

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (MTIP) AND METRO COUNCIL ROLES AND DESIRED PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

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Department: Planning, Development &
Research
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Length: 30 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

The Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) is a federally required process. It includes documenting how transportation projects prioritized for funding advance the Portland metropolitan region's shared goals and comply with federal regulations – such as fiscal constraint, air quality impacts, and public involvement. The MTIP outlines the implementation schedule of federally funded transportation projects in the region for the next four years and helps to manage the delivery of transportation projects. The MTIP exists as a financial planning and project delivery tool for the metropolitan region. As a tool, the MTIP assists in ensuring the region does not overspend and tracks the scheduled delivery of transportation projects.

The Metro Council is requested to adopt a new MTIP every three years and is also requested to manage changes through amendments to the MTIP each month. With a new MTIP currently in development and significant amendments to the current MTIP expected in the next year, this work session aims to provide a common understanding of the Metro Council role in the MTIP process and to provide direction to Metro staff on how to support the Council in carrying out the MTIP process.

ACTION REQUESTED

No formal action required. Staff is asking Council to provide direction on how staff can best support Council in their role in the MTIP process. .

IDENTIFIED POLICY OUTCOMES

The MTIP aims to carry out regional transportation policy direction set forth in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In addition to adequately maintaining the transportation system, investments are to improve outcomes toward desired performance for the following priorities:

- **Safety:** toward the Region's Vision Zero target for fatal and serious injury crashes
- **Climate:** implementing the Region's Climate Smart Strategy
- **Equity:** eliminating inequities of the transportation system for people of color and with low income
- **Congestion relief:** implementing the Region's Congestion Management Process

When it comes to major projects in the MTIP or being amended in the MTIP, Metro staff has heard from individual Metro Council that they would like:

- More specificity in what it means to meet the four desired outcomes
- Improved communication between Metro Council and the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) on how to meet the four desired outcomes
- Consideration of how to balance and weight the desired outcomes relative to each other

At this Council work session, we will dive further into these requests, starting with the questions below.

POLICY QUESTION(S)

- How does Metro Council want to apply the 2018 RTP priority outcomes to an MTIP amendment?
 - Does Metro Council want staff to use the outcomes as screening criteria?
 - If screening criteria are developed, should a threshold be applied, either numerically or otherwise?
 - Should one outcome have more weight than others?
 - How should the impacts of the proposed project be considered in the context of the total package of projects included in the current MTIP?
 - If Metro staff had the resources and capability to analyze every MTIP Amendment, if and how should that be applied?
- Does Metro Council have questions about how Metro administers the MTIP process?
 - What is the best way for staff to provide information to Metro Councilors on upcoming MTIP amendments?
- How does Metro Council create clear communication between JPACT and Council regarding the MTIP and upcoming MTIP amendments?
- What outcomes should staff consider as we begin to develop the 2023 RTP list and future MTIPs?

POLICY OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

Metro Council makes decisions based on the outcomes that it wants to achieve. For the RTP and MTIP, Metro shares this outcome-based decision-making process with JPACT.

For upcoming amendments to the current 2021-24 MTIP, Council could provide additional direction for how to frame future MTIP amendments on how the proposed amendment meets the four desired outcomes. Metro processes MTIP amendments that vary in size and scale, which raises a question on whether larger MTIP amendments for major projects should be treated differently from smaller ones.

In addition, Metro staff have begun the work to develop the next MTIP for 2024-27. Council could provide additional direction for its desired input to the future allocation processes that will prioritize new projects to be included in the next MTIP. Current policy

direction is used by staff to prepare Metro agency comments at key decision points for the allocation processes that are most likely to be impactful to priority policy outcomes. Metro Council will also be considering adoption of the program direction for the Regional Flexible Fund Allocation (RFFA) element of the MTIP at its September 9, 2021 meeting and provided early input to that process at a previous Council Work Session. Staff will request Metro Council direction on how to frame and analyze the MTIP projects in the 2024-27 MTIP based on Metro Council's desired outcomes.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

None.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The MTIP is both a process and a document to help understand and influence how proposed near-term transportation investment decisions consider and help implement the priority policy outcomes defined in the long-term regional transportation plan. Metro Council participated in the development of the current RTP that utilized Metro racial equity goals and climate action goals and integrated them into regional transportation policy. Council will work through the next two years to update those policies during the development of the 2023 RTP.

In this work session, Council will consider how it may wish to refine its participation in and use of the MTIP process as a means to best implement the desired transportation policy outcomes as defined in the RTP.

BACKGROUND

Every three years the Metro Council is scheduled to consider approval of the MTIP, and in each subsequent month to approve amendments to the MTIP. In this work session, the Council will review the purpose of the MTIP, its participation in the MTIP process, and consider providing direction to program staff on how the MTIP meets Metro Council's desired outcomes.

The MTIP is a federally required process that encourages the cooperative development, evaluation, and adoption of the near-term investments in regional transportation. Its purpose is to promote communication and collaboration by agencies that allocate transportation funds, promote consideration of transportation plans and policies as a part of funding allocation processes, and to ensure fiscal accountability for agencies using federal transportation funds on projects.

Metro Council's participation in this process is framed by its role as the policy board of the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a role it shares with JPACT. Federal regulations require the MPO policy board to adopt each MTIP and approve subsequent amendments to the MTIP.

Council most recently approved the 2021-24 MTIP, which is currently active, and has approved subsequent amendments to the current MTIP. Work has also begun on the

development of the upcoming 2024-27 MTIP. Staff has provided comments to Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) on the development of its funding allocation processes based on the Council adopted policy priorities and Council will be considering program direction for the allocation of RFFA funding for the years of 2025-27 at its September 9, 2021 meeting.

Staff support to the Council for the MTIP process has been guided by the 2021-24 Policy (Program Direction) Report. In addition to following federal regulations, encouraging cooperation in leveraging discretionary funding, and implementing a regional funding strategy, it emphasizes implementation of the RTP investment priority outcomes described above.

Currently the process for analysis and consideration of a new MTIP is for staff to conduct a performance assessment on the package of proposed new projects to evaluate their expected impact on the regional performance targets for the priority outcomes. Based on this assessment, staff may also make recommendations to funding agencies regarding implementation of the proposed projects or for consideration during their next funding allocation process. For individual project amendments to the current MTIP, current practice is to ensure the project is included as a part of the RTP financially constrained list (which is also analyzed for performance against the regional performance targets) and to describe which priority outcomes the project will advance.

ATTACHMENTS

2021-2024 MTIP Policy (Program Direction) Report

[For work session:]

- Is legislation required for Council action? ☐ Yes ☒ No
- If yes, is draft legislation attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- What other materials are you presenting today? PowerPoint presentation