

# Public Transportation Strategy EMAC Update

July 2023

This document presents the agreed-upon Purpose, Goal and Objectives of the Public Transportation Strategy (Strategy), a description of the committee approach, a summary of tasks, and the Strategy screening criteria questions.

## Purpose, Goal, and Objectives

The Strategy Purpose, Goal and Objectives were established with regional partners by consensus at meetings held on December 22, 2022, and February 1, 2023.<sup>i</sup> The Project Management Group (PMG) made minor adjustments to the Key Definitions during their first PMG meeting held on March 10, 2023.

### *Purpose*

Establish an equitable Public Transportation Strategy for the Portland Metropolitan and SW Washington area that is developed by regional partners and ODOT. The Strategy will identify near- and long-term public transportation projects and supportive services that are complementary to a congestion pricing system on I-5 and I-205.

### *Goal*

Increase public transportation options other than driving alone on or near tolled highways while advancing a more equitable and climate-friendly transportation system to help meet regional and state policy goals.

### *Objectives*

- Collaborate to increase availability of public transportation options other than driving alone on or near tolled highways, especially for historically and currently excluded and underserved communities.
- Identify public transportation projects and supportive services that will facilitate a shift to higher occupancy vehicles with consideration to local needs.
- Identify potential funding sources and lead agencies.

### *Definitions*

To provide clarity to the Strategy Purpose, Goal, and Objectives, the following definitions were developed:

- **Public transportation projects** include any project type that supports planning, development, and operation of fixed route service. Examples include fixed-route bus, light rail transit, bus rapid transit, and other forms of high-capacity transit.
- **Public transportation supportive services** include any programmatic elements that facilitates a shift to higher occupancy vehicles and/or provides transportation options where fixed route does not exist. Examples of supportive services could include ridesharing, vanpools, deviated fixed route service, local shuttles, park and rides, and mobility hubs.

- **Complementary public transportation projects and supportive services** are those that provide public transportation options for people who would otherwise drive alone on or near priced highways to get to their destination. The Regional Mobility Pricing Project (RMPP) proposes to use congestion pricing to manage travel demand and traffic congestion on I-5 and I-205 in the Portland metropolitan region. During the RMPP NEPA process, if a significant adverse impact is identified resulting from the RMPP, then ODOT will engage partners to identify appropriate mitigations. Mitigation measures for significant impacts that result from the RMPP could include public transportation projects or supportive services identified in the Strategy. More information about project mitigations can be found here: [https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/trans\\_decisionmaking.aspx](https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/trans_decisionmaking.aspx)

To provide further clarity for the Strategy effort, elements that will not be under consideration are described below.

- Projects and supportive services that cannot reasonably demonstrate they would be complementary to or have a connection to a congestion pricing system on I-5 and I-205.
- Bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects that are not included in a larger public transit corridor infrastructure project.

## Committee Approach

The committee approach and structure to develop the Strategy was determined through conversations and agreement with regional partners during meetings held on December 22, 2022 and February 1, 2023 and includes a Project Management Group (PMG) and a Workgroup.

### ***Project Management Group (PMG)***

#### **Members**

The members of the PMG were selected through discussion with partner agencies. Agencies and/or organizations will select their own representative. PMG representation includes Clackamas County, City of Portland, C-TRAN, Metro, ODOT, TriMet, Washington County.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- Inform and provide guidance on the overall workplan to develop the Strategy.
- Review and provide input on the agendas and materials for Workgroup meetings.
- Provide oversight on the development and implementation of the engagement plan for community-based organizations and other stakeholders.
- Support the Workgroup to reach consensus.

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- Support the Workgroup to reach consensus.

## **Workgroup**

### **Members**

The members of the Workgroup were selected through discussion with partner agencies. Workgroup representation includes Canby Area Transit, City of Portland, City of Vancouver, Clackamas County, C-TRAN, Interstate Bridge Replacement, Metro, ODOT, Ride Connection, SMART, SCTD, SW WA RTC, TriMet, Washington County.

### **Responsibilities**

The Workgroup's roles and responsibilities are the following:

- Review, provide input, and reach agreement on the screening criteria.
- Apply the screening criteria to develop the initial project list and identify projects and supportive services for the Strategy.
- Develop the initial project list comprised of short-term and long-term projects and supportive services.
- Review, provide input, and reach agreement on the development and implementation of the engagement plan for community-based organizations and other stakeholders.
- Review and provide input on the suite of funding options and financing strategies to be considered generally and by project or service.

## **Strategy Tasks**

The Strategy will be developed through five major tasks. The first task, establish the Purpose, Goal and Objectives of the Strategy as described above, is complete. The remaining tasks include identifying a comprehensive list of potential funding sources; develop the list of public transportation projects and supportive services; establish an engagement approach for the Strategy, and gain agreement and endorsement of the Strategy. These are described further below.

### ***Funding Options White Paper***

A funding options white paper will be prepared with input from the Workgroup that identifies potential funding sources (federal, state, regional, and local) for public transportation projects in the greater Portland metropolitan region including Southwest Washington. This will help inform regional discussions around the implementation of the Strategy.

### ***Strategy List Development***

Workgroup participants will work together to develop the Strategy project and supportive services list comprised of short-term and long-term public transportation projects and supportive services. The proposed approach to developing the Strategy list includes:

- Collaboratively develop screening criteria to determine the set of public transportation projects and supportive services that best meet the Strategy purpose, goal, and objectives.
- Partners submit initial public transportation projects and supportive services using the screening criteria as a guide.
- Workgroup use screening criteria to review, discuss, and narrow the proposed list of public transportation projects and supportive services to include in the Strategy.
- Projects/supportive services will be organized into two categories:

- Short-term 5-year investment priorities (2025-2030)
- Long-term investment priorities (2031+)
- The Workgroup will discuss and identify those that should be prioritized with the implementation of tolling. The prioritization shall take into account the timing of the proposed toll projects.
- Present the Strategy project selection criteria and public transportation project and supportive services list to RTAC, EMAC and other regional committees to keep them updated on status.
- Seek RTAC endorsement of the Strategy at their October 2023 meeting.

### Screening Criteria

The screening criteria will guide regional partners in determining the set of public transportation projects and supportive services that best meet the Strategy purpose, goal, and objectives. Provided in Table 1, below, are screening criteria that may be refined based on discussions with regional committees.

**Table 1: Screening Criteria**

Evaluation Categories	Screening Questions
<p><b>Project Type</b></p>	<p>Project must address at least one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the project or supportive service support planning, development, and operation of a fixed route service? Examples include fixed-route bus, light-rail transit, bus rapid transit, and other forms of high-capacity transit.</li> <li>2. Does the project or supportive service include programmatic elements that facilitate a shift to higher occupancy vehicles and/or provide transportation options where a fixed route option does not exist? Examples of supportive services could include ridesharing, vanpools, deviated fixed route service, local shuttles, park and rides, and mobility hubs.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Relationship to congestion pricing</b></p> <p>Assessment tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● TAZ District Map</li> <li>● 2027 RMPP No-Action Demand Table</li> </ul>	<p>Please use the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) District Map, 2027 RMPP No-Action Demand Table to provide responses to the following questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the project or supportive provide a transportation option for people who otherwise drive alone on or near tolled highways to get to their destination?</li> <li>2. It is anticipated that roadways near highways proposed for tolling that experience traffic congestion today will continue to experience traffic congestion in the future, which may be affected when tolling is operational. Does the proposed public transportation project or supportive service address a concern on an existing congested roadway near a highway proposed for tolling?</li> <li>3. Please describe how the proposed project or supportive service is complementary to congestion pricing.</li> </ol>

Evaluation Categories	Screening Questions
<p><b>Equity</b></p> <p>Assessment tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Social Vulnerability Explorer</li> <li>• Equity TAZ district map</li> <li>• Equity focus Areas 2027 RMPP No-Action Demand Table</li> <li>• Low Wage Jobs map</li> <li>• Social Resources Map</li> </ul>	<p>For the purposes of the Public Transportation Strategy, historically excluded and underserved communities are defined as populations that have currently or historically been disproportionately affected by local transportation projects. As discussed in Oregon Toll Program’s Equity Framework, equity communities include low-income populations, minority populations, older adults, children, people with disabilities, persons with low English proficiency, and households with no vehicle access.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the project/supportive service serve historically and currently underrepresented and under-served communities?</li> <li>2. Does the project/supportive service address transportation-related disparities and barriers experienced by historically and currently underrepresented and under-served communities?</li> <li>3. Does the project/supportive service provide access to opportunity for historically and currently underrepresented and underserved communities?</li> </ol>

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Participating Regional Partners Agencies
Canby Area Transit
City of Portland
City of Vancouver
City of Wilsonville – SMART
Clackamas County
C-TRAN
Multnomah County
Oregon Department of Transportation
Oregon Metro
Ride Connection
South Clackamas Transportation District
Southwestern Washington Regional Transportation Council
TriMet
Washington County
Washington Department of Transportation

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