

REIMAGINING POLICING, SECURITY, AND INCACERATED LABOR PROJECT

Date: March 8, 2022
Department: Office of the COO
Meeting Date: March 17, 2022

Presenter: Reed Brodersen, DEI
Length: 45 minutes

ISSUE STATEMENT

As called on by Reimagine Oregon and other Black community leaders in the wake of increased awareness of the systemic injustices of police violence, Metro is committed to our own reimagining process– rethinking our relationships with the criminal legal system and our approaches to policing, security and incarcerated labor to ensure our practices live Metro’s commitments to racial equity, minimize harm and advance a more just and prosperous greater Portland.

The Reimagining Policing, Security and Incarcerated Labor Project has worked since 2020 to assess our touchpoints with the criminal legal system and our approaches to public safety. The Project Team, Reimagining Policing Committee and other Metro staff have begun the creation of the Project Vision, which will set the direction for our future approaches to safety, security and the use of incarcerated labor. We are looking to CORE and key community stakeholders for input on this Vision.

COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

Council Engagement will occur in June 2022 (exact date TBD) and will include a formal adoption of the Project Vision, which will lay the ground work for department and agency action plans. Through the Project Vision Metro Council will establish the broad policy outcomes they wish to see Metro advance.

QUESTIONS for CORE

The Project Team is seeking CORE’s input on the draft Project Vision (Attachment A) so they can better tie the Project Vision to BIPOC community needs and efforts. Furthermore, CORE’s input will be considered alongside additional information from BIPOC community leaders to help them and Metro Council navigate complex policy decisions and tradeoffs.

CORE’s feedback on the following questions will help inform the Project Vision, action planning and implementation:

- What is your vision for Metro in the realm of public safety and the use of incarcerated labor?
 - What does the region look like when we’ve succeeded?
 - What do our sites and venues look like? How do staff and visitors feel?
- How is the draft Vision (Attachment A) sitting with you? What do you like? What does not align with your vision or with what you are hearing from members of your community?

STRATEGIC CONTEXT & FRAMING COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Project Vision

The Project Vision consists of a series of vision and policy statements organized into five major themes that capture the diverse array of touchpoints Metro has with the criminal legal system and our approaches to public safety. The themes are defined below and examples are provided from the Assessment to illustrate Metro's role.

Policing and Crisis Management

The ways in which Metro manages emergencies and crises at its sites and our ongoing relationships with law enforcement. Examples include:

- Ongoing contracts at the Visitor Venues with Portland Police Bureau to support at large events.
- Contracts with law enforcement agencies to patrol Metro Parks.
- Metro staff calling 911 in cases of emergencies or when staff or visitors feel unsafe.

Safety and Security

The ways in which Metro secures and protects its sites on an ongoing basis, through in-house and contracted security services, and associated policies and procedures. Examples include:

- Security personnel in standard uniform are stationed at entrances of many Metro sites and venues.
- Security personnel have standard state-issued DPSST licenses and are hired from traditional security backgrounds.
- Security personnel do not carry firearms but may have access to some security equipment like batons, handcuffs and pepper spray.
- At many locations badge policies are implemented and enforced to ensure only Metro staff and authorized visitors may enter.

Use of Incarcerated Labor

Metro's direct or indirect use of the labor of incarcerated people for services or products. This theme also includes opportunities for (and barriers to) employment at Metro for people exiting incarceration. Examples include:

- Parks and Nature contracts with inmate crews to conduct parks clean ups.
- The Oregon Zoo has a contract with a correctional facility to help rear butterflies.
- Metro has ended the use of background checks during the hiring process for nearly all of its positions.

Houselessness and Criminalization of Poverty

Metro's management of houseless people on or near its sites and parks. Also, our control or influence over policies and practices used to criminalize poverty and put people at risk of further engagement with the criminal justice system or incarceration. Examples include:

- Metro's compliance with Title X, which can mean the removal of houseless individuals camping in Metro Parks.
- Metro's program to support houseless folks in access garbage services and minimizing potential enforcement actions for littering or illegal dumping.

Safe and Stable Communities

Metro's ability to support safe and stable communities through housing and transportation justice using its role as a convener, planner and funder.

- Metro's planning and oversight of the region's transportation system and potential leverage points for influencing discriminatory practices in enforcement and fines/fees.
- Metro's administration and oversight of the Affordable Housing Bond and Supportive Housing Services program.
- Metro administers a variety of grant programs to support economic development, transportation-oriented development, community placemaking and safe routes to schools which may have impacts on community safety and stability.

BACKGROUND

Project Conception

Metro COO Marissa Madrigal chartered the Reimagining Policing, Security and Incarcerated Labor project in the summer of 2020 after the murder of George Floyd, subsequent calls for racial justice in greater Portland and across the nation, and demands from Metro partners like Reimagine Oregon, Metro's Committee on Racial Equity, and Black, Indigenous and staff of color.

Project Design

The project is led by an agency-wide committee and supported by four department action teams, from Waste Prevention and Environmental Services, Parks and Nature, Planning and Development, and the Visitor Venues and Metro Regional Center Operations. The internal-facing project works to center the voices of impacted staff and community members through research and engagement.

Project Phases

- **Shared Learning through Reimagining Policing, Security and Incarcerated Labor Learning Cohort** *(Completed)*
The learning cohort created space for participants to gain a deeper understanding of how the law enforcement and carceral systems connect with their work. More than 40 Metro staff participated in a four part training series and continue to engage in monthly learning sessions.
- **Internal assessment of touch points** *(Completed)*
The internal assessment inventoried Metro's touch points with Police, Security and Incarcerated Labor within the Parks and Nature, Waste Prevention and Environmental Services, Venues and Planning and Development departments. This provides necessary context that will guide the development of the department and agency action plans.
- **Project Vision** *(In Progress)*
The Decision Making Framework working group, made up of staff with personal and/or professional experiences relevant to this work, is drafting the vision and

direction for the project as Metro Council and leadership makes decisions to address our touch points with police, security and incarcerated labor to bring our work more closely aligned with our values.

- **Department action plans** *(In Progress)*

With direction from the Decision Making Framework working group, Policing Committee members will develop department specific action plans that address their departments touch points and goals to address those touch points that align with agency goals.

- **Coordinate a process for project transition to implementation** *(Not Started)*

The project team is committed to a smooth transition as the work moves to the implementation phase of the actions plans. We will work to secure possible funding sources needed to implement this work.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Draft Project Vision
- Attachment B: October CORE Meeting presentation with Project Background and Assessment Overview

Reimagining Policing, Security and Incarcerated Labor

Draft Project Vision

3/8/2022

Reimagining Policing, Security, and Incarceration

This vision articulates Metro's desired future for the region's public safety and justice systems and the role Metro plays in these systems. While the vision is for all people to be safe, to thrive, and to have agency over their own lives – we recognize that Black, brown, queer, trans/non-binary, disabled, immigrant and people with other marginalized identities have been particularly harmed by police violence, incarceration and disinvestment. We center these communities as we work towards these visions.

Policing and Crisis Management

The region's public safety system is not predicated on state-violence and fear, it de-centers police as a primary tool for creating safety, and it works for and is accountable to Black and brown communities. Metro manages crises using unbiased, de-escalatory and trauma-informed approaches and without the use of violence.

Safety and Security

All staff and visitors feel safe and welcome in Metro spaces and are safe from harm and discrimination. Security is relational, created through mutual respect and community relationships rather than intimidation. All safety personnel have the tools, training and support they need to be successful.

Use of Incarcerated Labor

The region's justice system is rooted in restorative justice and healing. Metro respects the rights and dignity of everyone who works with us and ensures they have a living wage and fair working conditions. Metro does not benefit from exploitive labor but gives people exiting or at high risk of incarceration opportunities for economic stability and agency.

Houselessness and Criminalization of Poverty

Metro manages houselessness using a compassionate, trauma-informed approach, connecting people with the services and supports their need while minimizing further trauma and harm. Metro and the region de-criminalize poverty by minimizing the use of fines, tickets, fees, displacement and other enforcement tools that disproportionately harm people experiencing poverty.

Safe and Stable Communities

Community safety is achieved through transportation and housing equity, not policing and incarceration. Metro uses its influence as a convener to dismantle historic and ongoing tools of oppression, like policing transportation and fare enforcement, and discriminatory code enforcement and unfair housing practices. Metro centers community stability and safety for Black, trans, and other marginalized communities in our plans, policies and investments across our housing, land use and transportation efforts.

Reimagining Policing, Security, and Incarcerated Labor

Committee on Racial Equity

October 21, 2021

Outcomes

- Inform CORE on project, process and Council engagement
- Get feedback on Project Values and alignment with the Strategic Plan
- Answer questions about Assessment and Metro's touch points

Context

- George Floyd's murder and **calls for racial justice**
- **Reimagine Oregon** calling on Oregon leaders for structural change
- **POC ERG & Black Caucus letter** demanding accountability and change
- Metro's **touch points** with these systems



(Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian)

Context

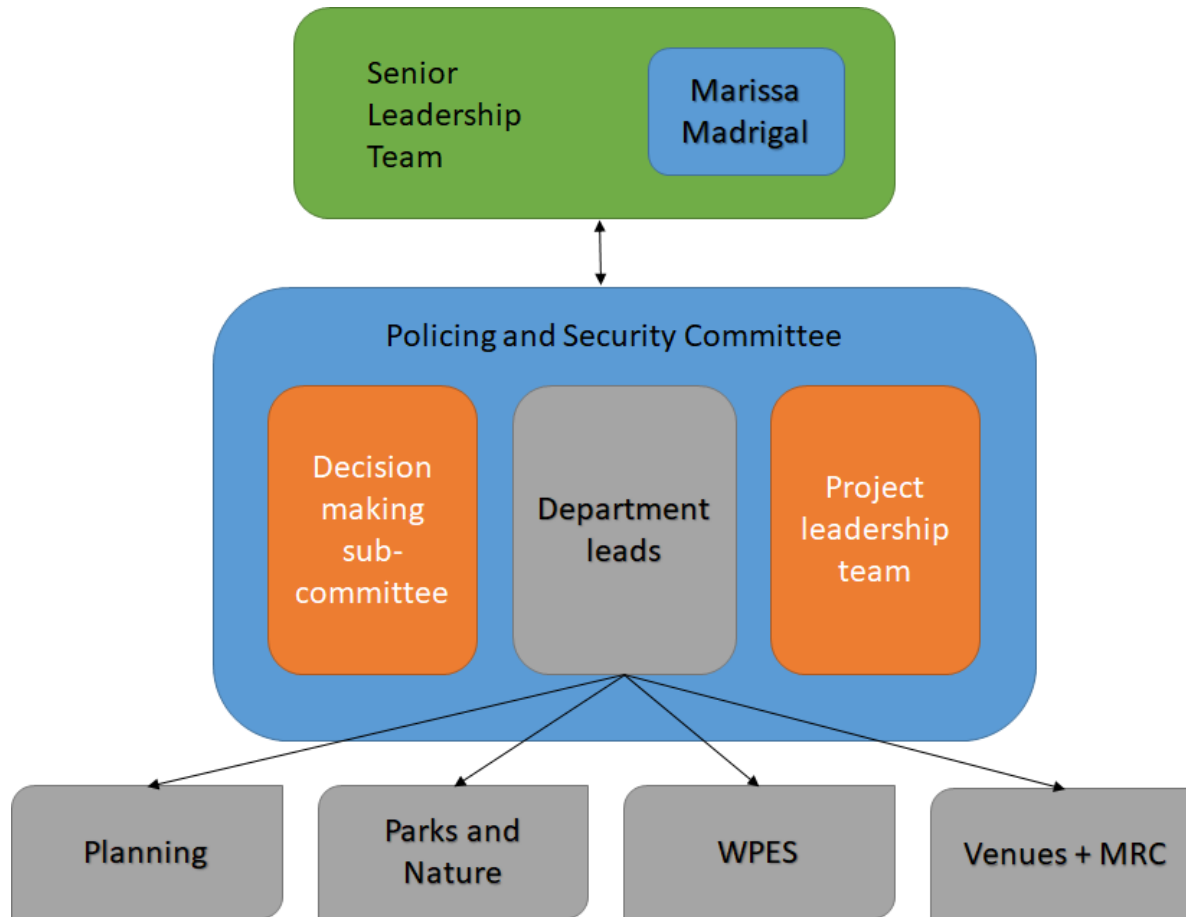
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Why this work is important to Metro?

- Commitments to community & SPAREDI
- Ownership of touch points
- Influence on community stability and prosperity through:
 - Affordable housing and houseless services
 - Safe transportation
 - Access to jobs and economic development
 - Recreation and nature

Project Teams



Project Values

- Collective Care
- Liberation
- Restoration
- Accountability
- Prosperity
- Leadership

Project phases



What:

- Five sessions to cover basics of criminology, racial disparities across criminal justice system, shared language
- Develop shared understanding of current systems and their historical context

Who: Committee, Department teams

When: January 2021 – ongoing

Project phases



What:

- Inventory and assessment of touch points and approaches to policing, security and use of incarcerated labor
- Analysis of impact, cultural/financial/policy dimensions

Who: Committee, Department teams, department leadership

When: March 2021– September 2021

Project phases



What:

- Develop draft vision for Metro moving forward
- Create decision-making framework to guide department action plans and future decisions

Who: Committee, *Decision-making Working Group*

When: August 2021 – January 2022

Project phases



What:

- Department teams develop work plans to mitigate harm across their practices, policies and investments
- Committee supports strategy development for areas of agency-wide concern

Who: Committee, Department teams, Department and agency leadership

When: January 2022 – May 2022

Council Engagement Plan

Fall Work Session

- Raise Council awareness of criminal legal system, histories and present-day inequities
- Build awareness project process
- Educate on touch points and build a case for why Metro needs to work on this issue.
- Inform Council of project values

Spring Council Meeting

- Adopt project vision

Council Engagement



Assessment



Assessment objectives

- Daylight touch points and identify needs
- Inquire under-utilized levers for safety
- Investigate magnitude and impact
- Learn about barriers to change

Agency-wide thematic analysis

- Security and Rule Enforcement
- People in Crisis and Emergency Management
- Incarcerated Labor
- Grants, Funding and Resources

Visitor Venues and Metro Regional Center

- Houseless/Mental Health Crisis Management
- Security Personnel
- Security Policies and approaches
- Law Enforcement Relationships



Parks and Nature

- Rule Enforcement
- Incarcerated Labor
- Safety and Security



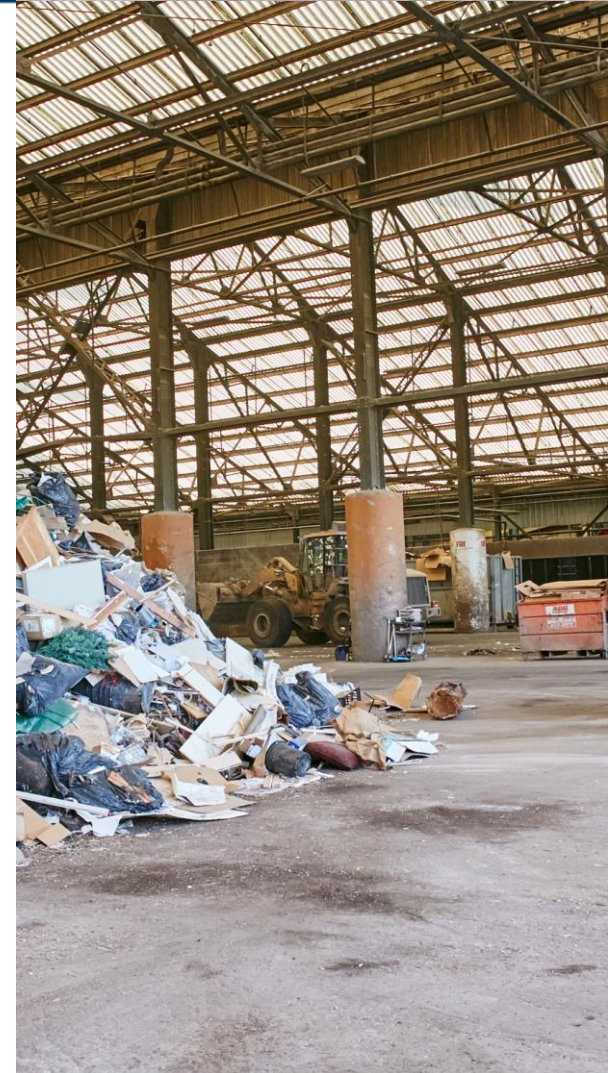
Planning, Development & Research

- Defining safety and security in regional plans and policies
- Role of police and security in grants and resource allocation
- Safety and security in land use and housing policies and plans
- Personal and public safety during engagement events



Waste Prevention and Environmental Services

- Use of labor of incarcerated people
- Calling the Police
- Relationships with law enforcement
- On-site security
- Lever for creating safety in communities

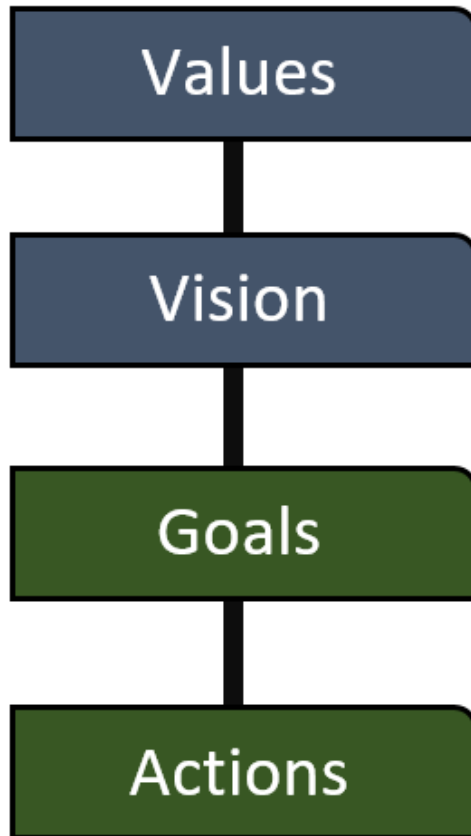


Project Values



- Collective Care
- Liberation
- Restoration
- Accountability
- Prosperity
- Leadership

Project Values



Values: Concepts that serve as a foundation for the plan's goals and actions.

Vision: A shared understanding of desired outcomes for the future.

Goals: Statements of direction towards a specific and measureable result.

Actions: Specific steps taken to reach the goals and vision.

Project Values

Collective Care

We center the physical and emotional integrity and humanity of each individual. We commit to practicing and demanding respectful interactions because we understand that for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities especially, merely existing in society can be dangerous. We recognize that in order to center the humanity of every individual, we must participate in and work towards collective care both for Metro staff and for members of our communities. This requires honoring, supporting, and actualizing the social justice work that happens outside of our agency, amplifying their voices and experiences, and acting on our commitments to advance equity.

Project Values

Liberation

A core purpose of our work is to make it possible for people to have more agency and efficacy in their lives. Public policy should support people in making their lives better and in increasing, rather than decreasing, that possibility. Shared liberation is not possible without centering each individual's agency and ability to make choices for themselves without the burdens and barriers of systemic oppression.

Project Values

Restoration

We recognize that the systems (e.g. white supremacy, policing, colonialism, patriarchy) that harm our communities are not broken, but are working exactly as they were intended to. We see this work as replacing systems that were designed to harm, with policies and practices that center humanity and restore relationships with people. We want to focus on creating something new, repairing lives and sharing tactics around nonviolence. We commit to being part of a solution and acknowledge that active dismantling of oppressive systems must happen to reach a solution.

Project Values

Accountability

We are building toward a structure of trust, transparency, and accountability to the Black and brown communities we serve as well as to future generations. We commit to centering and sharing power with, Black, brown, queer, trans, disabled and undocumented greater Portlanders, and leading with the moral courage they ask of us. We will foster an authentic relationship with these communities that will build trust.

Prosperity

We work towards a safe and welcoming community for all, where safety is not predicated on fear and violence. We support BIPOC, LGBTQ+, disabled and undocumented people in belonging and accessing the resources they need to succeed, while experiencing stability and opportunity in their communities.

Project Values

Leadership

We honor our ancestors and recognize that they set the foundation for us to engage in the work ahead. We listen to the calls of present generations who have asked for brave and collaborative leadership, and we center and work towards efforts to improve the conditions of future generations. We will lean into our roles as convener, researcher, funder, place-maker, and regulator as we support our government and community partners in advancing liberation across the region.

Discussion

- What questions come up for you?
- How well do the project values align with the SPAREDI & the letter CORE submitted to Metro Council in June 2020?

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