



AGENDA

Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee

Date: Thursday, June 17, 2021

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Location: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89727688853?pwd=VE9DTlITbkJ2TzRZUzMvS3RIZ0REdz09>

Meeting ID: 897 2768 8853

Passcode: 078544

Phone #: 253 215 8782

Contact: Office Specialist, RVCOG: 541-423-1375

MRMPO website: www.mrmppo.org

1	Call to Order / Introductions / Review Agenda	Chair
2	Review / Approve Minutes	Chair
<i>Attachment</i>	#1 MRMPO Policy Committee Draft Minutes 05/20/2021	
Presentations		
3	24-27 STIP Enhance Highway Program	Mike Baker
<i>Background</i>	The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has approved \$65 million for a competitive Enhance Highway Discretionary Program (Enhance Program) for the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Enhance Program will make operational enhancements to state highways to improve the movement of people and goods in order to enhance the economy of Oregon. The funds will be distributed around the state to eligible projects that can make tangible improvements. The OTC has dedicated at least 30% of the funds to rural areas (outside MPO boundaries).	
<i>Attachment</i>	#2 Introduction #3 PowerPoint Presentation	
Action Items		
4	Ride the Rogue Sponsorship	Karl Welzenbach
<i>Background</i>	The Ride the Rogue event is held every year and promotes not only the Rogue Valley but also alternate forms of transportation. Due to COVID and wildfires from previous years, the Ride the Rogue event (which is hosted by the Rogue River Greenway Project) has fallen on hard financial times. This event is important to the region as a whole and to the people, industries and businesses	

	of the Rogue Valley.	
<i>Attachment</i>	#2 Ride the Rogue Sponsor Package	
<i>Action Requested</i>	Authorize MRMPO become a gold level sponsor of the Ride the Rogue, 2021	
5	Discussion and Approval of OMPOC Policy Paper	Karl Welzenbach
<i>Background</i>	This policy paper is a revised version of the one that OMPOC agreed to several years ago. In general, staff agrees with the goals and issues highlighted in the document. There is one issue that staff does not agree with which is highlighted in the version provided to the Policy Committee. OMPOC is requesting that each of the member MPO Policy Committees approve the draft as written prior to the next OMPOAC meeting to be held on July 30 th of this year. Staff is looking for direction on how to proceed.	
<i>Attachment</i>	#3 OMPOC Policy Paper	
<i>Action Requested</i>	Discussion, clarification, and adoption of acceptable language	
Discussion Items		
6	Public Comment	
Regular Updates		
7	MPO Planning Update	Karl Welzenbach
8	Other Business / Local Business Opportunity for MRMPO member jurisdictions to talk about transportation planning projects.	Chair
9	Adjournment	Chair

- The next MRMPO Policy Committee meeting will be **Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.** in the Courtyard Conference Room at Grants Pass City Hall.
- The next MRMPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting will be **July 1, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.** in the Courtyard Conference Room at Grants Pass City Hall.
- The next MRMPO Citizens Advisory Committee meeting will be **July 8, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.** in the Courtyard Conference Room at Grants Pass City Hall.

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT RVCOG, 541-664-6674. REASONABLE ADVANCE NOTICE OF THE NEED FOR ACCOMMODATION PRIOR TO THE MEETING (48 HOURS ADVANCE NOTICE IS PREFERABLE) WILL ENABLE US TO MAKE REASONABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY TO THIS MEETING.



Summary Minutes
Middle Rogue MPO Policy Committee
May 20, 2021

The following attended:

Voting Members	Organization	Phone Number
Valerie Lovelace, Chair	Grants Pass	479-0952
Rick Riker	Grants Pass	479-7333
Pam VanArsdale, Vice Chair	Rogue River	660-4414
Dan DeYoung	Josephine County	660-0342
Mike Baker	ODOT	957-3658
Alternate Voting Members Present	Organization	Phone Number
Neil Burgess	Josephine County	
John Vial	Jackson County	
Staff	Organization	Phone Number
Karl Welzenbach	RVCOG	423-1360
Ryan MacLaren	RVCOG	423-1338
Kelsey Sharp	RVCOG	423-1375
Interested Parties	Organization	Phone Number
Lelsie Orr	Bike/Ped	

- **Meeting recording:** [May 20, 2021 MRMPO Policy Committee Meeting Recording](#)
- [05/20/2021 MRMPO Policy Committee Agenda Packet](#)

1. Call to Order / Introductions/ Review Agenda | 00:00 – 02:47
 2:30 p.m. | *Quorum:* 5 voting members, regardless of jurisdiction

2. Review / Approve Minutes | 02:47 – 04:25

01:40 | *Pam VanArsdale moved that the Policy Committee approve the April 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes with corrections. Seconded by Mike Baker.*

No further discussion.

Motion passed with none opposed.

Public Hearing

3. Review and Recommendation of the UPWP | 04:25 – 19:20

Valerie Lovelace opened the Public Hearing.

11:12 | *Question from Dan DeYoung: Is this funding a use it or lose it, or does the PL 5303 funds roll over?*

The PL 5303 funds automatically roll over, but they are not available for 18 months. There is rollover from two years ago.

Valerie Lovelace closed the Public Hearing.

18:47 | *John Vial moved to approve the adoption of the UPWP and the signing of Resolution of 2021-01 by the chair. Seconded by Dan DeYoung.*

No further discussion.

Motion passed with none opposed.

Action Items

4. Review and Recommendation of Dues | 19:20 – 23:45

23:20 | *Pam VanArsdale moved to approve the Dues for FY 2021-2022. Seconded by Rick Riker.*

No further discussion.

Motion passed with none opposed.

Discussion Items

5. Public Comments | 23:45 – 26:17

Provided by Leslie Orr in regard to Ride the Rogue. Discussion of the MRMPO sponsoring the Ride the Rogue with a Gold Level Sponsorship. None opposed. This will be discussed more during the next meeting.

Regular Updates

6. MPO Planning Update | 26:17 -

Provided by Karl Welzenbach. Discussion of the MPO Update and Other Business / Local Business combined.

7. Other Business / Local Business | - 58:40

Discussion of membership and representation in other committees. Discussion of the MPO Update and Other Business / Local Business combined.

8. Adjournment | 58:40

Valerie Lovelace, Chair, adjourned meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Scheduled Meetings:

MRMPO Policy Committee | June 17, 2021 | 2:30 p.m.

MRMPO Technical Advisory Committee | June 3, 2021 | 1:30 p.m.

MRMPO Citizen Advisory Committee | June 10, 2021 | 2:00 p.m.

DRAFT

2024-2027 STIP Highway Enhance Program

Overview

The Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has approved \$65 million for a competitive Enhance Highway Discretionary Program (Enhance Program) for the 2024-2027 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Enhance Program will make operational enhancements to state highways to improve the movement of people and goods in order to enhance the economy of Oregon. The funds will be distributed around the state to eligible projects that can make tangible improvements. The OTC has dedicated at least 30% of the funds to rural areas (outside Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) boundaries.)

The OTC created this program because it believes that congestion is an issue that affects the entire state and the mobility of people and freight is critical to Oregon's economy. At the same time, the OTC is aware that Oregon has many long-standing unmet needs on the highway system, and the Enhance Program will support the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) priorities.

Program Expectations

As with other STIP programs, effective communications among ODOT staff and with stakeholders is essential to have Enhance Program projects ready to fund in the 2024-2027 STIP. Regions should use this program introduction to begin conversations about possible projects with their ACTs and MPOs. Regions each have preferred procedures for how they communicate with their ACT; Regions should follow their preferred process and adapt as needed to ensure that the ACT, MPO, and other stakeholders can provide valuable input.

Project proposals must come from ODOT Region or central program staff (e.g. Fix-It program, Freight program, Commerce and Compliance, Public Transportation, etc.) Program staff should communicate with the affected Region about possible Enhance highway projects in the Region. Regions can then help communicate these possible projects to Area Commissions on Transportation (ACTs) and MPOs, who can help prioritize Enhance Program project ideas. Projects may receive recommendations from the ACTs, MPOs, local governments, tribes, and other stakeholder groups, but ultimately project proposals will be developed, selected, and submitted by ODOT staff. Regions may submit any letters of support with their project proposals, but these are not required.

It is important to remember that funding is limited and projects that best meet the criteria and intent of this program will be selected. The OTC intends for this limited program to make useful, strategic investments that address known needs and improve congestion or freight conditions. Region and central program staff should therefore use judgment and creativity regarding projects to propose. For example, Regions and programs should think strategically about potential projects to propose; if there are several good options, consider submitting a small variety of project proposals. A Region may have more chance of having a project selected if there are a couple different small and mid-sized project proposals submitted. A variety of projects will likely be needed to ensure that the \$65 million is allocated and the minimum 30% non-MPO target is met. However, Regions should not submit every possible project as the Enhance program is designed for targeted improvements and most of the money is not likely to go to one Region. Similarly, not all Regions may have an Enhance Program project selected this STIP cycle. Regions should also consider whether a proposed project can leverage other resources, such as local matching funds or federal funds already available. Projects that can leverage other funds to provide a more substantial benefit to the system may have an advantage.

In addition, the Governor’s Executive Order on Climate (20-04), requires that greenhouse gas emissions must be considered as part of project selection and the STIP decision making process. Climate and social equity are also identified as priorities in the SAP, and investment decisions need to optimize outcomes in these areas when possible. Project applications should identify the potential direct and indirect climate and social equity impacts of a project and detail appropriate mitigation strategies. The Climate Office will collect information on proposed Enhance projects and provide qualitative results and mitigation suggestions to support project scoping teams.

Project Selection Process and Preliminary Schedule

An Enhance Program project proposal form and contacts will be provided to ODOT Region and central program staff following this initial program introduction. Proposals will consist of the standard project business case form and a short additional form addressing Enhance Program criteria. Proposals must be developed by ODOT Region and central program staff, including project description, anticipated project benefits, and preliminary cost information. An internal cross-divisional Enhance Proposal Review Team (EPRT) will evaluate and rank the proposals to develop a 125% list totaling approximately \$80 million in projects. Region staff will also be responsible for completing the Climate Office GHG Index Survey for projects on the 125% list. Regions will provide the GHG Index Report to the scoping teams and back to the EPRT for consideration in final project scoping and selection.

Regions will bring this statewide 125% project list back to the ACTs and MPOs for any additional input that can help inform updated proposals, in the same manner as Regions do for other STIP projects. During the scoping process, Regions will develop more refined cost estimates, via the Cost Estimating Tool used for other programs. After scoping, Regions will submit updated proposals to the EPRT. This team will then rank the final project proposals and select the recommended projects to be included in the draft STIP.

The table below shows a preliminary schedule for the Enhance Program for the remainder of 2021 and early 2022. This shows the general outline and target timeline of the Enhance Program project selection process, but the schedule may be further refined, especially as regards the scoping process and subsequent steps. These could be adjusted, if needed, to better allow for identification of leverage and other opportunities.

Timeframe	Activity
Begin May 2021	ODOT announces Enhance Program
May-July	Regions seek input from ACTs, MPOs on possible projects
End Aug	Proposals Due
Early Sept	EPRT review to 125%
Sept-Nov	Scoping, Climate GHG Index Survey
Dec 2021-Jan 2022	Regions seek input from ACTs, MPOs on scoped projects
Early Feb	Updated proposals with cost information, Climate Survey results due
Feb-Mar	Final EPRT 100% selections Draft STIP

Eligible Projects and Selection Criteria

Eligibility

Eligible projects must:

- Address congestion relief or freight mobility,
- Be located on a state highway, and
- Be consistent with an existing statewide, regional, or local plan.

Multimodal elements should not be the primary focus of proposed projects, but these may be eligible for funding as part of a larger highway project. Projects that include only project planning, development, design, and preliminary engineering activities and do not include a construction phase are eligible, however, there is a higher emphasis on construction projects.

2024-2027 STIP Enhance Project Selection Criteria

1. Eligibility

Projects must be located on a state highway, be consistent with a plan, and provide benefits in one or both of the following outcome areas to be eligible for funding.

- Congestion relief—Reduce hours of delay on state highways, improve traffic flow/reliability, address a system bottleneck, and or improve the efficiency of the highway segment.
- Freight mobility—Reduce freight delay, address a known freight bottleneck, remove barriers or pinch points to improve movement on key freight corridors, address truck parking needs, or improve freight efficiency within or through regulatory facilities.

2. Additional Benefits

In addition to the eligibility criteria above, projects will be evaluated in terms of their benefits in other important outcome areas. Projects need not provide benefits in all outcome areas.

- Safety—Reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
- Multimodal accessibility—Improve the ability to access key locations by non-automobile modes.
- Equity—Improve economic and social well-being for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), low-income Oregonians, and others who have been marginalized.
- Climate mitigation and adaptation and sustainability—Reduce or minimize negative impacts to climate and the environment, implement adaptation measures, or improve system sustainability.

Illustrative List of Types of Projects Eligible

This list is provided to show examples of possible 2024-2027 STIP Enhance projects. It is not meant to list all possible types of projects.

- Auxiliary lanes
- Passing lanes
- Truck climbing lanes
- Truck parking
- Interchange improvements
- Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and other applications of technology to improve safety, operations, and efficiency and reduce congestion
- Freight corridor improvements (including curve corrections, vertical clearance improvements, and other projects for over dimension trucks on key freight corridors)
- Intermodal freight connections (e.g. from roads to ports or railyards)

**OREGON METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION CONSORTIUM:
2021 TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES**

The Oregon MPO Consortium (OMPOC) is a partnership of Oregon's eight Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), working together on matters of mutual interest and statewide significance and representing approximately 70% of Oregon's population. OMPOC has long advocated for increased investment in active transportation and transit; a safe transportation system for all Oregonians; and lowering transportation related greenhouse gas emissions.

OMPOC supports congressional leaders and the Biden Administration's bold transportation and infrastructure bill and the clear acknowledgment that these types of investments can put people back to work, rebuild our economy, help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve the quality of life for all Americans, particularly those harmed by previous policies and investments.

OMPOC feels that not only is the need obviously great, but that the time is right to turn many of the themes already reflected in the Moving Forward Act and President Biden's Build Back Better proposal from principles into policy and action. Themes aligning with OMPOC's transportation priorities are:

1. Robustly fund multimodal transportation projects and transportation planning
2. Use transportation investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, improve safety on our roads, and improve the resiliency of our transportation system
3. Ensure that transportation investments support improved outcomes for everyone, particularly people of color, who have historically been underinvested in or harmed by transportation funding and policy
4. Invest locally and support local engagement, direction, and planning of the transportation system
5. Improve transit access, impact, and help build more transit projects across the country

OMPOC encourages the policies and actions below to address each priority.

1.) Robustly fund multimodal transportation projects and planning

Oregon's MPOs demonstrate the power of transportation investment to help nurture, grow, and support communities and economic development and we have long supported efforts to increase transportation funding. Now, more than ever, those efforts are needed to help put people back to work, building a more efficient, affordable, greener, transportation system that helps everyone access the transportation system they need. We support all proposals on the table to increase transportation funding.

In particular, OMPOC supports policies that will:

- Implement increased long-term, stable funding that supports maintaining and upgrading the federal highway and transit system
- Fund multi-modal transportation projects, through formula funding and competitive grant programs such as RAISE and INFRA
- Simplify applications for discretionary grant programs by creating an online application and benefit-cost analysis (BCA) process so that small, rural and limited-capacity agencies can more easily access federal funds
- Provide dedicated funding for complex, multi-modal, hard to finance bridge projects such as the proposed Projects of National and Regional Significance grant program
- Incorporate innovative financing mechanisms, including Build America Bonds and the TIFIA program, recognizing that these provisions are helpful adjuncts to, but do not replace the need for, robust federal funding
- Provide financial support and flexibility for Support state and local efforts to pilot and implement innovative funding mechanisms such as congestion pricing and mileage-based user fees and urge/lobby/propose federal transition away from the gas tax

Commented [KW1]: Here is where we need to present our support for alternative funding mechanisms for transportation

Commented [TD2]: The feds should lead the transition away from the gas tax. The one-off approach now occurring will only delay widespread adoption of a new fee system/structure.

Commented [KW3]: Agree with Tyler here ... I believe we should actually promote the idea of a VMT style fee/tax

- Increase the federal share of funding on transit projects and roadway projects in order to jumpstart building back better and put people back to work
- Dedicate funding to support the facilitation and transfer of orphan highways¹ to local ownership and to ensure that the condition of and infrastructure on these roads reflects their current use

Commented [KW4]: I would state that we want to “increase the federal share for transportation related projects” and keep it that inclusive

Commented [TD5]: Does this require additional descriptive language? Will federal legislative staff understand this?

2.) Use transportation investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, improve safety on our roads, and increase the resiliency of our transportation system

Oregon’s MPOs are focused on making our transportation system safer, more affordable, and more accessible. At the federal level, there are key areas where federal help is needed in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the resiliency of our transportation system, and improve safety.

Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In the US and in Oregon, the transportation sector is the largest greenhouse gas contributor. Any meaningful action on climate change must involve the transportation system.

There are many meaningful policy actions that will help address climate change through transportation policy. In particular we support policies, add additional funding, to:

- Reinstate performance metrics that require the tracking of greenhouse gas emissions, as outlined in the Moving Forward Act, and develop new metrics to track vehicle miles travelled as key indicators of state progress in tackling climate change
- Increase investments that will reduce transportation related greenhouse gas emissions through alternative fuels and electrification of the transportation system including electric vehicles, micro mobility options, and zero emissions transit vehicle infrastructure

Commented [TD6]: New/additional funding should be attached to these types of requests. Otherwise, it’s an unfunded mandate and we (MPOs and state DOTs) will need to do more within our already stretched budgets.

Commented [TD7]: Do we want to broaden this include other fuels (e.g. hydrogen)?

Commented [KW8R7]: Again, here I agree with Tyler... Hydrogen fuel cells are well within our technological capabilities

Based on Metro’s Climate Smart Strategy, we know that the most important thing we can do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions created by our transportation system is to encourage more people to take transit and walk or bike, rather than drive. Those systems are only viable options for people when they are affordable, efficient, and available. Decades of underfunding our transit system and our active transportation system have made it difficult for many people to choose to walk, bike, or take transit. We urge Congress to work to increase the funding available for transit capital, transit operations and service, and walking and biking projects, in order to give people true climate-friendly options.

Increase the Resiliency of Our Transportation System

The last year has made it clear how vulnerable our state and local transportation system is to natural disasters. As the understanding and concern of a possible Cascadia subduction zone earthquake increases, we must prepare our system for withstanding and supporting recovery post-earthquake. We also need to fund and support responses to wildfires, landslides, flooding, and other natural disasters, and planning to increase our resiliency and improve recovery. There are many ways the federal system interacts with bridges, roadways and other infrastructure that are critical lifelines in case of natural disasters and other emergencies. We ask Congress to advance resiliency as a key outcome in federal grant programs, dedicate funding to support capital projects to improve resiliency, and acknowledge that resiliency needs differ across the country, from flooding and coastal degradation, to earthquake preparedness, to fire safety.

Last year our region experienced unprecedented wildfires within close proximity to our urban areas. We recognized failures within our transportation system in the midst of the crisis as our notifications systems and evacuation routes

¹“Orphan highways” are roads that were once farm-to-market highways and state highways that connected population centers, but now serve as roadways that include businesses, transit, neighborhood centers, and main streets. As a result they are no longer safe for the day-to-day use they have, becoming a place with higher conflict between cars and active transportation users. Creating a new fund to prioritize making the roads better reflect their current, urban uses is vital to meeting climate, safety, and economic development.

were bombarded with desperate users. Research and experience also demonstrate that climate change and natural hazards have a disproportionate effect on historically marginalized communities, including Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), people with limited English proficiency, people with low income, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities, who typically have fewer resources and more exposure to environmental hazards, and are, therefore, the most vulnerable to displacement, adverse health effects, job loss, property damage and other effects.

~~As a region, we are working to refine our emergency route planning and we require resources to insure reliable, sufficient transportation routes during these events.~~ We need dedicated funds for planning, interagency coordination, maintenance and capital improvements to strengthen current [emergency](#) routes and identified lifelines. This type of coordinated, multi-jurisdictional planning is complicated, expensive, and valuable because it helps jurisdictions identify and prioritize needs. ~~In our region, identified~~ [Identified](#) needs include the reconstruction of critical bridges, and shoring up critical connections across the region to help provide emergency medical treatment, food, water and services after natural disasters. These are big projects that emerge from multi-disciplinary collaboration of emergency management with transportation planning, engineering, operations, transit, port, and public works staff. Local jurisdictions and emergency management agencies need to integrate community resilience building into their planning efforts, which often requires funding beyond what is available. This also means including all communities in this work to ensure that a broad cross section of community voices are represented and provided meaningful opportunities to shape the outcomes.

Commented [TD9]: Delete these first 3 words?

Our region would fully support funding for emergency route planning, evacuation planning, etc. I know some work is occurring, but I'm not sure it's comprehensive across the entire region and includes all emergency services providers.

We encourage the federal government to support these types of planning projects with resiliency planning grants, and to help fund the projects that are prioritized through these coordinated planning efforts to make our region's transportation system more resilient. Investing now will also help accelerate response and recovery times within the region and help ensure equitable outcomes.

Improve Safety

The last ten years have seen a significant increase in the number of people being hit or killed on our roadways. We believe that the federal government should be a partner to local, regional, and state governments that are working to protect lives. OMPOC supports the American Jobs Plan investment of \$20 billion to improve road safety for all users, including increases to existing safety programs and a new Safe Streets for All program to fund state and local 'vision zero' and 'towards vision zero' plans and other improvements to reduce crashes and fatalities, especially for people walking and biking. With the number of people killed while walking or using mobility-assistive devices skyrocketing — increasing by 45 percent over the past decade — we must ensure adequate funding to address long standing need. In addition, we also support:

- An increase in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) dollars so that jurisdictions can undertake complex, multi-modal safety improvements
- Sub-allocation to local jurisdictions of Highway Safety Improvement Program dollars, to enable local jurisdictions to address safety needs, particularly as the rate of fatal and life-changing crashes on local roads continues to increase
- ~~A rewriting~~ [An update](#) of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to prioritize and reflect the safety and mobility needs of multimodal users on US roadways and streets

Commented [TD10]: Possibly change from "A rewriting" to "An update". My Board submitted a letter on the MUTCD update and took a softer tone.

- 3.) [Ensure that transportation investments support improved outcomes for everyone, particularly people of color and low income populations, who have historically been underinvested in or harmed by transportation funding and policy](#)

Commented [TD11]: Do we want to expand this to include low income people? Low and moderate income populations constitute a significant part of our populations, and I think it can be documented that there is long-term under investment in those communities.

There is a growing awareness of the negative impacts of past transportation investments toward the BIPOC community- [and low income populations](#). The Moving Forward Act incorporates several concrete steps that the federal government can take to help transportation agencies consider the impact of projects on people of color [and low income populations](#), and to create better understanding of the impact that decades of underinvestment and harmful investments have had on communities of color- [and low income populations](#). We support the policies in the Moving Forward Act that will:

- Require racial justice analysis in tolling/pricing, grant applications, and the national freight and highway system. This analysis should include both wealth development opportunities resulting from contracting and property ownership as well as how investments improve outcomes for the system user.
- Increase apprenticeship funding and workforce training for the construction, maintenance, and operations of transportation systems
- Require grant applications to discuss alignment with needs of BIPOC communities; and
- Propose incentives in the Capital Investment Grant program for increased density and a range of affordable housing options near transit stations, in order to increase the availability of high quality, transit-accessible affordable housing
- Provide support for local anti-displacement efforts that, in tandem with Capital Investment Grant projects, address the impact of transit investment of households and minority-owned businesses.

The region also supports the American Job Plan proposal to allocate \$20 billion for a new program that will reconnect neighborhoods cut off by historic investments and ensure new projects increase opportunity, advance racial equity, and environmental justice, and promote affordable access.

4.) Invest locally and support local engagement, direction, and planning of the transportation system

Cities, counties and regional agencies are often uniquely suited to develop, engage with, or identify the transportation needs of the people they serve. Recent transportation authorization bills have acknowledged that a one-size fits all policy does not work across a country as vast and diverse as the United States, and that local funding with appropriate accountability is likely to result in transportation investments that are tailored to local needs and challenges.

We ask that any transportation authorization bill:

- Increase the proportion of sub-allocated formula funds to local and regional jurisdictions, including Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Alternatives Program and some portion of Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) funds
- Support local and state flexibility in developing, piloting and implementing projects, including data collection and regulation of autonomous vehicles
- Provide federal financial assistance in bringing orphan highways up to a state of good repair and transferring ownership to support better safety, transit, and economic development outcomes
- Require local and regional support for proposed changes or designations to the National Highway System
- **Maintain CMAQ's support for attainment areas, in order to ensure that these areas stay in attainment and do not jeopardize the health of current residents**

5.) Improve transit access, impact, and help build more transit projects

As our metropolitan areas grow, we are more dependent on efficient, reliable, convenient ways for people to move. Increasing the accessibility, frequency, reliability, and speed of transit systems is a key priority as we work to expand the reach and access of transit as a viable option statewide. In addition, we know that increasing transit ridership is critical to reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and reducing transportation related greenhouse gas emissions. Transit is also an economic and social lifeline for many people of color, who are disproportionately likely to be dependent on transit and also have inadequate transit access. We call on Congress to make the following legislative changes to support a more comprehensive approach to improving transit systems, and ensure that federal funding keeps up with current need:

- Increase the maximum federal contribution to Small Starts projects, and expand Small Starts project eligibility to include systems improvements, rather than just specific bus lines
- Recognize the past performance of agencies in delivering Conservation Innovation Grants projects on time and on or under budget when making risk assessments and setting contingency levels for New and Small Starts projects

Commented [TD12]: What is the intention here?

Commented [KW13]: Isn't this redundant? Wasn't this stated previously under the last bullet of #1)?

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Commented [KW14]: Completely disagree with this ... Non-attainment areas should receive priority for funding. Those areas that have reached attainment but made a risky bet that CMAQ funding would last forever should own up and pay for it themselves and NOT put the onus on other smaller jurisdictions.

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- Support multimodal projects that combine transit system improvements alongside significant safety and access improvements
- Support driver recruitment, training and retention
- Accelerate the transition away from diesel buses to upgrade facilities and infrastructure necessary to purchase, accommodate and maintain zero emission bus fleets
- Advance the future of mobility by leveraging innovative, transferable and technology agnostic solutions for extended payment, an improved travel experience for all customers, and data frameworks for assessing impacts, improvements and efficiencies in transportation

Tax Incentives and Transportation

People make decisions based on convenience, safety, accessibility, and affordability. While the tax code itself often unfairly impacts people of color, tax incentives, particularly those applied at the employer level, can help make accessing different transportation options more affordable for everyone. OMPOC supports efforts to:

- Create parity between the employer-tax benefit for transit and parking
- Increase the current limit for the Bicycle Commuter Act, to better reflect the costs of bike commuting
- Make it more affordable for individuals to electrify their commute, whether that commute is by vehicle or by bike

OMPOC deeply thanks the Oregon delegation for their work on behalf of the region and the state of Oregon and we look forward to supporting you as best we can in our joint efforts for a more sustainable, more equitable, and more accessible transportation system.