

Rebuilding Our Transportation Vision Workgroup

Meeting 2 Summary

The meeting was held in-person on Monday, June 1, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Salem, as well as being streamed live on [YouTube](#). The meeting recording, materials, and transcript are available at [Rebuilding Our Transportation Vision Workgroup](#).

The Workgroup discussed how transportation funding decisions affect public safety, economic vitality, local communities, and the people and businesses that rely on Oregon's transportation system. A panel from around the state provided information and answered the Workgroup's questions. Members also reviewed and approved (with minor edits) the subgroup charge, deliverables, timeline and role in supporting the Workgroup.

Attendees

Members

Grace Crunican – Co-Chair

Bruce Hanna – Co-Chair

Ted Aadland

Julie Brown

Gale Castillo

Dan Dorran

Tyler Frisbee

Jeff Gritz

Chris Hagerbaumer

Patrick Nofield

Lisa Sumption (*non-voting*)

Jim Trett

Panel

Jim Simnitt, Owner of Simnitt Nursery and past president of Oregon Association of Nurseries

Brian Vitulli, President of Oregon Transit Association and General Manager of Tillamook County Transportation District

Phillip Wu, Retired pediatrician and former board chair of Oregon Environmental Council

Tammy Baney, Executive Director of Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council

Marcus Hinz, Executive Director of Oregon Coast Visitors Association

Lisa Collier, Wallowa County Commissioner

Subgroup Chairs

Jameson Auten, Lane Transit District

Thomas Baker, The Street Trust (virtual)

Lee Beyer, Oregon Transportation Commission

Anthony Castaneda, SEIU

Jana Jarvis, Oregon Trucking Association

Duncan Wyse, Oregon Business Council

Staff

Kelly Brooks, Office of the Governor

Susan Peithman, Amanda Pietz, Tova Peltz and Travis Brouwer, Daniel Porter, ODOT

Brandy Steffen, JLA Public Involvement

Public

Approximately 315 people have watched the meeting on YouTube.

Summary

Co-Chair Opening Remarks

The co-chairs welcomed members, subgroup chairs, staff, panelists, and online participants. They framed the meeting around two purposes: hearing directly from transportation system users about real-world impacts and preparing subgroups to begin focused work. They emphasized that the work must move beyond general agreement into specific, usable direction so subgroup members can contribute effectively and return with recommendations that help the full workgroup make decisions.

Governor's Office Updates

Kelly Brooks reviewed the results of the recent funding measure, which did not pass. She confirmed that workgroup's recommendations remain urgent; with maintenance and preservation needs, bridge weight restrictions, limited paving plans, and worsening safety outcomes across the local and statewide system.

Kelly also mentioned that with the subgroups starting in June, about 70 people will be involved in the six subgroups. She encouraged the

Workgroup members to take the input from the subgroups and then provide clear direction from the full workgroup on how to create safer travel, reliable freight movement, access to essential services, and stronger communities throughout Oregon.



Panel Discussion

The panel introduced themselves as representatives for agriculture and freight, rural transit, health and wellness, local government, tourism, rural counties, and economic development. They were asked to reflect on how an unreliable transportation system impacts their ability to operate, earn income or serve customers, as well as what should be funded first if Oregon cannot fund everything, to avoid the highest real-world costs to Oregonians.

Impacts of an Unreliable Transportation System

- **Freight and agriculture:** Nursery and agricultural businesses rely on trucks, bridges, and reliable corridors to move goods to out-of-state markets. Congestion, bridge closures, lack of truck parking, and detours increase costs and reduce competitiveness.
- **Rural transit:** Transit providers described service as a lifeline for people who need access to groceries, medical care, jobs, social activities, and non-emergency medical transportation. Road failures directly undermine transit reliability.

- **Health and wellness:** Transportation is often described as a social determinant of health due to limited transit access, which can lead to unsafe walking or biking conditions. The inability to afford a car can also restrict access to jobs, income, health care, and community participation.
- **Rural communities:** Road closures can interrupt mail, groceries, medication delivery, restaurant supplies, water testing, and medical lab work, often resulting in fines or the replication of medical tests. Rural counties with limited redundancy are especially vulnerable.
- **Tourism and coast access:** Coast communities depend on visitor travel, but vulnerable and limited routes (Highway 6 and 26) create a risk for businesses, residents, emergency response, and visitor experience.
- **Economic development:** Central Oregon and other regions need reliable statewide freight and passenger connections to recruit employers, move goods, and maintain competitiveness particularly when considering rural to market travel.



Funding Priorities

- **Maintenance and preservation first:** The panelists repeatedly emphasized protecting existing assets before taking on new commitments, even if those projects may not be the most politically popular they should be completed if they have the highest return on investment.
- **Major project discipline:** Panelists urged for clarity on how projects are selected, suggesting that safety and mobility should be considered first. They also suggested that realistic cost estimates and stronger alignment between commitments, funding, delivery capacity, and public expectations were needed.
- **Freight reliability:** Oregon needs reliable corridors connecting rural producers, ports, markets, rail, intermodal facilities, and urban centers. Another panelist suggested reinvesting in rail lines to get freight off the roads.
- **Safety:** One panelist suggested prioritizing giving people safe options for travel by bike and pedestrian paths. Panelists also tied emergency response, transit reliability, and roadway conditions to the safety of Oregonians.
- **Maintain transit service levels:** Panelists stressed that Oregon should preserve service gains made after House Bill 2017, including evening, weekend, and more frequent service. However, they noted that costs and wages are increasing while the payroll tax has held steady.
- **Revenue options:** Most panelists noted that the current funding mechanisms are broken. Ideas included vehicle miles traveled or congestion pricing, transient lodging tax, and other tools. Several participants said no option should be excluded without analysis. Rural areas may have more public land, resulting in lower tax revenue for local funding matches.

Member Reflections

Workgroup members reflected on the panel discussion and key takeaways. Two main themes emerged: the need for human-centered storytelling and the practical importance of safety, maintenance, mobility, and preservation. Additional reflections included

- The idea that transportation equals freedom resonated strongly. Members discussed framing transportation as freedom to work, live in rural Oregon, access health care, reach the coast, travel safely, and participate in community life. They also highlighted Oregon’s aging population who will need transit and healthcare access.
- Members emphasized the need to make the story about Oregon and Oregonians, not only about ODOT. They emphasized the need to bring in trusted local messengers to pass a future funding bill, including county and city officials, transit providers, businesses, and residents. They noted that there are 40 transit providers in the state.
- Several members noted that public trust is a barrier. Concerns included perceptions that ODOT has not used funds well, incomplete or underfunded past commitments/major projects, a focus on ADA ramp replacements that are legally required but to the public appear to be “sidewalks to nowhere,” and accountability from the legislature about what is being required for implementation/construction and the commitment of funds to those efforts.
- Members agreed that future communication (and education) must clearly explain what investments buy, what was delivered successfully, what was not delivered and why, and what outcomes Oregonians can expect. They suggested that the state can create a proactive, collaborative environment to build a movement around transportation funding and vision.

Meet the Subgroup Chairs, Charge and Draft Problem Statements

The subgroup chairs introduced themselves and described the perspectives they bring to work.

The co-chairs urged the subgroup chairs to keep discussions focused, coordinate across subgroups, use ODOT data,

elevate legislative questions when needed, and return to the Workgroup with options and recommendations. The workgroup will be responsible for integrating subgroup input, weighing tradeoffs, and developing final recommendations.

The Vision Workgroup then:

- Approved the subgroup charge, with minor refinements.



- Reviewed the subgroup charge to prepare a memo that describes the problem, current conditions, future needs, key tradeoffs, and recommended actions or decisions.
- Provided clarifications to the subgroup problem statements, including:
 - **Maintenance, operations, preservation, and emergency response:** focus on roadway assets; transit asset condition will be addressed in the transit and passenger rail subgroup.
 - **Transit and passenger rail:** address Oregonians who cannot drive or who face mobility barriers due to age, disability, income, or other factors.
 - **freight:** will be broadened beyond the interstate system to include rail and intermodal connections to state, national, and global markets.
 - **Major projects:** look both backward and forward to review existing commitments and underfunded projects, while also recommending better future processes for selecting, scoping, estimating, funding, and delivering major projects.
 - **Funding:** evaluate allowable uses, likely impacts on users, alignment with transportation goals, and how revenue choices affect the system and different user groups.

Additional comments and notes for the subgroups included:

1. **Community livability and safety:** Focus on reducing fatal and serious crashes, improving walking and biking safety, addressing rural and urban safety needs, and supporting access to key infrastructure.
2. **Maintenance, operations, preservation, and emergency response:** Examine deferred maintenance, local and state system conditions, user costs from poor road conditions, short- and long-term needs, and the importance of accounting for maintenance in capital decisions.
3. **Transit and passenger rail:** Describe the value of transit and passenger rail for riders and non-riders, maintain service where possible, coordinate with funding discussions, and examine who pays into and benefits from the system. Clarify how emergency transit needs should be reflected in subgroup discussions.
4. **Major projects:** Clarify how major projects are defined, assess existing commitments and underfunded projects, identify delivery risks, and recommend improved processes for selecting, scoping, estimating, funding, and delivering major projects. Determine whether statewide economic development goals should be referenced in subgroup materials.
5. **Funding:** Evaluate system needs, accountability, revenue options, and how funding approaches affect different users and regions.
6. **Freight mobility:** Identify key bottlenecks and clarify freight needs across highways, rail, intermodal connections, ports, and access to state, national, and global markets.

Upcoming Meetings and Next Steps

The co-chairs reminded the members that the next meeting will be held in-person on July 7 to hear legislative perspectives. Members also discussed possible outreach opportunities to raise awareness, hear from communities, and explain transportation needs before recommendations are finalized.

- Meeting 3: (July 7) What do legislative partners need from us? What can we learn from project successes?
- Meeting 4: (August 7) Subgroup report outs. What can we learn from major project successes? What can we learn from other states?
- Meeting 5: (September 9) Subgroup report out and synthesize.

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- Meeting 6: (October 9) Revenue & Implementation, including Subgroup funding and implementation input.
- Meeting 7: (November 10) Subgroup report out and components of a 2027 Transportation Package.
- Additional meeting if needed on Agreement and Concurrence.
- December: Final report published.

The Workgroup welcomes feedback from the public as it builds recommendations to rebuild Oregon's transportation system.

Feedback to the Workgroup can be sent to RebuildingTransportation@odot.oregon.gov.