

Background

Based on conversations with Portland metropolitan area partners, ODOT identified a need to develop a Public Transportation Strategy that includes near- and long-term public transportation projects and services that are complementary components of a congestion pricing system on I-5 and I-205, and that best contribute to regional congestion relief and realize regional and state equity and climate goals.

As a first step in this process, ODOT Public Transportation Division Administrator Karyn Criswell and ODOT Urban Mobility Office Strategic Initiatives Director Mandy Putney met with more than 15 potential partners during October and November 2022 to gauge interest in working together to co-create the Public Transportation Strategy.

Partner agency feedback is being used to refine the Public Transportation Strategy work plan, including:

- Purpose statement, goal, and objectives
- Approach, process, and schedule
- Approach to engagement—including creating a project management team and working group—and broader public involvement
- Aligning the Public Transportation Strategy with ongoing regional efforts, such as the Regional Transportation Plan

ODOT met with the following agencies and stakeholder groups:

Partner Agencies and Stakeholder Groups	
City of Portland, 11/7/2022	Ride Connection, 11/10/2022
City of Sandy (Sandy Area Metro), 10/26/2022	South Clackamas Transportation District, 10/27/2022
City of Vancouver, 11/4/2022	South Metro Area Regional Transit (SMART), 11/10/2022
Clackamas County, 10/17/2022	Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, 11/10/2022
Communities in Motion, TBD	The Street Trust, Oregon Environmental Council, 1000 Friends of Oregon, 10/24/2022
C-TRAN, 11/4/2022	Transit and Multimodal Work Group, 10/19/2022
Interstate Bridge Replacement Team, 11/10/2022	TriMet, 10/17/2022
Metro, 11/9/2022	Washington County, 10/20/2022
Multnomah County, 10/24/2022	Washington State Department of Transportation, 10/28/2022

The sections that follow provide an overview of partner input and the most common themes discussed at these meetings.

Purpose, Goal and Objectives

- Most partner agencies agree there is a need for a Public Transportation Strategy that complements congestion pricing and the fundamental idea of starting a process for regional travel options.

DRAFT Stakeholder Discussions Summary

- Most partner agencies recommend bringing equity front and center into the purpose of the Public Transportation Strategy.
- Most partner agencies suggested removing the term “corridor” in favor of focusing the Public Transportation Strategy on regional travel patterns, recognizing that transit does not solely travel along interstates to provide regional services.
- Several partner agencies recommend clarifying that southwest Washington communities are included in the Portland metropolitan area for this effort.
- Some partner agencies highlighted the importance of calling out a broadened definition of public transportation to go beyond fixed-route bus and light rail to include elements such as high occupancy vehicles (carpool), vanpools, and local shuttles.
- Some partner agencies suggested public transportation solutions that make a meaningful contribution to congestion relief will be different, depending on the context of each part of the region, and these differences should be considered as part of the Public Transportation Strategy.

Approach, Process and Schedule

- Most partner agencies agree with the steps identified to create the Public Transportation Strategy.
- Most partner agencies believe the schedule presented is too aggressive and suggested that partners should assess trade-offs between slowing down the process, recognizing that it would mean new projects identified through the Public Transportation Strategy could be added to the Regional Transportation Plan through the amendment process at a later date.
- Partner agencies have questions about the analytical tools that will be available for partners to determine the projects that will best meet the Public Transportation Strategy goals and objectives.
- Partner agencies recommend strong coordination with Metro and the transit providers serving the region to reduce redundancy and confusion.
- Some partner agencies recommended working through existing regional decision-making groups.
- Partner agency ongoing efforts most mentioned, include:
 - Metro High-Capacity Transit Study
 - 2023 Regional Transportation Plan Updates (Metro and Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council)
 - TriMet Forward Together and service planning
 - Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund local planning and coordination process

Engagement

- Most partner agencies agree that a smaller project management team should be established for the effort and should comprise senior-level agency representation.
- Many partner agencies expressed the need for regional partners to take part in this effort collaboratively and break down service planning silos.
- Most partner agencies identified the need to keep elected officials informed of the work going forward.

DRAFT Stakeholder Discussions Summary

- Most partner agencies agree that the project management team would need to include, listed in order of frequency mentioned:
 - ODOT
 - Metro
 - TriMet
 - Clackamas and Washington Counties
 - C-TRAN
- Additional Project Management Team representation commonly brought up by partners:
 - SMART
 - City of Portland
- Additional potential Project Management Team membership mentioned by partners:
 - Rural transit service provider
 - Equity Mobility Advisory Committee member
- Partners stated that there is a need for a working group or committee that is composed of agencies that are managers of public transportation services and regional planning entities.
- Partners did not have a strong opinion as to whether it would be better to re-charter and re-constitute the Transit Multimodal Working Group, which was formed to provide input on the I-205 Tolling Project or form a new group specific to the Public Transportation Strategy. It was often mentioned that the TMWG has been a place to learn about tolling updates, rather than a place for substantive engagement.
- Many partner agencies recognized that the staff participating on the work group or committee should have positional authority sufficient to speak on behalf of their agency in order to increase the likelihood of the successful development and implementation of a regionally supported Public Transportation Strategy.
- Some partner agencies recommended engaging with community organizations.
- Some partner agencies identified the need to engage with the public.

Next Steps

Given the strong support for co-creating the Public Transportation Strategy, proposed next steps include:

- Scheduling a third-party facilitated meeting with all partners in mid-December and/or early January to:
 - Review and discuss results of partner discussions.
 - Review, discuss, and potentially reach agreement on a refined Public Transportation Strategy work plan that incorporates partner feedback. (To keep the process moving, ODOT will make the initial revisions and will provide the document to all partners a minimum of one week prior to the partner meeting.)
 - Discuss/gain clarity and consensus on the draft purpose and outline of the charters for both the Project Management Team and the Public Transportation Strategy Working Group.
 - Reach group agreement on the agencies that will constitute the Public Transportation Strategy Project Management Team.