

Meeting Summary

Subject	Regional Toll Advisory Committee Meeting #6
Date and Time	April 24, 2023 / 9:00-11:30 a.m.
Location	Hybrid: Billy Frank Jr. Conference Center at Ecotrust and online via Zoom

Attendee	Organization / Role	Attendance
Michelle Belkot	Clark County	Virtual
Rory Bialostosky	City of West Linn	In person
Frank Bubenik	City of Tualatin	In person
Shawn Donaghy	C-TRAN (Washington business)	Virtual
Nafisa Fai	Washington County	In person
Carley Francis	Washington State Dept. of Transportation	In person
Jon Isaacs	Portland Business Alliance	In person
Susheela Jayapal	Multnomah County	Virtual
Mingus Mapps	City of Portland	In person
Anne McEnergy-Ogle)	City of Vancouver	In person
Willy Myers	Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council	In person
James Paulson	EMAC Liaison	In person
Lynn Peterson	Metro	Virtual
Matt Ransom	SW Washington Regional Transportation Council	In person
Curtis Robinhold	Port of Portland	In person
Paul Savas	Clackamas County	In person
JC Vannatta	TriMet	In person
Julie Wilcke Pilmer	Ride Connection	Virtual
Kasi Woidyla	Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center	Virtual
Keith Lynch	FHWA (ex officio)	In person
Brendan Finn	ODOT, Urban Mobility Office (ex officio)	In person
Della Mosier	ODOT, Urban Mobility Office (ex officio)	In person
Kris Strickler	ODOT Director, Chair	In person
David Kim	RTAC facilitator	In person
Mandy Putney	ODOT, Presenter	In person
Karyn Criswell	ODOT, Presenter	In person
Tom Mills	TriMet Presenter	Virtual
Thomas Parker	FHWA, Presenter	In person
Tyler Patterson	WSDOT, Presenter	Virtual
Kirsten Beale	Committee coordinator	In person
Anne Pressentin	Project team	In person
Jodi Mescher	Notetaker	In person
Nick Fazio	Zoom host	Virtual

Attendee	Organization / Role	Attendance
Logan Cullums	Zoom support	In person

Committee member regrets: Sarah Iannarone, The Street Trust; Jana Jarvis, Oregon Trucking Association; Dean Reynolds, Cowlitz Indian Tribe

1 Welcome and Agenda Review

David Kim, facilitator, welcomed the attendees and talked through the logistics and objectives of the meeting. He reminded the audience that this is a public meeting and a hybrid meeting.

Director Strickler provided opening remarks and noted that since the last RTAC meeting, the project completed the comment period on the I-205 Toll Project Environmental Assessment (EA), with over 2,600 comments submitted. Director Strickler noted his appreciation for the time and effort that many jurisdictions contributed by reviewing the EA and providing input. He reported there are two new members of the Oregon Transportation Commission. Director Strickler shared that he will be presenting a full update on the toll project and the work of the RTAC once the new members are confirmed; RTAC members are welcome to provide their own comments to the OTC. Director Strickler reinforced ODOT's commitment to providing funding for mitigation projects and recognizing that impacts of tolling are not limited to the highway.

2 Advancing Equity for the Oregon Toll Program

James Paulson shared how the Equity and Mobility Advisory Committee (EMAC) has explored the question of equity and shaping an equitable toll program and how it may inform RTAC's approach to revenue allocation. EMAC's work includes co-developing the Oregon Toll Program Equity Framework, which informs how a trauma-informed equity lens is applied to the toll projects.

The Equity Framework acknowledges that transportation and land-use investments have resulted in trauma for historically excluded and underserved communities and individuals. The Equity Framework supports EMAC's charge from the OTC to advise on neighborhood health and safety (diversion), low-income (affordability), and transit and multimodal transportation options. EMAC defines Equity Framework Communities as communities who have experienced negative cultural, health, economic, and relational impacts to local communities and populations because of previous decisions.

James described that "equity" for transportation projects is the just allocation of burdens and benefits within a transportation system. For the purposes of ODOT's toll projects, equity is described in two ways: process equity and outcome equity. Process equity measures help determine how successful the projects are at achieving inclusive and accountable participation of historically excluded and underserved communities in the transportation planning and decision-making process. Outcome Equity measures will address three dimensions: affordability (user costs), access to opportunity, and community health to determine which pricing and equity strategies best advance equity.

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James reviewed the recommendations and foundational statements presented to the OTC. EMAC's 2023 work plan will focus on providing input on accountability, engagement, revenue allocation, and rate-setting and the low-income toll program.

- Commissioner Mapps asked if EMAC's framework and recommendations around equity have been embedded in the I-205 Toll Project EA.
 - James responded that EMAC reviewed the EA with an equity lens to look for opportunities for an equity analysis. He added that EMAC's greatest impact is influencing the NEPA process as well as being represented on RTAC and STRAC to provide recommendations around equity.
 - Brenda Finn, ODOT, responded that comments received from the EA public comment period and EMAC's recommendations will be reviewed. ODOT will work with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to address those comments in the revised EA.
 - Mandy Putney, ODOT, commented that EMAC's work began before the NEPA process started and that ODOT has relied on EMAC's equity framework and foundational statement to guide all work. EMAC helped to create equity performance measures that are used throughout the I-205 Toll Project EA. An equity analysis was used to evaluate the impact on equity communities beyond what is required for the Environmental Justice component of the EA. Mandy added that the EMAC will continue working with the STRAC and RTAC.
 - Director Strickler clarified that the equity framework and equitable engagement strategies were embedded in the EA. Recommendations about rate-setting are still to come from EMAC and STRAC.
- President Peterson commented that the discussion about equity should not be limited to rate-setting because it should also consider the impacts from diversion on local streets. She shared an example of performance metrics from Georgia via email to Director Strickler and asked for that example to be shared with the RTAC members. President Peterson asked what performance metrics can be used to understand the full impact on equity communities.
 - James responded that EMAC is working to establish performance metrics. The EMAC foundational statements intentionally do not include specific performance metrics because they don't know what those need to be yet. Discussions about subsidies and available revenue provide an opportunity to discuss how equity is considered in performance metrics.
 - President Peterson commented that systematic bias can lead to a lack of data about lived experiences and community values, so the project should figure out how to identify and get missing data for equity communities for the best equity analysis.
- Commissioner Savas said that the I-205 Toll Project does not appear to meet the climate goals in the corridor because there are no alternatives to driving in the corridor. He commented that the region is not close to a state of readiness to implement tolling due to the lack of alternative modes

of travel and stated that cities need transit to be available in the corridor before tolling begins. Commissioner Savas added that the rate subsidies should be in place before tolling begins, but even if they are, they will not be enough without alternative transportation options.

- James responded that EMAC is fully in support of increasing public transit access to balance the program's climate goals. He commented that if the region does nothing, then no progress will be made, so EMAC is looking at how to move transportation projects forward with an equity lens.
- Commissioner Jayapal noted support for EMAC's foundational statements and added that equity and climate are mutually reinforcing. She commented that ensuring equity investments are available at day-one of tolling implementation is critical. She commented that the project needs to be considered holistically to ensure equity foundational statements are considered with metrics or at each decision point.
- Matt Ransom commented many people driving from Washington to Oregon are low-income workers who typically have fewer options for travel mode and time of day. He commented that SW Washington is concerned that the benefits and mitigations from tolling won't be extended to Washington. He recommended that the project team recognize the specific impacts to Washington commuters considering types of jobs or distance of travel. He also suggested considering a customer service center in Washington so commuters would not have to travel to Oregon to access information or services.
 - James responded that he has been trying to find data about labor movements to understand how movement is happening in the region across state lines.
- Michelle Belkot asked how much of the 12-hour reduction in congestion is due to the I-205 toll pricing and how much is due to the added third lane.
 - Mandy responded that the traffic benefit of reduced congestion is the result of both I-205 tolling and adding the missing third lane at the same time.

3 Public Transportation Strategy: Initial Screening Criteria

Karyn Criswell, ODOT, and Tom Mills, TriMet, provided an update on the Public Transportation Strategy (Strategy). The purpose is to establish an equitable 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. Karyn reviewed the Project Management Group and Workgroup charge and work plan, the schedule for developing the Strategy, and the overall engagement approach assumptions.

Tom presented a draft of the Strategy screening criteria based on initial feedback from the Project Management Group and Workgroup. He noted that this is still a working draft, and that RTAC member

feedback will be incorporated in the screening and prioritization criteria. Workgroup participants will work together to develop the list of short-term and long-term public transportation projects and supportive services. Once the draft Strategy is complete, it will be shared with RTAC for their input and endorsement in October.

The screening criteria will guide regional partners in determining the set of public transportation projects and supportive services that meet the Strategy purpose, goal, objectives, and definitions. Generally, projects will be rated as pass or fail based on the project type, relationship to congestion pricing, and equity. The second part of the screening process is to assess the readiness and timing for implementation for the list of projects and supportive services. The purpose of this section of the screening criteria is not to eliminate projects but to prioritize projects based on their readiness.

Discussion question: Any general questions or clarifications about the selection, screening, and prioritization process? Additional key issues on screening questions and criteria?

- Commissioner Savas asked what the minimum state of readiness should be before tolling is implemented. He commented that the I-205 section is the worst section of the region to be tolled first because of the lack of transit. He suggested that for the project to be successful, tolling should start where transit is already available, adding that there are buses on I-5 but no bus routes through the I-205 corridor. He asked when there will be a public transportation system and projects in place.
 - Karyn commented that part of the Strategy is identifying the timing of projects and identifying short-term projects, with 2025 being the earliest for short-term project implementation. The Strategy will identify projects that will be immediate to start at the onset of tolling. She acknowledged the draft list of transit-related projects that were identified as mitigation for the I-205 Toll Project and noted that while some of these projects will also be reflected in the Public Transportation Strategy, this is a separate process.
 - Tom noted that TriMet is the largest operation of public transportation in the region. TriMet released [Forward Together](#) which is a service restoration plan that will begin implementation in September 2023. One recommendation in Forward Together is to install a transit line on the I-205 corridor. TriMet anticipates that there will be a transit line along the I-205 corridor in anticipation of I-205 tolling. The goal is to have this line operational by the time tolling comes online. Tom added that there aren't transit services in the Stafford area because that area is undeveloped, but there are intentions for increasing services for developed areas in the I-205 corridor.
 - Commissioner Savas commented that TriMet's proposal has a lack of continuity and connection to other transportation systems in the area. Tom responded that he would reach out directly to Commissioner Savas to review the latest plans from TriMet.
- Mayor Bubenik shared his concerns about the gap in transit services and that transit should be available from day one of tolling. He commented that the Stafford area being undeveloped is a

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temporary condition. He added that regardless of development, the Stafford area will experience the impacts of diversion, especially on Borland Road and Willamette Falls Drive.

- Commissioner Mapps asked what role data plays in decision making. He asked if the traffic modeling from the Regional Mobility Pricing Project (RMPP) is available and when that will be shared with RTAC.
 - Karyn responded the RMPP traffic model data will be available mid-summer. The project team is looking at that data to determine which components will be relevant to the Public Transportation Strategy, and how origin and destination data relate to congestion pricing.
 - Commissioner Mapps reiterated that traffic modeling data is fundamental to decision-making. He noted that if the data is available in the summer, and the committee is expected to sign off on the Strategy in October, that it is too short of a timeline for RTAC to review the modeling data and have time to facilitate discussions with stakeholders about it. He noted a concern about the difficulty of engaging with people in late summer as schools begin. Commissioner Mapps recommended postponing making decisions until the traffic modeling data is available so that electeds can hear from constituents and make data-informed decisions. He also suggested extending RTAC's schedule.
 - David Kim said the team will look at the committee timing.
- President Peterson commented that she would like more information on the difference in the methodology between the corridor definition and the origin/destination definition. She stated her opinion that there is an inherent policy question that is put on the table through those differing definitions. She commented that RTAC should have an opportunity to provide input on the difference in those definitions and how that will impact communities. She noted that the committee has not been given an opportunity to weigh in on the funding opportunities within the transportation system and what kind of performance we can get for local communities. She noted there are sideboards but they are not as hard and fast as some would think. She asked that the goals and metrics for demand management for the highway system, local network, and accessibility be defined. Additionally, she added it should be clear what the Strategy is trying to achieve for highway users and the local transportation network. She asked for more time for the RTAC to review outcomes for this strategy and the end user rather than just the methodology. President Peterson stated that the Strategy is not at a state of readiness for RTAC and ODOT to make decisions about how it will be implemented.
- James Paulson commented that RTAC's workplan deadline shouldn't rush the work. He commented that there are more public transportation projects than there is available funding, so the prioritization of public transportation projects is important to consider. James commented that equity should be included in the prioritization categories for public transportation projects.
- Mayor Bialostosky stated that the lack of available public transportation is a big concern in West Linn. He noted that Forward Together recommends eliminating an existing line in West Linn to be replaced with a different line on I-205 from Oregon City to Tualatin. This will create a transit desert for West Linn because the only available local line will be on Highway 43. He suggested

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that Line 76 should be go through the business district and through the Stafford area. Mayor Bialostosky commented that city staff from West Linn, Oregon City, and Tualatin are not included in the Project Management Group or Workgroup and suggested those jurisdictions be involved in conversations going forward.

- Tom responded that TriMet can meet with West Linn staff to discuss the best way for the transit system to serve that community.
- Commissioner Fai commented that a challenge for the business community in Washington County is getting people to come to them. She suggested that the Project Management Group should include the members of the business and labor community (for example, the Portland Business Alliance). She also noted that equity should not be considered as an after-thought, so EMAC should be included in providing input on the Strategy from the beginning. Commissioner Fai extended congratulations to ODOT for the extensive work in centering equity and using equity-specific and trauma-informed approaches for the tolling program and said that work should be continued for the Public Transportation Strategy.
- Commissioner Fai asked who submits projects for consideration in the PTS, how people submit projects, and what kinds of projects qualify. She also asked about how ODOT is advancing equitable and climate friendly transportation.
 - Karyn responded that projects are submitted by public transit providers that are already doing engagement in communities. She added that there must be an identification of how projects meet the Strategy criteria for them to be considered, although the Project Management Group and Workgroup still need to specify how to define those criteria. Karyn referenced the Public Transportation Strategy update in the RTAC meeting packet which includes definitions that are used to identify what qualifies as a “public transportation project” and “public transportation supportive service”. She said that any project would be eligible for consideration within those definitions.
- Commissioner Fai asked what the price estimate is for the public transportation projects.
 - Karyn responded that ODOT will not have a cost estimate until the projects have been identified. She added that the second part of the planning work will include identifying a funding strategy and prioritization for projects. Karyn noted that part of this work is identifying the immediate-need projects that need to be implemented by the time tolling comes online.
- Commissioner Savas commented that RTAC’s work should be extended beyond October. He also stated that if TriMet is removing a transit line on Willamette Falls Drive, they are taking from the community rather than building a transportation system. He noted that there does not appear to be a commitment from TriMet to increase transit frequency.
 - Karyn responded that ODOT is working on the Strategy to help identify gaps in service.

4 Toll Program Monitoring Framework

Mandy Putney, ODOT, commented that there is an ongoing conversation with EMAC about monitoring diversion effects and long-term accountability related to equity. She noted that the conversation with RTAC will focus on the framework for monitoring the transportation system. She encouraged RTAC to focus on the process and the collaboration opportunities.

Thomas Parker, FHWA, discussed the importance of monitoring for the toll program. Key monitoring considerations include: who is responsible; what are the objectives; what are the environmental and community commitments that have been made while assessing disproportionately high and adverse impacts; what are some of the key metrics for monitoring performance to measure the effectiveness of the program, plan, or project; and how should monitoring be conducted.

Tyler Patterson, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), shared a case study example of WSDOT's approach to monitoring. WSDOT's approach to monitoring includes:

1. Form the team
2. Establish the area and time period to monitor
3. Listen and understand the concerns from partners
4. Select metrics to measure these concerns
5. Determine data needed and identify gaps
6. Fill the gaps
7. Establish a baseline time period
8. Begin collecting and sharing the data
9. Start tolling
10. Keep collecting and sharing data
11. Ongoing operations

Tyler noted keys to success in monitoring, including that the final program should be unbiased and accurate in its reporting, produced in collaboration with local jurisdictions who are the local experts, and committed to transparency through the process.

Mandy provided an overview of the proposed approach to monitoring at the Oregon Toll Program. ODOT is coordinating with multiple workgroups, local agency staff, and advisory committees (including RTAC) to develop a monitoring framework for the Oregon Toll Program. The purpose of a monitoring program is to establish a process to monitor and assess changes in traffic and safety patterns resulting from the implementation of tolling. While the NEPA process seeks to predict the effects of tolling, ODOT will implement monitoring to evaluate and respond to toll program performance. ODOT is proposing four workgroups to be involved in monitoring. ODOT still has work to do to determine the key elements of the monitoring framework and RTAC's work will be a vital component.

David noted that due to time constraints, RTAC members are encouraged to submit comments and questions about the monitoring framework via the meeting evaluation forms. Brendan stated that the team will commit to continuing the discussion about the monitoring framework and performance metrics as an agenda item to a future RTAC meeting.

5 Public Comment

One individual joined in person to share public comment.

- John McCabe, resident from the Stafford area, commented that they are already experiencing problems from diversion. 2008 was when a third lane was added on I-205 between I-5 and Stafford. Traffic on one of the roads increased by 135% and roads are at capacity, but ODOT's solution is to just live with diversion. He suggested to start tolling and see how many people divert off the highway, and if it's more than 5% diversion, then the project should be stopped. Mr. McCabe commented that with HB 2017 there was an increase in gas tax and registration fees, including for electric vehicle. He suggested that there is more than \$150 million set aside for local projects every year, so ODOT should not implement tolling. He commented that cities and counties are getting 41% of HB 2017 additional revenue and ODOT gets 59%, so if ODOT has a problem, that's where the 41% can go. He also talked about a second public meeting he attended where it was stated that anything at the meeting was not part of the public record. He engaged with FHWA and was told ODOT can't do that and that FHWA received a video of the meeting.

One individual joined online to share public comment.

- John Ley commented that tolling is an important topic for the entire Portland metropolitan area. He would like to know why ODOT won't tell the people what percentage of the congestion reduction is attributed to the added third lane on I-205 and what is attributed to tolling. He added that is an extremely critical component that RTAC should know. John added that transit is not a viable alternative. C-TRAN ridership peaked in 1999 and TriMet ridership peaked in 2012. Both transit agencies do not expect ridership to return to pre-pandemic levels until the end of the decade. He stated that TriMet is burning cash, and their projected 10-year budget is over half a billion dollars of their cash in the next decade with current service. There is no money for them to pay for new service. People want traffic congestion relief, which means new lanes and an efficient means of paying for transportation systems. The gas tax has less than 1 percent cost of collection, whereas tolling can cost 30 – 60 percent of revenue collected.

David reminded members of the public that there are additional ways to provide comment through in-person comment forms, email, and voicemail.

6 Project Updates

Commissioner Fai shared an update on the STRAC. She shared that at the last meeting on March 24th, the STRAC reviewed and provided comments on the draft rules for how customers would enroll and the types of accounts, discussed how ODOT could encourage customers to register for pre-paid accounts, as these are the lowest cost to administered, and delivered feedback on the community engagement plan that informs the rulemaking process. The next meeting will focus on the dispute process and enforcement.

Mandy provided an update on the Regional Mobility Pricing Project (RMPP) scoping period results. Public engagement for the scoping period built on significant engagement done as part of the initial planning phase of the project. Prior to the scoping period, there was a large engagement effort in Spring 2022 which included a series of CBO and equity focused discussion groups to understand issues and concerns related to congestion pricing. The 50-day comment period was the kick-off to the NEPA phase of the project, following the initial planning phase during PEL. As a result of the advertising and notifications, ODOT received 4,500 comments during the scoping comment period. ODOT has published a summary of the input received during the scoping comment period. Scoping is just the first step to inform the range of community and environmental issues that ODOT will study. ODOT will provide ongoing opportunities for input throughout the environmental analysis.

Mandy noted that the I-205 Toll Project EA comment period was completed on April 21. ODOT received about 2,600 comments from the comment period which are currently being reviewed.

7 Next Steps and Close Out

Director Strickler provided closing remarks, noting an appreciation for centering on equity conversations. He noted that it is nice to hear ODOT is making progress with how equity work is informing engagement and outcomes. He commented that the tolling program should base the foundational work in data and noted appreciation for identifying the performance metrics as well as the data itself. Director Strickler also extended his appreciation for the time and effort that RTAC members have contributed to having conversations about the tolling program. He noted that doing nothing leaves the region as is, so ODOT must do something. Ongoing discussions with RTAC members help to ensure that ODOT implements programs correctly.

- Carley Francis suggested that the project team initiate conversations the monitoring framework by reaching out to RTAC members directly since there was not time to have a full discussion.
 - Mandy responded that the team is willing to have those conversations.
 - Director Strickler suggested extending an invitation to WSDOT staff to return for the future discussion about the monitoring framework.
- Commissioner Savas asked if ODOT has a number yet for the peak hour for the RMPP analysis.
 - Mandy responded that analysis should be available in a couple months. She clarified that ODOT needs to have the methodology approved by FHWA before moving forward with that analysis.
- Commissioner Savas asked what the baseline year for the analysis is. He stated that the EA combined the construction project and the tolling project, which may have skewed the analysis of what the benefits are attributed to.
 - Mandy responded that the NEPA process looks at comparisons of not doing a project versus doing a project for a future year, looking at 2027 and 2045. ODOT is not

comparing the present scenario with a future scenario. ODOT uses Metro’s regional model which includes travel demand, population growth, and land use changes that are already planned as part of the regional transportation plan.

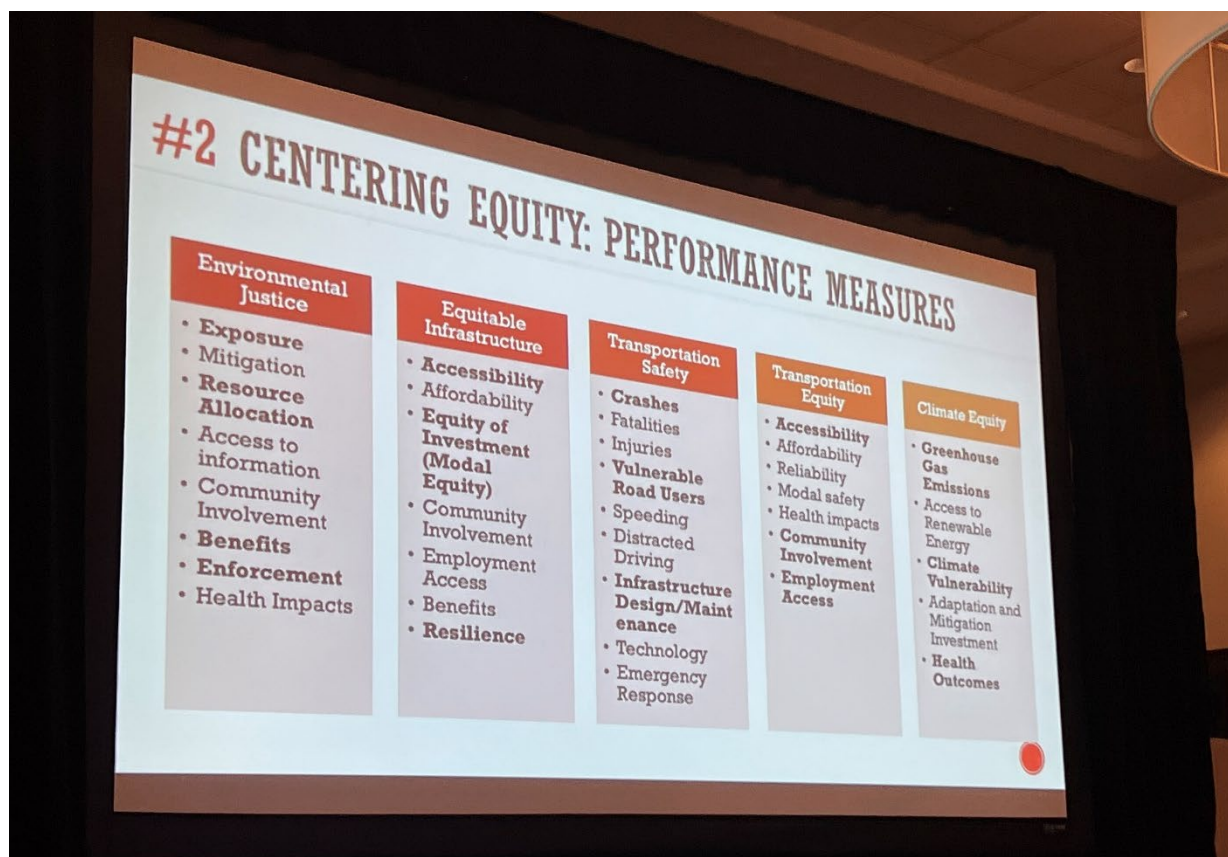
The next RTAC meeting will be May 22, 2023. David reminded RTAC members to provide feedback on the meeting evaluation forms.

8 Action Items

The project team heard requests for additional information during the meeting. Action items for the project team are:

- Share case study from President Peterson about performance metrics with RTAC members. (See below.)
- Add a discussion about the monitoring framework to the agenda for a future RTAC meeting.
- Review RTAC work plan and schedule.
- Project team to reach out to members to gain input on monitoring framework.

Case study: Submitted by Lynn Peterson. Credit: Charles T. Brown, founder and principal of Equitable Cities, a minority- and veteran-owned urban planning, public policy and research firm focused at the intersection of transportation, health and equity.



9 Written Public Comment

For public comments sent before the meeting, see attached.