

# Advocacy Committee

May 21, 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:

<https://meet.google.com/wzx-amyp-mcv>

Or dial: (US) +1 646-535-6995 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 April 16, 2026 Advocacy Committee Meeting.	Lou Simms, Committee Chair	Action
<b>4. Legislative Update (3:10 – 3:30)</b> Staff will review status of pending state and 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>• Public Transit Advisory Council</li><li>• Maine Transit Association</li><li>• Regional Transportation Advisory Committee</li><li>• Housing &amp; Transit Coordination</li></ul>	Megan Hannan, Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement	Information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BRT Next Steps</li> <li>○ Op-Ed on Price of Gas v Metro</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<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 – May 27, 2026 at 3:30</li> <li>• Planning and Operations – June 17, 2026 at 10:30</li> <li>• Executive Committee – June 24, 2026 at 3:30</li> <li>• Board of Directors – June 25, 2026 at 4:00</li> <li>• Executive Committee – July 22, 2026 at 3:30</li> <li>• Advocacy Committee – August 20, 2026 at 3:00</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 April 16, 2026:  
DRAFT Meeting Minutes:**

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

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Megan Hannan – Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement Glenn Felton – Executive Director Chad Heid – Chief Transportation Officer	

**I. With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order by Lou Simms at 3:02 pm**

**II. Public Comment:**

- No comments from members of the public present.

**III. Meeting Minutes:**

Lou Simms moved acceptance of the minutes from the February 19, 2026 Advocacy Committee Meeting. David Morse 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 State Legislature, Federal budget and the Federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization processes engaged with 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 – April 22, 2026 at 3:30
- Finance Committee – May 6, 2026 at 3:00
- Advocacy Committee – May 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Board of Directors – June 25 2026, at 4pm

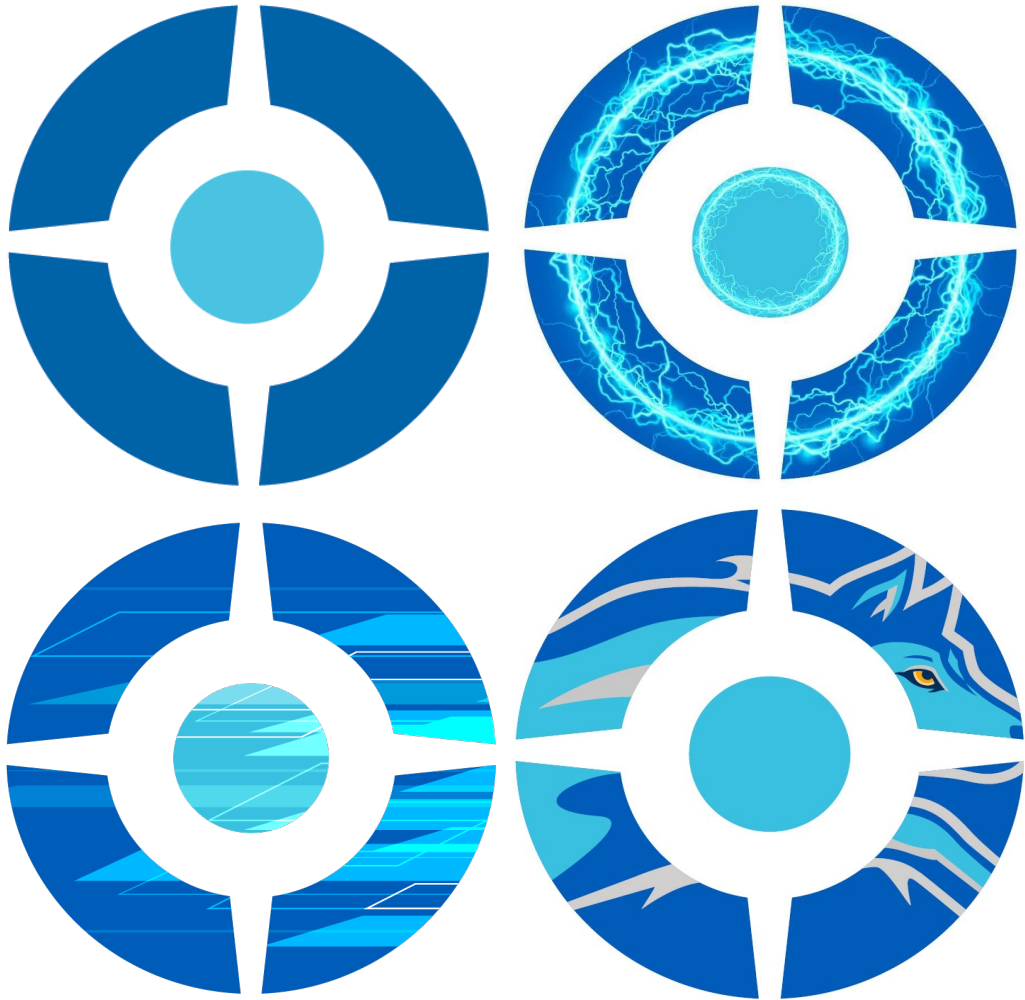
**VIII. Adjournment:** Adjournment was moved by David Morse, seconded by Lou Simms and the meeting ended by mutual consent at 3:37 pm.

DRAFT

# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

Advocacy Committee

April 16, 2026



**metro** **CONNECT**  
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
- LD 2212      Supplemental Budget



# Federal Update

- President's Proposed FY 2027 Budget
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization



# Federal Transit Administration

## Budgetary Resources (in thousands of dollars)

Account	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Enacted	FY 2027 Request
Capital Investment Grants (GF) (D)	2,205,000	1,700,000	1,214,500
Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (GF) (D)	150,000	150,000	150,000
Technical Assistance & Training (GF) (D)	7,500	7,500	-
Transit Infrastructure Grants (GF) (D)	45,569	23,052	-
<i>Transit Infrastructure Grants (repurposed IIJA funds) (GF) (D)</i>	-	188,371	-
Transit Formula Grants (OBLIM) (TF) (M)	14,279,000	14,642,000	14,950,000
<i>Administrative Expenses [non-add]</i>	[143,147]	[147,442]	[147,442]
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,687,069</b>	<b>16,710,923</b>	<b>16,314,500</b>
<b>IIJA Supplemental Total</b>	4,250,000	4,250,000	-
<b>Repurposed IIJA Supplemental Total*</b>	-	(50,371)	-
<b>TOTAL BUDGETARY RESOURCES</b>	<b>20,937,069</b>	<b>20,910,552</b>	<b>16,314,500</b>
<b>FTEs</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>547</b>

\* The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026 (P.L. 119-75) repurposed IIJA Division J funds from one or more years.

**FY 2027  
Budget**

# FY 2027 Budget

	FY 2026 IIJA Authorized (P.L. 117-58)	FY 2026 THUD Appropriation (P.L. 119-75)	FY 2027 President's Budget	President's Budget Increase/(Decrease) from FY 2026 THUD Appropriation:	President's Budget Increase/(Decrease) from FY 2026 THUD Appropriations:
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$22,292,000,000</b>	<b>\$21,105,119,368</b>	<b>\$16,315,000,000</b>	<b>(\$4,790,119,368)</b>	<b>-22.7%</b>
<b>Contract Authority</b>	<b>\$14,642,000,000</b>	<b>\$14,642,000,000</b>	<b>\$14,950,000,000</b>	<b>\$308,000,000</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
§ 5305 Planning	\$202,441,512	\$202,441,512			
§ 5307 and § 5336 Urbanized Area Formula Grants	\$7,025,844,743	\$7,050,844,743			
§ 5310 Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Grants	\$407,023,583	\$407,023,583			
§ 5311 Rural Formula Grants	\$959,639,810	\$959,639,810			
§ 5312 Public Transportation Innovation	\$40,390,337	\$40,390,337			
§ 5312(b) Low or No Emission Vehicle Component Assessment	\$5,481,842	\$5,481,842			
§ 5312(b) Transit Cooperative Research Program	\$7,212,560	\$7,212,560			
§ 5314 Technical Assistance and Workforce Development	\$12,982,608	\$12,982,608			
§ 5314(c) National Transit Institute	\$7,212,560	\$7,212,560			
§ 5318 Bus Testing Facility	\$5,481,842	\$6,981,842			
§ 5334 FTA Administration	\$147,441,654	\$147,441,654			
§ 5335 National Transit Database	\$5,770,048	\$5,770,048			
§ 5337 State of Good Repair Grants	\$3,850,496,668	\$3,850,496,668			
§ 5337(f) Competitive Grants for Rail Vehicle Replacement	\$300,000,000	\$300,000,000			
§ 5339 Buses and Bus Facilities Grants	\$1,152,557,380	\$1,152,557,380			
§ 5339(a) Bus Formula Grants	\$662,198,464	\$662,198,464			
§ 5339(b)(c) Bus Competitive Grants	\$490,358,916	\$490,358,916			
§ 5339(c) Low or No Emission Bus Competitive Grants	\$78,457,427	\$78,457,427			
§ 5340 Growing and High Density States	\$812,455,901	\$812,455,901			
§ 5340(c) Growing States	\$430,601,628	\$430,601,628			
§ 5340(d) High Density States	\$381,854,274	\$381,854,274			
§ 3006(b) of FAST Act Coordinated Access and Mobility	\$5,048,792	\$5,048,792			
§ 20005(b) of MAP-21 Pilot Program for TOD Planning	\$14,425,121	\$14,425,121			
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$3,400,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,263,490,368</b>	<b>\$1,365,000,000</b>	<b>(\$898,490,368)</b>	<b>-39.7%</b>
§ 5309 Fixed-Guideway Capital Investment Grants (CIG)	\$3,000,000,000	\$1,700,000,000	\$1,215,000,000	(\$485,000,000)	-28.5%
§ 5019 of IIJA Act WMATA	\$150,000,000	\$150,000,000	\$150,000,000	\$0	0.0%
Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Competitive Grants	\$50,000,000			\$0	N/A
Rural Communities Essential Ferry Service	\$200,000,000	\$20,000,000	\$0	(\$20,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 5314 Technical Assistance and Training		\$7,500,000	\$0	(\$7,500,000)	-100.0%
Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed		\$147,923,390	\$0	(\$147,923,390)	-100.0%
§ 5312 Public Transportation Research		\$2,000,000	\$0	(\$2,000,000)	-100.0%
Transit Safety		\$15,000,000	\$0	(\$15,000,000)	-100.0%
2026 FIFA World Cup		\$100,250,212	\$0	(\$100,250,212)	-100.0%
2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games		\$94,316,766	\$0	(\$94,316,766)	-100.0%
<b>Advance Appropriations</b>	<b>\$4,250,000,000</b>	<b>\$4,250,000,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$4,250,000,000)</b>	<b>-100.0%</b>
§ 5309 Fixed-Guideway CIG Grants	\$1,600,000,000	\$1,600,000,000	\$0	(\$1,600,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 5309(d) New Starts Grants	\$880,000,000	\$734,900,000	\$0	(\$880,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 5309(e) Core Capacity Grants	\$320,000,000		\$0	(\$320,000,000)	N/A
§ 5309(h) Small Starts Grants	\$240,000,000	\$849,500,000	\$0	(\$240,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 3005(b) of FAST Act Expedited Project Delivery CIG Grants	\$160,000,000		\$0	(\$160,000,000)	N/A
§ 5310 Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Grants	\$50,000,000	\$50,000,000	\$0	(\$50,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 5337(c)(8)(d) Fixed Guideway State of Good Repair Grants	\$950,000,000	\$950,000,000	\$0	(\$950,000,000)	-100.0%
§ 5339(c) Low or No Emission Bus Competitive Grants	\$1,050,000,000	\$1,050,000,000	\$0	(\$1,050,000,000)	-100.0%
All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) Competitive Grants	\$350,000,000	\$350,000,000	\$0	(\$350,000,000)	-100.0%
Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Competitive Grants	\$50,000,000	\$50,000,000	\$0	(\$50,000,000)	-100.0%
Rural Communities Essential Ferry Service	\$200,000,000	\$200,000,000	\$0	(\$200,000,000)	-100.0%

# FY 2027 Budget

## President Trump Requested

- \$16.3 billion (-23 percent) for public transit and
- \$2.8 billion (-82 percent) for passenger rail in FY 2027.

The President's Budget does not request to continue any advance appropriations under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which results in substantial cuts to key public transit and passenger rail investments, including:

- Capital Investment Grants (-\$1.6 billion)
- Low or No Emission Competitive Grants (-\$1.05 billion)
- State of Good Repair grants (-\$950 million)
- All Station Accessibility Program (-\$350 million)
- Ferry Competitive Grants (-\$250 million)
- Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grants (-\$7.2 billion)
- Railroad Crossing Elimination Grants (-\$500 million)

# FY 2027 Budget

## Public Transit

- \$16.3 billion for public transit in FY 2027, a \$4.8 billion (-23%) decrease from the FY 2026 enacted level.
- \$14.95 billion (+2.1 %) for formula and competitive programs funded from the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund. The Budget does not include a proposal to eliminate the Mass Transit Account.
- \$1.2 billion for CIG in FY 2027, a \$2.1 billion (-63%) decrease from the FY 2026 enacted level. Currently, communities are requesting more than \$31.9 billion of CIG funds in FY 2027 and subsequent years to fund construction of 54 projects in 23 States.

The Budget request does *not* include U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) surface transportation authorization funding or policy proposals.

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## The "Basics" vs. "Green"

The most significant development is the shift in focus compared to 2021.

- The "BASICS" Act: Ensure that a portion of federal highway money goes **directly** to county-owned roads and bridges by formula, rather than just being funneled through state DOTs.
- The Climate Friction: Focus on "State of Good Repair" pivoting funds away from "*social or climate*" programs back to clear the backlog of crumbling bridges and freight corridors.

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## The House Draft

The House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee is in the drafting phase.

- A full committee "discussion draft" should be released in late May.
- Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) has indicated that the House version will focus heavily on streamlining permitting (cutting "red tape" to get projects built faster) and formula funding (giving states more control over how they spend their money).

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## The Senate Drafts

In the Senate, the process is slower because four different committees have to write their own parts:

- **EPW (Environment & Public Works):** Writing the Highway section. Generally, this is the most bipartisan part and is expected to break first.
- **Banking:** Writing the Transit section.
- **Commerce:** Writing the Rail and Safety section.
- **Finance:** This is the Money Committee tasked with solving the \$38 billion Highway Trust Fund shortfall.

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## Timing

- May / June: Committee Markups
- July: Floor Votes in House & Senate
- August: Conference Committee
- September 30: Deadline for new funding

# Surface Transportation Reauth

## Public Transit Program Recommendations

APTA recommends several changes to improve public transit program administration and the efficiency, effectiveness, and distribution of FTA funds.

### APTA Recommendations:

- **Provide contract authority for formula programs on October 1 of each fiscal year and make the funds immediately available for obligation.** Amend Chapter 53 of Title 49 at the appropriate place to add language similar to the distribution of Federal-aid Highway contract authority pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 118.
- **Provide that FTA funds be apportioned or granted directly to the public transportation agencies in Urbanized Areas with a population of 50,000 to 200,000.**
- **Reauthorize the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program for Federally assisted public transportation projects.**

# Advocacy Update

- Gubernatorial Candidate Education
- Public Transit Advisory Council
- Maine Transit Association
- Housing & Transit Coordination
- Advocacy Communications

## Gubernatorial Candidate Education

- Move to Congressional Candidates?



Advocacy  
Update

# Advocacy Update

## Public Transit Advisory Council

- New Transportation Committee
- New Governor



# MAINE TRANSIT ASSOCIATION Prepared for the Maine Office of Community Affairs Planning for Public Transit in Maine Communities

A Municipal Development Review Guidance Document  
2026 Edition

When a developer submits a subdivision application or site plan in Maine, the review process typically includes detailed analysis of traffic impacts, capacity on sewer and water systems, and stormwater management. These are treated as essential infrastructure questions—not optional considerations. Public transit deserves the same treatment.

This guide, produced by the Maine Transit Association (MTA) for distribution to municipalities through the Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA), provides practical tools for integrating transit planning into standard municipal development review. It is designed to be used alongside traffic studies, utility capacity analyses, and comprehensive planning efforts.

### Why Transit Planning Belongs in Development Review

Transit is infrastructure. Like roads and pipes, the capacity, safety, and reach of Maine's public transit network is directly shaped by decisions made during the development review process. When municipalities fail to ask transit-related questions early—or ask them too late—the result is housing and commercial development that is permanently disconnected from the transit network, regardless of how many buses run nearby.

Maine's transit providers serve Kennebec, Somerset, York, Cumberland, Penobscot, Aroostook, Hancock, Washington, Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties. They operate fixed routes, flex services, demand-response programs, and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT). Their ability to serve new development depends on decisions made today.

## I. Applying the Traffic-Sewer-Water Standard to Transit

Maine municipalities routinely require applicants to answer the following questions during site plan or subdivision review:

TRAFFIC	SEWER & WATER	TRANSIT
What vehicle trips will this generate? Can nearby roads handle the load?	What is the daily flow demand? Does utility capacity exist to serve this development?	Is the site connected to transit? What does it need to be? Who do we ask?

# Using & Transit

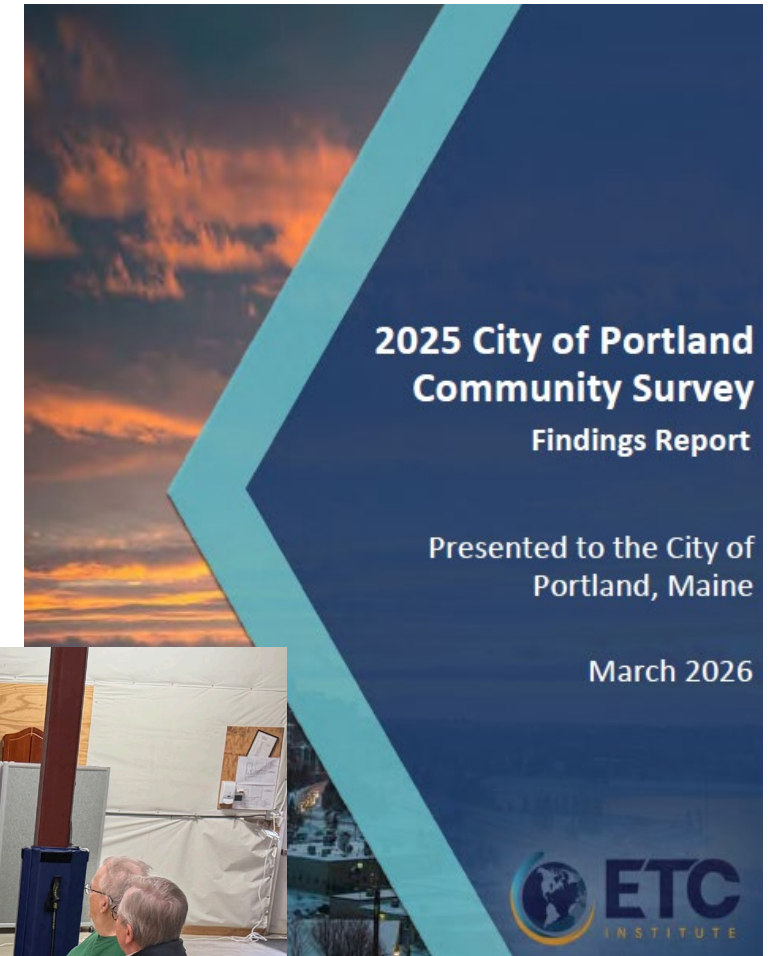


# Advocacy Update

# Advocacy Update

## Advocacy Communications

- Portland Community Survey
- Fare Policy
- Facility Build
- Scarborough
- BRT



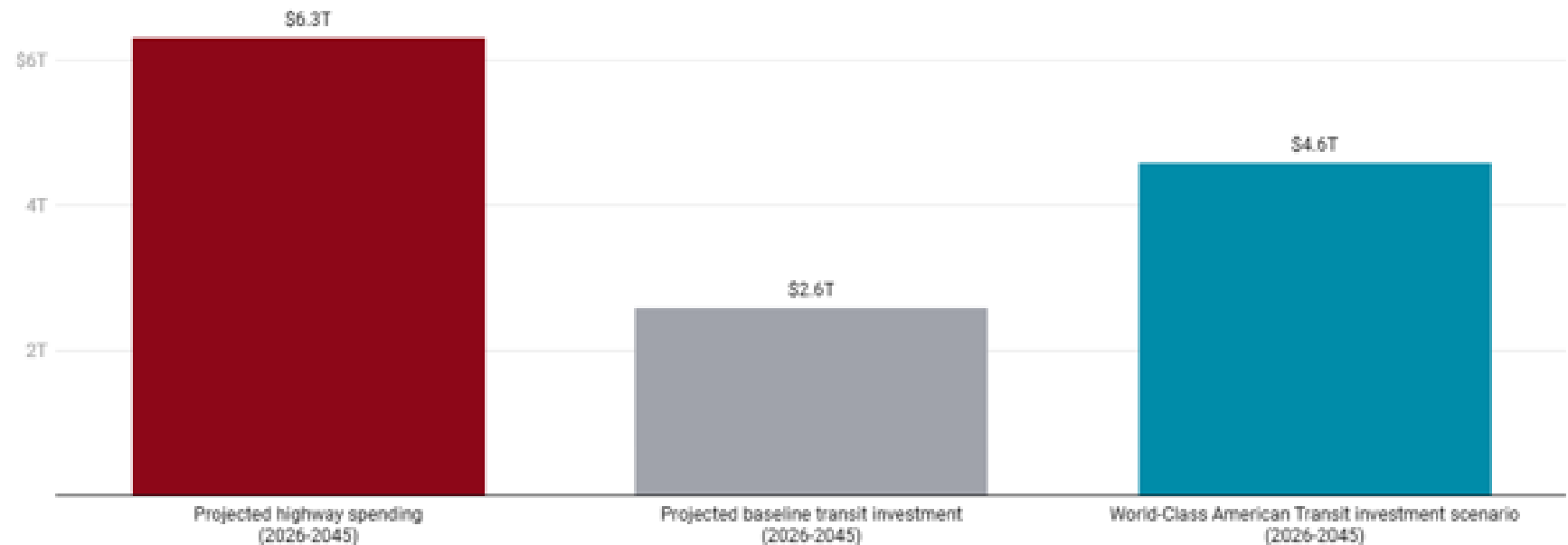
# Advocacy Update

## Consumer savings and investments in context

We did not build the interstate system overnight, and it's not reasonable to expect the same when it comes to transit. Cumulative public spending on public highway infrastructure is nearly 3.5 times that of what has been invested into transit. The investment deficit between today's service and world-class transit is sizable, but the costs are comprehensible. **World-class transit** would take an entire generation of public investment, political capital, professional capacity building, improvements to land use and development, and national culture shifts to attain.

### Projected transportation spending between 2026-2045, all levels of government

When projected future highway spending is taken into account, World-Class American Transit spending levels, transit would still represent *less than half* of total transportation spending. This does not factor in transit-friendly road projects, which could even further reduce the need for dedicated transit investments.



Values in 2024 dollars. Extrapolation from linear projection of public spending data from 1956-2023

Source: [Congressional Budget Office \(2025\)](#) - [Get the data](#) - Created with [Datawrapper](#)

# Advocacy Update

## Key Messages

### **Growth Strategy :**

Transit is not just transportation — it's an economic growth strategy. Smart transit connects workers to jobs, strengthens downtowns, and grows local tax bases while helping communities manage growth efficiently.

### **Business Competitiveness :**

Communities with strong transit are more competitive. Reliable transit expands the labor pool, attracts investment, and makes it easier for businesses and workers to thrive.

### **Community Payoff :**

Every dollar invested in transit returns five dollars to the economy. That's stronger businesses, higher property values, and healthier municipal budgets.

# Future Agenda Items

- Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Workplan Development (Strategic Plan)
- Coalition Building, State Advocacy;  
Local as appropriate

## Upcoming Meetings

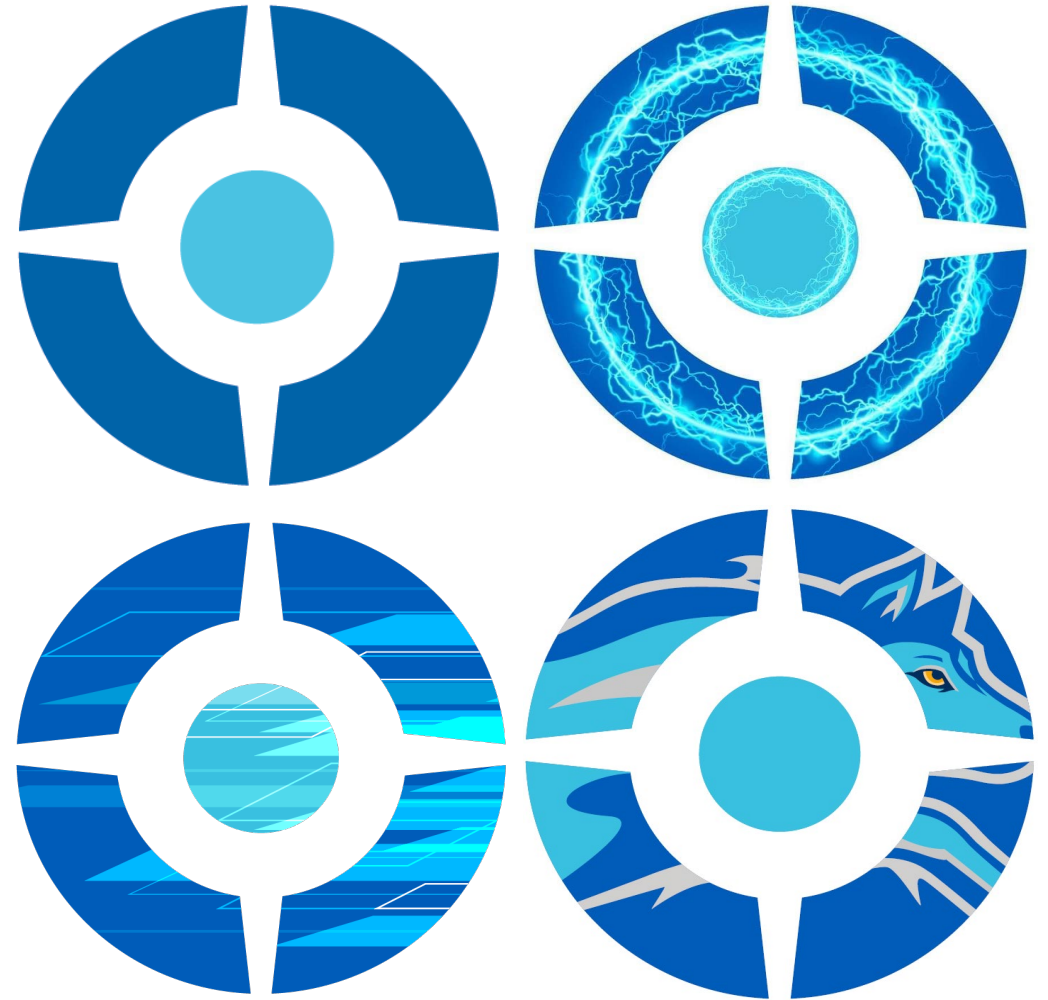
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- Finance Committee – May 6, 2026 at 3:00
- Advocacy Committee – May 21, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Board of Directors – June 25 2026, at 4pm

# GREATER PORTLAND METRO

Advocacy Committee

Next Meeting: May 21 @ 3:00

# Adjourn



**metro** **CONNECT**  
GREATER PORTLAND ON-DEMAND TRANSIT