EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT) FY 2023-24 base budget totals approximately $511.3 million across multiple funds. This includes 1,043.90 authorized FTE; a reduction of 16 FTE, all vacant, as compared to the Bureau’s FY 2022-23 Revised Budget. The FY 2023-24 Requested Budget represents a decrease of approximately $129.9 million compared to the FY 2022-23 Revised Budget. The significant change in the bureau’s total fund between FY 2022-23 Revised Budget and FY 2023-24 Requested Budget is primarily driven by
construction timeline changes within PBOT’s capital program, reductions in resources from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) revenues & grants and draws on reserves from General Transportation Revenue (GTR) & System Development Charge (SDCs) to balance forecasts and fund projects. It is not atypical for large infrastructure bureaus to have recognize the carryover of projects that span fiscal years.

While the true difference between the bureau’s available resources is less dramatic than the gap FY 2022-23 Revised Budget and FY 2023-24 Requested Budget indicate, the bureau does face an ongoing fiscal crisis, with a forecasted $60.7 million five-year deficit. To address the most immediate financial shortfall, PBOT’s FY 2023-24 Requested Budget puts forward a 4.3% cut to bureau programs, totaling approximately $6.3 million of ongoing reductions and eliminates 16.0 FTE. The reductions can be broadly categorized as:

- $2.4 million in major programmatic reductions,
- $1.2 million in asset maintenance and parking programs,
- $645 thousand in policy and administrative cuts, and
- $2 million of reductions via efficiencies and alternative revenues.

To balance their five-year forecast for the growing gap between bureau-specific resources and requirements, an additional reduction of at least 4.5% will be required in PBOT’s FY 2024-25 budget. The long-term financial sustainability continues to be the greatest threat to delivering on the bureau’s transportation mission and citywide goals, with looming uncertainty among some of the bureau’s largest revenue sources, such as the State Highway Fund, and the prolonged recovery of parking revenues since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**BASE BUDGET & KEY ISSUES**

The mission of the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is to be a community partner in shaping a livable city. PBOT plans, builds, manages, and maintains an effective and safe transportation system that provides people and businesses access and mobility. In FY 2019-20, PBOT launched Moving to Our Future, the bureau’s updated strategic vision and their 5-year plan for the transportation system. PBOT’s plan framework aims to deliver on three main goals 1) Safety: Make Portland’s streets safe for everyone 2) Moving people and Goods: Provide transportation options for a growing city and 3) Asset Management: Deliver smart investments to maintain the transportation system.

Guiding the work needed to achieve the bureau’s goals are several PBOT groups including:

- Office of the Director
- Policy, Planning, and Projects
- Parking Services
- Engineering Services
- Maintenance Operations
- Development Permitting and Transit
- Business Services
- Traffic Systems & Operations

To accomplish this PBOT work, resources are allocated into 21 bureau program offer. Consistent with the bureau’s desire to strategize around their mission and goals, for this budget process, PBOT prioritized the following areas:

1. Making progress on the strategic plan and transportation justice goals
2. Preserving existing workforce
3. Stabilizing the bureau’s finances.

PBOT’s FY 2023-24 Requested Budget includes $511.3 million, broken down into the program areas shown in the graph below. Key budget issues and further detail on the bureau’s fiscal stabilization plan are provided in subsequent sections.

PBOT’s Five-Year Forecast: Prolonged Fiscal Challenges

PBOT continues to struggle with a long-term fiscal crisis due to both increased expenses and structural revenue issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The bureau’s five-year financial forecast details a deficit of $60.7 million through FY 2027-28, requiring ongoing expense reductions of over 9% to balance unless implementation of new sources of revenue are realized.

The bureau’s discretionary revenue sources, General Transportation Revenue (GTR), which consist primarily of State Highway Fund (Gas Tax) and parking related revenues, are expected to grow to $145.9 million in FY 2023-24—a $13.6 million (10.3%) increase over FY 2022-23. However, despite this increase in GTR, PBOT’s Requested Budget still falls short of its programmatic requirements, leaving a $2.1 million deficit for FY 2023-24. This annual deficit grows in each subsequent year of PBOT’s five-year GTR forecast, reaching $27.3 million by FY 2027-28. The gap between the bureau’s requirements and forecasted revenues are shown below.
In order to mitigate service level cuts beyond what the bureau has already put forward, PBOT is drawing down its discretionary balancing reserves, reducing these from $15.9 million at the start of FY 2022-23 to zero by the end of FY 2027-28. As noted by the bureau, these measures alone will not resolve PBOT’s fiscal challenges beyond its 5-year forecast. Without either new funding sources or substantial growth in existing sources, PBOT’s annual operating deficit will continue to grow, requiring additional cuts to current service levels to remain balanced. As GTR resources are allocated to maintenance operations, parking operations & enforcement, planning, and infrastructure improvements, it is likely service level cuts will occur in these programs. Ultimately, if PBOT’s fiscal crisis continues unabated without new funding streams, Council and PBOT will be forced to rescope the bureau’s mission and service delivery model.

In summarizing their own funding crisis, PBOT cites three broad issue areas.

1. The bureau has discretionary revenue sources that PBOT and the City have little or no control, such as state gas taxes.
2. Growth in funds streams lag the rise in bureau expenses and service level expectations (i.e., inflationary pressures on external materials and services, expanded transportation services to houselessness, etc.).
3. PBOT’s revenue generation is based on sources at odds with the city’s stated climate, equity, and mobility goals.

While reductions to greenhouse gas emissions, increased active transportation infrastructure, and promotion of the use of public transit are critical city and bureau goals, they each have the potential to significantly impact PBOT’s discretionary resources. Likewise, as cars become more fuel and energy efficient and activity downtown lags pre-pandemic levels, there is ambiguity regarding the long-term viability of the bureau’s main discretionary resources (e.g., gas taxes and parking revenue). Because of these factors, it is increasingly important that the bureau manage the growth of its expenditures and take steps to identify additional revenue, either through new funding sources and/or growth in existing sources, such as regular increases in parking fees to offset inflation, to help avoid further service level reductions.

Revenue Constraints

The bureau’s sources of revenue consist of constrained funding, including the State Highway Fund, parking
revenues, program fees, grants, program reserves, set-asides, balancing reserves, project carryovers, and bond proceeds. The bureau often has little or no authority to alter these revenue sources, including its largest, the State Highway Fund, which consists of motor fuels taxes, weight-miles tax, and DMV fees. Rates and allocations for the State Highway Fund are set by the Oregon state legislature and amount to over 60% of PBOT's GTR in the bureau's FY 2023-24 Requested Budget. The funding PBOT receives from the State Highway Fund is also constitutionally restricted for use on construction of roads, streets, and roadside rest areas, further limiting flexibility in the bureau's budget.

Since the onset of the pandemic, volatility of State Highway Funds forecasts has injected added uncertainty in PBOT's fiscal situation. While driving and gas consumption rebounded faster than expected in late 2020 and beyond and the most severe early-pandemic forecasts on incoming State Highway Fund revenue never materialized, uncertainty persists as PBOT must contend with future ambiguity related to HB 2017. This legislation, passed in 2017, set periodic increases to gas taxes in the state. The final 2-cent a gallon gas tax increase set by HB 2017 is set for implementation in January 2024, causing PBOT's State Highway Fund revenues to stagnate thereafter. Because of this, PBOT's forecast assumes no changes in future State Highway Fund tax rates after this point. The bureau notes it is engaged in efforts to educate state legislators about the need for additional increases for the State Highway Funds to sustain local revenues. However, several regional transportation projects are currently a priority for some regional and state partners. The Interstate Bridge Replacement Project, for example, has been identified as a high priority project for state funding, which may make it harder for PBOT to see near-term revenue. Ambiguity over future gas tax revenues is likewise dependent on macroeconomic factors. With liquid fuel dependence diminishing over the long term as electric vehicles (EVs) take on larger market share of vehicle sales and remaining internal combustion (ICE) vehicles become more fuel efficient, alternatives to traditional gas taxes will be need.

Local transportations revenues also present challenges within PBOT's forecasts. Parking revenues have been slow to recover from the pandemic as downtown occupancy and parking transactions remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels. While monthly parking meter revenues recovered gradually since their lowest point of the pandemic, falling to 13% of pre-COVID averages in April of 2020, PBOT's forecast expects transaction in the downtown core to level off around 81% of pre-pandemic levels within the five-year forecast. In terms of average revenue within the bureau's five-year forecast, PBOT estimates a nominal 1.9% increase as compared to pre-pandemic levels, which is largely attributable to net effect of the hourly rate increase of $0.40 beginning in FY 2023-24 and a continued decline in parking meter transactions as compared to pre-pandemic levels.
Forecasts for parking citations and permits follow similar trajectories. Citation figures recovered to around 40-50% of pre-COVID levels by early fall 2020 before leveling off. Since then, recovery has lagged on-street parking, remaining at around 40% of pre-COVID levels even as on-street revenues reached nearly 70% over the summer. The forecast assumes citation revenues will continue to recover in FY 2023-24 but remain around FY 2023-24 levels throughout the five-year forecast. Likewise, the FY 2023-24 forecast estimate revenue from PBOT’s parking garages to be 20% to 30% less than pre-pandemic levels.

Other bureau revenues risks include funding related to the City’s CREEC settlement—a 12-year, $300 million program that entails constructing more than 1,500 ADA compliant curbs annually. The bureau’s assumed allocation from the Capital Set-Aside for FY 2023-24 is $1,837,204. However, the General Fund forecast distributed in December 2022 shows $0 available in the General Fund Capital Set-Aside. The program also assumes $12.3 million in future Build Portland resources, which currently has no identified funding source.

**Expense Drivers**

PBOT’s fiscal challenges are not exclusively revenue driven. Rising costs have likewise mounted to strain the bureau’s available resources and adds pressure to PBOT’s Requested Budget and forecasts. Sources of rising costs include inflationary pressures on external materials and services, higher expenses for internal services, unfunded long-term maintenance needs, looming updates to city labor agreements, and increasing scope of service and impacts of the houselessness crisis.

Much like its sources of revenue, PBOT often has little latitude in dictating its cost pressures. Interagency costs, which impact every bureau in the City, represent one such instance. Whereas bureaus generally have some flexibility to increase or lower charges where per-unit costs are incurred, they have little control over Interagency Agreement charges since per-unit costs and service price are set by the service provider, such as for technology or facility services. From FY 2022-23 to FY 2023-24, PBOT’s expenses from OMF IAs increased by $1.6 million year-over-year. According to the bureau, this increase changes outyear forecasts, adding roughly $6 million PBOT’s 5-year deficit. This year over year increase is part of a longer trend of the bureau’s growing costs related to internal services. Over the last five years from FY 2019-20 to FY 2023-24, PBOT’s expenses related to OMF internal services rose nearly $7 million. Some internal rates are based on inventory, and there would be potential for PBOT to mitigate its expense forecast by reducing inventory in CityFleet and BTS where count of equipment owned by the bureau is a primary factor in determining costs. The increase in OMF IA costs borne by PBOT are shown in the chart below.

Other cost pressures PBOT faces include expenses related the houselessness crisis, which has increased the scope of services PBOT delivers. PBOT notes the cost of removing derelict RVs from the City’s right-of-way totals $3 million per year for staffing, towing, and disposal. To serve this need, the bureau is reallocating parking enforcement staff...
from their normal duties of writing citations and managing parking demand to working with RV owners to connect them with the services. By bureau estimates, this staffing reallocation reduces citation revenue by an estimated $1.5 million per year. The bureau also incurs costs of $1.3 million per year for houseless camp cleanup efforts on PBOT owned property.

DECISION PACKAGE ANALYSIS

Budget Stabilization: Reduction Package

*DP: 14839, [$5,949,169,300], [16.00 FTE]*

Request Summary

PBOT's Budget Stabilization package is a reduction package totaling nearly $6 million in programmatic and personnel cuts, including the elimination of 16 vacant FTE positions. In making cuts, PBOT prioritized decision making around: (1) minimizing impact on the bureau's strategic plan and transportation justice goals, (2) preserving the existing workforce, and (3) focus on larger programmatic reductions. The requested decision package cuts are grouped into four categories including $2.4 million in major programmatic reductions, $1.2 million in reductions to asset maintenance and parking services, $645 thousand in reductions to policy and administrative support, and $2 million in efficiencies & alternative revenues.

CBO Analysis

This decision package details the first phase of PBOT’s two-year budget stabilization plan intended to address the immediate gaps stemming from the bureau’s funding crisis. The package includes 4.3% programmatic reductions totaling $6.3 million in ongoing cuts. To balance the five-year forecast (FY 2023-24 through FY 2027-28), another reduction of at least 4.5%, or over $9 million, will be required in FY 2024-25. The requested cuts follow two years of significant programmatic reductions, including 7.5% reductions in FY 2021-22 and 3.5% in FY 2022-23. A summary of the cuts put forward through this year’s stabilization package are as follows.

**Major Programmatic Reductions**

- $1,475,000 – small capital projects: reduces the yearly funding available for small capital project investments in sidewalks, crossings, bike safety improvements, freight wayfinding, improvements based on 823-SAFE calls, slow streets programming, and plazas. Eliminates one position.
- $500,000 - residential street sweeping: eliminates residential street sweeping except for those streets in the leaf districts. Staff will shift to vegetation management. Savings captured through vehicle removal and debris disposal costs.
- $201,195- support for community events: ceases support for special events with minor exceptions. Eliminates two positions and the production, storage, setup, and pickup of street closure barricades and onsite support for bike rides, runs, parades, and other festivals.
- $250,000 - meter replacement: reduces funding for replacement of parking meters to the minimum level. Will require alternative future funding or changes in payment technology that allow the removal of meters.

**Reductions to Asset Maintenance and Parking Services,**

- $741,172 – staff support and fleet costs: eliminates two positions in street maintenance and sidewalks and reduces vehicles from PBOT’s fleet inventory.
- $200,000 – parking enforcement officers: eliminates two parking enforcement officer positions thereby reducing parking enforcement capacity in metered and non-metered areas.
- $270,000 – parking consulting & vehicles: reduces funding for the North Portland Parking District plan
and reduces funding for rental vehicles to support Derelict RV program.

Reductions to Policy and Administrative Support

- **$140,234** – Planning: reduces support for the Regional Transportation Plan, updates to the Transportation System Plan, and guidance to other groups implementing transportation policy.
- **$246,960** - Administrative & policy support positions: eliminates two administrative & policy support positions. Reduces capacity to collect, catalogue, and update City code and policies that staff rely on to enforce Development Review requirements and capital design decisions.
- **$130,000** – Reduction from Traffic Systems for staff and contracting: allocates 75% of a traffic engineer position to work on capital funded projects and reduces contracting dollars for staff support services.
- **$167,000** - technology position: eliminates one position that provides technical support for parking, including analysis of pay station and Parking Kitty transaction data.

Efficiencies and Alternative Revenues

- **$100,000** - Land lines: eliminates land line phones for employees who also have a cell phone.
- **$600,000** - Mobile technology fee: reallocates fee resources to existing technology needs.
- **$350,000** – Towing and bank card fees reductions: reduces bank fees due to less parking transactions; redirects towing fees which may delay technology and personnel support.
- **$300,000** – Streetcar replacement: replaces annual Streetcar vehicle capital reserve amount with a larger annual contribution made possible by state (HB 2017) transit funding received via agreement with TriMet.
- **$600,000** - Dispatch services: transfer dispatch services to the City's 311 system.

PBOT notes that in making cuts leadership sought larger programmatic reductions with less focus on “thinning the soup”, i.e., expecting consistent service levels with less staff and resources. However, the cuts put forward in their stabilization package are nonetheless wide-ranging. Resource reductions in the package span 10 of the bureau’s 13 budgeted program offers (i.e., asset management, planning, streets & signs, parking enforcement, etc.) and 17 of 49 fund centers, or more granular programs such as street cleaning, which exists under the purview the streets & signs program offer. Cuts are similarly spread across expense inputs, with $2.3 million coming from reduced external materials & services, $1.9 million in eliminated (currently vacant) FTE, $1.2 million in contingency, and $635 thousand from internal materials & services.

Likewise, while the bureau maintains its goal of sustaining service levels, reductions of this magnitude make service impacts unavoidable. It is anticipated that much of the negative impact will be experienced through the delay or elimination of smaller capital projects, resulting in fewer improvements and delayed maintenance to pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, bike safety improvements, less capacity for implementing slow streets infrastructure, and more. Over $1.2 million of the requested cuts are allocated to PBOT’s Quick Build Program, which is a citywide quick-response programs adopted by City Council in the Transportation System Plan’s Major Projects List in December 2016. These programs invest in small-scale, quick build transportation projects that, among other things, address safety concerns on high crash corridors and near schools, fill in gaps and upgrade infrastructure on the multimodal transportation network, and make operational improvements to improve traffic flow, reliability, and access on major transit and freight corridors. Another $200 thousand in reductions is allocated to the bureau’s Neighborhood Transportation Safety & Livable Streets Project. This program builds pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements such as crossing improvements at busier streets, speed reduction on neighborhood streets, neighborhood safety improvements, sidewalk and bicycle network infill, and safety improvements on the pedestrian and bicycle network.

Other impacts that will be visible to residents include services historically provided by PBOT, such as street sweeping. Among the bureau’s proposed cuts is the elimination of residential street sweeping, except for designated leaf districts. In previous years, PBOT has cleaned local residential streets once per year and all
Major arterial streets 3-4 times per year. Elimination of residential street sweeping means a vast majority of Portlanders will not receive any street sweeping where they live. The City has 52 leaf districts that include roadways identified as possessing a high percentage of mature trees which will continue to receive sweeping. Leaf districts cover a minority of Portland’s roadways that are mainly located in Portland’s inner East and West sides while outer East side contains none, raising equity concerns regarding where coverage is remaining intact. A map of leaf district coverage can be seen below.

Other notable reductions include transfer of PBOT’s dispatch services to the City’s 311 system. The bureau is eliminating 5.0, currently vacant service dispatchers, amounting to a $417 thousand ongoing reduction. In recent years, the City’s 311 system has been leveraged to divert a portion of non-emergency calls away from 911 dispatchers because of increased call volumes. The FY 2022-23 Adopted Budget added $1.3 million in ongoing resources and 10 FTE to the 311 Program with the expectation that up 180,000 annual non-emergency calls could be absorbed from Bureau of Emergency Communication’s Safety Non-Emergency Line. While the service level impacts resulting from PBOT dispatch being moved to 311 are not immediately clear, the migration will necessarily increase call volume to 311, potentially diminishing response times.

Meanwhile, the reduced support to planning leaves PBOT with less capacity to strategize on implementation of long-term goals as outlined within the Regional Transportation Plan as well as the PBOT’s 20-year growth plan, the Transportation System Plan. Related to these cuts and the bureau’s strained fiscal outlook, PBOT notes that initiatives that will have to be deprioritized due to resource constraints include development of a citywide speed monitoring program; development of a commute trip reduction program; focused work on the nexus between transportation and housing access; and further advancement of currently unfunded Central City in Motion projects.

Looking forward, with expected reductions of over $9 million in FY 2024-25, the bureau will continue to have to make significant reductions to programs. While PBOT has not yet identified what these reductions will be, given that the majority of GTR resources are allocated to Maintenance Operations, Parking Ops & Enforcement, planning, and infrastructure improvements, significant reductions will likely happen in these program areas.
This requested decision package includes reductions necessary for PBOT to balance its five-year forecast in accordance with financial policy, and CBO recommends this decision package. CBO additionally notes the need for PBOT to present comprehensive plan which addresses its long-term financial sustainability. While uncertainty regarding state level gas revenues, future parking activity, and other revenue sources loom, a unified strategy to address long-term declines are necessary such that the bureau can avoid annual reductions which do not outwardly appear to be part of cohesive, multiyear strategy.

**CBO Recommendation:** [[$5,949,169] General Transportation Revenue | [16.00] FTE]

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

As PBOT states, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which is updated annually through the overall budget process, is a five-year spending plan that has been developed to bring transportation assets to state of good repair, enhance the safety of Portland’s transportation system, and provide additional capacity for a growing population. At its core, the CIP is a list of projects, estimated costs and revenue sources. The base five-year FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28 Requested CIP includes 131 projects at a total cost of $521 million. PBOT’s FY 2023-24 Requested Budget includes plans for CIP projects totaling $191.7 million in requirements and includes 20 new projects. Many of these come from the 82nd Ave jurisdictional transfer and state grants. These projects range in scope from sidewalk, pedestrian, and lighting improvements.

The bureau highlights several key CIP projects will build new transportation facilities in areas with significant infrastructure deficits. Examples include sidewalk infill and other crossing improvements in East Portland and Southwest Portland. Other projects and programs will rebuild and improve obsolete infrastructure for continued safe use, such as traffic signal replacements and pavement restoration. Reduction of traffic deaths remains a policy priority for the bureau. Investments are planned on several streets identified as high crash corridors including NE/SE 82nd Avenue, NE/SE 122nd Avenue, and SE Stark Street east of I-205. The CIP also includes cycling facilities, such as the seven-mile-long 70's neighborhood greenway project, and protected bike lanes on NE Killingsworth Street in the Cully neighborhood. New sidewalks will be designed and constructed on important neighborhood walking routes in Cully, Powellhurst-Gilbert, and West Portland Park as part of the Local Transportation Infrastructure Charge program. Projects under the Central City in Motion banner will provide improved cycling, walking and transit access on key downtown corridors such as SW 4th Avenue. PBOT’s CIP also dedicates resources to freight movement, including intersection reconstruction on NE Columbia Boulevard at Alderwood Road and Cully Boulevard as well as replacement of the NE 42nd Ave bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad in Northeast Portland. Lastly, the CIP includes work on commercial corridors such as the Stark/Washington couplet in the Gateway Regional Center and SE 82nd Avenue in the Jade and Montavilla Districts. These projects will provide improved sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, and pedestrian crossings, and pavement repair.

Notably, like it’s other program areas, PBOT’s capital programming faces the same financial challenge of stagnate resources and rising costs resources. Funding dedicated to the CIP relies on 81% grants and restricted funding sources. While the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 provides new opportunities for funding City transportation projects, it essentially results in modest increases in competitive grant opportunities through programs such as the Regional Flexible Fund Allocation. In addition, grant projects historically are oriented toward safety and mobility enhancements, leaving many asset repair needs unaddressed. Per the Asset Management Program Maturity and Infrastructure Funding Assessment released in December 2022 by the City Asset Managers Group (CAMG), PBOT has an estimated unmet need of $4.4 billion over the next ten years, and there is no identified resource dedicated to increasing the status of these City assets.
### SUMMARY OF REQUESTS & RECOMMENDATIONS (ALL FUNDS)

**Portland Bureau of Transportation**

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<th>2023-24 Requested Base (A)</th>
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