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JOINT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION (JPACT)

Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2024

Metro Regional Center, Council Chamber

MEMBERS PRESENT

Juan Carlos González  
Christine Lewis  
Ashton Simpson  
Paul Savas  
Nafisa Fai  
Carley Francis  
Mingus Mapps  
Joe Buck  
Rian Windsheimer  
Leann Caver  
Ali Mirzakhilili  
Jesse Beason

AFFILIATION

Metro Council  
Metro Council  
Metro Council  
Clackamas County  
Washington County  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
City of Portland  
Cities of Clackamas County  
ODOT  
C-Tran  
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality  
Multnomah County

MEMBERS EXCUSED

Curtis Robinhold  
Sam Desue  
Curtis Robinhold  
Steve Callaway  
Anne McEnery-Ogle  
Travis Stovall

AFFILIATION

Port of Portland  
TriMet  
Port of Portland  
Cities of Washington County  
City of Vancouver  
City of Gresham

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Jef Dalin  
Brett Sherman  
Chris Ford  
JC Vanatta  
Emerald Bogue  
Scott Patterson

AFFILIATION

Cities of Washington County  
Cities of Clackamas County  
ODOT  
TriMet  
Port of Portland  
C-Tran

OTHERS PRESENT: Dwight Brashear, Gerik Kransky, Margi Bradway, Sara, Tom Powers, Sarah Iannarone, Karen Buehrig, Josie Tecum, Blake Perez, Miles Pengilly, Laurie Lebowsky-Young, Allison Boyd, Zoie Wesenberg, Mandy Putney, Trevor Sleeman, Mark Ottenad, Jef Gudman, Steve Witter, Tom Markgraf, Jamie Snook, Jaimie Lorenzini, Matt Ransom, Suzanne Carlson, Shoshana Cohen, Eric Hesse, Trent Wilson, Amanda Sheppard, Ashley Bryers, Michael Orman, Mike Benzer, Katherine Kelly, Casey Gillespie

STAFF: Georgia Langer, Catherine Ciarlo, Betsy Emery, Ken Lobeck, Ted Leybold, Jaye Cromwell, Grace Cho, Michelle Bellia, Ally Holmqvist, John Mermin, Kim Ellis, Victor Sin, Ina Zucker, Gerritt Rosenthal, Monica Krueger, Anneliese Koehler, Susanne Raymond,

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

JPACT Chair Juan Carlos Gonzalez (he/him) called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Chair Gonzalez called the role and declared a quorum.

### **2. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Metro staff Connor Ayers read aloud the instructions for providing public testimony.

There being no testimony, Chair Gonzalez moved onto the next agenda item.

### **3. UPDATES FROM THE CHAIR**

Chair Gonzalez introduced Catherine Ciarlo, who shared the fatal traffic accidents that have occurred since the last meeting. Ciarlo also included monthly highlights, noting that some of the actions that regional partners are taking for safer streets.

Chair Gonzalez shared that TriMet and SMART have recently approved their annual budgets. He shared that TPAC received extended briefings from TriMet and SMART staff at the April meeting. He shared that there may be some minor administrative adjustments to the programming of funds in MTIP, but nothing formal is expected.

JC Vanatta shared that TriMet just passed their \$1.84 Billion budget for their 533 square mile service district. He noted that their budget priorities are centered around growing ridership which includes investments in their forward-together concept plan. Vanatta added that they are still working to address their operator and mechanic shortage, and that they added 24 new electric buses to their fleet.

### **4. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Gonzalez noted that there were two items on the Consent Agenda. The first was Resolution No. 24-5422 For the Purpose of Amending or Adding a Total of Four Projects in the 2024-27 MTIP to Meet Federal Transportation Delivery Requirements, and the second item was the Consideration of the May 23, 2024, JPACT Minutes.

**MOTION:** Rian Windsheimer moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Mayor Joe Buck.

**ACTION:** With all in favor, the consent agenda passed.

Seeing no further discussion, Chair Gonzalez moved onto the next agenda item.

## **5. ACTION ITEMS**

### **5.1 Resolution No. 24-5414 For the Purpose of Directing the Allocation of \$13.6 Million of Federal Transportation Redistribution Funds to Projects and Programs**

Chair Gonzalez introduced Ted Leybold to discuss the topic.

Staff pulled up the PowerPoint presentation.

Presentation Summary:

The presenters discussed an overview of the redistribution funding. They highlighted Metro's contractual obligations stemming from federal funding awarded by ODOT, amounting to approximately \$13.6 million over two years. They noted that the approach emphasized supporting regional project obligations to qualify for further redistribution funds and avoid penalties due to inflation impacts. Specifically, \$10 million was earmarked for previously awarded projects to address funding gaps caused by inflation, with a request-based allocation process planned pending Metro Council approval. An additional \$3 million was allocated to initiate early project development work for upcoming funding cycles, aimed at reducing project delivery risks. Lastly, \$600,000 was set aside for risk assessments, consultant support for local agencies in applying for funds, and enhanced project delivery monitoring tools. The presentation concluded with a request to approve Resolution no. 24-5414.

**MOTION:** Mayor Dalin moved to approve Resolution No. 24-5414, seconded by Commissioner Nafisa Fai  
**ACTION:** With all in favor, the action item was approved.

JPACT Member Discussion:

Commissioner Paul Savas asked how they are factoring in inflation.

Ted Leybold shared that for each fund cycle, they have an advisory role in estimating inflation rates for applicants. He emphasized the importance of incorporating inflation into project schedules, especially given the typical duration of federal aid processes, which span three to five years. Leybold mentioned advising a 4% inflation factor in the last cycle based on current conditions. However, he highlighted reports indicating significant variability in inflation rates over the past four years, with some projects experiencing up to 28% inflation. He shared that this exceeded what most applicants would have anticipated, potentially doubling their projected costs.

Commissioner Savas expressed concerns based on observation of road and large-scale project costs, noting that many projects have escalated significantly. He cited the Abernathy bridge as an example, which was initially projected at \$250 million in 2018 but has since risen to \$750 million. Commissioner Savas acknowledged that inflation plays a role in these cost increases over time but emphasized that such drastic rises raise questions about the effectiveness of allocated funds. He pondered on the efficiency of funding distribution processes across various governmental levels, suggesting that bureaucratic hurdles might diminish the impact of available funds.

Mayor Joe Buck asked how the local agency assistance money will be spent.

Leybold responded that those funds will be used to hire a consulting agency that will be made available to local jurisdiction staff, noting that they can fill out an application.

Mayor Buck asked if there is a population threshold of the jurisdiction for fund distribution.

Leybold responded that they will run a pre-application process with the flex funds that will give them an indication of how many projects will be requesting assistance. He added that they will then divide the assistance amongst those requesting jurisdictions based on the capacity of the consultant agency itself to provide those services.

Chair Gonzalez noted that this recommendation feels like good governance, and he sees alignment across governments.

## **5.2 Resolution No. 24-5415 For the Purpose of Adopting 2028-2030 Regional Flexible Fund Allocation (RFFA) Program Direction**

Chair Gonzalez introduced Grace Cho and Ted Leybold to discuss the topic.

Staff pulled up the PowerPoint presentation.

Presentation Summary:

The presenters shared the 2028-2030 Regional Flexible Fund allocation program direction, emphasizing its collaborative development with regional partners to align with transportation plan goals and policy objectives. The program direction outlines two main updates for this cycle: the introduction of a new project bond proposal and revisions to the step two allocation process for local projects. The presenters explained that the bond proposal aims to utilize retiring bond repayments to advance regional projects, focusing on transit-related categories to maximize outcomes across regional goals. They noted that updates to the step two process align evaluation criteria with the adopted transportation plan and introduce application assistance for local jurisdictions. They added that the program direction reflects extensive partner input and anticipates moving forward with the bond proposal development and step two allocations in parallel phases. Pending approval, the presenters shared that they would plan public input phases leading to fiscal year 2028-2030 fund allocation decisions by mid-2025. The presentation concluded with a request for JPAC approval of resolution 24-50415 to proceed with program direction implementation.

JPACT Member Discussion:

Commissioner Paul Savas noted a desire to make sure that the funds are still flexible. He explained that RFFA has been restricted to mostly high-capacity transit projects, but not every jurisdiction is ready for that. He asked how they can make sure that transit can happen in the region. Despite his concerns, Commissioner Savas indicated a willingness to consider a yes vote, trusting that collaborative efforts could enhance flexibility in the proposal. Commissioner Savas also raised a technical request for projects to be included in the RTP before receiving funds, rather than needing to be in the current RTP at the time of application. He reiterated the importance of intent over tradition in developing transit corridors and emphasized staff's role in achieving regional balance and flexibility in the proposal.

Ali Mirzakhilili shared that the opportunity for public participation seems to be truncated. He asked if they will

have an opportunity to advance the proposal to the public. He asked how they can best engage the public if they only have 30 days.

Grace Cho shared that they intend to bring the community input from both community input processes, and they are currently identifying appropriate times and opportunities. She noted that they are in discussion and have not formalized their public communication aspect yet, but they will have it in the coming month.

Mayor Jef Dalin shared some of the comments from Washinton County, noting that many folks are in favor of maximizing the bond amount. Mayor Dalin remarked that he had observed his community's transformation from having ditches throughout downtown on TV Highway to having curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. He noted the positive impact of this change, which allowed people to walk safely in the community and wait for buses on curbs or benches instead of standing on gravel at the road's edge. He agreed with Commissioner Savas's comment about the importance of ensuring regional equity, emphasizing that all areas, including Clackamas, Washington County, and Multnomah, should benefit equally from the upcoming bond. He expressed his support for the plan and thanked the staff for their information-sharing and responsiveness to input.

Councilor Lewis followed up on Commissioner Savas' discussion about the eligibility for projects. She asked if the projects are RTP constrained or if they need to be anywhere in the RTP.

Ted Leybold shared that if they were to provide funding, they can fund that without that project being in the RTP financially constrained list. He noted that once they move into more formal preliminary engineering, then that project does not need to be in the financially restrained RTP at the point they move forward with it.

Councilor Lewis asked what their cycle is for updating and bringing items from the larger list into the constrained list, and asked how that cycle matches up.

Cho responded that the timing of the next update of the RTP is in 2028.

Councilor Lewis asked that if there is something that is in the non-constrained list that is appealing, why they would not want to accelerate the project-development side, if not the actual capital side, through their bond program.

Ted Leybold shared that it will be up to JPACT and Metro Council to determine if they feel comfortable investing money into project development work.

Councilor Lewis asked Commissioner Savas if, when he made his statement, he intended for them to be in the kind of green field ideas or if it was more specific to not-yet constrained RTP projects.

Commissioner Savas inquired if there had been a mid-cycle update from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) into a constrained plan in the past, indicating some confusion or possible mix-up with another program.

Kim Ellis, Metro, shared that the amendment process is not a light process to go through. She noted that they must go through a 45-day public comment period and respond to public comments. She shared that they have not done a mid-cycle amendment, adding that one thing they have done was for the I 205 toll project, noting that everyone was part of that process. She added that sometimes there have been amendments due to state funding.

Catherine Ciarlo shared that rather than making a blanket decision about allowing things to move forward without

being in the RTP, that they should have that conversation with more concrete examples in front of them.

Councilor Gonzalez summarized that the discussion was fundamental to their decision-making, highlighting the balance between planning, technical work, and policy decisions. He noted the importance of choosing between shovel-ready construction projects and major regional priorities. Councilor Gonzalez suggested that if a project became regionally significant, they could consider a mid-cycle RTP amendment, like the I-205 toll project. He shared his thoughts on the policy implications and raised a question about transportation planning and project development. Councilor Gonzalez pointed out that a project does not need to be on the financially constrained list to receive funding for early planning and scoping phases. However, once it moves into project development and construction, different criteria apply. He sought clarification on the terminology used, emphasizing that significant progress could be made on major regional priorities even if they were not initially on the financially constrained list. He asked for further explanation on the process and terminology to better understand how to advance such projects.

Leybold explained the nuanced distinction between planning project development and preliminary engineering. He clarified that project development during the planning phase involves fewer specific details about the project's alignment and mitigation measures. This phase includes preliminary issues, some survey work, and initial design efforts to determine the project's scope. Once there is a clearer idea of the project's alignment and basic design, it moves into the preliminary engineering phase. This formal phase requires approval from the Federal Highway Administration and necessitates that the project be included in the regional transportation plan. Leybold provided this high-level distinction to clarify the two phases.

Mayor Buck asked if there is a specific project that they are thinking about when they discuss this.

Commissioner Savas shared that there are others, besides those in Clackamas County, that have been raising certain projects as concerns. He shared that there may be opportunity to take a large project, and maybe divvy it up into smaller projects. He noted that they are not naming projects and noted that he is trying to honor that.

Mayor Buck expressed his appreciation for Commissioner Savas's and Mayor Dalin's comments about the importance of regional investments as they bond these funds. He noted the need for investments throughout the region and questioned whether this was reflected in the principles for the new bond project. Mayor Buck inquired if there was a framework ensuring regional parity within the package and asked if he was missing something in the existing plans that addressed this need.

Grace Cho shared that they have a broader objective and principle for the regional flexible funds in general.

Mayor Buck emphasized the importance of considering how transit impacts the region, particularly as job locations have shifted. He noted that while the focus of the transit system had traditionally been on the center of the region, where most jobs were, jobs are now spreading to outer areas. He highlighted the investments in Washington County and the creation of new job centers in Clackamas County. Mayor Buck underscored the need to plan for the region's development by using funds to support job growth, which in turn supports transit systems. He stressed the importance of having flexibility in funding and planning to address these evolving needs, rather than focusing solely on existing areas.

JC Vanatta acknowledged Commissioner Savas's perspective and agreed that it was challenging not to discuss specific projects. He emphasized that a cornerstone of the funding was to provide local matches for larger transit

projects, which are crucial for climate mitigation. Vanatta stressed the importance of this funding because, without it, they would lack the local match needed to access significant federal monies. He noted that securing federal funds is difficult without these local resources. Vanatta mentioned that he and Chair Gonzalez had attended the joint committee on transportation's roadshow, where they discussed the challenges of finding local match funds. He reiterated that this funding is essential for pursuing federal funds and that it could bring up to 50% of a federal share to the region, significantly boosting transit system investments.

Commissioner Nafisa Fai asked if they could quantify what number of projects each jurisdiction would receive. She shared that she is having a hard time quantifying the number of projects that they identify as a jurisdiction from Washinton County. She asked if, between the process communication bracket and the candidate project identifications, if they are having conversations with their staff to identify projects to go through the process.

Grace Cho shared that they are having those conversations, noting that they are also asking for a leap of faith to walk into this process without having that fully defined.

Commissioner Fai noted that multiple people mentioned TV highway, stating that they do not need to carefully consider that project.

Emerald Bogue shared that this is a really important decision of this body, and she is very much in favor of it. She noted that they do not need to work out all the details today because even though they matter, there is a lot at stake if they do not leverage bigger amounts of money coming to this region.

Commissioner Mingus Mapps agreed with Bogue and shared that at the City of Portland, they are thinking about the importance of these funds as an opportunity to leverage matching dollars, which is particularly important.

Rian Windsheimer shared that they have a lot of climate goals and noted that there are a lot of things that they need to implement. He noted that they are leveraging our region's future and need to make sure that they are building things.

Commissioner Jesse Beason shared that the County supports this opportunity, and they support the use of the bond to move forward.

Carley Francis shared that it is valuable to consider the holistic reality of projects. She noted that building new things is great and emphasized the emerging reality of preservation and maintenance as a very pressing and valuable thing to consider.

Leann Caver shared that she agrees with Francis.

Commissioner Savas shared that they should talk about limiting the number of projects that are evaluated and there should be regional equity. He asked if there were any recommendations for an amendment that would open the door for that.

Cho shared that they have heard a strong desire to know what the next steps are and shared that there are a lot of great comments that were provided today. She noted that they do not need an amendment, but they will weigh it in when defining the details.

Leybold shared that they will talk to every jurisdiction about which projects are appropriate to do and analyze their relative benefit to some of the other proposals across the region which is the whole point of those conversations.

Chair Gonzalez shared that if there is three themes that stuck out, the first one is leverage and recognizing the opportunities created by some of the federal dollars. 2. Regional equity is a theme heard loud and clear. 3 is something.

**Motion:** JC Vanatta motioned to approve Resolution No. 24-5415, Seconded by Commissioner Fai

**Action:** With all in favor, the action item passed.

## **6. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **6.1 Regional Transportation Priorities and Funding: HB 2017 Recap**

Chair Gonzalez introduced Suzanne Carlson, ODOT Miles Pengilly, TriMet to discuss the topic.

Staff pulled up the PowerPoint presentation.

Presentation Summary:

Suzanne Carlson provided an update on the statewide transportation improvement funds from House Bill 2017, which created Oregon's first dedicated public transit funding source. This funding has significantly expanded and preserved transit services, enhancing access to jobs, healthcare, and community services while helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She discussed the introduction of a 0.1% payroll tax, with funds distributed to regional transit providers, tribes, rural areas, and for intercommunity routes and discretionary programs. This has tripled the funding available to transit providers, supporting a wide range of services from urban to rural areas. She noted that major accomplishments include increased mileage and ridership, free and reduced fares for students, and investments in electric vehicles. Despite challenges like reduced ridership due to COVID-19 and supply chain disruptions, the funding has been crucial in maintaining and expanding transit services, supporting the state's climate and transit goals.

Miles Pengilly discussed how TriMet has utilized the statewide transportation improvement funds (STIF) from House Bill 2017. He emphasized the critical nature of STIF as the only state funding source for transit operations and maintenance, crucial for local match funds needed to access federal money. Key areas of investment included fare subsidy programs, reallocating service to meet changing job locations and commute patterns, and the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2040. The presenter highlighted the need for additional funding to support service expansion, the zero-emission bus transition, and maintaining a state of good repair amid rising costs. Pengilly underscored the importance of including increased STIF funding in the 2025 transportation package, emphasizing transit's role in equity, safety, and climate goals.

JPACT Member Discussion:



JC Vanatta shared that building affordable housing is very important and they often build it on undesirable land. He noted that it is cheaper to maintain rather than replace.

Commissioner Savas shared that they are working with TriMet to resolve some of the gaps. He noted that more of the STIF dollars that can fill in the gaps and address the needs of the transit areas are great. Commissioner Savas added that high density housing may be outside the Metro boundary and having the flexibility might help get people out of their cars. He asked TriMet about the restriction.

Vanatta shared that if they go beyond their borders, they need to be fully compensated for it which does not set them up for partnerships. He noted that they have a financial agreement with SMART, but there are opportunities for that.

Miles Pengilly shared that the STIF program is the regional transportation program, noting that that program is not one of their largest 3 expenditures.

Commissioner Savas noted that they may not be able to fill transit gaps.

Vanatta agreed with Commissioner Savas, noting that they opened 200 units of affordable housing and they are restricted to serve.

Mayor Buck asked about what the overlap between STIF dollars and the payroll tax.

Vanatta explained that the payroll tax functions as general fund money for TriMet, supporting various expenses such as service, maintenance, vehicle procurement, and right-of-way. He noted that this tax, mandated by legislation, directs funds into specific categories outlined in a biennial plan submitted to ODOT. Vanatta added that major allocations from the statewide transportation improvement fund (STIF) include service, regional coordination, transit for youth, and the transition to zero-emission buses. In contrast, he noted that the payroll tax has no specific earmarks, allowing flexibility in funding various operational services provided by TriMet.

Commissioner Fai expressed appreciation for TriMet's focus on safety in housing development, particularly in areas like South Hillsboro where increased housing has led to safety concerns around transit access. She acknowledged the proactive steps taken by TriMet to ensure safe pathways for residents accessing transit amidst growth. Commissioner Fai inquired about TriMet's approach to handling old buses as they transition to electrification, and how any financial benefits from this process could be returned to the community. Secondly, she proposed the idea of using surplus equipment to pilot transit expansion projects in transit deserts, such as in Washington County or Clackamas County, to address community needs for better transit access.

Pengilly discussed TriMet's approach to retiring old buses, noting that most are recycled due to their worn-out condition and lack of available parts. Occasionally, buses in good condition are donated to community organizations like Columbia Area Transit. He shared that specialized buses for people with disabilities are also donated if in good shape. Pengilly added that TriMet uses regional coordination funds to support vans that act as circulators in areas needing transit connections, enhancing access for communities. He mentioned transitioning from van services to fixed-route shuttles in some areas, aiming to build demand and improve service coverage.

Vanatta added that their commitment is to not purchase anymore diesel buses and they will work towards their zero-emission goal. He added that they use some regional coordination dollars to improve their trip planner.

**Member Updates:**

Chris Ford shared that next weekend, I-5 will be closed for a four mile stretch from Friday June 28-June 30. He also noted that in mid-July, 1-84 will be closed overnight on Saturday July 13<sup>th</sup> until noon July 14<sup>th</sup> to remove graffiti and pick up garbage.

Carley Francis shared that they will have repair work on bridges on I-5 at the north end of Clark County.

**7.ADJORN**

Chair Gonzalez adjourned the meeting at 9:30AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Georgia Langer,  
Recording Secretary

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF June 20, 2024**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DOCUMENT TYPE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>DOCUMENT NO.</b>
3.0	Presentation	06/20/2024	Fatal Crash Slide	062024-01
5.1	Presentation	06/20/2024	Resolution No. 24-5414 Presentation	062024-02
5.2	Presentation	06/20/2024	Resolution No. 24-5415 Presentation	062024-03
6.1	Presentation	06/20/2024	HB 2017 Recap Presentation	062024-04
6.1	Presentation	06/20/2024	TriMet STIF Presentation	062024-05