

# MEMO

Date: June 4, 2025  
To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation and Interested Parties  
From: Ted Leybold, Transportation Policy Director  
Re: US DOT Certification Review of the Portland Area MPO

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The U.S. Department of Transportation has recently completed its Certification Review of Metro as the Portland Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), part of joint review with the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (SWRTC) as the Clark County, Washington area MPO. This review certified Metro and SWRTC meet the requirements for metropolitan transportation planning established in federal regulations.

The certification review report includes corrective actions, that must be addressed in an identified timeframe, and recommendations for improving the regional transportation planning process. USDOT staff have directed MPO staff to develop a plan of action for inclusion in the upcoming Unified Planning Work Programs to convey how MPO work will resolve the corrective actions.

Metro staff have prepared a draft action plan for initial review and input by TPAC, JPACT and the Metro Council. Please see the attached Draft Action Plan summary for a description of all proposed actions. While not directed to do so, Metro staff have also included draft actions to respond to the recommendations USDOT provided in the certification review report to provide additional transparency on expected MPO work program efforts.

Proposed actions to resolve the corrective actions are straight-forward and Metro staff see no impediments to resolving them in the time frame directed. Some directives related to compliance with Title VI regulations have already been addressed.

Some of the recommendations provided by USDOT are relevant to transit agency representation and consideration of transit issues at the MPO, initially raised by South Metro Area Regional Transit and Clackamas County during the MPO certification review process and requested for discussion at JPACT (USDOT Certification Report, pg. 53-79). To provide a foundation for JPACT discussion, following are the relevant USDOT recommendations and proposed draft action plan responses.

### USDOT Recommendations

“( . . . ) consider including direct representation of regional transit agencies on technical advisory boards and committees, such as the Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC).”

“The Federal Team recommends that Metro work with JPACT members and regional transit agencies to clearly define how regional transit interests are represented on the committee. The JPACT By-Laws should explicitly describe the role of the regional transit representation seat, currently held by TriMet. Additionally, the representation of transit agencies on JPACT could be further supported through interlocal agreements between the transit agencies.”

### Draft Action Plan Response

Share current definition of regional transit agency representation on JPACT (summary memo attached) and determine whether any clarification is warranted.

Consult with JPACT and consider means/methods to support JPACT members in their representation of transit issues and agencies, such as preparatory coordination meetings or briefings.

Propose and obtain feedback on Metro hosting regular (quarterly?) transit providers coordination meeting to review and discuss TPAC and JPACT work programs and public transit planning topics.

Review TPAC by-laws and operating procedures with intent to increase opportunities for participation by public transportation service providers in regional planning activities.

Review and prepare update to regional planning agreement between ODOT, Metro, TriMet and SMART for opportunities to clarify and increase coordination on public transit planning activities.

Metro staff will present this information at the June 11<sup>th</sup> TPAC workshop and the June 12<sup>th</sup> JPACT meeting and then invite input from the committees for ideas on future work plan efforts.