

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCEPTING THE	)	RESOLUTION NO. 09-4052
REGIONAL HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT	)	
SYSTEM TIERS AND CORRIDORS, SYSTEM	)	Introduced by Councilor Carlotta Collette
EXPANSION POLICY FRAMEWORK AND	)	
POLICY AMENDMENTS FOR ADDITION TO	)	
THE 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION	)	
PLAN, STATE COMPONENT	)	

WHEREAS, in 1975, elected leaders set the stage for the Metro Area’s balanced transportation system by rejecting the so-called Mt. Hood Freeway project between the Marquam Bridge and Lents neighborhood after public outcry over its expected cost and the destruction of developed neighborhoods that would be harmed by its construction; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Area chose a different development option and adopted the 1975 Interim Transportation Plan, setting aside plans for large new highway projects in favor of a multitude of street and roadway projects and a network of transitways along major travel corridors to meet future travel demand; and

WHEREAS, a systemwide network examination of regional high capacity transit corridors was completed in 1982 and adopted by Metro that resulted in nearly 90 miles of light rail transit, commuter rail and streetcar being built and/or planned for construction by 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Area’s 2040 Growth Concept and 2035 Regional Transportation Plan seek to prepare for the expected increase in growth in the Metro Area by providing multiple transportation options, including having pedestrian, bike and transit play a large role in facilitating growth within the Metro Area’s current capacity; and

WHEREAS, expansion of the high capacity transit system will continue to reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions and the Metro Area’s transportation carbon footprint; and

WHEREAS, high capacity transit is one of many important elements the Metro Area can use to build great communities; and

WHEREAS, a broad list of 55 potential high capacity transit corridors developed with the community and local jurisdictions was screened to the 18 most promising corridors based on criteria including ridership, cost, environmental constraints, social equity, transit connectivity, traffic congestion and region 2040 Growth Concept land uses; and

WHEREAS, the resulting 18 potential high capacity transit corridors were further analyzed based on a set of evaluation criteria that was approved by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and the Metro Council; and

WHEREAS, the evaluation criteria were derived from the six outcomes of the Metro Council for a successful region, and are based on the three Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) categories of community, environment and economy, and also include a high capacity transit-specific category of deliverability; and

WHEREAS, the resulting 18 potential high capacity transit system corridors are prioritized and placed into the tiers of near term regional priority corridors, next phase regional priority corridors, developing regional priority corridors and regional vision corridors; and

WHEREAS, the regional high capacity transit system plan corridors which have been placed into tiers will be incorporated into the RTP and long-range land use and transportation planning efforts; and the 18 high capacity transit corridors will be regularly reviewed through the RTP; and

WHEREAS, the system expansion policy provides a framework for advancement of regional high capacity transit corridors, and identifies a distinct set of planning and policy actions and targets that will support successful high capacity transit implementation, including proposed amendments to the RTP; and,

WHEREAS, at its meeting on June 12, 2009, the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation recommended approval of the following; now therefore

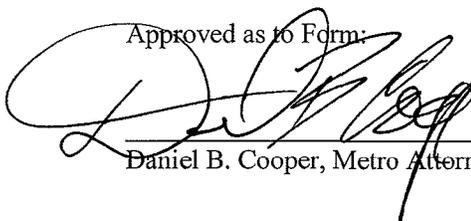
BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

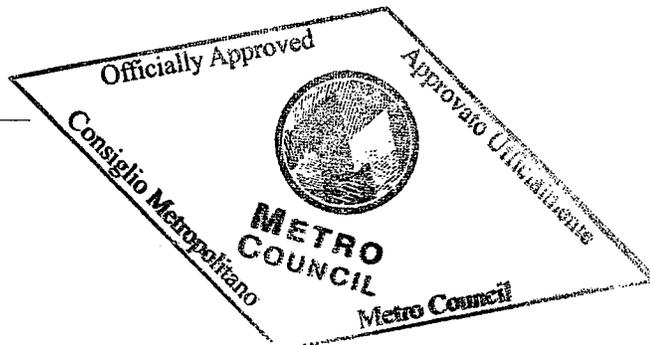
1. The Metro Council accepts the regional high capacity transit system plan tiers and corridors (Exhibit A), system expansion policy framework (Exhibit B), and recommended policy amendments (Exhibit C) for addition to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, State Component.

2. Acceptance of the regional high capacity transit system tiers and corridors, system expansion policy framework and policy amendments is not a final land use decision. The Metro Council will make a final land use decision on these matters when it adopts the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, State Component, by ordinance.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 9<sup>TH</sup> day of JULY 2009.

  
David Bragdon, Council President

Approved as to Form:  
  
Daniel B. Cooper, Metro Attorney



**Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan Tiers and Corridors**

Corridors are not ranked within the tiers. Corridors are shown in numeric order by the corridor identification number. Also refer to the attached map.

				Actions		
Tier	Corridor Description (Mode As Evaluated) <sup>1</sup>	HCT Corridor Number	RTP Mobility Corridor Reference	Actions for Next 4-Years		
Near Term Regional Priority	Portland to Gresham in the vicinity of Powell Corridor (LRT)	10	5 - Central City – Gateway; 6 – Gateway to Gresham/Fairview/Wood Village/Troutdale	See the System Expansion Policy Framework’s potential local actions and potential regional support, figure 2.	The location of High Capacity Transit and local land use actions and investments will influence future capacity for residential and employment in the region.	Location of High Capacity Transit may influence the location of future Urban Reserves and Urban Growth Boundary expansions.
	Portland to Sherwood in the vicinity of Barbur/Hwy 99W Corridor (LRT)	11	2 – Central City – Tigard; 4 – Portland Central City; 20 – Tigard - Sherwood			
	Beaverton to Wilsonville (LRT) in the vicinity of WES <sup>2</sup>	34 <sup>2</sup>	2 – Central City – Tigard; 3 - Tualatin – Wilsonville; 19 – Beaverton – Tigard; 22 – Beaverton – North Plains			
Next Phase Regional Priority Corridors	CTC to Oregon City in the vicinity of I-205 Corridor (LRT) <sup>3</sup>	8 <sup>3</sup>	8 – Clackamas – Oregon City	See the System Expansion Policy Framework’s potential local actions and potential regional support, figure 2.	The location of High Capacity Transit and local land use actions and investments will influence future capacity for residential and employment in the region.	Location of High Capacity Transit may influence the location of future Urban Reserves and Urban Growth Boundary expansions.
	Park Ave to Oregon City in the vicinity of McLoughlin Corridor(LRT extension) <sup>3</sup>	9 <sup>3</sup>	8 – Clackamas – Oregon City; 11 – Milwaukie to Clackamas			
	Sunset Transit Center to Hillsboro in the vicinity of Hwy 26 Corridor/ Evergreen (LRT)	17 <sup>4</sup>	22 – Beaverton – North Plains; 24 – Beaverton to Forest Grove			
	Tanasborne (LRT extension) <sup>4</sup>	17D <sup>4</sup>	22 – Beaverton – North Plains			
	Clackamas Town Center to Washington Square in the vicinity of I-205/217 Corridors(LRT)	28	2 – Central City – Tigard; 7 – Oregon City – Tualatin; 8 – Clackamas – Oregon City			
	Clackamas Town Center to Washington Square in the vicinity of RR ROW (LRT)	29	2 – Central City – Tigard; 11 – Milwaukie to Clackamas			
	Beaverton to Hillsboro in the vicinity of TV Highway (LRT)	32	24 – Beaverton – Forest Grove			
Gateway to Salmon Creek in the vicinity of I-205 Corridor <sup>5</sup>	55 <sup>5</sup>	9 – Gateway – Clark County				
Developing Regional Priority Corridors	Hillsboro to Forest Grove (LRT extension)	12	24 – Beaverton – Forest Grove	See the System Expansion Policy Framework’s potential local actions and potential regional support, figure 2.	The location of High Capacity Transit and local land use actions and investments will influence future capacity for residential and employment in the region.	Location of High Capacity Transit may influence the location of future Urban Reserves and Urban Growth Boundary expansions.
	Gresham to Troutdale Extension (LRT Extension)	13	6 – Gateway – Gresham/Fairview/Wood Village/Troutdale			
Regional Vision Corridors	Troutdale to Damascus (LRT)	13D	15 - Gresham/Fairview/Wood Village/Troutdale – Damascus	See the System Expansion Policy Framework’s potential local actions and potential regional support, figure 2.	The location of High Capacity Transit and local land use actions and investments will influence future capacity for residential and employment in the region.	Location of High Capacity Transit may influence the location of future Urban Reserves and Urban Growth Boundary expansions.
	Clackamas Town Center to Damascus (LRT)	16	12 – Clackamas – Happy Valley; 13 – Happy Valley - Damascus			
	Sherwood to Tualatin (LRT)	38S	20 – Tigard – Sherwood/Newberg			

<sup>1</sup> The location of the alignment is to be decided through a corridor refinement plan and/or alternatives analysis.

<sup>2</sup> The WES Corridor (34) service upgrades are currently included in the federal RTP financially constrained list of projects to all day, 15 minute service. Service improvements that mimic light rail service will be examined in phases. Some portions of this corridor are included in corridors 28, 29 and potentially 11.

<sup>3</sup> Corridor 9 to be studied in conjunction with corridor 8.

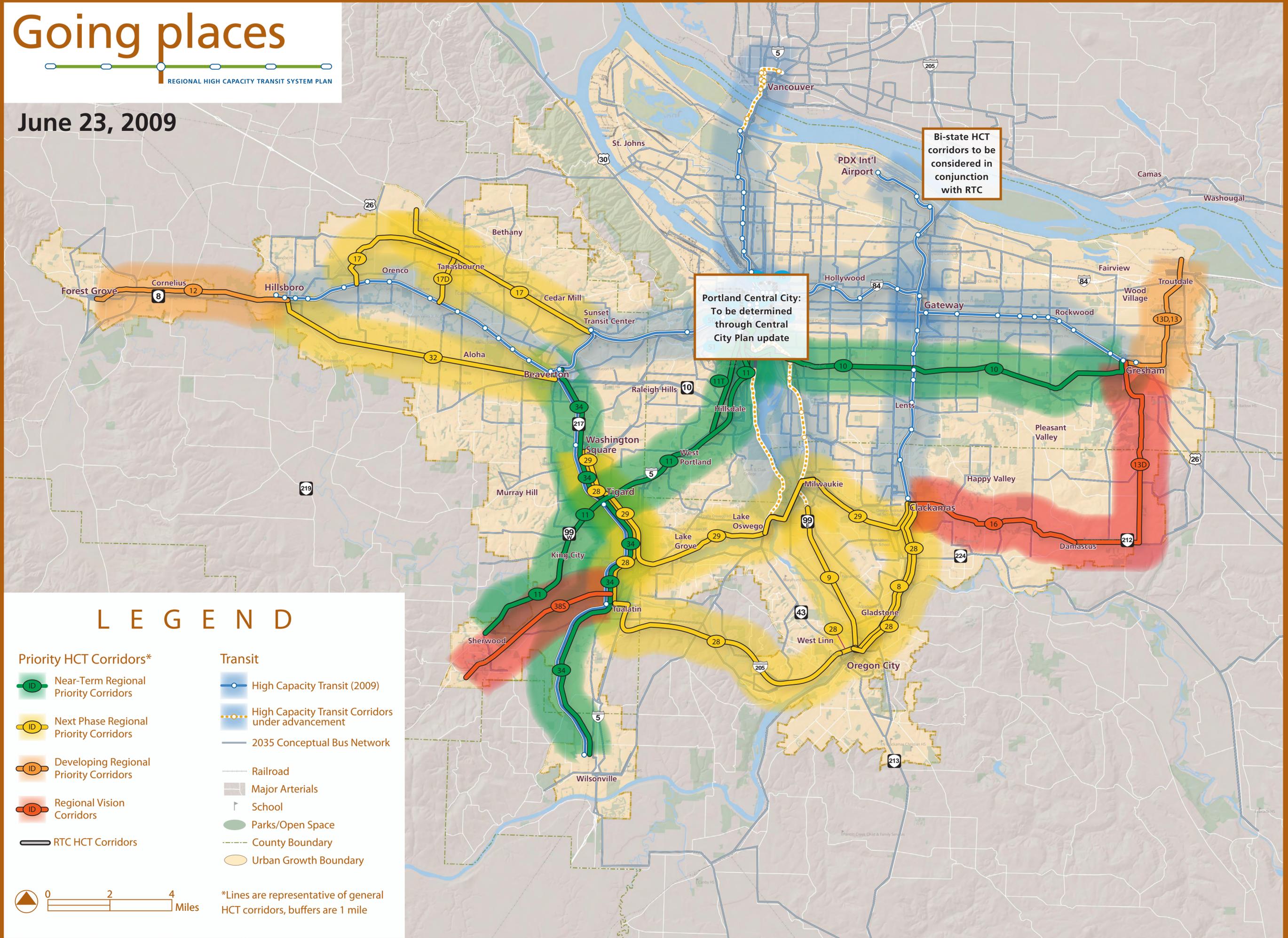
<sup>4</sup> Corridor 17D to be studied in conjunction with corridor 17.

<sup>5</sup> Corridor 55 was selected as part of Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) HCT System Plan and was not ranked based on the evaluation criteria.

# Going places

REGIONAL HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT SYSTEM PLAN

June 23, 2009



Bi-state HCT corridors to be considered in conjunction with RTC

Portland Central City: To be determined through Central City Plan update

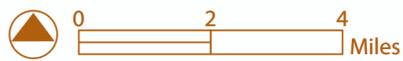
## LEGEND

### Priority HCT Corridors\*

- Near-Term Regional Priority Corridors
- Next Phase Regional Priority Corridors
- Developing Regional Priority Corridors
- Regional Vision Corridors
- RTC HCT Corridors

### Transit

- High Capacity Transit (2009)
- High Capacity Transit Corridors under advancement
- 2035 Conceptual Bus Network
- Railroad
- Major Arterials
- School
- Parks/Open Space
- County Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary



\*Lines are representative of general HCT corridors, buffers are 1 mile

## **Regional high capacity transit system expansion policy framework 6-24-09**

### **BACKGROUND**

*Making the Greatest Place* helps define how regional and local aspirations come together to create vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities. The challenges of climate change, rising energy costs, economic globalization, aging infrastructure and population growth require regional land use and transportation decisions to be supported by local decisions and actions. While regional land use policy has positioned the Portland metro region as a model for transit-supportive development, much of the region remains auto dependent due to the relatively low level of transit supportive land use regionwide. With limited resources, it is essential that future regional investments in high capacity transit (HCT) be used to leverage achievement of land use and economic development goals.

### **PROCESS FOR HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT PROJECT ADVANCEMENT - PRIORITY TIERS AND SYSTEM EXPANSION POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The regional high capacity transit system tiers and corridors identify near- and long-term regional HCT priorities. The system expansion policy component of the plan provides a framework to advance future regional HCT corridors by setting targets and defining regional and local actions that will guide the selection and advancement of those projects.

#### **High capacity transit priority tiers**

As described in Figure 1, regional HCT system corridors are grouped into one of four priority tiers, along with specific targets and various steps local jurisdictions could follow to advance a project to a higher tier. The four tiers relate to an HCT corridor's readiness and regional capacity to study and implement HCT projects. Corridors within each tier would be updated with each RTP or by RTP amendment. The four tiers are:

- **Near-term regional priority corridors:** Corridors most viable for implementation in next four years.
- **Next phase regional priority corridors:** Corridors where future HCT investment may be viable if recommended planning and policy actions are implemented.
- **Developing regional priority corridors:** Corridors where projected 2035 land use and commensurate ridership potential are not supportive of HCT implementation, but which have long-term potential based on political aspirations to create HCT supportive land uses.
- **Regional vision corridors:** Corridors where projected 2035 land use and commensurate ridership potential are not supportive of HCT implementation.

#### **System expansion policy framework**

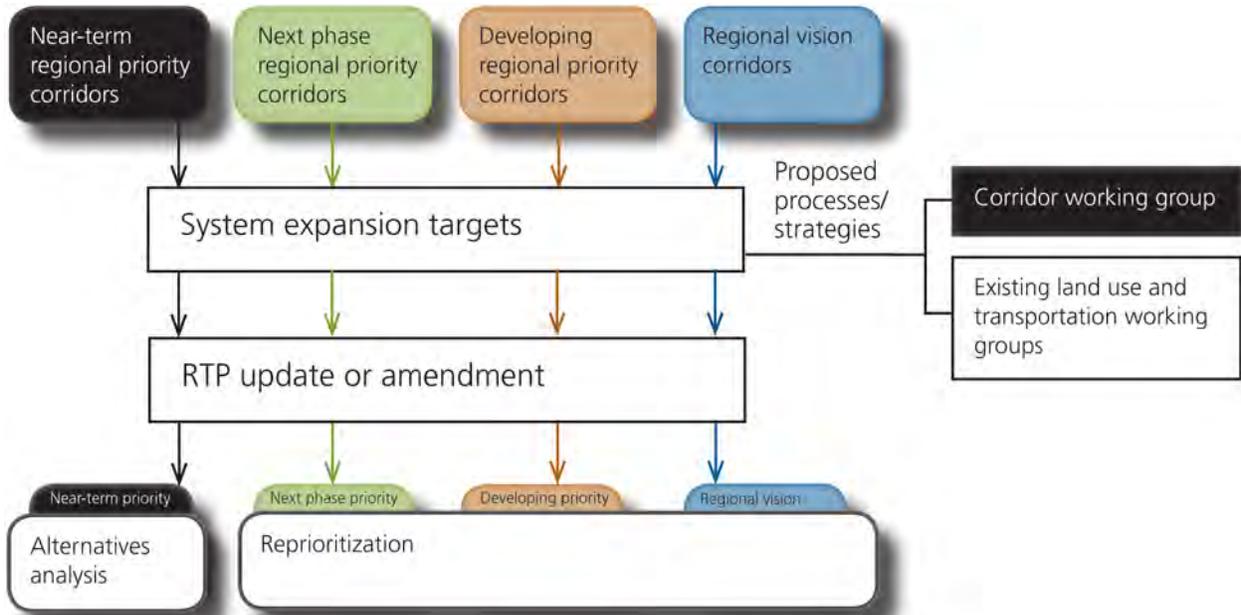
The system expansion policy framework is designed to provide a transparent process agreed to by Metro and local jurisdictions to advance high capacity transit projects through the tiers. The framework is based on a set of targets designed to measure corridor readiness to support a high capacity transit project.

The system expansion policy framework:

1. Identifies which near-term regional priority corridor(s) should move into the federal project development process toward implementation; and
2. Delineates a process by which potential HCT corridors can move closer to implementation, advancing from one tier to the next through a set of coordinated Metro and local jurisdiction actions.

Based on the tiered category, regional actions would be aligned with work in each corridor while local actions would focus on meeting HCT system expansion targets. In near-term corridors, formal **corridor working groups** would be established. Other corridors would coordinate work through existing processes.

**Figure 1: System expansion policy framework**



**Figure 2: HCT system expansion policy framework concept**

Tiers	Summary	Potential methods to reach targets		Potential system expansion targets	Potential strategies
		Potential local actions (applied to each corridor)	Potential regional support (assistance with corridor assessment against system expansion targets)		
<b>Near-term regional priority corridors<sup>1</sup></b>	Corridors most viable for implementation in next four years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop corridor problem statement</li> <li>• Define corridor extent</li> <li>• Assess corridor against system expansion targets</li> <li>• Create ridership development plan/ land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> <li>• Assess mode and function of HCT</li> <li>• Create multimodal station access and parking plans</li> <li>• Assess financial feasibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> <li>• Analyze station siting alternatives</li> <li>• Coordinate with MTIP priorities</li> <li>• Perform multi-modal transportation analysis</li> <li>• Create multimodal station access and parking plans</li> <li>• Start potential Alternatives Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit supportive land use/station context</li> <li>• Community support</li> <li>• Partnership/political leadership</li> <li>• Regional transit network connectivity</li> <li>• Housing needs supportiveness</li> <li>• Financial capacity – capital and operating finance plans</li> <li>• Integrated transportation system development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corridor working group</li> <li>• Existing land use and transportation working groups</li> </ul>
<b>Next phase regional priority corridors<sup>1</sup></b>	Corridors where future HCT investment may be viable if recommended planning and policy actions are implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop corridor problem statement</li> <li>• Define corridor extent</li> <li>• Assess corridor against system expansion targets</li> <li>• Create ridership development plan/ land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> <li>• Assess mode and function of HCT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> <li>• Analyze station siting alternatives</li> <li>• Coordinate with MTIP priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit supportive land use/station context</li> <li>• Community support</li> <li>• Partnership/political leadership</li> <li>• Regional transit network connectivity</li> <li>• Housing needs supportiveness</li> <li>• Financial capacity – capital and operating finance plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing land use and transportation working groups</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The location of the alignment is to be decided through a corridor refinement plan and/or alternatives analysis.

Tiers	Summary	Potential methods to reach targets		Potential system expansion targets	Potential strategies
		Potential local actions (applied to each corridor)	Potential regional support (assistance with corridor assessment against system expansion targets)		
<b>Developing regional priority corridors<sup>1</sup></b>	Corridors where projected 2035 land use and commensurate ridership potential are not supportive of HCT implementation, but which have long-term potential based on political aspirations to create HCT supportive land uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop corridor problem statement</li> <li>• Define corridor extent</li> <li>• Assess corridor against expansion targets</li> <li>• Create ridership development plan/ land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> <li>• Analyze station siting alternatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit supportive land use/station context</li> <li>• Community support</li> <li>• Partnership/political leadership</li> <li>• Regional transit network connectivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing land use and transportation working groups</li> </ul>
<b>Regional vision corridors<sup>1</sup></b>	Corridors where projected 2035 land use and commensurate ridership potential are not supportive of HCT implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop corridor problem statement</li> <li>• Define corridor extent</li> <li>• Assess corridor against system expansion targets</li> <li>• Create ridership development plan/ land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create land use/TOD plans for centers and stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit supportive land use/station context</li> <li>• Community support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing land use and transportation working groups</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The location of the alignment is to be decided through a corridor refinement plan and/or alternatives analysis.

## **Attachment 1 - System expansion policy terms and definitions**

This section provides a description of terms and definitions used in this document to describe the proposed process for HCT project advancement.

### **Local action descriptions**

Local actions would be structured to reach tiered targets. Some or all of the following actions could be taken to advance a project, depending on the tier placement.

**Develop corridor problem statement:** The corridor problem statement defines the purpose of and establishes goals for the proposed HCT investment (i.e., congestion mitigation, economic development, etc.). It assesses the role of the project in addressing other regional transportation priorities and identifies opportunities for integration with other transportation system improvements in the corridor.

**Define corridor extent:** As in an FTA Alternatives Analysis, the definition of corridor extent could include a project extent that encompasses multiple alignment corridors or options.

**Assess corridor against system expansion targets:** The identification of progress toward all system expansion targets for the current priority tier.

**Create ridership development plan/land use/TOD plans for centers and stations:** Assessment of potential future ridership based on current land use projections, identified station areas and local zoning. This might involve demand modeling, but could effectively use Transit Orientation Index (TOI) scores within ½ mile of identified station areas. A ridership development plan could include assessment of: TOI score, residential density, employment density, potential cost effectiveness and transit supportive land uses (zoning and station typology aspirations).

**Assess mode and function of HCT:** Definition of the HCT modes that are most relevant for meeting the primary function of a corridor's problem statement. Selection of a lower cost mode could improve the corridor's ability to meet targets.

**Create multimodal station access and parking plan:** The station access plan would ensure that station designs optimize opportunities for intermodal connections and TOD by planning for an urban block pattern. The parking management plan would help local jurisdictions develop transit supportive parking policies that include development of potential parking districts. It could also establish maximum parking requirements, pay-for-parking, park-and-ride development and management plans, and other parking code changes such as unbundling parking for new development.

**Assess financial feasibility:** Assessment of the financial feasibility of the region to advance an HCT project. The analysis would consider and propose incentives to finance existing and future infrastructure improvements, using tools such as system development charge credits, tax abatement, improvement districts and tax increment financing (TIF).

## **Regional support descriptions**

Regional support will be necessary to advance any corridor. Regional actions may already be in place, such as work coordinated through the transportation system plans; however, specific regional actions to support HCT project advancement would vary based on the tier.

**Create land use and transit-oriented development plans for station areas:** Land use and TOD plans for corridors would be reviewed for local areas to ensure that station areas within a defined corridor extent can meet defined targets for ridership and transit supportive land use.

**Analyze station siting alternatives:** Locations of stations is critical to the success of the HCT system. Metro has advanced tools to work in tandem with locals to assess the trade-offs between potential station areas.

**Coordinate with MTIP priorities:** HCT investments should align with regional priorities for transportation and land use investments. MTIP prioritization would support development or preparation of a corridor as an HCT project.

**Perform multi-modal transportation analysis:** Metro will assist with the preparation and production of transportation modeling for near-term regional priority corridors. Metro will assist corridors in other tiers as well; however, methods will vary.

**Create station access and parking plans:** Parking availability is one of the strongest determinants of transit ridership and has the potential to add significant value to leverage regional HCT investment. Metro has tools for the region to review parking plans for all land use types.

**Start potential alternatives analysis:** The region can begin the process to help projects advance into federal alternatives analysis process.

## **Proposed system expansion target descriptions**

A small set of system expansion targets will be identified to measure project readiness and contribution to regional goals. These targets will provide clear direction to local jurisdictions that desire to advance projects. System expansion targets would vary based on the tier.

**Transit supportive land use/station context:** Under this target, each station along a proposed alignment should be evaluated for ridership potential based on the jurisdictions' demonstrated willingness to promote transit supportive development. Specific targets could be set for residential, commercial and employment density in station areas. Additionally each station should undergo an evaluation to determine: (1) the capacity for station area development, (2) ability to create good station access for all modes and (3) any issues with station capacity or functionality.

**Community support:** This measure would be qualitative, based on expressed support for HCT service in the corridor.

**Partnership/political leadership:** This measure would be qualitative based on demonstrated political leadership, development of strategic partnerships and demonstrated advancement of local aspirations.

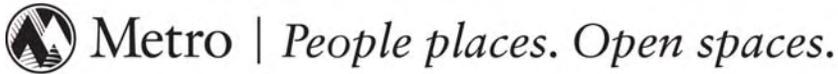
**Regional transit network connectivity:** This measure would assess the role the project plays in filling key regional transit system gaps, connectivity with the existing and planned systems and ability for existing system facilities to support the investment. It would also measure a project's impact on the regional HCT system's ability to increase system capacity to deal with malfunction, incident or construction/maintenance, and the ability for existing station and track infrastructure to support the investment.

**Housing needs supportiveness:** This measure would assess the contribution of the project to improve overall housing and transportation affordability for populations of concern.

**Financial capacity – capital and operating finance plans:** This measure would assess the capacity to fund capital and operations with no significant negative consequences on existing infrastructure or transit system operations. This evaluation could include:

- **Capital finance plan:** A qualitative rating based on whether a project is partially or fully funded, the availability of local capital funds and competition for funding that is needed for core system capacity enhancements or maintenance.
- **Operating finance plan:** A preliminary analysis of the financial capacity to operate using measures such as estimated farebox recovery, cost effectiveness (total annualized operating and capital cost per passenger), and the stability, reliability and availability of proposed operating subsidy.

**Integrated transportation system development:** This measure would quantitatively assess the role each project would play in addressing a broad range of regional transportation priorities, particularly those priorities for the Mobility Corridor in which the corridor is located.



This document describes elements of the federal 2008 Regional Transportation Plan recommended for update based on the work concluded through the High Capacity Transit System Plan.

### **1. Define the function of high capacity transit within an integrated transportation system**

**Current Regional Transportation Plan policy:** As defined in the Regional Transportation Plan, page G-7, “High capacity transit is characterized by carrying a larger volume of passengers using larger vehicles and/or more frequent service than a standard fixed route bus system. It operates on a fixed guideway or within an exclusive right-of-way, to the extent possible. Service frequencies vary by type of service. Passenger infrastructure is provided at transit stations and station communities, including real-time schedule information, ticket machines, special lighting, benches, shelters, bicycle parking, and commercial services. Using transit signal priority at at-grade crossings and/or intersections preserves speed and schedule reliability. Park and-ride lots provide important and necessary access to the high capacity transit network.”

**What we’ve heard:** In public involvement efforts and committees, staff has heard conflicting understanding and opinions about the purpose and function of high capacity transit. High capacity transit could serve corridors with access and many stops or it could serve centers with speed and few stops. Some participants wanted more suburban-to-suburban service and faster service through downtown Portland.

**Recommendation:** Update the RTP to define the function of high capacity transit as carrying a larger volume of passengers using larger vehicles and/or more frequent service than a standard fixed route bus, with a majority of an HCT line separated from traffic. The update should include language to reflect that the level of investment in High Capacity Transit should be warranted based on performance targets. HCT targets would be based on the ability of a capital investment to move people more efficiently than can be achieved by a fixed-route bus in traffic.

**RTP update method:** Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan system expansion policy targets would set clear guidelines about what HCT investment is fiscally appropriate based on projected demand. This would help guide the level of investment necessary for individual corridors.

**2. Define the role of HCT in providing service to town centers and employment areas**

RTP Figure 3.14

**Current Regional Transportation Plan policy:**

Under the current Regional Transportation Plan, Figure 3.14, high capacity transit (LRT, commuter rail, and rapid bus) is designed to provide core transit service to primary components, which include the central city, regional centers, and Union Station, and to the secondary component, station communities. High capacity transit (LRT, commuter rail, and rapid bus) is designed to provide additional public transportation modes that may serve growth concept land use components include the Portland Airport (PDX) and town centers.

**What we’ve heard:** In public involvement efforts and committees, staff has heard a desire for town centers, employment areas and major activity centers (e.g., the Oregon Zoo) to be served by high capacity transit.

Service Type		Primary Components					Secondary Components				Other Urban Components		
		Central City	Regional Centers	Industrial Areas	Intermodal Facilities		Station Communities	Town Centers	Main Streets	Corridors	Employment Areas	Inner Neighborhood	Outer Neighborhood
					PDX	Union Station							
Regional Transit Network	LRT	●	●	○	○	○	●	○					
	Commuter Rail	●	●		●		○						
	Rapid Bus	●	●		○		○		○				
	Streetcar & Frequent Bus	●	●				○	○	●	○		○	
	Regional Bus	●	●	○	○		○	●	○	●	○	○	
Community Transit Network	Community Bus	○	○	●	●		○	○	○	○	●	●	○
	Mini-Bus	○	○	○			○	○	○	○	●	○	●
	Paratransit	○	○	○			○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	Park-and-Ride			●			○	○	○		○	○	●
Inter-Urban Transit	Inter-urban Rail	●	○		●		○						
	Inter-city Bus	●	●		○	●	○						

● Best public transportation mode(s) designed to serve growth concept land use components  
○ Additional public transportation mode(s) that may serve growth concept land use components

**Recommendation:** Update the RTP with

defined targets for mode-neutral transit service frequencies to serve each of the 2040 Growth Concept land uses. Performance targets would guide the mode type and clarify what major investment is appropriate. Activity centers are not clarified in the 2040 Growth Concept, and no specific service targets are recommended.

**RTP update method:** Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan system expansion policy targets would set clear guidelines about what HCT investment is fiscally appropriate based on projected demand. This would help guide the level of investment necessary for individual corridors.

**3. Define HCT modes and resolve if rapid streetcar should be added as potential high capacity transit mode and clarify the role of commuter rail**

**Current Regional Transportation Plan policy:** Under the current Regional Transportation Plan, page 3-38, high capacity transit facilities and services include light rail transit, commuter rail, bus rapid transit, intermodal passenger facilities and park-and-ride lots.

The Regional Transportation Plan, page G-15, defines streetcar as: “Fixed-route transit service mixed in traffic for locally oriented trips within or between higher density mixed-use centers. Streetcar services provide local circulator service and may also serve as a potent incentive for denser development in centers. Service runs typically every 15 minutes and streetcar routes may include transit preferential treatments, such as transit signal priority systems, and enhanced passenger infrastructure, such as covered bus shelters, curb extensions and special lighting.”

The Regional Transportation Plan, page G-3, defines commuter rail as: “Short-haul rail passenger service operated within and between metropolitan areas and neighboring communities. This transit service

operates in a separate right-of-way on standard railroad tracks, usually shared with freight use. The service is typically focused on peak commute periods but can be offered other times of the day and on weekends when demands exist and where capacity is available. The stations are typically located one or more miles apart, depending on the overall route length. Stations offer infrastructure for passengers, bus and LRT transfer opportunities and parking as supported by adjacent land uses. See also Inter-city rail.”

The Regional Transportation Plan, page G-8, defines inter-rail as “Inter-city passenger rail that is part of the state transportation system and extends from the Willamette Valley north to British Columbia. Amtrak already provides service south to California, east to the rest of the continental United States and north to Canada. These systems should be integrated with other transit services within the metropolitan region with connections at passenger intermodal facilities.”

**What we’ve heard:** In public involvement efforts and committees, staff has heard that there are discrepancies existing in the current RTP. Rapid streetcar is being proposed in the Portland to Lake Oswego corridor, but rapid streetcar is not defined in the RTP. The High Capacity Transit System Plan has identified potential commuter rail lines to neighboring communities, but these lines would fall in between the RTP definitions of commuter rail definition and inter-city rail.

**Recommendation:** Update the RTP to replace the mode description type with mode function and performance targets. Targets for all modes performing as high capacity transit will be added, including the modes of commuter rail and rapid streetcar.

**RTP update method:** Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan system expansion policy targets would set clear guidelines about what HCT investment is fiscally appropriate based on projected demand. This would help guide the level of investment necessary for individual corridors.

#### **4. Define the coordination of land use, station area and transportation investments with HCT investments**

**Current Regional Transportation Plan policy:** There is currently no Regional Transportation Plan policy directing concurrent land use, transportation and transit planning in high capacity transit corridors.

**What we’ve heard:** In public involvement efforts and committees, staff has heard an emphasis on the importance of combining placemaking efforts and land use planning with future high capacity transit investments. Public participants were interested in creating links between stations and neighborhoods by integrating stations into surrounding communities, considering pedestrian and bike facilities around stations, and providing good local transit service to get people to HCT stations.

**Recommendation:** Update the RTP to incorporate the system expansion policy for advancement of high capacity transit corridors to include land use coordination and action by local communities to advance HCT projects.

**RTP update method:** Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan system expansion policy targets will include land use targets in association with measuring the value of potential future HCT investments.

## **STAFF REPORT**

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 09-4052 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCEPTING THE REGIONAL HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT SYSTEM TIERS AND CORRIDORS, SYSTEM EXPANSION POLICY FRAMEWORK AND POLICY AMENDMENTS FOR ADDITION TO THE 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN STATE COMPONENT

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Date: June 25, 2009

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### **BACKGROUND**

The Regional High Capacity Transit (HCT) System Plan identifies corridors where new HCT could be developed over the next 30 years and prioritizes corridors based on evaluation criteria adopted by the region, and sets a framework to advance projects in the future. This staff report summarizes the study process, provides key results and describes proposed policy changes.

#### **Role of high capacity transit**

Metro's *Making the Greatest Place* process will position the region as a national leader in addressing the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges of energy independence, carbon neutrality, population growth, sustainable economic development and human health. Continued development of a world class, HCT system is part of an integrated strategy to accommodate the region's rapidly increasing population, while reducing the negative impacts of growth on land, air and water quality and the ability to get around. Regional land use policy has positioned the Portland metro area to effectively employ transit supportive development policy and implementation. It is essential that HCT future investments leverage achievement of land use and economic development goals.

#### **Regional HCT System Plan outcomes**

The Regional HCT System Plan is not intended as a review of the regional transit structure or its management, or as a complete service analysis of the existing HCT system. Rather, the plan applies technical evaluation of possible investments to set near- and long-term priorities and aligns HCT project advancement in a way that supports and enhances the goals of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the region's 2040 Growth Concept. HCT system capital investments must be implemented as part of a broad corridor strategy that includes supportive land use and transit-oriented development (TOD), comprehensive parking programs, access systems for pedestrians and cyclists, park and rides and feeder bus networks. The Regional HCT System Plan creates a new policy framework where these elements lead or parallel investment in HCT.

#### **Regional HCT System Plan process**

Significant work has been done by Metro's technical team as well as the HCT MTAC/TPAC Subcommittee and other Metro policy committees. Steps completed in the process to date include:

- early plan public outreach and stakeholder interviews to identify major issues and objectives, and to develop an initial universe of corridors to be evaluated

- formation of and meetings with a “Think Tank” group, a group of regional leaders in a number of related fields formed to provide high-level concept development to guide the Regional HCT System Plan
- development of a long list of 55 potential regional high capacity transit corridors
- development and application of a set of eight screening criteria to narrow the 55 corridors to 18 promising corridors.
- development and adoption of 25 detailed evaluation criteria used to prioritize the 18 corridors
- stakeholder and public review of evaluation criteria
- evaluation and prioritization of the 18 adopted regional HCT system corridors
- development of a system expansion policy which sets a framework to advance HCT corridors into development.

## **RESOLUTION MATERIALS**

*Exhibit A* delineates HCT system plan tiers and corridors. These tiers and corridors are the result of months of technical work and iterations of review by the MTAC/TPAC HCT Subcommittee, TPAC, MTAC, MPAC, and JPACT.

*Exhibit B* explains the system expansion policy framework, as described in more detail below.

*Exhibit C* illustrates recommended policy amendments for addition to the 2035 RTP, State Component based on lessons learned through the HCT planning process.

### **EXHIBIT A: Regional high capacity transit system plan tiers and corridors**

An intense evaluation process revealed that ridership, though not weighted, is an important indicator of how a corridor scores since many of the evaluation criteria relate to ridership. In short, the more use a corridor has, the more benefits the corridor will produce. In addition to the technical analysis, public outreach efforts and a survey of Metro’s standing committees revealed that ridership (or ridership potential) was seen as the most important single factor in determining where new HCT investments should be made.

#### **HCT modes**

To ensure that all corridors were evaluated evenly, all HCT corridors were examined as light rail. This was also done to limit the potential for subjective judgments about appropriate modes for a corridor, which could favor one corridor over another.

Mode selection will be a critical component of the system expansion policy for future selection of priority corridors, and targets will be set to help guide what the appropriate investment should be for each corridor.

## **EXHIBIT B: Regional high capacity transit system expansion policy**

### **System expansion policy framework**

The system expansion policy framework is designed to provide a transparent process to advance high capacity transit projects through the tiers. The framework is based on a set of targets designed to measure corridor readiness to support a high capacity transit project, as described in *Exhibit B*.

### **System expansion targets**

The targets or thresholds set through the system expansion policy will provide clarity for actions local jurisdictions can take to move a corridor to a higher tier or prepare a corridor for advancement. Regional actions will also be required to ensure projects move forward in partnership. Targets will be based on measurable factors that support ridership such as household and employment densities and sidewalk connectivity. Additionally, targets will be set for community support and political leadership. These targets will be finalized in conjunction with the completion of the 2035 RTP, State Component.

## **EXHIBIT C: Recommendations for regional transportation plan updates**

Over the course of the HCT System Plan process, several policy questions arose. These policy questions are addressed in *Exhibit C*. This document seeks to address policy questions of the function of HCT and definitions of HCT modes and to define the framework of the system expansion policy.

## **ANALYSIS/INFORMATION**

### **Known opposition**

Representatives from Forest Grove (including the mayor) and Cornelius have concurred with the validity of the technical analysis but are on record as opposing the tiered ranking of Corridor 12 (Hillsboro to Forest Grove) in the developing regional priority category.

### **Legal antecedents**

Resolution No. 09-4025 *For the Purpose of Adopting the Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan Screened Corridors and Evaluation Criteria.*

Ordinance No. 82-135 *For the Purpose of Adopting the Regional Transportation Plan*

Resolution No. 83-383 *For the Purpose of Endorsing the Regional Light Rail Transit (LRT) System Plan Scope of Work and Authorizing Funds for Related Engineering Services*

Resolution 07-383 1B *For the Purpose Of Approving the Federal Component of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update, Pending Air Quality Conformity Analysis*

### **Anticipated effects**

Adoption of this resolution would enable the prioritized HCT corridors to be included in the RTP, State Component, set a policy framework for the advancement of high capacity transit projects through the system expansion policy, and set a policy framework for HCT within the RTP, State Component.

### **Budget impacts**

There would be no direct impact on the Metro budget as a result of taking action on this resolution.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approve Resolution No. 09-4052 For the Purpose of Accepting the Regional High Capacity Transit System Tiers and Corridors, System Expansion Policy Framework and Policy Amendments for Addition to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan State Component

### **Resolution exhibits**

Exhibit A: High capacity transit system plan tiers and corridors

Exhibit B: System expansion policy framework

Exhibit C: Recommended policy amendments for addition to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan, State Component

### **Staff report attachments**

Council has previously received the following document in the draft form:

- High Capacity Transit System detailed evaluation report on May 12, 2009

Council will receive the following documents when they have been finalized after council's final adoption of Resolution:

- High Capacity Transit System detailed evaluation report
- Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan summary report
- Public outreach summary report