

Memo

Date: June 9, 2022

To: Metro Council

From: Dan Kaempff, Principal Transportation Planner
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Subject: Regional Flexible Funds/Trails Bond Funding Decisions

Introduction

Metro Council will be requested to take action later this year on two funding allocations. One is the 2025-2027 Regional Flexible Funds Allocation (RFFA) to a package of transportation projects. The other is a package of trails projects to be funded through the Metro Parks and Nature bond measure, approved by voters in 2019.

A combination of policy direction, technical information and public input is used in developing a recommendation of these packages for funding. Current policy direction and program process provides some latitude in how these inputs can be used in shaping funding investments that best serve the region's needs. Staff is seeking input from Council on outcomes you wish to see brought forward in the funding packages on which you will take action.

Process and timeline

Identifying projects funded through the RFFA follows a previously established process. Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) serve jointly as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) board and are responsible for investment of the region's federal transportation funding. The Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) develops a funding recommendation for JPACT's consideration and approval. Metro Council then takes action to either adopt the JPACT-approved investment list or refers it back to JPACT.

The project selection process for the Parks and Nature bond trail grant program is similar but not identical to the RFFA process. The two funding programs share the same outcomes evaluation, risk assessment and public comment processes. Additionally, the Coordinating Committees' lists of priorities will also inform both funding decisions.

The primary difference between the two selection processes is that while JPACT approves the recommended RFFA project list, the final bond project list is entirely a Metro Council decision. While Council will consider input from JPACT on the bond project list, it is Metro COO Marissa Madrigal who will recommend the final bond project list to Council.

For the Parks Bond allocation, Metro staff proposes to compile a menu of draft project list scenarios in June, drawing from the outcomes evaluation and risk assessment, input from the July and August TPAC and JPACT meetings, the public comment report, and the Coordinating Committees' priority

lists will inform subsequent draft funding scenarios, culminating in a final staff recommendation in September. Metro Council is scheduled to consider and take action on the recommended project list on October 13, 2022.

TPAC and JPACT will discuss and consider different RFFA funding approaches through July and August, with action to approve a funding list scheduled for September. Metro Council is scheduled to consider and take action on JPACT's approved list on October 13, 2022.

Sources of input to inform funding decisions

Reaching a final decision on which projects receive funding is a process of gathering and reviewing multiple sources of information on the projects themselves, combined with considering regional and federal policy directives specific to this process. All the projects under consideration have been identified previously in the RTP or through regional trails system plan and 2019 Parks and Nature bond processes. As such, they are all important to the creation of the region's envisioned transportation and trails systems.

Outcomes Evaluation – The Outcomes Evaluation is a technical report of the candidate projects' ability to achieve the region's investment priorities. Metro Council adopted these priorities through the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and in referring to the ballot the Parks and Nature Bond Measure, which voters approved in 2019. Subsequently, a work group comprised of TPAC representatives, agency staff and community organization representatives provided input to the development of performance measures and assisted in creation of the Outcomes Evaluation report.

There are five primary criteria areas in the Outcomes Evaluation, based on the policy priorities noted above. The **Equity, Safety, Climate and Congestion Relief** criteria are based on the 2018 RTP Investment Priorities¹. The **Trails** criteria are identified in the Bond Measure language². The Equity, Safety and Climate areas were used in rating all the projects. The Congestion Relief criteria was used only for RFFA projects, and the Trails criteria was only used for Trails Bond projects. Each criteria area was weighted equally for the purposes of the Outcomes Evaluation.

The Outcomes Evaluation report illustrates how projects performed in each of the relevant criteria areas, as well as an overall rating. Project ratings follow a GOOD | BETTER | BEST structure. Structuring the report in this manner provides decision makers with information to better understand how well projects advance specific regional priorities. The projects are rated in comparison to the other projects within their specific category. Projects requesting consideration for either funding source are shown in the relevant category for both funding types.

Risk Assessment – Following practice established for the 2022-2024 RFFA, Metro is working with Kittelson and Associates to conduct a risk assessment of the project proposals. This evaluation measures the thoroughness of projects' scoping, timeline and budget, and identifies any associated risks to the project being completed as indicated in the proposal. The risk assessment also includes a preliminary cultural resources assessment that identifies the probability of resources with a project area and estimates the level of effort required to address the presence of resources. The risk assessment is intended to

¹ 2018 Regional Transportation Plan, Chapter 6

² Metro Council Resolution 19-4988, Exhibit F

help ensure that the regional funding awarded to a project can be obligated and proceed as described in the applications. The initial risk assessment findings have been shared with applicants. They have the opportunity to amend their proposal following the initial risk assessment report to address any findings. The final risk assessment report will be presented to TPAC and JPACT in July.

Public Comment – A 30-day public comment period concludes on June 21. This provides the opportunity for members of the general public, community organizations and local jurisdictions to provide insights and information beyond that included in the project application materials and to demonstrate support for specific projects and staff have worked to publicize this opportunity as broadly as possible.

Coordinating Committee Prioritization – Gathering input from local jurisdictions via their county coordinating committees is the final source of information used in helping shape the funding decision. Coordinating committees may indicate which of the projects submitted from their represented jurisdictions are their priorities to be considered for funding and articulate additional project benefits they believe were not adequately captured by the Outcomes Evaluation. The deadline for coordinating committees to submit communication to Metro on their priorities is July 22.

RFFA Objectives – Included in the 2025-2027 RFFA Program Direction are ten objectives that define how the RFFA process should be conducted and what outcomes should be achieved through the overall allocation process. Two of these objectives in particular influence how a final selection of projects is determined. One objective directs projects should be selected for funding from throughout the region without a predetermined suballocation or formula. Another objective is to recognize the needs of projects at various stages of planning, development and construction. Part of the TPAC and JPACT deliberation will be to ensure the funding allocation they approve is consistent with all the RFFA objectives.³

These information sources of project performance, stakeholder input and regional objectives are used together to arrive at a final package of projects for Council consideration.

Next steps and schedule

Staff is preparing for upcoming discussions with TPAC and JPACT in July, August and September. To help inform the discussion of which projects are to be awarded funding, staff intend to develop two or more draft funding proposals for TPAC and JPACT discussion and consideration. These proposals are intended to illustrate different approaches to awarding funds.

Potential options for these proposals include looking at funding projects based on the project's overall ratings, looking at the results of funding the top performing projects across all criteria areas. Other proposals could consider funding projects that rate highly in one or two specific criteria areas, regardless of their overall ratings. Using this approach gives decision makers the opportunity to compare different approaches to achieving regionally identified outcomes. Initial proposals could also be adjusted to incorporate other allocation process inputs such as public support, Coordinating Committee priorities, providing for an adequate distribution of project benefits across the region, or a desired balance of project development and project construction investment. Finally, staff will

³ See Appendix B following this memo, or the [2025-2027 RFFA Program Direction](#) for a full listing of the RFFA Objectives

perform a technical screen of proposed packages to ensure technical criteria are met such as having an adequate number of projects that eligible for the component federal funding sources that make up the RFFA process.

In the TPAC and JPACT discussions, members will consider and refine these proposals to reach an agreement for the list of RFFA projects to be sent to Metro Council for their consideration. Their input will also be used to inform the staff recommendation to Council for projects to be funded through the Bond funding.

Table 1
RFFA Step 2 project selection schedule

July	8 – TPAC 14 – TPAC workshop 21 – JPACT	Present final risk assessment report, public comment report, discuss initial draft staff proposals Coordinating committees identify priority projects (due July 22)	
August	5 – TPAC 18 – JPACT	RFFA Refined draft staff recommendation, w/CCC priorities. Draft Council legislation	Bond Metro staff refine funding proposal, incorporating input from JPACT.
September	2 – TPAC ACTION 15 – JPACT ACTION	Recommendation to JPACT Approved project list to Council	Metro COO recommends Bond Trails Grant project list to Council
October	13 – Council ACTION	Final adoption of 25-27 RFFA funding allocations	Council approves and adopts Bond Trails Grants project list

Questions for Council discussion

What input does Council wish to provide to staff to indicate what they want to see reflected in these draft discussion proposals? As a means to present the project ratings, the table in Appendix A is sorted by project's Overall ratings. The Overall rating method weights each of the criteria equally. However, the RFFA program direction was for the outcomes evaluation to not weight the priority investment categories relative to each other but rather to provide decision makers with the opportunity to utilize the performance ratings for each category as they found most helpful during the project selection process. Are there other approaches to using the five criteria areas to illustrate different policy outcomes from proposed funding packages that you wish TPAC and JPACT to consider?

Does Council have specific outcomes they want to accomplish through this funding allocation process?

Is there specific information you wish to communicate to TPAC and JPACT to help inform their discussions?

Appendix A – RFFA/Trails Bond Project Outcomes Ratings

In this example, projects are sorted by their Overall rating within each funding category.

25-27 RFFA/Trails Bond project ratings				Legend:					
Project	Applicant	Fund Source	Requested amount	Equity	Safety	Climate	Con. Rel.	Trails	Overall
Trails Bond Planning/PD projects									
Tigard-LO Trail	Tigard	Either	\$ 245,000	67%	71%	56%	N/A	82%	69%
Westside Trail Bridge	THPRD	Bond	\$ 1,907,500	89%	71%	33%	N/A	76%	67%
Scott Creek Trail	Happy Valley	Bond	\$ 89,562	78%	79%	44%	N/A	47%	62%
Brookwood Ped Overpass	Hillsboro	Either	\$ 4,500,000	44%	71%	33%	N/A	71%	55%
Emerald Necklace Trail	Forest Grove	Either	\$ 200,000	56%	63%	33%	N/A	53%	51%
Westside Trail: Seg 1	King City	Bond	\$ 210,000	44%	50%	22%	N/A	56%	43%
Trails Bond Construction projects									
Council Ck Trail	Washington Co	Either	\$ 5,511,000	67%	92%	67%	N/A	82%	77%
Trolley Trail	NCPRD	Bond	\$ 624,250	67%	71%	56%	N/A	88%	70%
NP Greenway (Col to Cath)	PPR	Either	\$ 2,647,950	78%	83%	44%	N/A	71%	69%
Gresh-Fairview Trail	Gresham	Bond	\$ 4,167,723	67%	79%	56%	N/A	65%	67%
Marine Dr Trail	PPR	Either	\$ 2,161,124	56%	71%	56%	N/A	59%	60%
NP Greenway (Kelley to Slough)	PPR	Either	\$ 3,483,699	56%	58%	44%	N/A	56%	54%
Cornfoot Rd	PBOT	Either	\$ 5,225,500	56%	46%	44%	N/A	59%	51%
Sandy River Greenway	Troutdale	Bond	\$ 1,945,800	22%	67%	44%	N/A	47%	45%
Clackamas River Trail	Happy Valley	Bond	\$ 666,175	33%	42%	11%	N/A	29%	29%
RFFA Planning/PD projects									
I-205 MUP	Clackamas Co	RFFA	\$ 935,884	78%	71%	56%	71%	N/A	69%
Tigard-LO Trail	Tigard	Either	\$ 245,000	67%	71%	56%	79%	N/A	68%
Allen Blvd	Beaverton	RFFA	\$ 723,670	67%	50%	67%	79%	N/A	66%
Fanno Ck Trail	Tigard	RFFA	\$ 1,606,705	67%	50%	56%	54%	N/A	57%
Brookwood Ped Overpass	Hillsboro	Either	\$ 4,500,000	44%	71%	33%	67%	N/A	54%
Troutdale Rd	Multnomah Co	RFFA	\$ 1,720,000	56%	58%	44%	50%	N/A	52%
Emerald Necklace Trail	Forest Grove	Either	\$ 200,000	56%	63%	33%	54%	N/A	51%
Lakeview Blvd	Lake Oswego	RFFA	\$ 450,036	67%	13%	56%	13%	N/A	37%
RFFA Construction projects									
162nd Ave	Gresham	RFFA	\$ 7,316,080	100%	83%	67%	79%	N/A	82%
MLK Blvd	PBOT	RFFA	\$ 5,532,955	78%	63%	78%	88%	N/A	76%
Council Ck Trail	Washington Co	Either	\$ 5,511,000	67%	92%	67%	79%	N/A	76%
NP Greenway (Col to Cath)	PPR	Either	\$ 2,745,541	78%	83%	44%	79%	N/A	71%
Beaverton Creek Trail	THPRD	RFFA	\$ 1,774,575	78%	71%	56%	79%	N/A	71%
7th Ave	PBOT	RFFA	\$ 10,692,227	56%	71%	67%	79%	N/A	68%
148th Ave	PBOT	RFFA	\$ 7,100,335	89%	63%	67%	54%	N/A	68%
57th Ave-Cully Blvd	PBOT	RFFA	\$ 7,643,201	67%	63%	67%	71%	N/A	67%
Marine Dr Trail	PPR	Either	\$ 2,770,252	56%	71%	56%	79%	N/A	65%
Sandy Blvd	Multnomah Co	RFFA	\$ 20,660,000	44%	63%	67%	79%	N/A	63%
Taylor's Fy Rd	PBOT	RFFA	\$ 10,124,236	56%	58%	56%	67%	N/A	59%
Cornfoot Rd	PBOT	Either	\$ 6,698,345	56%	46%	44%	83%	N/A	57%
NP Greenway (Kelley to Slough)	PPR	Either	\$ 4,465,605	56%	58%	44%	54%	N/A	53%
Willamette Falls Dr	West Linn	RFFA	\$ 3,497,580	33%	63%	56%	54%	N/A	51%

Appendix B – RFFA funding objectives

1. Select projects from throughout the region; however, consistent with federal rules, there is no sub-allocation formula or commitment to a particular distribution of funds to any sub-area of the region.
2. Honor previous funding commitments made by JPACT and the Metro Council.
3. Address air quality requirements by ensuring State Implementation Plan for air quality requirements are met and that an adequate pool of CMAQ-eligible projects is available for funding.
4. Achieve multiple transportation policy objectives.
5. Allow use of funding for project development and local match of large-scale projects (greater than \$10 million) that compete well in addressing policy objectives when there is a strong potential to leverage other sources of discretionary funding.
6. Encourage the application of projects that efficiently and cost-effectively make use of federal funds.
7. Recognize the difference in transportation infrastructure investment needs relative to an areas stage of development (developed, developing, undeveloped) consistent with RTP Table 2.2.
8. Identify project delivery performance issues that may impact ability to complete a project on time and on budget.
9. Ensure agencies have qualifications for leading federal aid transportation projects.
10. Identify opportunities for leveraging, coordinating, and collaboration.