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# METRO TRANSPORTATION FUNDING TASK FORCE (TF2)

## MEETING 17 SUMMARY

January 15, 2020 – 5:30-7:30 PM

Metro Council Chambers

600 NE Grand Avenue

Portland, OR 97232

## ATTENDEES

Michael Alexander, *PSU | Albina Vision*

Jim Bernard, *Clackamas County Board of Commissioners Chair*

Emerald Bogue, *Port of Portland*

Cooper Brown, *Oregon Transportation Commission*

Leslie Carlson, *Street Trust Board*

Mayor Denny Doyle, *City of Beaverton*

Councilor Karylenn Echols, *City of Gresham*

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, *City of Portland*

Senator Lew Frederick, *State of Oregon*

Mayor Mark Gamba, *City of Milwaukie*

Stephen Gomez, *Project PDX | BBPDX*

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink, *Community Housing Fund*

Kayse Jama, *Unite Oregon*

Mayor Tim Knapp, *City of Wilsonville*

Nolan Lienhart, *ZGF Architects*

Nate McCoy, *NAMC-Oregon*

Representative Susan McLain, *State of Oregon*

Marcus Mundy, *Coalition of Communities of Color*

Dave Nielsen, *Home Builders Association*

Dave Robertson, *PGE | Portland Business Association Board*

Linda Simmons, *TriMet Board*

Vivian Satterfield, *VerdeNW*

Nate Stokes, *Union of Operating Engineers*

Co-Chair Commissioner Pam Treece, *Washington County*

Co-Chair Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, *Multnomah County*

## NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Mayor Steve Callaway, *City of Hillsboro*

Meredith Connolly, *Climate Solutions*

Marie Dodds, *AAA*

Debra Dunn, *Synergy Resources Group*  
Elaine Friesen-Strang, *AARP*  
Mary Ellen Glynn, *Columbia Sportswear*  
Councilor Eddy Morales, *City of Gresham*  
Chi Nguyen, *APANO*  
Kathryn Williams, *NW Natural*

## STAFF PRESENTING/INVOLVED

Craig Beebe, *Metro*  
Andy Shaw, *Metro*  
Molly Cooney-Mesker, *Metro*  
Jeanne Lawson, *JLA Public Involvement*  
Hannah Mills, *JLA Public Involvement*

**Note:** At the first meeting, Task Force chairs suggested referring to the members by their first names due to the nature of this as a working group. The Task Force members agreed and therefore members will be identified by first names for the purposes of this summary document.

## WELCOME AND AGENDA

Co-chairs Commissioner Pam Treece, Washington County, and Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County, welcomed the group and introduced Metro Councilor Juan Carlos González. Councilor González thanked the Task Force and expressed the urgency of making transportation investments that saves lives, specifically relating to providing safe access to public transit. Councilor González reviewed Metro Council direction at the council's Jan. 14 work session, regarding Tier 1 corridor investments. He said the Metro Council advanced the Task Force's unanimous Tier 1 recommendations from December 18, and also raised questions for staff to answer regarding proposed investments at the 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave. and Airport Way intersection, Clackamas-to-Columbia new connector road between 172<sup>nd</sup> and 190<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and Sunrise/212 corridor.

The Co-Chairs reviewed the agenda.

The agenda was as follows:

1. Public Comment
2. Staff Update: Timeline and Programs
3. Funding Mechanisms Options and Feasibility Recap
4. Funding Mechanisms and Feedback to Council
5. Wrap Up and Next Steps

## PUBLIC COMMENT

A total of three people provided verbal testimony.

Nick Skinner, PCC, asked a question about the viability of diagonal crosswalks.

Ronald A. Buel, Portland Forward, provided the following summarized comment.

*I will organize against the ballot measure if it is submitted as is. It does not sufficiently address the existing transportation system problems. This is Metro's responsibility. It doesn't do enough to get people out of their cars or restrict expansion of ODOT highways and corridors. You aren't actually reducing carbon emissions.*

Walter Robinson II, Getting There Together Coalition, provided the following summarized comment.

*The Task Force did well at the last meeting when considering projects. Don't lose speed as you move into considering programs. Programs are the transformational component of this work. If we can change policies and culture for the future, we can create a transportation system that is led by the communities impacted.*

## STAFF UPDATE: TIMELINE AND PROGRAMS

Using a PowerPoint, Andy Shaw, Metro, gave a brief presentation on the updated timeline and the programs. Molly Cooney-Mesker, Metro, explained that the Metro would be working with community partners in order to shape the programs in a way that reflects the community needs. Other key components of the presentation included involving interested stakeholders and providing an online engagement tool.

A Task Force member noted the high interest in programming and concern about taking a “divided county” approach. Additionally, this member felt there should be an opportunity to weigh in on the different options and come to some consensus on the scope and scale of the programming. Andy explained that staff is currently exploring bringing staff recommendations to the Task Force as well as providing an opportunity to participate to each county.

## FUNDING MECHANISMS OPTIONS AND FEASIBILITY RECAP

Continuing the PowerPoint, Andy broke down the funding necessary for the corridors and for the programs - \$6.03 billion for Tier 1 corridor investments and \$1 billion for program investments over the next 20 years. Andy explained that they would need an annual revenue stream of \$350-\$450 million to support these investments.

## FUNDING MECHANISMS AND FEEDBACK TO COUNCIL

Andy asked the Task Force to consider other revenue options, keeping in mind whether Metro is an eligible recipient, how easily it could be collected, whether it helps raise enough, and whether voters and key stakeholders would support it. The Task Force was shown the funding options that Metro staff recommend for further consideration and exploration, recognizing the considerations listed above, including: payroll tax, vehicle registration fee, business income tax and personal income tax. Staff do not recommend continuing to explore property tax, regional gas tax, sales tax, vehicle privilege tax, or

corporate activity tax for this measure. Andy explained that staff plan to bring this recommendation to the Metro Council for direction at a work session on Jan. 28.

The co-chairs clarified that the Task Force is being asked for input to help inform Council's discussion, acting essentially as a large, cross-regional focus group with members representing many interests. While the Task Force is not being asked for a formal recommendation, staff pledged to carry this input forward to the Council.

Below is a summary of the Task Force discussion.

- Ensure that we are not disproportionately burdening lower-income people with funding mechanisms that would require them to pay a larger share of their income than people with greater means – this could harm the very people we are trying to help with the measure and run counter to our racial equity goals.
- Would it require multiple questions on the ballot to consider multiple funding mechanisms?
  - Andy responded: *We don't think so. We think it would be one question for increases of multiple taxes.*
- In terms of revenue sources, how have you considered income level in the analysis?
  - Andy responded: *We have done some analysis on that, but at this point we're mainly focused on narrowing the options. We will do a deeper dive into how those revenue sources would impact people based on income in the future.*
- When considering equity as it relates to the vehicle registration fee, is there a way to show how the total revenue would be impacted if there were exemptions based on income?
  - Metro staff responded: *We polled for both a flat rate and a range based on income. Polling showed stronger support for a fee that seeks fairness based on income. However, the collection system for this kind of graduated fee does not exist at present.*
- It's important to engage the business community at an early stage in order to allow conversations and engagement.
- Consider not only looking at whether the mechanisms are regressive, but also geographic income. It should not be a standalone question.
- People are already moving out of our region due to property taxes, and the costs are being passed down to travel expenses and rental prices. Is there another funding mechanism for a transportation district?
  - Metro staff responded: *We are a special district by definition.*
- Over a third of people are cost burdened by property costs. It's important to consider who isn't paying their fair share.
- We have funding and preemption inequities at the state level that cannot be addressed by this measure, but are important for us to consider.
- The infrastructure planning thus far has done little to address climate issues. This gives us an opportunity to address climate issues through programming using transit. Consider increasing programming funding by \$50 million per year.

- Consider ways to incentivize reduced impact on the environment by charging less to those with less impact.
- Considering a variety of funding mechanisms is common and helps soften the blow to the taxpayer and voter. It's wise to have many options.
- It's important to consider the ease of implementation for each funding mechanism as well as the appetite from the public. Consider how each would further burden the people that are already disadvantaged. When do we decide that it's not worth the impact and complications?
- Progressive taxation is polling well at the national level. We should make this as progressive as possible.
- The Gas Tax has more potential than is being represented in this. It should be reconsidered. It would raise a lot. It's connected to how people are getting around. For the average person getting around by car, the gas tax would not make that much impact.
- It's important to recognize that if we are trying to reduce VMT and single-occupancy vehicle use, Gas Tax would not be viable as a funding source long term.

## NEXT STEPS AND CLOSE

The co-chairs thanked the group for the work they've done and the meeting was adjourned.