

# Marketing and Communications Committee

May 20, 2026 | 3:30 pm – 4:30 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:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86595032479?pwd=osVQcjhTJlma7Y5dY1PiMWaaluv9fk.1>  
 Passcode: 414334 | Webinar ID: 865 9503 2479  
 Phone: (646) 931-3860 | Telephone participants: \*9 to raise hand, \*6 to unmute

## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (3:30)</b>	Steven Riley, Committee Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (3:30-3:35)</b> The Marketing and Communications 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.	Steven Riley, Committee Chair	Information
<b>3. March Meeting Minutes Approval (3:35-3:40)</b> Review and approve minutes from the March 11, 2026 Marketing and Communications Committee meeting.	Steven Riley, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>4. Staff report (3:40-3:50)</b> Staff will provide updates on Metro’s ridership through April 2026, and provide an update of ongoing marketing and communications activities.	Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development	Information
<b>5. Fare Policy Review Update (3:50-4:10)</b> Staff will provide updates on our ongoing Fare Policy Review, including public feedback to date, and draft changes to be reviewed by the Executive Committee on May 27.	Metro Staff	Information

<p><b>6. Open Fare Payment Marketing (4:10-4:20)</b> Staff will provide an outline of discussion points with regard to recent changes to Metro’s Sustainability Goal.</p>	Metro Staff	Information
<p><b>7. Future Agenda Items (4:20-4:25)</b> Committee members may request future agenda items.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Fare Payment marketing</li> <li>• Scarborough Service Launch marketing</li> <li>• Microtransit marketing</li> <li>• Map and Schedule Overhaul</li> </ul>	Steven Riley, Committee Chair	Information
<p><b>8. Upcoming Meetings (4:25)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan/Ops Committee – August 19, 2026 at 10:30 am</li> <li>• Advocacy Committee – May 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Executive Committee – May 27, 2026, at 3:30 pm</li> <li>• Finance Committee – August 5, 2026 at 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Market/Coms Committee – August 12, 2026 at 3:30 pm</li> <li>• Board of Directors – June 25, 2026, at 4:00pm</li> </ul>	Steven Riley, Committee Chair	Information
<p><b>9. Adjournment (4:30)</b></p>	Steven Riley, 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 Marketing and Communications Committee

### March 11, 2026

#### DRAFT - Meeting Minutes

Member:	Municipality:	Role:	Status:
Steven Riley	South Portland	Chair	Present
Bill Rixon	Freeport	Committee Member	Present
Ed Suslovic	Portland	Board President	Present
John Thompson	Westbrook	Board Member	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Glenn Fenton, Executive Director Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development Denise Beck, Marketing Manager	

**I. The meeting was called to order by Steven Riley at 3:31 pm**

**II. Public Comment**

No members of the public were present for this item.

**III. January Meeting Minutes Approval**

The meeting minutes from the January 14, 2026 meeting were moved for approval by Bill Rixon, seconded by Michael Shaughnessy, and approved unanimously.

**IV. Staff Report**

Mike Tremblay provided an overview of Metro ridership numbers through February 2026, along with an update on marketing and communications activities.

**V. Fare Policy Review Public Outreach Plan**

Mike and Denise discussed plans for providing public information on the upcoming fare policy review, including public meetings and survey work, notices on buses and on bus stops, and other measures.

Steve Riley asked if messaging was catered to riders and non-riders. Mike explained that most riders can be reached by providing information on buses and at bus facilities, and that non-riders are reached using more traditional advertising methods.

**VI. Sustainability Goal Communications**

Mike Tremblay discussed that a communication plan is needed regarding Metro's recent shift away from a zero-emission goal.

Steve Riley suggests that bus fuel type and emissions goal are largely a public perception issue, and that most passengers don't care what kind of bus they ride, only that the service is operating well.

Ed Suslovic agrees that this is an opportunity to highlight the sustainability benefits of transit. Increasing transit mode share will have greater environmental benefits no matter the fuel type.

**VII. Future Agenda Items**

- Fare Policy
- Scarborough Service Launch marketing
- Microtransit marketing
- Map and Schedule Overhaul

**VIII. Upcoming Meetings**

- Finance Committee – April 1, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Advocacy Committee – March 19, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Executive Committee – March 16, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Board of Directors – June 25, 2026 at 4:00pm
- Market/Coms Committee – May 20, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Executive Committee – March 26, 2026 at 3:30pm

**IX. Adjournment:**

Bill Rixon motioned to adjourn, seconded by Steve Riley.  
The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 pm.



## **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

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### **DATE**

May 18, 2026

### **SUBJECT**

Fare Policy Review Update

### **PURPOSE**

To update the Committee on our ongoing Fare Policy Review, including public feedback to date, and draft changes to be reviewed by the Executive Committee on May 27.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Greater Portland Metro last raised its fares in 2020. As part of the 2026 budget process, the Board of Directors asked that Metro staff revisit fare prices in 2026.

Metro has contracted with Four Nines Technologies on a fare policy evaluation that includes considerations for base fare, reduced fare discount, fare caps, express fares, and methods of fare payment, including open fare payment, known colloquially as “tap to pay”. Metro conducted public involvement meetings in April 2026, and will be seeking approval from the Board of Directors in June 2026.

Metro staff will review the proposed changes and public comments received to date.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed fare changes are projected to generate an additional 6.3% more fare revenue than 2025, with a similar level of ridership. However, the projection falls approximately 5.8% short of the budgeted fare revenue amount in 2026.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion only.

### **CONTACT**

Mike Tremblay  
Director of Transit Development  
(207) 517-3023  
mtremblay@gpmetro.org

## **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

## **AGENDA ITEM 6**

### **DATE**

May 18, 2026

### **SUBJECT**

Tap to Pay Marketing Plan

### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Committee with Metro's strategy to market tap-to-pay to our customers in 2026 and beyond.

### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Metro's current fare policy does not allow for direct payment on board, except using cash. Our DiriGo Pass system requires users to pre-load their account with cash, or ride with a pass provided by their employer or educational institution. Thus, fare payment can be a barrier to riding transit for some users, particularly those visiting the area, infrequent riders, and/or those who do not carry cash. Tap-to-pay may also provide an option for those who board the bus but find they are unable to pay (insufficient balance on DiriGo account, or having inexact change), reducing the likelihood that passengers will ride without paying the full fare or attempt to evade paying their fares.

According to Metro's consultant, Four Nines Technologies, tap-to-pay can generate 3-5% additional ridership, but only if it is well-marketed. In order to reach these ridership generation levels, Metro is preparing a multi-faceted approach to marketing tap-to-pay, including:

- Physical, permanent signage at bus stops
- Exterior advertising on buses (bus wraps)
- Direct outreach to businesses, particularly in downtown Portland and the Old Port
- Digital marketing
  - Social media
  - Website
  - Metro-owned monitors
  - Video advertising (TV streaming, etc)
- Printed materials
  - Flyers
  - Posters
  - Route brochures
- Creative Services
  - Work with consultant to create unified vision for open fare payment

**FISCAL IMPACT**

When marketed well, tap-to-pay can result in fare revenue increases of 3-5% above typical out-of-pocket ridership.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This item is for information and discussion only.

**CONTACT**

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