

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF AN UPCOMING REQUEST BY THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT) TO AMEND THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) TO CREATE A PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING PHASE AND ADD FUNDING TO THE I-5 INTERSTATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Date: October 4, 2021
Department: Planning, Development & Research
Meeting Date: October 19, 2021

Prepared by: Margi Bradway, Ted Leybold
Presenters: Margi Bradway, Ted Leybold
Length: 15 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) will be requesting an amendment to the 2021-24 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) to create a Preliminary Engineering phase and add funding to the I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement project (IBRP). Preliminary engineering work is used to develop project design alternatives, inform the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process to select a preferred design alternative, develop project impact mitigation measures, and develop materials needed to prepare for construction. A summary of the upcoming request is attached.

ACTION REQUESTED

Provide direction to Metro and ODOT staff for additional information, or questions that should be addressed for Metro Council consideration of the proposed MTIP amendment for the IBRP (currently scheduled for December 2, 2021).

Metro staff is responding to direction provided by Council at the Council Work Session on September 7, 2021. At that work session, Council requested additional information to inform their decisions on all large MTIP amendments that propose new motor vehicle capacity. Based on direction Council provides, the staff proposal will be shared and discussed with Council at an upcoming work session prior to consideration of the proposed I-5 Interstate Bridge Replacement project MTIP amendment.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

The MTIP aims to carry out regional transportation policy direction set forth in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In addition to adequately maintaining and operating the transportation system, investments are made to advance outcomes for the following priorities:

- **Safety:** achieving the Region's Vision Zero target for fatal and serious injury crashes
- **Climate:** implementing the Region's Climate Smart Strategy
- **Equity:** eliminating inequities of the transportation system for people of color and with low income

- **Congestion relief:** implementing the Region's Congestion Management Process

POLICY QUESTION(S)

No policy questions at this time. This work session item is to inform Council of an upcoming action on amending the 2021-24 MTIP and ensure Council has the opportunity request information they need to take action. When considering action on the amendment at a future Council meeting, Council members will consider whether the MTIP amendment as proposed reflects the investment priority policies as defined in the Regional Transportation Plan.

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

No policy options at this time. When Council i considers action on the MTIP amendment proposal, it will consider whether adding the IBRP preliminary engineering phase and funding reflects the investment priority policies of the RTP.

In a separate but related Council activity, Council is considering how to communicate its priorities regarding this project in its role as a participating agency in the project's NEPA process.

In addition, Metro staff have begun the work to develop the next MTIP for 2024-27. Council could provide additional direction for its desired input to the future allocation processes that will prioritize new projects to be included in the next MTIP. Staff will request Metro Council direction on how to frame and analyze the MTIP projects in the 2024-27 MTIP based on the Metro Council's desired outcomes. Requests to include future phases of the IBRP (such as right-of-way acquisition or construction) in the MTIP may occur after then 2024-27 MTIP has been adopted.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

In this work session, Council will be briefed on an upcoming proposal to amend the MTIP. Staff would like to ensure that Council understands the proposal and desires additional information prior to taking action on the amendment in December. Council will also have the opportunity to further discuss information to be provided for all large MTIP amendments that proposed new motor vehicle capacity, including this IBRP amendment, at an upcoming Council work session.

BACKGROUND

The MTIP is a federally required process that encourages the cooperative development, evaluation, and adoption of near-term investments in regional transportation. Its purpose is to promote communication and collaboration by agencies that allocate transportation funds, promote consideration of transportation plans and policies as a part of funding allocation processes, and ensure fiscal accountability for agencies using federal transportation funds on projects.

It includes documenting how transportation projects prioritized for funding advance the Portland metropolitan region's shared goals and comply with federal regulation (such as fiscal constraint, air quality impacts, and public involvement). The MTIP outlines the implementation schedule of federally-funded transportation projects in the region for the next four years and provides guidance to manage the delivery of transportation projects. The MTIP also acts as a financial planning and project delivery tool for the metropolitan region. As such, MTIP guidance ensures the region does not overspend and tracks the scheduled delivery of transportation projects.

Metro Council is requested to adopt a new MTIP every three years and is also requested to manage changes through amendments to the MTIP each month. Metro Council's participation in this process is framed by its role as the policy board of the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a role it shares with the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT). Federal regulations require the MPO policy board to adopt each MTIP and approve subsequent amendments to the MTIP.

Council most recently approved the 2021-24 MTIP, which is currently active, and has approved subsequent amendments to the current MTIP. Work has also begun on the development of the upcoming 2024-27 MTIP.

Currently, the process for analysis and consideration of a new MTIP is for staff to conduct a performance assessment on the package of proposed new projects to evaluate their expected impact on the regional performance targets for the priority outcomes. Based on this assessment, staff may make recommendations to funding agencies regarding implementation of the proposed projects, or recommendations for consideration during their next funding allocation cycle.

For individual project amendments to the current MTIP, current Metro staff practice is to ensure the project is included as a part of the RTP financially constrained list (which is also analyzed for performance against the regional performance targets) and to describe which priority outcomes the project will advance. Metro staff is also following up on direction provided by Council at the September 7, 2021 work session regarding additional information the Council would like provided to inform their decisions on large MTIP amendments that propose new motor vehicle capacity. The staff proposal will be shared and discussed with Council at an upcoming work session prior to consideration of the proposed MTIP amendment for the IBRP.

ATTACHMENTS

ODOT MTIP amendment request – Memo from Chris Ford to TPAC and Interested Parties
ODOT Project information submittal for MTIP amendment request

[For work session:]

- Is legislation required for Council action? Yes No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? Yes No
What other materials are you presenting today? None