



March 14, 2018

To: JPACT & Metro Council
From: Getting There Together Coalition members

Re: 2018 Regional Transportation Plan update



As community members, leaders, and participants in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) update process, we appreciate the significant work that Metro and regional partners have done to date to align and advance our region's goals. Metro has identified critical priority areas for the region through previous planning processes and the RTP policy process itself. The region has identified and prioritized the right goals and outcomes that we need to have a thriving, livable, affordable region for everyone and has generated a number of plans to guide us there: Climate Smart Communities, the Regional Active Transportation Plan and Metro's Equity Strategy.



However, as highlighted by Metro's own project list analysis, the current list and investment strategy show that as a region we are not, in fact, planning to build a transportation system that will help us meet our goals by 2035 - most troubling, our equity, safety, climate, and congestion goals will not be met.



If we make no changes to the current RTP draft project list:



- Congestion will not improve, causing serious air quality concerns despite incredibly large monetary investments in 'congestion relief'. Average delay for drivers during peak commute times will increase by 75% by 2040, and freight delay will increase by 60%.
- Over the first 10 years, current areas with a greater rate of poverty, language isolation, older adults and young people will see less benefit in reaching community places than the region as a whole.
- The region will not meet our transit, active transportation network, smart technology, and demand management programs as adopted in the 2014 Climate Smart Strategy to meet the region's greenhouse gas reduction goals.
- In 2027, only 57 percent of arterial roadways will have completed sidewalks and only 43 percent will have completed bikeways.
- The region will not achieve its adopted Climate Smart Strategy and will not meet its greenhouse gas reduction target set by the state.



If we are to work together to make a great place, we must be bolder in this 2018 RTP update.

At the fourth and final Regional Leadership Forum on March 2, we heard that this plan does not yet lead with equity, and that we will not achieve our equity goals unless we make strategic corrections. When we lead with equity, we ensure that all people who live, work and recreate in the greater Portland region have the opportunity to share in and help define a thriving, livable, and prosperous place. Equity is the best model for economic growth, and we support the Metro staff proposal before you guiding how local agencies can refine their draft project lists to better meet the region's shared goals while still honoring local Transportation System Plan (TSP) needs.

Identified through years of planning and agreement on how we will create an equitable and prosperous transportation system, we now must align projects to policy and ensure we build our region's transportation system on a foundation of social equity. The Getting There Together Coalition came together in 2017 because the community was asking for transportation projects to meet their needs, but weren't seeing their needs reflected in projects being proposed. As a region, we need to:

1. Reduce congestion using proven methods to support a climate smart future.
2. Make our streets safe and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
3. Invest in new bus & MAX lines to help people get where they need to go.
4. Ensure that transportation investments are transparent and accountable to the community.
5. Prevent mass displacement and restore housing affordability.
6. Think beyond infrastructure investments and support increased access to transportation options.

With revenue projections now adjusted up to account for HB 2017, local agencies have the opportunity to incorporate additional projects or move those projects forward in time that address equity, safety, and meet our Climate Smart goals. HB 2017 represents significant investment in identified highway bottlenecks; therefore, additional revenue must be programmed to meet the below principles when refining project lists. In order to achieve a shift in the RTP goals, it will be essential for local agencies to move these projects to the first ten years of the constrained project list, where revenue forecasts allow. Metro identified several areas of refinement for the RTP, and we support these refinements as clarified:

- Expand transit operations to meet service levels adopted in the Climate Smart Strategy.
 - We also support funding enhanced transit - additional service stuck in congestion will not meet our goals.
- Target investments to address safety as well as congestion on the region's arterial and throughways that extends beyond the peak travel periods.
 - All projects on the High Crash Network should be reviewed to ensure they meet our Vision Zero goals.
 - Across the region, we should add RTP projects on orphaned state highways, e.g. 82nd Avenue.
 - All projects on the High Injury Network should be reviewed and enhanced to meet safety objectives. Project summaries should demonstrate clearly how much of the project is dedicated to safety improvements.
- Complete 100% of the gaps in the regional active transportation network.

- We strongly support the focus of this work being on the high injury corridors that are in historically marginalized communities, and these project being included in years 1-10.
- Lead with equity.
 - Jurisdictions should reference the two equity maps produced by the RTP Equity Work Group, expanding the definition of ‘historically marginalized communities’ for analysis: 1) inclusion of seniors and children under the age of 18, and 2) a map of communities of color, non-English speakers/linguistically isolated communities, and low-income.
 - Metro should provide more specific data that documents how much more likely people living in historically marginalized communities are to be killed or seriously injured based on housing affordability and past transportation underinvestment.

We recommend you move the staff proposal for refining 2018 Regional Transportation Plan Investment Priorities forward for approval by Metro Council, so that local agencies can begin immediately making needed changes to their project lists.

Sincerely,

Getting There Together Coalition

Jenny Glass
Executive Director, Rosewood Initiative

Duncan Hwang
Associate Director, APANO

Gerik Kransky
Policy Director, The Street Trust

Mary Kyle McCurdy
Deputy Director, 1000 Friends of Oregon

Noel Mickelberry
Executive Director, Oregon Walks

Steph Routh
Communications & Marketing Manager, Community Cycling Center

Vivian Satterfield
Deputy Director, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon

Kari Schlosshauer
Senior Policy Manager, Safe Routes to School National Partnership