

Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov



Metro

Minutes

Tuesday, December 6, 2022

10:00 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber,
<https://youtu.be/7sW7JPTUmio>, <https://zoom.us/j/615079992>, or
877-853-5257 (toll free) (Webinar ID: 615079992)

Council work session

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Council President Peterson called the Metro Council Meeting to order at 10:38 a.m.

Work Session Topics:

10:35 Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation Update

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)
[Attachment 2](#)
[Attachment 3](#)
[Attachment 4](#)

Council President Peterson made 3 points:

- Anything that comes into the region comes through North Portland, and we do not want a highway going right through our community nor the negative effects that would have.
- Connection between Portland and Vancouver BC is huge. It can connect numerous industries.
- Oregon knows Oregon best, so work needs to be fronted by City of Portland and Metro, not by WSDOT.

Councilor Rosenthal is a long-time supporter of high speed rail. He asked what the benefits of ultra high speed are (250mph), compared to high speed (170-180), which is more commonplace around the world. What are the economic benefits?

Staff has not yet done the research to know the breakpoint between the two. However, infrastructure limitations do not allow for a safe high speed rail system.

Councilor Lewis voiced her support of this general direction. She also voiced support for a Southern rail system, perhaps a connection to Salem and other industries in Southern

Oregon. She then encouraged Staff to reach out to the ports, like Port of Portland.

Staff reminded Council that they provided a list of stakeholders they have reached out to, and the ports are on there.

Councilor Craddick voiced her support for the project, emphasized the importance of it, and hopes these conversations reach the state level. She also hopes Oregon can “go bigger” and expand these projects to cover the entire state.

Councilor Hwang had two questions:

- How does the regulatory framework and jurisdictional overlap affect decision making?
- How did Staff reach the 6 million metric ton GHG reduction, and what is the scale of that (over 1 year, or over the lifetime of the project)?
- Which line will come first?

Staff provided the following answers:

- Jason provided some context for the regulatory framework, though the project is still in its early stages and no major work has been done quite yet. There is no precedent for this type of project in N. America, but Staff is learning from many similar international projects which will inform the final governing structure.
- Staff has not yet decided which line will come first.
- The 6 million metric ton number came from a high-level study, but that number will change. Staff is currently “technologically agnostic” at this point of the project, and those choices will affect the final projections.
- Margi added some of her thoughts about the Cascadia

Corridor. The region shares a great deal with the rest of Cascadia. It is important to cooperate as a region during the planning phase. Once construction begins, then Staff will have to figure out how to navigate the different jurisdictions.

Councilor Gonzalez believes this “seismic level investment” is a massive opportunity but is thinking about community agreements and workers’ benefits. He hopes we are very intentional about engaging and getting community agreement benefits. He also asked if the region, with all of the other ongoing infrastructure projects, has the capacity to take on something this big.

Margi believes we can do it; however, she also acknowledged that Metro is involved in numerous other transportation infrastructure projects while experiencing staffing and resource constraints.

Council President Peterson agreed, and expects JPACT to discuss this issue.

Councilor Nolan wanted to emphasize:

- The need for this project to be supported and worked by our local community, and should benefit them. It should not simply be a project for industry.
- Short term benefits should go to the community, while long term benefits should be shared by all.

Councilor Rosenthal, building off of Councilor Nolan’s comments, believes it is possible to either build this rail project around key nodes, or build it to disperse the benefits amongst the larger community.

Council President Peterson explained that the project would use a multi-level approach, rather than try to solve

the issues mentioned by Councilor Nolan and Rosenthal with higher speeds.

11:20 Chief Operating Officer Communication

Marissa Madrigal provided an update on the following events or items:

- Metro has held 2 town halls over the past few days.
- She visited the Portland Rotary Club, answered questions, and received feedback. She invited other community groups to reach out if they would like to talk about Metro’s ongoing projects/programs.

11:25 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- **Councilor Craddick** updated Council on the 12/5 Region 1 Area Commission on Transportation (ACT) Meeting.
- **Councilor Rosenthal** updated Council regarding the Oregon Zoo Foundation Retreat.
- **Council President Peterson** updated Council regarding liaison assignments.

11:30 Adjourn

There being no further business, Council President Peterson adjourned the Metro Council Meeting at 11:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Kim

Nathan Kim, Legislative Assistant

