

Metro

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



Metro

Minutes - Final

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

10:30 AM

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber,
<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or
888-475-4499 (toll free) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=Jb7peOknW9U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb7peOknW9U)

Council work session

This meeting will be held electronically and in person at the Metro Regional Center Council Chamber.

You can join the meeting on your computer or other device by using this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/615079992> Webinar ID: 615 079 992 or 888-475-4499 (toll free)

10:30 Call to Order and Roll Call

Present: 6 - Councilor Gerritt Rosenthal, Councilor Mary Nolan, Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Duncan Hwang, Christine Lewis, and Ashton Simpson

Excused: 1 - Lynn Peterson

Work Session Topics:

10:35 FY 23-24 Budget Note Report

Presenter(s): Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro
Brian Kennedy (he/him), CFO, Metro

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)
[Attachment 1](#)
[Attachment 2](#)
[Attachment 3](#)
[Attachment 4](#)
[Attachment 5](#)
[Attachment 6](#)
[Attachment 7](#)

Deputy Council President Hwang introduced Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operation Officer (she/her) Brian Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer (he/him) to present on the FY 23-24 Budget Note Report.

The presenters did not have a presentation and were available to answer any questions that the councilors had.

Council Discussion

Councilors did not have any questions.

Deputy Council President Hwang introduced Marissa Madrigal, Chief Operation Officer (she/her) Brian Kennedy,

Chief Financial Officer (he/him) to present on Discussion of FY 24-25 Budget Notes.

Council Discussion

Councilor Simpson presented two requests: one to support the Portland State Transportation class, which would demonstrate Metro's leadership and increase knowledge in the region, and another to address financial constraints resulting from its removal from Peabot's budget for the next fiscal year. He highlighted the alignment of this class with Metro's transportation and regional planning work, emphasizing its positive impact on the communities served.

Councilor Rosenthal questioned on what the content of the class would be.

Councilor Simpson state that the class would benefit transportation planners, students, engineers, or transportation traffic engineers, planners, urban planners, as well as community development students come in and talk through transportation framework, planning frameworks as well as learn from guests who are invited.

Councilor Simpson's second amendment to support Greater Portland, Inc. in their endeavor to conduct a workforce gap analysis, emphasizing the importance of getting involved in the early stages and allocating Metro staff time to assist with project development. He sought approximately 20 to 30 hours of staff time to consult with GPI as they explored the feasibility of the project.

Councilor Nolan pondered whether there were guidelines in place for such situations, expressing support for the idea of supporting the PSU class while noting the precise nature of some expenditures that might not require direct council

direction.

Marissa Madrigal, COO emphasized the importance of transparency in creating budget notes and council direction, highlighting the need to clarify staff tasks and time allocations to avoid conflicting or excessive directives. She mentioned a past guideline where tasks taking more than a few hours should be channeled through her or directed at the council level to ensure alignment with council priorities.

Councilor Nolan expressed difficulty with the concept of limiting tasks to those taking only a few hours, highlighting concerns about blurring the distinction between legislative and executive functions if multiple council members directed significant time commitments. They also noted that the proposed threshold of \$20,000 to \$40,000 for task significance seemed very low.

Brian Kennedy, CFO, clarified that requests specifically seeking appropriation of funds should be structured as budget amendments, while budget notes are intended to provide direction to staff. He emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the two, noting that budget amendments materially alter the budget by allocating funds to specific programs or projects.

Councilor Gonzalez stated a need to understand the process better and suggesting a review of council practices to potentially update them. He wondered whether the expectation was for budget notes to only arise during budget season and proposed exploring standardization to differentiate between matters brought directly to the council and those discussed with staff.

Councilor Rosental questioned the stage of budget

development, seeking clarification on whether they were currently in the phase of budget amendments or still in the process of developing the budget. He engaged with Brian, highlighting the three phases of budget under Oregon local budget law and the schedule for council deliberations and approval, aiming to ensure adequate time for deliberations before adopting the budget in mid-June.

Top of Form

Councilor Lewis presented on recent conversations with the council president and chief operating officer, recognizing a larger struggle within the council regarding their legislative authority and the need to develop the necessary skills for legislative work outside of the budget process. She observed that some questions were premature, given the absence of discussions on key budget elements like transportation, and emphasized the importance of staffing and resources to enable the council to function more effectively as a legislative body rather than just a board of directors.

Councilor Rosenthal expressed uncertainty about the intended purpose of the allocation of funds for climate resilience, seeking clarification on whether it was meant solely to develop a report on making metro facilities more resilient or if it was intended for broader purposes.

Councilor Lewis clarifies that the allocation of funds was intended for making investments in the capital improvement program rather than producing a report, aiming to implement projects outlined in the program for which there were insufficient funds. He expressed a desire to continue investments like electrifying the fleet made in previous years.

Councilor Nolan expressed appreciation for the arts redirection concept and acknowledged the importance of investing in organizations using their facilities, while also raising concerns about potential short-sightedness regarding racial justice values. They proposed earmarking or prioritizing some of the additional funds for locally led, BIPOC-led arts organizations, recognizing the need to support smaller organizations, many of which use their facilities but may struggle to access them due to financial constraints.

Councilor Rosenthal presented on various ongoing concepts and initiatives being evaluated, highlighting two proposals for regional tolling and vehicle mile tax analyses, emphasizing their importance for transportation funding and proposing budget amendments to support them.

Councilor Gonzalez questioned regarding the proposals discussed, particularly concerning the scope of the project and the feasibility of dedicating resources like a dedicated full-time equivalent (FTE) and hiring consultants. He expressed concerns about the disconnect between designing a system that they don't own or implement and the need for alignment with external agencies involved in the project, as well as the uncertainty surrounding the legislative session's focus and whether the proposed investments would align with future priorities. Despite previous discussions, he emphasized the need for further review and evaluation of these questions throughout the budget process.

Councilor Rosenthal elaborated on the concept, explaining that it was based on the findings of a previous study advocating for a regional approach to tolling to avoid complications. He outlined two key components: defining a

tolling plan aligned with regional values such as economic and regional equity and conducting analysis requiring technical expertise beyond current staff capacity, likely necessitating consulting support. Despite potential legislative timing challenges, he stressed the importance of addressing ongoing issues related to road funding and greenhouse gas emissions, asserting Metro's role as a regional leader in fostering discussions and finding solutions.

Councilor Lewis expressed curiosity about the feasibility of proceeding independently at this stage, emphasizing the importance of collaboration with other agencies involved in tolling to ensure that success of the proposed program. She sought clarification on which agencies would need to work with Metro to achieve success in implementing the program.

Councilor Rosenthal noted that necessity of working with stakeholders to define values and establish an ideal tolling system, which could be managed in-house initially for discussion purposes. However, he emphasized the importance of engaging with agencies like ODOT, OTC, and legislators in the second phase to align regional concepts and address constituents' needs

11:05 Discussion of FY 24-25 Budget Notes

Presenter(s): Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro
Brian Kennedy (he/him), CFO, Metro

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legislative timing challenges, he stressed the importance of addressing ongoing issues related to road funding and greenhouse gas emissions, asserting Metro's role as a regional leader in fostering discussions and finding solutions.

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Councilor Rosenthal noted that necessity of working with stakeholders to define values and establish an ideal tolling system, which could be managed in-house initially for discussion purposes. However, he emphasized the importance of engaging with agencies like ODOT, OTC, and legislators in the second phase to align regional concepts and address constituents' needs.

11:35 Department Budget Presentation: Planning, Development & Research

Presenter(s): Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), Planning, Development and Research Director, Metro

Attachments: [Staff Report](#)

Deputy Council President Hwang introduced Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), Planning, Development and Research Director, Metro, Malu Wilkson (she/her), Deputy Director, Planning, Development and Research Director, Metro, and Rachel Lembo (she/her), finance manager for the planning, development, research department, Metro.

Presentation Summary:

Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), Planning, Development and Research Director, Metro introduced the presentation and

highlighted the department's progress and upcoming priorities, showcasing examples of multidisciplinary work and its impact on communities. Expressing gratitude for approved modifications and investments in the budget, she outlined the addition of three new full-time equivalent positions and their respective roles in enhancing collaboration and supporting equitable programs. She concluded by handing over to Rachel Lembo for an overview of the budget.

Top of Form

Rachel Lembo, (she/her) discussed the FY 25 proposed budget, detailing the department's resources totaling 49.3 million from new revenues and fund balance usage, broken down by division. The bulk of PDNR's revenue came from grants, particularly transportation grants like federal MPO funds and regional flexible fund allocations, while urban policy and development funding primarily stemmed from construction Excise Tax and state funding for transit-oriented development investments. Over 80% of the funding was restricted, with the general fund allocation utilized for various non-grant funded programs and grant matching. The budget primarily allocated resources to personnel and grant programs across divisions, with a focus on transportation and urban policy and development initiatives. The department's total FTE count was 89, including proposed new positions and communications staff transitioning from the central department to support PDNR. Lembo passed the presentation it back to Catherine Ciarlo.

Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), expressed that the PD and R operates within a framework of various policies and agreements, including Metro's 2040 vision and council priorities, to fulfill regional planning and funding requirements. With a focus on meeting performance

expectations and reporting standards to maintain funding, the department has embraced the concept of performance measures. Two key measures identified include the advancement of multimodal projects funded or supported by Metro and the density and development in 2040 centers. While these measures require further refinement, they aim to gauge progress towards livable communities, climate outcomes, and mobility, reflecting Metro's commitment to strategic investments and community development. Ciarlo passes the presentation to Malu Wilkson (she/her), Deputy Director of Planning, Research and Development.

Malu Wilkson (she/her), Deputy director of the planning, development, and research department (she/her), emphasized the department's commitment to meaningful engagement, particularly focusing on involving people of color in decision-making processes. This approach helped shape decisions and outcomes across various departmental initiatives, such as applying an equity lens to urban growth management work and convening a youth cohort to provide new perspectives. Additionally, the department intentionally invested in participant compensation to lower barriers to engagement for individuals and community-based organizations. Looking ahead, the department highlighted key efforts to support strategic targets, including last-mile transit planning to enhance connectivity, transit-oriented development programs to provide affordable housing near transit, and industrial land and freight movement studies to encourage industrial development in alignment with efficient goods movement. Wilkinson passed the presentation back to Rachel Lembo.

Rachel Lembo (she/her), highlighted changes in the FY 25 budget, noting an increase in the general fund allocation. During the pandemic, their allocation had decreased due to

cost reductions, but as costs mostly recovered and staff were rehired, the allocation remained below pre-pandemic levels. To address this, the proposed budget included a \$2.25 million increase in the general fund allocation, totaling \$9.1 million, ensuring they could maintain their current work without further cost reductions. She then passed it to Malou to discuss additional modifications. The first involved allocating \$320,000 to cover additional local grant match requirements due to higher-than-normal levels of grants received for FY 25. Another modification included \$200,000 to develop a regional data assessment of cooling corridors to enhance the region's resilience to extreme heat events, with a focus on equity outcomes. Additionally, a shared ask with the housing department involved \$300,000 for the development of a regional housing coordination strategy, aligning with state legislation on housing needs analysis. Lastly, \$100,000 was allocated to support early scoping and engagement for a 2040 plan update, emphasizing the need for a vision that reflects contemporary challenges such as racial equity, climate resilience, and housing.

Catherine Ciarlo expressed the research program director position aimed to address a leadership gap and provide strategic direction, while the other two positions; an associate planner and an assistant planner; were intended to support specific programs related to climate pollution reduction and regional travel options, respectively, funded by grant revenues.

Council Discussion

Councilor Rosenthal questioned about the cooling corridors, particularly about whether the definition extended to include connectivity between parks and parklands, such as Forest Parks. He also inquired about whether the regional housing coordination strategy would encompass non-Metro

communities within the economic watershed, like Woodburn or Newberg, to facilitate coordination and information exchange.

Malu Wilkinson (she/her), deputy director for planning, research, and development built upon the heat mapping work done by the data resource center and integrate global insights on designing cities for climate resilience, aiming to connect cooling corridors and identify tree canopy gaps, with plans to seek feedback from council once the draft scope is ready. She clarifies that the regional housing coordination strategy was focused on coordinating with cities within the metro urban growth boundary as required by state law, although conversations with surrounding cities like Woodburn or Newberg were not mandated. The discussions would inform decisions regarding future population and job growth allocation between the urban boundary and surrounding communities.

Councilor Lewis asked if the cooling corridors are just standalone investment or if it will be matched by additional tree canopy and cooling investments through parks and nature.

Marissa Madrigal (she/her), COO, Metro, receiving information through the cooling corridor could help identify existing corridors and potentially align them with target areas in the protect and restore maps to assess compatibility or identify additional priority areas. While the specific integration process was not yet clear, there was a vision for utilizing this information across various aspects of Metro's planning, such as the 2040 vision or park maps.

Councilor Lewis asked about the next steps for highlighting the affordability aspects in TOD development.

Malu Wilkinson (she/her) stated that she collaborated with the TOD steering committee to delineate a new strategic plan and draft a corresponding work plan for implementation. Defining future investments was paramount, particularly considering the potential for commercial vibrancy through TOD investments, reinforcing the program's integration within PD and R. Close collaboration with the housing department was imperative for their work, given the intertwined nature of their efforts, especially as they expanded the focus of TOD investments from transit-centric development to encompassing ground-floor retail and addressing the crucial need for affordable housing in the region.

Councilor Lewis reiterated their acknowledgment of housing's paramount importance in ensuring people were adequately housed, fully endorsing such a focus. Utilizing federal funds to not only address housing needs but also foster economic growth and stability, such as incorporating amenities like childcare facilities into housing developments, was a strategic approach they actively pursued, recognizing the balance between housing priorities and broader community development goals.

Councilor Gonzalez expressed genuine appreciation for the presentation's focus on slide ten, highlighting it as a crucial equity metric and commending the department's efforts to engage people of color in planning work. Proud of the progress made, particularly since FY 22, he credited past department leaders for laying the groundwork for such achievements.

Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), emphasized the urgency of navigating through the urban growth decision to allocate

staff resources effectively, recognizing that securing funding and hiring new staff would be time-consuming. Despite the challenges, she mentioned that they had initiated discussions with key stakeholders and earmarked scoping funds in the budget to define priorities and boundaries for the project, promising to return for additional resources if needed.

Malu Wilkinson (she/her), stressed the importance of ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the 2040 update before decisions were made on urban growth management, planning to initiate scoping discussions within the next month or two to gather input. Despite not requesting a substantial budget allocation at present, she reassured that the groundwork for the project was underway, eager to receive guidance and insights to shape its direction, as described by Katherine.

Councilor Gonzalez, was concerned about the ongoing regional vision conversation, expressing a desire to accelerate the project and questioning if additional funding or direction could expedite the process given the region's need for a reset in vision, particularly regarding housing gaps.

Catherine Ciarlo (she/her), emphasized the need to progress through the urban growth decision to allocate staff resources efficiently, expressing doubt about the time it would take to secure funding and hire new staff. However, she reassured that key staffing for the effort had been identified, and initial meetings had commenced. The budget outlined scoping dollars for engaging with stakeholders to determine priorities, scope boundaries, and the extent of the refresh, with plans to return for additional resources if necessary.

Councilor Nolan recognized that while current analysis followed state guidelines, it didn't reflect present-day realities. There were talks about allocating funds in the budget for improvements to the model, aiming to incorporate more accurate and recent data to better inform future projections and align with the community's transportation values.

Catherine Ciarlo (she/her) stated that the PD&R team encountered a requirement to adhere to the state's approach, which was undergoing updates through climate-friendly and equitable communities rulemaking. Kim Ellis and the staff were deeply engaged in this technical process, seeking clarity on included assumptions. Despite ongoing efforts to maintain the model's high standard, there remained a need to analyze project impacts beyond the model and ensure alignment with regional policy goals, which involved both technical and political elements. As discussions progress towards the 2028 RTP update, resolving climate analysis questions will prompt a reevaluation of project priorities, involving collaborative efforts among Metro, regional partners, and council members.

Councilor Nolan emphasized that while certain measurements are useful for assessing progress, they alone are insufficient without considering their impact on people's lives. They urged for discussions at the council level to ensure that investments align with the values and missions set forth, emphasizing the importance of tangible improvements visible to the broader community.

Catherine Ciarlo noted that there's a need to clarify the definition of multimodal projects to encompass modes of

transportation beyond driving, such as walking, cycling, transit, and assisted devices. Additionally, she suggested including a measure like "system completeness" to gauge progress toward more comprehensive transportation systems, aligning with the goal of accommodating diverse mobility needs.

Marissa Madrigal, COO inquired if the measure sought was the "people measure," indicating an interest in quantifying the number of individuals gaining access to multimodal transportation options, which could offer insights into demographics and related factors.

Councilor Nolan expressed interest in the topic and recognized the data's limitations, indicating a willingness to defer to Katherine and her team for further insights. Their focus remained on tangible results, such as access to affordable and safe transit, and they suggested exploring quartile-based analysis for achieving equity.

Councilor Lewis noted that Metro was diligent in investing and planning but highlighted a gap between planning and execution, citing two bike pad bridges in her district that might not be completed during her tenure. Expressing concern over the disparity between plans and actual outcomes, she suggested focusing efforts on tangible results rather than investing in plans that may not materialize.

Catherin Ciarlo noted that the metrics need to be presented with further details.

Councilor Rosenthal expressed concern about the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the need for potential amendments related to climate and safety criteria. He

emphasized the urgency of addressing these needs rather than waiting until the 2028 refresh, although acknowledging the timing constraints. Additionally, he highlighted his discomfort with the merger of information systems with planning and planning with transportation, suggesting a preference for separate departments. In his questions, he sought clarification on whether challenges with projections in transit projects were separate from the RTP modeling issues and questioned if sufficient resources were allocated to meet the diverse needs of Metro's modeling efforts.

Catherine Ciarlo clarified that the modeling team's work is not primarily a resource issue but rather a continuous effort to maintain state-of-the-art modeling practices. Regarding Metro's engagement with project teams, she noted that it could be more of a resource question, although not a current problem. She explained that while Metro employs separate models for internal RTP and consultant work, they share the same underlying model but serve different purposes. She concluded by highlighting the teams' awareness of the need to address these issues and their commitment to progressing accordingly, attributing any changes to evolving circumstances rather than funding constraints.

Malu Wilkinson mentioned that the modeling team was actively seeking additional resources for transit projects and highlighted the addition of a new staff member responsible for learning to operate the model required by the Federal Transit Administration. This new capability would complement the regional model used for the RTP, enhancing Metro's modeling capabilities within existing resources. Additionally, she noted the absence of a research program director as a missing resource that could serve as a spokesperson to elevate issues and validate Metro's work in

various contexts.

Councilor Hwang raised a question regarding the budget increase and observed the rise in both general fund allocation and federal grants to the department, seeking clarification on the sustainability of this trend and its potential impact on other agency sectors in the future.

Rachel Lembo, noted an increase in federal grants, leading to additional workload and the creation of new positions funded by these grants, particularly in response to new projects like those on 82nd Avenue and TV highway. They anticipated the need for a one-time significant increase in general fund allocation to accommodate this growth, attributing it to the reduction in costs during the pandemic followed by subsequent staff additions. They clarified that while there may be future asks for new work or one-time allocations, this current increase represented a reset and was not expected to recur soon.

Marissa Madrigal, COO provided context on Metro's use of the general fund, highlighting its judicious distribution due to most funds being restricted and the relatively small size of Metro's general fund compared to other organizations. They noted the distinction between one-time only and ongoing general funds, with this year seeing relatively modest requests alongside healthier general fund levels, prompting a reset to support the planning department. They emphasized the discretionary nature of general fund dollars and Metro's careful approach in allocating them.

Brain Kennedy, CFO agreed with Marisa's points and highlighted the challenge of sustainability over a five-year planning horizon, noting that Metro's revenue sources, primarily the solid waste excise tax, have limited growth due to mechanisms in the Metro code. He acknowledged the

tension between rising personnel costs and limited revenue growth, anticipating potential constraints on flexibility in funding choices in the coming years. Regarding federal grants, he clarified that there is no separate pool of money and that general funds are often used as a match, ensuring competitiveness for grants. He mentioned that while it hasn't been a constraint thus far, Metro has other tools to address any future limitations in funding.

12:35 Chief Operating Officer Communication

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

Updates on the fourth stakeholder advisory table. First half would involve presentations from the counties regarding their current service levels and commitments, addressing questions collected from stakeholders

Second half would involve discussing areas of alignment identified in previous meetings and exploring trending scenarios for the use of the supportive housing services tax, aiming to gather feedback on policy choices and their potential impacts on communities.

12:40 Councilor Communication

Councilors provided updates on the following meetings and events:

- Councilor Rosenthal attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Opal and Cedar Mill affordable housing project, dedicated to senior LGBTQ individuals, where 54 units were made available. The project, supported by a local United Methodist church's land donation, highlighted the collaboration between public sector and faith community groups, fostering hope for continued support and resource allocation for similar initiatives in the future.
- Councilor Gonzalez emphasized the importance of

supporting initiatives like the Beaverton home plate development to prevent homelessness and commended the success of its planning and opening events, noting significant attendance.

12:45 Adjourn

There being no further business, Deputy Council President Hwang adjourned the Metro Work Session at 12:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anushka Kargathara

Anushka Kargathara, Legislative Assistant