
JAN - MAY '20

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT BACK: 2020 TRANSPORTATION FUNDING MEASURE

THE PORTLAND AFRICAN AMERICAN
LEADERSHIP FORUM (PAALF)

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Goal of Work

Our project goal has been to implement the *PAALF People's Plan* (2017) and our newly adopted strategic plan, which outlined transportation as our organizing and advocacy focus for PAALF's Environmental and Climate Justice Program during the next three years. Over the course of this project, we have focused our efforts on working with Metro to create safe, efficient transportation options in all-Black neighborhoods, connecting people to jobs and education via transit, walking, biking, and creating accessible pathways for disabled folks. Through this project, PAALF strives to increase the influence of Black leaders in public discourse and decision-making opportunities relevant to transportation, climate change, and sustainability.

We will continue our commitment to a Just Transition, moving away from an extractive economy to a regenerative one. Initiating a movement that addresses root causes of both environmental degradation and environmental racism by getting involved in smaller civic actions that allow us to strengthen our ability to lead this work into the future.

Engagement

With support from the grant funds provided to us by Metro's community partnerships program, we have worked to engage and partner with government and public transportation agencies to ensure that community needs are met on a local and regional policy level, as outlined in *PAALF People's Plan* (2017). Through this project, we have continued to ensure the prioritization of safety improvements for Black people across all multimodal transportation efforts for PBOT, TriMet, and Metro -- with an emphasis on the Northeast and East Portland corridors -- as well as equitable access for Portland's Black community to public transit, green spaces, and parks.

Project Deliverables

Digital Engagement

As outlined in our project scope, we set out to 1) extend Metro's survey to 100+ community members; and 2) report on social media and newsletter Key Performance Indicators on the Metro survey. We used these outreach methods to offer people an opportunity to provide

feedback on Metro's programs, receive incentives from PAALF to do so, and spread the word about the Metro community workshop scheduled for March 12 (later canceled due to executive orders to shelter-in-place due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

- On Tuesday, March 3 - we sent out a targeted email from our digital database, EveryAction, sharing with folks the Metro survey and inviting them to the March 12 workshop. This email went out to 258 people with an open rate of 39.92%.
- On Thursday, March 5, we shared the flyer for the March 12 workshop on our c3 Facebook page, reaching a total of 72 people. From the targeted email that shared the survey, we received 13 survey submissions from participants that shared a screenshot of the survey with us, in return for a \$10 Visa gift card from PAALF.

Community Meetings and Interviews: Key Themes and Insights

In December 2019, PAALF launched our Environmental & Climate Justice Council with a mission to develop a group of self-determined Black leaders in the environmental arena of our region. PAALF Council Members have opportunities to provide leadership and guidance within PAALF's Environmental & Climate Justice (ECJ) program. Members help us vote on action steps, propel the work forward, and perpetuate positive change for Black Oregonians. A few current action areas in our ECJ program include pushing for safe, expanded, accessible, and affordable transportation; anti-displacement; and emergency preparedness.

Each of our six Council Members were asked to provide feedback on Metro's T2020 programs in the form of one-on-one interviews with our ECJ staff. ECJ Council interview questions were mostly centered on the four Metro programs PAALF focused on (Better Bus, Active Transportation, YouthPass, and Anti-displacement).

Interview Questions

- Describe your ideal neighborhood. How do you get around in that neighborhood? How do you feel as you are getting where you need and want to go?
- Do you feel that any of the four programs (Better Bus, Active Transportation, YouthPass/Fare Affordability, and Protecting & Preserving Multi-Family Housing) support your vision of an ideal neighborhood? If "no," why not?

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- If “yes,” what would the successful implementation of these four programs look like in your ideal neighborhood?
 - How do you rank these four programs from most important - least important, in your opinion?
 - What types of [safety improvements, anti-displacement strategies, transit improvements] would you most like to see in the places you live, work, and travel? Where would you like to see these improvements?
 - Do you have any additional comments about the following programs: Better Bus, Active Transportation, YouthPass/Fare Affordability, and Protecting & Preserving Multi-Family Housing, or other programs on this list that you would like to share?

Council Members responded from the perspective of their personal experiences and opinions on topics such as prioritizing programs, and where they would like to see improvements made in the form of safety, transit upgrades, and anti-displacement strategies. Feedback from ECJ Council Members helped us conclude our T2020 Policy Recommendations to Metro Council, found on pg. 12 of this report, and captured in the anonymous quotes listed below:

- Re: **Better Bus**
 - *“Any of [the programs] without real consideration to economic opportunity and development, they can be harmful, because the Better Bus piece...increasing the capacity and reducing delays...if people can't afford to live in the area and those improvements get made and they get priced out, they won't be able to enjoy those improvements.” - PAALF ECJ Council Member Interview*
- Re: **Student Fare Affordability/YouthPass**
 - *“[YouthPass] eases the pressure of parents and youth. That is the most important program. It puts pressure on parents to provide transportation to another person. Our region is experiencing high youth homelessness. [We need to] not just be basing it off youth that are in school, not having the age guidelines.” - PAALF ECJ Council Member Interview*
- Re: **Anti-displacement; Protecting and Preserving Multi-Family Housing**
 - *“The Anti-displacement program needs a (oversight) committee just like what's happening with PCEF, like how do you really check? We have so much displacement already going on, so if that number drops do they feel like they did*

their job? They gave us a lot of surface information without a lot of hard facts, [it's] hard to give comment because these programs are necessary and needed but I don't want to support them." - PAALF ECJ Council Member Interview

- **Re: Active Transportation Regional Connections**

- *"In areas where infrastructure needs to be built up, and Active Transportation does that, it just makes it more enjoyable for the people that can afford to live there. All of this does relate to displacement, and to put it really simply, [the] most effective measure is closing the housing wealth gap. If these aren't making real opportunities for Black and Indigenous people, none of these plans are going to help." - ECJ Council Member Interview*

Community Workshop

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, a Metro community workshop was planned for Thursday, March 12. Participants had been recruited from PAALF, APANO, and Verde. Due to Governor Brown's executive order to cancel/postpone large, in-person gatherings, this workshop was cancelled. PAALF Staff had planned to facilitate and take notes for one of the breakout sessions, and had recruited 25 community members to attend.

Anti-Displacement PDX Focus Group

On Thursday, March 26, PAALF hosted a focus group with members of the Anti-displacement PDX Coalition with attendance from Metro staff to answer questions and share information. Topics discussed in the focus group included an overview of the T2020 funding process, Metro's Equity Analysis, strategies for anti-displacement and options for affordable housing. ADPDX participants brought forward the need for clear housing budget breakdowns to receive community feedback; affordable housing investments that will directly benefit BIPOC communities; and a revolving loan fund that not only ensures the success of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color becoming homeowners, but one that is measurable by accomplishments.

Other questions asked by participants included:

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- *“How are the Metro planning and housing teams communicating and working together with the DEI team to create strategies for creating and keeping existing housing and location selection for affordable housing?”*
 - *“Is there a timeline for the affordable housing program? Hopefully it will be before the measure is approved.”*
 - *“The bond seems to mostly focus on new housing being built, but how would existing affordable housing be preserved? Taking in consideration that the calculations for affordable housing are often not actually affordable for most BIPOC folks. I understand that the research might have lead to building more housing but we also need to place an equal or greater amount of emphasis on connecting folks to housing since increasing the # of units doesn’t always translate to housed folks.”*
 - *“How is the revolving loan fund helping what happened in SW corridor? Why can’t Metro hold the land?”*
 - *“Is the hope that [the revolving loan] program will set aside some funding to help eliminate those barriers Jes mentioned [about securing land]. For example in homeownership...what we saw with preference policy in N/NE portland was that folks needed more time to get homebuyer ready. There just wasn't enough resources and time budgeted to those efforts. We truly need to give grants to orgs that have those existing BIPOC-focused home buying programs.”*
 - *“How does analysis of affordable housing investments work with corridors?”*
 - *“Can we get a breakdown and next steps of this \$5 mil allocation that the technical team is working on for “affordable housing”. And can we get clarity on who is the “technical team”?”*
 - *“Directed to the affordable housing team, how will the new finance tool embed equity, and directly benefit BIPOC folx?”*

Agenda:

(10 minutes) Welcomes & Introductions

(40 minutes) Metro Presentations

Overview of the transportation funding measure process

Equity Analysis

Anti-displacement strategies and affordable housing options

(35 minutes) Discussion, Q&A for anti-displacement and affordable housing programs

(5 minutes) Closing, next steps

Participants were asked by PAALF Staff to fill out a survey through our digital portal, EveryAction, to help us capture demographic information from participants as well as their responses to the following questions:

- Please share your main concern, if you have one, regarding Metro’s anti-displacement program within the 2020 transportation ballot measure.
- What do you think is the best way to track anti-displacement efforts within Metro’s 2020 regional transportation ballot measure? (Ex. an advisory committee; embedding certain criteria into each transportation program...).

Responses to the above questions are listed below, and a redacted spreadsheet of the survey results can be found here: [Survey Results ADPDX T2020 Focus Group Participants](#). A list of focus group attendees can be found in Appendix A.

Concerns about Anti Displacement program w/in Metro T2020: Please share your main concern if you have one regarding Metro’s anti displacement program within the 2020 transportation ballot measure.	Tracking Anti Displacement efforts in Metro T2020: What do you think is the best way to track anti displacement efforts within Metro’s 2020 regional transportation ballot measure? (Ex. an advisory committee; embedding certain criteria into each transportation program...)
<i>Its not strong enough and not enough money invested.</i>	<i>advisory committee</i>
<i>Metro should use bond funds to buy 'naturally occurring affordable housing' buildings along its future transit lines in order to preserve affordable homes. Otherwise, the transit investments will allow landlords to raise rents and/or sell properties to investors, resulting in displacement.</i>	<i>Provide funds for a community-based organization to hire an Anti-Displacement Manager who has autonomy from Metro, but whose job is to work with the community to develop and report on implementation of pro-active anti-displacement strategies as part of the bond.</i>

The need to ensure CBO'S are provided the capacity to acquire property for TOD. Add affordable housing in places where you've already invested in light rail but haven't changed any of the Zoning (orange line)

At the very least you should have an advisory committee and have specific criteria built into each transportation program. You should go further to get an outside antidisplacement audit of the program investments to ensure you can meet the goals set forth in Metro Policy, plans and etc

Equity Analysis

PAALF Staff met with Sebrina and Reed to discuss Metro's Equity Analysis on the following dates:

- Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2:30 - 3:30 pm via Zoom
- Friday, Feb. 21, 1:00 - 2:00 pm at Metro's DEI offices
- Wednesday, March 11, 9:00 - 10:00 am via phone with Reed
- Friday, April 10, 11:00am - 12:30pm GetMoving2020 Racial Equity Analysis Workshop

In these meetings, we discussed Metro's plans for their Equity Analysis and areas for collaboration and engagement with PAALF. We were pleased to be able to have an opportunity to work closely with Metro's DEI team, and to be able to provide further feedback in the Racial Equity Analysis Workshops. See Appendix B for our response to Metro's *Drafted Community Recommendations for Equity Outcomes* document.

Policy Recommendations to Metro Council

Better Bus

- It is essential that this program works together with anti-displacement and affordable housing programs.
- Should include safety investments.
 - Should not be limited to increased frequency, but also include investments in street lighting, flashing beacons, shelters, and sidewalks leading to bus stops.
- Bus priority lanes are needed to increase efficiency.
 - Consider how narrowing lanes (to accommodate bus-priority lanes) in the downtown Portland area may impact traffic in East Portland, where access to public transit is sparse with fewer options, and folks rely more on car travel.

Active Transportation Regional Connections

- Participatory budgeting would be an investment in community expertise and folks with lived experience of local issues.
- Consult and engage with long-time and most-vulnerable residents before making ‘improvements’ in areas.
 - Understand, first, the needs of that immediate community before implementation— it may be that what residents actually need is bus shelters vs. widened sidewalks
- Make investments near multi-family affordable housing campuses.
 - Active Transportation has the potential to cause harm as it typically only benefits the surrounding community, so it’s essential that these investments are made to benefit multi-family, BIPOC communities in and around affordable housing.

Student Fare Affordability/YouthPass

- Available to all youth 18 and under in the Metro region.
- Available to all youth independent of financial, social, or school status.
- Available to all youth year round to support youth travel needs in every season.
- Transportation Measure builds on existing PPS YouthPass program and funds, and incorporates TriMet existing commitments of 1/3 Student Pass Program and High School Pass Program funding.
- Transportation Measure is based on ridership levels to reflect lost fare revenue, rather than the nominal cost of a monthly Youth HOP. This is determined by card actual use as verified through HOP taps, similar to Universal Annual Pass Program for employers.

Anti-Displacement; Protecting and Preserving Multi-Family Housing

- Consider an increase from 2% of project capital dollars.
- Anti-displacement strategies should be implemented across all T2020 programs.
- Equitable representation at decision making tables: Implement an oversight committee made up of folks from community that identify as BIPOC, low-income, disabled, displaced, local, LGBTQ+, immigrant, bikers, walkers, and transit-dependent individuals.

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- Annual funding to support the anti-displacement efforts of Black-led and indigenous organizations. Funding including but not limited to, predevelopment costs, funds to purchase real estate and marketing analysis.
 - Invest in affordable housing along future transit lines,
 - Localized Community Benefit Agreements in each of the corridor programs,
 - Racial equity is not just community/civic engagement it must include access to decision making and resource allocation.

Appendices

Appendix A

Anti-Displacement PDX Focus Group Attendees:

Name	Pronouns	Organization
Sydney McCotter-Bicknell	she/her	Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF)
Joy Alise Davis	she/her	Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF)
Patty Unfred	she/her	Metro - Zoo, and helping with this project
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	she/her	Metro - DEI Team
Molly Cooney-Mesker	she/her	Metro (Community Engagement Specialist)
Jes Larson	she/her	Metro (Housing Policy Manager)
Brian Harper	he/him	Metro - planning department, SW Corridor Equitable Development Strategy
Reed Brodersen	he/him	Metro (Equity Analyst on DEI Team)
Nicole Johnson	she/her	1,000 Friends of Oregon
Jensi Albright	she/her	Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT)
Todd	he/him/his	APANO
Mychal Tetteh	he/him/his	PBOT - Active Transportation and Safety
Janaira Ramirez	she/her	OPAL
Cameron Herrington	he/him	Living Cully Coalition
Fatmah W	she/her	Momentum Alliance
Margi Bradway		Metro

Appendix B

Response to Metro's Drafted Community Recommendations for Equity Outcomes document:

What aspects of the outcome and strategy recommendations did you like?

I'm really happy to see that one of the strategies in "Communities of color and youth of color benefit" includes allowing flexibility in implementation. Moving slowly and intentionally is essential to effectively listen to community and to implement the needs of community.

What would you change?

Communities of color benefit from transportation investments and programs through... Add: increased reliability and efficiency. Folks need to be able to trust that the bus will be on time and that their ride time is functional -- this is a step towards getting single occupancy commuters to transition to public transportation.

Expand on: increased safety and health outcomes. Safety can be interpreted differently by different people, which could result in increased harm for Black and Brown riders if increased safety = increased policing, so I think we need to be clear on what "increased safety" looks like for Black, Indigenous, and other riders of color.

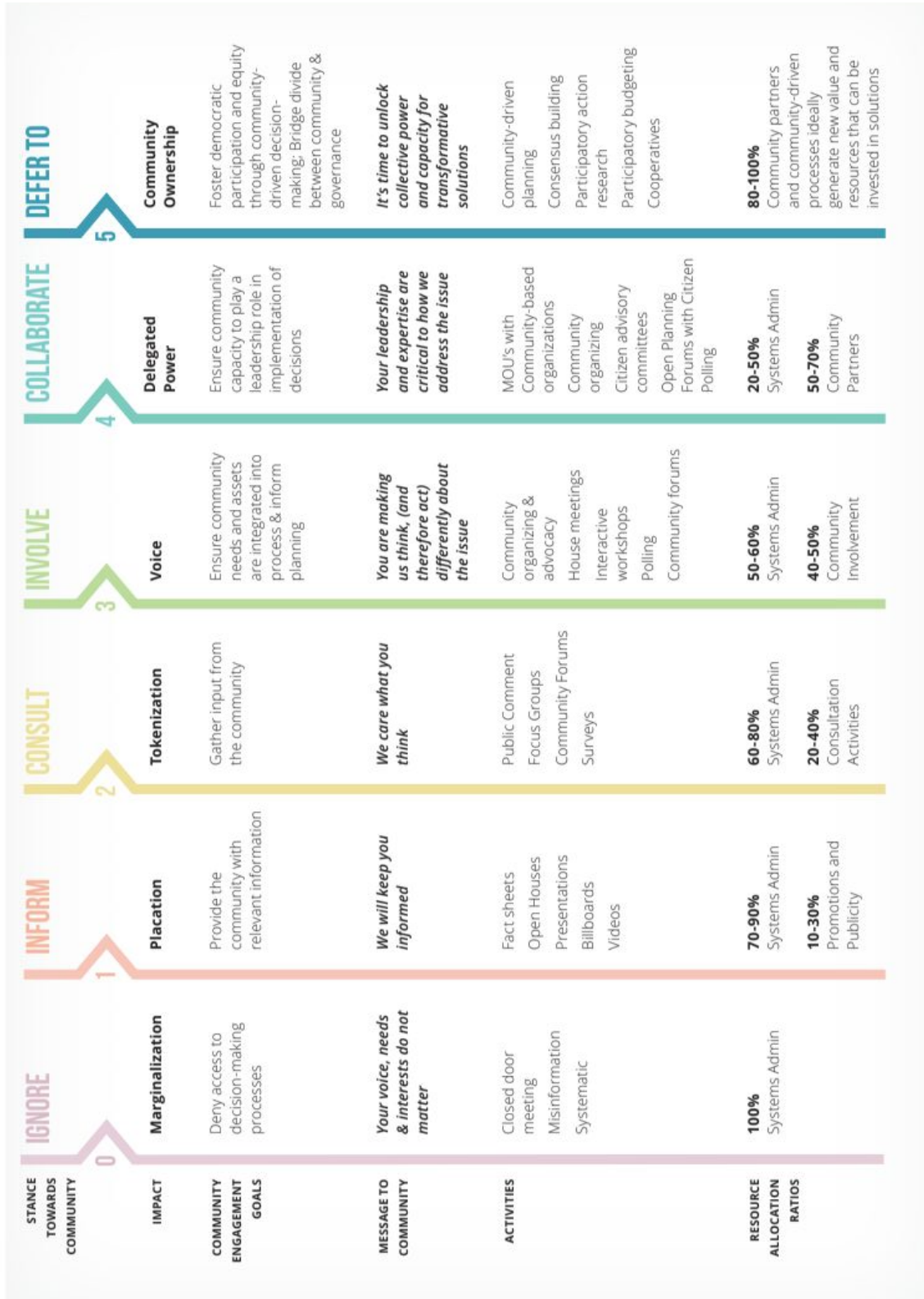
#4: It would be great to add "oversight" in this section as well, making it clear that we want Black, Indigenous, other communities of color, low income, disabled, sick folks, trans, queer, and gender non-binary folks not only involved in engagement and implementation phases, but largely involved in oversight for program investments.

#7: I'm not sure it's enough just to make the outcomes and impacts publicly available. I think communities that were previously engaged should be directly updated with this information.

In anything related to engaging the community, it would be ideal for Metro to allow more time to do so than they have in the past. Having that cushion will allow for more meaningful engagement, and provide the time necessary to readjust during uncertain times of emergency (i.e. COVID-19).

Appendix C

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP



The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership (p. 2) by [Facilitating Power](#), in partnership with [Movement Strategy Center](#) and the [Building Healthy Communities Initiative in East Salinas](#)