

Memo



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Date: September 27, 2024
To: Transportation Policy Alternatives Committee (TPAC) and interested parties
From: John Mermin, Senior Transportation Planner
Subject: Administrative amendment to the 2024-25 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Regional Rail Futures Study

Background

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is developed annually by Metro as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Portland Metropolitan Area. It is a federally-required document that serves as a guide for transportation planning activities to be conducted over the course of each fiscal year, beginning on July 1. The UPWP is developed by Metro with input from local governments, TriMet, ODOT, FHWA, and FTA. It includes all planning projects that will be receiving federal funds for the upcoming fiscal year. The UPWP describes a process for administrative amendments: 1) Notify TPAC; 2) Send amendment to USDOT for approval.

See attached project narrative which describes the Regional Rail Futures Study, funded by the Oregon Legislature. This project is not federally funded, and therefore is being processed administratively. Metro staff is including it in the UPWP for purposes of coordination and transparency.

Next Steps

Metro staff will forward notice of this amendment to USDOT staff for approval and these changes will be reflected on the Metro's UPWP webpage.

Please contact John Mermin, john.mermin@oregonmetro.gov if you have any questions about this amendment.

Regional Rail Futures Study

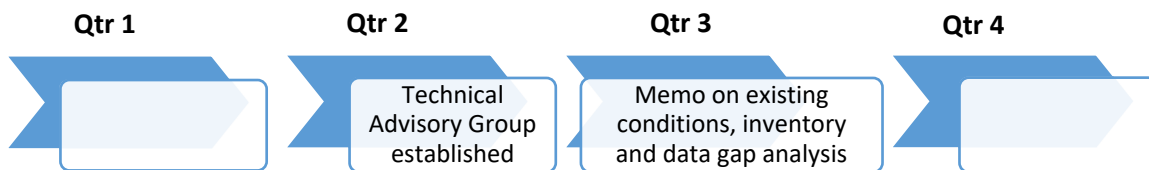
Staff Contact: Elizabeth Mros O’Hara, Elizabeth.Mros-OHara@oregonmetro.gov

Description

The RTP establishes a strong vision for transit to help the Portland metropolitan region meet its transportation goals and provide communities with equitable, economic, safety and climate benefits. However, gaps remain in the transit system. While the region’s long-term target is 37% of jobs accessible by transit, our 2045 RTP constrained investments would only provide access to 8% of jobs. Reuse of existing freight rail lines is a potential solution to improve access already leveraged in the region (e.g., WES, Council Creek).

In April 2024, the Oregon State Legislature passed Senate Bill 5701, calling on Metro to study the use of existing heavy freight rail assets in the Portland metropolitan area for passenger rail alternatives to augment existing transportation modes. Metro, with the help of a consultant team, will assess heavy rail corridors for their ability to serve travel markets. In addition, staff anticipate organizing a technical advisory group that will provide feedback on the findings. The end result will be a memorandum to the Oregon legislature. The Regional Rail Futures memo will document findings, assess corridor readiness- barriers and opportunities, and make recommendations to inform the region’s vision for passenger rail priorities. It will recommend next steps (near and longer term), as well as identify areas that need more analysis, corridors that are likely to serve the most riders, and opportunities and barriers to implementation.

Key Project Deliverables / Milestones



FY 2024-25 Cost and Funding Sources

Requirements:

Personnel Services	\$ 68,352
Materials & Services	\$ 397,609 ¹
Indirect Costs	\$ 34,039

Resources:

State of Oregon Grant	\$ 500,000
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TOTAL \$ 500,000

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¹ The budgeted amount for Materials & Services includes potential costs for consultant activities.