

## METRO COUNCIL 2026 LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES<sup>1</sup>



### GENERAL PRINCIPLES:

1. **Successful Communities:** Metro supports policy and funding solutions that facilitate the achievement of the six desired outcomes for successful communities that have been agreed upon by the region: vibrant, walkable communities; economic competitiveness and prosperity; safe and reliable transportation choices; leadership in minimizing contributions to climate change; clean air, clean water and healthy ecosystems; and equitable distribution of the burdens and benefits of growth and change.<sup>2</sup>
2. **Racial Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** Metro envisions a region and state where a person's race, ethnicity or zip code does not predict their future prospects and where all residents can enjoy economic opportunity and quality of life. Metro therefore supports legislation that acknowledges past discrimination, addresses current disparities and promotes inclusion in public programs, services, facilities and policies.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Tribal Sovereignty:** Metro seeks to support tribal sovereignty through government-to-government relations and coordination with Tribes, exploring opportunities to incorporate tribal interests and priorities into Metro's work and ensuring agency compliance with pertinent cultural, historic and natural resource protection laws. Metro will not supplant any Tribe or tribal organization's efforts on legislative priorities and will strive to coordinate with legislative and policy representatives of Tribes, Tribal organizations and Indigenous legislators to determine if Metro's involvement on any legislative priorities is appropriate.
4. **Climate Justice:** Metro supports efforts to combat and adapt to climate change and to meet the state's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To this end, Metro supports state policy and funding solutions that can help to reduce emissions in all of its main lines of business: land use and transportation planning and investment, housing and homeless services, consumption, waste management and solid waste management, parks and natural areas, and operation of visitor venues.
5. **Vibrant Sustainable Workforce.** Metro supports a thriving and equitable regional economy that creates job and career opportunities for all people. To this end, Metro supports state policy and investments that create new career opportunities and remove barriers to career opportunities to meet the demand for a skilled and diverse workforce in Metro's lines of business and in the region, including initiatives that promote quality training, family sustaining wages, access to career ladders and the provision of workforce wraparound services, and incentives to promote economic adaptability and mobility.
6. **Preemption:** With respect to issues related to matters of regional concern, Metro's policy and funding authority should not be preempted or eroded.

7. **Funding:** To ensure a prosperous economy, a clean and healthy environment, and a high quality of life for all of their citizens, Metro and the region's counties, cities, and other service providers must have the financial resources to provide sustainable, quality public services. Accordingly, the Legislature should remove existing restrictions on local and regional revenue-raising authority and avoid enacting new limitations or pre-emptions, and all state mandates should be accompanied by funding.

## **SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES:**

### **HOUSING:**

8. **Affordable Housing and Homelessness:** Metro supports efforts to ensure that housing choices are available to people of all incomes in every community in our region; to reduce the number of households that are burdened by the combined costs of housing and transportation; to support people experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing housing; and to increase affordable opportunities for home ownership.<sup>4</sup> To achieve these outcomes, Metro supports legislative actions consistent with Oregon's land use laws that increase the supply of both regulated affordable housing and market-rate housing; provide funding for both housing development and services that support lower-income renters and people experiencing homelessness; and provide reasonable protections for renters against arbitrary and unfair actions.

### **LAND USE AND URBAN GROWTH MANAGEMENT:**

9. **Oregon's Land Use System:** Oregon's land use planning system provides an important foundation for the prosperity, sustainability and livability of our region; this system reflects the values of Oregonians and enjoys strong public support. The Legislature should exercise restraint and care when considering changes to Oregon's land use system.
10. **Local Land Use Decisions:** Management of the urban growth boundary is a complex undertaking that involves extensive analysis, public input, and a balancing of many factors. Urban growth management decisions have profound impacts not just on land at the boundary, but on communities within the boundary and on farms and other rural lands outside the boundary. For these reasons, the Legislature should establish the process and policy framework for local land use decisions and should affirm the authority of local governments, including Metro, to make specific decisions on local land use matters.
11. **Efficient Use of Existing Urban Land:** Land within the urban growth boundary should be used efficiently before the boundary is expanded.<sup>5</sup> Metro supports policy and funding strategies to facilitate efficient use of existing urban land, including investments in brownfield cleanup and industrial site readiness, as well as policy and zoning reforms that authorize and/or encourage more efficient development in residential and commercial areas.
12. **Need:** The UGB should not be expanded in the absence of demonstrated need.<sup>6</sup>

- 13. Integration of Land Use and Transportation:** Land use and transportation planning should be coordinated so land uses do not undermine the efficiency and reliability of the transportation system and transportation investments do not lead to unintended or inefficient land uses.<sup>7</sup>
- 14. Annexation:** Cities are the preferred governing structure for providing public services to urban areas, and Metro supports reforms that will facilitate, or reduce barriers to, orderly annexation and incorporation.
- 15. Fiscal Responsibility:** Funding to support urban development should be generated at least in part by fees on those who directly benefit from that development.

#### **SOLID WASTE:**

- 16. Life Cycle Approach:** Metro supports efforts to minimize the health, safety, environmental, economic and social impacts associated with consumer products and packaging throughout all stages of a product's life cycle, beginning with resource extraction and continuing through design, manufacturing, consumption and disposal.<sup>8</sup>
- 17. Product Stewardship/Producer Responsibility:** Metro supports legislation providing that whoever designs, produces, sells or uses a product bears responsibility for minimizing the product's environmental impact throughout all stages of the product's life cycle. Under this market-based approach, the life-cycle costs of a product are internalized into its price rather than being forced onto the general public. This approach also provides an incentive for manufacturers to design and produce their goods in a way that minimizes waste, environmental impact and management costs.
- 18. Equity in the Solid Waste System:** The Regional Waste Plan aims to eliminate disparities experienced by people of color and historically marginalized communities from the full life cycle of products and packaging used and disposed in the region. Metro supports legislation that achieves this by advancing: community restoration, community partnerships and community investment; access to recycling, waste and reuse services and information; good jobs with improved worker health and safety, compensation and career pathways; business opportunities in the local economy; and community health through minimized impacts from system operations - locally and in end markets - and from toxic chemicals in products and packaging. Legislation should require the establishment of targets, standards and compliance processes, as appropriate, to ensure progress toward equity goals.

#### **TRANSPORTATION:**

- 19. Transportation Funding:** Providing adequate funding for all transportation modes that move people and freight supports economic prosperity, community livability, public health and environmental quality. For these reasons, Metro supports an increase in overall transportation funding, investments in a safe and balanced multimodal transportation system that addresses the needs of all users, and flexibility in the system to provide for local solutions to transportation problems.

**20. Climate Justice:** Metro and its regional partners are committed to the Climate Smart Strategy, which includes actions needed to achieve state targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. The state should provide financial support for implementation of the Climate Smart Strategy.

**21. Safe and Equitable Transportation:** Our region has adopted policies and developed programs to make it safer to walk and bike to school and other destinations, reduce serious traffic crashes and deaths, and reduce the disproportionate impact of traffic crashes and traffic enforcement in low income communities and communities of color.<sup>9</sup> Metro supports legislation that advances safe and equitable transportation, including more effective and equitable enforcement of speed limits and other safety regulations, greater investment in infrastructure that improves safety (especially in disadvantaged communities), and greater authority for local governments to safely manage their transportation networks.

#### **PARKS, NATURE AND CONSERVATION:**

**22. Parks and Natural Areas:** Our region has invested heavily in protecting water quality and fish and wildlife habitat and providing residents with access to nature and outdoor activity. Parks and natural areas are regional assets that support public health, environmental quality, strong property values and economic prosperity. For these reasons, Metro supports measures to increase local and regional authority to raise revenues to support parks and natural areas and to increase the level of state funding distributed to local governments for acquisition, capital improvements, and park operations.

**23. Species Conservation:** Metro supports efforts to protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat, to recover threatened and endangered species, and to create a better future for fish and wildlife, both in Oregon and globally.

**24. Conservation Education:** Metro supports efforts to provide stable and reliable funding to conservation education.

#### **ECONOMIC PROSPERITY:**

**25. Metro Venues:** Because the Oregon Convention Center, Expo Center, Portland's Centers for the Arts and Oregon Zoo contribute millions of dollars to the state and regional economies, Metro supports policy and funding solutions that facilitate the success of these venues in attracting visitors and enhancing the quality of their experiences.

#### **AGENCY OPERATIONS:**

**26. Firearms and Public Facilities:** Metro supports legislation that increases Metro's authority to regulate the carrying of firearms on Metro properties and public venues, and opposes legislation that limits or reduces that authority.

**27. Disaster Resilience:** Metro supports legislative efforts to improve community disaster preparedness and resilience, with the goal of enabling the Portland region to provide for the

immediate needs of its residents and businesses after a catastrophic event and facilitating the region's short- and long-term recovery.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, endnotes refer to applicable policy statements in Metro's [Regional Framework Plan](#) (RFP).

<sup>2</sup> RFP Chapter 1 (Land Use).

<sup>3</sup> [Strategic plan to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion](#).

<sup>4</sup> RFP Policy 1.3 (Housing Choices and Opportunities).

<sup>5</sup> RFP Policy 1.1 (Compact Urban Form).

<sup>6</sup> RFP Policy 1.9 (Urban Growth Boundary).

<sup>7</sup> RFP Policy 1.3.13 (Housing Choices and Opportunities); Transportation Goal 1 (Foster Vibrant Communities and Efficient Urban Form).

<sup>8</sup> [2030 Regional Waste Plan](#), page 11.

<sup>9</sup> [2018 Regional Transportation Plan, Chapter 3](#), Safety and Security Policies 1-9 and Transportation Equity Policies 1-7.