

MPAC Worksheet

Agenda Item Title: Supporting our Regional Economy: Foundational information

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Purpose/Objective

The purpose of this presentation is to lay the groundwork for a series of discussions and presentations at MPAC in 2026 on economic development, growth, and job creation.

Since 2020, our state has experienced net population loss for the first time since the early 1980s. In 2025, Oregon lost over 14,000 jobs, many of those within Metro's boundary. The Governor of Oregon, Metro Councilors, and many of our Metro area's city councils and commissions have put economic growth and jobs creation as a top issue.

Supporting the regional economy is core to Metro's responsibilities. Metro manages visitor venues like the Convention Center and the Oregon Zoo, supports development and provides funding for affordable housing, parks and natural areas. Metro's land use and transportation planning, policy and investments help to shape our region. Over the years, Metro has undertaken many projects and programs that influence economic development: below are a few examples:

- The Regional Transportation Plan is fundamentally about moving goods and people to support, among other things, the economy. The RTP includes a Regional Freight Plan.
- Collaborating with regional and local partners on high-capacity transit and shared strategies for transportation investment are paired with community led development strategies to support residents and businesses.
- Growth management decisions ensure that the region has enough employment land for long-term job growth.
- Periodic updates to our region's industrial land inventory have highlighted the investments necessary to make large industrial sites ready for development.
- Metro's policies, implemented by cities and counties, protect industrial lands from conflicting uses.
- Metro's brownfield grants fund site assessments.
- Metro's Construction Career Pathways Program works to build reliable construction career pathways for apprentices, women, and Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.
- Metro's venues such as the Zoo, EXPO, the Oregon Convention Center, and the Portland's Center for the Arts attract visitor dollars.

- Metro maintains data and analysis tools like the Economic Value Atlas to support policy and investment decisions.
- The Regional Affordable Housing Bond and Supportive Housing Services levy help to improve housing access and affordability for workers.
- Metro partners with Greater Portland, Inc. on the development of our region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which will soon be updated.

Outcome

MPAC members will share a common understanding of:

- The history of how Metro has supported economic development
- Why Metro is prioritizing economic development activities

At the February MPAC meeting, members will hear about activities from the Westside Economic Alliance and an internal working group of Metro Councilors addressing economic development and land use within the region.

What has changed since MPAC last considered this issue/item?

This is the first time this item is coming to MPAC.

What packet material do you plan to include?

N/A