

# Memo



**Metro**

600 NE Grand Ave.  
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Date: Friday, Feb. 7, 2020  
To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation members and interested parties  
From: Andy Shaw, Government Affairs and Policy Development Director  
Margi Bradway, Deputy Director of Planning & Development  
Subject: Regional Transportation Funding Measure Update

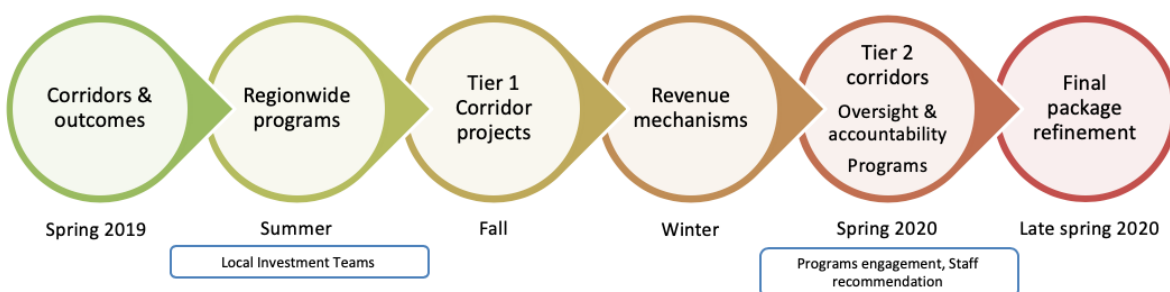
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Everybody in greater Portland deserves safe and reliable ways to get to work, school, and other destinations, and back home again. However and wherever we travel, we need roads, buses, trains and streets that work for everyone, as the region continues its rapid growth.

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 that support 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.

At JPACT's Feb. 20, meeting, staff will provide an update on ongoing work to develop this potential measure with partners and communities throughout the region. This memo provides an overview of engagement and decision-making to date, as well as developments since JPACT's last discussion.

A high-level of the decision-making process is below. Each of the steps below includes opportunities for feedback and/or recommendations from the Transportation Funding Task Force, and direction from the Metro Council. All are also informed by engagement with the public and key stakeholders and communities.



## Background and Metro Council direction

In December 2018, JPACT and the Metro Council adopted the Regional Transportation Plan, following years of conversation included over 19,000 engagements with residents, community and business leaders, and regional partners. Through this engagement, Metro heard clear desires 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 demands a new vision for serving people's transportation needs.

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The themes of this engagement have led directly to the key outcomes and values driving a potential 2020 transportation funding measure. In January 2019, the Metro Council provided direction on key outcomes, principles and the structure of a potential transportation investment measure that could help advance this vision.

## **Task Force**

The Metro Council is ultimately responsible for what could be referred to the region's voters in 2020, but its decision-making is closely informed by the recommendations of a Transportation Funding Task Force with nearly three dozen leaders representing perspectives and communities throughout the region. Several JPACT members serve on this Task Force.

The Task Force, appointed by the Metro Council President and co-chaired by Multnomah County Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson and Washington County Commissioner Pam Treece, will have met 18 times by the date of this JPACT discussion to identify shared values, discuss investment priorities, and provide recommendations and feedback to the Metro Council. The Task Force will continue meeting into April.

## **Update on measure development**

### *Corridors*

In June, with input from the Task Force and an online survey that attracted over 3,500 responses, the Metro Council selected thirteen Tier 1 travel corridors for further project identification, development and engagement. An additional sixteen corridors were designated as Tier 2 priorities.

Through the summer, three Local Investment Teams of community members with lived experience in each of the counties met to tour the Tier 1 corridors, review potential investments, and provide feedback to inform Task Force and Metro Council discussions about projects to advance for further consideration for the potential investment measure.

Based on this input, as well as detailed assessments of project risks, readiness and potential outcomes in partnerships with project delivery agency staff, Metro released a preliminary Tier 1 corridor projects staff recommendation to the Transportation Funding Task Force on Oct. 18, 2019.

The Task Force discussed these recommendations, proposed amendments, and voted on their own recommendations to the Metro Council – most of them unanimous – on Dec. 19, 2019. These investments include about \$3.8 billion in proposed investments by the measure, with the vast majority supporting enhanced transit and safety improvements. The recommendations would leverage approximately \$2.2 billion in additional federal and local funds. The Task Force's recommendations are attached to this packet.

Following a public hearing on Jan. 13, 2020 and discussion at two January work sessions, the Metro Council furthered most of the Task Force's recommendations, while also directing staff to continue exploring concerns regarding several proposed projects. Staff will provide an update on these questions at the council's Feb. 18 work session.

Metro continues to work with partners on project development, including risk and cost assessments. Staff are also working on an expenditure plan and letters of commitment with project partners to ensure that corridor projects are delivered as envisioned in a final investment package.

On Feb. 19, the Transportation Funding Task Force begins discussion of possible investments proposed by local jurisdictions in several of the Tier 2 corridors. This conversation will continue at the Task Force's March 18 meeting. The Metro Council is expected to provide direction on these corridors at a work session on April 7.



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## *Regionwide programs*

Metro conducted community forums in spring 2019 to begin scoping potential regionwide programs that would invest in key priorities beyond the measure's identified corridors. These forums were created in partnership with a cohort of community organizations and also included discussion of the affordable housing bond implementation and the parks and nature bond then in development. In July and August 2019, the Task Force provided input on these programs, which the Metro Council has directed should constitute the second primary element of the potential measure.

The Metro Council directed staff to move ten programs forward at a work session on Sept. 24; these include programs that would invest in safe and livable streets, transit and community stability. One program, Community Strengthening, would be funded through planning for each corridor included in the measure, to ensure that strong equitable development and anti-displacement strategies are in place for each.

Metro is working with community partners to conduct a variety of engagement activities regarding the regionwide programs. These include three community workshops to hear from communities of color and other marginalized groups; an online input opportunity; focused discussions with a variety of stakeholders and practitioners; and a Task Force discussion on March 4.

This engagement will inform a staff programs recommendation to the Metro Council in April.

## *Revenue mechanisms*

Following Task Force discussions on Dec. 11 and Jan. 15, the Metro Council discussed potential revenue mechanisms for the measure at a work session on Jan. 28. Based Task Force input and findings of revenue potential, feasibility and possible public support, the Council directed staff to continue exploring possible combinations of employer payroll taxes, regional vehicle registration fees, and business and personal income taxes as options for raising the funds needed to implement the measure. Staff are continuing engagement and research of these options and will make a recommendation to the Council later in the spring.

## *Oversight, accountability and outcomes*

A final piece of the potential measure are structures for oversight and accountability, to ensure key outcomes are advanced and promises to voters are kept throughout measure implementation.

Staff are developing oversight and accountability proposals for discussion with the Task Force, community partners and other stakeholders throughout the spring. Additionally, staff are conducting analyses how the measure's investments could address key priorities including racial equity, climate change, safety and job creation. Findings will be shared with the Task Force and Metro Council as they are available.

## **Reaching a referral decision**

Later this spring, the Metro Council will align anticipated revenue and proposed investments with an implementation plan, and oversight and accountability mechanisms. The Council will seek Task Force, partner and community input in this process, prior to an expected referral decision in the late spring.