

**CLIMATE
SMART
COMMUNITIES
SCENARIOS PROJECT**

Online public comment tool report

March 21 to May 5, 2014

*Prepared for Metro by
JLA Public Involvement, Inc.
May 7, 2014*

**MAKING A
GREAT
PLACE**

About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

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Visit the project website for more information about the climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project at www.oregonmetro.gov/climatescenarios

The preparation of this report was partially financed by the Oregon Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Transportation. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the State of Oregon or U.S. Department of Transportation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Metro hosted an online public comment tool – Investing in Great Communities – to get feedback from the public about the kinds of investments people would like to see made in their communities and the transportation system. The results and responses will be used to help shape the:

- Climate Smart Communities Scenarios Project preferred approach for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating great communities
- 2014 Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Active Transportation Plan
- 2015-2018 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program

Between March 21 and May 6, 2014, there were 2,321 unique visitors to the online survey and 1,217 comments were submitted. The majority of visits were from the Portland area (68%). Other significant participation from within the Portland metropolitan region included Beaverton (7%), Hillsboro (4%), and Tigard (3%).

This executive summary outlines the main themes provided by the public through the online survey. It is organized around the seven policy areas being considered by the region's policymakers. The full report provides a summary of responses to each question in the online survey.

Summary of responses by policy area

1. Make transit more convenient, frequent, accessible and affordable

Increased and improved transit service is the most desired investment by respondents. People want to see **more frequent service, faster options** like express bus and trains; **expanded route options** that extend to suburban and smaller communities; and **cross-town connectivity** that does not feed into downtown Portland. Many people said they lack access to a transit stop within walking distance of their home or job. An **increase in light rail** was requested by many respondents, although a minority preferred more bus service or Bus Rapid Transit due to lower costs and greater flexibility. There is support for investing in the Southwest Corridor light rail, Powell-Division High Capacity Transit project, and light rail to Vancouver, Wash.

Some respondents said that transit fares are **too expensive** and want reduced prices. Investments including more bus shelters and park-and-ride options, and better security and fare enforcement are also desired by a few.

2. Use technology to actively manage the transportation system

Few people made specific comments about transportation technology. Nevertheless, when asked about the importance of investing in technology to reduce traffic congestion and improve the reliability of transit, respondents chose it as the third most important investment (after expanding transit and biking and walking improvements). Some drivers did note that poorly synchronized traffic signals are a major challenge to getting around. Some suggested smart traffic lights, blinking

yellow lights, and right-turn-on-red signals to improve traffic flow. Some noted that it is important to ensure investments that improve traffic flow be designed and implemented in ways that make it safer for walking and biking, particularly at intersections.

3. Provide information and incentives to expand the use of travel options

Very few people made comments about information and incentives. A small number of people said they would like to see more incentives for those who carpool, use transit, walk or bike; employers that allow employees to telecommute; businesses that locate near transit lines; and more public information to encourage walking, biking, carpooling and use of transit.

4. Make biking and walking more safe and convenient

Improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities are highly desired by many respondents. They want more **sidewalks and bike lanes**, and a more **comprehensive network of infrastructure**. Many said that **safety** is their biggest concern when they choose to walk or bike, and that sidewalks and bike lanes separate from auto traffic are needed. **Crosswalks** and efforts to improve safety at intersections are a priority.

5. Make streets and highways more safe, reliable and connected

Respondents cited **traffic and congestion** as the biggest challenge to getting around. Another main concern is the **lack of street connectivity in some parts of the region**. There are many routes to access Portland and the eastside of the region has a well-connected grid pattern, but there are insufficient connections between growing suburban communities, particularly in Clackamas and Washington counties. **Maintaining current roads** and bridges is a higher priority than creating new infrastructure, although there is a healthy amount of support for **widening roads** experiencing major congestion and adding new bridges and roads.

Many people supported specific road projects, including the Columbia River Crossing or some alternative river crossing; the widening of Highway 217; a Westside Bypass or other connectivity in the southwest part of the region; I-5 improvements, particularly in the Rose Quarter area; the widening of Highway 26; and capacity improvements on I-205 and Highway 99W.

6. Manage parking to make efficient use of parking resources

Few people made comments about parking. Those that did said that parking in downtown Portland is **too expensive**, and it is **difficult to find parking** in urban areas and, increasingly, in neighborhoods with denser residential development. People suggested a range of parking management strategies including providing more free parking to encourage retail shopping, removing parking, timing parking or creating more paid parking to better manage parking resources so spaces are frequently occupied.

7. Identify potential ways to pay for our investment choices

Few people made specific comments about funding mechanisms. Some said jurisdictions should engage citizens in decision-making and employ fiscal responsibility, and that investments should be made equitably across the entire region. There was a split among people who want to see efforts to make driving more expensive versus investing more in roads and easing congestion.

Many respondents support increased and stable funding for walking, biking and transit. A few respondents mentioned more paid parking, tolling on roads or bridges, congestion pricing, an increase in the gas tax, instituting a vehicle miles driven fee, and instituting a bicycling tax or fee.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

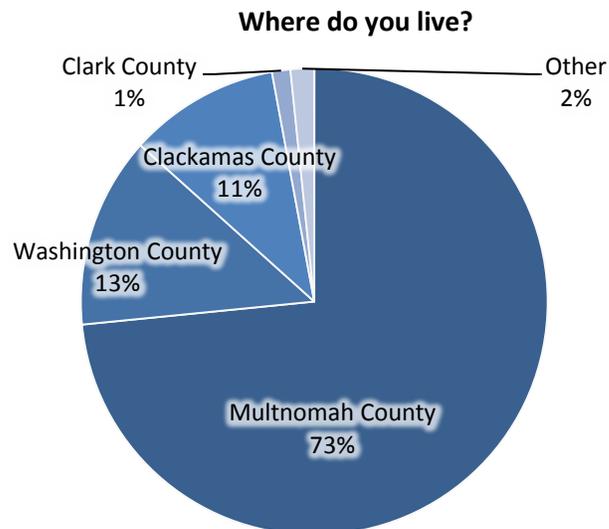
Investing in Great Communities online comment period

Metro hosted the online public comment tool to invite area residents to share their vision for the future of their communities and the region in order to help shape the investments and actions to make that vision a reality. The online survey asked general questions about the kinds of investments people would like to see made in their communities – where they live and work – and in the transportation system.

A non-functional version of the online comment tool can be viewed at <http://www.makeagreatplace.org/start>.

Level of participation

From March 21 to May 5, 2014, there were 2,321 unique visitors to the online tool and 1,217 comments were submitted. The majority of people who submitted a comment said that they live in Multnomah County (73%). Thirteen percent said they live in Washington County, and 11 percent said they live in Clackamas County.



WHERE WE LIVE AND WORK

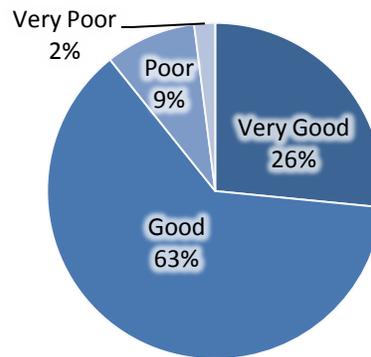
The online public comment included a series of questions to get feedback about community and land use investment in the Portland metropolitan region. These questions began by asking respondents how they define “quality of life” and how they feel about the quality of life in the region; and then asked participants to list the investments they would most like to see made in their communities over the next ten years.

The following portion of this report summarizes responses to these questions.

Question 1. Overall, do you feel the quality of life in the Portland metropolitan region is very good, good, poor, or very poor?

Generally, people feel that the quality of life in the region is good (63%) or very good (26%). Only 9 percent feel quality of life is poor, and 2 percent feel it is very poor.

How is quality of life in the region?



Quality of life means...
having a good balance
between urban
amenities, rural
recreation, and
sufficient
transportation options
throughout.

Question 2. What does "quality of life" mean to you?

Most people didn't respond to this question with one phrase or word, but indicated that quality of life includes a combination of many diverse factors. In general, they feel that quality of life includes *access* to a variety of goods and services, *opportunity* for personal and economic gain, and a variety of *options* in how they live their life. Most commonly, people said that quality of life means **healthy environment and people**, including healthy air and water and access to natural areas. Secondly, they said that having a **strong economy and good jobs** as well as an **affordable cost of living** were important to quality of life. Next, quality of life exists when it is **easy to get around** by many modes, meaning low traffic congestion, solid roads and infrastructure, and good access to transit and active transportation. Many also define quality of life by **personal happiness** including enjoyment of cultural and recreational opportunities and family life.

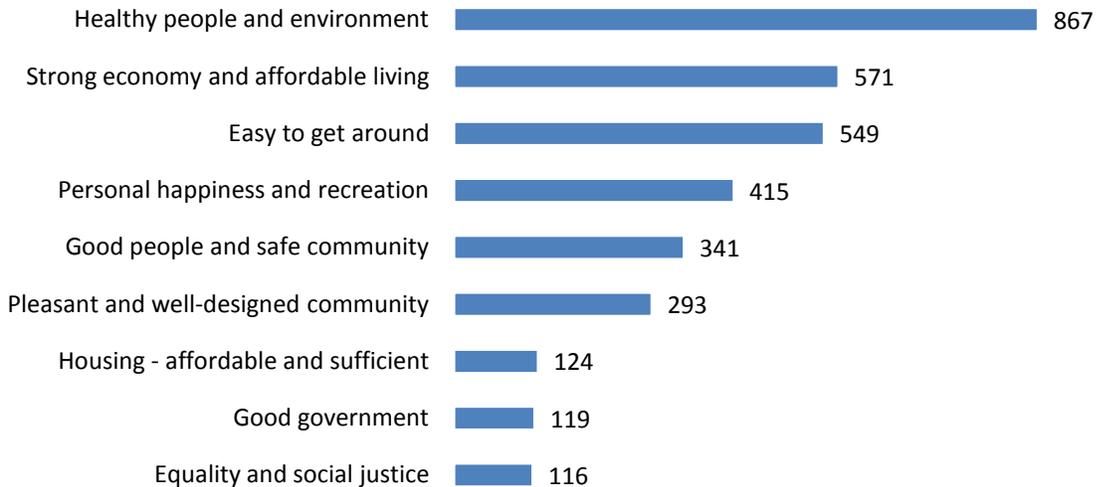
For some, a **well-designed community** is important, which can mean more walkable communities or less density. **Safety**, including low crime, a **sense of community** and good neighbors are also important to quality of life. Some define quality of life as including **government** that allows both freedom of choice and provides important services, as well as ensuring **equality and social justice**

so that everybody in the community has opportunity and access. **A variety of housing choices**, including affordable housing, are also important to quality of life.

Quality of life means... living in a great place to work, raise a family, and play.

The bar graph below shows the general themes that people referred to in their definition of quality of life. The chart below provides further detail on the kinds of elements that are included in each of the general themes.

What does “quality of life” mean to you?



Definitions of quality of life

Theme	Count
Healthy people and environment	867
Natural areas and green spaces are accessible, located nearby and protected	171
Healthy air/low air pollution	143
Parks are plentiful, accessible and of good quality	112
Food choices and farmers markets are available; all residents have access to fresh, healthy foods	100
Clean water (including drinking water and rivers and streams)	100
Natural environment is clean and healthy	94
Health and medical care is accessible, affordable, and of excellent quality	48
Health - people are physically healthy	47
Trees - lots of street trees and tree canopy	20
Farmland is protected	19
Low carbon footprint and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	13
Strong economy and affordable living	571
Jobs – there are plenty of good, family-wage jobs in the region	170
Education – excellent schools are available and accessible to all	159
Cost of living is low/reasonable	70

Strong, viable economy in the region	54
Economic prosperity for individuals – people are able to accumulate wealth, pursue dreams, and be financially comfortable	51
Basic needs – people are able to meet their basic needs	38
More small, locally owned businesses exists (fewer large businesses and big box stores)	29

Easy to get around	549
Transit is accessible, efficient, reliable, and affordable	138
Travel – it is easy to get around because of the excellent transportation system	117
Multi-modal transportation options are extensive and accessible	95
Low traffic/congestion	67
Biking and walking – it is easy and safe to bike or walk to work and services	67
Roads are in good shape and provide sufficient capacity	34
Infrastructure is well maintained (includes mostly roads and bridges, but also sidewalks)	31

Personal happiness, entertainment and recreation	415
Cultural resources – there is wide and easy access to a variety of entertainment, arts and cultural events and resources	171
Personal enjoyment, happiness, well-being – including good work/life balance, a low-stress lifestyle, the ability to pursue whatever makes one happy, and time spent with family	121
Recreational and outdoor opportunities are plentiful and accessible	110
Livability	13

Good people and safe community	341
Safety – it feels safe to walk around the community	182
Sense of community, including a high level of community service/volunteering	78
Crime - low crime	40
Nice people and neighbors	25
Citizens are engaged and participate actively in government and the community	16

Pleasant and well-designed community	293
Walkable communities	89
Neighborhoods are nice, clean and safe	83
Space – the region has less density and feels less crowded	29
UGB is maintained and sprawl is limited	27
Jobs are located close to home	28
Sustainability	19
Good land use and transportation planning	18

Housing - affordable and sufficient	124
Housing is affordable to all residents	85
Sufficient and diverse housing options are available	39

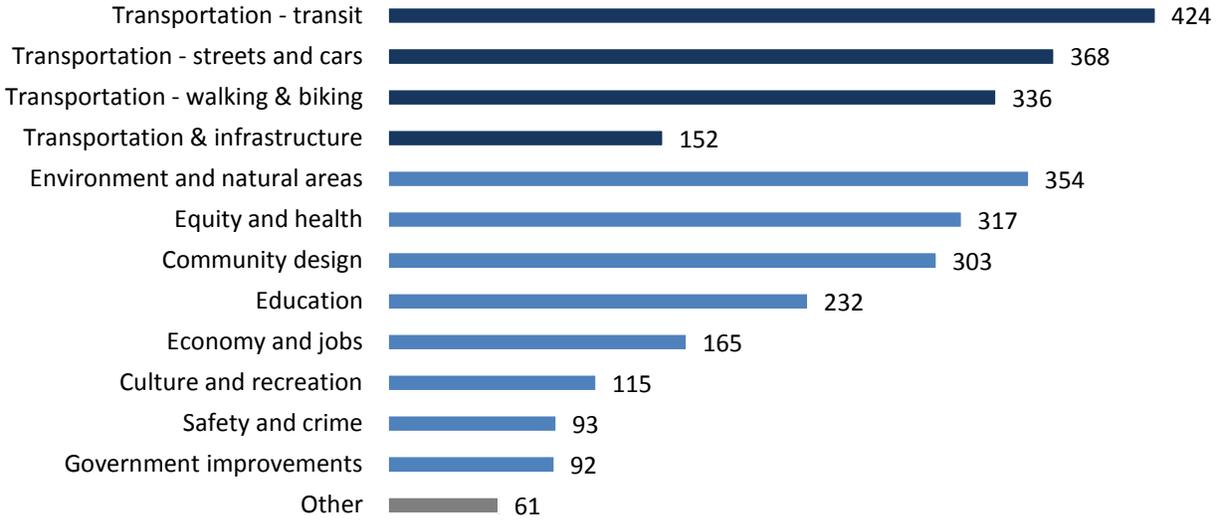
Good government	119
Freedom from undue government interference or regulation	39
Government is responsive to citizens' needs	30
Low taxes	21
Government spending is kept in check, and costs are kept in mind as community improvements are made	16
Emergency services are of good quality (and police are accountable for their actions)	13

Equality and social justice	116
Equitable access to opportunities and services for all, particularly the poor and displaced	57
Diversity – the community includes a range of ethnicities, ages, and income levels	29
Social services, particularly homeless and mental health services, are available	30

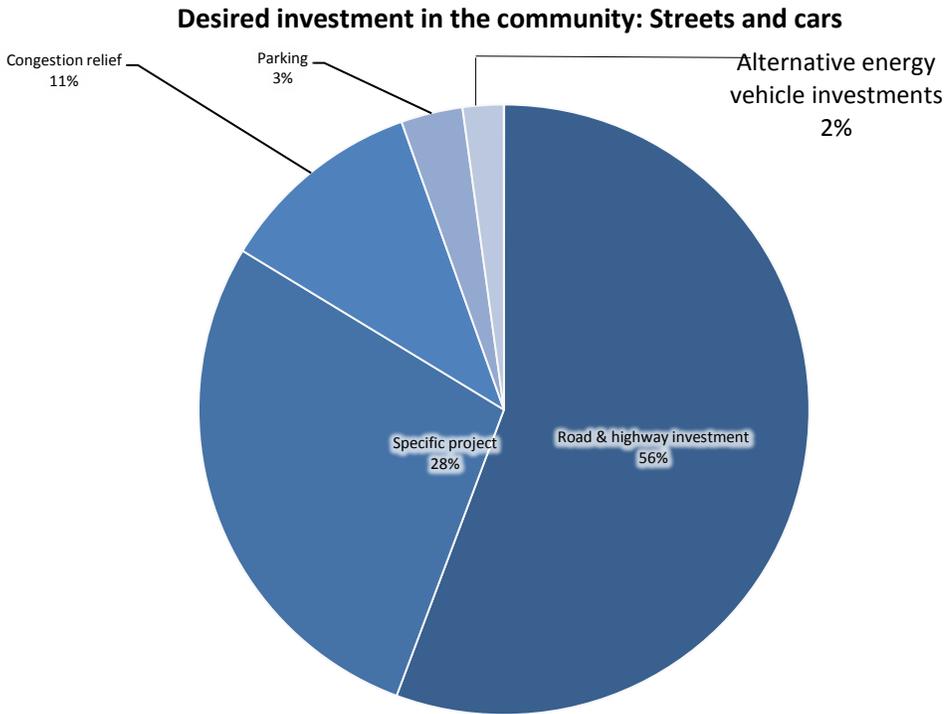
Question 3. What three investments would you most like to see made in your community (where you live and work) in the next 10 years?

By a large majority, people want investment in the **transportation** system – road and highway investments as well as investment in transit, biking and walking. Many also want more investment in protecting the **environment and natural areas**, and in **community design** (for example, increasing or decreasing density, making neighborhoods more walkable, and improving planning). There is also support for creating more **equity** in the region and for improving **education, health and social services**. Of lower priority are investments to improve the economy, create more recreational or cultural opportunities, non-transportation related safety and crime, and changes to the government.

What three investments would you most like to see made in your community in the next 10 years?



Transportation – Streets and cars



Many people want to see general improvements to roads, particularly to reduce traffic congestion. While some want to add **new roads or lanes** to improve traffic flow, most want more investment in **maintaining and repairing** existing roads, highways and bridges (including fixing potholes and paving or repaving where needed). Several people suggested **smart road or technology** improvements, including better traffic signal synchronization. Several also suggested investing in

electric vehicles and charging stations, as well as subsidies to make them more affordable. Some said that **more funding** should go toward roads rather than other modes of transportation.

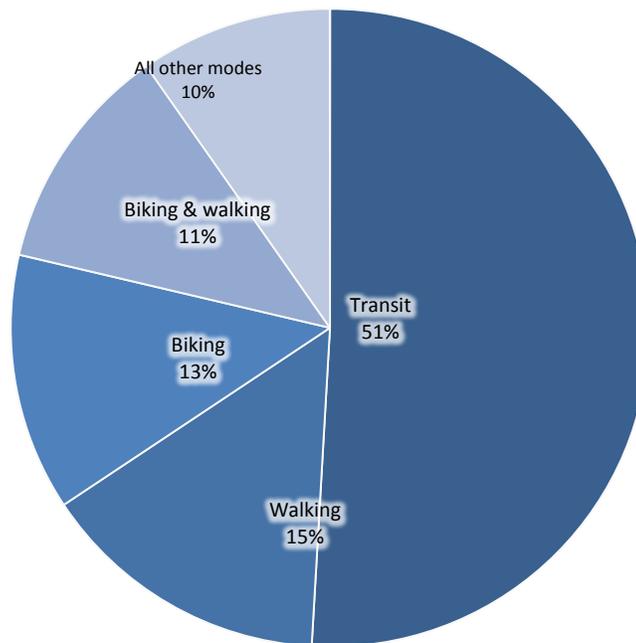
Many want to see specific **road projects** built, including:

- Columbia River Crossing or some alternative bridge across the Columbia River
- Westside bypass or some other freeway to improve regional connectivity on the west side
- Widening Highway 217
- Widening Highway 26 and improving the Sunset Tunnel
- I-5 improvements to reduce traffic, particularly in the Rose Quarter/I-84 area and near Highway 217
- Burying I-5/I-405 around downtown to bring back access to the Willamette River
- Road paving and improvements in East Portland

Some also want more **parking**, particularly parking required for new development and infill.

Transportation – Transit, walking and biking

Desired investment in the community: Transit, walking and biking



Among transportation investments, most people want more investment in transportation options, including increased and improved transit and better and expanded bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Some want less investment in roads that favor single occupancy vehicles.

Transit In terms of transit investments, people want **improved transit** that is more frequent, convenient and reliable. **Frequency, speed and affordability** of transit seem to be most important.

Several also stated the need for more focus outside the urban core and for **suburban connectivity**, as well as better service to East Portland. Many want to see **more light rail** with a focus on moving commuters, although some feel that more bus service or Bus Rapid Transit would be cheaper and more flexible. A few people would like **improved security** and fare enforcement on trains and buses, as well as more investment in park and rides.

Walking and biking Among pedestrian investments, the main desire is to create **more and improved sidewalks** throughout the region, and particularly in East and Southwest Portland. There is also some support for improved **crosswalks** to improve safety, as well as **traffic calming** measures to reduce vehicle speeds.

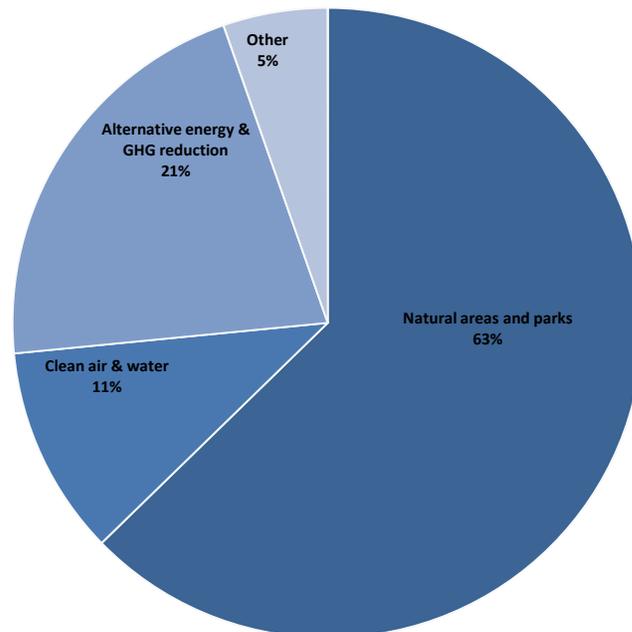
Among bike investments, there is great support for **more bike paths and lanes**, with a particular focus on improving **safety** and providing better **connectivity** to reduce gaps in the bicycle network. Several want more bike lanes and walking paths **separate from traffic** as well as **complete streets and greenways**. A few people commented that bicycles should be taken off of major streets and rerouted to lower traffic routes.

General transportation and infrastructure improvements

Many people commented that they want more investment in the **transportation system in general**, without regard to mode. They want improvements to reduce traffic and provide more public transportation options and better bike/walk options, as well as transportation affordability. Many also want to see **general infrastructure improvements** in all sectors of government – including roads and bridges, bike lanes and sidewalks, sewer and water, and public buildings. Some commented that the focus should be on infrastructure that improves sustainability and smart growth. Several people said that more transportation and infrastructure is needed to keep up with new population growth.

Environment and Natural Areas

Desired investment in the community: Environment and natural areas

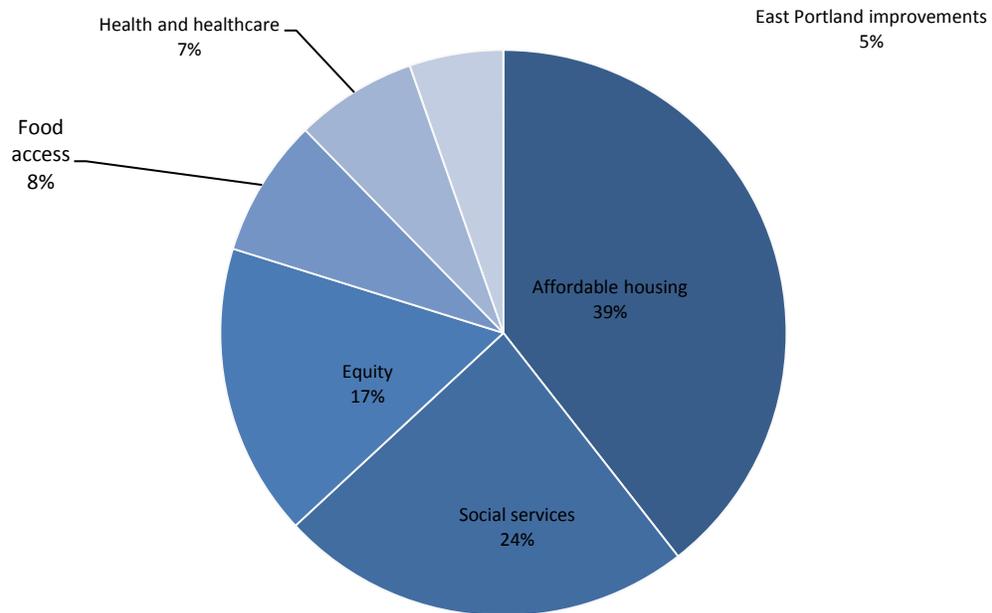


Among environmental investments, people want investment in **natural areas and parks**; they want to see more green space and open space for **recreational** purposes, as well as for **habitat and wildlife protection**. There is support for both larger natural areas and smaller greenspaces woven into the urban environment. People would particularly like more parks that are **easily accessible** in and near neighborhoods. Several respondents want more **trails** in parks, as well as connectivity between trails. Some people want to improve the urban **tree canopy** and protect trees.

Several people want greater investment to improve **air and water quality**, including reduced pollution from transportation, diesel trucks, and industry. Several support more efforts in river clean up. There is also support for **natural stormwater systems**, and green streets in particular. Several also support investment in the **alternative energy** infrastructure to provide more sustainable local energy sources and to reduce reliance on fossil fuels; and in particular solar power investment in new construction and public buildings, and incentives or subsidies for installments.

Equity and public health

Desired investment in the community: Equity and public health

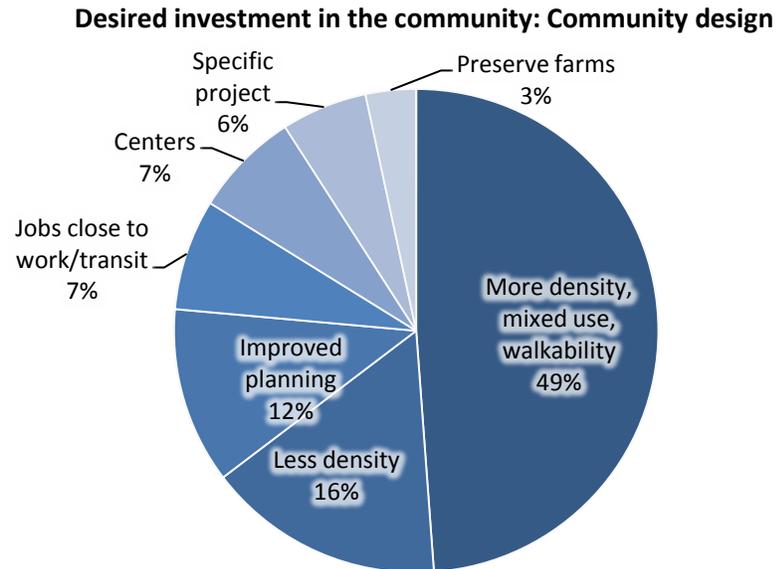


Many people want investment in more reasonably-priced and **affordable housing**, particularly closer into the central urban areas. Some also want more support for low-income and subsidized housing, as well as a **variety of housing options** for all income levels.

Many people support increased investment in **social services**, and in particular better services for the homeless and mental health. Some also want more investment in underserved areas to make the **region more equitable**, avoid displacement and ensure equitable access to transportation, schools, housing and employment. Several noted the particular need for investment in **East Portland**.

There is support for greater healthy **food access** to reduce the number of food deserts in the area; as well as for better **health care access and affordability**, including free or low-cost health insurance and care.

Community design



The key improvements that most respondents want to see in community design are **increased density** and making communities more **walkable** with **mixed uses**. Some people are interested in **more infill** development, both commercial and residential, with good design, to discourage sprawl. Development should include a mix of housing, business and retail, and **complement the neighborhood** character. Several said they want more **shopping, retail and restaurants** located near their homes, creating more neighborhood hubs to improve walkability. Several noted the need to place **jobs close to home** to reduce commute times, or to have more convenient transit access to jobs.

Many respondents want to ensure **protection of the urban growth boundary** and focus on redeveloping/developing underutilized and vacant lots within the UGB before expanding outwards. Several added that increased density should include **maintaining natural areas and parks** within urban areas as well as protection of farms and natural areas outside of the UGB.

Some also want more investment in **downtowns, centers and main streets** to make them vibrant and walkable, and attract more quality restaurants, retail and other amenities. There is support to invest in both suburban centers and downtown Portland.

Among those that want **less density** are preferences for **less infill** and fewer high density housing developments that lead to **overcrowding**. They'd like to keep larger single family lots and stop lot splitting and placing home close together. They are mainly concerned about population growth in the region and an overemphasis on growth.

Some want a focus on **improved planning** within the region, and offered diverse views on how to achieve this. Suggestions include zoning and laws to ensure that new developments fit into neighborhoods and the natural environment, regulations that require developers to provide infrastructure and community benefits, and better traffic planning coordination.

Some want **investment in a specific project**, including a public access project at Willamette Falls in Oregon City and improving the Memorial Coliseum/Rose Quarter area in the city of Portland.

Education

Many people want investment in education, particularly in **K-12 education** and Portland Public Schools. This includes more funding and innovative programs to foster true learning, as well as more investment in music and arts. Some supported education reform or an overhaul of the system to improve graduation rates. Several also support increased funding for **higher education** and making college more affordable, as well as increased funding for early childhood education.

Economy and jobs

Many people want more investment in employment and creating **good-paying, family-wage jobs**. This includes greater investment in jobs infrastructure, and creating more manufacturing and green jobs in particular. Several also want to ensure that jobs are close to home, or more jobs-housing match so that people can afford to live near their jobs.

Many also want investments to make the region more **business-friendly** and increased efforts to **encourage, support and attract new businesses**. There was a split among respondents who want more focus on attracting large businesses to the area versus those that want more support for small, family-owned local businesses.

Culture and recreation

Some people want more investment in **civic spaces and gathering places**, including community centers, low-cost community-oriented and neighborhood activities and events, and more public markets. Several also want to see more **community gardens** and **recreation opportunities**, including access to riverfront areas and more sports stadiums. Several support more investment in **public arts and culture** in the region.

Safety and crime

Some people want more safety investment in their communities. This includes efforts to **reduce crime** by investing in the police force or by doing more community policing. Many also want more **traffic enforcement** to ensure safe streets and travel, as well as greater **disaster response** in case of earthquake.

Government improvements

Some people commented that they want changes in the government, including **lower taxes** in general and **reduced scope of government**, including less government spending and less regulation on citizens. Many also want to see a government that is **responsive to citizen needs** and provides for more citizen involvement and greater oversight and transparency.

Question 4. What else do we need to know as we continue to plan for the future of how we live and work?

Many people discussed **high-density development**. The majority of people who discussed density favored denser development, but want to make sure it is done right – large “mega-homes” on small lots is a concern to many. Others support high-density but want it balanced with low-density and open space. Many noted the need to protect farmland and maintain the urban growth boundary.

Affordable housing is another key theme, many noting their inability to live close to their jobs, making commute times long, and contributing to more traffic. As people move further from jobs, the need for improved **public transit** increases.

Locating **goods, services and jobs near peoples'** homes in order to reduce the need to travel was suggested by many respondents. People indicated that this would result in walking, biking and transit options being more convenient. Enabling more **telecommuting** opportunities is also desired.

Neighborhood livability is important to people. Respondents indicated the importance of retaining neighborhood character, and improving connectivity, walkability and safety, including crime reduction, in neighborhoods. People indicated the need to be equitable geographically with public investments; East Portland and rural areas were identified as communities that need more investment and planning to improve livability.

Many respondents are concerned with **infrastructure** – roads, transit, utilities, and services. With growth and development comes the need to **add appropriate infrastructure** and to **maintain and upgrade** what is already in place.

Congestion in the region is a concern. Suggestions to improve congestion range from making **transit** more flexible, affordable and convenient across the **entire region**, making more investment in **roads** for cars, freight and bikes, and making communities more accessible for pedestrians (safer, sidewalks, better connectivity). The need for investment in **transportation options** is important to many.

Finally, respondents commented that whatever is done, **spending funds efficiently** is important. **Equitable investment** across the entire region is also desired. Some respondents stressed the need to continue to **engage citizens** before making decisions, and to balance the influence of a loud minority. Many stressed the need to do **long-range planning** and to make difficult choices now.

HOW WE GET AROUND

The online public comment survey asked a series of questions to get feedback about transportation investment in the Portland metropolitan region. These questions began by asking respondents what challenges they experience getting around the region, and then asked about which strategies should be invested in to help ease traffic congestion. Participants were then asked to list the top three investments they would most like to see made in the transportation system over the next ten years.

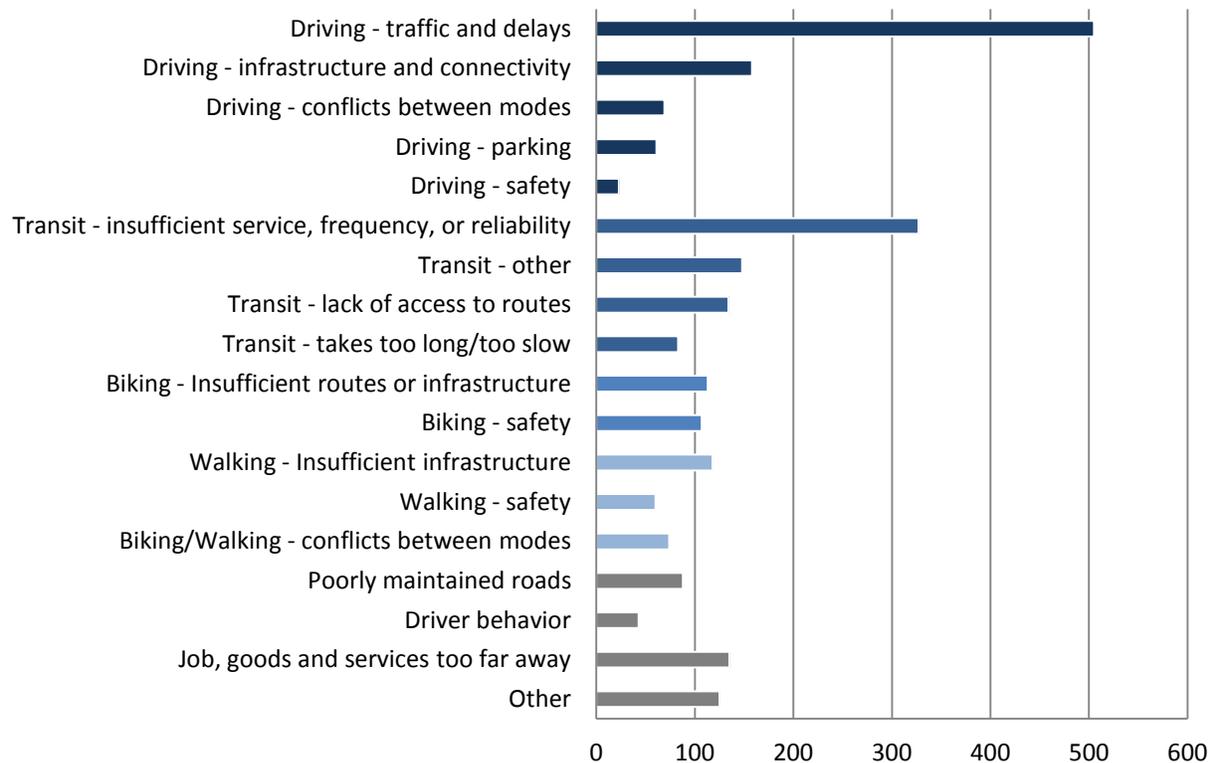
The following portion of this report summarizes responses to these questions.

Question 1. What are the three main challenges you have getting to work, school or to complete errands?

Participants were asked to list the three main challenges they have getting around. Most people provided challenges that relate to driving and transit; the most common challenge is traffic and delays. Of all the challenges that people listed, 35 percent dealt with driving, 29 percent with transit, 11 percent with biking, 9 percent with walking, and 16 percent other or multiple modes.

Many also provided challenges related to alternative transportation. For transit, the main challenge is insufficient access, service, frequency or reliability; and for biking and walking the main challenge is insufficient infrastructure or routes.

What are the three main challenges you have getting to work, school or to complete errands?



Driving challenges

By far the biggest challenge for drivers is **traffic and congestion**, particularly during rush hour. Many noted traffic in specific areas or roads, including: Interstate 5 around the Rose Quarter area and the Columbia River Bridge; southwest highways including Highway 99W, Highway 217, Highway 26; the Ross Island Bridge and the Sunset Tunnel through downtown; and I-84 and I-205. Some said that traffic overflows into **neighborhood streets**, causing local congestion and safety issues. A number of people also find **construction delays** to be a major challenge, as well as **downtown driving** in general due to too much traffic, expensive parking, and conflicts with cyclists and transit.

Infrastructure and connectivity is another main challenge for drivers and includes poor quality or not enough **bridges and freeways**, and **not enough lanes** on existing roads to carry the volume of traffic. Some cited issues with road lanes being removed to accommodate green streets and bike lanes. Many said there is a **lack of regional connectivity**, particularly a lack of direct routes connecting suburbs and outer communities that don't require travel through downtown Portland. Many also noted that roads lack good **traffic technology**; poorly synchronized traffic signals and traffic timing makes driving less efficient. Some suggested smart traffic lights and blinking yellow lights, and right-turn-on-red improvements to improve traffic flow.

Some drivers said that **conflict with other modes** is a challenge. In particular, they feel that some bicyclists do not obey traffic laws or seem to ride in a dangerous way, which impedes the flow of auto traffic and the safety of pedestrians and drivers. Similarly, some said that buses and MAX trains impede the smooth flow of traffic. Some said that projects seem too oriented toward improving transportation options as opposed to improving roads.

A number of people said they have trouble finding **parking**, particularly in urban areas, or that parking is too expensive. Some said that parking is becoming scarcer due to more dense residential development.

A few people commented that **safety issues** are a challenge, including a lack of enforcement of traffic violations, difficulty crossing major intersections without signals, and poor signage and street markings.

Transit challenges

The main challenge for transit riders is insufficient service, frequency, or reliability. Respondents generally said that transit service is **not frequent enough**, which makes it inconvenient or makes driving the more efficient option. There is **not enough transit service or route options**, particularly to the suburbs and smaller communities. Many noted that the transit **schedule is not convenient**; and would like to see more service on the weekends and outside of peak hours, particularly late evening/night service. Some said that transit is **not reliable**. Many said that taking transit **takes too long** because routes are circuitous, wait times are long, or routes include too many transfers. Some said that it is faster to drive than to take the bus to their destinations.

Many transit riders noted that the transit system **lacks regional connectivity**. They said that it is easy to get to inner Portland from outer areas, but difficult to move between other parts of the

region. North-south connections seem to be a particular problem. Many also **lack access** to a bus or train stop within walking distance of their home or job.

Other problems include **overcrowding** on buses and trains, particularly during rush hour, as well as **unaffordable fares**. Some feel that transit is **not safe** and would like more security and fare enforcement on trains and buses. Several noted that **park and ride options** need improvement, and some want more **bus shelters** at transit stops.

Biking challenges

The main challenge to bicyclists is **insufficient routes or infrastructure** and problems with **safety**. Many said there is simply a lack of bike lanes or paths, or that routes are incomplete and lack **connectivity**. Many cyclists want a more connected, comprehensive bicycle **network**, as well as more bike lanes that are protected or **separate from auto traffic**. Some noted that there are not good North-South options on the eastside.

In terms of safety, people cited challenges with **safely crossing busy streets** by bike, and unsafe bike paths along **major streets** where cars move very quickly. Other safety issues occur when trying to cycle with children and biking on bridges. A few people noted that topography is a challenge.

Walking challenges

The main challenge to walking is a **lack of sidewalks** or incomplete sidewalks and poor pedestrian facilities, as well as a **lack of crosswalks** and safe crossings. This is a particular problem in outer East Portland and Southwest Portland. Many feel **unsafe** due to the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks.

For both bicyclists and pedestrians, **conflicts with drivers** are a major challenge. They said that automobile traffic moves too quickly in neighborhoods, or that drivers are not aware of or mindful of bicyclists and pedestrians on roads. Some also feel that transportation **planning is too car-oriented** and the presence of so many vehicles make biking and walking more difficult, less safe, and less pleasant. Some also cited car and truck emissions and pollution as a challenge to biking and walking.

Challenges for all modes

Some challenges seemed to cross multiple modes. These include:

Poorly maintained roads Many people said that more effort should be spent maintaining the roads we have. Deteriorated roads, unpaved streets, and potholes create hazards and delays, for drivers and for cyclists.

Driver inattentiveness Drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians alike said that distracted or aggressive drivers make getting around more difficult and dangerous.

Jobs, goods and services too far away Many people said that goods and services, particularly grocery stores, are too far away from their homes, which makes their chosen mode of travel more difficult. Some live in sprawled areas that make it too difficult or dangerous to get to destinations by

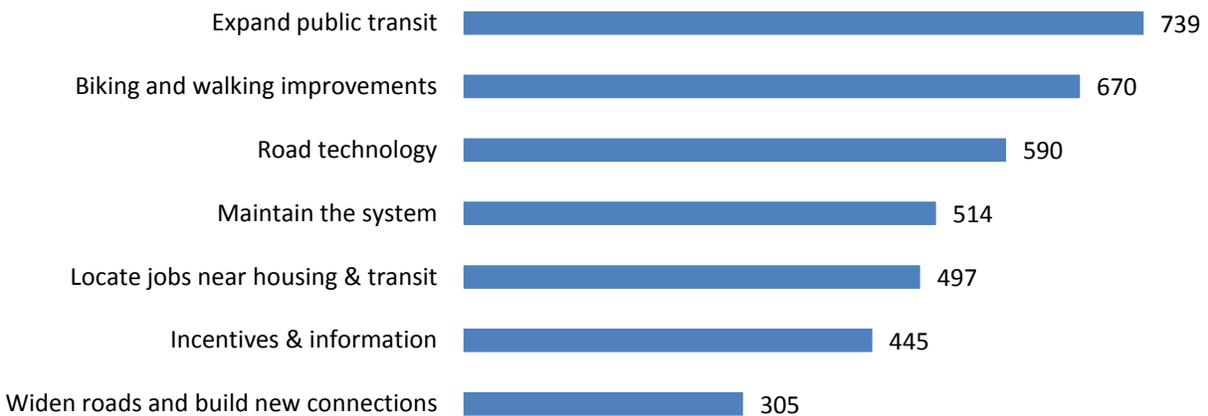
any mode other than a car. Many want more options within walking distance or a shorter drive. Some said that their **commute is too long**, which affects their choice of mode; many said they would take transit but it takes too long or there is a lack of access.

Question 2. Which strategies do you think the region should invest in to help ease traffic congestion?

Participants responded to a multiple choice question that listed seven strategies to help ease traffic congestion. The most desired investments include **expanding public transit** to make it more frequent, convenient, accessible, and affordable; connecting more places with **sidewalks, walking, and bicycle paths**; and investing in **technology to improve vehicle flow and safety on roads** including timing traffic signals, pedestrian countdown signs, and flashing yellow turn signals.

The next three most desired investments are **maintaining** and keeping our current transportation system in good condition; locating **jobs near housing and transit**; and providing **incentives and information** to encourage carpooling, walking, bicycling, and public transit. There is less support for **widening roads** and building new connections to improve vehicle flow and safety.

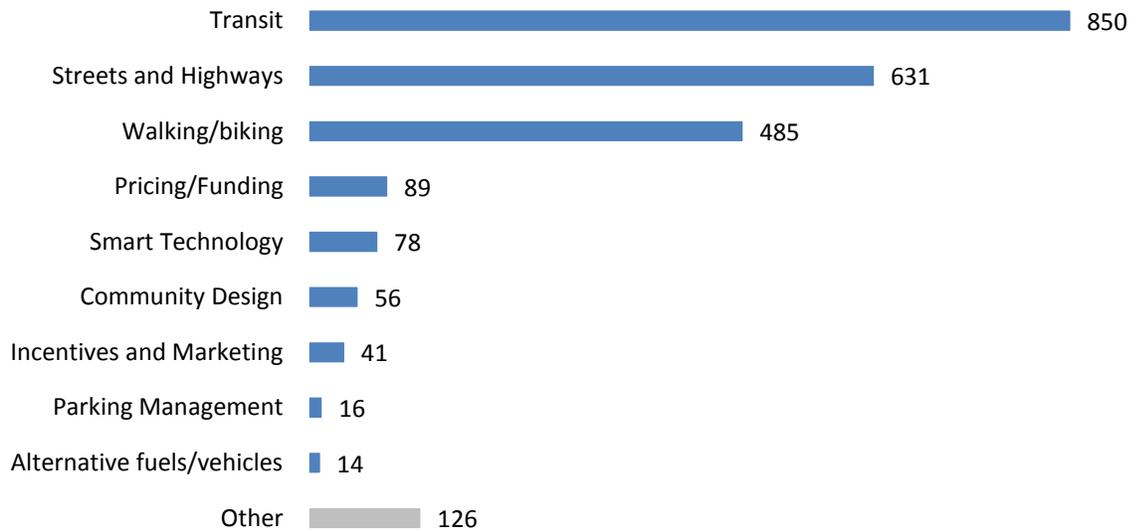
Which strategies do you think the region should invest in to help ease traffic congestion?



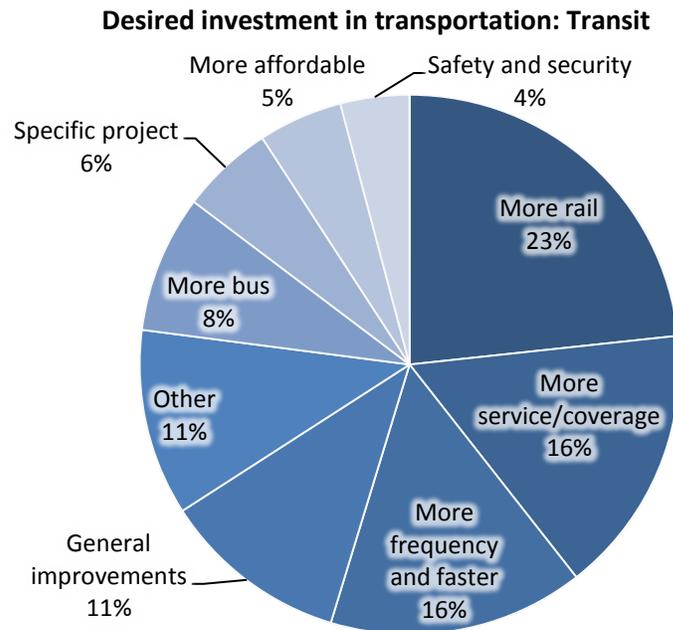
Question 3. What three investments would you most like to see made in our transportation system (how we get around) in the next 10 years?

Generally, people want to see investment in transit (35%) and streets and highways (26%). Many also want investments to make walking and biking safer and more convenient (20%).

What three investments would you most like to see made in our transportation system in the next 10 years?



Transit



Many people simply want to see **better, affordable, faster and reliable** public transportation. Many people want investments to **expand service** to areas that are not currently served or that are

poorly served, particularly in suburban and outlying areas that do not have to go through downtown Portland. Many desire **increased frequency** of transit lines, including more express lines, and some desire for longer and later hours of operation. Some suggested more creative transit options like small shuttles and feeder buses to major lines and MAX stops.

In terms of types of transit investments, many support **more light rail** by either expanding current MAX lines or creating new ones. A minority supports **increased bus service** or Bus Rapid Transit instead of MAX because it is cheaper and more flexible. Those who support light rail particularly want it catering to commuters. There is some support for streetcar expansion. A minority want to see a halt to construction of any new MAX lines.

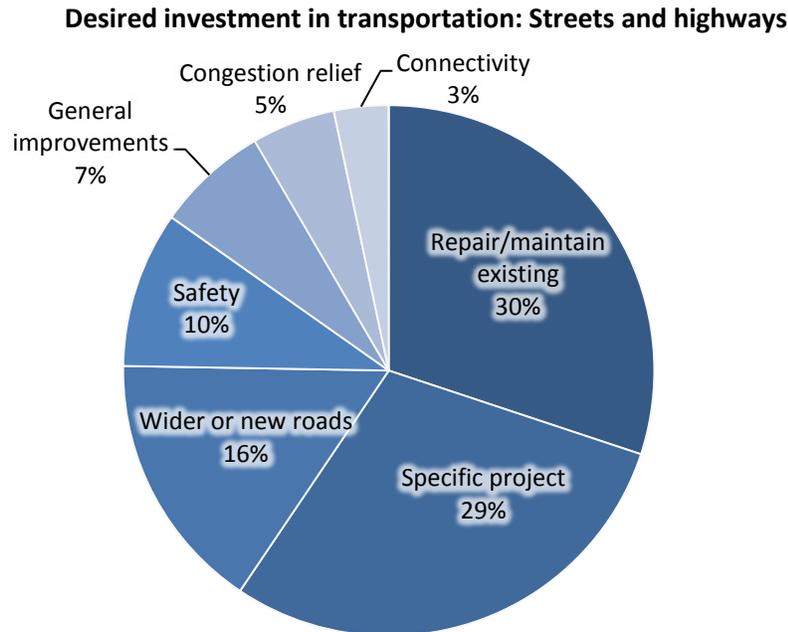
Some people want **safety and security** improvements, including greater fare enforcement, security on trains and buses, and better lighting and shelters at stations.

In terms of other improvements, some people commented that they want more **park and ride** options, **dedicated bus lanes** to improve speeds and reliability, increased **passenger rail**, and more **fuel efficient** or electric buses. A few also commented that transit must better serve **underserved populations**.

There is also support for particular **projects**, including:

- Southwest Corridor to serve Tigard, Tualatin and Sherwood; or some other MAX service in the south metro area
- More light rail in Southwest (to Lake Oswego, along Highways 26 and 217, or further into Washington County)
- Powell-Division High Capacity Transit
- Light rail to Vancouver, Wash.
- WES (Westside Express Service) commuter rail expansion

Streets and highways



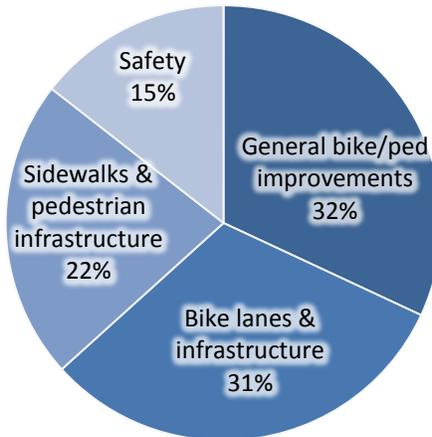
Participants who want to see improvements in roads are most interested in a specific **road project**, or want to see **repair or maintenance** of existing roads and bridges, mostly paving and repairing potholes or maintenance of bridges. Some people support **widening roads** and freeways to improve traffic flow, or for **building more roads** and better freeways to improve connectivity. Some want more improvements in **safety** on roads, including seismic upgrades on bridges and more enforcement of traffic law violations. A smaller number of people are interested in **more funding** to support road improvements, or any measures to provide **congestion relief**, particularly on highways and bottleneck areas. A few noted that **connectivity** to suburban areas and smaller communities needs improvement.

Some of the **projects** that have the most support include:

- Columbia River Crossing or an alternative bridge across the Columbia River. Alternatively, a number of people supported no longer pursuing the Columbia River Crossing project.
- Widening Highway 217
- I-5 improvements or expansion, especially north of downtown and in the Rose Quarter area.
- Building the Westside Bypass or some other major road to provide connectivity in the western/southwest part of the region (such as expanding I-205 to the west).
- Highway 26 improvements or widening.
- I-205 capacity improvements.
- Highway 99W capacity improvements.
- Improvements to Powell Blvd. and other eastside roads.

Walking and biking

Desired investment in transportation: Walking and biking



Of those who want more investment in walking and biking, there is support for more bike lanes and paths and more pedestrian amenities, mostly sidewalks. There is a desire for more **bike lanes and paths** in general, and some support for more bike trails or lanes separate from auto traffic. Many support investment in pedestrian infrastructure, particularly **sidewalks** and **crosswalks**. A few people want **traffic calming measures** and more walking trails. Several comments support bike lanes and sidewalks to connect to schools. Many are also concerned about biking and walking **safety**, and want investment in safer sidewalks, lighted crosswalks, better street lighting, safer bikeways and trails, and well-maintained bike lanes that are cleaned of debris. A few also want to prioritize pedestrian safety in underserved neighborhoods.

Some people commented that greater biking and walking **connectivity** is needed, including regional connectivity and **complete streets**. They want more seamless transitions between alternative modes – walking, biking and transit. Several support repurposing car lanes for active transportation use or limiting road widening. A few people support specific bicycle/pedestrian projects, including the Sullivan Gulch Trail, Barbur Boulevard bike lane, completing the gap in the 40-mile Loop trail network, and building a bicycle/pedestrian bridge over the Willamette River in Wilsonville.

Some also support less investment in roads and highways or projects that favor single occupancy vehicles, and more investment in providing transportation options.

Pricing/funding

Four percent of responses support some kind of pricing or funding mechanism. Some want to see generally improved funding for transportation, particularly **increased and stable funding for alternative transportation**, or more accountability for how funds are spent. The most commonly supported funding mechanism is **tolling** on roads or bridges, particularly during rush hours, and an increase in the **gas tax, vehicle miles driven fee** or other measure to make driving more expensive; as well as a **bicycling tax or fee**. There is some support for more private investment in transportation or a sales tax.

Smart technology

Three percent of responses want more investment technology to improve efficiency and smooth traffic flow. Most commonly, they want to see improved **traffic signal timing/synchronized traffic lights** and **Intelligent Transportation Systems**. A few support more use of flashing yellow turn signals and real time traffic updates.

Other

A smaller number of people support investment in the following:

- **Community design** including development that makes neighborhoods more walkable, brings services and jobs closer to neighborhoods, or transit oriented development.
- **Incentives and marketing** including incentives for those who carpool, use transit, walk or bike; incentives to employers who allow employees to telecommute; incentives for businesses that locate near transit lines; and more public information to encourage alternative transportation.
- **Parking management** including a wide range of strategies including providing more free parking to encourage retail shopping, and removing parking or creating more paid parking to encourage alternative transportation use.
- **Alternative fuels/vehicles** including incentives and investment in electric and fuel-efficient vehicles, Smart cars, and electric vehicle charging stations.
- **Carshare and carpooling** investments to increase carsharing and carpooling programs
- **Equity** considerations ensuring transportation investments are equitably distributed throughout the region and accessible to low-income communities.

Question 4. What else do we need to know as we continue to plan for the future of how we get around?

Overall, respondents want **improved transit service** – more flexible, accessible, affordable, efficient and convenient. These improvements need to occur **throughout the region**, including suburban areas and smaller communities. The **reduction of bus lines** is a concern. Some fear the additional reductions that will occur when Portland to Milwaukie Light Rail begins operating in 2015. Others are concerned the system doesn't work well for those who are most dependent on it. In other portions of the online comment survey, respondents favored greater light rail expansion; but for this question many respondents said they support public bus service, including Bus Rapid Transit, but not light rail. The need to **educate the public** about transit and other available transportation options was noted many times. Finally, **improved safety** for public transportation is another key transit theme.

Many identified **peak hour congestion** as an issue that needs to be resolved. Many respondents believe that a key component to alleviating congestion and increasing the use of alternative transportation modes is to **locate housing close to jobs, goods and services**. Another theme is the **aging population** and their transportation needs.

There is a **healthy split** between respondents wanting to invest in roads, those wanting to divest in them, and those that want have a balanced multi-modal approach. While some respondents want to reduce investment in roads, a large number of comments requested improved bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure; specifically to increase safety. A minority specifically want less investment in bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure. Many respondents stated that cars are not going away – even electric cars and those that use alternate fuels will still require roads.

There are quite a few comments about general **maintenance** of our transportation facilities – the need to sweep gravel for bikes, add missing sidewalks, trim bushes and trees around street/stop signs, pave on-standard roads, fix potholes, etc. Others discussed reducing the need for road maintenance by reducing the number of cars on the roads.

Finally, **funding** was mentioned by many respondents. Many are concerned about the lack of funds available to make improvements and stressed the need for **new revenue sources**; others noted the need for **fiscal responsibility** and do not want any additional tax burden placed on the public to fund improvements. The need for **equitable investments** among geography and demographics was noted by some.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Race/Ethnicity 89% of respondents identified as White/Caucasian. The remaining identified as African American/Black (1%), Asian or Pacific Islander (2%), American Indian/Native American (2%), Hispanic/Latino (2%), Slavic (2%), or some other race (2%).

Geography Most respondents said that they live in Multnomah County, 13% said they live in Washington County, and 11% said they live in Clackamas County.

Resident longevity Participants generally have lived in their community in the region for a long time, with 38% over twenty years, and 24% between 11 and 20 years.

Education Respondents are highly educated, with 34% having completed a college degree and 48% a post-graduate degree.