

REGIONAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY: TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT MEASURE

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Departments: GAPD, Planning & Development

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ISSUE STATEMENT

People in the greater Portland region are increasingly concerned about growing traffic and unsafe arterial roads across the region. The Metro Council has directed staff to work with community and partners on a potential 2020 transportation investment measure.

At these work sessions, the Council will discuss Tier 1 corridor investment recommendations from the Transportation Funding Task Force. On Jan. 7, the Task Force co-chairs will present recommendations to the Metro Council, with staff providing updated information about the potential outcomes these investments could advance. Following a public hearing on Jan. 13, staff will seek Council direction on what projects in Tier 1 corridors should continue to move forward at the Jan. 14 work session.

ACTION REQUESTED

Provide direction on potential project investments in Tier 1 corridors to continue developing for possible inclusion in a potential regional transportation measure.

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

The Metro Council has directed that a potential measure advance the Regional Transportation Plan, Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, and Climate Smart Strategy; engage diverse partners and community members; and leverage regional and local investments in affordable housing and parks and nature.

The Metro Council approved specific policy outcomes for the potential transportation measure and appointed a Transportation Funding Task Force in early 2019.

In order to advance its desired policy outcomes, the Council has directed staff to develop a measure that focuses investments in key regional travel corridors and also includes regionwide investment programs to spread benefits throughout the region. Council direction on the measure structure is further described in the “Background” section below.

POLICY QUESTION

What potential projects in Tier 1 corridors advance Council’s desired measure outcomes and should move forward for further project development and continued consideration for inclusion in a potential measure?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Following a summer of in-depth engagement with community-based Local Investment Teams and project development with jurisdictional partners, Metro staff released a preliminary Tier 1 corridor projects and regionwide programs recommendation to the Transportation Funding Task Force on Oct. 18, 2019.

In creating these recommendations, Metro staff considered a number of factors, including:

- Metro Council outcomes for the Transportation Measure
- Task Force outcomes for the Transportation Measure
- Local Investment Team input
- Regional and local plans
- Analysis of transit opportunities on corridor
- Agency staff knowledge of readiness and opportunity
- Metro staff review of consistency with Regional Transportation Plan principles
- Expected scale of potential revenue
- Feasibility of delivering projects within the near future

The Task Force discussed staff's recommendations at meetings on Oct. 30 and Nov. 20. As the Task Force prepared to make its own Tier 1 recommendations, several Task Force members also proposed amendments to add, modify or remove staff-recommended investments in some corridors. The Task Force considered and voted on proposed Tier 1 corridor recommendations at its Dec. 18 meeting in Clackamas.

The Task Force's recommendations and additional feedback/input to Council will be described in a forthcoming memo from the Task Force co-chairs, which will be attached to this worksheet in early January.

In summary, the Task Force recommendations constitute roughly \$3.81 billion in measure investments in Tier 1 corridors, leveraging approximately \$2.22 billion in expected federal and local funds, for a total of approximately \$6.03 billion in recommended Tier 1 corridor investments. The Task Force voted unanimously on the vast majority of these recommendations, placing particular priority on increasing safety and transit investments.

Policy options for the Metro Council include directing staff to work with partners to continue developing all or some of the Tier 1 investments recommended by the Task Force. The Council may also wish to add investments which the Task Force has not included in its formal recommendations for Tier 1 corridors, or provide further clarity or direction to staff on outcomes that should be elevated through further measure development.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Greater Portland is growing quickly. 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 people travel. The council has directed that this work must place advancing racial equity and addressing climate change at its core. The council has also directed staff to engage a wide range of community members, partners and leaders to identify smart solutions supported by a broad coalition.

Greater Portland voters' decisive approval of the regional affordable housing bond in 2018 and regional Parks and Nature bond renewal in 2019 demonstrates their eagerness to address the critical issues we face across the region. The Metro Council is now working with jurisdictional partners, housing providers and the community to create needed affordable homes through the bond, and will soon begin a refinement process for implementing the new parks and nature bond. As greater Portland faces the future, a regional transportation measure in 2020 represents a significant opportunity to continue connecting these priorities to make meaningful, strategic investments that improve lives and increase opportunities throughout the region.

BACKGROUND

In December 2018, the Metro Council adopted a Regional Transportation Plan update, following years of engagement that included more than 19,000 engagements with residents, community and business leaders, and regional partners. Through the extensive engagement that shaped the plan, Metro heard clear desires for safe, smart, reliable and affordable transportation options for everyone and every type of trip. The 2018 Regional Transportation Plan is therefore built on key values of equity, climate, safety, and congestion relief.

At work sessions in January 2019, the Metro Council provided guidance on key outcomes, principles and the structure of a potential investment measure to help advance these values. The council also approved a charge for a diverse and regionally inclusive Regional Transportation Funding Task Force. Co-chaired by Commissioners Jessica Vega Pederson and Pam Treece, the Task Force has met 16 times. To date, the Task Force has reviewed Metro Council direction and policy applying to the regional investment measure, identified additional desired outcomes, provided input to Council on priority corridors and regionwide programs, discussed possible revenue mechanisms, and made recommendations on potential Tier 1 investments.

In June, informed by input from the Task Force and an online survey completed by approximately 3,500 area residents, the Metro Council directed staff to move 13 "Tier 1" corridors into further project identification, development and engagement. The council also

identified 16 “Tier 2” corridors that could also be considered for funding if there is revenue capacity. Over summer 2019, three Local Investment Teams toured the Tier 1 corridors and provided feedback to inform staff and Task Force project recommendations.

In September, informed by input from community forums in the spring and Task Force discussions in the summer, the Metro Council provided direction on nine regionwide programs to continue developing for potential inclusion in the measure; these programs would advance Council outcomes and meet community needs beyond the priority corridors identified in the measure. Staff are now developing these program concepts further through engagement with community and jurisdictional partners, with an expectation that they would include approximately \$50 million in total annual investment for 20 years. At the Metro Council’s direction, staff are also continuing to develop a community stability program that would support the development of community-based anti-displacement strategies in corridors funded through the measure. Staff plan to bring a refined program recommendation to the Metro Council in April.

The Metro Council will continue to direct staff in future iterative policy discussions, including direction on options for project investments, possible additional corridors to include in the measure, regionwide programs, revenue mechanisms, oversight and accountability, and implementation. The council could consider referral to voters in late spring.

- Is legislation required for Council action? **Legislation will be required for referral, but staff are not proposing legislation for direction on Tier 1 corridor investments.**