

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 19-5048 FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING
THE WORK PLAN AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR UPDATING THE
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP) MOBILITY POLICY

Date: November 21, 2019

Department: Planning and Development

Meeting Date: December 5, 2019

Prepared by:

Kim Ellis, x1617,

kim.ellis@oregonmetro.gov

ISSUE STATEMENT

Metro and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) are working together to update the policy on how the region defines and measures mobility in regional and local transportation system plans (TSPs) and during the local plan amendment process in the Portland area. The current “interim” 20-year old mobility policy is contained in both the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) and Policy 1F (Highway Mobility Policy) of the [Oregon Highway Plan](#) (OHP). The current policy is vehicle-focused and measures congestion levels by using the ratio of motor vehicle volume to motor vehicle capacity during peak travel periods.

The need for this project was identified in the 2018 RTP in part because the Portland region cannot meet the current mobility policy targets and standards as they are now set for Portland region in the 2018 RTP and OHP. The 2018 RTP failed to demonstrate consistency with Policy 1F of the OHP for state-owned facilities, particularly for the region’s throughway system.¹ Moreover, growing congestion on Portland area throughways is impacting economic competitiveness for the region and entire state and is of regional and statewide concern. As a result, ODOT agreed to work with Metro to update the mobility policy for the Portland metropolitan area in both the 2018 RTP and OHP Policy 1F.

The 2018 RTP is built around four key priorities of advancing equity, mitigating climate change, improving safety and managing congestion. The plan recognizes that our growing and changing region needs an updated mobility policy to better align how we measure the performance and adequacy of the transportation system for both people and goods to serve planned land uses. The comprehensive set of shared regional values, goals and related desired outcomes

What is the Regional Mobility Policy?

The region’s mobility policy is based on vehicle-based thresholds adopted in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Policy 1F of Oregon Highway Plan (OHP). These thresholds are referred to as the volume-to-capacity ratio (v/c ratio).

As the primary way of measuring congestion on roads and at intersections, the current policy measures the number of motor vehicles relative to the motor vehicle capacity of a given roadway during peak weekday travel times to identify transportation needs and determine adequacy of the transportation system to serve planned land uses.

Originally developed and used to guide the sizing and location of the Interstate System in the 1960s, over time the policy has been applied to all roads for these purposes:

- Planning for the future
- Regulating development
- Mitigating the impacts of development
- Managing and designing roads

¹ Throughways are designated in the 2018 RTP and generally correspond to Expressways designated in the OHP.

identified in the RTP and 2040 Growth Concept, as well as local and state goals will guide to this work. This work will be coordinated with planned updates to the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP) and the OHP.

Since April 2019, Metro and ODOT have worked closely together and with local, regional and state partners to scope the project, seeking feedback on the project objectives and proposed approach.

Comments and feedback have been received since mid-April through:

- two **Metro Council work sessions** (June 25 and November 5);
- more than twenty-eight **discussions with local and regional policy and technical advisory committees**, including county-level coordinating committees, **and local, regional and state agency staff** aimed at understanding the intersection of the mobility policy and land use and other transportation issues (April – October);
- one **forum with community leaders** (August);
- two **consultation meetings with Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development** staff (September and November); and
- **interviews with more than sixty stakeholders** from across the greater Portland region representing state, regional and local government, transit, business, freight movement, commuter, public health, environmental, affordable housing and racial equity perspectives, among other stakeholders (July – October).

A **Scoping Report** describing the process and key themes from stakeholder feedback and a **Stakeholder Interviews Report** are provided in **Attachments 1 and 2, respectively**.

Overall, there is broad support and enthusiasm for an updated policy that accounts for all modes of travel and a broader array of outcomes beyond the level of congestion. Stakeholders also broadly supported the draft project objectives and the need for an updated policy. The comments and feedback received throughout the scoping phase shaped the work plan and the stakeholder and public engagement plan recommended by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) on November 21, 2019.

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve Resolution No. 19-5048, approving both the work plan and the stakeholder engagement plan for the regional mobility policy update as recommended by JPACT and directing staff to move forward with the next phase of the project.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

As directed by the 2018 RTP, this project will update the 20-year old “interim” mobility policy that is used to define and measure mobility in regional and local transportation system plans (TSPs) and during the plan amendment process in the Portland area. The project will develop a holistic alternative mobility policy and associated measures, targets, and methods for the Portland region that focuses on system completeness for all modes and system and demand management activities to serve planned land uses. The project will advance the RTP policy goals for addressing equity, climate, safety and congestion as well

as support other state, regional and local policy objectives, including implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept and the region's Climate Smart Strategy.

In addition, this project will develop guidance to jurisdictions on how to balance multiple policy objectives and document adequacy, i.e. consistency with the RTP and OHP, in both transportation system plans (TSPs) and plan amendments, when there are multiple measures and targets in place. Finally, the project will recommend considerations for future local, regional and state actions outside the scope of this project to implement the new policy and to reconcile differences between the new TSP and plan amendment measures and targets and those used in development review and project design.

POLICY QUESTION

Should the Metro Council approve the resolution and direct staff to move forward with implementing the regional mobility policy update work plan and supporting stakeholder engagement plan as recommended by JPACT?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Policy options for the Metro Council to consider include:

1. Approve the resolution thereby approving the project work plan and stakeholder engagement plan as recommended by JPACT and directing staff to move forward with the next phase of the project.
2. Approve the resolution with changes or conditions.
3. Do not approve the resolution.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends Metro Council approval of Resolution No. 19-5048, approving both the work plan and the stakeholder engagement plan for the regional mobility policy update as recommended by JPACT and directing staff to move forward to the next phase of the project.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

When the mobility policy update was defined and adopted unanimously in Chapter 8 of the 2018 RTP, JPACT and the Metro Council recognized this work must holistically advance the RTP policy goals for addressing equity, climate, safety, and congestion as well as support other state, regional and local policy objectives, including implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept and the region's Climate Smart Strategy. This understanding and direction provided by the Metro Council in June is reflected in the project work plan and engagement plan recommended by JPACT.

Known Opposition/Support/Community Feedback

There is no known opposition.

Legal Antecedents

- **Ordinance No. 18-1421** (For the Purpose of Amending the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan to Comply with Federal and State Law and Amending the Regional Framework Plan), adopted December 6, 2018.
- **Resolution No. 19-4979** (For the Purpose of Adopting the Fiscal Year 2019-20 Unified Planning Work Program), adopted May 16, 2019.

Anticipated Effects

Approval of Resolution 19-5048 will direct staff to move forward to the next phase of the project and to finalize the project agreement between Metro and ODOT.

As called for in the work plan, the project will develop a holistic mobility policy that addresses all modes of travel and considers a broader array of outcomes, beyond the level of congestion. The project will advance the RTP policy goals for advancing equity, mitigating climate change, improving safety and managing congestion as well as support other state, regional and local policy outcomes, including implementation of the 2040 Growth Concept and the region's Climate Smart Strategy.

The updated policy will provide a clear policy basis for management of and investment in the throughway and arterial system to better manage growing motor vehicle congestion in the region in order to maintain interstate and statewide mobility on the throughway system while providing for intra-regional mobility and access by transit, freight and other modes of travel on the arterial roadway network and other modal networks defined in the RTP.

This project will develop amendments to the mobility policy contained in the 2018 RTP and the OHP for the Portland metropolitan region for consideration by JPACT, the Metro Council and the Oregon Transportation Commission in 2021.

Financial Implications

This project is accounted for in the 2019-20 budget approved by the Metro Council on June 20, 2019 and the 2019-2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approved by the Metro Council on May 16, 2019. The project will rely on a combination of Metro's federal transportation planning grants and other resources to be determined by ODOT, pending finalizing the project agreement between Metro and ODOT.

ATTACHMENTS TO STAFF REPORT

1. Stakeholder Interviews Report (10/23/19)
2. Scoping Engagement Report (11/1/19)