



# GETTING THERE TOGETHER

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## 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 in the Metro region. The Coalition is comprised of more than 50 member- and mission-based organizations in the region that work 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.

The Coalition represents many of the people in the community that T2020 transportation improvements would impact and benefit, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide that perspective as you consider which projects to recommend for inclusion in a possible T2020 measure.

## The Coalition's Assessment of Projects on Corridors

Our initial assessment of the Staff Recommendation is that many of these investments are a good start, and will represent important improvements to the people living and moving along corridors with long-known safety and transit access needs. However, the Staff Recommendations do not *go far enough* to build the existing transportation needs that would fulfill the needs of the community when it comes to the Task Force and Metro Council's values of equity, safety, transit access, affordability, and climate and that prioritizes moving people, not cars. If the Task Force and Metro Council really wants to see transformational impacts through this measure (to be clear: we do), the Coalition recommends turning T2020 into a transformative first step in addressing our region's transportation needs by doubling down on the corridors where the needs are greatest, and removing from consideration projects where the needs and impact do not match the values above. In other words, we should be *fully funding* all of the safety, equity, and transit projects on certain corridors, in order to transform them through T2020.

Getting There Together used a series of questions based on our values of equity, safety, climate, and affordability to sift through Metro Staff Recommendation proposed project list. These questions were included in our 10/16 comments to the Task Force, and key questions are highlighted below:

### **On Equity:**

- Does this investment/corridor prioritize community priorities as reflected by public input and testimony?
- Is this a project/need identified by communities of color, low-income communities, older adults, people with disabilities, and other historically marginalized groups?

### **On Safety:**

- Is this project along/near a high-crash corridor?
- Does this project address pedestrian/bicyclist safety? Which one?

### **On Affordability:**

- Is this investment/corridor located within ¼ mile (5-minute walk/roll) of current existing, planned, or public affordable housing?

### **On Climate/Transit:**

- Does this project expand (or plan to expand in the future) roadway capacity in any way besides adding transit capacity, bicycle facilities, or sidewalk connectivity?
- Would this investment help shift mode share, reduce VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled), or reduce climate emissions?
- Would/could this investment result in increased transit ridership?
- Would/could this investment result in faster, more reliable transit?

The Coalition continues to evaluate the proposed projects on corridors, including the Staff Recommendation, based on our values of equity, safety, providing options, climate, and an overall people-driven approach. This has included our Coalition individually matching the provided vague project descriptions to Metro's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Climate Smart Strategy, talking with experts in transportation infrastructure, consulting with Metro staff, and further research to better understand and weigh in on the potential impact of these projects.

## **The Coalition's Recommendation**

**We propose the Task Force and Metro Council “doubles down” to fully fund identified needs on certain corridors, ensuring every corridor receives transit improvements, and by allocating more funding to these corridors in your T2020 recommendations. By doing so, you are taking the right step to ensure T2020 will create truly transformative transportation outcomes, take steps toward achieving our regional goals, and meeting the needs of people who live and move in our communities.**

You have heard repeatedly from the community that they want more and better transit, and you know this is also the key to our climate goals. You've heard from Metro & TriMet staff that adding transit operations will not be part of the T2020 measure, so within that constraint, the best way to achieve community and regional goals is through capital improvements to make transit fast, frequent, and more reliable. Better Bus should be a part of every single corridor. Every corridor receiving investment through T2020 must have a tick-mark in the box for “Recommends transit project?”

Now is your chance to make it so.

Below are the corridors and projects that the Coalition finds must be included in a T2020 measure that prioritizes safety, equity, affordability, transit options, and climate. Those corridors that should have project elements retained, and/or receive additional investment beyond what is included in staff's recommendations are indicated with a 💰 emoji below.

**1. TV Hwy 💰**

TV Highway is a High Crash Corridor, with 29 fatalities and 175 life-altering injuries from 2007-2017. It has the highest need in Washington County for safe bike/ped infrastructure, access to transit, supports some of the highest ridership bus lines in Washington County, and serves many low income and communities of color. TV Highway has also come up in every public engagement process, from the RTP to the LITs this summer, as well from multiple Coalition members, as a community priority. A T2020 measure aimed at truly changing the way people get around would ensure it is safe and easy to use and cross TV Hwy on foot, by bicycle, with a mobility device, and on transit. The dollar amount allocated to TV Highway should reflect the high needs and potential of this corridor.

- This corridor should receive full funding from the original project list
- The Task Force should consider additional investments on TV Hwy to make a complete, safe, and transit-friendly community roadway
- Retain the Council Creek Trail
- Retain Canyon/West Slope walking, bicycling facilities and crossing improvements

**2. McLoughlin 💰**

SE McLoughlin Is a High Crash Corridor, with 20 fatalities and 113 life-altering injuries from 2007-2017. It has the highest need for safety, transit, and climate-forward investments in Clackamas County. With the proposal as it currently stands, there will still be stretches of McLoughlin as long as half a mile without a safe crossing for pedestrians. A T2020 measure aimed at truly changing the way people get around would ensure those gaps be closed along a high priority corridor. In addition to what is proposed in the Staff Recommendation, a T2020 measure should transform McLoughlin into a safe street with easily accessible crossings throughout, and extend the bus-only lane to cover the entirety of McLoughlin. The dollar amount allocated to McLoughlin should similarly reflect the high needs and potential of this corridor.

- This corridor should receive full funding from the original project list
- The Task Force should consider additional investments on McLoughlin to make a complete, safe, and transit-friendly community roadway - this measure should close remaining gaps on the corridor for both pedestrians crossing the street and for ETC improvements.
- The Coalition generally supports all original project elements, including Reedway Bike Overcrossing, Kellogg Creek Dam, and Portland Ave Streetscape, and pushes the Task Force to consider and prioritize additional investments on this corridor that help complete a safe and transit-friendly roadway on McLoughlin.

**3. 82nd Ave 💰**

82nd Ave is a High Crash Corridor, with 19 fatalities and 177 life-altering injuries from 2007-2017. It has the highest need in Multnomah County for safe bike/ped infrastructure, access to transit, supports the highest ridership bus lines in the region, and serves many low income and communities of color in Multnomah and Clackamas Counties. 82nd Ave has also come up in every public engagement process, from the RTP to the LITs this summer, as well from multiple Coalition members, as a high community

priority. A T2020 measure aimed at truly changing the way people get around would ensure it is safe and easy to use and cross 82nd Ave on foot, by bicycle, with a mobility device, and on transit; the dollar amount allocated to 82nd Ave should reflect the high needs and potential of this corridor. The Coalition supports the Staff Recommendation to move all the projects forward, with the exception of Airport Way, which as proposed does not meet our values -- this project as proposed shows low likelihood of mode shift and high likelihood of increasing climate emissions. If anything, funding from this measure should be dedicated to increasing options and incentives for more transit and shuttle options around the Airport, such as connections to the Red Line, connecting Line 87 directly to PDX, and better management of pick up and drop off but not what is currently proposed.

- The Task Force should consider additional investments on 82nd Ave to make a complete, safe, and transit-friendly community roadway
- Retain all project elements, except the Airport Way project as currently proposed. Not enough information about this project has been presented to community members.

#### 4. **Central City** 💰

LIT members clearly articulated the need to provide multi-modal options for getting around the densest area in the region.

- This corridor should receive full funding from the Staff Recommendation project list
- The Coalition would like to see more communication and strategizing done on the MAX Tunnel Planning Project, and how the tunnel could be a part of a long term vision for the region and transportation system. As with some other projects, large dollar amount projects must be contextualized alongside smaller investments with large immediate impact for our communities and how they get around.

#### 5. **162nd** 💰

Safety and better transit are key priorities on this corridor and is one that urgently needs to address such concerns. There were 34 serious injuries and fatalities on this corridor between 2007-2017, and this is a high priority corridor in that it largely serves low income and communities of color. This corridor has a high need of more frequent pedestrian crossings through additional crosswalks and improved intersections.

- The Task Force should retain the “Enhanced Transit” project on 162nd
- The Task Force should consider additional investments on 162nd to make a complete, safe, and transit-friendly community roadway

#### 6. **Albina Vision** 💰

This suite of projects is a vision for what a transformative corridor investment looks like. A transportation measure that leads with racial equity and is aimed at truly changing the way people get around must include this exciting initiative that transformatively rethinks an entire district. Transformation goes beyond just capital improvements, and we stand with the the Albina Vision Community as they are working to create institutional change using a racial equity lens redefining the process of how we engage communities of color, redefining narratives, and rethinking institutional power.

- This corridor should receive full funding
- The Task Force should consider additional investments in this corridor that align with the Albina Vision

#### 7. **Powell** 💰

Powell Blvd is a High Crash Corridor, with 22 fatalities and 137 life-altering injuries from 2007-2017.

- The Task Force should retain all project elements on Powell
- Powell is a high priority corridor based on our values and the series of questions above. As such, the Task Force should consider folding in additional investments (including some in the RTP that call for signage for the bike network, safety improvements for pedestrians in outer Powell, and Gresham, transit amenities such as better bus shelters, crosswalks and more lighting among others, and revisiting short term bus enhancements that would address current needs of riders).

#### 8. **C2C/181st** 💰

C2C/181st is a major north/south connector for Clackamas and Multnomah Counties; in particular, SE 181st has a very high injury rate per mile. However, the C2C connector portion of this corridor will not add just a few *hundred* cars to the corridor, it will add a few *thousand* cars along an already High Crash Corridor. We recommend the removal of the C2C connector at this time, until an equitable strategy on anti-displacement and equitable Transportation Oriented Developments is in place. With significant safety and air quality impacts to the nearby community, investments in sidewalks, crossings, lighting, and other pedestrian safety elements are critical.

- The Task Force should consider additional investments to make 181st a complete, safe, and transit-friendly community roadway
- The Task Force should retain the “Enhanced Transit” project on 181st from Sandy to Powell
- The Task Force should remove the C2C “Connector Road” project

#### 9. **SW 185th**

In Washington County, this corridor, alongside TV Hwy, has the highest potential to address outcomes related to equity and safety.

- The Coalition has carefully examined the projects on this corridor, and we have concerns regarding the “Complete Street” project from Kinnaman to Farmington that would widen this road to three lanes. The staff report mentions pedestrian and bicycle improvements that would be completed in this project, but it is unclear from the brief project description how these improvements would help link these transportation options to other networks, and what the issues will continue to exist with the current 0.7 mile section. We suggest the Task Force requests more information about what this project will look like, and how the estimated \$24m to \$32m would be allocated between automobile, pedestrian, and active transportation improvements.

#### 10. **Burnside**

Burnside is a High Crash Corridor, with 16 fatalities and 125 life-altering injuries from 2007-2017. This is also a critical corridor that connects communities from Washington County to Clackamas County, particularly with healthcare services. Furthermore, the Coalition is excited to see enhanced transit investments coming to the whole length of this corridor. The Task Force should make sure that these investments are robust enough in order to ensure effective improvements in transit speed and efficiency, and ensure the distribution of improvements most directly benefits low income and communities of color that have been pushed continually eastward.

- The Coalition remains supportive of the proposed safety improvements that extend across Portland and into Gresham.
- The Coalition understands the need for a seismically resilient Burnside Bridge, and with this and every other larger-dollar investments for individual projects proposed, the Task Force should carefully examine the breakdown of dollars spent on that corridor and in that county. This measure should be proposed with the intention of seriously changing the way people get

around, and as such, projects like the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge (EQRB) project, while important, should not dominate the dollar allocations in this measure.

#### **11. 122nd**

- The Task Force should retain all project elements on 122nd

#### **12. SW Corridor**

- The projected amount of funding from the measure is \$3 billion; this corridor receives nearly \$1 billion, or approximately one-third of the measure, which raises serious concerns about the high amount of funding invested in a single project.

#### **Tier 2 Corridors**

In addition to this direct feedback on the corridors currently being considered, the Coalition is still exploring possible “Tier 2” corridors that meet the Coalition’s and Metro’s values, and therefore worthy of including in the measure. We welcome Task Force members, local jurisdictions, and Metro Council and staff to work with the Coalition in order to identify and potentially advance these Tier 2 corridors.

### **Lingering Questions**

The Coalition finds there is much to like in the Staff Recommendation project list, we believe the measure will only be successful with voters if it demonstrates a transformational vision for a corridor and the region as a whole, that allows community members to become supportive voters because they see opportunity for themselves and their families even if they are unable to cast a formal vote. This can only be achieved by greater investment in transit and safety projects that make a difference in our communities in key corridors as outlined above, within a larger vision of what kind of roadway we are creating.

Additionally, we are left with some lingering questions to answer before the Task Force makes project list recommendation:

- Does this proposal of investments meet our communities’ priorities and needs around safety, climate and air quality improvements, and need for more transit & transportation options?
- Does this proposal demonstrate the equity, safety, and transit/climate transformation on these corridors that the community has been demanding through this process?
- How does this proposal demonstrate the equity, safety, and transit/climate transformation on these corridors that the community has been demanding through this process?
- How far does this proposal get us to our equity, safety, climate/transit ridership goals?
  - How is this recommendation projected to change mode share?
  - The Climate Smart Strategy calls for (and the RTP confirms) a near doubling of daily transit service hours, from baseline 4900 to 9400 by 2035. What does this proposal do to get us there?
  - The Climate Smart Strategy calls for increases of share of households, low-income households, and employment within ¼ mile of frequent transit. What does this proposal do to get us there?
  - The Climate Smart Strategy calls for a per capita GHG emissions reduction from cars and small trucks by 25% by 2035. What does this proposal do to get us there?
- Can we do better than this, especially for the community members that continue to show up here asking for meaningful investments?
- Is the measure properly protecting the region’s most vulnerable community members through robust anti-displacement plans, equitable transit oriented design, and other policy tools?

**Lastly, thank you!**

**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 with safe, convenient, and affordable transportation options.**

As a coalition we are grateful to be a part of a process to consider serious and transformational investments in our region to help people get to where they need to go, especially as Metro staff and the Task Force discuss program elements and how they will coordinate with projects on corridors. The conversation itself is an important one and as we continue to craft a measure that voters will be excited to turn out for.

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.

**Sincerely,**

**Walter Robinson II**

**Lead Organizer**

**Getting There Together Coalition**