

**CLIMATE
SMART**
COMMUNITIES
SCENARIOS PROJECT

Community Conversations Report

March 28 and
April 2, 2014

*Prepared for Metro by
JLA Public Involvement, Inc.*

**MAKING A
GREAT
PLACE**





Community Conversations Report

March 28 and April 2, 2014

The Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project was initiated in response to a state mandate from the 2009 Oregon Legislature to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent from cars and small trucks by 2035.

The goal of the project is to engage community, business public health and elected leaders in a discussion with their communities to shape a preferred approach that meets the state mandate and supports local and regional plans for downtowns, main streets and employment areas.

As one part of the engagement effort, Metro convened two discussion groups of community leaders. At the first discussion on March 28, 2014, leaders were invited to weigh in on the investments and actions under consideration for inclusion in the preferred approach.

The second discussion on April 2, 2014, was an open dialogue with community leaders on ways that Metro and its state and local partners can ensure that the investments and actions recommended are implemented in a way that is equitable and meets the needs of our diverse communities. This report provides an overview and key themes of both community conversations.

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COMMUNITY CONVERSATION #1 – Shaping the Preferred Approach

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project

Friday, March 28, 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Metro Regional Center

Meeting Participants

Dave Nielsen, Home Builders Association
Heidi Guenin, Upstream Public Health
Jonathan Ostar, OPAL Environmental Justice
Philip Wu, Kaiser Permanente
Eric Hesse, TriMet
Glenn Koehrsen, Clackamas County Aging Services Advisory Council
Jake Warr, TriMet Transit Equity Committee
Andrea Hamberg, Oregon Health Authority
Corky Collier, Columbia Corridor Association
Cora Potter, Ride Connection
Mike Houck, Urban Greenspaces Institute
Lainie Smith, ODOT Region 1
Duncan Hwang, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Linda Moholt, Tualatin Chamber of Commerce
Steve White, Oregon Public Health Institute
Chris Hagerbaumer, Oregon Environmental Council
Ramsay Weit, Community Housing Fund

Staff and Facilitation Team

Kim Ellis, Metro
Peggy Morell, Metro
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Cliff Higgins, Metro
Deena Platman, Metro
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Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement
Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement

Background

As part of its public engagement effort for the CSC Scenarios project, Metro convened a group of community leaders representing diverse interests to discuss six key investment areas to help inform Metro's regional policy advisory committees (MPAC and JPACT) as they develop their recommendation for a draft preferred approach for the project. The meeting focused on the following policy questions:

- How should the region make investments into the six areas in a way that meets the needs and visions of diverse communities across the region?
- Given the current uncertainty around transportation funding, how should we pay for investments?

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

Metro Councilor Bob Stacey welcomed participants and explained that this meeting is the first of two community conversations that Metro is hosting to get input on strategies that are being discussed for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating great communities. The focus of the first meeting was to capture input, thoughts, and concerns to share with members of the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) who have been charged with making a recommendation to Metro Council on the draft preferred approach.



Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement, introduced herself as the facilitator of the meeting. She reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Presentation: Overview of CSC Scenarios Project

Councilor Stacey provided a brief overview of the project, noting that the project was initiated in response to a mandate from the Oregon Legislature to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region by 2035. He identified the project goal as an opportunity to engage community, business, public health and elected leaders in a discussion about how to meet the state mandate while supporting local and regional visions for healthy, more equitable communities and a strong regional economy. He added that the project seeks to find ways to meet the greenhouse gas emissions target using those strategies that will also support community visions and goals.

Councilor Stacey indicated that communities across the region are *already* taking important actions and making investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that those actions and investments already being implemented will be included in the preferred approach. He noted that participants were being asked to focus on **six investment areas** that MPAC and JPACT need more community feedback on:

1. **TRANSIT** – Maintaining and making transit more convenient, frequent, accessible and affordable
2. **WALKING and BIKING** – Making walking and biking more safe and convenient
3. **ROADS** – Maintaining and making streets and highways more safe, reliable and connected
4. **SMART ROADS** – Using technology and “smarter” roads to actively manage traffic flow and boost efficiency
5. **PARKING** – Managing parking using a market-responsive approach to make efficient use of parking resources
6. **MARKETING & INFORMATION** – Providing information and incentives to expand walking, biking, carpooling and use of transit and fuel-efficient driving techniques

Councilor Stacey concluded by presenting other opportunities to get involved:

- Online public comment tool: www.makeagreatplace.org
- Three community forums (details in handout)

- Fall 2014 public comment period, which is the final opportunity to provide input on the draft preferred approach.

Presentation: Key Themes from Stakeholder Interviews

Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement, reviewed key themes from stakeholder interviews conducted in early 2014. Metro and JLA interviewed thirty-three leaders in public health, equity, environment, and business, as well as elected officials from across the region, to understand their priorities and concerns about the six investment areas. The main points from these interviews regarding the six key investment areas are included in Appendix 1 of this summary.

Small Group Discussion: Review of Issues for Each Investment Area

Participants worked together in three small groups to provide additional input on each of the six investment areas. After reviewing the stakeholder input for each area, participants indicated whether the priorities and concerns raised capture what is important to their communities and provided additional input. They wrote their comments on flip charts, and staff reported out what was discussed. A full list of comments is included as Appendix 2 of this summary. Main points included:



1. **TRANSIT – Maintain and make transit more convenient, frequent, accessible and affordable**

- High capacity transit options should be carefully planned. For example, bus rapid transit might be a better option than light rail in some situations because it is lower cost and provides good efficiency.
- There is a need for better regional connectivity beyond the “hub and spoke” model. TriMet System Enhancement Plans are beginning to move in this direction. Unconventional options could help serve less dense communities, such as small, local shuttle buses that feed into TriMet routes. Examples of Grovelink in Forest Grove and the Tualatin Shuttle were provided.
- Transit planning should happen in conjunction with land use and community planning—not after.
- Prioritize low-income communities for bus service improvements. Keep fares low, connect to the region's small or mid-size communities, and invest in increased bus service more than light rail and capital projects.
- Consider potential gentrification and other impacts of light rail on existing communities.
- Transit fleets should switch to more carbon-efficient fuels.
- Make transit more appealing and convenient for users. This could include incentives like regional or youth bus passes, or a lower age for the senior discount.
- Consider using TriMet service instead of school bus service to transport students. This could increase ridership, provide a new funding source, and develop a habit of transit ridership among youth.

2. WALKING and BIKING – *Make walking and biking more safe and convenient*

- Participants generally agreed that walking and biking improvements should be a high priority, and particularly support projects that focus on *safety* and *improving health*. This may mean prioritizing separated facilities.
- It is important that investments create complete streets and complement road improvements. The region needs intermodal hubs, but at the same time each mode should be sufficiently developed so that people can get to their destinations using a single mode.
- Demographics are changing in the region in terms of how people choose to get around. Younger populations drive less and have decreased car ownership, and persons with disabilities and older populations who have stopped driving need better walking options and amenities. Mixed used communities are needed, particularly for seniors.
- *Integrated systems* are needed that connected walking and biking routes (including trail routes) to transit. Integrated projects may also be eligible for more funding sources.
- Marketing should not promote the message that *everyone* should bike and walk. Not everyone can bike and walk, particularly if their work patterns do not allow for it.
- There is a lack of dedicated funding sources for bicycle/pedestrian projects. Funding is needed for both maintenance and capital projects.
- Improvements should not just focus on commuters. Improvements also should be made to facilitate short neighborhood trips and recreation.
- We need better options for the “last mile” of travel.

3. ROADS – *Maintain and make streets and highways more safe, reliable and connected*

- Making streets and highways *safe* should be a key priority.
- Connectivity is important, but means different things to different people.
- Road improvements should not impact natural areas. Use Green Street guidelines.
- Complete streets are important. Prioritize investments to roads that have access to transit and are integrated with walking and biking facilities.
- We need to be more strategic about which roads we invest in and where we invest. Investments should be tailored to improve the best and highest use of each road. Some roads may be better suited as a freight road vs. a bike/ped corridor, for example. Similarly, developers who put in new roads should build them strategically to integrate into and improve existing systems.
- Multimodal streets are important, but separate modes when it would result in efficiency and where other modes have other easy nearby access.
- Road improvements should be made equitably across the region. Consider which populations are receiving priority in road improvements. For example, more investment is needed in East Portland.
- New funding sources are needed beyond the gas tax, which is not a sustainable funding mechanism.

4. SMART ROADS – *Use technology and “smarter” roads to actively manage traffic flow and boost efficiency*

- All of the groups supported technology in general, and some noted the importance of investing in technology and road maintenance *before* making capital investments like road widening. They particularly support the use of technology to help reduce idling and congestion, and making technology as reliable as possible. Efforts to reduce congestion would also help reduce emissions from freight vehicles, which emit the highest amount of greenhouse gases while stuck in traffic.
- Technology about delays and conditions need to be in real-time. Drivers need to get information about delays *before* they begin their trip. Examples could be taken from the freight community, which prices every trip in advance.

- Ideas for specific technology investments:
 - Provide information about real-time ambient air quality on freeways.
 - Create ways for people to price their different travel options. For example, a Smartphone app could show the true cost of driving (gas, insurance, etc.) so that travelers can make their mode choice before they make the trip.
 - Install bus jump lanes to improve on-time performance.
 - Implement technology to better handle incident congestion.
 - Consider congestion pricing and tolling options, and explore successful examples or case studies.
 - Increase TSMO funding.

5. PARKING – *Manage parking using a market-responsive approach to make efficient use of parking resources*

- All groups focused on the idea that “free parking is never free—it is just a matter of who subsidizes it.” This message needs to be more widely communicated, as well as the message that paid parking has economic and health benefits.
- If paid parking is instituted, there must be corresponding strong investments in other transportation options so that people have a real alternative to driving.
- Paid parking strategies should not harm retail business.
- Parking management strategies must be tailored to each community. This means that strategies must begin with *data collection and assessment* to ensure that the strategies meet the community’s needs. At the same time, there should be consistent rules and standards across the region to facilitate understanding when people park in different parts of the region.
- Electronic information about parking would be useful.
- Many creative parking solutions should be considered. This could include shared parking, employer-provided free parking, and working with lenders in local government to limit parking.
- An equity issue exists when low-income residents must move to outer communities; since driving may be their only option, paid parking can negatively impact them.
- Revenues from parking could be given to local Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) or to provide community benefits.

6. MARKETING & INFORMATION – *Provide information to expand walking, biking, carpooling and use of transit and fuel-efficient driving techniques*

- All groups agreed that it is very important to provide information in new and relevant formats. Electronic information and smart phone apps are increasingly important.
- Make an effort to educate employers about commuter options to their particular places of business, so that they can pass this on to employees. Employers should also be educated about tax incentives connected to transportation options.
- Don’t just focus on information for commuters. Expand marketing to the youth and elderly, and provide information on transportation options for non-work travel.
- Tailor campaigns for effective communication to new audiences. This may mean translating into different languages and finding appropriate messengers.

Large Group Discussion: Priority Messages for MPAC and JPACT

Participants discussed the priority messages that should be provided to MPAC and JPACT as they move towards a preferred approach. Participants responded to the following questions:

- The key messages from this discussion included:

- The preferred approach should not just focus on greenhouse gas reductions; instead, it should focus on the **co-benefits** of the various investments and actions. However, from the perspective of a climate change advocate, the preferred approach should focus on measures that will lower emissions at the lowest cost, and *then* look at co-benefits. The most cost-effective investment is to transition from internal combustion fuels to low/non-carbon vehicles and fuels.
- The investments should be considered under an **equity lens analysis**. Improvements should be equitably distributed and include low-income communities. The existing distribution of transportation and land use investments is not equitable and must be rethought.
- Investments in **transit and urban design** are crucial, and are in significant part a local responsibility.
- Decision makers need to pay more attention to **affordable housing** and locating such housing near employment. Look to successful models like Vancouver, B.C.
- **Mixed-use, livable communities** are crucial, particularly for seniors and people with disabilities who benefit greatly from having services nearby.
- Investments should be made in **climate adaptation and preparation**. While the listed investments and actions can help curb future climate change impacts, environmental changes are imminent and the region must prepare for this. Various land use and environmental strategies can help address this.
- The effectiveness and fairness of the investments varies with the **differing income levels** of individuals. Different options must be provided to people at various levels of wealth.
- The preferred approach should result in **increased modal choice**. The focus should not be on reducing or expanding one mode over another, but about expanding choice and making it easier for people to choose the travel option that best meets their needs.

- Transit, walking and biking investments should receive priority because they help achieve **public health goals**.
- Transit, walking and biking improvements **benefit freight** movement because they help remove single occupancy vehicles from roadways.
- Improved transit is valuable to the region's economy because it gives people **access to a wider range of jobs**, and gives employers access to a larger pool of employees.

- Need to get the info ^{and how} b4 you begin the trip

- Need real-time info

- Freight trucks always check each other's conditions b4 the trip. How do we get SOLR to do the same?

To improve reliability

SMART ROADS

technology = "Smart Roads" +
1. Manage traffic flow + more
x2y
Cities + Countries are ready
y in traffic technology and
or roads.

cars to be a low cost strategy
will be ready

use of intelligent transportation
systems (ITS) to make people
at more efficient.
(and there!)

ROADS

the number of lanes and
the way they are used
to make them more
efficient to help the
flow of traffic and
help the environment.
The road network is
the backbone of the
economy and the
transportation system.

ROADS

- Investments in roads are needed to help **support the economy and job creation**. Creating more family wage jobs should be a major objective of the project.
- Focus investments now on **how we want people to travel in 50 years**. If this isn't in cars on roads, investments must be made elsewhere.

MARKETING & INFORMATION

- Marketing and information strategies should **make the cost of driving more explicit** so that people can weigh their travel options. People are more likely to change their behavior based on cost and economics.

FUNDING

- People move to the Portland metropolitan region because of its unique quality of life. We may need to **think differently about how we invest in the economy** to maintain this quality of life.
- **More funding is needed**, particularly for non-road projects. Bike/ped projects are much less expensive than transit and road projects and provide important co-benefits.

Individual Survey about Funding

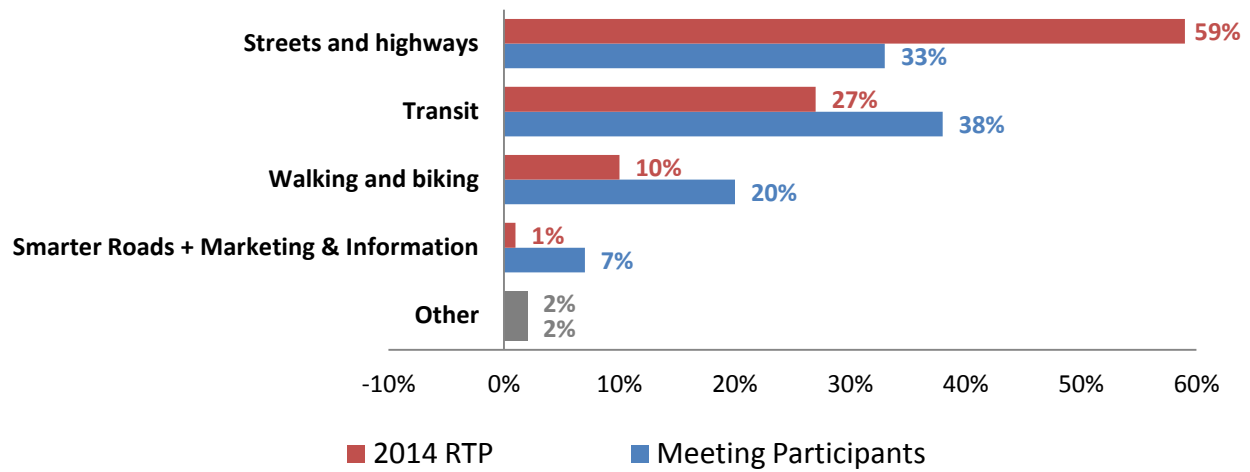
Participants completed a short survey in response to the question: ***“How do you think funding should be allocated among the six investment areas?”***

Staff showed a chart indicating how funding is currently allocated among the six investment areas in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and explained that the CSC Scenarios project will be implemented through the RTP. Participants were asked if they agree with the funding split in the RTP, and to indicate what percentage of funding they think should be allocated to each of the investment areas. This survey question was meant to be an exercise to understand the general priorities of participants, *not* as a way to influence the actual level of funding in the RTP.



The chart below summarizes participants' responses. Responses showed that participants would like to see a much higher percentage of funding go towards transit and walking and biking investments, and less funding for street and highway projects.

Survey: How do you think funding should be allocated among the six investment areas?



** Note: Parking management funding is not included in the RTP.*

Wrap Up and Adjourn

Staff thanked members for their participation and reminded them that the second community conversation on April 2 will focus on implementation issues. Selected community conversation participants representing equity, public health, business, and the environment will participate in a panel at the April 11 MPAC/JPACT meeting to carry forward key messages.



COMMUNITY CONVERSATION #2 – Implementing the Preferred Approach

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project

Wednesday, April 2, 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Metro Regional Center

Meeting Participants

Heidi Guenin, Upstream Public Health
Jonathan Ostar, OPAL Environmental Justice
David Hanson, Multnomah County Aging & Disability Services
Philip Wu, Kaiser Permanente
Eric Hesse, TriMet
Carlos Lopez, Centro Cultural
Glenn Koehrsen, Clackamas County Aging Services Advisory Council
Jake Warr, TriMet Transit Equity Committee
Corky Collier, Columbia Corridor Association
Cora Potter, Ride Connection
Mike Houck, Urban Greenspaces Institute
Lainie Smith, ODOT Region 1
Mike Rosen, City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
Tuck Wilson
Mara Gross, Coalition for a Livable Future
Stephan Lashbrook, SMART Transit
Duncan Hwang, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Linda Moholt, Tualatin Chamber of Commerce
Steve White, Oregon Public Health Institute
Julia Meier, Coalition of Communities of Color
Mychal Tetteh, Community Cycling Center

Staff and Facilitation Team

Kim Ellis, Metro	Roberta Hunte, PSU and JLA Public
Peggy Morell, Metro	Involvement
Patty Unfred, Metro	Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement
Cliff Higgins, Metro	Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement

Background

As part of its community engagement effort for the CSC Scenarios project, Metro convened a group of community leaders representing diverse interests to have an open dialogue on ways that Metro and state and local partners can ensure that investments and actions of the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios project are implemented in a way that is equitable and meets the needs of the region's diverse communities.

It was an opportunity to inform development of a near-term implementation plan this summer and to provide ideas for how best to involve communities as the region's preferred approach moves forward to implementation.

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

Metro Councilor Sam Chase welcomed participants and thanked them for their participation. He provided some background on Metro's Equity Strategy project, and noted that low-income populations make up a large portion of the region yet do not have much voice in planning efforts. He stressed the importance of making investments in underserved areas, particularly in regard to access to transportation, schools and quality of life. He also recognized that many participants work for non-profit organizations and thanked them for their important community work and the time they were giving today to inform the project.

Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement, introduced herself as the facilitator of the meeting. She reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting. The purpose of the first community conversation, held on March 28, was to get input on the six priority investment areas to advise the Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT). Today's meeting is intended to be an open discussion about what Metro needs to consider in terms of implementation. This meeting was prompted by results of stakeholder interviews that showed that there is real concern about how the project's investments and actions will be implemented.

Presentation: What We've Heard about Implementation Challenges

Roberta Hunte, PSU and JLA Public Involvement, and Sylvia Ciborowski, JLA Public Involvement, reviewed key themes from stakeholder interviews conducted in early 2014. Metro and JLA interviewed thirty-three leaders in public health, equity, environment, and business, as well as elected officials from across the region, to understand their priorities and concerns about the six investment areas. Many interviewees made comments about implementation or had concerns about how the investments and actions would play out on the ground. In addition, equity stakeholders were specifically asked questions about implementation. The main points from these interviews regarding implementation are included in Appendix 3 of this summary.

Presentation: Context for Considering Implementation Issues

Kim Ellis, Metro project manager, provided background information on implementation of the CSC Scenarios project. She explained that the project will not result in a "Metro Plan" implemented by Metro. Instead, the project is an effort to make recommendations that will influence future local, regional and state plans and implementation efforts. Metro's policy committees will make recommendations about investment priorities and how the region can support those investment areas. She explained that implementation will include on-the-ground projects such as transit improvements, new sidewalk connections, and an expanded arterial system to help move freight and people—but will also involve advocacy in communities and at the regional and state level to help fund and support such projects or make policy changes that reduce barriers to implementation. While the CSC Scenarios project stems from a legislative mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is framed around using those strategies to support broader community visions and goals, and the region's six desired outcomes.

Kim Ellis reviewed the project timeline. On May 30, 2014, MPAC and JPACT will make a recommendation to the Metro Council on a draft preferred approach for the project. Over the summer, Metro will evaluate the potential impacts of this approach and develop a draft near-term implementation plan. This will be shared with the public in the fall of

2014. The public can weigh in on this during the formal comment period in September 2014. MPAC and JPACT will make their final recommendation in November 2014 and Metro Council will take final action in December.

Kim Ellis told participants that Metro wants to know how participants would like to continue to be engaged. She explained that the feedback from today's conversation will help inform Metro's community engagement going forward and it will be shared with MPAC and JPACT at their joint meeting on April 11.

Large Group Discussion: Implementation Challenges and Solutions

Jeanne Lawson invited participants to respond to these overall questions:

- 1) What are implementation challenges, issues and solutions?
- 2) How should communities and constituents continue to be engaged?

The main points of the discussion are outlined below.

Co-benefits Should Be a Focus of the Project

- Participants agreed that the preferred approach should **focus on co-benefits**, even though the goal of the project is greenhouse gas reduction. Priority should be given to those projects that provide immediate community benefits beyond just reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Only by focusing on co-benefits will we change the way people travel and live, so there needs to be a connection between changes in human behavior and the ultimate goal. For example, increased funding for transit will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but more importantly, it will help address equity issues, improve access and connectivity, and provide a low-cost travel option. Similarly, investments that have a large co-benefit but may not do much to reduce greenhouse gas emissions should still be strongly considered for inclusion in the preferred approach.

On the other hand, some climate change advocates said that the preferred approach should focus on measures that will lower emissions at the lowest cost, and *then* look at co-benefits. The most cost-effective investment is to transition from internal combustion fuels to low/non-carbon vehicles and fuels.

- A TriMet representative noted that **TriMet's System Enhancement Plan** process is engaging communities to define how they want transit to look in the future, and is focused on co-benefits of transit and implementation. However, the process will not be complete for another couple of years so the timeline does not sync up well with the CSC Scenarios project.
- One participant provided a model for how to **measure co-benefits as they relate to community engagement**. The implementing jurisdictions or agencies should circle back to communities to show how input was used, explain what progress has been made, and ask community members whether they are seeing real benefits in their communities as a result.
- The **relationship between the CSC Scenarios project, Regional Flexible Funds, and Regional Transportation Plan** needs to be made clearer, so that there is an understandable picture of how co-benefits will be realized. The project should consider *all* the outcomes we're trying to accomplish.

The Impacts of Climate Change are an Equity Concern

- **Climate adaptation or preparation strategies** need to be included in the preferred approach. There needs to be a more explicit nexus and coordination between Metro's work, transportation and land use planning efforts by the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and the City of Portland's Climate Action Plan.

Transportation and land use plans need to include ways to address the impacts of climate change, which may have a disproportionate negative impact on agriculture, human health, and low-income communities. This is a major equity concern, and should be shared at the April 11 MPAC/JPACT meeting.

Attention also needs to be paid to other greenhouse gas reduction strategies that result in multiple benefits, such as carbon sequestration. The time to consider climate adaptation strategies is *now*—not when we are in a dire situation facing the realities of climate change.

Demographics, Jobs and the Economy Need to be Considered

- Consider **jobs, housing, and transit match**, beyond just the balance of jobs and housing. Jobs of the appropriate skill level and salary must exist near communities with residents that can fill those jobs, and efficient transit must be provided to transport the right employees to the right jobs.
- **Demographics are changing**. Washington County is set to become the most diverse community in the region. Investments must be made with consideration of these changes.
- While equity is important, there also must be a focus on improving job quality and the economy of the region. There is a **lack of high quality, higher paying jobs** in the region, especially as compared to surrounding states. Education has suffered and the region lacks talent to fill professional jobs. It is unacceptable that the region's low-income communities combined would be the second-largest city in the region. Focusing on education will help reduce poverty.
- There is **lack of housing located near transit to fit all income levels**. This includes both low-cost or affordable housing and upper-end housing for higher paid professionals.

Make Investments based on Data, Results and Equity Impacts

- Analysis of the investments and actions must be **data driven and focused on results**. The analysis should ask: "How does X investment increase jobs, improve health, decrease poverty, etc.?" The biggest bang for the buck will come from investments made in communities with the greatest need—including low-income communities and communities that disproportionately lack resources and opportunities. The region must make investments that will put the region's future residents in the position to be successful. Investments in impoverished areas should not be made out of charity, but because such investments make economic sense and will improve the success and prosperity of the region. There is enough information and data to support this approach; now it is time to act.
- If the project applies an equity lens, **which equity lens do we use?** Whatever lens is used, it must be deeply embedded into the project. Various cities, counties and organizations in the region are developing their own equity lenses; there should be collaboration among them. The equity lens must also go beyond just planning and into empowerment of communities. A good example is Multnomah County's Equity Empowerment Lens. There was acknowledgement that Metro's Equity Strategy currently being developed will provide a framework for how Metro programs and planning efforts address equity in the future.

Address Lack of Funding

- A fundamental issue is the **lack of transportation funding**. Elected officials need to be bold and pursue more funding to implement the actions that their communities desire. Otherwise, we need to face the reality of funding shortages and adjust our expectations accordingly.

Provide Information to Support Engagement

- Metro and partner jurisdictions should provide a **map of roles, decision-making structure and engagement opportunities** so that communities can provide better input on implementation. It is difficult to provide input without knowing which agencies or organizations are involved in which parts of the project.
- More information is needed about how Metro analyzed the investments and actions to come up with its rankings of relative cost and relative climate benefit. Organizations would like to **review the comparative analysis** to determine how it was done and to better understand the climate benefit and equity implications to be able to analyze trade-offs. It is difficult to have a conversation about implementation without fully understanding the analysis.
- Members discussed the **level of information** that should be provided during outreach, and how to present that information. They suggested that staff structure information dissemination based on feedback received and tailor the information to make it relevant to the community. Agencies should provide all of the information, data, and analysis and let individuals decide how much of that they want to read. Information materials should also clearly indicate the short term, immediate term, and long term benefits of proposed actions. For this project, the short term benefits include better transit and improved communities, while greenhouse gas reduction is the long term benefit.

Refine and Tailor Future Engagement

- It is important to **clarify that the planners and implementers are not the same**. Metro develops visions, goals and guidance, and it is the cities, counties, and transportation agencies implement them and play the fundamental role in on-the-ground changes.
- To date, **community-based organizations have not sufficiently been engaged** and do not have the capacity to provide input. Communities must be continuously engaged.
- Members of the **business community** want to be engaged, but have **time constraints**. They prefer to be involved in one meeting or in very sporadic meetings, and have other short communications by email or phone.
- Getting the **private sector involved** will be a challenge, but it is important to get their buy-in.
- Community members in crisis will not be engaged because they have other, more pressing priorities. The best way to engage them is to focus *first* on **stabilizing communities and getting people out of crisis**. Then, they will see the immediate impacts of the project and be more interested in and capable of engaging.
- **Public health and equity expertise is a valuable specialty area and should be compensated**. Jurisdictions could pay public health and equity organizations to conduct analyses of impacts, much like jurisdictions pay economic organizations to conduct economic analyses.
- Keep **literacy** in mind; some portions of the population are not literate in any language. Getting information to these populations is a major challenge.
- Metro should **send out periodic emails** to stakeholders and interested parties providing updates on the CSC Scenarios project and upcoming ways to get involved.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

Staff thanked members for their participation and said that they will send out an email update with reports from this meeting and the March 28 community conversation. Selected community conversations participants representing equity, public health, business, and the environment will participate in a panel at the April 11 MPAC/JPACT meeting to carry forward key messages.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Key Themes from Stakeholder Interviews about the Six Investment Areas

Key themes heard from leaders across the Metro region and from diverse interest areas included:

- The investments and actions should be a “menu of options” and retain flexibility and local control.
- The whole region should benefit, not just urban areas that may find it easier to implement some of the investments and actions.
- A mix of housing choices is needed, including affordable housing options near transit and jobs, and suburban and rural living options with plenty of space and parking.
- There is a need for more information about implementation. Specifically, equity and public health leaders would like to understand the economic and health impact on low-income communities. Business leaders would like to see the effect on the economy and market competition.

Key themes heard from stakeholders for the six investment areas:

1. **TRANSIT** – Maintain and make transit more convenient, frequent, accessible and affordable
 - This investment area is **the highest priority** for nearly all communities and interest groups. Transit improvements create many **secondary benefits**: transit helps reduce pollution and congestion, improves health, helps integrate communities, and provides a low-cost travel option.
 - Transit must be made more effective for **commuters**. Expand service to employment areas.
 - There is a need for better regional connectivity for suburban communities **beyond TriMet’s “hub and spoke” model**. This could include creative shuttle options.
 - Transit must **serve low-income communities**. This means keeping fares low, connecting to the region's small or mid-size communities, and investing in increased bus service more than light rail or capital projects.
 - Care needs to be taken to make sure that high capacity transit projects don’t result in **gentrification**.
2. **WALKING and BIKING** – Make walking and biking more safe and convenient
 - Walking and biking improvements are a **very high priority** for nearly all communities/interest groups. Like transit, these improvements provide many **secondary benefits**.
 - Projects should focus on **safety** and improving the perception of safety of biking and walking. Projects should also provide **convenient and efficient** travel options to places people actually want to go.
 - Concern about the **lack of dedicated funding sources** for bicycle/pedestrian projects. However, elected officials and business leaders do not want funding taken away from street and highway improvements.
3. **ROADS** – Maintain and make streets and highways more safe, reliable and connected
 - Better roads are needed to **improve the economy**. It is important to help **move freight more efficiently** and help the region compete in the market.
 - Reduced congestion, cleaner air, and improving safety have **positive health and livability benefits**.
 - Suburban communities need better **regional road connectivity**.
 - The goal should be for **complete streets** in which driving complements walking, biking, and transit.

4. **SMART ROADS** – Use technology and “smarter” roads to actively manage traffic flow and boost efficiency
 - While this investment area is not the highest priority, it is **low cost and provides immediate benefits**, so should be part of the preferred approach.
 - Many cities and counties are **already investing** in traffic technology and smarter roads.
 - Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technology should be extended to make **freight movement** more efficient.
5. **PARKING** – Manage parking using a market-responsive approach to make efficient use of parking resources
 - **“Free parking” is never free** – it is just a question of who bears the cost.
 - Concern about **harming retail businesses**. If paid parking is included, affected businesses should be part of the conversation.
 - Parking management has to be **tailored to each community**. Urban, suburban and rural communities all have very different parking needs and challenges.
 - Regressive parking fees can **negatively impact low-income drivers**. On the other hand, the wealthy are more likely to drive and park so may bear more of the cost.
 - If paid parking is included, there needs to be a corresponding **strong investment in transit** so that travelers have a real alternative to driving.
6. **MARKETING & INFORMATION**
 - Interviewees were split between two different points of view on the value of this investment area.
 - Some said that educational programs can make a huge difference in people’s choices. Printing pamphlets and running ads isn’t enough. The focus needs to be on door-to-door and **individualized campaigns** that can truly change behavior.
 - On the other hand, some interviewees felt that **people already know their travel options**, and that providing more information may be a waste of resources.

Appendix 2: Flip Chart Notes from conversation #1

This appendix lists all comments provided by participants for the six investment areas during their small group discussion in Community Conversation #1.

1. TRANSIT

Group 1

- Keep fares low
- Regional/youth bus pass
- Side benefit → Increase bus service to school areas and non-urban areas
- Transfer school bus money to transit
- Lower age of senior discount
- More local circulator service (“fractal geometry”)
- Recession → Have to travel farther to access jobs (small or mid-size communities)
- Increased BRT with designated ROW
- What are impacts of light rail to existing communities? (e.g. gentrification)
- Prioritize low-income communities for bus service improvements

Group 2

- Transit planners need to be more strategic around how they participate in the community master planning
- Complete livable communities
- What else do people need to make transit work for them?

Group 3

- TriMet SEPs ARE moving beyond hub and spoke
- Jurisdictional partnerships are important
- Need unconventional transit methods to service medium density communities
- What is the value of providing new bus lines vs. really good incentive for buying EV or efficient vehicle?
- Transit fleet should switch to more carbon efficient fuels

2. WALKING AND BIKING

Group 1

- Includes access for disability community
- Integrate bi-state regional trail plan with transit
- Prioritize separated facilities

Group 2

- Idea that people can walk and bike at all times is lower because of our work patterns.
- Don’t just focus on commute
- However in the Portland region we have a network that supports this
- Better options for last mile
- Need mixed use communities, especially for seniors
- Personal safety
- Place to walk or sit, benches and signs.

Group 3

- Need equitable distribution of projects, not just downtown
- Complement roads – complete streets

- Create hubs – intermodal (complementary modes) but also make it easy to travel by one mode
- Short trips are “real” too
- We need more money (dedicated and stable)
- Need funding to do more than just maintenance – need to also enhance/do capital projects

3. ROADS

Group 1

- Turn lanes help keep main roads moving (e.g., right and left turn lanes)
- Transit/park and ride options for commuters from outside of region
- Keep environment/natural features in mind when increasing connectivity (greenstreet guidelines)
- Analyze capacity of roads
- Prioritize roads that provide access to transit

Group 2

- Strategically think about what we have and judge more what we need.
- Can builders put funds into a pot for strategic road development/sidewalk development rather than focusing on half street improvements that don’t make real impacts?
- Prioritize walkers and bikers in street maintenance projects
- Be sensitive to transit from walking and biking needs in different areas
- Congestion pricing – need to see examples where it has worked
- Gas tax not sustainable funding mechanism – alternatives needed
- Assuming need to maintain same/existing road network. Maybe not, maybe not such a financial crisis.

Group 3

- Must be complete streets. Pedestrians belong on every street, whereas bikes might have other options. A closed street is a big deal for pedestrians. But separate modes when it would result in efficiency.
- Incremental cost of making a street complete is low – but benefit is high.
- Need road investments in East Portland
- Make better roads tailored to the right use (is it a freight road? local road?)
- Congestion is bad for freight. Best GHG reduction comes from a full truck driving without traffic
- Congestion tolling

4. SMART ROADS

Group 1

- Bus jump lanes to improve on-time performance
- Do this first before widening roads
- Do non-structural strategies before structure changes

Group 2

- Use technology to help people avoid sitting in traffic
- Bad idling
- How to handle incident congestion better
- Adding info about real time ambient air quality on freeways

Group 3

- Drivers need to get the info about delays before they begin their trip
- Need real-time info
- Freight trucks always check cost and conditions before the trip. How do we get SOVs to do the same?
- Use technology to improve reliability
- Need increase in TSMO funding

- Need more ways to allow people to price their different travel options
- Apps should show true cost of driving (gas, insurance, etc.)

5. PARKING

Group 1

- Money from parking goes to local TMA, community benefits
- Improve access by other modes
- Consider user fee at park and ride lots (will it reduce transit ridership?)
- Downtown parking fees too low (cheaper than the bus?)

Group 2

- If parking matters – pay for it.
- Employer-provided free parking
- Parking cash out
- Working with lenders in local government to limit parking – needs to be region specific
- Shared parking
- Parking must be accessible to transit for aging and folks with disabilities specifically
- For folks moving between regions simplifying
- How segregating – designating parking
- Gentrification can mean low-income folks in far away areas pay the cost of parking as a burden
- Smart parking systems.

Group 3

- There are economic and health benefits of paid parking
- Have to do the assessment before implementing the strategy so it is tailored.
- Anything beyond expectation of free parking is step in the right direction
- Concentrate on downtown Portland as the place to experiment. Use different approach for commuters vs. customers, etc.
- Must include electronic information about parking.
- If charging for parking, need to provide alternatives to car travel.

6. MARKETING & INFORMATION

Group 1

- Hard to get people's attention – and costly
- Current efforts focused on commuters → expand focus to other communities and trips
- Changing demographics (e.g. aging, diverse communities, language, etc)
- Coordinate with other transportation investments (e.g. transit)
- Educate about the resources (e.g. mobile apps)
- Develop material/channels on platforms people use
- Combine with employer transit marketing → invest in transit programs
- Depends on transit service

Group 2

- Let's not oversell walking and biking
- Tax advantage plans need to be marketed through employers
- Remove perverse tax incentives that give more to folks who drive than those who don't
- In areas where public adoption worked, ask what worked and see if we can we mimic some of those things.
- Focus on providing more affordable options and not just reducing greenhouse gas emissions

- Find different audiences for workplace campaigns – don't just focus on white collar workers
- Selling program based on co-benefits

Group 3

- Work trips are 30% of trips – so need to focus beyond workplace campaigns
- Tailor campaigns (translation, appropriate messenger, etc.)
- Think about the crossover between this strategy and technology/smarter roads
- Leverage electronic materials. Make info and incentives available at point of purchase (i.e. when a traveler is making the choice to drive, bike or take transit)
- Target marketing to employees that actually CAN switch to transit

Appendix 3: Key Themes from Stakeholder Interviews about Implementation

In early 2014, Metro and JLA Public Involvement conducted 33 stakeholder interviews with elected officials and community leaders that represent a broad range of interests, including business, the environment, equity, and public health.

Many interviewees made comments about implementation or had concerns about how the investments and actions would play out on the ground. In addition, equity stakeholders were specifically asked questions about implementation.

Overall, the main implementation issues identified by interest area include:

- **Business:** Concern about how the investments and actions may impact the economy and competitiveness. The project should not impede economic development priorities, nor should it penalize industries that by their nature have limitations in what they can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Elected Officials:** There is a need for local control and flexibility in implementation. There cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution.
- **Equity/EJ and Public Health:**
 - Questions about the economic and health impact on vulnerable populations of each of the investments and actions. All actions should be studied to determine their economic and health impact on low-income communities, and to see how benefits and burdens are distributed to different communities in the region.
 - Questions about implementing actions so as to avoid gentrification/displacement of low-income populations. There is a need to ensure affordable housing near jobs, downtown and transit.
 - How do you put in place funding mechanisms that don't disproportionately impact low-income communities? Any regressive fee or structure will negatively impact low-income folks.
 - Need to apply an equity lens. This lens should ask which communities/demographics are getting improvements first. Projects should be distributed equitably—not just downtown.

1) IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES – by investment area

Some of the investment areas have particular implementation issues. These are the main implementation issues that stakeholders brought up:

- **Implementing local zoning, comprehensive and transportation plans**
 - Elected officials said:
 - Local jurisdictions must maintain control over how to implement local plans and how to site new services and businesses within their boundaries.
 - Need to provide a variety of housing and development options.
 - Transportation and land use plans often do not consider how each community fits within regional context. May need to reevaluate plans to see how they work with one another across jurisdictional boundaries.
 - How do you deal with the growing community pushback against density, particularly lack of parking when dense housing comes in?

- Equity concerns:
 - Creating denser communities may lead to higher housing costs and gentrification, displacing low-income communities.
 - May need to reassess local plans that did not originally consider health impacts and affordable housing.
- **Managing the UGB**
 - How do we both keep a tight UGB to encourage dense development, and also provide enough industrial and employment land as well as provide desired spacious suburban and rural housing options?
- **Transit**
 - Need to balance investments that serve different riders:
 - Need more bus lines or Bus Rapid Transit to serve low-income communities living in outer parts of the region.
 - Make investments that make transit more appealing to commuters (more high capacity transit or bus rapid transit, and faster and frequent service).
 - Suburban communities that are not well served by TriMet's hub and spoke model.
 - Transit dependent riders need good service too, even if they do not live in the highest potential ridership areas.
 - Need to avoid gentrification that often follows high capacity transit.
- **Parking management**
 - Need to avoid harming the economy and retail business. If parking cost increases are planned, impacted businesses must be part of that conversation.
 - Need to do an assessment of parking management needs for each community, so that the strategy is tailored to that community.
- **Funding mechanisms**
 - Regressive fees may disproportionately impact low-income residents. One suggested solution is to charge fee in proportion to income, or have an exemption for low-income residents.
 - There is concern about how the increased cost of driving might affect manufacturers and haulers and the competitiveness of the market in Oregon.

2) POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Environmental justice, equity and public health leaders provided some potential solutions to implementation challenges, including:

- To avoid displacing vulnerable populations as housing costs rise:
 - Community Benefit Agreements
 - Community self-sufficiency strategies
 - Inclusionary zoning
 - Urban renewal districts provide the opportunity to increase the amount of affordable housing by requiring a certain percentage set-aside for affordable housing.
 - Tax abatements for developers that build affordable housing units into Transit Oriented Development communities.
 - A requirement within the region that each jurisdiction contain a certain percentage of all housing types, including condos, apartments, single family homes, affordable housing, etc.

- Suggest changes in housing development requirements to help increase transit service. For example, new housing developments might be required to locate near bus service. Employers might also provide subsidies for commuters.
- Policy guarantees may ensure that strategies are implemented in an equitable way. Examples:
 - Community Benefit Agreement
 - Health Impact Assessment
- Local comprehensive plans and transportation projects should have more stakeholders engaged than typical. This will ensure that equity is considered at the project level. For example, advisory committees for transit projects should include more community representation.

3) COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How should communities and organizations continue to be engaged throughout implementation?

Equity and Environmental Justice leaders provided the following suggestions for community engagement:

- *Generally, these leaders said there is a need for Metro to engage low-income communities and communities of color in a meaningful and collaborative way, which means engaging them early, helping to build capacity so that they can participate fully, and keeping them engaged throughout the entire process. The project messaging also needs to be written in a way that is relevant to the daily lives of these communities.*
- Messaging about Metro projects is often full of jargon and not made relevant to all people. Messaging must be put in a context that low-income communities and communities of color understand. How will the project affect their daily lives? How does the project relate to affordable housing, poverty, gentrification, and things that they care about?
 - From elected officials and business representatives: The project needs to be made relevant to individuals and their own priorities. The message should focus less on climate change benefits, and instead on how the project will create better communities for people. Need to personalize the project to make people willing to pay, and explain what their money will buy.
 - Go beyond calling this the CSC Scenarios project. Emphasize that the project is about building great communities.
- Non-profit organizations need capacity-building to effectively participate in or understand complex Metro projects. Organizations may not have a traditional environmental focus or expertise in climate change issues.
- Need for financial resources to be able to participate. Equity and public health nonprofit organizations are underfunded and understaffed. Find ways to compensate non-profit organizations for their involvement in projects like the CSC Scenarios project
- Project timelines need to have sufficient time and flexibility to engage communities.
- Some of the stakeholders interviewed want to be engaged in Metro's work holistically, not on a project-by-project basis or piecemeal approach. They feel they are only being asked for their input whenever it is convenient for Metro. They are more interested in focusing on equity strategy development and policies and practices within Metro, rather than working on specific projects.
- With the equity community, there will always be the question of implementation. It is difficult to prioritize the investments and actions without knowing what they will look like on the ground.
- Have different interests in the same room so they can hear one another. Having people from the same interest group talk amongst themselves just maintains silo thinking.
- In presentations and meetings, there needs to be the right presenter and messenger, with the message tailored to the priorities of that group. This applies both when presenting before equity and public health groups and business groups. It is best when the audience is familiar with and has a relationship with the messenger.

About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

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Visit the project website for more information about the climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project at www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios

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