

# Advocacy Committee

April 16, 2026 | 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm



## Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District  
114 Valley Street, Conference Room A | Portland, ME 04102

## Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
Join Google Meet [meet.google.com/wzx-amyp-mcv](https://meet.google.com/wzx-amyp-mcv)  
Phone Number [\(US\)+1 646-535-6995](tel:+16465356995) PIN: 339 571 847#

## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (3:00)</b>	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (3:00 – 3:05)</b> The Advocacy Committee welcomes public comment. For items NOT listed on this agenda, the chair will recognize speakers at this point on the agenda. For items on the agenda, the chair will recognize public comment following the staff presentation. There is a 3-minute time limit per speaker.	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	Information
<b>3. Meeting Minutes (3:05-3:10)</b> Review and approve minutes from the February 19, 2025 Advocacy Committee Meeting.	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	Action
<b>4. Legislative Update (3:10 – 3:30)</b> Staff will review status of state resolves and bills, pending federal issues, and rules affecting public transit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State</li><li>• Federal</li></ul>	Megan Hannan, Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement	Information
<b>5. Advocacy Update (3:30 – 3:50)</b> Staff will update the committee on new and continuing efforts in statewide and Federal advocacy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gubernatorial Candidate Education</li><li>• Public Transit Advisory Council</li><li>• Maine Transit Association</li><li>• Housing &amp; Transit Coordination</li><li>• Advocacy Communications</li></ul>	Megan Hannan, Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement	Information

<p><b>6. Future Agenda Items (3:50 – 3:55)</b>          Committee members may request future agenda items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit</li> <li>• Bus Rapid Transit</li> <li>• Workplan Development (Strategic Plan)</li> <li>• Coalition Building, State Advocacy, Local as appropriate</li> </ul>	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	Information
<p><b>8. Upcoming Meetings (3:55 – 4:00)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Committee – April 22, 2026 at 3:30</li> <li>• Finance Committee – May 6, 2026 at 3:00</li> <li>• Advocacy Committee – May 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Board of Directors – June 25 2026, at 4pm</li> </ul>	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	Information
<p><b>9. Adjournment (4:00)</b></p>	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>

*As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland METRO is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) in hybrid format, both in person at METRO’s offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [METRO’s Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.*



**Greater Portland Metro Advocacy Committee  
 Wednesday February 19, 2026:  
 DRAFT Meeting Minutes:**

Member	Municipality	Role	Status
Lou Simms	Gorham	Chair	Present
David Morse	Westbrook	Vice Chair	Present
Anna Bullett	Portland	Committee Member	Present
Chrissy Adamowicz	Brunswick	Committee Member	Absent
Julie Dubovsky	Yarmouth	Board Member	Present
Ed Suslovic	Portland	Board President	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Megan Hannan – Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement Chad Heid – Chief Transportation Officer (first 15 minutes)	

- I. **With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order by Lou Simms at 3:00 pm**
- II. **Public Comment:**
  - No comments from members of the public present.
- III. **Meeting Minutes:**

David Morse moved acceptance of the minutes from the November 19, 2025 Advocacy Committee Meeting. Lou Simms seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted and the motion passed unanimously of voting members present. The slide deck presented to the committee is at the end of these notes.
- IV. **Legislative Update:**
  - Megan Hannan provided an update on the Federal budget and state resolves engaged in since the last meeting.
- V. **Advocacy Update**
  - Megan Hannan provided an update on advocacy initiatives engaged in since the last meeting.
- VI. **Future Agenda Items:**
  - Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit

- Bus Rapid Transit
- Workplan Development (ongoing)
- Coalition Building, State Advocacy; Local as appropriate
- Activism for World Public Transit Day, April 17, 2026

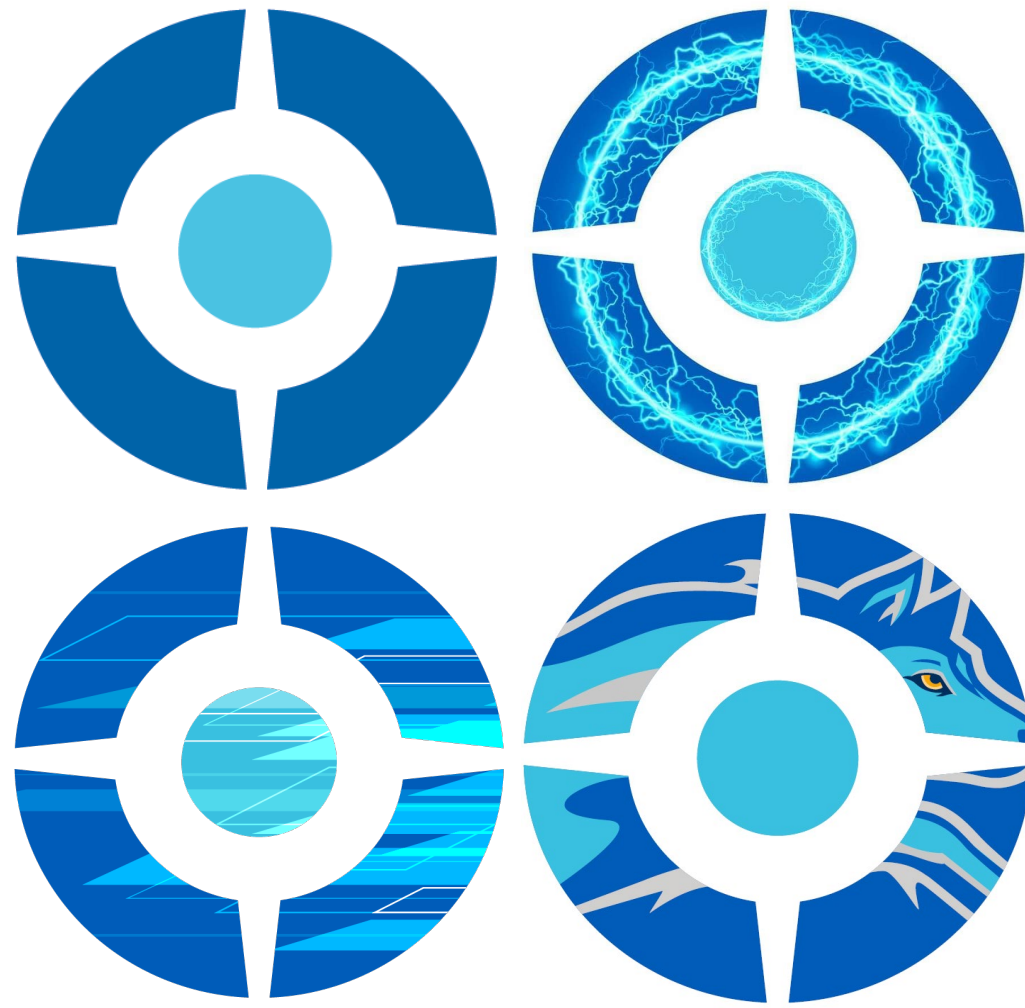
**VII. Upcoming Meetings:**

- Executive Committee – February 23, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Board of Directors – February 26, 2026 at 4:00 pm
- Finance Committee – March 4, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Mkt/Coms Committee – March 11, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Plan/Ops Committee – March 18, 2026 at 10:30 am
- Advocacy Committee – March 19, 2026 @ 3:00 pm

**VIII. Adjournment:** Adjournment was moved by David Morse, seconded by Lou Simms and the meeting ended by mutual consent at 3:45 pm.

# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

Advocacy Committee  
February 19, 2026



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GREATER PORTLAND ON-DEMAND TRANSIT

# State Update

LD 2026     An Act to Enhance the Safety of Public Transit  
Bus Operators Through the Installation of  
Vehicle Security Barriers

# State Update

- LD 1359      Resolve, To Direct The Department Of Transportation To Report Progress Made Toward Implementing Recommendations Based On The 2025 Public Transit Advisory Council Report
- LD 1451      Resolve, Directing The Department Of Transportation To Establish The Maine Coordinating Working Group On Access And Mobility

# Federal Update

- Budget
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization

# Federal Budget

## House, Senate & Final THUD Bill Comparison

Program	FY25 Enacted	House Proposal	Senate Proposal	Final Enacted
<b>Total Transit Funding</b>	\$20.9B	\$19.2B	\$21.1B	<b>\$21.1B</b>
<b>FTA (Annual Discretionary)</b>	\$16.6B	\$16.8B	\$16.5B	<b>\$16.5B</b>
<b>Capital Investment Grants</b>	\$3.8B	\$1.65B	\$3.55B	<b>\$3.3B</b>
<b>Bus &amp; Bus Facilities (Total)</b>	\$1.0B	\$1.0B	\$1.1B	<b>\$1.1B</b>
<b>Low-No Vehicle Grants</b>	\$1.1B*	N/A	N/A	<b>\$1.1B*</b>
<b>Formula Grants (Total)</b>	\$14.2B	\$14.6B	\$14.6B	<b>\$14.6B</b>
<b>Transit Earmarks (CDS)</b>	\$0**	\$96M	\$96M	<b>\$147.9M</b>

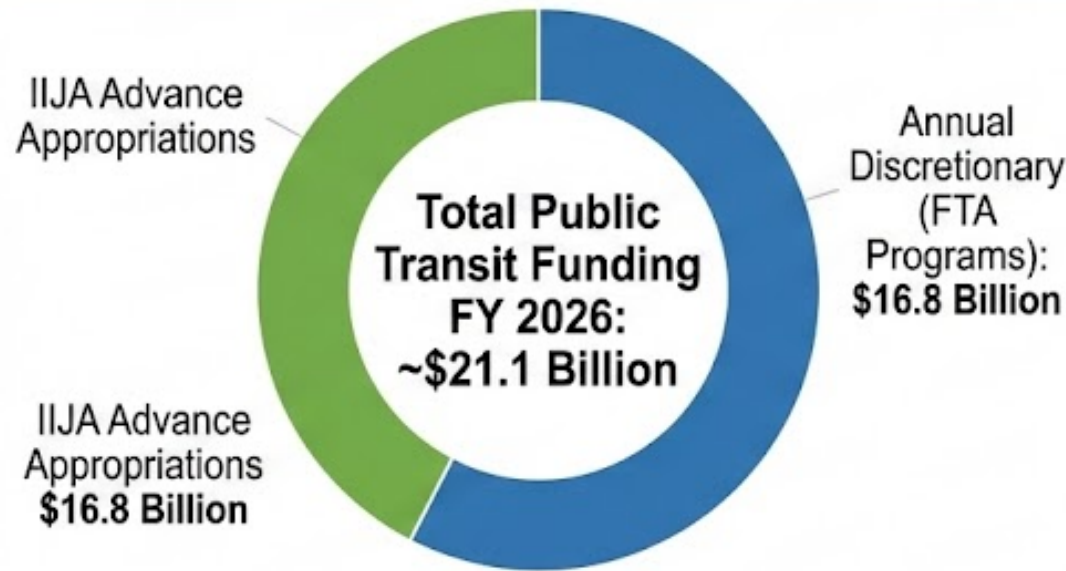
\*Includes IJA advance appropriations that remained steady throughout the cycle. \*\*FY25 was funded via a Continuing Resolution that stripped out earmarks..

# FY 2026 THUD Appropriations Act (H.R. 7148): Public Transit Funding Summary

## Bipartisan Agreement Prioritizes Stability, Rejects Deep Cuts to Transit & Housing

July 2025:  
Initial Briefing

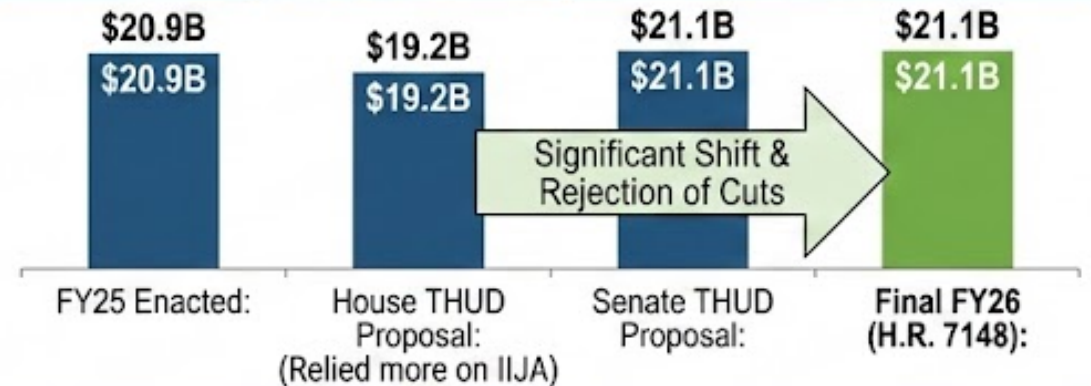
January 2026:  
H.R. 7148 Consolidated Act



### Key Provisions & Funding Breakdown

- \$14.6 Billion for Formula Grants (+\$6M over FY25)
- \$1.1 Billion for Bus & Bus Facilities (Modest Growth over FY25)
- \$3.3 Billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG)
- \$88.4 million for Transit Security Grants (+\$3.9M over FY25)
- ~\$96 million for Congressionally Directed Spending (Earmarks)
- \$145 million for BUILD Grants (Decrease)
- \$55 million for Passenger Ferry and Rural Ferry Programs

### Funding Proposal Comparison (Total Transit)



### What This Means for Metro (Greater Portland Metro)

- Preserves Baseline Funding** for Operations
- Sustains Access to Key Capital Programs** (Replacement, Improvements, State-of-Good-Repair)
- Limits Near-Term Growth** (Inflation, Constrained Discretionary) – Reinforces Advocacy Needs

**Next Steps:** Support Bill, Monitor Floor Action & Amendments, Track Final Passage (Minibus/Omnibus/CR)

# Surface Transportation Reauth

As of this month, the reauthorization process is transitioning from information-gathering to active legislative drafting. While a previous government shutdown caused minor shifts in the timeline, both the House and Senate are now moving toward a **Spring 2026** release for their initial bill drafts.

## Current Status

- Drafting Phase
- Senate Activity
- Budget Alignment
- Administration Push

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## Immediate Next Steps

- Bill Introduction (Early March 2026)
- Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Hearings
- Climate & Energy Debates

**Target Deadline:** Negotiators are working to pass the final package before **September 30, 2026**, to avoid the need for short-term extensions that could disrupt state-level planning.

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## Senate Sign-On Letter

February XX, 2026

The Honorable Tim Scott  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Banking,  
Housing, and Urban Affairs  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Banking,  
Housing, and Urban Affairs  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Scott, Ranking Member Warren, Chair Collins, and Vice Chair Murray:

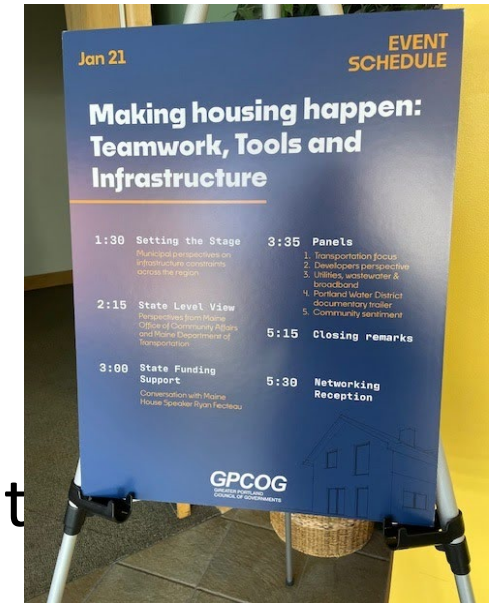
As the Senate works to develop a surface transportation reauthorization bill this year, we write to urge you to ensure that robust public transportation funding levels are maintained through both the Banking Committee's transit title and through advanced appropriations. Specifically, we urge you to ensure that no less than 20 percent of new Highway Trust Fund monies is allocated to the Mass Transit Account and at least \$21.25 billion in additional transit funding is provided through advanced appropriations in a five-year reauthorization bill.

This level of funding will ensure that we do not lose ground on the bipartisan investments made in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021.

With more than 8 billion transit trips taken last year, millions of Americans rely on public transportation to get to work, school, doctors' appointments, and more. Transit also makes our transportation system more efficient and opens the doors of economic opportunity, particularly for those who do not drive or cannot afford their own vehicles.

# Advocacy Update

- Gubernatorial Candidate Education
- MEREDA / GPCOG Housing & Transit
- Public Transit Advisory Council
- Maine Transit Association
- Non-Domiciled CDLs



# Future Agenda Items

- Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit
- Bus Rapid Transit
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# Upcoming Meetings

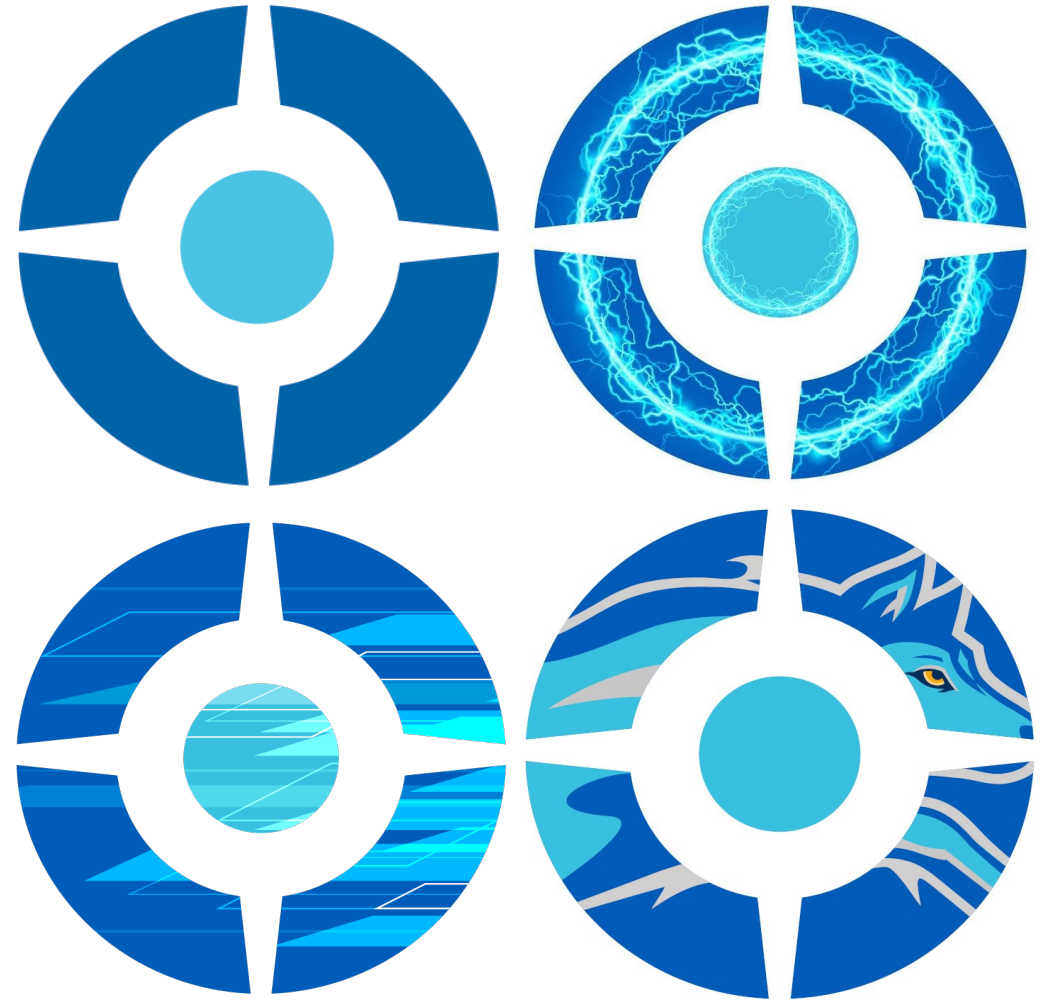
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# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

Advocacy Committee

Next Meeting: March 19 @ 3:00

# Adjourn



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