

REGIONAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY: REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT MEASURE UPDATE

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Prepared by: Craig Beebe, x1584,
craig.beebe@oregonmetro.gov

Department: GAPD

Presenters: Tyler Frisbee,
tyler.frisbee@oregonmetro.gov;
Andy Shaw, andy.shaw@oregonmetro.gov

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Length: 30 min

ISSUE STATEMENT

It's fundamental to greater Portland's future to have a variety of safe, affordable, and reliable options for people to get where they need to go – whether they are driving, riding a bus or train, biking or walking. In February, the Metro Council confirmed the Metro Council President's appointment of a Transportation Funding Task Force to advise it on the development of a potential 2020 transportation funding measure. Staff will provide an update on the Task Force's work and next steps for the development of the measure.

ACTION REQUESTED

No formal action requested at this work session. Staff seek to keep the Metro Council updated ahead of direction on priority investment corridors in May.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

The Metro Council has previously indicated its desire that a regional measure:

- Be truly regional, delivering benefits to residents and businesses throughout greater Portland's three counties and 24 cities
- Advance racial equity through the measure's development and implementation
- Reduce climate emissions and support projects, programs, and policies that will advance Metro's Climate Smart Strategy
- Support investments that make it safer and easier to use a variety of transportation options that serve people's needs, including driving, taking transit, bicycling, walking and rolling
- Advance the Southwest Corridor light rail project, delivering a congestion-proof transit option to one of the region's busiest and fastest-growing travel corridors
- Bring together a wide coalition of interests and partners, as well as community members, to support a broad, bold package of investments in the region's future

POLICY QUESTIONS

- Does the Metro Council recognize alignment between its identified values and outcomes and those of the Transportation Funding Task Force?
- How can staff and the Task Force best support the Metro Council providing direction on priority corridors for investment?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

The Transportation Funding Task Force is expected to make a corridor prioritization recommendation to the Metro Council in mid-May. The Metro Council is expected to provide direction on the Task Force's recommendation at a work session on May 21.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Everybody in greater Portland deserves safe and reliable ways to get to work, school, and other destinations, and back home again. However and wherever we travel, we all depend on roads, buses, trains and streets that work for many kinds of people and many kinds of trips – from commuting and moving goods to running errands and visiting friends.

Greater Portland is growing quickly, with more than two thousand new residents each month. It's fundamental to our future to have a variety of safe, affordable, and reliable options for people to get where they need to go – whether they are driving, riding a bus or train, biking or walking.

Metro has been working since early 2018 to lay the foundation of a collaborative, comprehensive investment plan that makes getting around safer, faster and more affordable for everyone. The Metro Council has directed that this plan include investments throughout the region, supporting the many ways residents travel today and in the future. The council has been clear that this work must place advancing racial equity and addressing climate change at its core. The council also seeks to engage a wide range of community members, partners and leaders to identify smart solutions supported by a broad coalition.

The passage of the regional affordable housing bond in November demonstrates greater Portland voters' eagerness to work together to address the critical issues we face. The council is now working with jurisdictional partners, housing providers and the community to create needed affordable homes through the bond. The Metro Council is also considering a parks and nature bond in 2019 to carry Metro's work protecting and connecting nature and people into a new decade. As greater Portland faces the future, a regional transportation investment measure in 2020 could represent a significant opportunity to connect priorities and make meaningful, strategic investments that improve lives and increase opportunities throughout the region.

BACKGROUND

In December 2018, the Metro Council adopted a significant Regional Transportation Plan update, following years of engagement that included over 19,000 touch points with residents, community and business leaders, and regional partners. Through the extensive engagement that shaped the plan, Metro heard clear desires from residents for safe, smart, reliable and affordable transportation options for everyone and every type of trip. Built around key values of equity, climate, safety, and congestion relief, the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan recognizes that a growing and changing region needs a new vision for serving people's transportation needs.

At work sessions on Jan. 24 and 31, the Metro Council provided guidance on key outcomes, principles and the structure of a potential transportation investment measure that could help advance this vision. The Metro Council also identified 60 potential transportation corridors where investment could help advance these outcomes as a starting point for further discussion, engagement and prioritization. Finally, the Metro Council approved a charge to provide direction for a Regional Transportation Funding Task Force.

On Feb. 14, the Metro Council approved Resolution No. 19-4964, confirming the Metro Council President's appointment of the Transportation Funding Task Force with nearly three dozen community leaders from throughout the region.

The Task Force, co-chaired by Multnomah County Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson and Washington County Commissioner Pam Treece, has met three times since its appointment. On Feb. 27, Task Force members outlined key hopes for the measure. On March 6, the Task Force discussed how transportation investments should advance racial equity and aligned members' values to the measure direction provided by the Metro Council in January. On March 20, the Task Force reviewed the methodology behind the initial 60 corridors for consideration in the measure and proposed several additional corridors for evaluation. Over the course of further meetings in April, the Task Force will establish criteria for prioritizing these potential corridors. By mid-May, the Task Force is expected to make a corridor prioritization recommendation to the Metro Council.

At the April 2 Metro Council work session, staff will provide an update on the Task Force's work, including the alignment of Task Force and Metro Council values and additional corridors the Task Force has proposed for consideration. Staff will also discuss next steps for developing the measure, including Task Force work, Council decisions and engagement with community and key partners.

Metro Council will continue to direct staff in future iterative policy discussions, including direction on options for investments, programs, oversight and implementation of the measure. The Metro Council could consider referring a measure to voters in spring 2020.

- Is legislation required for Council action? **Yes**
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? **No**