

PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

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Dan Saltzman Commissioner Chris Warner Interim Director

August 13, 2018

Dear Council President Hughes & Metro Council,

The City of Portland appreciates the collaborative approach that Metro has taken in the development of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Over the past few years, City staff and elected officials have served on working groups, provided technical and programmatic input, and engaged with regional leaders at JPACT, MTAC and Regional Leadership Forums. We've worked closely with Metro staff and our regional partners to develop a 2040 RTP that moves the region closer toward outcomes adopted in the Climate Smart Strategy, 2040 Growth Concept, and other regional frameworks. We especially appreciate your responsiveness to the concerns we raised following the release of the first round of the Call for Projects.

We'd like to highlight a few areas where we believe the 2040 RTP update has made significant progress:

- **Safety:** We strongly support the Metro Council's commitment to Vision Zero. The policies contained in the Regional Transportation Safety Strategy send a clear message that one roadway fatality and severe injury in the region is one too many. As the analysis performed in the RTP update shows, most fatalities and serious crashes occur on a small subset of the region's transportation network. These high crash corridors, many of which are state-managed arterials, need focused safety investments and, in some cases, possible reclassifications that better reflect their urban function. We encourage Metro to continue to work with its partners to use data driven methodologies and to explore new approaches to improve safety for all roadway users.
- **Equity:** The 2040 RTP update has highlighted the need for a better understanding of how our transportation decisions and investments impact communities of color and low-income communities. We are grateful that Metro has been engaging the region in conversations that are both difficult and necessary. The transportation equity policies that have emerged are a good starting point. More work needs to be done, however, to gather and understand data, as well as to make informed decisions. We are eager to work with our regional partners and impacted communities to continue to work toward a more equitable and just region.
- **Growth Strategies:** As our region continues to attract new residents and jobs, we need to recognize that traditional approaches to managing our transportation network will not be sufficient to accommodate growth. Simply put, we won't be able to build our way out of congestion. We support a comprehensive approach to managing for growth. This includes approaches that have emerged during the 2040 RTP update such as Enhanced Transit and



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policies that support a regional approach to value pricing. These emerging ideas will work best if we also have a renewed focus on fully completing our active transportation network, increased efforts at transportation demand management, and smart investments in transportation system management and operations. All these tools will be critical to managing our transportation network during a period of unprecedented growth.

While there are many positives in the 2040 RTP, it is also important to emphasize that much more work needs to be done by all of us. Even if all the identified projects are funded and built, the region will fall well short of many of its adopted goals. This is a reality we must own. It must guide both our near-term work and our long-term investments.

We encourage the Metro Council to work with its regional partners to move quickly with the work identified in the 2040 RTP's Implementation Chapter. We see an opportunity to focus efforts on the following identified projects to help the region better meet its desired outcomes:

- **8.2.3.2 Regional Congestion Pricing Technical Analysis:** Even under the best of scenarios, congestion will remain a concern in the region. As the ODOT-led value pricing process has demonstrated, pricing is one potential tool for congestion management, but it is also a tool that the region needs to study more. We encourage a regional analysis, led by Metro, that not only looks at the potential benefits of pricing, but also evaluates issues related to equity, safety, and alternative investments.
- **8.2.3.4 Jurisdictional Transfer Assessment Program:** The 2040 RTP update has made it clear that many of our region's most dangerous roads are state-managed orphan highways. These regionally significant roads are often located in communities of color and lower-income communities. To meet the region's safety goals and to advance equity, we need a long-term strategy for how to invest in and manage orphan highways.
- **8.2.3.7 Coordination of Freight System and Industrial Land Planning:** We support the additional policy direction in the Regional Freight Plan addressing the interrelated tasks of freight-system and industrial-land planning. The effectiveness of freight-system investments that accommodate expanding freight volumes will benefit from coordinated industrial-land planning that is responsive to the region's robust warehouse-development trends.
- **8.2.3.8 Transportation Equity Analysis and Monitoring:** We are supportive of future work that improves transportation equity data collection and analysis. This emerging field is one from which all of us can benefit. The value of transportation investments that support middle-wage job growth and moderate the economy's widening income inequality are an important part of this research.
- **8.2.3.13 Regional Transportation Functional Plan Update:** The RTFP was last updated in 2012. Since that time, the region has adopted the Climate Smart Strategy and Active Transportation Plan, and it has developed safety and equity policies. To fully implement the 2040 RTP, jurisdictions need an up-to-date RTFP as they update their TSPs and other plans. This will improve both local planning and regional collaboration.

Finally, in our technical review of the 2040 RTP's classifications, we have identified several classifications that do not correspond with the classifications recently adopted as part of Portland's 2035 Transportation System Plan. PBOT staff have submitted a table of recommended changes to Metro staff.

Thank you again for the opportunity to engage in the development of the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Warner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Warner
Interim Director
Portland Bureau of Transportation

cc: Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner Dan Saltzman
Susan Anderson, Director, Bureau of Planning & Sustainability

