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Technical Memorandum

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TO:	Metro and TriMet
FROM:	Emily Mannisto-Meyers, Ben Kahn, Ryan Farncomb, and Nadine Appenbrink
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PROJECT NAME:	High Capacity Transit Strategy Update

Introduction

In 2022 and 2023, The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission updated the Transportation Planning Rules to establish the Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities program. As a result of this rulemaking, many transportation system plans (TSPs) will be required to be updated in the coming years. This presents a prime opportunity for coordinating local transportation planning and the regional high capacity transit (HCT) vision to reinforce desired transportation outcomes. This memorandum provides guidance to local jurisdictions on incorporating future HCT into their respective TSPs, infrastructure plans, and development codes. There are two key elements of this guidance:

- **Part 1 – Policy and Process Guidance.** Provides guidance on the steps jurisdictions should take during the TSP update process to be supportive of HCT.
- **Part 2 – TSP Toolbox.** Provides examples of HCT-supportive policy language, as well as examples of how those policies have been successfully put into practice.

High Capacity Transit Vision

High capacity transit is a type of public transportation that moves a lot of people quickly and often. It provides a high quality of service with improved convenience and travel time. It is also a proven tool for achieving thriving, compact communities, while furthering equity goals and connecting people to opportunities every day.

The HCT vision is the comprehensive future network of HCT corridors in the Portland metropolitan region with enhanced amenities and transit priority that work together to move more people, more quickly than other types of regional or local transit. Well-connected and people-focused, the vision supports creating convenient connections between people and jobs, services, commerce, and other major destinations (e.g., colleges, hospitals, and affordable housing). The vision prioritizes those who depend on transit or lack travel options, particularly communities of color and other marginalized communities. Some HCT corridors identified are not ready to move forward today; they lack the population density or number of jobs to warrant a major transit investment such as HCT. However, the vision recognizes that these corridors are important for mobility in the region as places where future growth is focused and that they will become viable corridors for HCT investment as time goes on. Other corridors are already clear regional priorities where all the right conditions are in place today. The vision combines all these corridors, representing the full build-out of the region's HCT system (as shown in Figure 1).

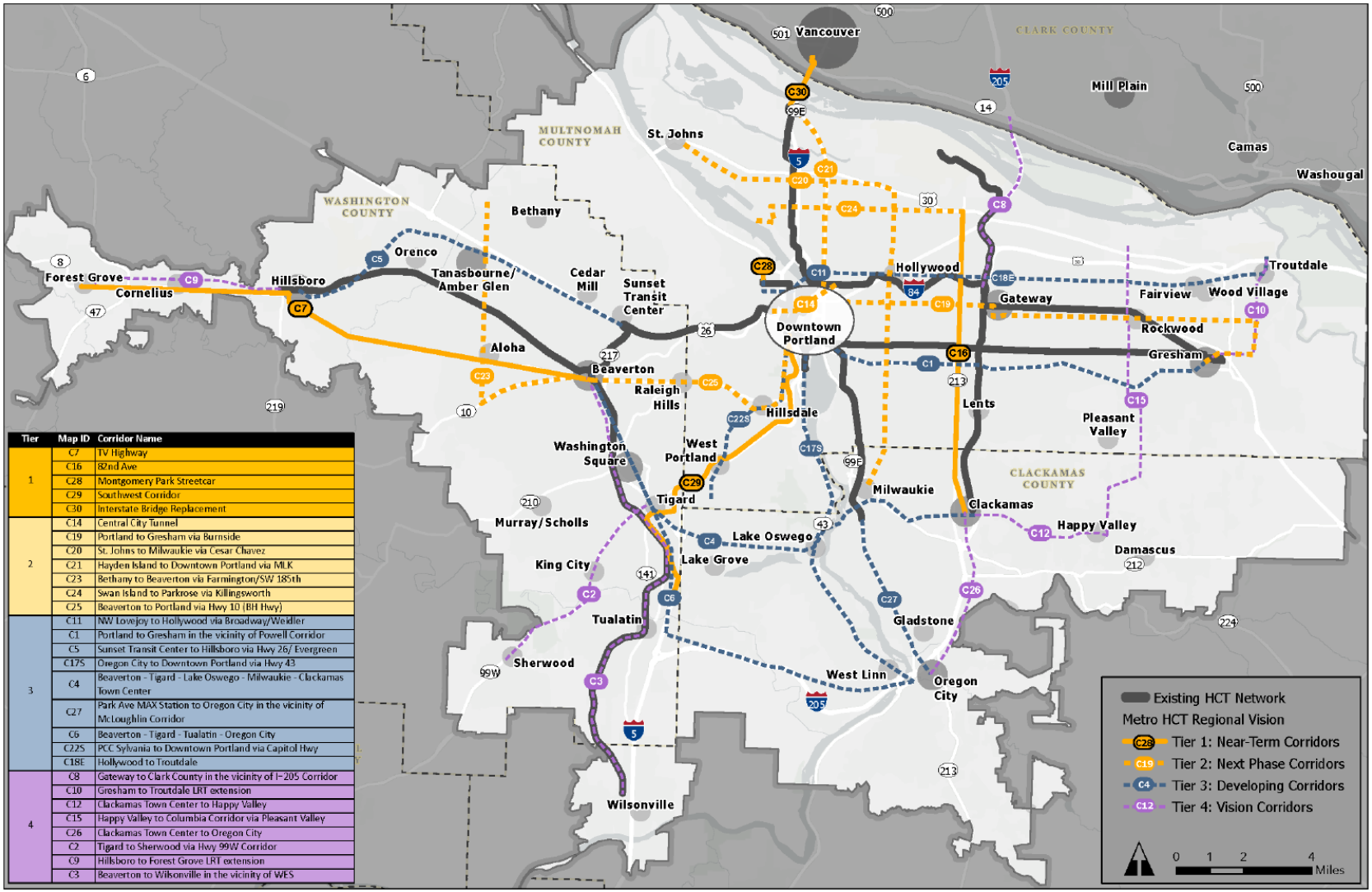

Figure 1. HCT Regional Vision Corridors by Tier

Many partners have a role in delivering fast, convenient reliable transit by ensuring transit is given priority and can operate efficiently, that there are safe and accessible ways to connect to transit, and that land use patterns and policies are designed to support transit (as shown in Figure 2). As a result, the success of HCT implementation relies heavily on local jurisdictions, as HCT corridors are planned to be implemented on state and local roadways spanning multiple jurisdictions. These local jurisdictions play a crucial role in developing the land use and transportation context that will support HCT development. Facilitating the planning, design, and eventual implementation of HCT projects hinges on the inclusion of transit-supportive improvements and policies within local TSPs.

The Oregon Public Transportation Plan (OPTP) establishes goals, policies, and strategies for the statewide public transportation vision. Refer to the OPTP for guidance and support for local HCT planning efforts.

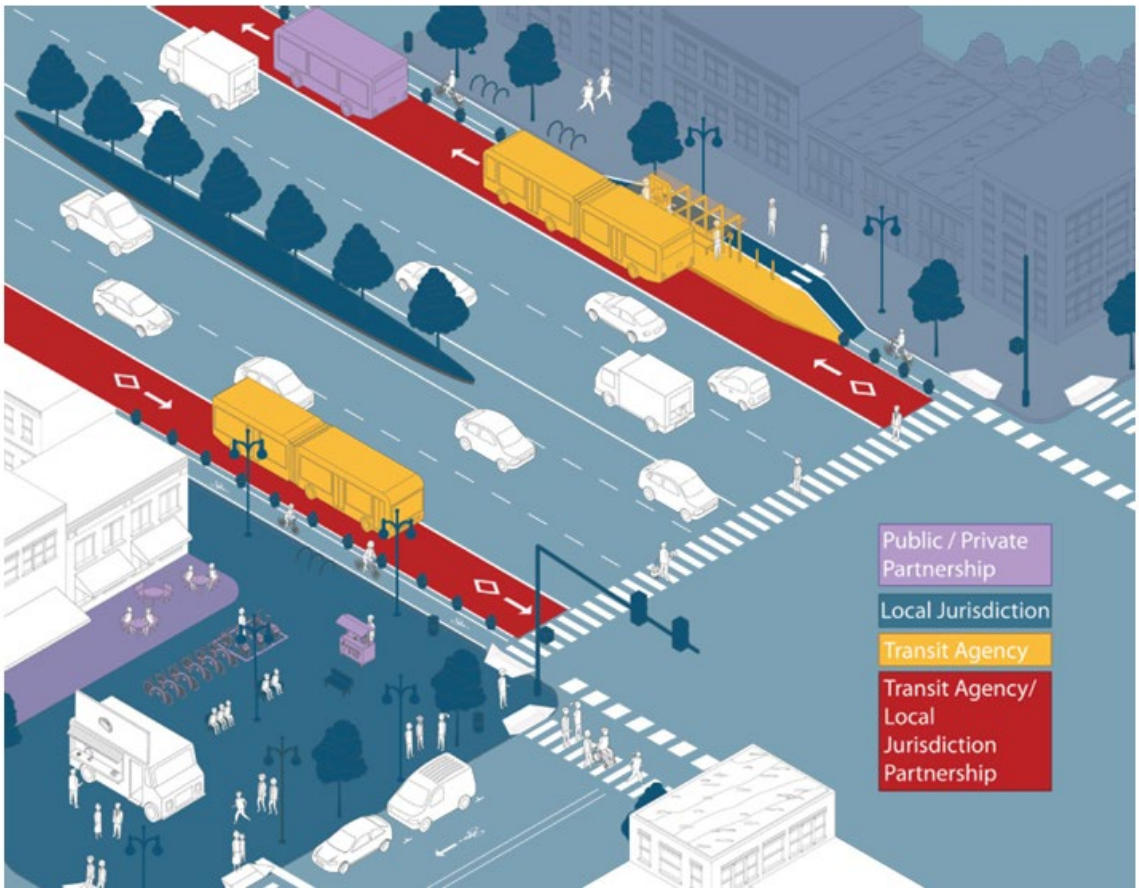

Figure 2. High Capacity Transit Delivery Roles and Responsibilities

Source: Washington County Transit Vision, 2024.

Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities Requirements

The State of Oregon recently adopted rules requiring cities in the Portland metropolitan area, as well as in the seven metropolitan areas outside of Portland, to adopt regulations allowing walkable mixed-use development in defined areas called climate-friendly areas (CFAs). These requirements include reforming parking regulations, establishing minimum development standards in CFAs, and serving the CFAs with high-quality walking, bicycling, and transit infrastructure and services.

Additional guidance is available through the Department of Land Conversation and Development.

Part 1. Policy and Process Guidance

This step-by-step guide was designed to help jurisdictions incorporate HCT into local TSPs in a meaningful, achievable way by recommending resources to review and concrete actions to take. Recognizing that local contexts, staff capacity, funding, and resources vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, this guide is intended as a menu of options but with clear delineation of the key steps in the process.

Step 1. Review Existing Plans and Policies

To begin the process of incorporating HCT into TSPs, jurisdictions should review the HCT Strategy Update, as well as other relevant regional and local plans, to identify transit- and HCT-supportive policy language to include in TSP updates.

Table 1. Step 1 – Resources and Actions

Resources to Review	What should jurisdictions do?
☐ Metro Regional Transportation Functional Plan ☐ Metro HCT Strategy Update ☐ Metro Regional Transportation Plan ☐ Metro Regional Transit Strategy ☐ TriMet Forward Together Plans ☐ TriMet Pedestrian Plan ☐ Local and county land use or comprehensive plans ☐ Oregon Department of Land Conservation CFEC implementation resources	☐ Ensure HCT corridors are identified early in the TSP update process. Identified HCT corridors and nexus with local jurisdiction corridors. See Figure 1 for identified HCT corridors in the region. ☐ Identify updates necessary to comply with CFEC requirements. Identify and prioritize transit projects, and identify priority transit corridors which will see a higher level of investment.

CFEC = Climate-Friendly and Equitable Communities; HCT = high capacity transit; TSP = transportation system plan

Step 2. Analyze Existing and Future Conditions

Jurisdictions should assess existing conditions for all transportation modes through the lens of the HCT Strategy, particularly the readiness criteria detailed in Appendices D and E of the HCT Strategy.

Table 2. Step 2 – Resources and Actions

Resources to Review	What should jurisdictions do?
☐ ODOT TSP Guidelines. ☐ Step 3 describes how to develop an existing conditions inventory. ☐ Step 4 describes how to analyze future conditions. ☐ Chapter 4 of the Metro Regional Transportation Plan to understand existing conditions and trends within the Portland metropolitan region.	☐ Use the information gleaned from the resource review to conduct the inventory and the analyses. ☐ Analyze the pedestrian and bicycle network, including within 0.5 miles for pedestrians and 2 miles for people cycling ☐ Work with TriMet to assess transit travel delay and reliability along HCT corridors and frequent bus routes to identify key hot spot locations today and in the future. ☐ Analyze conditions related to equitable access to transit. ☐ Understand mode share and locations where households with low incomes and one or fewer cars live today and in the future. Review ridership trends over time, and consider how those might change. ☐ Assess existing and future traffic conditions on planned HCT corridors.

☐ Other resources for emerging best practices such as TransitCenter's Measures for Success, which focuses on TDM practices that complement HCT.	☐ Assess whether and how existing conditions meet or do not meet mobility targets. ☐ Identify where existing or planned freight and transit routes, cycling, and pedestrian facilities overlap with planned HCT corridors. Consider the intersection of transit services so that locations with transfers that see a higher level of activity can be considered in the planning process. ☐ Coordinate with ODOT for HCT corridors that may use ODOT facilities to explore how transit and HCT investments align with ODOT plans for facilities. Key issues to explore include mobility standards, freight designations, and the potential for lane reallocations and other changes that could support (or hinder) future HCT implementation.

HCT = high capacity transit; ODOT = Oregon Department of Transportation; TDM = transportation demand management; TSP = transportation system plan

Step 3. Set Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

Jurisdictions should develop TSP goals and objectives to guide project prioritization in compliance with the regional transit vision and goals in the Regional Transportation Plan, especially for HCT.

Table 3. Step 3 – Resources and Actions

Resources to Review	What should jurisdictions do?
☐ ODOT TSP Guidelines which outline the State prioritization framework with elements that support transit outcomes. ☐ Chapters 2 and 7 and Appendix M of the Metro Regional Transportation Plan for consistency with, and as a resource for, regional goals and objectives and performance measures. ☐ Metro's High Capacity Transit Strategy HCT Readiness and Assessment Criteria (p. 27) to optimize transit-supportive outcomes. Appendices D and E of the strategy provide more detail on the measures and the measurement approach. ☐ Other recently adopted TSPs by Oregon cities. Examples are included in ODOT's TSP Guidelines.	☐ Use the information gleaned from the resource review to develop goals, objectives, and performance standards or measures that explicitly support HCT development in the corridors identified in the HCT Strategy Update. Consider the following (among other things) transportation system measures, not just transit measures: equity (marginalized community locations and travel mode), transit mobility (mode share and ridership), transit accessibility (jobs and services), economy (travel time), safety (non-SOV network completeness), land use (centers, urban form, density), and environment (reduction in VMT). ☐ Apply the performance measures developed by creating criteria to guide project selection and prioritization to achieve key transit outcomes.

HCT = high capacity transit; ODOT = Oregon Department of Transportation; SOV = single-occupancy vehicle; TSP = transportation system plan; VMT = vehicle miles traveled

Step 4. Identify Transportation Improvements

When developing projects or identifying funding commitments, local jurisdictions should include and/or support transit priority improvements and transportation improvements for all modes to incorporate and support future HCT, as appropriate.

Table 4. Step 4 – Actions

What should jurisdictions do?
☐ Coordinate with TriMet and Metro at the start of improvements development to discuss needs and issues on corridors with existing HCT and those planned for future HCT.
☐ For corridors with existing HCT, address key considerations:
☐ Opportunities for transit speed and reliability improvements.

☐ Pedestrian and bicycle access to stops and stations. ☐ Opportunities for partnership with TriMet on stop enhancements (e.g., shelter improvements). ☐ For future HCT corridors, collaborate with TriMet and Metro on roadway improvements. ☐ Consider how roadway allocation and right-of-way expansions or reductions may impact future HCT. ☐ Consider how future HCT corridors can integrate pedestrian and bicycle connections, micromobility infrastructure, Universal Design principles, and ADA improvements. ☐ Consider identifying match funding bucket(s) for corridors identified nearer-term in the HCT Strategy.

ADA = Americans with Disabilities Act; HCT = high capacity transit

Step 5. Develop HCT-Supportive Policies in the TSP

Local jurisdictions should develop HCT-supportive policy language as appropriate. Refer to Part 2, TSP Toolbox, for examples of HCT-supportive policies and how they have been put into practice.

Table 5. Step 5 – Resources and Actions

Resources to Review	What should jurisdictions do?
☐ Metro Regional Framework Plan for example transit-supportive land use and transportation policy language. ☐ Chapter 3 of the Metro Regional Transportation Plan for consistency with and as a resource for regional policies. ☐ Other recently adopted TSPs for best practices such as the City of Tigard's Complete Streets Best Practices Report. ☐ Review the TSP elements table (Part 2 of this document) for examples of HCT policies.	Develop overarching policies that accomplish the following: ☐ Promote equitable implementation. ☐ Support Universal Design principles. ☐ Encourage coordination in the funding, design, and operations of transportation facilities with the transit agencies. ☐ For future HCT corridors designated on a street, coordinate with TriMet on the future of that street. ☐ Promote the integration of different modes, such as bike to bus, and transit modes, such as shuttle and bus to rail connections.

HCT = high capacity transit; TSP = transportation system plan

Step 6. Update Land Use and Development Codes

Jurisdictions should ensure that code and ordinance updates promote land use and zoning compatible with regional plans implementing the 2040 Growth Concept (including the HCT Strategy).

Table 6. Step 6 – Resources and Actions

Resources to Review	What should jurisdictions do?
☐ Metro's Urban Growth Management Functional Plan for required and recommended changes to comprehensive plans and enacting ordinances to implement the 2040 Growth Concept and regional goals. Reference Title 6—Centers, Corridors, Station Communities, and Main Streets—and check whether current uses, housing types, and activity density levels provided for in current zones match the recommendations. ☐ Metro's Regional Transportation Functional Plan for required and recommended changes to comprehensive plans and enacting ordinances to implement the Regional Transportation Plan and regional goals. Reference the sections on performance targets and standards to check whether system and parking designs and requirements support non-SOV mode targets. ☐ TriMet's Planning & Design for Transit for information about market factors and guidance for transit-supportive zoning features and development concepts and standards, including model regulations. ☐ Recent best practice resources such as the Puget Sound Regional Council's Transit-Supportive Densities and Land Uses guidance paper.	☐ Assess market conditions, physical and regulatory barriers, and opportunities and incentives for encouraging mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-supportive developments. ☐ Use the information gleaned from the resource review and assessment combined with the TSP process work to inform language and policies to be incorporated into the TSP elements that set up key actions and regulatory changes encouraging transit-supportive outcomes. ☐ Incorporate development code amendments that support bus rapid transit, particularly transit-supportive development. ☐ Consider building and parking configuration that can be transit-supportive. ☐ Plan for development that achieves transit-supportive densities and a mix of uses along the corridor, particularly at stations. ☐ Allow for diverse housing types affordable to a full range of incomes within transit communities. ☐ Use tools and incentives to preserve and increase affordable housing near HCT corridors.

HCT = high capacity transit; SOV = single-occupancy vehicle; TSP = transportation system plan

Ongoing Community Engagement

Ongoing engagement ensures that the community vision for HCT is implemented.

Table 7. Ongoing Actions

What should jurisdictions do?
☐ Incorporate HCT as a topic during outreach efforts to ensure residents and small businesses benefit from HCT investments. ☐ Develop strategies for outreach communications to understand how HCT can best meet the needs of the public—both what HCT elements should be prioritized to solve identified issues and what features are most important to address in implementation. ☐ Work with local community-based organizations in identifying corridor needs to prepare for coalition-building. ☐ Start championing HCT! Tell the story of why it is important for the corridor.

HCT = high capacity transit

Part 2. TSP Toolbox

Table 8 is a toolbox of potential HCT-supportive strategies and elements for inclusion in local TSPs and other long-range plans. Table 8 catalogues the ways in which elements of local TSPs can support HCT and transit more broadly, identifies constraints or barriers that would need to be addressed to make the corridor HCT-ready, identifies which elements within the TSP could include HCT-supportive concepts, and provides specific actions and language that can be included in local TSPs. Not all items in the columns *Example Policies* and *In Practice* will be applicable or appropriate for every jurisdiction. This toolbox is intended to provide a variety of options that jurisdictions can choose from based on the specific context of their city or county.

Table 8. TSP Toolbox

TSP Element	Potential Strategies	Example Policies	In Practice
Bicycle/ Pedestrian Modal Plan	▪ Assess project prioritization criteria for bicycle system and pedestrian system planning reflected in OAR 660-012-0500 to 660-012-0630. ▪ Assess and prioritize pedestrian and bicycle improvements including pedestrian-bicycle networks, safety improvements, bicycle parking, sidewalk widths and connections, accessibility improvements, street crossings, and lighting through their connection to HCT corridors. ▪ Assess how the street grid and continuous local street connections can support access to HCT for people walking and bicycling. Ensure that proposed roadway connections and extensions increase access to potential HCT corridors. ▪ Identify RTP center and station areas as pedestrian and/or bicycle districts, including micromobility as applicable. ▪ Prioritize filling sidewalk and bicycle facility gaps near transit. ▪ Consider the level of stress of existing and future pedestrian and bicycle improvements.	▪ **Beaverton Comprehensive Plan 2035: Goal 6.2.2, Policy E:** Provide connectivity to each area of the city for convenient multimodal access. Ensure pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle access to schools, parks, commercial, employment, and recreational areas, and destinations in station areas, regional and town centers by identifying and developing improvements that address connectivity needs (source). ▪ **City of Portland Pedestrian District Boundaries:** Identifies areas where priority is given to pedestrian access where high levels of pedestrian activity exist or are planned aligned with the town centers, neighborhood centers, and transit station areas from the RTP (source).	▪ **SW Rose Biggi Avenue Extension.** The City of Beaverton leveraged a regional flexible funding allocation from Metro to construct an extension of SW Rose Biggi Avenue to support enhanced connectivity near the Beaverton Central light-rail station (source).

TSP Element	Potential Strategies	Example Policies	In Practice
Transit Modal Plan	▪ Assess statewide requirements for public transportation system planning reflected in OAR 660-012-0700 to 660-012-0720. ▪ Identify and prioritize corridor investments based on existing and planned frequent transit service, high transit ridership, projected improved access to places people want to go, and potential for future ridership. ▪ Identify corridors or corridor segments where enhanced transit or HCT investment aligns with the Regional Transit Strategy and HCT Strategy for speed and reliability improvements. Consider identifying opportunities for studying or pursuing reallocating existing roadway space for transit. ▪ Support development and densification of mixed land uses in corridors identified as having high transit needs. ▪ Support projects that increase access to transit near identified corridors. ▪ Support parking policies that incentivize transit trips.	▪ **Vancouver, WA TSP Policy T2 - Enhanced Transit Corridors:** In coordination with C-TRAN, build a network of enhanced transit corridors where a higher level of transit service (frequency, hours of operation, stop amenities) is desired based on existing and future density and equity needs (source). ▪ **City of Portland Rose Lanes:** Identifies the City's vision for providing bus and streetcar services with additional transit priority, in tandem with existing and future high-capacity transit, to help achieve its goals including climate and transportation justice (source).	▪ **C-TRAN 2030:** This 20-year long-range plan for the transit agency serving Vancouver, Washington, and the surrounding Clark County area was updated in 2016 to include a revised HCT System Plan. The revised plan identifies planned and proposed BRT and light-rail transit corridors (source).
Functional Classification Plan	▪ Ensure alignment between HCT corridor designation and local functional classifications. Consider how vehicle demand on the corridor will be affected by HCT. ▪ Ensure roadway classifications designated for HCT can include transit-supportive elements while balancing right-sized design. ▪ Develop a category in the street classification system for transit streets as a way to guide investments in transit-supportive infrastructure. ▪ Assess existing state and local urban design standards with respect to the Regional Transit Strategy and HCT Strategy. ▪ Apply guidance from the Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide to make transit-supportive adjustments to preferred cross sections and incorporate transit-supportive elements into standards.	▪ **Portland 2035 Comprehensive Plan: Policy 9.27:** Use transit investments as a means to shape the city's growth and increase transit use. In partnership with TriMet and Metro, maintain, expand, and enhance Portland Streetcar, frequent service bus, and HCT to better serve centers and corridors with the highest intensity of potential employment and household growth (source).	▪ **City of Portland Functional Classifications:** The City of Portland's TSP contains transit functional classifications with recommended treatments to provide different levels of transit service and associated infrastructure improvements depending on local context and the future desired transit network (source).

TSP Element	Potential Strategies	Example Policies	In Practice
Complete Streets	▪ Preserve right-of-way for transit priority capital investments when designing new streets, planning maintenance or improvements for existing streets, and in local land use and transportation plans. ▪ Ensure that Complete Streets plans prepare the corridor to be ready for BRT. ▪ Ensure that corridor plans in the TSP are compatible with the HCT Strategy and include elements that are supportive of BRT. ▪ Apply the guidance from the Designing Livable Streets and Trails Guide for transit-supportive design principles. ▪ Conduct station area planning around planned and existing transit hubs and stations.	▪ **Washington County TSP Objective 8.1:** Provide an integrated network with a Complete Streets approach that safely and comfortably accommodate road users of all ages and abilities, including people walking, cycling, using mobility devices, taking transit, and driving (source).	▪ **Washington County Road Design and Construction Standards Updates.** The County's Complete Streets objective and policies in the TSP have been carried forward into its Road Design and Construction Standards. An online open house and survey in 2021 enabled public participation in this process (source).
Mobility Hubs	▪ Identify areas where connections to HCT corridors would improve local mobility, equity, and climate goals, and consider priority infrastructure elements for spaces that connect people to destinations via shared mobility or active transportation modes. ▪ Support placemaking through regulatory or financial incentives that reduce parking demand and encourage alternate modes of travel. ▪ Consider existing or proposed transit centers, major transfer points, and key destinations that could be adapted to serve people arriving by all modes.	▪ **Plan Bay Area 2050 Policy 11e) - San Francisco Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission:** Restructure the MTC Climate Initiatives Program to ensure it can effectively scale over the next 5 years, while advancing existing initiatives including electric vehicle incentives, electric vehicle charger programs, local parking policies, curb management, targeted transportation alternatives, mobility hubs, vanpooling, car sharing, and MTC SHIFT, as well as bikeshare and e-bike incentive programs (source).	▪ **MTC Mobility Hub Implementation Playbook.** The MTC published a Mobility Hub Implementation Playbook in 2021 to help jurisdictions select strategies and tools to implement and manage mobility hubs (source).
Traffic Operations and Transportation System Management	▪ Work with TriMet to identify key locations to study and/or prioritize for transit signal priority. Develop near-term plans for implementation. ▪ Support technology and infrastructure that improve transit travel times and reduce variability of person delay. ▪ Support demand management along corridors to optimize the safe movement of people and vehicles. ▪ Consider guidelines to prioritize or integrate traffic operations and demand management elements into roadway construction projects.	▪ **Eugene 2035 TSP: Chapter 2, Potential Actions for Roadway and Parking Policies (H):** Expand methods of providing real-time traveler information to the public (source). ▪ **Washington County Transit Study:** Maps speed and reliability opportunity segments and intersections and priority level of need for current and future frequent bus corridors (source).	▪ **Seattle RapidRide Expansion Program Report:** The City of Seattle and King County Metro created a report to plan the expansion of RapidRide, a collection of enhancements such as signal upgrades, to bus networks to improve travel time (source).

TSP Element	Potential Strategies	Example Policies	In Practice
	▪ Review capital improvements plans on an annual or biennial basis to identify opportunities to coordinate improvements in speed, reliability, safety, and access.		
Parking Management	▪ Consider identifying key areas to prioritize for curb management plans. ▪ Consider how parking demand, parking management strategies, park and rides, and parking options will be affected by HCT. ▪ Consider alternative approaches supporting alternative uses of transit-oriented land that improve HCT readiness (e.g., mixed-use development, housing). ▪ Consider transportation system and demand management and parking management strategies. Reduce or eliminate minimum parking requirements on HCT corridors (and other frequent routes) and establish parking maximums in accordance with OAR 660-012-0400 through 660-012-0450. ▪ Allow and encourage shared parking among neighboring land uses or community parking facilities in commercial districts. ▪ Use pricing strategies for public and on-street parking to manage the areawide parking supply.	▪ **King County 2021 Comprehensive Plan:** Adopt flexible design standards, parking requirements, incentives, or guidelines that foster green building, multimodal transportation, and infill development that enhances the existing or desired urban character of a neighborhood or community. Ensure adequate code enforcement so that flexible regulations are appropriately implemented (source).	▪ **Seattle Parking Maximums (23.54.015):** The City of Seattle has established parking maximums in specific zones. Buildings in these zones have strict limits on the number of off-street parking spaces allowed. All zones where maximums are in place are near HCT or designated commercial or multifamily zones.
Freight	▪ Identify where HCT or freight corridors are co-located to consider, and where possible identify, opportunities to minimize tradeoffs.	▪ **Portland 2035 Comprehensive Plan: Policy 9.29:** Maintain capacity of regional transitways and existing regional trafficways to accommodate through traffic (source).	▪ **EmX Extension:** The planning process for the West Eugene EmX Extension Locally Preferred Alternative—a BRT line located on a freight corridor—considered and eliminated noise abatement measures through traffic management such as restricting trucks or reducing speed limits. The LPA also improved traffic flow, which had concurrent benefits for freight traffic (source).

TSP Element	Potential Strategies	Example Policies	In Practice
Access Management	▪ Consider access management standards that support the speed and reliability of HCT.	▪ **Los Angeles Metro Vision 2028 Initiative 1.2 Action:** Implement transit priority measures (e.g., signal priority, queue jumps, exclusive lanes, congestion hot spot mitigations) for bus corridors (source).	▪ **Los Angeles Metro BRT Design Standards.** LA Metro developed BRT Design Standards with different recommendations for the percentage of dedicated transit lanes for BRT. The standards also recommend removing conflicting left turns and consolidating conflicting driveways (source).
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan	▪ Support incentives such as transit pass subsidies for building tenants, bicycle parking, car share parking, or other amenities. ▪ Consider programs or strategies that incentivize transit use, including education and outreach, employer and university discounts or benefits, and transportation wallet options. Explore opportunities for expanding reduced fare programs for these groups. Require a TDM plan as part of site plan review for larger developments.	▪ **Portland 2035 Comprehensive Plan: Policy 9.53:** Create and maintain TDM regulations and services that prevent and reduce traffic and parking impacts from new development and redevelopment (source).	▪ **City of Portland Transportation Wallet.** The Transportation Wallet program offers financial benefits for transit, rideshare, bikeshare, and scooter share. The program is available to people living in parking-impacted areas, people moving into new multifamily buildings, or people with low income. The City has also made free streetcar passes available to Portland State University students (source).

BRT = bus rapid transit; HCT = high capacity transit; LA = Los Angeles; LPA = Locally Preferred Alternative; MTC = Metropolitan Transportation Commission; OAR = Oregon Administrative Rule; RTP = regional transportation plan; TDM = transportation demand management; TSP = transportation system plan