Planning and Operations Committee

November 18, 2026 | 10:30 am – 12:00 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:
Google Meet joining info
Video call link: https://meet.google.com/mhy-hqxq-zkk
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MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
1. Call Meeting to Order (10:30)	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	N/A
2. Public Comment (10:30-10:35) The Planning & Operations 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.	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	Information
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (10:35-10:40) The committee will review and consider approving the minutes from the September meeting of the Planning and Operations Committee.	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	**Action**
4. Operations Key Performance Indicators and Staff Update (10:40-10:55) Staff will report monthly updates on agency KPIs and service updates.	Metro Staff	Information
5. Next Stop: South Portland – Outreach Plan and Service Concepts (10:55-11:15) Staff will provide the public information plan for the 2027 route optimization in South Portland, and will discuss possible concepts for consideration.	Metro Staff	Information

6. Three-year Service Outlook (11:15-11:30) Staff will discuss possible service expansion and changes being considered for the next 1 to 3 years.	Metro Staff	Information
7. Future Agenda Items (11:30-11:35) Committee members may request future agenda items. ● Lewiston-Auburn-Portland service options and partnerships ● Updates to the Metro Projects website ● Shelter and stop standards ● Jewel Box Shelter ● Pulse Reopening ● #1 Atlantic St. Determination	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	Information
8. Upcoming Meetings (11:35-11:40) ● Plan/Ops Committee – TBD January 2027 ● Advocacy Committee – TBD ● Executive Committee – Nov 25, 2026 at 3:30pm ● Finance Committee – Dec 2, 2026 at 3:30pm ● Facilities Committee – Next meeting TBD ● Market/Coms Committee – TBD January 2027 ● Board of Directors – Dec 10, 2026 at 4:00pm	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	Information
9. Adjournment (11:40)	Julie Dubovski, Vice Chair	**ACTION**

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 Planning and Operations Committee
Wednesday September 16, 2026
DRAFT Meeting Minutes:

Committee Member	Municipality	Role	Status
Jeff Levine	Portland	Chair	Present
Julie Dubovsky	Yarmouth	Vice Chair	Present
Wes Pelletier	Portland	Member	Present
Gabe Faulkner-Macklin	South Portland	Member	Present

Board Member	Municipality	Role	Status
Ed Suslovic	Portland	Board President	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Chad Heid, Chief Transportation Officer Mike Tremblay, Director of Transit Development Megan Hannan, Director of Government Affairs, Nigel Mills, Operations Analyst	No members of the public were present

1. **With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order By: Jeff Levine at 10:31 am**

2. **Public Comment:**
No members of the public were present.

3. **Approval of May Meeting Minutes:**
The draft meeting minutes from the May 26 committee meeting were provided in the agenda packet. Julie Dubovsky motioned to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Gabe Faulkner-Macklin; minutes were approved unanimously.

4. **Operations Key Performance Indicators and Staff Update:**
Chad Heid presented details for each KPI, noting a bit of a dip due to school starting a day late and potentially the new bus fare. Nigel created a map of crashes as requested, noting the vast majority of accidents take place within the Metro bus yard.

Ed Suslovic asked about how Metro can let the public know about the KPIs and dispel some public assumptions about Metro's efficacy; this is on the workplan for Nigel Mills, the new Operations Analyst, but he just started two weeks ago. There are many opportunities to let the public know about this on social media and to lawmakers.

Mike Tremblay also discussed a September 8 meeting about route changes with the South Portland Council. The Council is very supportive of more transit options, and only disagreed on the start date – right away, or next fiscal year.

Mike also discussed a new improved route map and schedule to improve the customer experience. Wes Pelletier asked about using the Urbanist Coalition of Portland's real-time map, which he thinks is a bit more user friendly. Mike agreed they have a good map and reiterated that their maps are using the same data Metro maps and Google maps are using.

5. Route 25 and Scarborough Microtransit Service & Schedule

Mike Tremblay updated the Committee on the status of the Scarborough service. The soft launch date for microtransit is Sunday, Sept. 20 and fixed route is October 4. Most buses will stop and the MaineHealth campus and Park-n-Ride, and real time performance will be closely monitored.

Metro changed the micro app to a new bidder, Via. There have been some glitches within Metro and within the app, but Metro will refresh marketing in Falmouth, invite past riders to come back.

Ed Suslovic asked about Scarborough service projections. Staff answered that they have done the numbers but could not remember the number off hand, but cautioned that all services start slow. Staff will track the two-year pilot period closely so there are data to report to the Scarborough Council and the zone can be expanded or shrunk based on ridership.

The service is fully funded for the pilot period through several funding mechanisms and Scarborough is stepping up its funding to eventually meet full member funding.

Ed also asked about how this new service will work in ongoing BSOOB funding. Mike said they are talking to BSOOB to coordinate so that the public doesn't see two buses following each other, but there are also financial implications for BSOOB to let go of routes altogether.

6. Service to Portland Homeless Services Center:

Board member Anna Bullet asked Metro staff to look into directly serving the HSC. Since the HSC opened, there are been at least two fatal pedestrian crashes. Mike discussed challenges and limitations to possible service to Portland Homeless Services Center at 654 Riverside Street. Those challenges include:

- Lost time (about 10 mins) and cost to the current Route 2 for this detour
- Turning out of the site requires a left turn without a light and fast-moving traffic, which is a safety concern.
- Doing this would require new service, although that would still reduce service to Pride's Corner and Riverside, which are imperfect and costly solutions.

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Metro staff have determined this is not a feasible in 2027 budget, but it will be considered in future route discussions.

Jeff Levine asked how the request interacts with the City shuttle. That shuttle is operating, but it is not necessarily running often enough. Mike added that if Metro does add a fixed route, the City of Portland could be paying twice – for the shuttle and a new bus route. Microtransit may be a solution, but Metro has heard the HSC is also acting as a senior homeless shelter, the majority of residents are older residents, so they may not have access to a smart phone to call a return ride. Making a larger change and making that whole area a micro area to include Riverside Rd. businesses and the golf course is being discussed.

Ed said there is a larger issue of ensuring bus safety, so if they have to cross streets without the proper infrastructure the stop needs to be considered. GPCOG is working on a bus stop inventory to answer these questions. Metro does not know where people are actually going, so may not be the best solution. Mike noted Since the facility has opened, ridership at the Riverton Park stop has grown substantially, from less than 100 for June to October 2022, to over 3,700 for the same period in 2025.

Next steps: Glenn Fenton met with the Asst. City Manager about this, and Metro will be involved as a support but it is a City shelter and they will be the lead.

ACTION: Metro will talk to City about pedestrian safety at all bus stops

7. Future Agenda Items:

Items suggested in the Agenda:

- Results of South Portland City Council process
- Lewiston-Auburn-Portland service options and partnerships
- Updates to the Metro Projects website
- Shelter and stop standards
- Jewel Box Shelter
- Pulse Reopening
- #1 Atlantic St. Determination

Committee members also requested to add these future agenda items:

- Roux Institute-data analysis (Ed Suslovic)
- Gorham Transportation Study (Jeff Levine)
- Train station update (Jeff Levine)
- Soccer Stadium – impact on service (Jeff Levine)
- Follow up on the HSC
- Follow up on the larger bus stop safety
- Portland West study

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8. Upcoming Meetings:

- Plan/Ops Committee – November 18, 2026 at 10:30am
- Advocacy Committee – November 12, 12:30 – 1:30 pm
- Executive Committee – September 23, 2026 at 3:30pm
- Finance Committee – October 7, 2026 at 3:00pm
- Facilities Committee – October 1, 2026 at 3:30 – 5:30 pm
- Market/Coms Committee – Nov. 4, 2026 at 3:30pm* (proposed reschedule from Nov. 11 holiday)

The Committee expressed its appreciation for Chad Heid's service and wished him well in his next endeavor.

9. Adjournment:

Motion to Adjourn by Gabe Faulkner Macklin, seconded by Julie Dubovsky.
Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am

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PLANNING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM 5

DATE
November 12, 2026

SUBJECT
Next Stop: South Portland – Outreach Plan and Service Concepts

PURPOSE
To provide the Committee a plan and schedule for upcoming service changes in South Portland

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS
In October 2026, the City of South Portland City Council voted unanimously to allocate an additional $125,000 to Metro's operating budget for 2027 to support improved transit service in South Portland. At workshops in March and September, the Council generally supported concepts presented by Metro that would significantly reshape service in South Portland, with a goal of making service faster, more frequent, and more direct for South Portland residents and visitors.

In November 2025, Metro conducted initial public meetings in South Portland and Scarborough, nicknamed Next Stop: Scarborough | South Portland, to help determine how people perceive the transit system and what could work better for riders and nonriders. This input was used to help design the Scarborough service that Metro launched in Fall 2026, and will be a helpful base of information as we proceed into additional public process for South Portland.

In South Portland, service improvements are likely to come with significant changes to the existing routes serving South Portland. As required by Metro's Title VI program, significant changes to existing services require a robust public information process. As such, Metro is planning a multi-pronged approach to public involvement, which will likely include:

- At least three in-person public meetings, of which at least two will be in South Portland
- At least one virtual meeting
- Metro's Planning and Operations Committee
- Public outreach through community organizations
- A public survey
- At least one final informational public meeting (which would serve as the required Title VI public hearing) on the final changes to routes and bus stops

Public outreach is likely to take place in January 2027, with the final public informational meeting in March or April. Service changes are expected to launch in June 2027.

FISCAL IMPACT
The anticipated route changes, and South Portland's increased assessment, are already reflected in Metro's approved 2027 budget. Metro will be designing route changes to primarily affect South Portland's revenue hours. To the extent that service changes affect other Metro communities, these will be reflected in Metro's 2028 budget cycle.

RECOMMENDATION
This item is for information and discussion only.

CONTACT
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PLANNING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM 6

DATE
November 12, 2026

SUBJECT
Three-Year Service Outlook

PURPOSE
To provide the Committee with an outline of planned, possible, and conceptual service changes to consider over the next three years

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS
Metro routinely evaluates our service profile to identify issues and opportunities for our services. As our service evolves thanks to new technology, service types, and partnerships, assumptions about the next Metro project or initiative may change. Metro staff endeavors to evaluate our future plans and discuss with the Planning and Operations Committee at least once per calendar year.

Metro has several short-term goals for our service, which include:

- Improving service frequency
- Improving span of service
- Improving service coverage
- Improving technology and passenger information
- Improving comfort and safety at bus stops

These broad goals are limited by budget, staff capacity, and, in some cases, forces outside of Metro's control. In the short term, Metro is significantly limited by our bus storage and maintenance facility, which is at capacity and is unlikely to be reconstructed before 2030. As such, Metro's focus on service until a facility is reconstructed, and/or additional storage and maintenance capacity is identified elsewhere, are somewhat limited. For 2027 to 2029, Metro staff has identified the following service goals, which require no additional peak buses in service, except where otherwise noted:

- Extending service span where appropriate
- Extending our "peak service" period later into the evenings
- Improving weekend headways
- Optimize routes to provide more robust service within existing resources

Specifically, Metro has identified several possible changes to our routes that are likely, or possible, by 2029:

- Extension of service to the new Roux Institute campus in East Deering by extending Route 5 or by deviating Route 7 into the Roux site. Extending Route 5 would improve service between downtown Portland and on Washington Avenue. Deviating Route 7 would likely result in Route 7 headways being improved to 30 minutes (from 40 minutes today). In either case, this improvement will require 1 additional bus in peak service.
- Re-examination of our peninsula reboot project (2020). This effort would consider combining resources for Route 1 and Route 8 to create a single, bi-directional circulator.
- Possible extension of Route 7 to Portland Transportation Center/Thompson's Point. Related to the two above items, Route 7 could be extended into Thompson's Point to augment, or replace Route 1 service, at this location.
- Resolve the Atlantic Street service issue.
- Examine possible route(s) to serve St. John Street bidirectionally to serve a possible future Amtrak Downeaster station.
- Prepare for State and High Street two-way conversion, and potential opportunities for service improvements.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no immediate fiscal impacts related to this exercise. Any substantial changes to service would likely not be implemented until after a full budget cycle, in which case it could be considered as part of Metro's budgeting process; otherwise, more minor changes to service would be cost-neutral.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for information and discussion only.

CONTACT

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