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Public engagement annual report

An annual report covering public engagement review and notable public involvement activities.

Covering July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014



Metro | *Making a great place*

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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Metro office of citizen involvement

Metro believes that effective citizen involvement is essential to good government. Elected officials, staff and residents all play important roles in governing the region. Cooperation among the Metro government, local governments and residents result in the best policy decisions. Therefore, Metro commits to promote and sustain a responsive public involvement environment.

Metro respects civil rights

Metro hereby gives public notice that it is the policy of the Metro Council to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which Metro receives federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint with Metro. Any such complaint must be in writing and filed with Metro's Title VI Coordinator within one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information, or to obtain a Title VI Discrimination Complaint Form, see the web site at www.oregonmetro.gov/civilrights or call (503) 797-1536.

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OFFICE OF CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

To supplement public engagement activities happening at the project and program level, the Office of Citizen Involvement was created by the Metro Council. The office helps ensure Metro engages with all of the communities in the region, connects public input to decisions and evaluates engagement outcomes.

The office supports and builds capacity for programs that create more inclusive, transparent and relationship-based public engagement practices. The office serves as a resource for current best practices for public involvement; supports the Diversity Action Plan and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program; and develops strategies to engage communities in regional decision-making. The office also arranges an annual community summit and conducts surveys and reports on the agency's public engagement activities.

The office is advised by a Public Engagement Review Committee and a Public Engagement Network made up of public involvement professionals.

Public Engagement Review Committee

PERC meets at least twice a year and serves as a key component of Metro's efforts to develop successful public engagement processes. The committee includes at least three at-large community members, at least three staff or board members from local community organizations, and a public involvement staff member from Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. The current membership is comprised of seven community representatives, three community organization representatives, and three county representatives.

Criteria for membership selection includes:

- community service: demonstrated commitment to community involvement
- experience: demonstrated skills, knowledge or experience valuable to support Metro's public engagement principles
- diversity: collectively representative of the geographic and demographic diversity of the region.

The PERC met in fall 2013 and spring 2014 to provide input on Metro's Diversity Action Plan, the annual Community Summit, annual public engagement survey, a new public engagement guide, and the engagement strategy for reviewing draft environmental justice benefits, burdens and disparate impacts measures related to the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program.

Public Engagement Network (peer group)

The peer group convenes public engagement staff and professionals from the Portland metropolitan area to pool professional knowledge in the region by sharing best practices, emerging tools and case studies. The peer group met twice – once in fall 2013 and once in spring 2014. The meetings included updates on the public engagement guide, a tool to share resources and a panel discussion on engaging underserved communities. Panelists shared their valuable insights and experience with engaging underserved communities. Presenters included Duncan Hwang from Asian Pacific American Network

of Oregon, Mary Rose Navarro of Metro, and Shoshanah Oppenheim and Jeri Williams from the City of Portland.

Annual public engagement survey

The annual Opt In online panel public survey provides further opportunity to assess Metro's public involvement efforts. An Opt In survey on Metro's public engagement practices was conducted in May/June 2013 and results were very similar to the previous year.

Respondents continue to feel that Metro does a good job providing opportunities for the public to get involved but needs to do better showing how feedback influences project outcomes and decisions. Comments also cited individuals' lack of time as a barrier to engaging with Metro.

Annual community summit

The community summit is intended to bring together community members and partners representing the diverse perspectives of the region to learn about Metro programs, services and opportunities to participate in the decision-making process.

Title VI and Metro's Limited English Proficiency Plan

Language access activities

Metro's Limited English Proficiency Plan provides broad implementation strategies for prioritizing the provision of language assistance. As part of implementation, many programs and projects continue to do a program- or project-specific language assessments – using the Department of Justice four-factor analysis – as a way to define populations with language access needs.

As part of implementing the agency's LEP Plan, Metro has taken these additional steps to provide language assistance during the reporting period:

- Metro completed data collection and analysis for an updated regional LEP Factor 1 analysis based on updated census data and Oregon Department of Education data. The data collected for this analysis will be available to programs and projects to help identify populations with limited English proficiency, and analysis support will be available when the program or project area is smaller than the whole region.
- Metro extended its contract for telephone interpretation services with Certified Languages International through March 2016.
- Metro continues to annually update a list of volunteer staff interpreters who are available to provide language interpretation services on request. This list is made available to all Metro staff and provided during annual language training to administrative support and communications staff throughout the agency. The list, updated in April 2014, identifies 15 employees who are available to help with interpretation of 13 spoken languages plus American Sign Language.
- Language Resource Training: On April 14, 2014, Metro conducted an internal staff training for nineteen frontline staff, including communications and public involvement staff, planning staff

and council administrative staff on how to provide meaningful language assistance to customers who don't speak English well.

- Metro continues to build relationships with community organizations that serve underrepresented populations, including those with language access needs, and is gathering information on how to best communicate and engage with populations they serve. One result of this increased interaction is the award of funds and contracts to community organizations to support engagement of the communities they represent, in coordination with Metro.
- Metro redesigned and launched a new website in May 2014. The new oregonmetro.gov website was built from the ground up with all visitors in mind, including those with limited English proficiency. It offers a cleaner, more streamlined look along with better information about Metro and better navigation and search functions. The new site is an upgrade for visitors and a giant step toward making it easier for people to connect with Metro on their computers, phones, tablets and in different languages. The new site will improve access for visitors with limited English proficiency and will connect them with key pages available in as many as 13 languages. There is a special emphasis on meeting the needs of the region's growing population of Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian speakers.
- Metro contracted with Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to hire local talent fluent in Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese and produced four short videos to inform visitors about the various programs or services Metro provides. To view the videos, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/languagehub.

Vital documents have been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Mon-khmer Cambodian, Romanian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.

Limited English proficiency Factor 1 analysis

As part of its effort to provide meaningful access to its programs to all residents, including those with limited English proficiency, and as part of Factor 1 of the four-factor analysis process provided by the U.S. Department of Justice, Metro conducted an extensive review of Title VI¹ and Limited English Proficiency plans and Factor 1 analyses by peer agencies. Informed by this review, Metro developed a four-step methodology to determine the number or proportion of persons over the age of 5 with limited English proficiency in the Metro service area. Implementation of this methodology resulted in Metro's Factor 1 report in 2013, which identified 13 languages that qualified for the Department of Justice's Safe Harbor provisions. As part of this process, Metro:

- conducted thorough review of peer agency documentation related to Department of Justice Factor 1 compliance
- developed a methodology for analysis of language data

¹ Federal guidance under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 requires an agency that receives federal funds to publish a Title VI Plan and a Limited English Proficiency Plan.

- gathered relevant data.
- identified languages that are eligible (or potentially eligible) for inclusion under the Safe Harbor provision.

To view Metro’s Factor 1 analysis, visit www.oregonmetro.gov/civilrights.

Diversity Action Plan

Metro recognizes that the diversity of the region’s population will grow over time and that it is essential for Metro to increase the diversity and cultural competence of its workforce to remain relevant and accountable to the community it serves.

Metro’s Diversity Action Plan envisions a future where diversity practices improve Metro’s responsiveness to the residents of the region, strengthen Metro’s workforce, and distinguish Metro as a model for other governments. The plan helps Metro identify ways to value diversity and demonstrate cultural competence in carrying out its mission. A living document that is subject to regular review and revisions, the plan identifies goals, strategies and actions in four areas:

- internal awareness and sensitivity to diversity issues
- employee recruitment and retention
- public involvement and citizen advisory committee membership
- procurement.

The plan was developed by an interdisciplinary team of Metro staff, and is based on organizational needs and feedback from employees and community groups. It was adopted by the Metro Council on Nov. 15, 2012.

Implementing the plan

More than 50 staff members from across Metro serve on teams charged with reviewing, developing and helping to implement strategies in the plan. An advisory council, made up of Metro’s Chief Operating Officer and several department directors, helps identify, address and remove barriers.

Diversity Action Plan – Core area 1: Internal awareness and sensitivity to diversity issues

In 2013, core teams of employees were developed to implement the four key areas of the Diversity Action Plan (DAP). The goal of core area 1 is to provide opportunities for Metro staff to explore various dimensions of diversity to increase cultural competence. Ideally, this increased level of competence will result in deeper conversations and heightened awareness of the different experiences and perspectives that we each bring to the workplace and our daily lives. The core area 1 team facilitated or helped plan the following diversity learning opportunities:

- Black History Awareness Month – February 2013 – Former Metro Councilor Ed Washington key speaker at staff learning events held at Zoo and Metro Region Center

- Hispanic Heritage Month – Sept./Oct. 2013 – Worked with local non-profit Momentum Alliance to develop program focused on raising cultural awareness of local Hispanic community at staff learning events
- Native American Heritage Month – November 2013– Metro staff person who identifies as Native American and has worked extensively raising awareness of Native American culture spoke at staff learning event
- Women’s History Month – March 2014 – Former Oregon Governor and Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts spoke about the experiences and challenges of women in public leadership positions.
- LGBTQ Pride – June 2014 – with informational booth at Waterfront Festival and marching in Parade celebration
- Northwest Public Employees Diversity Conference – October 2013– 50 staff attended daylong conference with workshops, plenary and keynote speakers
- Diversity awareness training – OUCH! That Stereotype Hurts trainings rolled out across agency
- Two part diversity training with a focus on leadership role held for Senior Leadership Team in Nov./Dec. 2014
- Cultural Compass diversity survey administered by consulting firm MBL in October 2014
- Metro is committed to promoting and maintaining a safe, respectful and productive work environment. To that end there is a required harassment prevention course for all employees both regular and temporary. It is an on line course that employees must complete every 3 years.

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Diversity Action Plan – Core area 2: Employee recruitment and retention

Core Area Team 2 focuses on recruitment and retention of ethnically diverse employees at Metro. Goals include increasing the diversity of applicants for Metro positions, hiring more employees who self identify as ethnically diverse, and retaining and providing professional growth opportunities for employees.

In 2013, Core Team 2:

- finalized the recruitment portion of the work plan
- reviewed applicant and hire demographics and current employee composition by EEO category to establish baselines from which to measure and improve

- finalized a diversity statement that is now used on all job announcements; it says:

At Metro, we strive to hire a workforce representative of the communities we serve, understanding that a diverse workforce strengthens our organization. We value diversity and support a positive and welcoming environment where all of our employees can thrive.

In 2014, the group will focus on training and educating hiring managers in order to keep diversity goals at the fore and ensuring that interview and hiring processes are equitable and fair. Additionally, the team will review and refine diversity-related interview questions to create a bank managers can use and further analyze recruitment data to evaluate whether barriers to diverse hiring exist.

Diversity Action Plan – Core area 3: Public involvement and advisory committee membership

Core Area Team 3 addresses public involvement and committee membership to achieve DAP goals of inclusive public engagement and more diverse representation on Metro’s committees.

PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Metro’s public engagement strategies focus on engaging – and improving further engagement with – historically underrepresented communities.

The projects included in this report demonstrate Metro’s commitment to engage the region’s full diversity, connect the public to decisions and effectively evaluate engagement outcomes.

Powell-Division Transit and Development Project

The Powell-Division Transit Project is designed to create a better experience and faster ride for the 18,000 people who board buses on Powell and Division every day to get to school, go to work or go shopping.

This reporting period covers the earliest planning phase of the transit project, before alternatives are generated and discussed with the public and decision makers. To ensure the project incorporates Title VI and environmental justice principles, project staff and decision makers have integrated equity into the project’s foundation. Later phases of the project will include an analysis of impacts and benefits to environmental justice populations and their involvement in the development of mitigation actions.

- Equity is one of four project goals
- Equity measures are included within project screening and evaluation

Broad and inclusive engagement is essential to developing a community-supported transit solution. Metro works with residents and community organizations that serve low income and minority populations to provide early, regular and meaningful opportunities to influence decision-making. Engagement efforts during this report period included the following.

- Project’s decision-making body (steering committee) includes communities of color and low income representatives

- The availability of translation services and Metro’s nondiscrimination notice with Title VI complaint forms were included with all public meeting notifications
- Web content available in Spanish, some content available in Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese; translation hotline number accompanies this content
- Spanish factsheet
- Multilingual factsheet in Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese
- Bus rider engagement that reaches communities of color and low income populations; materials available in Spanish, Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese
- Survey of Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization staff
- Public Steering Committee discussion on equity and anti-displacement strategies
- Youth engagement at the Youth Summit for Transit Justice and the Gresham Youth Advisory Committee

Presentations and/or discussions with equity/ social justice organizations, including:

- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- East Portland Action Plan
- The Promise Ministries
- Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
- Coalition for a Livable Future
- OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon
- Home Forward
- Human Solutions
- Catholic Charities
- Oregon Advocacy Council Office

Participation in events or input opportunities that target communities of color, including:

- All-Spanish transit service enhancement plan meeting
- Jade District steering committee and community meetings
- Immigrant Entrepreneurs as Economic Creators in East Portland Tour
- Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization's Diversity Community Leadership Roundtable
- Participation in the East Portland neighborhood survey (Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese)

Southwest Corridor Plan

The Southwest Corridor Plan will improve a taxed transit system and congested and unreliable roads so that residents, commuters and visitors can get around safely, quickly and efficiently for decades to come.

The Southwest Corridor Plan is currently finalizing its Refinement Phase, which is the step prior to initiating environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act. During the Refinement Phase, Metro and the plan's partner agencies (Beaverton, Durham, King City, Portland, Tigard, Tualatin, Washington County, Metro, ODOT and TriMet) teamed up to conduct a broad range of public involvement and outreach activities, including community planning forums, corridor design workshops and questionnaires to collect public input on different aspects of the Plan.

In terms of public involvement and outreach efforts, since August 2013 the Southwest Corridor Plan has implemented the following activities:

- One community planning forum on Nov. 6, 2013, in Tigard. The forum focused the Statement of Purpose and Need for the plan and TriMet's Southwest Service Enhancement Plan planning exercise
- One questionnaire, primarily online, to obtain input on the draft Statement of Purpose and Need from the public
- Three corridor design workshops on March 12 (Southwest Portland), March 19 (Tigard) and 20 (Tualatin), 2014. The workshops presented information about the proposed high capacity transit design options and collected feedback on the public's preferences for those options
- One transit fair on March 16, 2014, in Tigard. This event targeted Spanish- and Vietnamese-speakers with limited English proficiency, presented them with information about the Southwest Corridor Plan and the Southwest Service Enhancement Plan, and encouraged them to become more involved in those two planning efforts. Metro hired a professional Vietnamese interpreter that served as a liaison to the Vietnamese-speakers with limited English proficiency, approaching and engaging them in conversation to encourage them to get info from the transit fair tables. Martín González from TriMet and Juan Carlos Ocaña-Chíu from Metro attended the transit fair, serving as liaisons and translators to Spanish-speakers with limited English proficiency.
- One community planning forum on April 10, 2014 in Tualatin. The forum presented information on the potential station locations along the high capacity transit design options, and on the related multimodal projects that support the station locations or the options. Public input was collected at this event.
- One questionnaire, primarily online, to obtain input on the potential station locations and multimodal projects from the general public
- One community planning forum on May 13, 2014 in Tigard. The forum presented information on the draft recommendation of what high capacity transit options, potential stations and related multimodal projects to select for further study in a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS).

- One questionnaire, primarily online, to obtain input on the draft recommendation of which high capacity transit options, potential stations and related and multimodal projects to select for further study in a DEIS.

Public input collected through these activities was analyzed, summarized and presented to the Southwest Corridor Plan Steering Committee members, who are elected officials from the Plan’s partner jurisdictions and agencies (Beaverton, Durham, King City, Portland, Tigard, Tualatin, Washington County, Metro, ODOT and TriMet). The Steering Committee considered the public input collected when making decisions about future Southwest Corridor Plan direction.

Two Southwest Corridor Plan activities have been focused on traditionally underrepresented groups:

- One Transit Fair on March 16, 2014 in Tigard
- The work on the definition of impacts, benefits and burdens of the Southwest Corridor Plan.

Southwest Corridor Plan staff organized the Transit Fair on March 16, 2014, in partnership with TriMet, the City of Tigard and Washington County. For Metro, the primary goal of the Fair was to bring information about the Southwest Corridor Plan to members of two underrepresented communities (limited English-proficiency Spanish- and Vietnamese-speakers) in person, and in their primary language, and to invite them to get more involved in the Plan.

To achieve this goal, Metro translated the most recent factsheet that described the current status of the Southwest Corridor Plan into both Vietnamese and Spanish, and also used a more general factsheet about the project that was created in 2012. Metro worked with professional translators who are on contract to translate the most recent factsheet. Bilingual (Spanish-English) Metro and TriMet staff reviewed the English-to-Spanish translation and made sure it was more likely to reach the widest possible number of Spanish-speakers. The same staff attended the Fair in order to present information directly to the limited-English proficiency Spanish-speakers. In order to reach the limited English-proficiency Vietnamese-speakers at the Fair, Metro also contracted the services of a professional interpreter to attend the event and serve as communications conduit with members of this community.

St. Anthony Catholic Church was the selected location because it offers services in both Spanish and Vietnamese, and they have a large meeting room where they provide coffee and refreshments to members of their congregation in between services. Southwest Corridor Plan and TriMet staff worked with St. Anthony Church’s staff to make sure that the Transit Fair was advertised to as many limited-English proficiency Spanish- and Vietnamese-speakers as possible, and to the entire parish membership, including low-income members of those communities. The Transit Fair participating organizations set up their booths in that room, maximizing the opportunity to reach out to members of these communities. Bilingual staff and the contract interpreter had the opportunity to talk with a significant number of limited-English proficiency people and give them information about the Southwest Corridor Plan and the Southwest Service Enhancement Plan.

The Southwest Corridor Plan staff is also working to create draft definitions of potential impacts, benefits and burdens of the plan on communities located in the study area. Based on previous

environmental justice and Title VI work done for the plan, staff identified a number of organizations that work with protected populations in the corridor and elsewhere in the region. The identified organizations will be approached in the second half of 2014 in order to present them with the draft definitions and get their perspective on whether the definitions apply to the populations they work with, and how to potentially modify the definitions in order to make them more relevant to them. Metro plans to contract with community-based organizations that have experience reaching out to and involving underrepresented communities to get their help in convening conversations with their peer organizations, in order to increase the probabilities of getting effective feedback on the draft definitions. The results of these discussions will then inform the creation of the formal definitions of impacts, benefits and burdens that will be used by the Southwest Corridor Plan during the DEIS phase.

Public Engagement Guide

The Public Engagement Guide establishes consistent guidelines to ensure people have meaningful opportunities to be involved in the regional planning process. The guide also provides examples of the tools and techniques that Metro may use to communicate with and receive input from the public.

In November 2013, Metro Council adopted an updated Public Engagement Guide (formerly the Public Involvement Policy for Transportation Planning) and submitted it to Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in compliance with 23 CFR 450.316(a) and FTA C 4702.1B. The guide reflects changes in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), and was adopted after considering comments received during a 45-day comment period on the guide.

The public engagement conducted between August 12 and September 30, 2013 had the primary goal of engaging a diverse and representative group of stakeholders from across the region and gathering substantive public comment and feedback to help shape, inform and improve Metro's engagement policies.

Recognizing that not everyone had time to review the entire guide, Metro designed a short online survey that asked what actions Metro can take to ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate in planning and decision-making processes. During the 45-day comment period provided, Metro collected the majority of the public input from an online survey and from feedback gathered at public events and presentations, which resulted in 1,466 responses.

Targeted input was also sought from interested parties including tribal governments, Native American resource agencies, environmental justice organizations, faith-based and community based-organizations that serve underserved communities such as populations with limited English proficiency, diverse cultural backgrounds, low-income, disability, seniors and youth. Email notification was sent to Metro's advisory committees: Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC), Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT), Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) and Metro Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC)— including the alternates and corresponding interested persons email lists; distributed to Metro's Opt In panel; and provided to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

Outreach approach

Metro's efforts to publicize the comment period and ways to comment included the following tactics.

- City and community newsletters – Metro provided articles to be included in city and community newsletters. Articles were placed in The Regal Courier, HelloLO newsletter and posted on the City of Tualatin's website and the City of Tigard's website.
- Email – Metro announced the opening of the comment period during the week of August 12, 2013 to its interested persons email list including members of the Public Engagement Review Committee (PERC), the regional Public Engagement Network peer group, community leaders, faith-based organizations and organizations that serve underserved communities such as populations with limited English proficiency, diverse cultural backgrounds, low-income, disability, seniors and youth. The list contained contacts for approximately 200 people. Organizations were encouraged to forward the email to their networks and contacts. A second email was sent to remind recipients about the comment period the week of September 9, 2013. Metro provided notification to the TPAC, JPACT, MTAC and MPAC and corresponding interested persons and alternates email lists, which reaches 853 people. Metro announced the opening of the comment period in an email and encouraged Metro Councilors to forward the email to constituents and community contacts.
- Events – Metro staff provided opportunity for the public to comment at the following events:
 - Saturday, Aug. 24 – Blue Lake, Disc Golf Tournament (100+ people)
 - Wednesday, Aug. 28 – Big Screen on the Green: Madagascar at Glendoveer Golf Course
 - Sept. 14 – Aquifer Adventures sponsored by Columbia Slough Watershed Council and Portland Water Bureau.
- Farmers' markets – Metro staff provided opportunity for the public to comment at the following farmers' markets:
 - Urban Homesteading Fair at the King Farmers Market: Sunday, Sept. 15
 - Moreland Farmers Market: Wednesday, Sept. 18
 - PSU Farmers Market: Saturday, Sept. 21
 - Milwaukie Farmers Market: Sunday, Sept. 22
 - St. Johns Farmers Market: Saturday, Sept. 28.
- Multicultural and community media outreach – Metro sent a news release to media contacts announcing the public comment period. Media outlets included: El Hispanic News, The Skanner, Asian Reporter and Portland Chinese Times.
- Newsfeeds – Metro encouraged public comments through a newsfeed story, sent to media and interested parties. The newsfeed has more than 800 subscribers.
- Outreach to tribal governments – Metro sent personalized letters to over 20 tribal governments and Native American resource agencies in the region.

- Opt In – Metro sent two email blasts to the 21,000 person Opt In panel on Aug. 21 and Sept. 10, 2013. The email directed people to fill out a short online survey. Participants who took the survey were entered to win one of four \$50 VISA gift cards. Four winners were selected on Oct. 1, 2013.
- Presentations at advisory committee meetings – Metro staff presented an overview of the Public Engagement Guide to JPACT, MPAC, TPAC and MTAC.
- Social media – Metro posted information on its Twitter account throughout the comment period. The OregonMetro Twitter account has over 6,000 followers.
- Website –The Public Engagement Guide was posted on Metro’s website www.oregonmetro.gov/engagementguide. The page received 726 page views during the public comment period.

Regional Transportation Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program

As the metropolitan planning organization for the Portland metropolitan area, Metro is authorized by Congress and the State of Oregon to coordinate and plan investments in the transportation system for Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

The RTP recognizes the diversity of transportation needs throughout the Portland metropolitan region and integrates land-use, economic, environmental and transportation policies to accomplish desired outcomes for the region. The plan lays out the priorities for road, transit, freight, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and a strategy to pay for them.

To meet the requirements of MAP-21, the 2014 RTP public participation plan was designed to ensure early and active public participation throughout the updating process and timely, effective notification prior to major decisions. To help remove barriers to attending meetings, all the public meetings were held at locations served by mass transit. Translators and interpreters were available as needed. As the development and decision-making timeframe for the 2015-18 MTIP coincided with those of the RTP, engagement activities sought to leverage the similar themes of and interest in the projects.

Metro advisory committees – TPAC, JPACT, MPAC and MTAC – were forums for discussion and decision-making by elected officials and their staffs, representing cities and counties of the region, transportation agencies and providers. Three of those committees – TPAC, MPAC and MTAC– have community representatives as regular members, bringing the layperson’s perspective to those discussions and making recommendations on decisions.

Information on RTP and MTIP developments was provided to the public throughout the update process through electronic news articles and fact sheets available through the Metro website and distributed at meetings and events. The RTP and MTIP project websites posted information about the update process, with a timeline indicating key decision points and public comment opportunities.

Metro staff worked with cities, counties and agencies such as TriMet and the Port of Portland on targeted outreach and communication efforts to address specific needs of each agency or jurisdiction and to facilitate collaboration among the agencies and jurisdictions in the RTP process. Throughout the process, staff presented to standing county coordinating committees (as well as their associated

technical advisory committees) and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council; staff also led several joint MTAC/TPAC workshops covering various topics:

- two workshops focused on updating RTP revenue projections (July 23, 2013 and Sept. 9, 2013)
- a workshop focused on updates to Metro's regional travel demand model (Aug. 21, 2013)
- a workshop focused on demographic/economic trends as well as draft policy edits for Safety and Active transportation (Sept. 11, 2013)
- a workshop focused on travel trends and an overview of the RTP project solicitation process (Sept. 23, 2013)
- a workshop focused on transportation system performance / modeling results (March 17, 2014).

On March 21, 2014, review drafts of the 2014 RTP and the 2015-18 MTIP were posted on Metro's website for viewing or downloading. Printed copies and electronic copies on CD were available on request and were distributed to Metro advisory committee members. This marked the start of a formal 45-day public comment period that ended on May 5, 2014. The March 21 through May 5 comment period for the RTP and MTIP was expanded to include questions related to the work for the Regional Active Transportation Plan and the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project. Having a unified comment period allowed Metro to:

- demonstrate the related nature of the three programs
- leverage the resources of each program, increasing the outreach that would otherwise be feasible
- reduce the number of requests on participants' time, attention and effort.

Promotion

- The comment period was promoted through newspaper ads, postings on the Metro newsfeed, notification to the Opt In panel, and an update to Metro's planning enews list. Notices were also disseminated through Metro's Public Engagement Network and neighborhood association contacts.
- Ads were placed in the Beaverton Valley Times, Gresham Outlook, Portland Observer, Asian Reporter and El Hispanic News. The notice in El Hispanic News was presented in both English and Spanish; other ads had translated text stating the purpose of the notice and providing contact information for more information. See Appendix A for copies of these ads.

Outreach elements

- During the March 21 through May 5 comment period, Metro received comments through an online tool and questionnaire that focused on soliciting comments from the general public, a more detailed and specific online questionnaire focused on the RTP itself, and via email, letter, phone call and message, and other conversations.
- Online tool and questionnaire: Where we live and work and how we get around

The comment period included an online tool and integrated general public-focused questionnaire, asking participants about investments needed:

- for communities where we live and work
- to improve how we get around.

This online tool and questionnaire was designed to be more interactive than typical online questionnaires. The goal was to create a more accessible portal for the general public to let their desires be heard by focusing questions on the challenges faced by and desires of participants rather than trying to explain the programs the responses would inform (i.e., the RTP, ATP, MTIP and Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project). In total, 2,321 unique visitors viewed the online tool, and 1,217 responses to the questionnaire were submitted.

Opportunity to comment specifically on the draft Regional Transportation Plan

Government partners, advocates and other interested parties needed avenues to offer comments on the specific issues raised by 2014 RTP and the ATP, the 2015-18 MTIP and the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project. Decision-makers also need specific public feedback on these programs in order to move forward. To meet these needs, more detailed and specific online questionnaires were offered.

The 2014 RTP and ATP online questionnaire received 176 responses. Metro also received additional email, letter, phone call and message, and verbal comments. All substantive comments were recorded and responded to for the staff recommendation to decision-makers.

Community forums

Three community planning forums were held in early April, one each in Washington County, Multnomah County and Clackamas County. The events included open house-style information as well as a forum/discussion table element that included participation with Metro Councilors.

Civil Rights Assessment

The 2014 RTP process and each of the funding allocation processes leading to the projects proposed for funding in the 2015-18 MTIP considered transportation needs of underserved populations, along with other policy objectives, when nominating and selecting projects. In addition, Metro must assess potential burdens and benefits of the final selection of projects as a whole on communities of concern and whether the distribution of the public transit investments, under the guidance of FTA's guidance on the Executive Order on Environmental Justice, have a disparate impact on these communities. As part of this (Title VI and Environmental Justice) Civil Rights assessment, Metro chose a methodology that provided quantitative and qualitative information.

Metro contacted local agencies and community based organizations that serve underrepresented populations to advise on demographic thresholds that would identify communities of concern. Based on this advice, Metro provided a qualitative assessment of the investment levels in communities of concern under the 2014 RTP and the 2015-18 MTIP, comparing them to regional investment levels, to determine the presence of disproportionate lack of investment for these communities. This

quantitative assessment was released as part of the 30-day comment period from May 16 through June 20, 2014.

For the release of the quantitative assessment, Metro posted notices in the Beaverton Valley Times, Gresham Outlook, Portland Observer, Asian Reporter, El Hispanic News and The Skanner to solicit comments and qualitative feedback on the potential benefits and burdens of programmatic investments. Notifications were also posted on Metro News and sent to the Planning enews email list as well as local agencies and community based organizations that serve underrepresented populations.

The Civil Rights Assessment received six letters and two online questionnaire responses. These comments were recorded and, along with those received informally throughout the processes, were responded to for the staff recommendation to decision-makers. Though the original quantitative methodology was questioned by these comments, neither the original methodology nor subsequent methodologies tried during this assessment revealed the presence of a disproportionate lack of investment for Title VI or Executive Order on Environmental Justice communities of concern (people of color, those who do not speak English well, those with low-income) under either the 2014 RTP or 2015-18 MTIP.

Because of this and based on the qualitative information received during the comment period, Metro found no disproportionate burdens or disparate impacts on these communities for this assessment. However, due to the feedback on the quantitative methodology and comments highlighting the need for improving equity in the region, the assessment also recommends improvements in communications with these communities and future quantitative methodology as well as coordination with the Metro Equity Strategy as it develops.

Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project

The 2009 Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2001, the Jobs and Transportation Act. The law includes a requirement for the Metro MPO to work with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), and local governments to analyze land use and transportation scenarios that are designed to accommodate planned population and job growth for the year 2035 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks.

The law also requires Metro to adopt a preferred scenario after public review and consultation with local governments, and calls for local governments in the Portland metropolitan region to implement the adopted scenario. In response, Metro launched the Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project 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.

To realize that goal, Metro evaluated three approaches – or scenarios – to better understand how best to support community visions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. During the July 1, 2013, to June 30, 2014, reporting period, the project conducted extensive outreach with community and business leaders, local governments, and Metro's technical and policy advisory committees to share the results

of that evaluation and help facilitate a discussion to shape a draft approach to test for its ability to meet the state target and help communities realize the priorities in their local adopted plans.

Throughout the July 1, 2013, to June 30, 2014 reporting period, Metro staff provided standing advisory committee briefings to land use and transportation policymakers and technical staff (JPACT and MPAC, TPAC and MTAC, respectively) who were actively engaged in shaping the draft approach for staff to evaluate recommended to the Metro Council in May 2014, which council formalized with a resolution in June 2014. Also during this period, Metro staff maintained the project website with video and printed resources that informed the public and stakeholders on the progress and outcomes of the public outreach efforts and project milestones. A major update to the website and project page was completed during this time period and launched in May 2014.

From July to September 2013, the Metro Council held one-on-one briefings with Metro's policy committee stakeholders to answer questions regarding the scenarios project and prepare them to actively participate in the fall discussion around the first look at the results of an analysis of the three approaches for meeting the state target and other community goals.

From October to December 2013, Metro staff provided briefings to local, regional and state public officials and staff, Metro's policy and technical committees, community and business leaders previously engaged and community organizations on the results of the analysis to prepare them to identify/discuss tradeoffs and implications through a process of shared discovery.

From January to May 2014, Metro facilitated a Community Choices discussion through public engagement activities to explore policy choices and trade-offs of the three approaches. The engagement activities built upon earlier public engagement to solicit feedback from public officials, public health, environmental, business, environmental justice and equity stakeholders, interested members of the public and other identified audiences. Online comment opportunities, interviews, discussion groups, and statistically valid public opinion research were used to gather input on:

- perceptions of the region's transportation system
- perceptions of access to jobs, and affordable housing and transportation options
- perceptions of the feasibility of implementing key strategies under consideration
- perceptions of investment priorities and infrastructure finance
- general willingness to support key strategies under consideration
- general willingness to pay more for key strategies under consideration
- general willingness to take personal actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

During this period, community and business leaders, local governments and the public were asked to weigh in on which investments and actions should be included in the region's preferred approach.

During this same period, local, regional and state leaders worked with each other informed by results of the above public engagement activities to make a recommendation for a draft approach for Metro staff to evaluate for its ability to meet the state target and support other community goals.

In June 2014, the Metro Council passed a resolution formalizing the recommendation directing staff to test the draft approach recommended by Metro's policy committees, MPAC and JPACT.

The engagement strategy implemented in the last reporting period guided the public engagement efforts up through June 30, 2014. The public engagement was coordinated with Metro's Regional Transportation Plan update and other priority Metro projects. The engagement strategy continues to be informed by data compiled for the Limited English Proficiency Plan.

Opt In

In 2011, Metro initiated an online public engagement tool called Opt In (www.optinpanel.org) to reach a broader audience and get input about Metro programs and policies. Participants are asked to provide basic demographic information and invited to take one or two online surveys each month.

The panel has grown to more than 24,000 members as of spring 2014 providing an opportunity for broad, ongoing engagement with a large number of community members. Metro sent four surveys to Opt In members during the reporting period, resulting in a total of 7,582 responses.

Solid Waste Road Map

Metro manages the region's solid waste system on behalf of the public. Over the next few years, the Metro Council will make decisions that affect how the region handles its garbage and other discarded materials. The Solid Waste Roadmap is a long-term effort to consider and determine the best approaches to manage the region's garbage and other discarded materials in the years ahead. It provides an opportunity to have extensive and thoughtful discussions about the best ways the region can manage its garbage in the future.

An important outreach effort supporting the objectives of the Solid Waste Roadmap was a 12-month engagement series titled "Let's Talk Trash." The purpose of the program was to engage the public in discussions about different approaches and considerations relating to the management of garbage and other discarded materials, and to engage the public through fun and innovative events.

The goal of the effort was to engage a broadly diverse group of interested persons across the region that will remain interested and involved in waste-related issues and will provide input to the Metro Council on its decisions relating to the management of the region's garbage.

Engagement activities included:

- An original video to announce the launch of Let's Talk Trash, raise awareness for the event series and get people excited to participate,
- A series of community tours of El Tesoro, a custom performance created in partnership with the Milagro Theater.
- A Nerd Nite event (now known as Science on Tap) waste technology options that included a quiz and Q&A session with Dr. Castaldi and Metro.
- A partnership with Portland State University for Sustainable Solutions and the City Club of Portland to bring Pulitzer prize-winning author Ed Humes to Portland to talk about trash.

- Let's Talk Trash Film Contest and Gala.

A variety of perspectives were included in the conversation including interviews with industry stakeholders, community partners, thought leaders and community members. A survey also went out to 1100 subscribers to Metro's Solid Waste News and Updates list.

Equity Strategy Program

In 2011, Metro initiated the Equity Strategy Program, with the objective of creating an organizing framework to help Metro consistently incorporate equity into policy and decision-making.

In 2013 Metro created the Equity Strategy Advisory Committee ("ESAC"), a group of external stakeholders who provide input to the Metro Chief Operating Officer and staff regarding the implementation of the equity strategy. The Advisory Committee will deliver program recommendations to Metro's Chief Operating Officer, who will convey those recommendations to Metro Council, along with the Chair and other Advisory Committee members as needed. The committee has created a working definition of equity that continues to guide Metro in its strategic effort to advance equity throughout the region.

Metro's working definition of equity reads:

"Our region is stronger when all individuals and communities benefit from quality jobs, living wages, a strong economy, stable and affordable housing, safe and reliable transportation, clean air and water, a healthy environment, and sustainable resources that enhance our quality of life.

We share a responsibility as individuals within a community and communities within a region. Our future depends on the success of all, but avoidable inequities in the utilization of resources and opportunities prevent us from realizing our full potential.

Our region's population is growing and changing. Metro is committed with its programs, policies and services to create conditions which allow everyone to participate and enjoy the benefits of making this a great place today and for generations to come."

In 2014 The Equity Strategy Program will work with the advisory committee to develop equity indicators and a feasibility assessment report and an Equity Baseline Analysis.

Parks and Nature Levy

In 2013, voters across the Portland metropolitan area approved a five-year levy to help care for regional parks and natural areas. The levy raises about \$10 million per year, going toward six major initiatives – representing hundreds of projects on the ground.

The levy is designed to make the most of the 17,000 acres of regional parks and natural areas that Metro oversees, from Chehalem Ridge to the west and Sandy River to the east. Most of this land was protected over the past two decades through two regional bond measures.

Public engagement goals for the projects included in the levy included:

- Increase public awareness and support

- Bring more people to Metro destinations
- Engage more diverse audiences
- Improve stewardship across the region
- Strengthen Metro's partnerships

The following strategies were used to accomplish the engagement goals:

- Tell the story through compelling places
- Go where the people are – literally and figuratively
- Empower Metro Council and staff to tell our story
- Capitalize on partners' audiences, resources
- Develop a timeline that drives strategic investments
- Expand the It's Our Nature brand
- Put resources toward key audiences

In addition to project-specific local engagement – like restoration work at Newell Creek Canyon in Oregon City and improvements to Oxbow and Blue Lake Regional Parks, the levy team initiated strategies to engage a more diverse segment of the regional population through community-based organizations, community partnerships and organizations working with youth.

Engaging people in Metro's natural areas, parks and trails was critical to the success of and implementation of levy related projects and the long-term success of the region's work to care for these special places – and the public's opportunities to enjoy them.