

Budget Note Response Form - Regional Climate Mitigation

Budget Note Narrative

Our region is calling for greater leadership on climate mitigation. Although Metro has adopted a climate goal for internal operations¹, incorporated climate leadership into its six desired outcomes², and implemented climate criteria into policies and programs across departments, it is clear that Metro has an opportunity to take the next step for climate action and catalyze a coordinated regional strategy.

The budget note directs staff to develop a work plan and identify employee capacity needed to create a coordinated, regional strategy to mitigate climate change, including but not limited to:

- Create an inventory of current climate change mitigation work being done both at Metro and at partner jurisdictions
- Evaluate opportunities for new climate mitigation work through Metro's external-facing programs
- Work with local jurisdictions to determine their climate needs and identify ways in which Metro can support their work
- Develop multi-jurisdictional benchmarks for greenhouse gas reduction in key timelines (e.g. 2030, 2050) and a regional strategies and a roadmap to meet those goals
- Identify regional climate goals for the impacts of Metro's external-facing work and what progress looks like for Metro
- Effectively communicate our strategy and our successes.

Resources currently allocated

Climate mitigation is embedded in much of the work that occurs throughout Metro, and few people have climate work explicitly called out in their job descriptions, so it is difficult to calculate the amount of staff resources currently allocated. The attached document entitled "Metro Current Climate Mitigation Allocated Resources" is an attempt at this calculation, and the total resources are summarized below, but there are a few assumptions that impact the calculation.

- Much of the existing climate mitigation work calculated is not done exclusive of other desired regional outcomes, including Equity, Vibrant communities, Economic prosperity Safe and reliable transportation, and Clean air and water. If the time spent on each of these desired outcomes was calculated in a similar fashion it is likely every staff position would add up to more than 1 FTE since these issues are interconnected and improving one helps to improve others.
- Because of the overlapping work described above, the department-level FTE shown in the table below are not strictly comparable in an apples-to-apples sense, but they do give a good sense of the level of climate-related effort each department now makes.
- The in-progress refresh of Metro's Vision 2040 has explicitly committed at both Council and staff levels to addressing climate change as a crucial action element. Staff recommend that Council be aware of this fact and consider any resources they wish to devote to climate mitigation work in light of the Vision 2040 effort and its potential outcomes. The current Vision 2040 work plan envisions ramping up staff and Council work after fall of 2020.

Currently Allocated Resources

Department	FTE	Cost
Parks & Nature	.3	\$41,400
Planning & Development	6.15	\$935,650
Property & Environmental Services	22.3	\$9,800,000
Research Center	.08	\$32,000
Visitor Venues	3.3	\$377,300
GAPD/Other	.25	\$61,300
Total	32.38	\$11,247,650

¹ <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/how-metro-works/green-metro>

² Metro Resolution 08-3940, "For the Purpose of Affirming a Definition of a "Successful Region" and Committing Metro to Work with Regional Partners to Identify Performance Indicators and Targets and to Develop a Decision-Making Process to Create Successful Communities," adopted on June 26, 2008.

Staff Proposal – Narrative

Climate change is one of the most critical issues facing both the global and local communities. Metropolitan regions are well situated to take meaningful action to respond, and, in recognition of this, the Metro Council adopted leadership on climate change among the six desired outcomes for the region in 2008. As is evident above and in the attached “Synopsis of Metro’s Leadership on Climate Change” Memo, significant climate mitigation work is already occurring throughout Metro. The goal of this budget note would be a coordinated effort that provides the Metro Council and local governments with the technical support and information they need to make substantive climate mitigation impact through policy changes and investments as well as to effectively communicate about these efforts. Below are three alternative proposals to move this work forward.

Consistent throughout the three proposals is the introduction of a new “climate coordinator” who can take Metro’s climate leadership to the next level and provide more regional stewardship and visibility on climate mitigation as well as providing coordination and support for existing climate mitigation programs throughout the agency.³

The climate coordinator could also engage with local jurisdictions to share best practices, support their current efforts, help facilitate the exchange of information and amplify their efforts as well as engage them in Metro’s climate related programs. As part of the research for this response local jurisdictions were surveyed about their climate action work. Out of 16 responding jurisdictions six have no plan and no expectation of a plan in the future. Three are working on a plan, three others have plans that were focused on internal operations, and only four currently have broader community focused Climate Action Plans. The responses from the jurisdictions on why they have not taken action ranged from “no requests to do anything” to “lack of legal mandate” but mostly focused on lack of resources and staff capacity as well as competing priorities. Depending on the level of investment made, Metro’s support of local jurisdictional partners could range from providing basic technical and policy support, coordination and collaboration to collaboratively creating a regional climate strategy and implementation plan that is ratified and supported by the Metro Council and local jurisdictions.

A few notes as the Metro Council considers expanding its work on regional climate action – first, it is important to acknowledge the geography and politics of the region. Anecdotally, it seems that in places where until recently there has been a lack of political will to pursue climate action, there now seems to be an interest in working on this issue, but resources are limited and the issue can still be highly politicized. One local government staffer indicated that because many local jurisdictions are finally moving forward in developing their own climate efforts, it is important for their community members to feel local ownership on this issue. This is particularly important in the two counties that include significant areas outside of Metro’s jurisdiction.

Second, none of these proposals include time explicitly focused on the potential effects of climate change on migration into the region. It is understandable that this issue is of significant interest to the Metro Council, as it is critical to understand if the agency is to appropriately plan for future population growth. However, at this time this issue is not well understood and there is extremely limited available research. The Metro Research Center is coordinating with government and academic partners to develop more research on this topic, but to date that collective has been unable to deploy significant new resources. However, with a dedicated climate coordinator, Metro can begin exploring climate migration, and potentially identify new resources for the Research Center and the broader community to conduct meaningful, science-based research on this issue. Local media and stakeholders in Metro’s growth planning process are already paying attention to climate change as a potential factor in migration, so this topic will only become more central to the ability of Metro to successfully plan for the region’s future.

³ Because climate mitigation work is already so central to the work that is already occurring at Metro there are some opportunities for expanded climate efforts that are not reflected in this document, but would significantly increase Metro’s capacity to support local and regional efforts to reduce GHG emissions. These include additional funding for Congestion Pricing Technical Analysis, the Regional Mobility Policy Update and the Build Small Coalition (passed to Metro from DEQ in 2017 but which will need ongoing Metro funding starting in 2020 to continue). These are in addition to other projects that are already part of the baseline budget including Food Waste reduction, Vision 2040 Refresh and many others.

Third, during the process to produce this proposal, staff completed a cursory inventory of current work being done at Metro and our partners jurisdictions, effectively completing the first of the outcomes directed by this budget note – the outcomes of this work are covered in this report and its appendices. However, should significant expanded spending on climate mitigation be prioritized it is recommended that this inventory be done more thoroughly.

And finally, Metro does not have to, and shouldn't, do this work alone. Like Metro, many of our local jurisdictional partners have already invested significant resources in climate mitigation work, and as the climate crisis worsens, efforts to reduce GHGs and mitigate the most devastating impacts of climate change will continue to expand. Publicly committing significant resources to reduce GHG emissions could help to identify and leverage partnerships with other public, private and non-profit partners. Regardless of what level of funding the Metro Council chooses, it is important that this effort include close coordination with local, regional and state partners in order to get more done and minimize duplication of work.

Climate and Equity

Climate mitigation is a topic particularly fraught with historic and systemic inequities and injustices. Those most impacted by the impacts of climate change, both locally and globally, are those who have produced the fewest GHG emissions. Individuals with low incomes and individuals of color are not only among the most impacted, but they are also least able to withstand the impacts of climate change.

It is imperative that Metro explicitly focus resources on tying climate mitigation to the good work we are already doing on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Best practices for ensuring that equity is truly embedded in climate policies require:

- Explicit commitments to equity and vulnerable populations in the mission and values of regional climate policies,
- Deeply engaging community members in processes so as to learn about their priorities, needs and challenges,
- Ensuring outcomes and implementation expand equity, and
- After implementation, policies are analyzed to ensure equity outcomes are met.⁴

In our communication efforts in particular, it is important that climate mitigation work is tied concretely and explicitly to our work on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion so that this is not seen as a pivot from one to another, but rather as an integration of deeply related issues that impact one another and are both fundamental for creating a vibrant community for all. Well-funded Metro facilitation of regional climate strategy could help ensure an equity lens is applied to all regional Climate efforts and that action plans are focused on an equitable and just climate future that reduces climate pollution equitably and addresses historical and systemic inequities.

Finally, there has been some exploration by regional partners and Metro staff of moving beyond an equity lens and addressing climate mitigation and climate adaptation through an indigenous lens. While this work is nascent it is something that this program should stay involved in and explore further.

A. "Communication and Coordination":

This approach would achieve the following outcomes articulated in the budget note:

- **Create an inventory of current climate change mitigation work being done both at Metro and at partner jurisdictions**
- **Evaluate opportunities for new climate mitigation work through Metro's external-facing programs**
- **(Effectively) communicate our strategy and our successes.**

This approach would allow Metro to better leverage currently allocated funds. By carving .5 FTE of the currently funded Resiliency Program Manager position this approach would allow coordination of existing and future climate work without significant new investments would create a climate coordinator. While this nesting is not ideal, Resiliency work⁵ and Climate mitigation work generally deal with different systems and both have significant need for investment, it does allow for a

⁴ Taken from "Making Equity Real in Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience Policies and Programs: A Guidebook" by The Greenlining Institute - <http://greenlining.org/publications/2019/making-equity-real-in-climate-adaption-and-community-resilience-policies-and-programs-a-guidebook/>

⁵ As currently defined Metro's Resiliency work focuses on reducing vulnerability to Natural Hazards and Climate impacts as well as social and economic threats to the region.

modest focus on coordinating current projects, identifying opportunities for new climate mitigation work but would not allow a significant expansion of our engagement with local jurisdictions to support their work on climate.

This approach would require additional one time investments for research, communications materials and community engagement. It would allow some coordination of climate related implementation of regional funding measures such as the Affordable Housing and Parks and Nature bonds, with other current projects. Should funding remain at this level it is unlikely that significant new regional projects on climate mitigation could be spearheaded by Metro, but this would allow more engagement with projects initiated by other partners such as the renewal of the Multnomah County/Portland Climate Action Plan or any new state level programs or policies that are developed in the near future (see risks section).

B. “Expanded Regional Effort”:

This approach would achieve the following outcomes articulated in the budget note:

- **Create an inventory of current climate change mitigation work being done both at Metro and at partner jurisdictions**
- **Evaluate opportunities for new climate mitigation work through Metro’s external-facing programs**
- **Work with local jurisdictions to determine their climate needs and ways in which Metro can support their work**
- **Develop multi-jurisdictional benchmarks for greenhouse gas reduction in key timelines (e.g. 2030, 2050) OR a regional strategies and a roadmap to meet those goals**
- **Effectively communicate our strategy and our successes.**

This approach expands the Climate Coordinator position to its own FTE and increases one time communications funding in addition to the one time investments outlined above. It also includes some additional Parks & Nature staffing in order to better implement the Parks Bond with a climate lens.

Funding for a one time summit of local, regional and state partners to begin to craft regional goals *OR* an implementation strategy on climate mitigation is also included - it is unlikely that one gathering could cover both so a gathering focused on implementation strategy would likely need to focus on current state level emissions targets or more stringent targets that had somehow been predetermined, for example if the legislature passes more stringent limits similar to those proposed in the 2019 Cap & Invest measure, which are 45 percent below 1990 emissions levels by 2035 and 80 percent below 1990 emissions levels by 2050.⁶

Finally this option provides one time funding for deep dive research to take the solutions described in “Project Drawdown”⁷ and determine which would be most effective when implemented in our region.

C. “Regional Climate Framework”:

This approach would achieve all the outcomes articulated in the budget note:

- **Create an inventory of current climate change mitigation work being done both at Metro and at partner jurisdictions**
- **Evaluate opportunities for new climate mitigation work through Metro’s external-facing programs**
- **Work with local jurisdictions to determine their climate needs and ways in which Metro can support their work**
- **Develop multi-jurisdictional benchmarks for greenhouse gas reduction in key timelines (e.g. 2030, 2050) and a regional strategies and a roadmap to meet those goals**
- **Identify regional climate goals for the impacts of Metro’s external-facing work and what progress looks like**
- **Effectively communicate our strategy and our successes.**

To significantly reduce GHG emissions in the region, sustained leadership and a substantive investment will be required. This approach would allow significant coordination not only within Metro but with our local, regional and state partners with the goal of creating and implementing a regional climate framework in the next five years. To put this in budgetary context, the four years of planning, community engagement and communications to create and implement Climate Smart Strategy required an *annual* investment of approximately \$1 million. Much work on climate mitigation is already occurring

⁶ [Oregon HB 2020 \(2019\)](#)

⁷ www.Drawdown.org

which should be leveraged, including the Vision 2040 Refresh, the update of the Functional plan, ongoing implementation of the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan, the implementation of the 2030 Regional Waste Plan and others. Because of these existing investments, it is not expected that this effort will require a new investment on the scale of CSS, however, it is imperative that a significant investment be made in planning, community engagement and communications materials.

In addition to all the funding recommended for approach “B”, this option proposes one time spending on consultant capacity to help staff create the work plan that would lead to a coordinated regional climate strategy. This planning work will consist of scope development of planning, engagement and technical analysis across sectors and would allow for engagement of partners (JPACT, MPAC, and Community Based Organizations) and state agencies to help develop the work plan. This proposal also increases staff capacity in Communications and makes the regional summit an annual occurrence rather than a one-time gathering.

The work planning process will further refine these increased staffing recommendations and may identify new needs for FTE funding for PES and Planning and Development not reflected in the table below. This work would consist of both expanded climate mitigation work for Metro’s external-facing programs and help supporting local jurisdictional partners’ integration of climate smart policies into their plans and operations. Additionally, should work on climate mitigation increase significantly there will be a need for reliance on existing staff, in particular DEI staff, that are not reflected in this request.

Risk Analysis

Overarching risk

Metro is already spending significant amounts on climate mitigation work throughout the agency. However, without coordination there is the risk that current work is less visible, less coordinated, less efficient, and less cohesive than is ideal for the goal of Metro playing a leading role on climate mitigation. For example, Metro is not currently telling one cohesive story about its existing climate work. In the past, significant agency resources have been expended to create climate mitigation implementation plans, communications strategies and other policy proposals but when funding for a coordinator position ended in 2011, this work atrophied and for the most part none of the good recommendations of this significant effort came to fruition.

Exterior Risks

There are a number of ongoing processes that may influence Metro policy, projects and staffing moving forward:

- Oregon Cap-and-Invest policy - expected to be reconsidered next session. Previous versions of this bill have included project funding to implement Climate Smart Strategy and new statewide emissions targets and funding to support climate adaptation work statewide.⁸
- **STS Interagency Implementation** – Governor Brown tasked leadership of four state agencies (ODOT, DLCD, ODEQ, and ODOE) to develop an implementation plan for the Statewide Transportation Strategy to reduce GHG emissions.⁹
- **MPO GHG reduction targets review** - By June 1, 2021, LCDC is required to review and evaluate the targets defined in the Metropolitan GHG Reduction rule to determine whether revisions are needed.¹⁰
- Council is expected to refer a **Transportation Investment Initiative** to the voters in 2020. If this is referred and passed it will impact Metro spending as well as regional emissions and climate mitigation efforts.

Political risks

Though this is changing, climate mitigation work, in particular that focused on the reduction of fossil fuel emissions is still a politically charged issue particularly in rural and conservative areas. Any work in this area must balance the urgent need for climate mitigation action with our need to work with partner counties whose boundaries extend significantly beyond Metro’s jurisdictional boundaries or who, while not being within Metro’s jurisdictional boundaries still contribute to the region’s GHG emissions.

⁸ [Oregon HB 2020 \(2019\)](#)

⁹ [Governor’s letter initiating STS implementation](#)

¹⁰ [DLCD Metropolitan GHG Reduction Rule](#)

Financial risks

Climate Change is a problem that could absorb Metro's entire budget and still not be solved, even locally, so it begs the question of how to balance the need to do something meaningful and the limitations of our resources. In addition – the largest financial risk of climate change is the cost of unchecked climate impacts in the form of heat waves, extreme precipitation and flooding, wildfire and drought and their impact on the region's health and economy – the less spent on mitigating our GHG emissions the more will be spent on adapting to the impacts of climate change, or rebuilding in their wake.

Policy risks

Metro's policy framework on climate change stems mainly from several resolutions passed in 2008 in which the Metro Council gave clear direction for the agency to demonstrate leadership on climate change and for staff to collaborate with regional partners in creating a regional Climate Action Plan to meet state-mandated GHG emissions reduction targets.^{11, 12} Metro's current work on climate change is also driven by Oregon law that led to the production of the current Climate Smart Strategy. To date Metro's Climate Action Planning has focused on internal operations and Climate Smart Strategy (which was limited to emissions from passenger vehicles) but not on a holistic Regional Climate Action Plan created with our regional partners as was outlined in Resolution 08-3971. Without this there is a risk that Metro could be seen as out of compliance with our own resolution, of not being leaders on this issue but most importantly, of not doing what is needed to make headway on the existential threat of Climate Change.

¹¹ Metro Resolution 08-3971, "For the Purpose of Designating a Council Project and Lead Councilor for the Climate Change Action Plan," adopted 8-21-08

¹² Metro Resolution 08-3940, "For the Purpose of Affirming a Definition of a "Successful Region" ..." adopted on June 26, 2008.

Staff Proposal Budget Options

Description	Ongoing/One-time	A “Communication and Coordination”	B “Expanded Regional Effort”	C “Regional Climate Framework	Notes
Community Engagement	One time	\$25-30,000 plus management/staff time.	\$25-30,000 plus management/staff time.	\$25-30,000 plus management/staff time.	3 months engagement of 5-6 organizations @ \$5k each
Parks & Nature	One time	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	research on CO2 sequestration per acre - current and future acquisitions
Communications	One time	\$7-10,000	\$35-50,000	\$35-50,000	“A” - news stories, web landing page and other content; “B”/“C” - Contract for initial convening, messaging and strategy around climate communications
Climate Coordinator	Ongoing	X	\$132,509.90	\$132,510	1 FTE
Parks & Nature Science Staff additional	Ongoing	X	\$18,369	\$18,369	.1 FTE
Regional Climate Summit	One time/ongoing	X	\$30,000	\$30,000	“B” - one time summit; “C” - annual for at least 4 years.
Drawdown Strategy research	One time	X	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Communications	Ongoing	X	x	\$88,685.26	.5-1 FTE to coordinate the contract work and split time between content creation/writing and management- could start mid cycle
Work plan consultant	One time	X	x	\$50-75,000	
Total FY 20-21 costs		\$70,000	\$340,879	\$504,564	
Total ongoing costs		\$0	\$150,879	\$269,564	

Note: The programmatic efforts described would be supported by the related GHG data budget note, the staff recommendation for which appears in a separate document from the Metro Research Center. To effectively ground this coordinated climate work in emissions data, Council should also fund the new GHG Emissions Data budget note at least at the “Consultant led” or “Basic” budget request levels outlined to support approach “A”. Approaches “B”&“C” would work best in conjunction with the staff recommended “Expanded” level in order to fully leverage the connection between data and policy implementation. The resource estimate for the “Expanded” level includes 0.2 FTE dedicated to assisting local partners, in the form of technical support and coordination, with community GHG inventory production. This would help to ensure focus on areas of most significance and to ensure that any new projects are outcomes based.