



APPENDIX V

2023 Regional Transportation Plan

Future corridor refinement planning

November 30, 2023

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The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) is a 17-member committee that provides a forum for elected officials and representatives of agencies involved in transportation to evaluate transportation needs in the region and to make recommendations to the Metro Council. The established decision-making process assures a well-balanced regional transportation system and involves local elected officials directly in decisions that help the Metro Council develop regional transportation policies, including allocating transportation funds.

Regional Transportation Plan website: [**oregonmetro.gov/rtp**](http://oregonmetro.gov/rtp)

The preparation of this strategy was financed in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this strategy are not necessarily those of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

This appendix (formerly included in Chapter 8 of the RTP) identifies areas in the region – called mobility corridors - that are recommended for more detailed refinement planning to identify multimodal investment strategies needed to support planned land uses, forecasted growth and identified regional transportation needs in the mobility corridor planning area. A regional transportation need exists when regional performance thresholds and targets in Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 of the RTP are not achieved.

Many of the areas identified for refinement planning in this appendix have been carried forward from the 2018 RTP. Significant refinement planning work has been completed in each corridor since 2018. Individual corridor refinement planning descriptions have been updated to reflect work remaining that is being carried forward in this RTP. Future refinement planning in these mobility corridors should address the RTP goals and objectives in Chapter 2 and policies in Chapter 3, including the updated regional mobility policy defined in Table 3.5 in Chapter 3 of the RTP. The new mobility policy includes three performance measures:

- household-based vehicle miles traveled per capita
- system completeness for all modes (including TSMO and TDM)
- throughway reliability

Chapter 8 of the RTP (Section 8.2.3.9) identifies future work by Metro and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to support implementation of the new mobility policy at the local, regional and state levels. Availability of funding and future discussions will determine the timing and sequencing of these corridor refinement planning efforts.

Corridor refinement planning and the Transportation Planning Rule

Under state law, the RTP is a regional transportation system plan (TSP) subject to the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule (TPR). OAR 660-012-0020 in the TPR requires that local and regional transportation system plans (TSPs) establish a coordinated network of planned transportation facilities needed to support growth and address transportation needs. An adoption or amendment of a TSP constitutes a land use decision

Defining terms

Functional Classification

The way roads, streets, and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service and access they provide for different modes of travel.

Modes

A type of transportation distinguished by means used (e.g., such as walking, bike, motor vehicle, bus, train, truck, air, marine).

Mobility corridors

Mobility corridors represent subareas of the region and include all regional transportation facilities within the subarea as well as the land uses served by the regional transportation system.

regarding the need for transportation facilities, services, and major improvements and their functions, modes, and general locations. While preparing a TSP, it might not always be possible to make a final land use decision regarding the function, mode, or general location of a needed project. In such cases, OAR 660-012-0025 in the TPR allows jurisdictions to defer decisions regarding mode, function, and general location of improvements to address identified needs. This is the primary purpose of corridor refinement planning.

A corridor refinement plan should identify the operational and capital improvements that are needed within a mobility corridor identified in the RTP consistent with the goals, objectives and performance targets in Chapter 2 of the RTP and policies contained in Chapter 3 of RTP. Refinement planning efforts that may propose projects to expand roadways beyond the planned system in the RTP or that are subject to enhanced review required under [OAR 660-012-0830](#) should follow the region's federally-required congestion management process and the process defined in [OAR 660-012-0830](#). A summary of these processes follows.

- **Congestion management process** - Described in Chapter 3, the congestion management process (CMP) views road expansion beyond the planned system of motor vehicle through lanes as a last resort. A CMP analysis is required for proposed projects that will increase motor vehicle capacity to be eligible for federal transportation funding. For such projects, Section 3.3.4 of the RTP describes the process that should be followed to demonstrate that system and demand management strategies, including access management, transit and freight priority, pricing, transit service, and a combination of multimodal connectivity improvements cannot adequately address identified needs consistent with the RTP policies as well as the 2023 Oregon Transportation Plan policies (including Oregon Highway Plan Policy 1G). Sections 3.08.220 and 3.08.510 of the Regional Transportation Functional Plan (RTFP) further direct how cities and counties implement the CMP in the local transportation system planning process. Furthermore, consistent with RTP policies, the addition of roadway capacity should not come at the expense of non-motorized modes and achieving system completeness consistent with modal or design classifications identified in Chapter 3 of the RTP or achieving the state mandated VMT/capita target for the region. If a project under consideration in a corridor refinement plan is determined to increase capacity, then the refinement plan should document the congestion management process was followed.
- **Enhanced review required under OAR 660-012-0830** - Described in the motor vehicle policies in Chapter 3 of the RTP (see Motor Vehicle Policies 5 and 6 and Section 3.3.3.2), when enhanced review of select roadway projects is required under OAR 660-012-0830, the proposed project should first be analyzed using established

statewide methods for determining whether it increases capacity. If a project under consideration in a corridor refinement plan is determined to increase capacity, then the refinement plan should document the transportation need, function, impacts and alternative options evaluated to address the identified need and be publicly adopted consistent with the OTP, OHP, RTP Congestion Management Process, and OAR 660-012-0830. If a determination is made that the project does not increase capacity, a qualifying exception should be documented in the refinement plan.

Corridor refinement planning process in the greater Portland region

To ensure consistency with regional land use and transportation goals and policies in the RTP, corridor refinement planning is conducted through a public process and includes a review of existing and planned land uses and projected growth, and a multimodal analysis of transportation needs and potential solutions.

Shown in Figure V.1, typically, the corridor refinement planning process includes the following steps:

1. **Develop MOU or IGA** for refinement plan scope of work that includes identification of roles and responsibilities, methods of collaboration and consultation with Metro, if the refinement planning work is not led by Metro. The scope of work should include a public engagement plan that provides opportunities for public input, with specific efforts to engage marginalized communities.
2. **Conduct analysis** that considers current and planned local land uses, regional and community goals for equity, housing, economic opportunity, climate, environmental protection and stormwater management as well as safety, pedestrian, bike, system and demand management and operational strategies, freight, throughway, road and transit needs and previously identified solutions.
3. **Agree on corridor specific multimodal performance measures.**
4. **Evaluate multimodal performance** and potential impact on regional and community goals for safety, equity, economic development, climate, mobility and environmental protection and, if applicable, apply [High Capacity Transit Strategy](#) HCT Readiness and Assessment Criteria.
5. **Develop alternative mobility or other performance standards**, if necessary.
6. **Determine mix and phasing of projects and/or land use changes** needed to address identified needs.
7. **Prepare local, regional and/or state plan amendments and MOU or IGA to implement** refinement plan recommendations at state, regional and local levels.

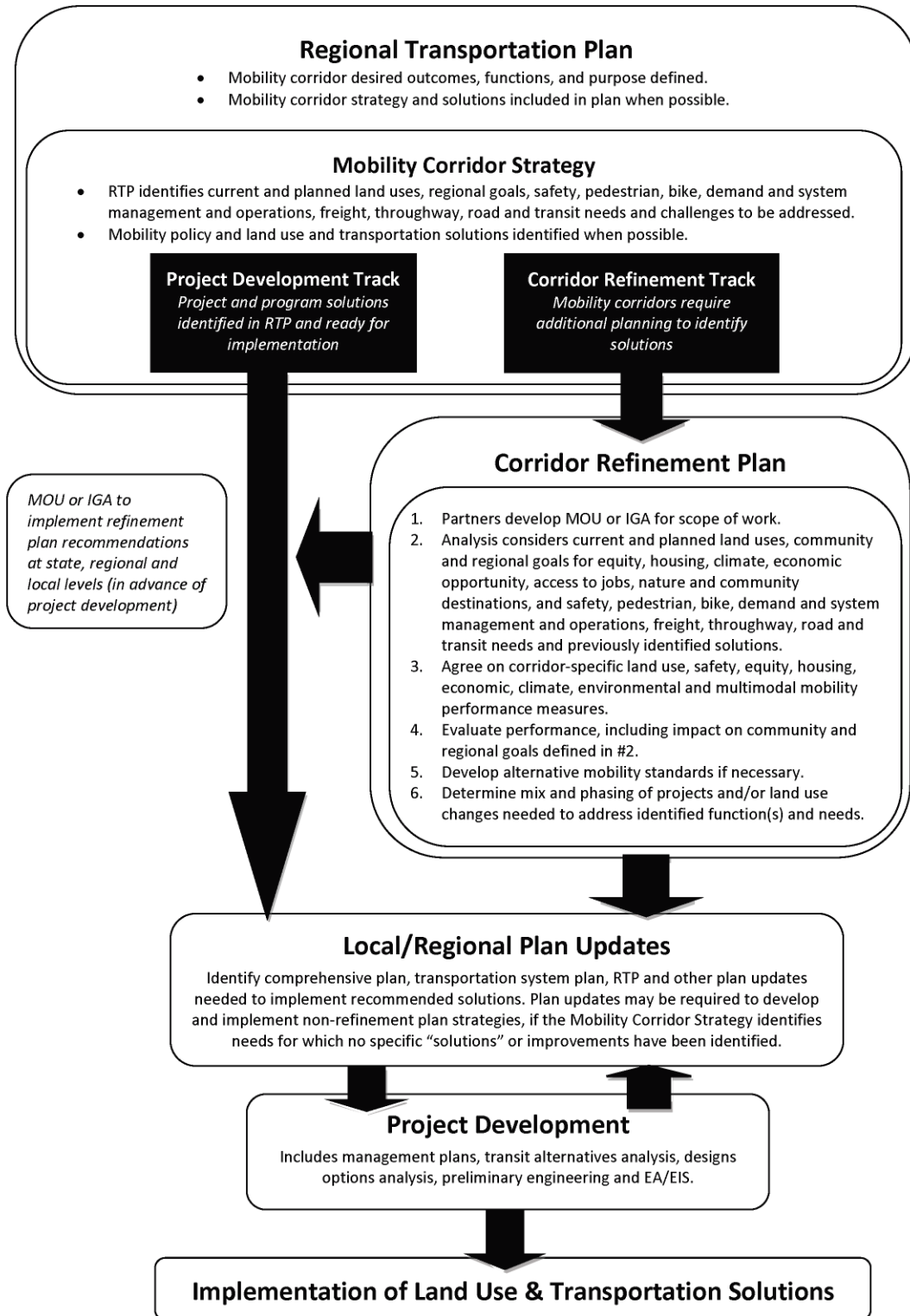
See Chapter 2 of the RTP for RTP goals, Chapter 3 of the RTP for regional land use and transportation policies and Section 3.3.4 of Chapter 3 and Appendix L for more information about the region's congestion management process policies and implementation.

Consistent with the region's congestion management process, corridor refinement plans will provide decision-makers with more comprehensive information regarding safety, equity, climate, economic development, and mobility as they relate to the movement of people, goods and services in the mobility corridor. Corridor refinement plans should also consider housing, economic opportunity, access to jobs, nature and community destinations, potential environmental impact, as well as transportation demand management and system management strategies, street connectivity, and transit, walking and biking solutions prior to increasing throughway and road capacity. The corridor refinement plan will recommend a wide range of strategies and projects to be implemented at the local, regional and/or state levels to address identified needs.

To be included in the RTP, projects must come from adopted plans or strategies developed through a planning process that identified the project to address an identified regional transportation need. Transportation agencies should document how the corridor refinement planning process met the appropriate requirements for public engagement, including having provided opportunities for public comment, with specific efforts to engage marginalized communities, including people of color, people with low-income and people who speak limited English or who do not speak English. Metro prepared a public involvement and non-discrimination checklist for transportation agencies to use to certify these requirements have been met when submitting projects for consideration in the RTP. This checklist should inform the public engagement for the corridor refinement planning process.

Figure V.1 shows the framework for how a mobility corridor strategy is incorporated into the RTP or developed through a corridor refinement plan and then incorporated into the RTP and/or local plans. The corridor refinement planning and subsequent implementation in regional and local plans should occur through a public process with opportunities for public input.

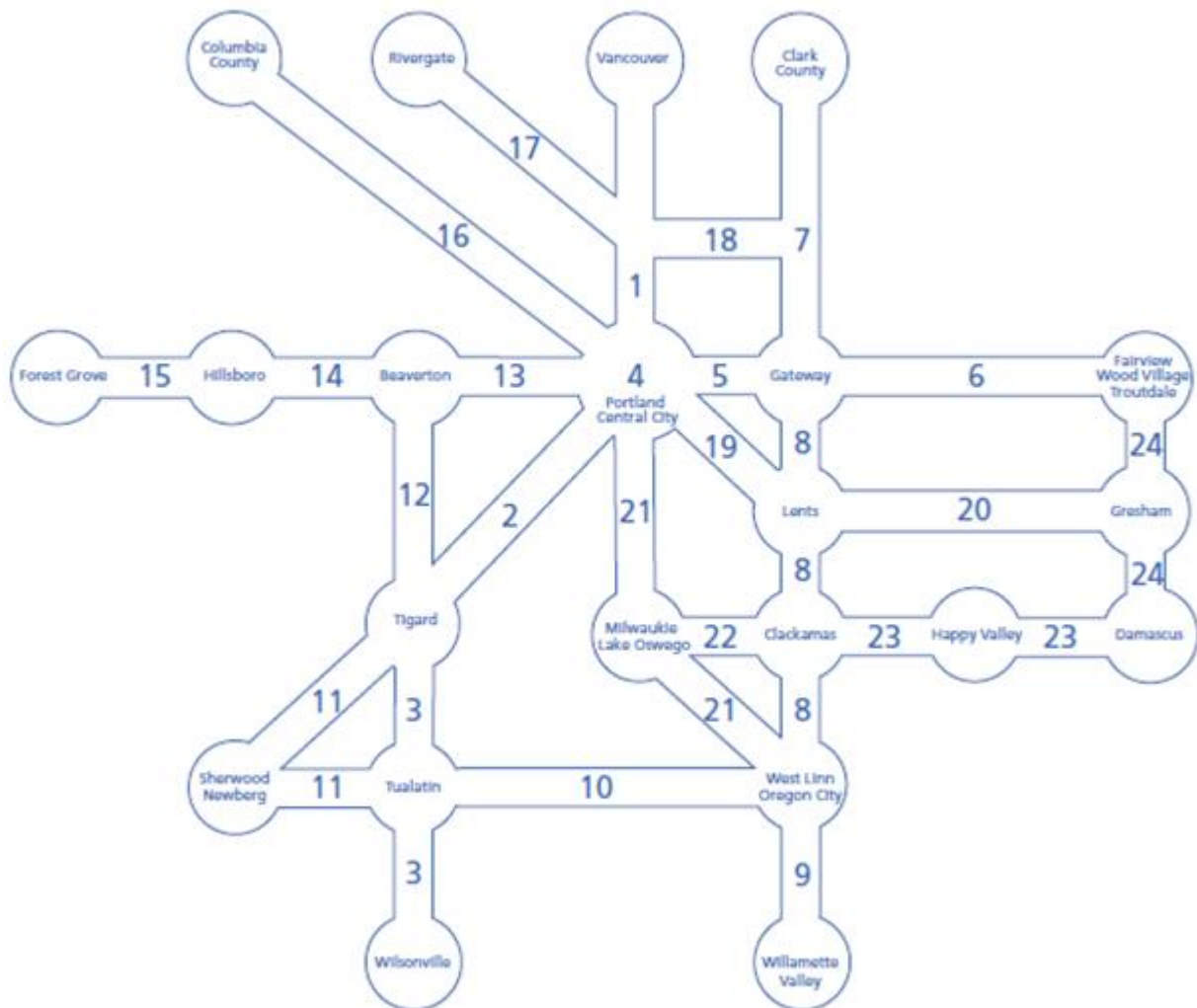
Figure V.1: Framework for how a mobility corridor strategy is developed and implemented



Individual project and program solutions identified in the RTP may move forward to project development at the discretion of the facility owner/operator. Planning and project development efforts should be conducted with an understanding of the corridor refinement planning anticipated in the RTP and not preclude any strategies or potential solutions identified for consideration in the corridor refinement plan. The MOU or IGA for a corridor refinement plan is intended to provide more accountability and to formalize agreements across implementing jurisdictions on moving forward to implement the corridor refinement plan recommendations. This is particularly important in mobility corridors that cross multiple jurisdictions and/or have multiple facility owners.

Figure V.2 shows an illustrative map of the twenty-four mobility corridors in the greater Portland region.

Figure V.2: Illustrative map of mobility corridors in the Portland metropolitan region



MOBILITY CORRIDORS RECOMMENDED FOR FUTURE CORRIDOR REFINEMENT PLANNING

The main objective of the RTP mobility corridor framework is to organize information needed to help define the need, mode, function, performance standards, and general location of facilities within each mobility corridor consistent with the Transportation Planning Rule to ensure land use and transportation planning and decision-making are coordinated. The needs assessment in Chapter 4 of the RTP applied the RTP policy framework in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 to inform the identification of transportation needs and projects and programs during development of the RTP.

Under the mobility corridor framework, when determinations of need(s), mode(s), function(s), and general location(s) of solutions cannot be made, the mobility corridor needs a refinement plan. Corridor refinement plans are intended to be multimodal evaluations of possible land use and transportation solutions to address identified needs and develop a shared investment strategy, consistent with RTP goals, objectives and policies. This includes conducting an evaluation that considers the potential impact of proposed solutions on regional and community goals for equity, safety, climate, mobility, housing, economic development, access to jobs, nature and essential destinations and environmental protection.

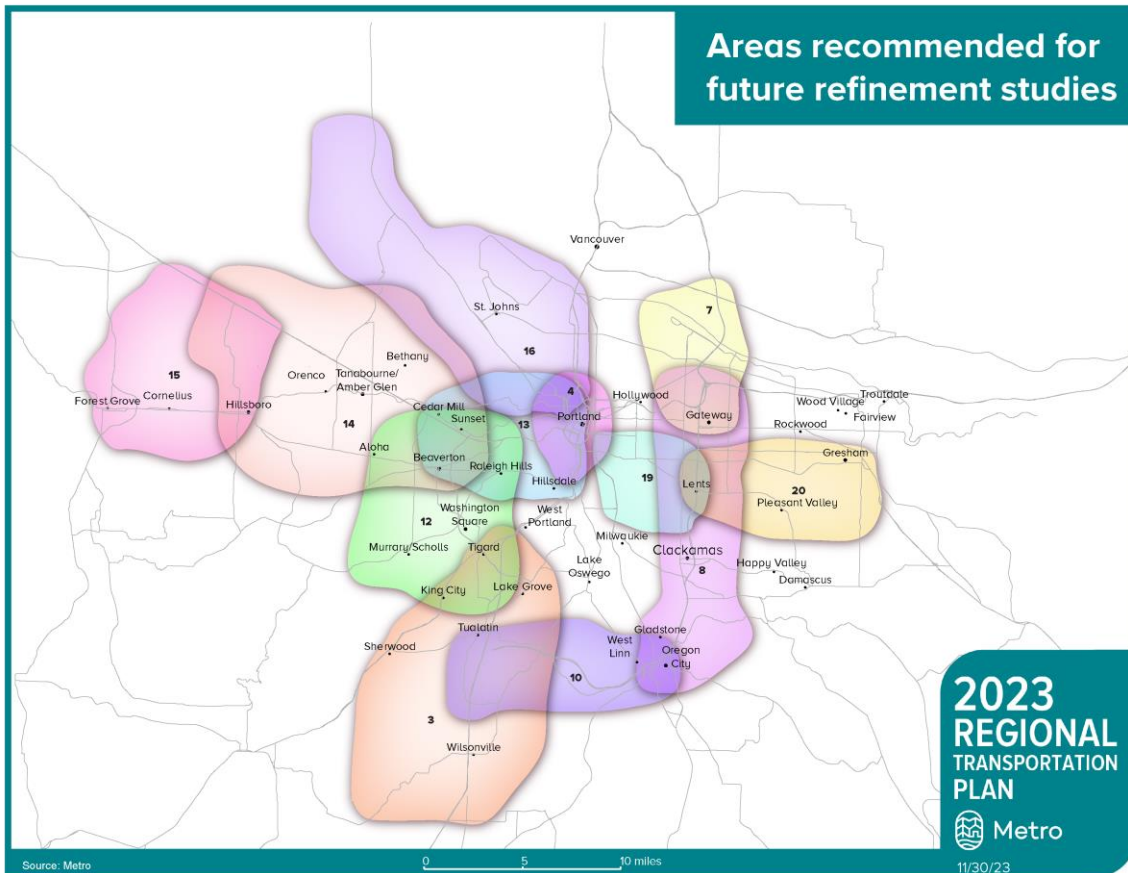
Chapter 8 of the RTP and this appendix identify mobility corridors that do not meet the outcomes-based performance targets and thresholds of the RTP and/or do not fully answer questions of mode, function and general location of planned facilities.

Table V.1 and Figure V.3 identify the mobility corridors recommended for more detailed refinement planning to identify multimodal investment strategies needed to serve planned land uses and identified regional transportation needs in the corridor. The corridors are not listed in priority order. Availability of funding and future discussions will determine the timing and sequencing of these corridor refinement planning efforts.

Table V.1: Mobility corridors recommended for future corridor refinement planning

Regional Mobility Corridor	General Geographic Scope of Mobility Corridor
Mobility Corridors #3 and #12	Beaverton to Wilsonville via Tigard which includes 217 and I-5 South
Mobility Corridor #4	Portland Central City Loop, which includes I-5/I-405 Loop Central City Transit Access - Steel Bridge Transit Bottleneck and Interim Capital Improvements Study
Mobility Corridors #7, #8 and #10	Clark County to I-5 via Gateway, Oregon City and Tualatin, which includes I-205
Mobility Corridor #14 and #15	Beaverton to Forest Grove, which includes Tualatin Valley Highway
Mobility Corridors #13 and #14	Hillsboro to Portland, which includes US 26
Mobility Corridors #19 and #20	Portland Central City to Lents and Lents to Gresham, which includes US 26/Powell Boulevard

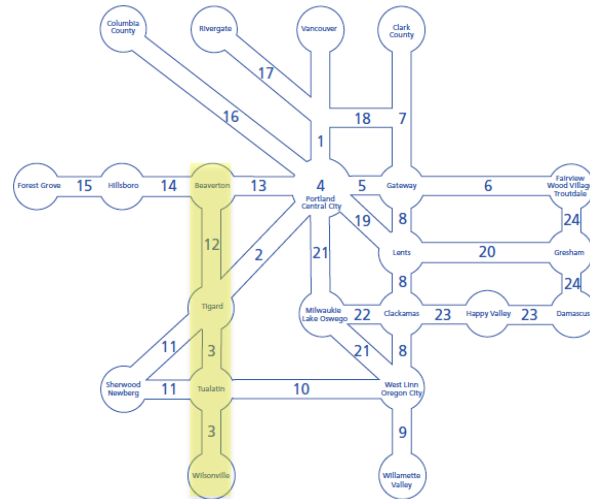
Figure V.3: Mobility corridors recommended for future refinement planning



In addition, potential high capacity transit corridors identified in the [High Capacity Transit Strategy](#) and [Regional Transit Strategy](#) are likely to require corridor refinement plans to develop shared land use and transportation investment strategies and determine transit mode, function, general location and any associated changes in road or freight rail functions and performance standards of existing transportation facilities.

Beaverton to Wilsonville (Mobility Corridor 3 and Mobility Corridor 12)

This mobility corridor provides the major southern access to and from the central city. The corridor also provides important freight access, where Willamette Valley traffic enters the region at the Wilsonville “gateway,” and provides access to Washington County via OR 217. Much of the demand on I-5 comes to/through/from the Beaverton-Tigard area and potential transportation solutions includes the throughway (OR 217) and transit, SW Corridor light rail transit project and WES in particular.



In 2002, a joint ODOT and Wilsonville study concluded that in 2030 widening of I-5 to eight lanes would be required to meet Oregon Highway Plan and RTP mobility standards at that time, and that freeway access capacity would not be adequate with an improved I-5/Wilsonville Road interchange. The appropriate improvements in this corridor are not determined at this time. However, I-5 serves as a critical gateway for regional travel and commerce, and an acceptable transportation strategy in this corridor has statewide significance. Projections for I-5 indicate that growth in traffic between the greater Portland region and the Willamette Valley will account for as much as 80 percent of the traffic volume along the southern portion of I-5, in the Tualatin and Wilsonville area.

In 2009, ODOT and the City collaborated to plan the reconstruction of the I-5: Wilsonville Road interchange, including infrastructure improvements and management strategies to better serve planned growth in the area. Since adoption of the interchange area management plan, ODOT completed the interchange reconstruction and implemented the bulk of the management plan’s recommendations. More recent projects include the City’s addition of a third lane to the Wilsonville Road southbound on-ramp and improvements at the Elligsen Road northbound on-ramp. In addition, ODOT constructed a single southbound auxiliary lane on I-5 from north of Lower Boones Ferry Road to Nyberg Road and from South of Nyberg Road to I-205 and a second lane at the northbound exit ramp

for Lower Boones Ferry Road to relieve congestion and reduce crashes. The auxiliary lane work included on- and off-ramp lane modifications at Lower Boones Ferry Road and Nyberg Street.

The [Washington County Transportation Futures Study](#), completed in 2017, recommended completion of this corridor refinement plan to address growing transportation needs in the corridor. The Washington County Freight Study, also completed in 2017, identified the I-5 corridor as a key area of freight operational delay and unreliability and underscored the importance of developing and funding improvements in this area.

In 2017-2018, ODOT and the City of Wilsonville partnered on a Southbound I-5 Boone Bridge Congestion Study. They evaluated and developed solutions for a southbound bottleneck in the bridge area to manage congestion and reliability for passenger vehicles, freight, and transit in the evening peak. This geographically focused study was timed to identify operational improvements in advance of upcoming seismic replacement of the Boone Bridge, so that they could proceed as one project and allow the state to reduce total costs. The study led to the adoption of the [I-5 Wilsonville Facility Plan](#), which documented a southbound auxiliary lane concept consistent with implementation recommendations for this corridor (see Project 11990 on the 2023 RTP Financially Constrained List). It did not preclude a larger I-5 south corridor refinement plan, and many of the broader multimodal needs in this corridor still need to be addressed.

A corridor refinement plan is proposed to address the following in coordination with project development activities for Mobility Corridor #10 and Mobility Corridor # 12:

- Effects of widening I-205 on the I-5 South corridor.
- Effects of the I-5 to 99W Connector study recommendations (See RTP Appendix R) on I-5 and the N. Wilsonville interchange and the resultant need for increased freeway access to preserve local system performance and in-line capacity for I-5 mobility.
- Effects of peak period and mid-day travel demand in this area and mitigation options for regional freight reliability, mobility and travel patterns.
- Ability of inter-city transit service, to/from neighboring cities in the Willamette Valley, including commuter rail, to slow traffic growth in the I-5 corridor.
- Ability to maintain off-peak freight mobility with system and demand management strategies and capacity improvements.
- Potential for better coordination between the greater Portland region and Willamette Valley jurisdictions on land-use policies.
- Effects of a planned long-term strategy for managing increased travel along I-5 in the Willamette Valley.

- Effects of UGB expansion and Industrial Lands Evaluation studies on regional freight mobility.
- Effects on freight mobility and local circulation due to diminished freeway access capacity in the I-5/Wilsonville corridor.
- Identify and implement safety and modernization improvements to I-5 defined by the Tigard to Wilsonville Corridor Refinement Plan.
- I-5/OR217 Interchange Phase 2: SB OR 217/Kruse Way Exit – Complete interchange reconstruction: Braid SB OR 217 exit to I-5 with Kruse Way exit.
- I-5/OR217 Interchange Phase 3: SB OR 217 to I-5 NB Flyover Ramp – Complete interchange reconstruction with new SB OR 217 to NB I-5 flyover ramp.
- Effects of the new and proposed auxiliary (ramp-to-ramp) lanes.
- Effects of future Southwest Corridor LRT.
- Identify and implement active transportation priorities that provide safe alternatives to vehicle travel.
- Consideration of how land use interfaces with the transportation needs and impacts, local system enhancements and new connections, and improved transit network and service and potential outcomes.

In addition, the following design elements should be considered as part of the corridor refinement plan:

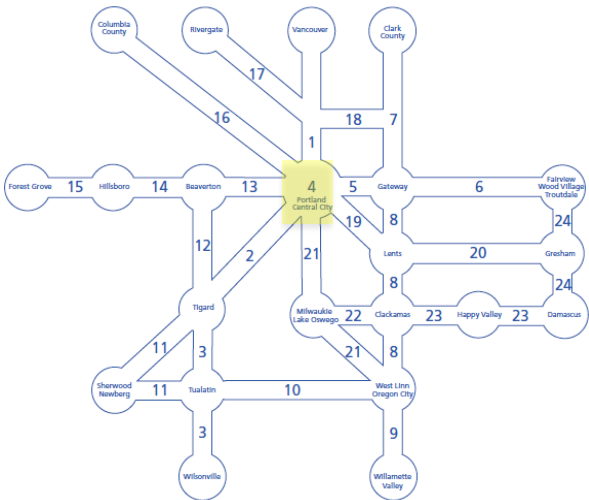
- Congestion pricing, including consideration of the Regional Mobility Pricing Project, and HOV lanes for expanded capacity.
- Operational bus on shoulder treatments.
- Provide regional transit service, connecting Wilsonville and Tualatin to the central city.
- Increase WES service frequency and hours/days of operation.
- Provide additional freeway access improvements in the I-5/Wilsonville corridor to improve freight mobility and local circulation.
- Add capacity to parallel arterial routes, including 72nd Avenue, Boones Ferry, Lower Boones Ferry and Carman Drive.
- Add overcrossings in vicinity of Tigard Triangle, City of Tualatin and City of Wilsonville to improve local circulation.

- Extend commuter rail service from Salem to the Portland Central City, Tualatin transit center and Milwaukie, primarily along existing heavy rail tracks.
- Additional I-5 mainline capacity.
- Provision of auxiliary lanes between all I-5 freeway on- and off-ramps in Tualatin south of the I-5/I-205 split and in Wilsonville; and
- Complete gaps in the Fanno Creek and Ice Age Tonquin Regional Trails to provide a continuous off-street active transportation route through the length of the mobility corridor.

Portland Central City Loop (Mobility Corridor 4)

Context

In 2005, the I-5/405 Freeway Loop Advisory Group (FLAG) completed its review of the near- and long-term transportation, land use, and urban design issues regarding the I-5/405 Freeway Loop. Appointed by former Mayor Vera Katz and the ODOT Director in 2003, the 24-member group developed and evaluated concepts to address identified transportation issues and needs. The concepts represented a range of options that included modest improvements within existing right-of-way, a one-way loop System, and a full tunnel that would connect the Freeway Loop to I-84 and Sunset Highway. The three concepts were evaluated against the region’s proposed transportation system, along with projected employment and household growth, for the year 2030.



In completing its initial review, FLAG found that additional master planning work is needed to identify, prioritize and fund specific projects, and that short-term or interim investments should move forward while the master planning work is being completed. FLAG recommended that planning on I-84/I-5 interchange and the I-5 elements of South Portland Plan contemplated in the area of the interchange of I-405 and I-5 may proceed independent of the Master Plan with the understanding that the final plan for any such project would be consistent with the Master Plan.

In addition, the study recommended advancing a corridor refinement plan to begin to identify short-term and long-term investments and a recommended scope, problem statement and set of principles to guide the refinement planning as follows:

Scope

- Develop an overall Freeway Loop Corridor Refinement Plan that will guide public investment for improvements to the I-5/405 Freeway Loop.
- Develop a phasing strategy for implementation of the Master Plan. Include the currently approved Regional Transportation Plan improvements as well as new elements.
- Identify and pursue a funding strategy.

As directed by the FLAG's recommendations, planning proceeded on the I-84/I-5 section of the Loop under the N/NE Quadrant and the I-5 Broadway-Weidler Interchange Improvement Planning process. The key recommendations from the adopted 2012 N/NE Quadrant Plan include:

- Preserving and enhancing Lower Albina by protecting the working harbor and increasing land use flexibility that promotes a mix of uses on historic Russell Street and greater employment densities.
- Protecting historic neighborhoods and cultural resources.
- Concentrating high density development in the Lloyd District, with a focus on new residential development that will add activity and vibrancy to the district.
- Providing amenities, such as parks, street improvements and green infrastructure to support and encourage new development.
- Improving regional access and local street safety and connectivity for all modes.
- Encouraging sustainable development that supports the Lloyd EcoDistrict and goals for improved environmental health.
- Future changes to zoning and building height regulations that implement the plan goals.

Key recommendations for the I-5 Broadway-Weidler Facility Plan include:

- Adding auxiliary lanes and full-width shoulders to improve traffic weaves and allow disabled vehicles to move out of traffic lanes.
- Rebuilding structures at Broadway, Weidler, Vancouver and Williams and adding a lid over the freeway that will simplify construction, increase development potential and improve the urban environment.

- Moving the I-5 southbound on-ramp to Weidler to improve circulation and safety.
- Improving conditions for pedestrian and bicycle travel by adding new connections over the freeway and safer pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the interchange area.

The N/NE Quadrant Plan and I-5 Broadway/Weidler Facility Plan were adopted by the City of Portland in 2012. The Oregon Transportation Commission adopted the facility plan in 2012. The recommendations of the [N/NE Quadrant Plan](#) were incorporated in the adopted Central City 2035 Plan in 2018. In addition, as part of the plan, ODOT and the City worked to designate the Central City as a Multimodal Mixed-Use Area (MMA). MMAs are State acknowledged high density, mixed use areas that are well served by multimodal transportation. MMA areas are exempt from mobility standards as part of land use amendments (safety and other State mandated policies remain in effect). In development of the MMA, the City and ODOT worked to identify safety improvements for the Loop (including the I-5 Broadway/Weidler Project), which were subsequently added to the City's list of TSP projects and submitted to Metro for inclusion in the 2018 RTP.

Proposed Mobility Corridor Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study is to develop alternative design concepts for Portland Central City Loop. Improvements to the I-5/405 Freeway Loop must address long-term transportation and land use needs in a system-wide context. Because the movement of people and goods is a vital economic function, changes must be considered in relation to local, regional, and statewide geographies. Freeway Loop improvements should enhance, not inhibit, high-quality urban development, and should function as seamless and integral parts of the community.

Proposed Principles

These objectives will guide the selection and evaluation of options in the next phase:

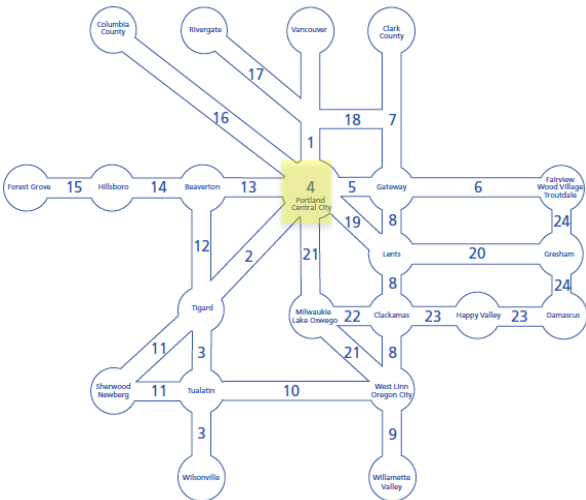
- Maintain or enhance transportation performance, including safe and reliable highway operations and enhanced transit performance.
- Support a multi-modal strategy for automobiles, transit, trucks, bicycles, and pedestrians.
- Support trade and freight movement to facilitate regional and state economic development.
- Support local, regional, and state land use plans.
- Ensure regional accessibility to and from the Central City to reinforce its significant statewide, regional, and national economic role.

- Support economic activities and new investments in the Central City and in adjacent industrial areas.
- Improve the quality of the built environment and multimodal connections across facilities.
- Avoid or minimize negative impacts on the natural and built environments.
- Evaluate facility improvement costs relative to the distribution of benefits and impacts.
- Develop strategies that can be implemented in phases, including consideration of congestion pricing such as that identified in the Regional Mobility Pricing Project.

Central City Transit Access - Steel Bridge Transit Bottleneck and Interim Capital Improvements Study (Mobility Corridor 4)

This study would be led by Metro and TriMet, in partnership with ODOT, City of Portland, Portland Streetcar Inc. and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). It is envisioned to occur during the 2031-45 time period.

This study would explore ways to alleviate transit operational issues caused by the Steel Bridge. The bridge is a critical link between downtown Portland and the east side of the greater Portland region for the Blue, Green, Red, and Yellow MAX Lines, as well as for several bus routes. The 106-year old bridge constrains light rail throughput, requires frequent maintenance that impacts system-wide light rail reliability and presents structural risks. The Steel Bridge with its current two-track configuration cannot reliably accommodate anticipated growth in service.



Metro and TriMet conducted a process to look at alternatives to improve speed, reliability and on time performance of the MAX lines crossing the Willamette River using the Steel Bridge. The study looked at a new bridge or a tunnel and concluded that the MAX tunnel was the most promising. In 2019, Metro and TriMet documented the feasibility and benefits of the tunnel in the MAX Tunnel Study, examining the feasibility of faster light rail. In 2019 the agencies examined the feasibility of a new MAX tunnel connecting Lloyd Center to Goose Hollow stations. The study concluded a new light rail tunnel between Lloyd Center and Goose Hollow is promising.

A new light rail tunnel would extend from the vicinity of the Lloyd Center Station to the Goose Hollow Station, with approximately four underground stations in between. TriMet would retain some service on the existing surface alignment to continue to serve all stations. The tunnel would increase system ridership by 7,500 to 15,200 riders and decrease travel time by approximately 15 minutes between Lloyd Center and Goose Hollow, while improving system resiliency and redundancy. Planning of a tunnel would need to evaluate the locations of portals and determine the optimal number and locations of stations. Estimated cost is \$3 billion to 4.5 billion dollars (construction cost range is comparable to similar tunnel project completed by Sound Transit and LA Metro, respectively).

A project of this magnitude could take a decade or more to plan, design and construct, including the steps necessary to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Federal Transit Administration's Project Development process. As the region continues to grow, there is a need to look at short term investments to improve the speed, reliability and on time performance for the travel across the Willamette River.

MAX Tunnel benefits

Routing MAX through a tunnel under downtown Portland and the Willamette River would save people time and make MAX as fast as or faster than driving. This would lead to even greater benefits such as lower car ownership costs, less traffic, less constrained parking downtown, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

For the many people in the region who rely on public transit as their primary transportation, a light rail tunnel would sustain the MAX service they count on for access to school, jobs, recreation and other opportunities. Today, average on-time performance is 87%, higher than just a year ago, but still below the over 90% that can be expected with a tunnel. Train delays average 2 ½ minutes, with one in eight delays lasting between 5 and 8 minutes.

Speed

The MAX tunnel can save over 12 minutes for a trip through the central city. Even people going to downtown Portland, to places like PSU or Pioneer Square, would save 5 to 6 minutes, depending on where they're coming from. While the MAX tunnel stations have yet to be determined, access to downtown destinations will be further enhanced by surface travel options like bus, streetcar, bikeshare, and a great walking environment.

Resiliency

A MAX tunnel would add a resource to the regional transportation network that would be resilient to natural disasters and other regional disruptions. A MAX tunnel would offer a critical link to help the region recover from possible future events.

Capacity

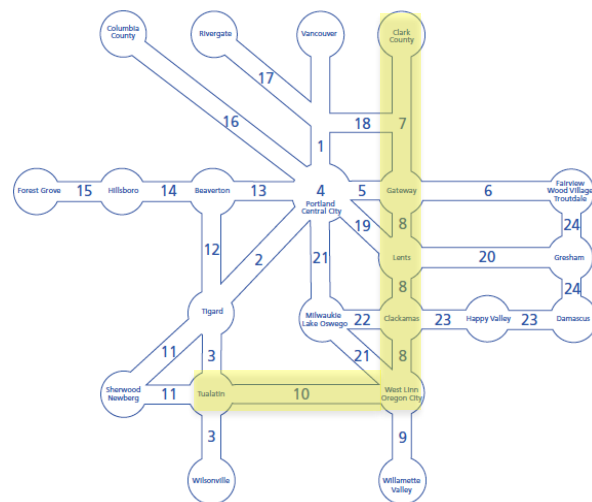
The MAX tunnel will help make sure light rail is there to accommodate growth and for people even at the busiest times of day. To fit people comfortably in trains over the next 15 years, analysis anticipates 60 trains crossing between the central city and Rose Quarter every day—a 50% increase in rail traffic. The MAX tunnel accommodates added service and maintains capacity on the Steel Bridge.

Clark County to I-5 via Gateway, Oregon City and Tualatin (Mobility Corridors 7, 8 and 10)

Improvements are needed in this corridor to address existing gaps and deficiencies and expected growth in travel demand in Clark, Multnomah and Clackamas counties. Construction of upgrades to the I-205/Abernethy Bridge are underway and anticipated to be complete in 2025.

Transportation solutions in this corridor should address the following needs and opportunities:

- Maintain peak period and off-peak mobility and reliability from I-5 to Clark County for freight and longer trips, with an emphasis on connections to OR 213, OR 224 and the Sunrise Corridor.
- Maintain an acceptable level of access to the Oregon City, Clackamas and Gateway regional centers and Sunrise industrial area.
- Maintain acceptable levels of access to PDX, including air cargo access.
- Coordinate refinement planning activities with planning for the Stafford area.
- Adding general purpose lanes to I-205 should be considered to meet state and regional policies to bring the freeway up to three through lanes in each direction in the southern section from Oregon City to I-5 and to allow for potential of bus-on-shoulder operations for bypassing of traffic queues on I-205 during peak periods.



- Expanded transit service in the corridor including provision of I-205 express bus service between Clackamas regional center and Bridgeport in Tualatin, and frequent bus service between Clackamas regional center and Clackamas Community College via downtown Oregon City.
- Extend high capacity transit service from Milwaukie to Oregon City along McLoughlin Boulevard.
- Complete gaps in the I-205 Multi-use path - including southernmost segment from Oregon City to Tualatin - to provide a continuous off-street active transportation route through the length of the mobility corridor.
- Interchange improvements, auxiliary lanes and other major operational improvements such as ramp improvements and other weaving area improvements in the corridor should also be considered. Specific projects to be considered to meet identified needs include:
 - Southbound truck climbing lanes from Willamette River to 10th St. interchange.
 - Interchange improvements at several locations, including: Division/Powell, Airport Way, OR 213, OR 212/224, Sunrise, Johnson Creek Boulevard and others.
 - Auxiliary lanes, northbound and southbound in the following locations: Airport Way to Columbia Blvd., Columbia Blvd. to I-84, I-84 to Glisan, Glisan to Division/Powell, Division/Powell to Foster, Foster to Johnson Creek Boulevard, OR 212/224 to Gladstone, Gladstone to OR 99E.
 - Widen I-205 to 6 lanes from Stafford Interchange to Willamette River.
 - Improvements needed on OR 213 (82nd Avenue) include bicycle/pedestrian and streetscape improvements.
 - Implement tolling on I-205 between Stafford Road and the Abernethy Bridge.

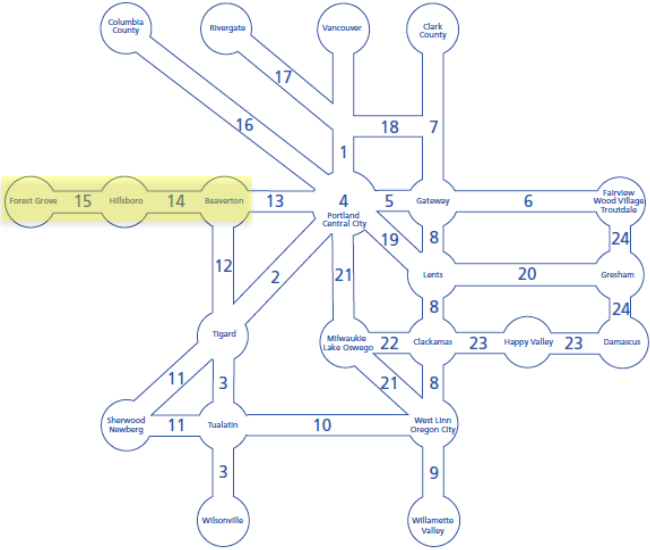
Potential transportation and land use solutions in this corridor should evaluate the potential of the following design concepts:

- Auxiliary lanes added from Airport Way to I-84 East.
- Consider express HOV lanes as a strategy for expanding capacity.
- Relative value of specific ramp, overcrossing and parallel route improvements.
- Evaluate crash history of arterials and throughways in study area, with a focus on fatal and serious injury crashes, to inform potential transportation solutions and phasing.
- Eastbound HOV lane from I-5 to the Oregon City Bridge.

- Truck climbing lane south of Oregon City.
- Potential for inter-city transit service, vanpool services and other travel options, to/from rural areas and neighboring cities in Clackamas County, to expand travel options and slow traffic growth in the I-205 corridor.
- Potential for rapid bus transit service or light rail from Oregon City to Gateway.
- Potential for extension of rapid bus service or light rail north from Gateway into Clark County.
- Potential for refinements to 2040 land use assumptions in this area to expand potential employment in the sub-area and improve jobs/housing imbalance.
- Potential for re-evaluating the suitability of the Beavercreek area for urban growth boundary expansion, based on ability to serve the area with adequate regional transportation infrastructure.
- Explore opportunities to support economic and land use goals with the Columbia Connections Strategy.
- Provide recommendations to the Bi-State Coordination Committee prior to JPACT and Metro Council consideration of projects that have bi-state significance.

Beaverton to Forest Grove (Mobility Corridors 14 and 15)

Improvements are needed in this corridor to address existing deficiencies and serve increased travel demand for people traveling by all modes. One primary function of this route is to provide access to and between the Beaverton and Hillsboro regional centers as well as to town centers in Aloha, Cornelius and Forest Grove. Tualatin Valley Highway also serves as an access route to Highway 217 from points west along the Tualatin Valley Highway corridor. As such, the corridor is defined as extending from Highway 217 on the east to Forest Grove to the west, and from Farmington Road on the south to Baseline Road to the north.



RTP Design and Functional Classifications

The [Tualatin Valley Highway Corridor Plan](#) (TVCP), completed by ODOT, Metro, the cities of Hillsboro and Beaverton, and Washington County in 2013, gave policy direction to maintain the design and function of Tualatin Valley Highway as an urban arterial that will not exceed motorized vehicle capacity of two through travel lanes in each direction. Tualatin Valley Highway is classified as a “Major Arterial” on the Arterial & Throughway map and a “Regional Street” on the System Design map. The corridor has been included on the high capacity transit network since 2010 and remains a Tier 1 corridor which is currently under study to determine the most appropriate transit investment.

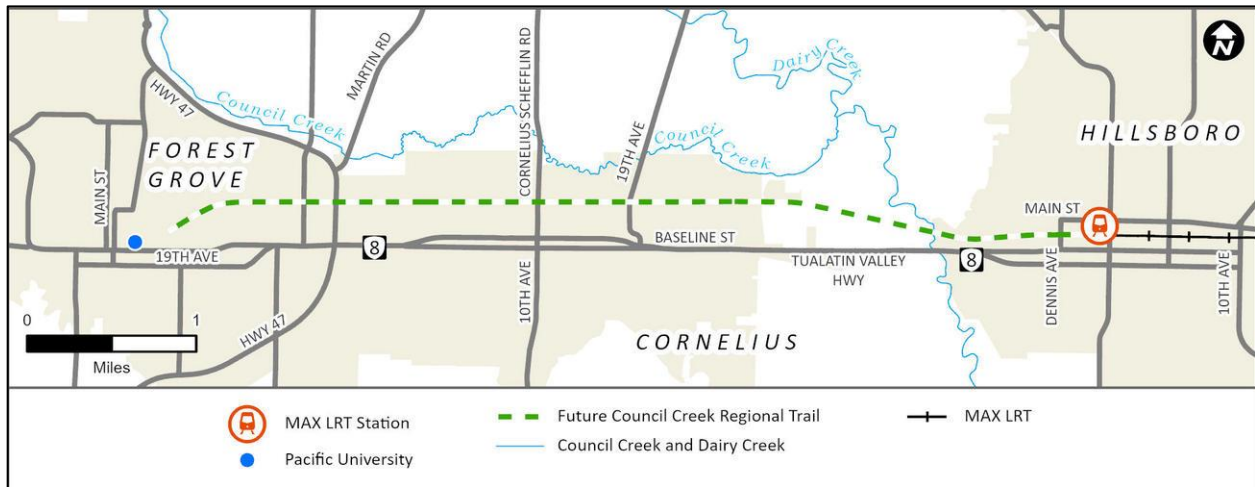
Recent planning efforts include Washington County’s [Moving Forward TV Highway Plan](#) (2019), studying improvements to multimodal networks for the segment from 106th Ave to Cornelius Pass Road. The [East Forest Grove Safety Action Plan](#) (2022) which examined the portion of OR 8 between Cornelius and Quince St / OR 47. The East Forest Grove plan identified multi-modal improvements to address safety along this section of the corridor.

Forest Grove is actively pursuing funding to implement recommendations from this planning effort, and new sidewalk in this area and crossing at A & B Row will be constructed by ODOT starting in 2025. Aspects of the Moving Forward TV Highway Plan form the basis of the current transit and roadway study being led by Metro.

Additional intersection and crossing projects are ongoing in the corridor, both in construction and in design and planning by ODOT from the 2021-24 STIP and 2024-27 STIP and by Washington County and the City of Hillsboro.

Mobility for people walking and biking in RTP Mobility Corridor 15 from Hillsboro to Forest Grove is being addressed by creation of a parallel facility, the [Council Creek Trail](#). This multiuse regional trail is in design and will move to construction in 2026 providing an off-street, low-stress way for people to walk and bike between the Forest Grove and Cornelius town centers, and to connect to the western end of the Hillsboro regional center, including the MAX Blue Line. While this facility will provide mobility among these centers, it does not provide direct access to destinations along Tualatin Valley Highway for people walking and biking.

Figure V.4: Council Creek Regional Trail general location



A high capacity transit solution for Tualatin Valley Highway has yet to be identified. The current study is investigating means for delivering a corridor-based bus rapid transit (BRT) line to Tualatin Valley Highway that would replace TriMet’s existing line 57 with high-capacity service. This service would improve transit speed and reliability, as well as provide improved pedestrian access to station locations and improved rider experience through investments in stations, such as weather protection. This project focuses on enhancing transit and transit access and does not address the wholesale multimodal mobility needs of the corridor. Future planning and design will be necessary to identify implementable strategies to construct corridor-wide enhancements that meet the specifications of ODOT’s context-sensitive design approach for multimodal mobility.

Powell-Division Corridor: Portland Central City to Lents Town Center and Lents Town Center to Gresham Regional Center (Mobility Corridors 19 and 20)

The Powell-Division Corridor is included in Mobility Corridors #19 and #20. Both corridors are anticipated to experience high levels of growth in employment and population by the year 2045. A number of investments are needed in these corridors to address existing gaps and deficiencies and serve increased travel demand.

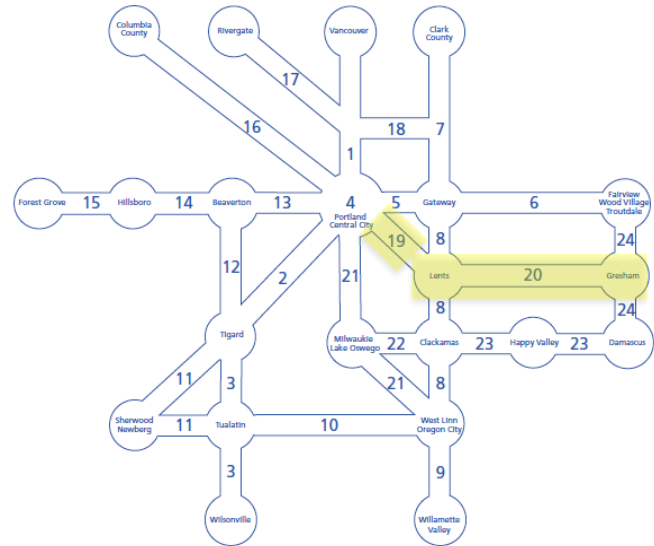
The [Powell-Division Transit and Development Plan](#) alternative analysis identified a project – now called the Division Transit Project (FX2-Division) - that addresses some of the needs identified for the Powell-Division Corridor by

improving transit and safety on Division Street from the Gresham Transit Center to downtown Portland with a bus rapid transit project. The Division Transit Project went into revenue service in September 2022. While the Division Transit Project is a positive and meaningful investment in safety and transit speed and reliability it does not fully address the transit, safety, and mobility needs that remain on Powell Boulevard.

Project partners involved in the development of the Division Transit Project Locally Preferred Alternative recognized and clearly articulated that Powell Boulevard improvements are still needed to address safety and mobility needs for all modes and supply essential transit connections in this corridor. Based on community feedback and analysis during the Powell-Division Transit and Development project, the City of Portland included language documenting this recommendation in the city’s resolution adopting the LPA, as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Metro advance Powell Boulevard for regional consideration and prioritization within the High Capacity Transit planning process, and amend the Regional Transportation Plan to assert continued need for Powell Boulevard transit improvements.

The Powell-Division Corridor is included in Mobility Corridors #19 and #20. The Mobility Corridor Strategy identified in 2014 RTP Appendix 3.1 notes that both corridors are anticipated to see high levels of growth in employment and population by the year 2040.



Mobility Corridor #19 provides an important connection between the Portland Central City and the Lents Town Center and provides important freight access to rail facilities at Brooklyn Yard and access from Powell Boulevard and McLoughlin Boulevard to the Central Eastside Industrial District. This corridor also serves statewide and regional travel on Powell Boulevard (US 26), which serves as a statewide and regional freight route between I-5 and I-205.

The corridor does not meet regional performance thresholds (does not perform as it should) for its throughways (Powell Boulevard) and arterials (Division and Holgate streets) as defined in the RTP due to high volume to capacity ratios.

Strategies adopted in 2014 RTP Appendix 3.1 to address identified safety and mobility needs in the corridor include:

Near term:

- System and demand management along Powell Boulevard and parallel facilities for all modes of travel.
- Improved, safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Powell Boulevard.
- Modify existing signals, coordinate and optimize signal timing to improve traffic operations on Powell Boulevard.
- Prioritize and construct safety and streetscape improvements from SE 50th to SE 84th Avenue.

Medium term:

- Improve safety by all modes and enhance opportunities for use of bicycles, walking and transit on Powell Boulevard.
- Identify and implement potential changes to the cross section of Foster Road based on the Foster Streetscape Plan.

ODOT is constructing improvements to help people get around busy Outer SE Powell Boulevard more safely. The [Outer Powell Transportation Safety Project](#) stretches between I-205 and Portland/Gresham city limits, just east of SE 174th Avenue. These safety improvements will reduce the frequency and severity of crashes and help vehicles, pedestrians, transit and bicyclists share the road with fewer conflicts.

Roadway, bike and pedestrian safety improvements include:

- Sidewalks where there are none now

- Mix of separated and sidewalk level bike lanes
- Center turn lanes for cars, buses and trucks for safer turns and to reduce back-ups
- Storm drains to prevent water from pooling on the road
- Lighting for improved visibility
- New waterline in some areas
- New traffic signals
- Mid-block flashing light pedestrian crossing beacons (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) to alert drivers that people are crossing the street

Construction began on SE Powell Boulevard from SE 122nd Avenue to SE 136th Avenue in early 2019 and was completed in fall 2020. ODOT designed safety improvements for the remainder of the corridor to be consistent with the completed section. Pre-construction utility work for the remainder of the corridor is expected to occur through 2024. ODOT expects to begin construction of the in Spring of 2025 and last five years. As prescribed in Keep Oregon Moving (HB 2017), ownership and operation of this road will be transferred to the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT). The transfer is expected after construction is complete.

Figure V.5: Map of the project area and timelines on SE Powell Boulevard between I-205 and Portland/Gresham city limits, just east of SE 174th Avenue



Additionally, for the segment of SE Powell Boulevard between the Ross Island Bridge and I-205, ODOT is working with the City of Portland to implement safety investments, such as enhanced crossings and speed feedback signs, and studying roadway configuration options to increase safety for all users.

Mobility Corridor #20 provides an important connection between the Lents Town Center and the Gresham Regional Center. The corridor provides important freight access, connecting I-205 to Gresham and the Springwater Industrial Area. In addition, the

corridor serves statewide travel, connecting to routes that lead to destinations outside the region such as the Mt Hood Recreational Area and Sandy Oregon. Similar to Mobility Corridor #19, Mobility Corridor #20 is expected to experience high levels of employment and population growth by 2045.

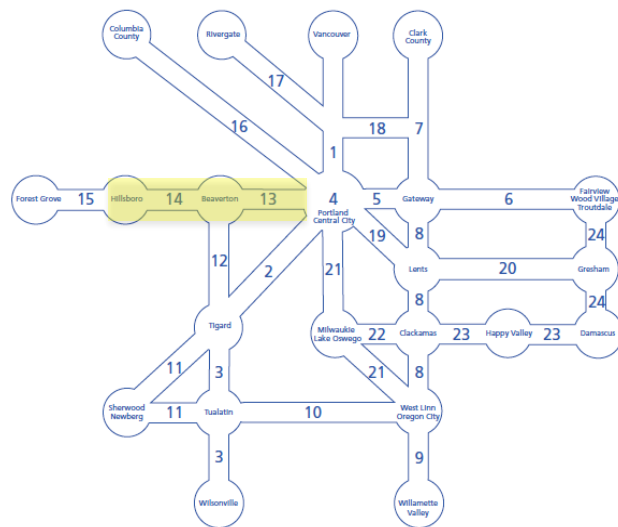
Strategies adopted in the 2014 RTP Appendix 3.1 to address identified safety and mobility needs in the corridor include:

- **Near term:** System and demand management along the Powell Boulevard and parallel facilities for all modes of travel.
- **Medium term:** Implement a three-lane cross-section on Powell Boulevard from I-205 to SE 174th Avenue with bicycle and pedestrian improvements.
- **Long term:** Implement additional capacity enhancements along Powell Boulevard from 162nd to 174th Avenue as needed. Additional enhancements may include intersecting north-south streets along Powell Boulevard.

Hillsboro to Portland (Mobility Corridors 13 and 14)

Context

Washington County is growing faster than its neighbors in the region, and with that growth comes an increased need to move more people and freight. The Sunset Highway (US 26) Corridor is a critical thoroughfare for residents, commuters, and the regional economy, but current conditions result in recurring vehicle congestion, diversion of motor vehicle traffic to parallel roadways, and unreliable travel times for people driving, riding transit, and moving freight. These transportation deficiencies adversely affect the safety, affordability, and livability of the area and can impede economic competitiveness.

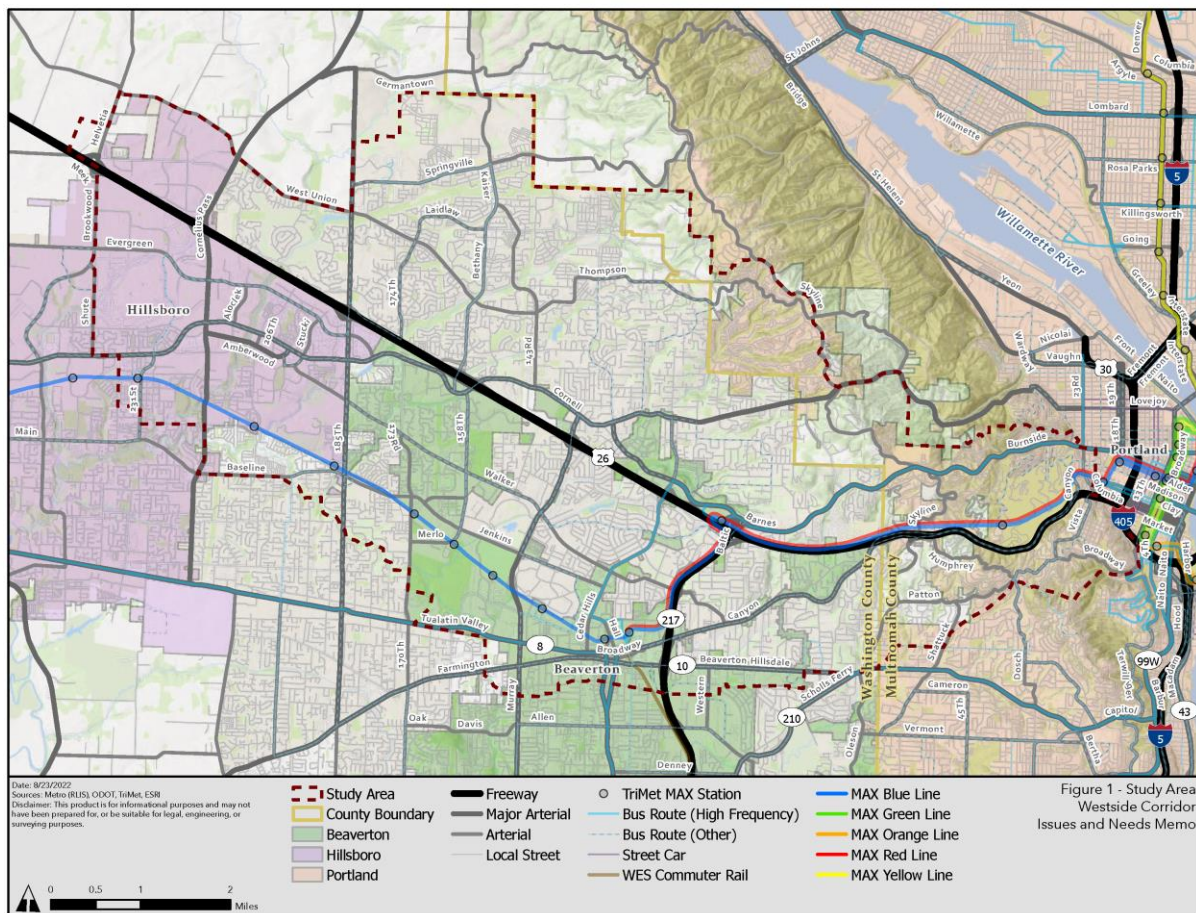


Centered on the US 26 (Sunset Highway) from Hillsboro to Portland, the Westside Multimodal Improvements Study was recommended in the 2018 RTP and kicked off in January 2022. The study’s purpose was to address transportation challenges that affect the movement of people and goods between Hillsboro’s Silicon Forest, Northern Washington County’s agricultural freight, and the Portland Central City, the international

freight distribution hub of I-5 and I-84, the Port of Portland marine terminals, rail facilities, and the Portland International Airport. The study area is shown in Figure V.6.

ODOT and Metro co-managed the study in partnership with local agencies, business representatives, and community-based organizations. The study was guided by a Project Management Group, made up of technical staff from partner agencies, and a Steering Committee composed of representatives from the business community, community-based organizations, and agencies that have jurisdiction or ownership of infrastructure or systems considered in the planning process. An analysis of existing conditions data helped to define the issues and needs within the corridor and are framed here in the context of five priority areas: mobility and reliability, safety, social equity, climate action, and economic vitality.

Figure V.6: Study area for the Westside Multimodal Improvements Study



Mobility and Reliability

Mobility Corridor #13, which extends east to the Willamette River including the western portion of Portland's Central City and Mobility Corridor #14 extending west from Murray Boulevard to North Plains will account for 22 percent of the region's households, 20 percent of the region's population, and 31 percent of the region's employment by 2040.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, changes in travel patterns in the corridor have included fewer people using transit, fewer people commuting daily to workplaces, and more people working from home or on flexible schedules. Meanwhile, jobs that require in-person attendance such as manufacturing, agriculture, retail, hospitality and maintenance are often not centrally located and may have work shifts that cover 24 hours of the day. These changes have resulted in afternoon traffic congestion occurring earlier in the day and lasting longer than before the pandemic, as demonstrated in ODOT's 2022 Traffic Performance Report.

Corridor #13, which includes the Sunset Highway and its array of complementary parallel arterial roadways (Cornelius Pass Road, Germantown Road, Cornell Road, Barnes/Burnside Road, and Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway), carries approximately 229,150 vehicles per day comprising roughly 390,000 person-trips per day. Of the total vehicle trips, Sunset Highway carries 160,000 vehicles per day, including 6,000 trucks, and Cornelius Pass Road serves approximately 11,000 vehicles per day.

TriMet's ridership data from Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 show that transit carries approximately 18,710 person-trips per weekday on the MAX Blue Line, the MAX Red Line, and multiple bus lines serving the parallel arterials in the corridor. Of those total trips, approximately 11,500 occur on the MAX Blue and Red Lines. Bus lines serving the Sunset Highway corridor include Line 47 (720 average weekday boardings), Line 48 (1200 average weekday boardings), Line 57 (5,240 average weekday boardings) and Line 59 (50 average weekday boardings). This is a decrease from pre-pandemic transit use. TriMet plans to open the western extension of the MAX Red Line to Hillsboro's Airport/Fair Complex Station in fall 2024.

The existing transit network in the westside of the Metro area has limited north-south bus routes, some routes have infrequent service, and may require multiple transfers to reach a destination. Efforts such as TriMet's Forward Together concept, the Washington County Transit Study, and Metro's [High Capacity Transit Strategy](#) include plans for transit enhancements and future investments to meet existing transit needs and accommodate future growth in the Westside Corridor.

Economic Vitality

The Sunset Highway corridor is a major employment center in the region. Many of the region's top private employers call the area home including Intel, Nike, Tektronix, Reser's Fine Foods, Qorvo, and Salesforce, among others. Top public sector employers include local school districts, city and county governments, hospitals, and health care providers.

The US 26 corridor provides critical transportation infrastructure for the area often referred to as Oregon's "Silicon Forest." Expansion of the semiconductor industry presents Oregon with a unique opportunity to create the kind of jobs and investment the state needs for a strong economy. In July 2022 Congress passed the \$52 billion CHIPS Act to boost domestic semiconductor manufacturing and design and Oregon's Senate Bill 4 (SB-4) was designed to support significant additional high-tech / manufacturing development that could potentially be located near the US 26 corridor. These actions provide an opportunity to solidify Oregon's position as a world leader in semiconductor innovation and expand semiconductor design and manufacturing development in Washington County. New industrial development will place additional demand on our transportation system and a greater need for freight mobility and reliability through the Sunset Highway corridor.

Outreach conducted during the [Westside Multimodal Improvements Study](#) reinforced freight-related concerns identified during the 2013 *Westside Freight Access and Logistics Analysis*. Oregon's export economy relies heavily on the computer and electronics industry, which accounts for over 60% of state's exports, and valued \$15 billion in 2021. This industry is primarily located in the region's westside and depends on a tightly managed supply chain to efficiently bring products to markets that are mostly outside of the greater Portland area. Addressing freight mobility challenges experienced by the Westside computer and electronics industry will likely also benefit the footwear, apparel, medical/dental, biopharma and agriculture industries in Washington County.

Freight movement between the Westside industries and the PDX freight consolidation area and the Portland International Airport depends on two routes:

- US 26 eastbound to I-405 northbound to I-5 Northbound to Columbia Boulevard eastbound; and
- Cornelius Pass Road northbound to US 30 southbound to Columbia Boulevard eastbound via the St. Johns Bridge.

US 26 eastbound between Highway 217 and I-405 ranks among the top bottlenecks in the region. Travel times can vary up to 20 minutes or more for a typical trip from Hillsboro's employment areas to PDX, due largely to traffic on US26. This lack of reliability means that freight haulers and commuters can't be certain how long a trip will take them, leading

to lost productivity. US 26 has the highest freight volume of all non-interstate highways in the region, but freight trips make up just five percent of total trips on US26. Meanwhile, freight trips account for sixteen percent of total trips on Cornelius Pass Road, indicating it is a preferred route for many freight haulers.

Work commute estimates based on Street Light Data indicate that a significant number of people commute into the area for work. Data shows that about 97,000 people per weekday commute to the Westside Multimodal Improvements Study area. About 27,000 both live and work in the study area and have local commute trips, while another 64,000 people live in the study area and commute to jobs elsewhere in the region.

Safety

Many of the key arterials in the Sunset Highway Corridor are identified among Metro’s 2016-2020 High Injury Corridors. These are roadways in the greater Portland area where the highest concentrations of serious crashes involving a motor vehicle occur. The top five most dangerous corridors within the study area include: Tualatin Valley Highway, Baseline Road, Cornell Rd, Cornelius Pass Road, and Farmington Road. A total of 15,000 crashes occurred between 2015-2019 in the study area, with 53% of crashes resulting in injury. Of these, 223 crashes involved pedestrians and 188 crashes involved bicyclists.

With congestion becoming more pervasive on US 26 near the Vista Ridge Tunnels and the I-405 interchange, traffic crashes have continued to increase.

Sunset Highway at the Vista Ridge tunnels prohibits the hauling of hazardous materials. Petroleum products used to fuel vehicles in the Tualatin Valley and chemicals, including but not limited to industrial gases used in the manufacturing of silicon wafer products, commonly use Cornelius Pass Road with Highway 217 as an alternate route.

Both the Sunset Highway corridor and the secondary freight route of Cornelius Pass Road are susceptible to recurring delays due to congestion and incidents such as crashes, landslides, and fallen trees blocking the roadways. In both cases, the regional transportation system lacks “redundancy” to accommodate any unforeseen impediments to travel. Similarly, both corridors (and their Willamette River bridges) are not likely to prove reliable and sustainable in the event of a Cascadia earthquake.

Social Equity

People living within the Sunset Highway corridor are more racially diverse than the region and state, with over 37% residents of color. Forty-five percent of households are renters, which is higher than the regional average.

Many areas throughout the corridor score high on TriMet’s transit equity index, reflecting higher concentrations of people of color, low-income households, people with low English proficiency, people with disabilities, older adults, youth, households with poor vehicle access, access to affordable housing, access to low/medium wage jobs, access to services. Higher scores indicate a potential for higher need for increased transit service, particularly in areas south of US 26.

Climate

Since the 1990s, robust population and employment growth within Washington County has substantially increased travel demand on the US 26 corridor. Despite substantial multi-modal investments in the County, the combination of land use development patterns and limited transportation funding have resulted in system inefficiencies and continued reliance on personal vehicles to meet people’s daily travel needs. This results in high vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and recurring traffic congestion that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions from gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles on US 26. Furthermore, frequent congestion on US 26 also contributes to traffic rerouting to other nearby roadways, increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT), inefficient vehicle operation, and vehicle idling, all of which contribute to greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

Recommended transportation investments

The Westside Multimodal Improvements Study produced a list of transportation investments that are intended to address the identified issues and needs in the Sunset Highway corridor. Investment options were evaluated based on how well they addressed mobility and reliability, safety, social equity, climate action, and economic vitality. The resulting implementation plan that outlines priority investments for the region to advance for future project development and funding, including project descriptions, lead agencies, cost ranges, benefits, issues, and dependent projects. Partner agencies agreed that future refinement in the Westside Corridor will need to be sequenced to account for the differing size and scope of recommended investments. There is broad agreement that short term actions should focus on smaller-scale investments that can minimize existing, ongoing demand on the transportation network. Mid-term and long-term investments will build incrementally towards top-priority, larger scale improvements that could provide significant multimodal improvements into the future.

OTHER REFINEMENT PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Cascadia Corridor Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation Project Planning

Lead agency	Partners	Anticipated timing
WSDOT	Metro, ODOT, PSRC, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, BC Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat, TransLink, Cascadia Innovation Corridor	In progress; 2023-2028

The Cascadia Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation (UHSGT) Project is a proposed high-speed rail system that would connect the Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, BC metropolitan areas as shown in Figure V.7. Travel time from Portland to Seattle or Seattle to Vancouver would be approximately one-hour, with low/no emissions and speeds of up to 250 miles per hour.

The Project would be located within the federally designated Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor, which extends from Vancouver, British Columbia to Eugene, Oregon, enhancing multimodal connectivity with other intercity and commuter rail systems. The Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor is one of eleven corridors identified by FRA for potential high-speed rail investments to better connect communities across the U.S. and into Canada.

Following planning activities conducted by Washington state and its jurisdictional partners (including completion of three studies since 2017), the Governors of Oregon and Washington and the Premier of British Columbia signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021 confirming continued support for the project. The agreement established the goal of laying the groundwork for the creation of a formal, legal entity to



Figure V.7: General location of the Cascadia Ultra-High-Speed Ground Transportation (UHSGT) Project

continue project development while seeking community engagement and input, gaining critical support from decision makers, and positioning the corridor for future funding opportunities and an efficient environmental process.

WSDOT has applied for funding for this project under both the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program and the FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program with matching funds of \$150M. Funding would support required pre-NEPA technical and advisory study planning requirements to advance the project to feasibility-level planning decisions.

Metro will continue to represent greater Portland, along with ODOT, on the technical and policy committees supporting planning activities, collaborating for a process and outcomes consistent with regional goals. More information about the project can be found at: wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/ultra-high-speed-rail-study.

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If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

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November 30, 2023