Greater Portland Metro Advocacy Committee
Wednesday February 19, 2026:
(Meeting Minutes Approved April 16, 2026)

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:

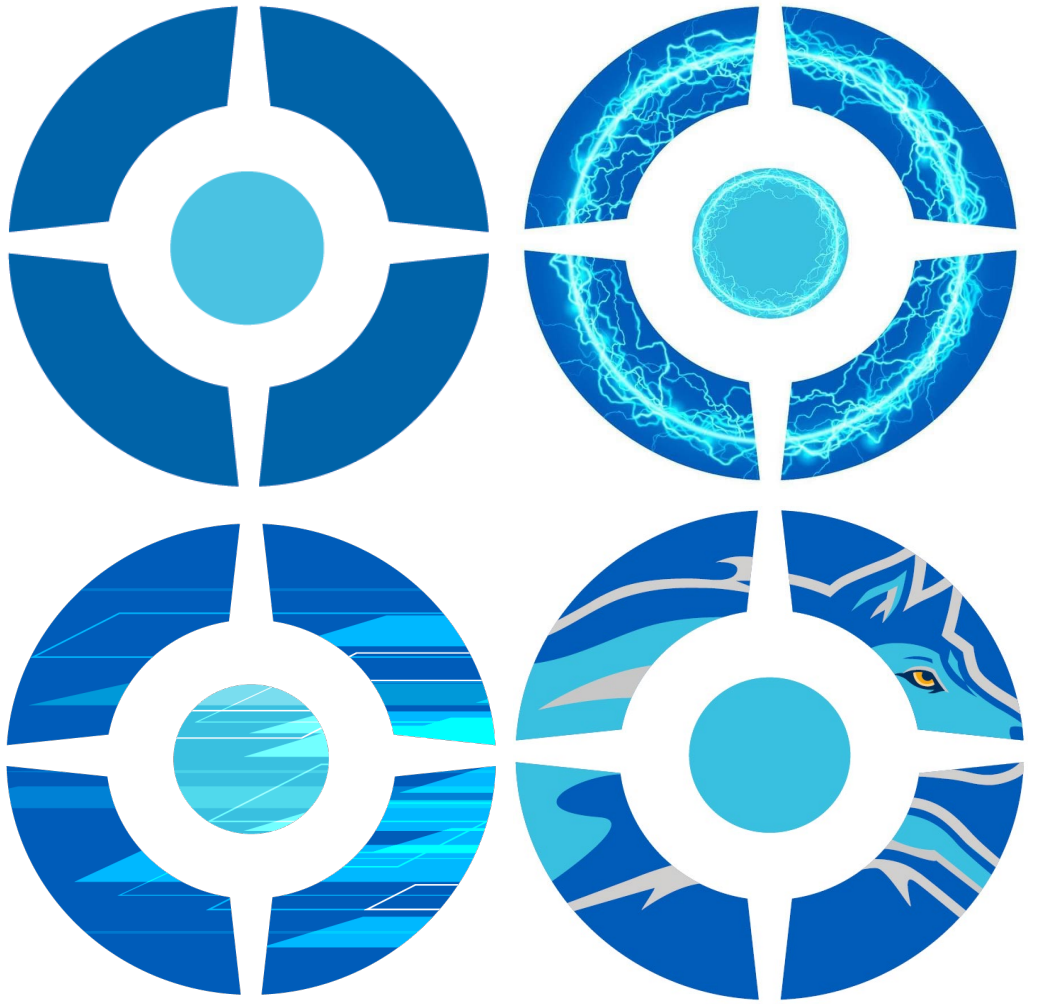
- Executive Committee – February 23, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Board of Directors – February 26, 2026 at 4:00 pm
- Finance Committee – March 4, 2026 at 3:00 pm
- Mkt/Coms Committee – March 11, 2026 at 3:30 pm
- Plan/Ops Committee – March 18, 2026 at 10:30 am
- Advocacy Committee – March 19, 2026 @ 3:00 pm

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

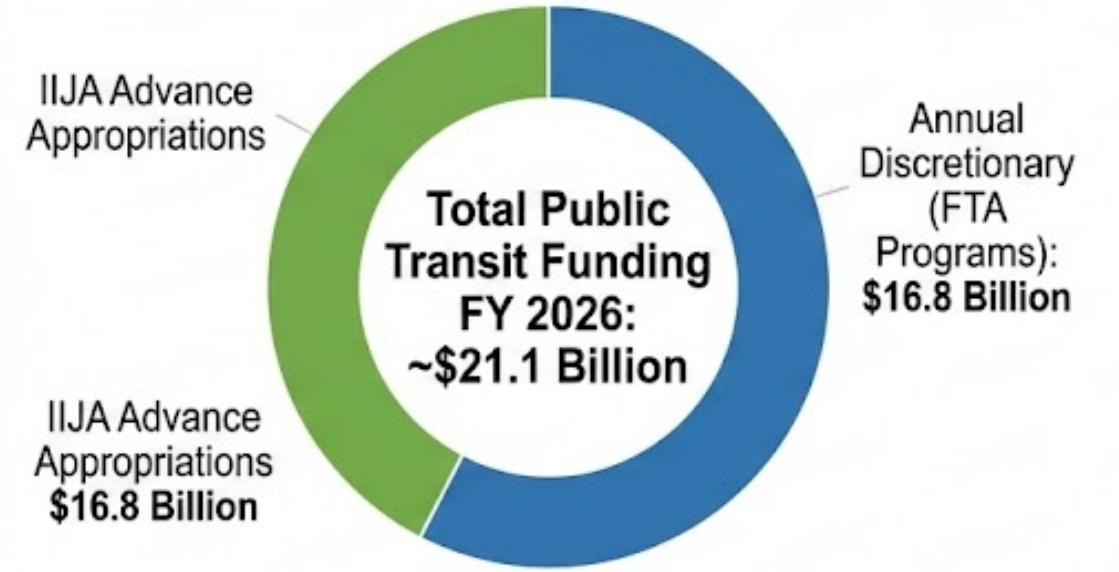
Program	FY25 Enacted	House Proposal	Senate Proposal	Final Enacted
Total Transit Funding	$20.9B	$19.2B	$21.1B	**$21.1B**
FTA (Annual Discretionary)	$16.6B	$16.8B	$16.5B	**$16.5B**
Capital Investment Grants	$3.8B	$1.65B	$3.55B	**$3.3B**
Bus & Bus Facilities (Total)	$1.0B	$1.0B	$1.1B	**$1.1B**
Low-No Vehicle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

*Includes IIJA 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



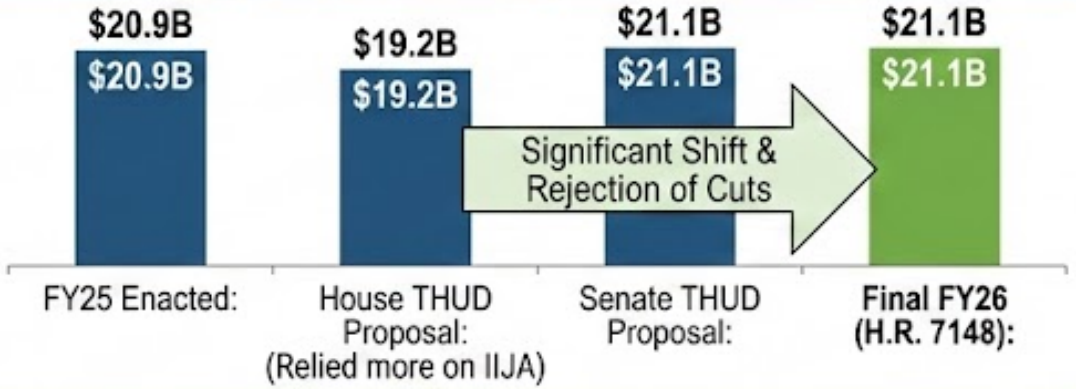
What This Means for Metro (Greater Portland Metro)

- **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

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)



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
- Workplan Development (Strategic Plan)
- Coalition Building, State Advocacy; Local as appropriate



Upcoming Meetings

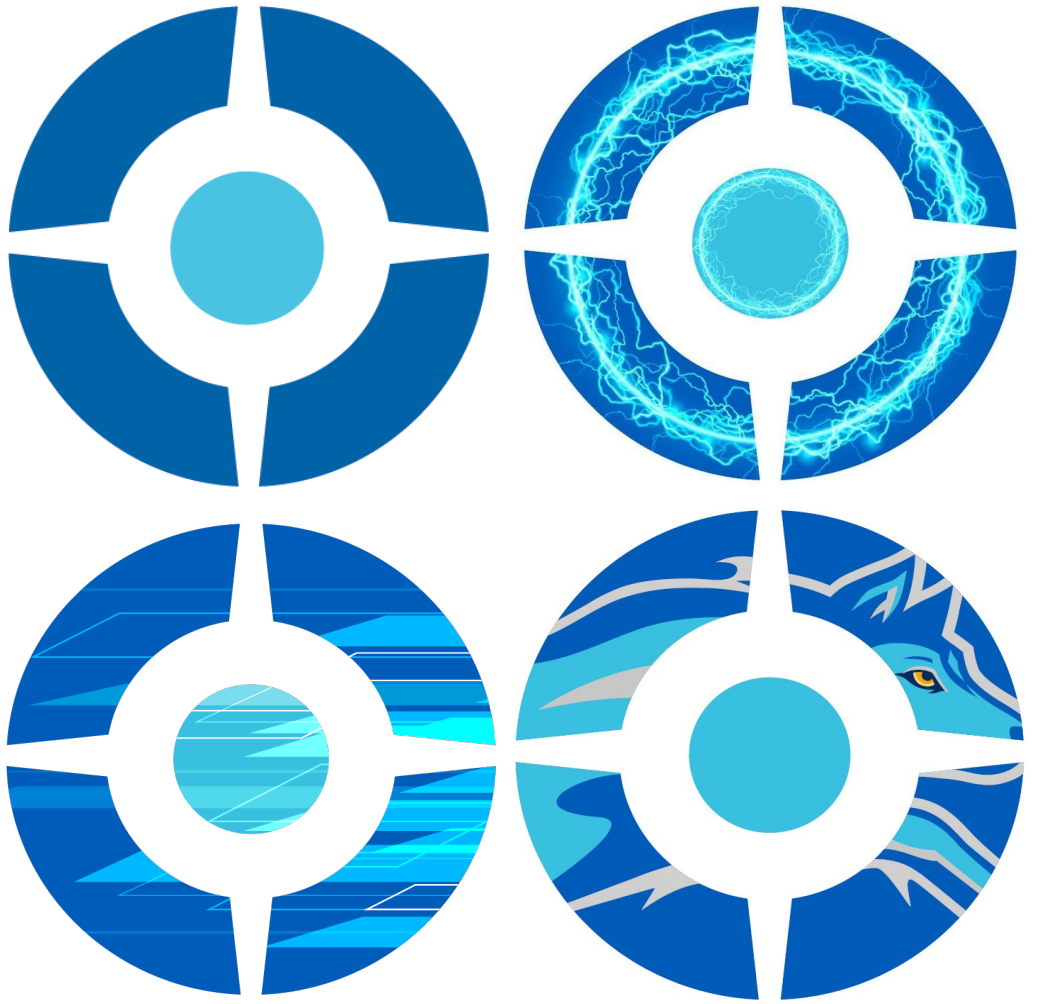
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GREATER PORTLAND METRO

Advocacy Committee

Next Meeting: March 19 @ 3:00

Adjourn



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GREATER PORTLAND ON-DEMAND TRANSIT