



February 23, 2022

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee
From: Paul Thompson
Subject: Item 6.c: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Flexible Funding – Next Steps

Action Recommended: Information and discussion; provide direction to staff

Background and Discussion

At the December, January, and February MPC meetings MPC engaged with ODOT Assistant Director Travis Brouwer in discussions around priorities for the use of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) flexible funding. MPC provided comments to Mr. Brouwer and directed testimony to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC).

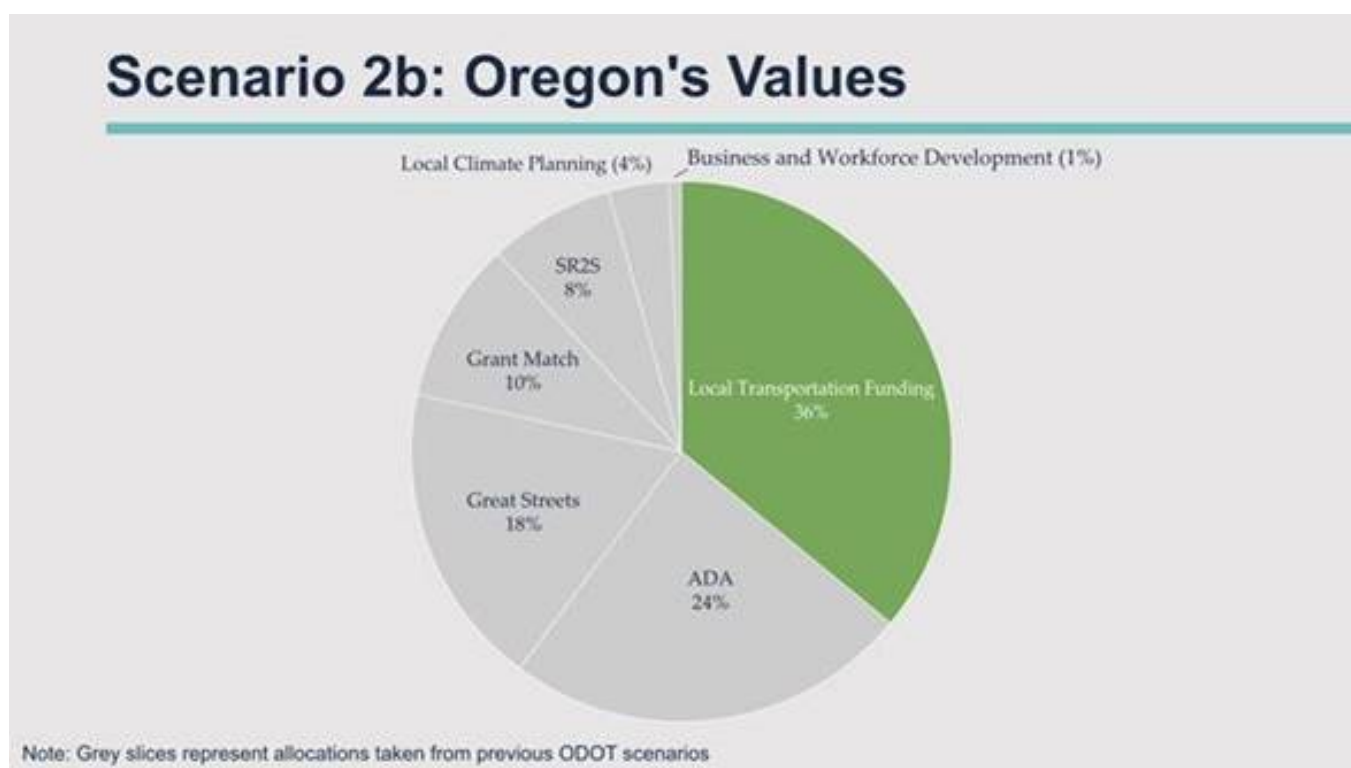
Subsequent to the February MPC meeting there was a discussion among the managers of several of Oregon's MPOs about submitting joint testimony on this matter to the OTC on areas of overlapping interest. Staff from the Portland, Salem, Corvallis, Bend, and Central Lane MPOs engaged in a quick round of drafting and editing this testimony. In the end, the testimony was submitted jointly by just the Portland, Salem, and Central Lane MPOs for consideration by the OTC at their February 17th meeting. The testimony is included with this memo as Attachment 1. (Note that due to the last minute nature of this letter it was approved by Brenda Wilson for the CLMPO under the delegation MPC provided to Brenda (and Paul) to support, sign, testify, etc. on the MPO's behalf when that would be consistent with previously established MPC direction.)

After the February 17th OTC meeting I asked Mr. Brouwer what would be addressed at the next (March 10th) OTC meeting on this matter. His response:

We aren't planning to bring any new material or modified scenarios to the OTC on March 10. At that meeting they will take public comment on the scenarios and program areas we gave them in January, we will give them the final public comment record, and then we will ask them to start deliberating on what they want to do based on what they've heard. They may give us direction on March 10 that would cause us to bring back a new/modified/hybrid scenario on March 30, but we won't know that until March 10.

We understand ODOT will request on March 10 that the OTC attempt to narrow the current four potential funding scenarios down to two scenarios at most, moving those to final discussion and decision on March 30.

One other possible wild card has been introduced. At the February 17th OTC meeting numerous members of the public, included multiple state legislators and other elected officials, testified urging the OTC to approve funding scenario 2b. Scenario 2b was not developed or introduced by ODOT, and it is unclear if the OTC will give it any consideration – it was introduced by these citizens. The graphic below illustrates this scenario to the best of our understanding. We felt it important to include here in case it does rise to the level of serious consideration by the OTC. The only difference between ODOT's Scenario 2 (supported by MPC) and Scenario 2b is a redistribution of all of the funds allocated in Scenario 2 for the Enhance, Fix-it, and Maintenance categories (\$148 million total) to a new category titled "Local Transportation Funding." "Local Transportation Funding" dollars would then be directed to local jurisdictions across the state allowing those agencies to determine how to best use the funds to meet their community's specific transportation needs.



In the event that on March 10th the OTC does something that could alter MPC's stated support for scenario 2, staff would appreciate discussion and direction for possible testimony at the March 30th OTC meeting.

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Attachment

1. Joint testimony to the Oregon Transportation Commission