



High Capacity Transit Vision

The 2040 Growth Concept provides a blueprint for the greater Portland region to grow while using land and other resources efficiently, support safe and stable neighborhoods, sustain a healthy economy and protect our health and environment.

What is its role in regional transportation?

High capacity transit is the backbone of the regional transportation network. It can efficiently move the highest number of people along regional routes where the most people need to travel quickly, reliably, and comfortably.

A high capacity transit network must be well-connected and people focused. High capacity transit must provide high-quality service and convenient connections between activity centers with essential trips to jobs, services, commerce and other major destinations (e.g., colleges, hospitals, affordable housing). The network must prioritize those who depend on transit or lack travel options, particularly communities of color and other historically marginalized communities.

Providing more convenient, faster and reliable transit connections between where people live and where they need to go means that people who rely on transit today will have better travel options and other people who drive today will be more likely to choose to use transit to travel in-

stead. These investments are a cornerstone for success in achieving regional equity, safety, climate and mobility goals.

What makes transit “high capacity”?

High capacity transit has both a level of enhanced amenities and transit priority that work together to move more people, more comfortably than other types of regional or local transit.

Enhanced amenities refer to features that make high capacity transit more efficient, convenient, and comfortable. These include vehicles that are larger and allow boarding from all doors, stations with near level boarding, and frequent service (15 minutes or better). It also refers to amenities like covered waiting areas, real-time bus or train arrival information, schedules, ticket machines, enhanced lighting, benches, bicycle parking, and even civic art and commercial services.

Enhanced priority investments refer to dedicated tracks or lanes in the street that improve speed and/or reliability, getting people to destinations faster and on-time. Light rail operates along dedicated tracks, but rapid buses may operate in a mix of dedicated and shared street space.



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What does it need to be successful?

To support the role of high capacity transit in moving a high number of people between centers of activity, and ensure that investments are using regional resources cost-effectively, routes must have:

- Housing, jobs, and other essential destinations (e.g., grocery stores, medical clinics, and educational institutions) within short, walkable distance.
- A lot of and a balanced mix of jobs and housing that creates a place where activity occurs most of the day.
- Well-designed streets and buildings that encourage walking and rolling and include elements giving transit priority.
- Connectivity with safe, direct and convenient access to walk and roll to, from, and beyond transit stops and stations.

How is this related to the vision?

The role of high capacity transit in the greater Portland region, supporting compact land development and broader travel connections and mobility, provides the foundation for the long-term network vision. This work will reimagine a stronger, expanded system with faster and more reliable connections moving the most people between centers of activity in ways best serving growing and changing regional needs. To do that, we're considering:

- where people are traveling today and where they will want to travel in the future;
- connections linking the most people and historically marginalized communities to jobs, essential services, and other major destinations;
- how long a transit trip takes compared to other travel options and how much an investment could improve travel

speed and reliability;

- how many new riders could be created in support of our climate goals;
- what the cost would be per person riding; and
- how much funding is available for high capacity transit investment.

This fall, we're working with stakeholders, community organizations, and advisory committees on how to best refine the vision for the future of high capacity transit in the greater Portland region.

Stay in touch with the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan Update.

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