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August 1, 2019

Dear Chair Kafoury and Commissioners,

In its 2018 and 2019 annual policy recommendations, the Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Innovation (“ACSI”) urged the Board of County Commissioners to work with other agencies to shape an active and clean regional transportation system and infrastructure targeting emissions reductions, clean energy, service enhancement, and mode-shifting goals. We believe that opportunity is here. As you are aware, Metro is engaged in a planning process for a 2020 transportation ballot measure (“T2020”) in which Commissioner Vega Pederson is serving as a Co-Chair of Metro’s T2020 Transportation Funding Task Force (“Task Force”).

In early June, the Task Force presented a recommendation letter and staff memo to Metro identifying corridors of interest for regional investment. This summer Multnomah County and other agencies will develop project proposals for those corridors that advance the outcomes and values adopted by Metro and the Task Force. In addition, the Task Force is currently meeting regarding potential regionwide investments, as compared to specific corridors, that may include projects or programs aimed to substantially improve access, equity, safety, reliability, and resiliency in the regional transportation network.

These planning activities are an important opportunity for Multnomah County to submit and support innovative project proposals for corridors within the County, to weigh in on other transportation investments in the region, and to ensure that investments further the most climate positive elements in Metro’s Climate Smart Strategy and Multnomah County’s own Climate Action Plan, “100x50” resolution, and environmental justice resolution commitments.

ACSI’s Transportation Values

Our values stem from the County’s existing, aggressive commitments. In the Climate Action Plan, the County acknowledges substantial emission cuts from human activity are needed. CAP p.71. Specifically regarding transportation, the County prioritized completing transportation networks, including bikeways and other active transportation, TriMet service enhancement and Youth Transit Pass, increased transit coverage and efficiency, and improved safe routes and street connections. (CAP Objectives 4 & 5) The County also prioritized planning for systems and infrastructure for electric vehicles, mobile transportation services, and better highway management. (CAP Objectives 6 & 7)

The County reiterated its goals in the “100x50” resolution by committing to meet 100% of the community’s energy needs with renewable energy by 2050, to be accomplished by: guiding regional investments to “active and public transportation infrastructure”, expanding transit networks and access, and transitioning to clean energy transit options. Resolution 2017-046, p.4-5, 1, 11-12. In 2018, the Board resolved to apply an environmental justice lens to County work and to seek opportunities to improve County practices. Resolu-

tion 2018-108, p.3, 2.b

The outcomes and values guiding Metro's planning process are generally aligned with the values ACSI endorsed in its 2018 and 2019 policy recommendations. This includes recognizing the link between transportation and air quality, and the significant impact to public health that results from the combustion of diesel and gasoline, with those impacts falling hardest on the County's most vulnerable communities. ACSI believes the following elements in a transportation measure will be most successful in achieving our climate and sustainability goals, and should be supported:

- Expanded public transit: More hours, frequency, weekend service, bus lines, enhanced transit corridors, bus signal priority, and dedicated bus lanes to increase reliability.
- Reduced single occupant vehicle trips: Pricing to manage congestion in the region, applying any congestion revenues to transit or safety in underserved communities, and investing in ADA/walking/bicycling infrastructure to connect communities to transit.
- Climate and resiliency goals: Electrifying transit, fleet, and private vehicles, and building clean energy infrastructure.
- Environmental justice and equity commitments: Connecting transportation investments with affordable housing and infill, expanding youth pass, and eliminating transit fare increases.
- No investments in roadway capacity expansion other than in support of "complete streets" including additional public transit and active transportation infrastructure.
- Consideration for how the T2020 process can support the Albina Vision Project without the related highway capacity expansion.

Multnomah County Corridor Projects

In line with Metro's values and the County's own climate and transportation commitments, ACSI urges the Board 1) to direct County Transportation Division staff to develop innovative corridor project proposals for those corridors within their purview and 2) to encourage other jurisdictions, especially those within Multnomah County, to do the same. This may involve more upfront planning but it should make the proposals more competitive – the Task Force reserved the right to review project proposals against Metro's requirements before approval – and will help leverage other resources to meet the CAP, 100x50, and environmental justice commitments.

Metro Regional Program Investments

ACSI believes that regional T2020 investments can lay the groundwork to transform our current systems into an efficient, economic, clean, and equitable model transportation system. Key investments must be made to increase active transportation options and increase transit service and ridership, which depends on expanded service options at level, reduced, and even free fares on cleaner transit vehicles. ACSI hopes the Board will take an active role lobbying for holistic, community investments to promote this goal, rather than an "either-or" or a "trade-off" approach.

ACSI also recognizes that housing security, economic opportunities, and transportation are inextricably linked. A corridor approach to transportation projects is a logical approach, but ACSI asks the Board to strongly advocate for regional program investments that will help ensure that transportation project investments will benefit households that are already housing and economically insecure.

These ongoing regional program investments should include:

- Land banking for affordable housing, especially linked to transit investments such as SW Corridor / Division

Transit Project to address displacement and provide housing options for all income levels in high opportunity areas.

- Funding for infrastructure and programs separate from corridor-specific projects, including regional sidewalk infill that supports Safe Routes to Schools and connections between affordable housing and transit.
- Stable funding for transit service operation expansions, prevention of any fare increases and maintenance of existing low income and youth fare programs, while striving to reduce or eliminate fares.
- Transition to clean, zero carbon transit vehicles deployed first through service expansion and in areas experiencing poor air quality.
- Encouraging/requiring low-carbon fuels in solid waste disposal by funding alternative fuel charging/fueling infrastructure at transfer stations, landfills, and/or other key locations.

The County should seek and support financing mechanisms for the transportation measure that do not unduly impact low-income communities. The County and the region should not be bound by current or perceived limitations in transportation funding mechanisms. For example, as Oregon Supreme Court precedent regarding the Oregon Constitution, Article 9, Section 3(a) is evolving, we encourage the County to ensure that more funding from the measure will go towards transit improvements and the development of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure located outside the highway right-of-way.

Transportation systems and infrastructure planned and built today will impact Multnomah County for generations, and ACSI believes the Board and County staff should take a bold and proactive role in shaping the projects and programs to be included in T2020. Thank you for your commitment to these issues and your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Your 2019 ACSI Members