



GETTING THERE TOGETHER

September 18, 2019

Getting There Together Coalition | Who We Are

The Getting There Together Coalition (the Coalition) formed in 2017 in response to growing concerns that the Portland metropolitan region wasn't adequately planning to build the comprehensive infrastructure and transportation system in a way that effectively responds to the needs of people who live, work, learn, practice spiritually, and play. The Coalition is comprised of more than 50 member- and mission-based organizations in the Metro region that work in and with stakeholders, businesses, and community members, including communities of color, transit riders, youth, older adults, and the most vulnerable users of the roadway and transportation system.

Thank you for your continued service as we work to create a vision for the region's transportation network. The Coalition represents many of the people in the community that T2020 transportation improvements would impact and benefit. As you all continue to discuss and make recommendations for potential investment through the T2020 measure, we urge you to use a racial equity lens and a community- and people-driven approach in your decision-making.

T2020 Investments

Over the summer, the Coalition has been following the Local Investment Team (LIT) corridor and project process closely. Similar to LIT members and Task Force members, the Coalition understands there are still many important questions to be determined by the Metro Council that are necessary to inform final decisions, including the mechanism for funding; the amount of funding that will be invested in our communities; and questions around how programs and other transportation projects, including TriMet service enhancements, will overlap with T2020 corridors and projects. Taking these uncertainties into consideration, the coalition did want to provide our initial feedback on the direction and intent of the measure based on our coalition's guiding principles:

- Making our streets safe and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds;
- Investing in new bus & MAX lines to help people get where they need to go;

- Ensuring that transportation investments are transparent and accountable to the community;
- Preventing mass displacement and restoring housing affordability; and
- Guaranteeing funding for programs and operations that increases access to transportation options.

The Coalition will continue to advocate for a multimodal transportation system that makes our streets safe and accessible for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds, and **we will only support projects that do not add additional roadways or widen existing roadways for increased vehicle capacity.** We reflect the community's desire and strong support for transit, and urge you to **prioritize projects that ensure every corridor will include Better Bus or be transit ready as a result of T2020 investments.** Additionally, it is essential that this measure includes **coordination with regional programs and external investments:** significant investments in anti-displacement and multi-family housing protection strategies; coordinated with service expansions in existing public transit; and including programs like fare affordability for all youth under 18, safe routes to school, and safe connections to destinations. The measure must continue to be rooted in the Metro Council and Task Force values, prioritizing equity, safety, and clean transportation options, meaning it must benefit and not further harm low income communities and communities of color, provide safe and reliable transportation options to people in the region who need it most, and bring forward clean transportation outcomes that ensure a reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled in the region.

The Coalition recognizes that the Task Force has not had the opportunity to adequately compare the costs of projects within corridors; however, based on our observation of the LIT process, we have concerns about certain types of projects on corridors:

- In certain corridors, one large project would constitute the majority of funds used in corridor; in order for projects to be correctly assessed, they must be contextualized with the cost of the corridor and the entire measure.
- In other corridors, some projects do not meet Metro Council or the Task Force's values or have not been fully vetted by the community; large investments in roadway capacity will not result in the transformative transportation investments being sought by the Task Force and the region.

We applaud Metro Council's commitment to leading with equity in their values and the region's recently adopted Regional Transportation Plan. The LIT Final Report clearly articulates the desire to invest in communities that have traditionally been excluded in transportation options. Our observations of the LIT meetings gave us the impression that members did all they could to set forth recommendations that would fully inform the task force, yet they had very limited information. **We urge the Task Force to continue to hold true to their commitments to combat displacement, invest in affordable and safe transportation options that priorities low income communities and communities of color, bring about increased transit service, and improve access and inclusion for all communities as the transportation package begins to formalize.**

Thank You

The Portland Metro region is growing quickly, and Metro's [2016 Metropolitan Area Population Forecast](#) projects that we will see a population increase of more than 533,000 new residents to the Metro area over the next 20 years - likely the lifespan of the T2020 measure should it pass at the ballot. While we face challenges in affordable housing, equitable access to transit and other transportation options across the region, and increasing gentrification and displacement to the edges of Metro's Urban Growth Boundary and beyond, **through T2020 we have the opportunity to be bold in our vision for the future of transportation in our region.** As you continue to develop the T2020 measure, the Getting There Together Coalition urges the Task Force to continue to listen to community testimony around transportation needs and stand strong in your beliefs of prioritizing key investment measure outcomes that should improve safety, prioritize investments that support communities of color, make it easier to get around, support resiliency, support clean air, clean water, and healthy ecosystems, support economic growth, and leverage regional and local investments. These stated values align heavily with our Coalition's guiding principles and with what we continuously hear from our coalition members, allies, and the broader community who strongly support transportation programs and projects that increase affordability, safety, and transit service needs. Our Coalition seeks to address the need in the T2020 measure to center racial equity and inclusion in transportation; remove barriers to accessing modes of transportation and increase transportation options; and have the potential to build a more comprehensive transportation system that works for people of all ages and abilities.

The future depends on what we do today, and we must continue to center serving the people in our community in getting where they need to go. Thank you, Local Investment Teams, Transportation Funding Task Force, Metro staff, and the many others invested in this process for your continued dedication and commitment to a transportation system that works for those who need it most.

Yours sincerely,
Getting There Together Coalition