

# METRO COUNCIL

## Work Session Worksheet

**PRESENTATION DATE:** April 10, 2018

**LENGTH:** 30 minutes

**PRESENTATION TITLE:** Draft Regional Transit Strategy update

**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Development

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### WORK SESSION PURPOSE & DESIRED OUTCOMES

- **Purpose:** Provide Council with an opportunity to discuss the Draft Regional Transit Strategy, specifically regarding New and revised policies and the Regional Transit Vision.
- **Outcome:** Council provides input on the Regional Transit Strategy supporting the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan update.

### TOPIC BACKGROUND & FRAMING THE WORK SESSION DISCUSSION

The Regional Transit Strategy (RTS) is a collaborative effort to create a single coordinated transit vision and implementation strategy. The objectives of the RTS are to:

- Implement the 2040 Growth Concept and Climate Smart Strategy
- Update RTP transit-related policies and performance measures
- Update the current Regional Transit Network Map and High Capacity Transit Map
- Update the Transit System Expansion Policy
- Recommend a coordinated strategy for future transit investments and identify potential partnerships, strategies and funding sources for implementation.

#### **Implement the 2040 Growth Concept and Climate Smart Strategy**

Building off the Climate Smart Strategy, the regional transit vision is **to make transit more frequent, convenient, accessible and affordable for everyone**. The regional transit vision, policies and actions outlined in the Regional Transit Strategy build upon the strategies identified in the Climate Smart Strategy and support the implementation of our 2040 Growth Concept.

#### **Update RTP transit-related policies and performance measures**

This vision has been incorporated into our transit related policies to create a seamless transit system that works for everyone. Existing policies were integrated with new policies that address: equity, maintenance and resiliency, enhanced transit concept, first and last mile, new technology and affordability.

The proposed new transit policies are:

1. Provide a seamless, integrated, affordable, safe and accessible transit network that serves people equitably, particularly communities of color and other historically marginalized communities, and people who depend on transit or lack travel options. *(New)*
2. Preserve and maintain the region's transit infrastructure in a manner that improves safety, security and resiliency while minimizing life-cycle cost and impact on the environment. *(New to address MAP-21 asset management and resiliency requirements)*
3. Make transit more frequent by expanding regional and local frequent service transit and improving local service transit. *(Minor revisions to consolidate policies)*
4. Make transit more convenient by expanding high capacity transit (through the System Expansion Policy framework) and the region's enhanced transit network *(New)*, and supporting expanded commuter rail and intercity transit service to neighboring communities. *(Minor revisions to consolidate policies)*
5. Make transit more accessible by improving pedestrian and bicycle access to transit stops and stations and using new mobility services to improve connections to high-frequency transit when walking, bicycling, or local bus service is not an option. *(Minor revisions to add language on role of new mobility services)*
6. Use emerging technologies to provide better, more efficient transit service – focusing on meeting the needs of people for whom conventional transit is not an option. *(New to add language on role of emerging technologies)*
7. Ensure that transit is affordable, especially for people who depend on transit. *(New to add language on transit affordability)*

*The transit related performance measures were modified to include performance measures from the Climate Smart Strategy.*

### **Update the current Regional Transit Network Map and High Capacity Transit Map**

The Regional Transit Network is the future transit vision and includes future regional and local bus, enhanced transit corridors, high capacity transit and intercity rail. The proposed Regional Transit Network map has been updated to include the 2009 HCT lines, new enhanced transit concept, streetcar and future transit service as identified by the TriMet's Service Enhancement Plans and Wilsonville's Transit Master Plan.

Proposed changes to the 2009 HCT Map include:

- Moving the I-5 HCT corridor from "High Capacity Transit Corridors under development" to "Next Phase Regional Priority Corridor"
- Moving the Portland to Lake Oswego Streetcar project from "High Capacity Transit Corridors under development" to "Next Phase Regional Priority Corridor"
- Portland to Gresham in the vicinity of Powell Corridor remains a "Near Term Regional Priority"
- Add Portland to Gresham on SE Division St "High Capacity Transit Corridors under development"
- Moved Portland to Sherwood in the vicinity of Barbur/Highway 99 Corridor from "Near Term Regional Priority" to "High Capacity Transit Corridors under development"
- Modified the Clackamas Town Center to Damascus to connect to Happy Valley via the Columbia to Clackamas Corridor in the "Regional Vision Corridors"

## Update the Transit System Expansion Policy

The System Expansion Policy was adopted as part of the High Capacity Transit (HCT) System Plan in 2009 and was designed to help jurisdictions move projects towards implementation. The transit system expansion policy would only apply to those investments seeking FTA Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program funding (e.g. New Starts, Small Starts or Core Capacity). Examples of investments that could be considered as part of this program are the Division Transit Project, a corridor based bus rapid transit (BRT), or the Southwest Corridor Transit Project. The purpose of the System Expansion Policy is to:

- Clearly articulate the decision-making process by which future HCT corridors will be advanced for regional investment
- Establish minimum requirements for HCT corridor working groups to inform local jurisdictions as they work to advance their priorities for future HCT
- Define quantitative and qualitative performance measures to guide local land use and transportation planning and investment decisions
- Outlines the process for updating the 2035 RTP, including Potential future RTP amendments, for future HCT investment decisions

The updated Transit System Expansion Policy (TSEP) is still under development. The Council will have an opportunity to provide feedback and direction at a later date. Key elements to the updating the TSEP include:

- **Reduce the number of criteria** by eliminating duplicative measures, those not commonly used in peer processes, and certain qualitative measures that can instead become an element of a project justification narrative section of Metro's process of submitting projects for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).
- **Focus the core evaluation measures** on those elements that describe the benefit of the project, consistent with regional values, as well as measures that enhance the competitiveness of projects in the FTA CIG program.
- **Evaluate project readiness separately** for the highest priority projects. Project readiness factors include funding potential (aligned with FTA criteria) and local aspirations (measure local commitment and established agency partnerships to ensure successful project delivery)

Working with our regional partners, we were able to reduce the number of criteria from 26 to 12. We are currently applying the draft criteria to the HCT projects identified in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This will help determine if the proposed criteria provides the information needed to determine prioritization.

The TSEP includes a multi-phased evaluation that includes core criteria as well as readiness criteria. The Core Criteria is comprised of measures that describe the benefit of the projects, consistent with regional values, as well as assess the competitiveness of projects for funding through the FTA CIG program. The Readiness Criteria is the second filter and is evaluated separately from the core criteria assessment for the highest priority projects. Project readiness factors include funding potential (a simulated scoring based on the FTA CIG program criteria) and local aspirations (measure of local commitment and established agency partnerships to ensure successful project delivery).

## QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

1. Existing policies have been modified and new policies have been added to reflect Council direction. Does the Council support the updates to the transit related policies as identified in these materials?

2. Does Council support the key changes to the HCT map and the Transit Network Map?

**PACKET MATERIALS**

- Would legislation be required for Council action ☐ Yes ☒ No

***Materials included***

- *DRAFT Regional Transit Strategy Report, March 2018*