with that one particular one.. She welcomes more conversation about that.

Buck wanted to second Mayor Dalin's comments. As the Clackamas city's rep here, he's also supposed to be representing SMART, and it's a very challenging position to be in. He's not involved in SMART and it's really difficult to speak well to what's going on there, let alone the other small transit providers in Clackamas County. So, having that seat, not just on TPAC, but here at the JPAC table, he thinks is really critical to ensuring our communities are well represented, and the variety of ways in which transit is provided is spoken to at this table.

Lewis said she thinks this is a worthy conversation broadly, but she thinks we've strayed a little bit in comments today, so she asked Leybold clarify or give direct feedback if her understanding is incorrect. The scope of what we're talking about today is transit projects, not overall infrastructure investment. So whereas we did bring up the RTP in the slides, is that RTP writ large or focused on capital project transit investment? For the RTP recommendations coming from Federal Highway Administration FTA, that the recommendation was about ensuring that as we prioritize projects for the financially constrained list of the RTP that there is a demonstrated process that shows how the projects that are included will advance and reflect the goals and values, policy outcomes that we were looking for in that RTP itself, and so that there is a link between project selection for the RTP. Leybold confirmed Lewis' understanding.

Fai shared that Washington County would like to see a seat at the TPAC table for small transit providers.

Gonzalez said he wanted to end with a reflection and respond to some of the things he's hearing. He asked rhetorically about why we do regional planning. He believes it is because

we want to build alignment and pool resources to do things that we otherwise could not do alone. He's concerned about some themes, and noticing this happening, not just in transportation spaces, but in spaces more broadly in the Portland metro area, which is that as our region struggles economically, as we try and figure out what our path forward is, more and more people want to take their ball home with them and not share. And he's seeing that happen in transportation, in transit, in tourism, in housing, in supportive housing, and he thinks that if we decide to take that approach as a region, we really lose a lot of the strength that we have in re-emerging stronger in a more aligned way, where the broader region can lift all boats.

Singleton said that that's a mischaracterization of what she's saying. She said we get crossways with each other when we make assumptions about authority and don't have explicit conversations with the legislative bodies that we're talking about. And so it's not about taking my ball. She said she is one representative, and if we don't have a process that the boards actually make votes before this committee does, then you are stepping outside of the authority, or taking away authority that the boards have. She reiterated we need to preserve the legislative budget authority of county commissions.

Savas said Leybold laid out quite a bit there, and he was reluctant actually to respond because there's so much in here. He thinks we're all touching on things that maybe are close to us right now. He doesn't think that what he heard the Chair say is truly a reflection on at least on what I meant to talk about, but he's concerned that that summary doesn't really size up some of these huge problems. He said we have a lot of people that are paying for a service and not receiving it, and he thinks it's fundamental to us, whether we're in the region or where whether we're in our in our jurisdiction. That's a big deal. And if it's a critical service that's to be part of our climate action plan we need to be responsible for that. And we can't deliver that, or it's not efficient enough to deliver that, we'll never accomplish any of our goals. He thinks this really calls for deeper conversation.

Gonzalez shared that his comments were broadly in response to the many pieces of feedback that he heard, so not to any one individual comment. He was responding to what he's hearing here, but also at many other tables at the regional level and in the legislature. He said as our state looks to rebound from some of the issues that we're facing right now, that we really need to continue to look across our single authorities and our single jurisdictional boundaries to see where we can find efficiencies. Gonzalez said that ultimately, to Commissioner Savas' point, the point is to deliver the goods and services that we want to Oregonians. He agreed with Savas on that.

#### Cascadia High Speed Rail: Service Development Plan Update

Gonzalez shared he thinks most folks know here that the high speed rail project envisions connecting the mega region of Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, BC. The work that members are going to hear about today has started to paint the picture of how high-speed rail can serve as an economic development tool for our region. It would add capacity, it will catalyze development alongside the I-5 corridor, and this project could also solve quite a number of issues that we have right now with relation to congestion, air quality, air quality, affordability, and a stagnating economy. So something that we want to dive deeper on, and

we're starting discussions with private sector partners here in Greater Portland to better understand the opportunities and potential benefits that we see realized in Greater Portland. There are multiple examples of where this has been significant. You can look at Brightline in Miami, the work that is happening in California.

Ally Holmqvist, Metro, and Chelsea Levy, Cascadia High-Speed Rail Project Manager, WSDOT, provided an [update](#) on the Cascadia High Speed Rail service development plan.

Wilson thanked Chelsea for her time. He said Chelsea really talked about the technical aspects, about what the timeframe looks like. What he would like to talk about is just the value and what this table can bring as this conversation goes forward. Metro is now a US High speed rail coalition member. Wilson has been working with Councilor Simpson, advocating for funding because it really is a national play as well as a local opportunity. City of Portland is now a member of that coalition as well, and he invited members on trips to Washington, D.C. He stated this is a long play, and it's a huge financial play. But the value is recognizing that Vancouver, BC, Seattle, and Portland, those three cities are in the top 10 of the worst congestion in North America. And so, if we keep doing the same thing the same way, we're not going to expect or address the outcomes of our future. We also have a huge opportunity. That mega region, that 10 million people in the mega-region, produces \$662 billion in economic activity. We are the 25th largest economic zone in the world. We're as big as Switzerland when we combine those three cities and the mega-region together. Wilson noted the other problem is that in this next 20 years we're going to grow 20%, 30%. And so we just can't keep doing the same things that we are doing. The Amtrak Cascade, which is trying to keep up with that, where we see passenger boardings increasing is at 49% on time for 2024, the last time they put it together. 49%. The Shinkansen in Japan is always on time, the 99.9% of the time within one minute. So we really need to start rethinking how we do things and compete globally as opposed to nationally, and when we do that, we actually increase the wealth of all of our community members. Wilson shared that in China, we're really able to track the last 10 years, because they went from zero to 20,000 kilometers in a matter of a decade. He said we've seen GDP in rural communities double the growth of the urban community. So we have this huge bipartisan divide between rural and urban, conservative and liberal, and this is our opportunity to really provide back to those timber communities that we promised a better life by reducing timber economies. So this is a chance to kind of bring those communities back into a different sort of world. And then, what's the promise of high-speed rail? The service development plan, we're able to gain 9 to 1 match. The federal government will give \$9 for every \$1 we can collectively bring forward. My compliments to WSDOT, because for the last day decade, they've been dogged in their approach, and they're leading the nation. We have one of the top four lines in the nation now ready for funding, and then the next step is the FSP or the federal-state partnership, and they're going to match four to one, the same as the highway program that allowed us to build highways in a ubiquitous fashion. A lot of them, you know, not well deserving of the communities they went into, but now we get to build high-speed rail at the same rate that we did in the last century with this new technology. And so I really want to bring us all together and start really helping WSDOT. They are the lead partner. They've got everything ready to go, we just need to continue that forward progress, and I would like all

of us to be the bulwark that just clears the path for them as they deliver this project as we continue to fund that really important technology for the future. So thank you for that.

Lewis said she is very excited by this project. Some people characterize it as wild or ambitious, but when you look at the amount of energy that's being sunk into technologies that are still unproven and untested right now - we know how trains work. Trains have always been connectivity. And as you point out, Mayor, the amount of precision that we can have in terms of reliability of schedule goes far beyond any of our other modes of transportation. Lewis reiterated that she's really excited about this project. The question she has is around tribal engagement. We're obviously dealing across two countries that treat tribal engagement and the role of tribal government in processes like this very differently. She's curious if the standards of Canada, which are in some ways far superior to our own will apply across the project, or are there two separate kinds of tribal engagement mechanisms for this series of planning decisions, not on the construction side, but even just this early?

Project staff explained there are dozens of tribes and First Nations with ceded territory within the mega region, and they're an important group collectively for the project to be engaging. They also have both different needs and different requirements, established procedures for engagement in Canada and the United States. And at this early phase of planning, they're leveraging and using those existing structures to engage First Nations in BC and tribes in Washington and Oregon. It's unclear what that sort of engagement will look like, but right now, they're really working to leverage the resources and expertise of the First Nations representative and expert with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit in BC, as well as tribal relations directors at ODOT and WSDOT to support engagement through the existing relationships that they have. More to come on this and they've just begun their engagement with Indigenous communities in Washington and Oregon that included a letter that went to all of the tribes within the mega region in Washington and Oregon from WSD in collaboration with Oregon. That letter has gone out to tribes, and they are invited to a webinar that will occur later this month. And then also they had the Assistant Secretary for Transportation at WSDOT present to a tribal transportation convening yesterday.

Dalin said he's probably going to be a wet towel on this, and that's probably because he doesn't understand what Mayor Wilson understands. He was sitting here listening and doing a little math. He's going to BC this summer. It's going to cost \$29 a seat to drive up there for his family of four. If they were to take the train, it'd be between \$52 and \$134 to do the trip. If they flew, it'd be \$319, and that's the part that would be more closely in the speed in comparison to this. You know, an hour and 18 minute flight to get up there. So, what he doesn't understand, who is this being done for? His family's doing their once every couple year trip to BC, and for that, he'll just drive. And to congestion, it's only when he gets to Seattle, and it's only getting out of Portland that he has a congestion problem. So he'd like to understand who is this being done for or done to, and then he's just going to write the reality check that we've all lived through, especially if you've been around this table as long as he has. Dalin shared that we're over 20 years into the Columbia River Crossing, IBR, whatever name you want to recycle it on, and we still don't have a bridge, and we're

hundreds of millions of dollars into paperwork. So his faith in our ability to get a rail all the way from Portland to BC when we can't get across the one river is deeply challenged. He said he needs some education, and he's willing to learn and understand, but right now he just can't see it.

Wilson responded that to build that highway that we would drive on between Vancouver, BC, and Portland, it would be north of \$100 billion to add one lane in each direction. To build a high-speed rail, it's going to be less than \$50 billion. The difference there, though, is that when we build a highway lane, we know that demand's just going to immediately create congestion, and you're only going to go 55 miles per hour. The day we open up the high-speed rail lane, it's 250 miles. And the three questions Dalin had were kind of why is it pragmatic for a person to do that? Emissions, high-speed rail is 1/10 of the emissions of plane or car, which is very valuable for us in our context of thinking. The cost, looking at the competitive nature of Italy and the Spanish network now. The cost is about \$20 to \$40 for Portland to Seattle per person, so when you think about that, once you have that competitive nature, the rail cost, and so you're able to compete on cost, and then it's time. It's 2 hours to go from Portland to Vancouver, BC now. So you're able to jump in the cafe car, have a beer, read the paper with your family, and enjoy your family, as opposed to be in that car. And it's always going to be on time, and you get to go at 250 miles an hour. So it's the new Main Street we create. It's the new transportation design villages, it's all designed to be an attractive, pleasant, easy way to travel, because that's how 26 other nations are experiencing this around the world right now. And it is ubiquitous in developed countries except for ours, and so he thinks it's time for us to dream and then look at the data points and love the wet towel, ready to have the conversation anytime you want.

Ali said he appreciates the vision and enthusiasm and patience as we build this project out, but he's going to show his ignorance. He has a question as to why we are looking at alternate routes, given all the difficulty. Can we put rail alongside the existing right of way. Staff replied we might use an adjacent corridor to the existing Amtrak tracks or BNSF tracks that Amtrak operates on tracks that are owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe primarily. This is part of their evaluation in this early planning phase. They have assumed that baseline that this project for high-speed rail is greenfield development not shared tracks, in part because they know that there are existing constraints on those tracks. A, they're owned by the freight railroad, B, the freight railroad prioritizes freight, and we have an agreement with them to operate passenger rail service, but we all are aware of what the on-time performance and reliabilities are for Amtrak Cascades. And so this is really an opportunity to study the possibility of using existing infrastructure, but also study the opportunities for greenfield development, high speed, fast trains want to go flat and straight. And Amtrak tracks, those BN tracks are not always flat and straight, they have different sorts of requirements, speed limitations because of their design, and so really as part of this early, early planning, they're investigating these questions about what is the art of the possible for new greenfield development, as well as where might there be opportunities for us to align.

Eisenbeis wanted to emphasize some of Mayor Wilson's comments that our connections to the broader region and to the world, frankly, are critical to our economic success. We need

to be thinking long-term about strengthening our connectivity with the other urban centers in the Cascadia region, so he applauds this effort. He also noted that it'll be absolutely critical that there is local connectivity to major facilities like Portland International Airport, where our catchment basin for passengers includes Southwest Washington, and we are expecting passenger growth from 18.5 million passengers in 2025 to 34 million passengers by 2045. And then last he just also wanted to note the importance of engaging the private sector in this effort.

Fai extended her gratitude to the presenter. She said they did a great job and she can see the excitement in their presentation. She shared she's from Somalia, and they have a robust community that lives both in Vancouver, British Columbia, and in Seattle, Washington, as well as Vancouver. She knows the Somali community that lives in Oregon travels constantly, so she's constantly traveling to Seattle, to Vancouver, Canada, and really just, like, sometimes in a month, like 3 or 4 times, just visiting family and friends, or just, you know, vice versa, and people are coming here. So she's really excited that this idea and the opportunity to have a high-speed rail will actually facilitate that connection of traveling between the two states and even to Canada, and more importantly, it would mitigate freeway congestion, because if any of you travel to the North, you know that it gets heavily congested. So she's really excited. The first big trip to Europe she took she remembers experiencing for the first time high speed rail. It was from London to Liverpool, and it was very fast. She thinks we would really boost our economy, and it will boost interstate and inter-Canada and America movement. She likes this idea, but one question that she has from Washington County's perspective is around the funding of this study. Will Oregon or the Metro region be expected to fund part of this project as it proceeds? And then if that answer is yes, when would that funding contribution will be needed to be pledged? Then there is a broader conversation about other pressing transportation funding needs within our region, including the IBR. Project staff replied we're in the federal funding pipeline for passenger rail projects now through FRA. Just to go back in time. So, Mayor Wilson did a nice job articulating the step 2 that we are in. We have 90% funding from FRA and a 10% match from WashDOT. Going forward into the next step, the split changes will need a 25% match to match those federal funds. And so, they'll complete this step 2 at the end of 2028. In 2027, they'll need to start looking ahead. They're already looking ahead, but they'll really be planning and organizing to set up our eligibility and approvals for the next phase of funding that will require a higher match. And so really, I think. Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia will need to be thinking and working together about how to meet that match requirement for the next phase of work.

#### Future Vision Update: Engagement

Jess Zdeb and Laura Combs provided the [presentation](#).

Singleton said she wants to chat with Commissioner Jones-Dixon about some recommendations of places to hit up as part of the roadshow, but she did have a question. She asked if staff had considered having one or two folks from the Youth Commission actually be on the more formal body itself? Project staff responded they did not receive a lot of applications from young people for that, but they do have one member who falls within that 16 to 24 year old range. One reason that they haven't really pushed having more people

in that space in that age range is just it takes a really special person at that age to be able to be comfortable in a space like that, and so that's why they're sort of creating this separate youth committee that then will have a lot of interaction with the Future Vision Commission. Singleton encouraged staff to have the conversation with the members of the Youth Committee about that rather than assume their comfort level.

Reck noted he's a father of a couple of native kids, and he's just curious if there's representation. Project staff replied that they've been working with Metro's tribal affairs staff to develop a formal consultation process outline for what that will look like, and then also working with them to make sure that we are including outreach opportunities to urban indigenous populations throughout the region. So they're really looking to them and their expertise to guide what that looks like within this project. For the Commission itself, the advice of Metro staff was that they don't do a specific invite to leaders within each of our tribal partners, but that we instead do a formal consultation process throughout the effort. They did work with those staff to get the word out about the youth committee in particular, and they did have several applications who referenced that that was how they had heard about the committee. In the pool of 75, they had 7 or 8 that talked about hearing about the opportunity through a newsletters from the tribal affairs team and other organizations that they work with regularly. So that was really exciting.

Gonzalez asked Mayor Anne McEnerny Ogle, who sits on the commission, if there was anything she would like to add? She replied that staff did a wonderful job of explaining everything about it, and she has homework to do before the next meeting. Vancouver is looking forward to giving input from the north bank of the Columbia River.

Savas said he heard many times the phrase thinking outside the box. He was wondering whether it's geographic or whether it is people and their culture. He's wondering, is this really going to be a metropolitan kind of a vision versus something that includes farming, that includes ranching, that includes all those different things that we do here in this region. There are distinct cultures of people who've moved here from other places, and that of people that are actually Native Americans is quite the contrast. So I'm wondering how we actually capture and respect those cultures and also the livelihoods that come with those cultures. Staff responded that they're actually going to be bringing this question about geography to Metro Council in a meeting with them in April. The geography of this has to be a fuzzy edge when we're talking 50 years in the future. Staff has a couple of ideas that they want to talk about sort of the ways in which those boundaries are defined, whether that is how we share, a regional culture ourselves? Like, how do we identify? And what are the different aspects that make up a commute shed or a labor market? That's one way to define an edge. And then there's also just sort of that ineffable feeling of being part of a region. Project staff agreed we do need to acknowledge that there are a lot of different ways that people are parts of our region, whether that is a person from the city who conceptualizes part of their region being the place where they take their kids to go berry picking. And then the farmer who comes in to go to a cultural event at a venue within sort of the more urban core of the metro region. So there are all those different kinds of connections that they do want to be considering. Savas replied this was something that they took on a long, long time ago in Clackamas County, because their diverse lay of the land, the people, and also the

economics of it. The farm to table effort that they did in Clackamas County for a long time really showed that where you live and what you do for a living, and what your parents did for a living shapes your lives. And knowing that as we encroach deeper on the farmlands, and we're doing a lot to protect farmland, so it seems there ought to be a really distinct representation of just the natural economics of what it takes to be a sustainable region. And sustainable means, again, farm to table. How? How do we actually maintain a good food source, a local food source? And how do we protect those properties, lands, and people and cultures that actually develop that? That's something he's afraid we're losing. And same thing with those families that represent that mode of life. They're deeply concerned that there's not a place for them any longer.

Gonzalez thanked staff for the presentation and then called on McEnerny whose hand was raised. She replied she wanted to make sure everyone knows that the Coast Guard gave permission for the IBR to have a fixed bridge at 116 feet. They celebrated with champagne on their side of the river.

**Adournment**

**Gonzalez adjourned the meeting at 9:29 AM**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ramona Perrault". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Ramona Perrault, Engagement Committee Legislative Advisor