

## Policy Options and Alternatives: Transportation

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# Policy Consideration: Funding Priorities for New Mobility Programs and Projects (TR-B, TR-H, TR-L)

## Topics: Improve Travel Choices and Mobility; Orient around Light Rail

Policy question: How should Redmond prioritize new mobility investments?

There is a tension in transportation policy considerations on this topic. Different policy considerations call for prioritizing investments that:

- Improve access to light rail (TR-B)
- Complete modal networks (TR-H)
- Enhance safety, accessibility (TR-L)

Some investments could advance multiple priorities.

### History

The City used the following criteria to prioritize investments when creating the 2013 Transportation Master Plan:

<u>Basic Needs</u>	<u>Vision</u>	
Safety	Centers	Community Character
Maintenance	Neighborhood Connections	Mobility for People, Goods, and Services
Natural Environment	Travel Choices	System Integration
	Priority Corridors	Leveraged Funding
	Prepare for High Capacity Transit	

The criteria used in 2013 resulted in a long-range investment plan that was, by dollar value: 55% multimodal, 24% nonmotorized, 11% preservation, 9% vehicular, and 1% transit. (The plan does not break-down investments according to strategies or priorities.) In Downtown the plan focused on completing the street grid. In Overlake it focused on connecting to light rail, transforming 152<sup>nd</sup> Ave NE in Overlake Village, and mitigating congestion. Elsewhere it focused on creating new multimodal connections and mitigating congestion.

### Trends

City investments prioritized using the above criteria have contributed to the following trends (see more at [Redmond.gov/TMP](http://Redmond.gov/TMP)):

- Connectivity is improving in Downtown and Overlake
- Network completion is increasing for all modes
- Transit ridership has been steady at around 10,000 rides/day
- The number of traffic-related injuries has declined
- Pavement quality is deteriorating

### Stakeholder Feedback

We have heard that community members value investments that advance any or all these priorities. When asked to rank strategies to achieve the transportation vision, questionnaire respondents ranked strategies as follows:

1. Improve travel choices and mobility (TR-H and TR-L are part of this strategy)
2. Maintain transportation infrastructure

3. Orient around light rail (TR-B is part of this strategy)
4. Enhance freight and service mobility

Policy consideration TR-L, concerning safety and accessibility, was added in response to feedback from multiple stakeholders, including multiple City Councilmembers. In addition, over half of transportation projects suggested by community members included a safety component.

We also heard that these considerations must: account for partnerships, pursue innovative financial solutions, and new technology solutions; protect vulnerable users and improve neighborhood options; support the local bus network and first/last mile solutions; and prioritize multimodal options.

**Policy Analysis TR-B, TR-H, TR-L**

TR-B, TR-H, TR-L: Funding Priorities for New Mobility			
Option	<u>Distribute Funding Across Priorities</u> Give equal weight to the priorities identified in policy considerations, with investments that advance multiple priorities rising to the top. (1)	<u>Target Funding to Safety and Comfort</u> Like option 1 but prioritize high-comfort/low-stress facilities (part of TR-L) even if it takes longer to achieve other priorities. (2)	<u>Target Funding to Light Rail Access</u> Like option 1 but prioritize investments that improve access to light rail (TR-B) even if it takes longer to achieve other priorities. (3)
<b>Potential Strategies</b>	Use policy considerations to develop project ranking criteria that have equal weights among community priorities	Like option 1, but give greater weight to criteria related to facility comfort or stress	Like option 1, but give greater weight to criteria related to improving access to light rail
<b>Equity and Inclusion</b>	Equity and inclusion, together with all other Redmond 2050 themes, is a proposed ranking criterion, with the objective of developing a pro-equity and inclusion investment plan.	Relative to option 1, this option is likely to result in fewer facilities completed (potentially less geographic equity), but those that are completed (e.g. protected bicycle lanes) may be attractive to a broader population in terms of age and ability.	Relative to option 1, this option prioritizes access to high-quality transit, improving equity and inclusion.
<b>Sustainability</b>	Sustainability, together with all other Redmond 2050 themes, is a proposed ranking criterion, with the objective of developing a pro-sustainability investment plan.	Relative to option 1, this option pulls in different directions: it is likely to result in fewer nonmotorized facilities completed because they are likely to be more costly, but those that are completed may be attractive to more users.	Relative to option 1, this option may shift mode share toward transit, improving environmental sustainability.
<b>Resiliency</b>	Resiliency, together with all other Redmond 2050 themes, is a proposed ranking criterion, with the objective of developing a pro-resiliency investment plan.	Similar to option 1.	Relative to option 1, this option may improve resiliency by making the light rail system easier to reach during disruptive circumstances when other modes are not available.
<b>Safety</b>	Safety, together with all Redmond 2050 themes, is a proposed ranking criterion, with the objective of developing a pro-safety investment plan.	Relative to option 1, this option would prioritize investments that have fewer opportunities for modal conflicts, but fewer may be completed because they are likely to be more costly.	Similar to option 1.
<b>Other Considerations</b>			

## Policy Consideration: Balancing Transportation Investments (TR-E, TR-G, TR-H)

### Topics: Maintain Transportation Infrastructure; Improve Travel Choices and Mobility

**Policy question:** How should Redmond balance maintaining the transportation system as it has with investing in new mobility improvements?

There is a tension in transportation policy considerations on this topic. Policy considerations call for new investments to improve mobility (several, including TR-H), while also investing in regular maintenance to preserve the system we have (TR-E, TR-G).

### History

**Capital program.** Redmond relies on a broad mix of revenue sources to fund its transportation capital program. The 2013 Transportation Facilities Plan (TFP) is funded with the revenue sources shown in the pie chart at right. Sources earmarked for transportation, including developer contributions, impact fees, business taxes, grants, motor vehicle excise tax, and real estate excise tax, contribute the majority of TFP funding.

**Operations and maintenance.** Operations and maintenance activities, like pavement and sidewalk repair, rely on general fund dollars that compete with many other priorities like public safety, parks, and other general government operations.

### Trends

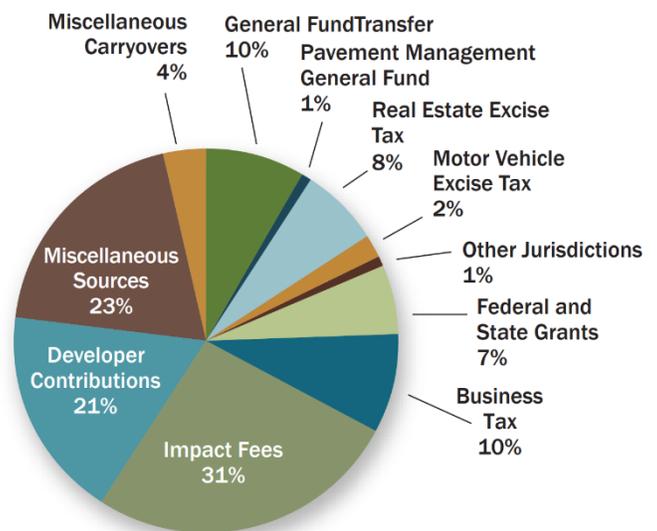
**Capital program.** Redmond is about 8.5 years into the 18-year, 2013-2030 TFP; that is, about 47% of the planning period has elapsed. In that time projects worth 35% of total TFP value are complete, projects worth 54% of the total TFP are in design or construction, and the remaining 11% are in planning or not started.<sup>1,2</sup>

**Operations and maintenance.** The pavement condition index (PCI), a key indicator of system maintenance, has trended downward for nearly 20 years, dipping below the critical threshold of 70 (out of 100), beyond which repairs commonly triple or quadruple in cost.

### Stakeholder Feedback

Building and maintaining a transportation system that gets people where they want to go consistently features prominently in community questionnaires. For example, as part of the Redmond 2050 Pains and Gains community questionnaire, respondents cited Redmond’s clean and well-maintained infrastructure fourth among all “Gains”. The top “Pain” was that traffic is increasing and the number of vehicles makes trips take longer. In the City’s 2019 statistically valid phone survey, traffic ranked as the most important problem by far.

FIGURE 1 - TFP FUNDING



<sup>1</sup> Projects and programs removed since 2013 are not counted here.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2013 TFP cost estimate.

Policy Analysis TR-E, TR-G, TR-H

TR-E, TR-G, TR-H: Balancing Transportation Investments		
Option	<u>System Maintenance Option</u> Prioritize use of “flexible” revenue sources for maintaining existing assets (1)	<u>System Expansion and Improvement Option</u> Prioritize use of “flexible” revenue sources for completing new mobility improvements (2)
Potential Strategies	Invest flexible revenue sources (those not earmarked for certain types of investments) into maintenance. Note that flexible sources typically in high demand <i>because</i> they are flexible.	Invest flexible revenue sources (those not earmarked for certain types of investments) into new mobility improvements. Note that flexible sources typically in high demand <i>because</i> they are flexible.
Equity and Inclusion	Benefits users of existing transportation network relative to option 2.	Benefits users of new connections relative to option 1. These connections will tend to be multimodal, positively impacting a broader economic cross section of the population.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May slow completion of new transportation infrastructure, potentially slowing growth in vehicle travel demand and associated environmental impacts.</li> <li>• Likely to slow completion of mode-shifting projects and associated environmental benefits.</li> <li>• Maintains economic benefits of existing infrastructure.</li> <li>• Slower growth of system maintenance costs relative to option 2.</li> <li>• Regular maintenance would tend to reduce the frequency of major rehabilitations and associated costs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faster completion of new transportation infrastructure, potentially increasing growth in vehicle travel demand and associated environmental impacts</li> <li>• Likely to accelerate completion of mode-shifting projects and associated environmental benefits.</li> <li>• System expansions may unlock economic opportunity by providing new access.</li> <li>• Faster growth of system maintenance costs relative to option 1.</li> </ul>
Resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves resiliency of existing infrastructure more quickly relative to option 2.</li> <li>• Slows ability to complete projects, some of which would add redundancy and mode diversification to system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves resiliency of existing infrastructure more slowly relative to option 1.</li> <li>• Speeds ability to complete projects, some of which would add redundancy and mode diversification to system.</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves safety of existing infrastructure more quickly relative to option 2.</li> <li>• Slows ability to complete projects, some of which would have safety components.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeds ability to complete projects, some of which would have safety components.</li> </ul>
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some revenue sources cannot be used for maintenance or preservation (impact fees, e.g.)</li> </ul>	Same as option 1.