



2023 Regional Transportation Plan

Community based organization engagement reports

Metro partnered with seven community-based organizations: Centro Cultural, Community Cycling Center, Next Up, OPAL, The Street Trust, Unite Oregon and Verde. These community partners have focused on engaging people across the region who hold identities at the intersection of multiple underrepresented communities.

Through partnerships community based organizations Metro aims to elevate the voices of underrepresented communities in the 2023 Regional Transportation plan process while also more broadly increasing the capacity of communities to engage in transportation planning and policy decisions. Some of the community conversations were focused on the High Capacity Transit Strategy. The input received through these conversations were considered and incorporated, as feasible, into the High Capacity Strategy. Other conversations have focused more generally on community transportation needs and investment priorities and were considered and incorporated, as feasible, into the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan.

Enclosed are the summaries of the community based organization-led engagement that has been completed to date. This includes:

- Centro Cultural focus groups (2): 40 participants
- Community Cycling Center focus groups and bike rides (2): 43 participants
- Next Up listening sessions (2): 39 participants
- OPAL: online survey and listening sessions (2): 141 participants
- The Street Trust listening sessions (4): 63 participants
- Unite Oregon listening session and focus groups: 40+ participants
- Verde focus groups (2): 29 participants

Metro Regional Transportation Plan and High Capacity Transit Strategy

Focus Group #1

March 4th, 2023

Facilitators:

- Mariana Valenzuela Director of Community Partnerships, Centro Cultural.
- Janet Silva Villanueva, Project Coordinator, Centro Cultural.

Participants:

- Centro Cultural.
- Washington County community members.

Focus Group Participants:

- Celerina Rojas
- Maria Guadalupe Lozano Figueroa
- Maria de la Luz Nino
- Maria Guadalupe Sanchez
- Dario Ramirez
- Milka Mendez
- Bertha Morales
- Martha Yanes
- Sergio Garcia
- Luis Martinez
- Alfredo Martinez
- Beatriz Ozuna
- Karla Yanes
- Manuel Cabrera

Materials:

- [Plan de transporte regional 2023.pptx](#)
- [High-Capacity-Transit-Corridor Investment Priorities Factsheet](#)

Meeting Purpose:

The purpose of this community focus group was to gather community input related to current transportation priorities, needs and challenges. During the workshop individuals were provided information on what the different project phases consist of and the definition of what a corridor is alongside a project map. This information will serve to guide decision-makers during the planning process for the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan.

Participants were informed that Metro is working in the Portland metropolitan area to expand safe and reliable transportation options for people and goods. This plan identifies urgent and long-term transportation needs, the investments needed to meet those needs, and the financing that the region expects to have available in the next 20 years. Individuals were also informed that the plan is updated every five years taking into account the opinions of community members, business and community leaders and governments.

Rundown of the agenda:

- Welcome
- Icebreaker/Introductions
- Project Description
- Levels of Investment
- Discussion Questions 1,2,3
- Antee Questions and Comments
- Thank you for assisting

Meeting Notes:

Icebreaker: Tell me what your name is and what type of transportation you use?

Attendee: My name is Celerina Rojas. I typically drive but I take the bus when I go to Portland.

Attendee: Maria Guadalupe Estrdada I drive but I have daughters who use the bus fortunately and I say fortunately because when they used to drive they would get lost on the road all the time. I like this because they get to know different routes and explore without worrying about getting lost.

Attendee: Rosalva, I take the bus because I don't drive, I guess this helps our environment.

Attendee: Maria Pino, I drive and use the bus. I think everything new is good to make sure everyone gets to places in a timely manner; for example traffic from Forest Grove to Hillsboro is bad and there needs to be something done to change this.

Attendee: Guadalupe Sanchez I drive but I use public transportation when I go to Portland because I save gas, avoid getting lost and it is less stressful than when I'm driving.

Attendee: Beatriz, I drive and use the bus sometimes. I have to drive all the time to leave my kids at school and sometimes it's frustrating because traffic has been getting bad. Although traffic has been getting bad I still prefer to drive because waiting for the bus is bad as it takes so long. I feel bad that they have to wait so long for public transportation because the weather is not adequate most of the time.

Attendee: Dario, I'd like to thank god for being here, I drive if it's needed to but I mainly use public transportation whether that is the max or the bus.

Attendee: Milka, for the type of job I have I do drive. Part of my job is guiding families on how to use public transit and that is when I realize what is needed and what needs to be modified in our cities. I think I will start using the bus a lot more because it's been harder for me to see while I'm driving, especially at night.

Attendee: Bertha, I used to use the bus a lot before, back then we didn't have a max but now I use it when I go to Portland because I don't like driving there. Like Milka says, I think I'm also going to start using public transportation too due to it being hard for me to see at night now.

Attendee: Karla, I used public transportation before but I drive now. I think it is really important for all of us to be here and have these types of discussion groups.

Attendee: Martha, I use public transportation on a daily basis; I use both the max and the bus. I have given my opinion on what changes need to be made but I feel like sometimes we have to keep up with whatever comes up because at this point it's a necessity to use public transportation for those of us that don't drive.

Attendee: Sergio, I agree with everyone. I like the idea of the corridor from Hillsboro to Forest Grove because people can transport in a healthier way through biking or walking but I agree that **we need to start making changes to make people in the community have a sense of safety.**

Attendee: Alfaro Martinez, I usually drive. I don't use public transportation as much.

Attendee: Luis Martinez, I drive but I have family that uses public transportation and was not aware of others experiences so I'm here to learn.

Attendee: Manuel Cabrera, I don't drive, I use public transportation.

Mariana went over the first 5 slides of the presentation and made sure that people understood what a corridor is and what the Rapid Transportation Project entails. She proceeded to describe the High capacity transit vision & corridor investment priorities. The following conversations surged after the explanation of every investment priorities and discussion questions on slides 8-10.

Description of the overall project and explanation of level one investment priorities

Attendee: Theoretically, if we add max services to forest grove will prices go up? Can we try to put the max over in that area? I think it is highly important to consider this because Forest Groves have been growing dramatically.

Attendee: The high capacity transit vision is important to discuss as a community, as low income individuals that live in these areas because rent is a lot lower compared to developed areas although we need these services, we fear that living costs and food prices will go up once this happens and this should not be a fear.

Attendee: I moved here from Chicago in 2010 and never knew about all the public services available. I used to work all the way to Tualatin and there were hardly any other buses so I had to get off from one bus and walk along the route and then take another bus. Before I would fear to miss the bus and my life was sad. I identify with our youth now, I remember how I used to struggle and hope some of these people that have a lot more services due to the current expansion know about them and don't suffer like I did.

Attendee: If these necessities are given to forest grove and Cornelius there will be a lot of our people that looked for refuge there and if the services are given to them then the process will go up and those zone will go missing= displacement because they will move to other rural areas that are more affordable this will only be affordable for individuals that are homeowners and have their own businesses because rent will continue to go up and this will be on a developers standpoint

Attendee: That's the problem of displacement which we call gentrification. We try to help people who are within the underserved population, but instead of helping them we end up hurting them.

Attendee: I attended a workshop hosted by Unite Oregon and someone mentioned that changes are sometimes good but some are bad mostly bad because rent increases, for example if a new corporation opens then prices will go up and only people that work for this corporation will have a living wage but people who don't have that wage will not be able to afford living expenses.

Mariana: Myself and Janet are part of the SWEC executive committee and I want to say that we work hard on protecting people who live in these areas so they can continue to be accessible.

Attendee: All of this new development is important but I think it is hard to keep sustainable affordable rent because you can't force a private property owner to maintain certain prices in their rent. I know there is a law that a certain rent percentage can't be increased, but this is still not protective at all.

Attendee: All of these price increases that come with new development, especially rent is something concerning for our elderly community, how is this ok?

Attendee: I want to comment on Forest Grove because I know there has been a lot of changes, it has grown drastically with small businesses and it's hard to see but things have been going up slowly. I was telling my husband we started paying \$700 for rent and now we pay \$900 so it's kind of hard to want something better for everyone. Where are all these good things taking us and how are they benefiting us? People live in rural areas where things are less expensive. There's people in rural areas of Forest Grove that don't have access to public transportation but

prefer this because it is a lot cheaper. I'm thinking about all of these families that have to move on the outskirts of town to be able to afford a living.

Attendee: New development affects our mental health dramatically because prices go up and most of us are forced to live with families due to not wanting to pay too much.

Level 2:

No comments

Level 3:

No comment

Level 4

No comment

Set of discussion questions #1

- Where do you think the region should prioritize investments in High Capacity Transit? Check the lines that are most important to you and your community.
- Are there things on Tier 3 or 4 that you think should be a higher priority?
- Are there bus routes and areas that surprise you that aren't on the map?
- Comment on what is important about the areas you think are high priority for better transit

Attendee: I see that connecting Forest Grove with Hillsboro is considered level 4 but why is this a level 4 when this should be a level 1? This is highly important to start prioritizing, it is ridiculous that it is on level 4 when it's clear that there is a need in Cornelius and Forest Grove because they have drastically grown.

Attendee: Could it be possible that we can have a single lane just for buses?

Attendee: People are really mad that Hillsboro to Forest Grove are a level 4 specially because we have Pacific University in Forest Grove and most individuals that go to school or work there need that resource.

Attendee: There are people that could have their own car but they prefer to take public transit no matter how long it takes to come by because this is better for the environment.

Attendee: It is important to teach our youth how to safely use public transportation in order to make sure our environment does not suffer in the future.

Attendee: If there are going to be new corridors in Portland, there needs to be bike lanes for these youth that can't drive. There needs to be greater focus on making bike lanes more accessible and safe as well.

Attendee: We have a country with resources invested wrongfully, because if I had all the resources to use public transportation I would by all means do so. How can our government do better to make this available?

Attendee: Level 2 is in a 5 year span, but how is it possible that level 4 is after 5 years if traffic is already so bad in this area? There needs to be a closer look at traffic and services. Decision makers need to adapt accordingly based on culture and empower using bicycles. If we don't make the right changes now the future is going to be horrible. A Lot of people moved here 10 years ago for employment that was a lot better compared to other states, but the downside to this is that prices went up drastically so imagine what will happen now with all future development. What are the plans to make sure our economy does not hurt us in such a drastic way?

Attendee: 8 years ago around the Aloha/Beaverton area we used to see deer by TV Highway but now I don't see them anymore, that is damage we are doing to our environment with new development.

Attendee: I have seen a lot of construction, especially apartments so this means that more people are going to start moving here. This affects our mental health because the necessity and high demand are getting bad.

Attendee: I'm surprised and super mad that this area is not being taken into consideration as it should because we have a fast developing area from Hillsboro to Forest Grove.

Attendee: My son who is 14 years old asks me if he can go to the store around the corner, but I don't feel so safe to do so now. I would be ok with him going to the store by himself before, but this is due to a lack of safety in our city. There needs to be a focus on making sure that safety is a priority before any further development.

Attendee: I have seen a lot of kids in my area that walk to schools or that parents take them walking to school due to a lack of funds from the school district and the city. Can we do something to also help them? Can we have shuttles that go to schools that are far from bus stops?

Attendee: Things are hard because there is a lack of drivers in the school district and the mile requirements to be able to be picked up by a bus. In Forest Grove High School this is horrible because there is no public transportation that goes all the way there; this is hard for youth to get to school. I understand that there is employment but not enough people, but we need to make youth our priority because they are our future.

Attendee: Maybe this is not so much about the school district but also on how metro and the state can help?

Attendee: Are sidewalks included in this planification? There needs to be a priority on this because most of the time there are no sidewalks in areas where schools are located, this is a safety concern.

Set of discussion questions #2

- Do you or your family use public transportation now?
- Are there things that could make it easier to access or use the existing public transportation? (A few examples: sidewalks could be improved, closer bus stops, better bus stops with a cover and lighting.)
- Are there things that prevent you from using public transportation?

Attendee: It surprises me that Gaston is part of Washington County and has not been taken into consideration when planification happens. There are families that move to Gaston due to how inexpensive it is but it is hard for them to get to places as public transportation is non-existent there.

Attendee: There is a shuttle bus that goes to Gaston which is part of metro regional as well as GroveLink that goes to Forest Grove High School.

Attendee: I like to use the GroveLink line but it needs more focus, because it goes to Forest Grove High School and it is highly important as it is a resource for students.

Attendee: I also think GroveLink is good, but the schedule is super bad. We need to make sure that it matches the school schedule.

Attendee: At first I didn't know what the GroveLink was, but I got a brochure on GroveLinks service from Centro Cultural because last time my car stopped working and needed a new alternative to get around town. I told the person there that it was hard for me to communicate with the driver to ask for the schedule due to the language barrier, they made sure I understood

the brochure they gave me. I have seen a lot more people use it now! There needs to be more awareness that this service exists and how to properly use it.

Attendee: Although GroveLink is an option, I feel like it is useless sometimes, because it runs when people don't need it and when people need it during peak hours it doesn't even come by. This service needs to review the scheduled service times.

Set of discussion questions #3

When there are big new transit investments, like a new Max line or a new bigger and faster bus, there are other types of investments as well; new transit stations and/or parks, trails, as well as better walking and biking routes to the city.

- As you think about the proposed transit you see on the map, what other types of investments will help people use new and better public transportation?

Attendee: First of all I would like for there to be public restrooms at bus stops because sometimes people need to use the restroom as a basic human need and there's nowhere to do so.

Attendee: There needs to be better lighting.

Attendee: Metro Regional Government and TriMet need to make sure that there are adequate garbage disposals at bus stops, this is the biggest priority in my opinion.

Attendee: It's bad that some bus stops don't have a covered area and this is what pushes people away from using public transportation in some instances when the weather is bad; they would rather stay home.

Attendee: I would like to see murals at transit centers and bus stops to represent our culture.

Attendee: I would like to see safer lanes for bicycles. I'm really scared of the area between Winco Foods and Coastal Farm & Ranch, because it's hard to see at night. I'm also concerned for people that need to cross over to get to the bus stop, because it is an area with high amounts of traffic and there is nothing to protect pedestrians. I want to let my daughters bike but I won't due to the lack of road safety.

Mariana: ODOT is in charge of that area from Hillsboro to Cornelius that's why some things take longer to go into effect.

Attendee: I think there needs to be more adequate training for bus drivers because I heard someone on an occasion ask the bus driver of line 78 if they could use the ticket they used for the max for the bus and the bus driver said he wasn't sure about it.

Attendee: The area more concerning is 19th and Hawthorne in Forest Grove, because it needs a lot of lighting. This area is bad and dark at night.

Comments on Handouts:

- We should put Cornelius and Forest Grove on level 1, because these zones are extremely important.
- Level 1 needs more public transportation because this area is of major importance and need; it is lacking that component at the moment.
- Level 4 is of major importance to me.
- I was really surprised to see that the Forest Grove area is considered level 4
- What is considered to be level 4, should instead be 1 or 2. There are a lot of people in this area that need to get from one city to another : there should be a focus on adding bike lanes, corridors where we can walk and more sidewalks for kids that walk to school.
- There needs to be more adequate training for bus drivers, because it looks like they lack proper knowledge on fare tickets.
- I think that Forest Grove and Cornelius areas should be placed on level 1.
- I think there should be a focus on constructing a bus lane on the road.
- Level 4 needs to be changed to level 1.
- There should be access for the community to be able to rent bikes in Hillsboro and Forest Grove.
- The area from Hillsboro to Cornelius and Forest Grove has been growing dramatically and should be on level 1.
- Bus stops should be more secure, this can be done by having a more adequate schedule, making sure bus stops have a covered area, having more light and making sure they are clean.
- The less important areas are being considered to be resolved in the next 5 years, they are leaving the most important areas for after 5 years.
- Areas near schools need to be improved in order to get there in a safe manner.
- Public transportation needs to make sure that the drivers hired are trained to be more respectful and kind. Services also need to be more frequent and there needs to be more lighting at bus stops.
- I would like a connection between schools and the Metro. Perhaps Metro can provide a bus line for students who do not have access to public transportation due to distance. We need to prioritize individuals that don't drive and make sure they are able to take their kids to their appointments and school when it is raining.
- We must prioritize Cornelius and Forest Grove; They should be on level 1 of planning, because it is very important to have the connection between these two cities.
- I use public transportation to go to portland. There needs to be more focus on making sure that bus stops are easy to get to and that there are not a lot of homeless people near them like we often see.
- Access to public transportation needs to be accessible to underserved areas.
- There are a lot of areas with not enough light which makes it hard to see pedestrians.
- The area with the green line needs more public transportation because it seems like it is abandoned due to a lack of public transportation.

- There needs to be public restrooms, there needs to be better lighting at bus stops, as well as covered areas in order to protect ourselves from harsh weather conditions.
- TriMet needs to make sure to have drivers that are patient with the elderly. Not only do they need to be more patient, but they also have to have training on how to respect individuals from other cultures that don't speak english.
- There is a high need for sidewalks and bike lanes on TV Highway.

Facilitators:

- Ally Holmqvist, Senior Transportation Planner, Metro Government Administration
- Molly Cooney-Mesker, RTP Engagement Specialist, Metro Government Administration
- Mariana Valenzuela, Director of Community Partnerships, Centro Cultural
- Janet Silva Villanueva, Project Coordinator, Centro Cultural

Rundown of the agenda:

- Welcome
- Project Overview and timeline
- Time for questions
- Break: Refreshments/Food
- Poster Mark-up
- Open discussion
- Event Wrap-up

Focus Group Participants:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| - Milka Mendez | - Marianela | - Margarita |
| - Alvaro Gomez | Contreras | Castellanos |
| - Antonio Lopez | - Eulalia Murillo | - Daniel Eneguiz |
| - Martha Yanez | - Aure Aguilar | - Isaac Ramirez |
| - Agustina Vazquez | Paredes | - Cossett Toledo |
| - Regino Rodriguez | - Ignacia Mercado | - Rosemary Morales |
| - Blanca Morales | - Laura Garrido | - Silvia Mendez |
| - Emily Morales | - Maria Estrada | - Susan Villanueva |
| - Lorenza Ortiz | - Brenda Alonso | |
| - Delfino Villanueva | - Celerina Rojas | |
| - Adan Eneguiz | | |

Total Participants: 26

Materials:

- [2023 RTP projects community presentation- Spanish.ppt](#)
- Types of transportation projects sheet
- [2023 RTP Fact Sheet](#)
- Types of transportation investment priorities map
- Goal priorities map

Meeting Purpose:

The purpose of this community forum was to include community members within Washington County that don't know about the 2023 Regional Transportation Planning. Oftentimes individuals within the Latinx community tend to be excluded from strategy planning and

outreach due to the language barrier-most of them only speak Spanish. Individuals tend to get excluded from these important developmental discussion groups due to the lack of knowledge. Centro Cultural has been making efforts to reduce this barrier and include Latinx community members within Washington County during important decisions. A community forum on the 2023 Regional Transportation Plan was presented by Ally Holmqvist, Senior Transportation Planner for Metro Government Administration at Centro Cultural. The presentation was given in English and translated to Spanish by Centro Cultural's Director of Community Partnerships, Mariana Valenzuela.

The goals for forum takeaways was for attendees to understand the draft vision and goals for 2023 RTP, what Metro is, who Metro serves and get to know Metro Council members. It is important that community members understand the types of projects that are included in each of the investments areas and that everyone in the greater Portland region will have safe, reliable, affordable, efficient and climate friendly travel options that allow people to choose to drive less and support equitable, resilient, healthy and economically vibrant communities and regions.

Poster Notes:

Which goals are most important for the next 5 to 10 years? Rank these goals from one to five, with one being most important.

Equitable Transportation

Sticky Note: There needs to be more security in public transportation.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more traffic lights in areas that are high in traffic, there also needs to be more emphasis on creating more pedestrian crosswalks. I also think that in order for transportation to be equitable and safe, the bus and max need to have a more consecutive schedule.

Climate action and Resilience

Sticky Note: I think it is necessary to have an emergency fund.

Sticky Note: Long term expansion needs to include car pooling services (HOV lanes) and affordable public transportation.

Thriving economy

Sticky Note: Making sure that public transportation has a better schedule on the weekends.

Safe system

Sticky Note: These services are needed from Beaverton to Aloha over SW Farmington; from 172nd to 198th. There needs to be priorities when building areas for pedestrians and bike lanes. Not only is this area lacking pedestrian safety areas, but also lighting and security to cross the street to go to the park.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more street signs.

Sticky Note: Making sure that the community has access to first AID kits and AED kits.

Sticky Note: Short term focuses need to include priority on making sure that public areas are well illuminated and that bus stations are safe. Although this development is necessary, natural areas need to be left alone.

Sticky Note: The priorities for me in the short term are Transit capital, Faster and more reliable buses and transit stops with features such as lighting, safety buttons, or ways to communicate in an emergency.

Sticky Note: There needs to be heated covered areas and seats in public transportation services; people have kids and groceries to take home during varying weather conditions. Bright lights by stop signs are also needed.

Sticky Note: The priorities for short term development need to include transit stops/stations with features such as lighting, but more importantly implementing a safety communication device and cameras in case of emergencies.

Mobility options

Sticky Note: Increase bus coverage.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more buses and high speed trains like the max, as well as protective barriers for bikers and more pedestrian crossings with flashing lights.

Sticky Note: Sidewalks and roads need to be more accessible to everyone.

Sticky Note: Street designs need to be inclusive; they need to have elements such as ramps for individuals with canes, as well as pedestrian crosswalks and more bike lanes.

Projects fall into different investment categories. Pick your top three priorities:

Walking and biking

Sticky Note: Runways and sidewalks on main roads

Sticky Note: Preserve green places and reduce garbage

Sticky Note: Walking and biking is one of my top priorities.

Sticky Note: Leave and respect green areas

Transit capital

Sticky Note: Short term. 10806, 12131, 11245.

Sticky Note: Short term. 11589,11440,10846.

Sticky Note: Short term. 10806.

Sticky Note: In my opinion the most important thing is to get the max to run in Forest Grove.

Sticky Note: Expand bus service to more places.

Roads and Bridges

Sticky Note: Short term 11661, 11380, 10802, 11918.

Sticky Note: Improve ramps and crosswalks.

Sticky Note: Let there be more sidewalks for the people.

Sticky Note: Designated areas for bicycles, as well as more traffic lights.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more sidewalks in Forest Grove.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more roads and bridges.

Sticky Note: Seismic preparations in highways, bridges and transit systems.

Sticky Note: Expansions on existing roads and future planning.

Sticky Note: Create HOV lanes.

Sticky Note: Work on access roads to the cities of Forest Grove and Cornelius.

Throughways

Sticky Note: Bus stops and transit stations with features such as lighting, coverage and restrooms.

Sticky Note: Improve the roads

Sticky Note: Maintenance of crosswalks.

Sticky Note: Improve roads that are close to schools for example Hillsboro High School needs to urgently improve access.

Sticky Note: More lighting in the streets for the safety of our community.

Sticky Note: I want to see the max in Forest Grove.

Freight access

Sticky Note: Plan out strategies to improve merchandise deliveries.

Sticky Note: I want to be able to see sidewalks and bicycle lanes on some areas of I-5, as well as light rail.

Sticky Note: Establish a lane on express roads specifically for freight transport.

Information and technology

Sticky Note: Affordable transportation pass programs for students, older adults and low income riders. It would be great to see these services at more camp school programs, cultural centers, and community centers.

Sticky Note: Carpooling lanes may reduce usage but does not seem like a priority over building/maintaining roads and walkways.

Sticky Note: New streets and freeway flyovers that support local commuting.

Sticky note: Vehicles with zero emissions.

Sticky Note: There needs to be programs and financial incentives to reduce vehicle trips.

Transit service and operations

Sticky Note: Traffic maintenance, public restrooms are needed in bus areas.

Sticky Note: Bus services need to be expanded in order to make sure they come to more places, not only expansion of services but making sure these services are consecutive.

Sticky Note: Expand the affordability for public transportation tickets for youth that are in camp programs and programs beyond school.

Sticky Note: We need faster and more reliable buses, as well as transit stops and stations with features such as lighting, benches, covers and bathrooms.

Sticky Note: I want there to be priority in having restrooms at bus stops, as well as a light rail.

Transit maintenance

Sticky Note: More police officers, because there are drivers that don't respect pedestrians and bicyclists.

Sticky Note: Maintenance on roads that have access to merchandise.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more sidewalks and bike lanes.

Sticky Note: There needs to be maintenance on Highway 26.

Sticky Note: There needs to be road maintenance and making sure that the max is clean.

Sticky Note: The main priority should be pedestrian safety. There needs to be focus on making sure that sidewalks are in good conditions to walk on.

Sticky Note: Modernize streets and restaurants. Improve cleanliness on buses. Improve and expand security routes of schools and control the speed of cars.

Road and bridge maintenance

Sticky Note: There needs to be maintenance in roads and bridges, as well as widening the roads.

Sticky Note: There needs to be more development in Washington County and better road maintenance.

Sticky Note: There needs to be maintenance on the roads for people that use the sidewalk and bike. Broken sidewalks and crossing lanes need to be fixed.

Sticky Note: Amplification of max lanes to Forest Grove.

Sticky Note: A short term focus should include fixing potholes and pavement surfaces, as well as fixing sidewalks and making sure that bus/light rail vehicles receive the maintenance needed and are replaced when they are no longer in good condition.

Sticky Note: Public transportation needs to have better maintenance and more bus lanes.

Sticky Note: New streets and highway overpasses that support local travel.

Forum Discussions/Questions:

Participant: All of these projects are exciting, are we going to be part of deciding which project we want or have you already decided?

- *Ally:* We have not decided yet, this is a draft list and taking input on how we want to make changes until 5.

Participant: I like to see all the percentages designated to Washington county but when you guys are working on the roads are you working hand in hand with school districts?

- *Ally:* Yes we work hand in hand with the school district

Participant: I want to make a comment Mariana, I have been at community workshops for this development and had not realized how big this project is, until right now that I saw that sheet with so many projects that we had no idea were included. I'm so glad we have this opportunity to be here and voice our opinion. I always wondered how we got money for this type of development, but now things are more clear to me and it is good that federal money is being used for a good cause.

Participant: I'm glad to see that there are some youth here because they are able to see how this is going to impact the future and they won't blame us because they have an opportunity to voice their opinion.

Participant: Everyone sees all of these projects and visualizes the needs around us. What I learned today is that although the Metro Regional Government has these workshops, there's other ongoing projects within the city that we are not aware of and people need to start demanding change now and not later. It is good to know which projects Metro Regional Government is responsible for and which ones belong to the city/state. It is good to know where to go to have these conversations in order to advocate for our community.

Participant: I also want to make a personal opinion. I think that it is important that some youth are here; hopefully they have some consciousness and use public transportation a lot more in the future to better our climate change because it is going to get worse in the long run if we encourage everyone to learn how to drive rather than learning how to use public transportation. I hope people that drive now have some consciousness and don't pollute our environment too much by taking the bus whenever they can; I'm trying to advocate for public transportation in order to reduce the carbon footprint.

Participant: In what way can the community be aware of these projects to be more involved? How do we make sure that city planners and individuals with authority don't make decisions without our opinion but solely based on bureaucracy and supremacy. I have spoken to people that work in the area but never get an answer

- *Ally:* We will be working on this project for a year and after that it goes to the cities, It is up to the cities and counties to continue on after they receive the funding; They have their own planning projects. Most of them are on their websites and it is available in Spanish

Forum Takeaways

Community members were unaware of the magnitude of the current developmental projects that Metro is in charge of, as well as how the drafting process looks like. The main concerns for the Rapid Transportation Plan were safety, inclusion and awareness. Individuals want to make sure that this plan includes pedestrians and bikers in a manner that optimizes their safety as well as awareness of the current resources and nature that could be harmed during this development.



COMMUNITY CYCLING CENTER
METRO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINAL REPORT
2023

INTRODUCTION

The Community Cycling Center (CCC) has been embedded in the Cully and New Columbia neighborhoods of Portland since 2012, working alongside community members to provide programming and support relevant to their transportation needs and aspirations. We have supported an Andando en Bici Caminando (ABC) in the Cully neighborhood since 2012. That same year we got the Repair Hub in New Columbia up and running, and we've had a Community Engagement Coordinator in the neighborhood since 2018. Our role in supporting these two community-led partnerships is to facilitate conversation towards better understanding the unique experiences of the communities we work with. We believe that the people we work with are the true experts of their lives and what they need. The most relevant and impactful changes we can make stem from strong listening skills, and experiential learning alongside community members in the field.

Through this community engagement grant, we learned with community members about Metro's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as well as projects specific to the Cully and New Columbia neighborhoods. Together, we examined the RTP's guiding vision and explored some of the project sites by bike. What follows is what we heard and some of the major takeaways.

METHODOLOGY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The CCC hosted two informational presentations during summer 2023 to discuss the RTP with ABC and New Columbia community members. We established context and basic understanding through an initial information sharing meeting for ABC and engaged New Columbia community members where we examined the vision for the RTP, as well as the five goals used to guide the region towards that vision. Both groups also learned about the timeline of the plan, the level of financial investment, and how projects are categorized by investment category group. Next, we hosted a focus group with each community to better understand their general transportation experience through the lens of the five RTP goals (safety, equity, climate, multi-modal options, and economy) by asking predetermined questions, as well as receiving feedback on the projects specific to the areas where community members live in each respective community. Lastly, we facilitated a bike ride to experience some of the project sites as they currently stand, while also imagining what they could be after improvements are installed. We administered a post-ride survey that asked specific questions around each participant's experience exploring the two routes. Data collected through the information sharing meetings, focus groups, community ride, and post-ride survey were analyzed in each community for commonalities in experience and perspective between participants in each community area. With the information gathered, each community group was able to assess the accuracy of the conclusions CCC staff identified, and submit an official public comment through a collaborative writing process.

Neither community group could be accurately defined as fully representative of their broader neighborhoods. While all participants identified as low income, engagement in Cully was limited to the Latiné population, and only those who identified as either white and/or Black in New Columbia. Both of these neighborhoods are extremely culturally diverse, so experiences may vary for people across cultural lines that we did not observe. Because the CCC has an active transportation mission, our relationships with community members tend to be with those who are invested in and sympathetic to our mission. While all of the community members we engaged in this project see themselves as multi-modal transportation users, it is important to acknowledge this potential for participant selection bias.

FINDINGS: ABC AND CULLY

DEMOGRAPHICS OF FOCUS GROUP

Focus group participants: 17 total

Race/ethnicity: 16 identify as Latina, 1 identifies as Latino

Age range: 19-70 years old

Language: facilitated in Spanish

SAFETY

Focus group participants expressed significant concern around the houseless community as a potential threat to personal safety in some situations. There was acknowledgement of the impact of high rates of drug addiction amongst the houseless community, which can lead to psychotic episodes that may take place in public settings such as the bus or on the sidewalk. The primary concern in these situations was a lack of recourse if someone is physically threatened or harmed. These realities disincentivize community members from using public transit and walking in public more than they already do.

Another major concern expressed was for the lack of street lighting. Combined with the feeling that not very many people are out in public in general, the lack of street lighting creates a sense of being isolated from help if something were to happen. Many participants from the focus group grew up outside of the United States and mentioned how, compared to their hometowns, the lack of human activity in public spaces in Portland makes them feel less comfortable as a pedestrian.

An additional safety concern of focus group participants stemmed from the language barrier that many of them experience. As primarily Spanish-speakers, or Spanish-speaking only for some participants, the sense of helplessness in the face of violence in public is intensified knowing that communication with anyone who could help will likely be very challenging during those tense moments.

The other primary safety-related concern for focus group participants was the general lack of safety as pedestrians for walking alongside and crossing busy streets in the neighborhood. Crossing Killingsworth feels like a risk because pedestrians are at the mercy of car drivers respecting their right to cross. Participants noted that they felt there was no recourse for car drivers who choose not to respect pedestrians' and cyclists' rights within the public right of way. In many neighborhoods there are still a lack of sidewalks, which limits the routes participants can safely use as pedestrians.

EQUITY

Focus group participants primarily communicate in Spanish, and several described the quality of customer service on public transit as unsatisfactory. If there is an issue or discrepancy and the bus driver doesn't speak Spanish, it creates a power imbalance. Sometimes participants don't attempt to resolve the issue due to the language barrier and the stress of the situation.

Focus group participants noted that the drivers' strict adherence to their route made using the bus challenging. Conversely, participants feel bus and Max line operators apply a double-standard to riders who they assume will overtly disrespect the rules of the bus and Max versus riders who the drivers expect will respect their authority. According to focus group members, drivers know that saying "no" to someone having a psychotic episode will not do anything, so they don't say anything, but they are quick to enforce these same rules with people they profile and assume will obey. This does not seem fair and it makes the bus feel unsafe and unpredictable when the rules are not enforced consistently amongst all riders. Regardless of race and ethnicity, the bus experience can feel classist according to focus group participants. Riders who appear low-income are not treated the same as people who are perceived as higher-income. Participants have experienced and observed bus drivers pulling away more quickly from a stop when a person perceived as low-income is getting on or off the bus.

CLIMATE

During the focus group, participants acknowledged that public transit is a more sustainable mode of transportation in terms of pollution and carbon emissions than personal vehicle trips. Bicycling and walking were also mentioned as good ways to counteract climate change at the micro-level. It is ironic to focus group participants that public buses and bus stops are not clean. They suggested that ridership would increase if these public spaces were more clean.

MULTI-MODAL OPTIONS

BIKETOWN has been a particularly convenient option for community members who want to bike occasionally but do not own a personal bike, as bike storage is very limited in the Hacienda CDC apartments where most focus group participants live. The electric assist is an attractive feature and allows people to go further and carry more. The BIKETOWN smartphone app has been fairly complicated to use for participants, and access to bikes is still somewhat unpredictable. Some participants have used electric scooters, finding them useful in certain

situations. They are more popular amongst younger community members in participants' observation.

Notably, bus access along Killingsworth Street is critical to focus group participants. They expressed explicit concern about PBOT's proposal to remove the 72 bus line's connection to 82nd Avenue, replacing it with the rapid line along 82nd Ave. This bus connection from Killingsworth Street to 82nd Avenue is heavily utilized by Hacienda residents. Bus travel is a very common mode of transportation for Hacienda residents, ABC members, and their community. Private motor vehicles are less common, and Uber/Lyft are mostly inaccessible due to cost.

ECONOMY

Focus group participants noted that Killingsworth Street and Columbia Boulevard in particular seem to be designed to help as many cars as possible move through the area as fast as possible. It was noted that these conditions are not safe for pedestrians or cyclists, so participants avoid these areas unless absolutely necessary. In regards to work and personal commutes, ABC members primarily use the bus lines. They tend to go towards City Center or south into East Portland and the Gresham area. Throughout the focus group, there were zero mentions of being frustrated by being stuck in traffic.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC RTP PROJECTS

Throughout the duration of this project, the following feedback was collected from community members on RTP projects located within the Cully vicinity:

- 10220, Seventies Greenstreet and Bikeway: Community members were excited and interested by this project idea. They probably wouldn't ride the bikeway for its entire length, but they would use it closer to Cully and would like to try and ride the whole thing at some point. ABC has been advocating for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along 72nd and nearby parallel roads for a long time now, so they look forward to future improvements.
- 10311, Prescott Multimodal Improvements: This was one route we explored on bike. Less confident bike riders said they thought protected bike lanes along Prescott St would make them comfortable enough to use the road with their bikes and families. As it is now, they typically avoid Prescott on bike.
- 11804, Cully to Columbia Connector: Focus group participants spoke on how they avoid the railway crossing on the northern end of Cully Blvd because there are no sidewalks or bike lanes, and the traffic speeds are too high along Columbia Blvd to want to go there outside of a car or bus.
- 11845, 57th/Cully Safety Improvements: This area is less explored on bike and while walking, but focus group participants were excited to see improvements. They are open to exploring more in that area if the infrastructure makes them feel comfortable.
- 11847, Outer Alberta Neighborhood Gateway: This was another route we explored on bike. Overall, participants thought it was a nice alternative to Prescott St for family rides and situations where recreation takes precedence over efficiency and time. The most

difficult parts of navigating this route are crossing some of the major streets such as 82nd Ave, Sandy Blvd, and Prescott St.

BIKE RIDE EXPERIENCE & POST RIDE SURVEY

Bike ride participants: 10

Race/ethnicity: 9 identify as Latina, 1 identifies as Latino

Age range: 19-55 years old

Language: facilitated in Spanish

The final phase of engagement was a facilitated bike ride where we navigated Cully-based RTP projects 10311 (Prescott separated bike lanes) and 11847 (neighborhood greenway through Sacagawea Park). Participants rode BIKETOWN bikes, comparing the experience along each route. Participants completed a post-ride survey in addition to providing feedback while we rode the two routes.

Participants envisioned the routes in different contexts, providing unique insight about the challenges and opportunities of each. Prescott would be used by community members to go shopping, to Maywood Mount Hood College campus, Parkrose/Sumner Transit Center, and take their children to school by bike. The neighborhood greenway route through Sacagawea Park is a choice route for riding bikes or walking with family for exercise and recreation. Participants who are more comfortable on bikes said they would consider using the separated lanes on Prescott knowing it would likely be the fastest route if they needed to get somewhere quickly. Participants who are less comfortable on bikes would prefer to only use the neighborhood greenway route because it is comparatively calmer, quieter, and less stressful. This particular group of riders was not comfortable in some spots riding on Prescott, as the space for passing cars can be narrow, and there was heavy car traffic. Everyone agreed that having separated bike lanes would greatly improve the experience. Several participants who are less confident cyclists said separated bike lanes on Prescott St could make them comfortable enough to use that route.

The most challenging part of the ride according to participants was the connection from Sandy Blvd & NE 91st Ave to the I-205 multi-use path, especially the crossing from NE 92nd Ave over Prescott because there is no pedestrian or bike crossing infrastructure. Riding uphill on NE 72nd Ave to get to Sacagawea Park was physically challenging. The lack of a bike lane, or even shoulder space, makes passing car traffic feel unsafe.

Generally speaking, participants felt like crossing major streets was the most challenging part of the experience. Participants want to see both pedestrian and bike safety improvements installed simultaneously. Participants also walk a lot, and they acknowledge that what is safer for pedestrians is also safer for bicyclists.

FINDINGS: NEW COLUMBIA

DEMOGRAPHICS OF FOCUS GROUP

Focus group participants: 7

Race/ethnicity: 5 identify as Black/African American, 2 identify as White/Caucasian

Age range: 30-60 years old

Language: facilitated in English

SAFETY

Participants from the focus groups and facilitated ride indicated they are generally comfortable with the level of safety for bicyclists and pedestrians in the New Columbia neighborhood. However, several community members raised concerns about youth pedestrian safety. New Columbia is a fairly walkable neighborhood, and many parents are comfortable allowing their children to move around the neighborhood independently. There are, however, certain situations when car traffic poses an increased risk. This is the case when freight trains reroute car traffic off of Columbia Boulevard, increasing the risk of frustrated drivers passing through the neighborhood recklessly to avoid delays.

Community members suggested there could be more signage alerting drivers to the presence of both Rosa Parks Elementary School and César Chávez School, as well as the numerous parks in the neighborhood. Similarly, drivers turning off of Columbia Boulevard into New Columbia need signage that informs them they are entering a residential area. More restrictions around semi-trucks entering the neighborhood are also necessary. Considering community members feel New Columbia is a fairly walkable neighborhood, safety concerns center primarily around pedestrian and cyclist crossings over higher traffic roads such as Fessenden St, Lombard St, Columbia Blvd, Chautauqua Blvd, and Portsmouth Ave.

EQUITY

Focus group participants spoke of the history of New Columbia and how the area was revitalized in the 1990s as a safer and more liveable alternative to the former "Ville" neighborhood. All the while, the industrial roots of the area are still evident today: The flow of traffic along Columbia Blvd and the freight train route are still prioritized over pedestrians and cyclists in areas immediately north of New Columbia.

Participants expressed frustration around the lack of bus line options. The frequency of the 4 bus line is convenient, but residents need more public transit options. Residents indicated they have historically felt limited and isolated to the New Columbia neighborhood, which they feel is related to race and perceptions of who lives in New Columbia. Residents need more traffic calming infrastructure in parity with more affluent neighborhoods. Differences in quality of pavement in north Portland versus more affluent neighborhoods was also noted by participants. Participants mentioned how small imperfections in the road, or major potholes in some cases, can make riding bikes and scooters dangerous.

CLIMATE

Focus group participants are generally aware of automotive pollution due along Columbia Blvd. Participants are aware of businesses in the industrial area north of Columbia Blvd, but not the specific sources of significant pollution. Likewise, participants are fully aware of the freight train, but not necessarily apprised of what materials the train is carrying. Focus group participants mentioned feeling generally uninformed about the neighborhood's proximity to significant sources of pollution.

MULTI-MODAL OPTIONS

Focus group and post-ride survey participants were generally pleased with the range of transportation options available to them in New Columbia. However, members would like to see a Max line along both Lombard St and Columbia Blvd. According to the community members we engaged, the presence of BIKETOWN and e-scooters in New Columbia has been positive. People indicated the need for more BIKETOWN bikes and stations in New Columbia, and would benefit from more opportunities to try them out through workshops.

New Columbia community members were critical of the last bus for the area's main bus line (number 4) ending too early, thus limiting transportation options for New Columbia residents working a late night job in the St. Johns neighborhood. Echoing what was mentioned regarding equity, residents feel isolated and constrained to the New Columbia neighborhood in a variety of ways, some of which go beyond the transportation system.

ECONOMY

Focus group participants concentrated mostly on the impact of the railroad crossing and how the train reroutes drivers through the New Columbia neighborhood, leading to increased traffic and higher vehicle speeds than usual. Participants acknowledged the presence of the industrial area north of Columbia Blvd, and how New Columbia's proximity to that zone ultimately surprises and frustrates drivers who decide to route themselves through the dense neighborhood. Signage along Columbia Blvd alerting drivers that they are entering a residential area is needed. Participants also mentioned a need for a prescribed semi-truck route within New Columbia, keeping trucks who must enter the neighborhood on the wider roads such as Alaska St, Trenton St, Willis Blvd, Lombard St, Portsmouth Ave, Chautauqua Blvd, and Fessenden St.

REVIEW OF SPECIFIC RTP PROJECTS

The following feedback was collected from community members on RTP projects located within the New Columbia vicinity:

- Project ID 10331, Columbia Blvd over Columbia Way and Railroad Bridge Replacements: Participants focused on the impact of the train crossing over Columbia Blvd, and how that reroutes drivers through the New Columbia neighborhood who are known to drive recklessly. Residents felt that street curvature and narrowness make it scary to drive or bike due to limited visibility and insufficient space. Vehicles travel at

high speeds through much of New Columbia, and focus group participants feel more speed bumps throughout the neighborhood would help the situation.

- Project ID 10341, N Columbia Blvd Safety Improvements: Focus group participants said, while this is not an area in which they typically bike (people would probably use Fessenden St. instead), the project should help improve safety for cyclists. Residents noted this could be a recreational route to go from New Columbia into far north Portland around Smith and Bybee Lakes. At the moment, it does not feel safe for residents to bike in this area, which is why many avoid it.
- Project ID 12321, NE Columbia Blvd Safety Improvements: The focus group talked about what could be improved along the Columbia Blvd multi-use path. Because Columbia Blvd traffic travels at high speeds, and there are curves in the road, it can be difficult to see approaching traffic from around a curve. Residents felt the crossing at Fiske Ave is particularly unsafe for car drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists because of traffic speeds and poor sightlines. Improving safety of these crossings for cyclists and pedestrians is important. Generally speaking, this is not an area that community members would choose to walk or bike, as there are better options heading east, west, or south from the neighborhood. Community members usually only go towards Columbia Blvd if they are in a car, unless they have no other option.

BIKE RIDE EXPERIENCE

Bike ride participants: 9 total

Race/ethnicity: 4 identify as Black/African American, 4 identify as White, 1 identifies as Latina

Age range: 7-60 years old

Language: facilitated in English

As described above in the report, the crossing at Fiske Ave feels unsafe due to limited visibility of traffic heading eastbound from around the curve of the road. Drivers making a left turn onto Fiske off of Columbia Blvd also have poor sightlines due to road curvature heading westbound and the hill on Fiske heading northbound. Participants noted they rely on traffic yielding to them as they navigate these challenging conditions and high-speed traffic as pedestrians and cyclists at this intersection.

Overall, residents feel that riding along Columbia Blvd, even on a separated multi-use path, is unpleasant. There are industrial factories that have been recently fined for air pollution; Columbia Blvd looks and sounds like a freeway; there is a lot of traffic, producing high levels of vehicle pollution; there are few people around so it doesn't feel very safe; it smells bad by the sewage treatment plant; and, while there are trees, shade coverage is limited. On the other hand, there are some natural areas north of Columbia Blvd that are attractive to cyclists and pedestrians. We explored the slough area on the facilitated ride and stopped to pick blackberries at one spot on the multi-use path. Participants said they would visit these areas more if it were safer to cross Columbia Blvd.

Participants noted the most challenging sections of the bike route, aside from the physical challenge of the hill climbs in high temperatures, were the crossings over busier arterials such as Chautauqua Blvd, Peninsular Ave, and Willis Blvd.

CONCLUSION

The community members we engaged from both Cully and New Columbia clearly shared a genuine interest in transportation, acknowledging its wide-ranging impacts on their daily lives from a variety of angles. It is a challenging endeavor to maintain public engagement in the infrastructure transportation planning process across the entirety of the life cycle of any given project, let alone the entire Regional Transportation Plan.

Several focus group participants asked how their opinions and their participation at this stage in the process could ultimately impact the RTP. The truthful answer is that their voices *will* be documented through reports such as this one, and community voice across time does guide decision-making in significant ways. Each individual's contribution to the RTP may be relatively small when we factor in all the voices that will be heard, yet that voice is critical in order to achieve the positive outcomes of more bike and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. All this to say, community members are eager to see how their input and investment in the project shapes its overall outcomes. They are also looking forward to infrastructure improvements that make biking and walking safer, more accessible, and more enjoyable in their neighborhoods.

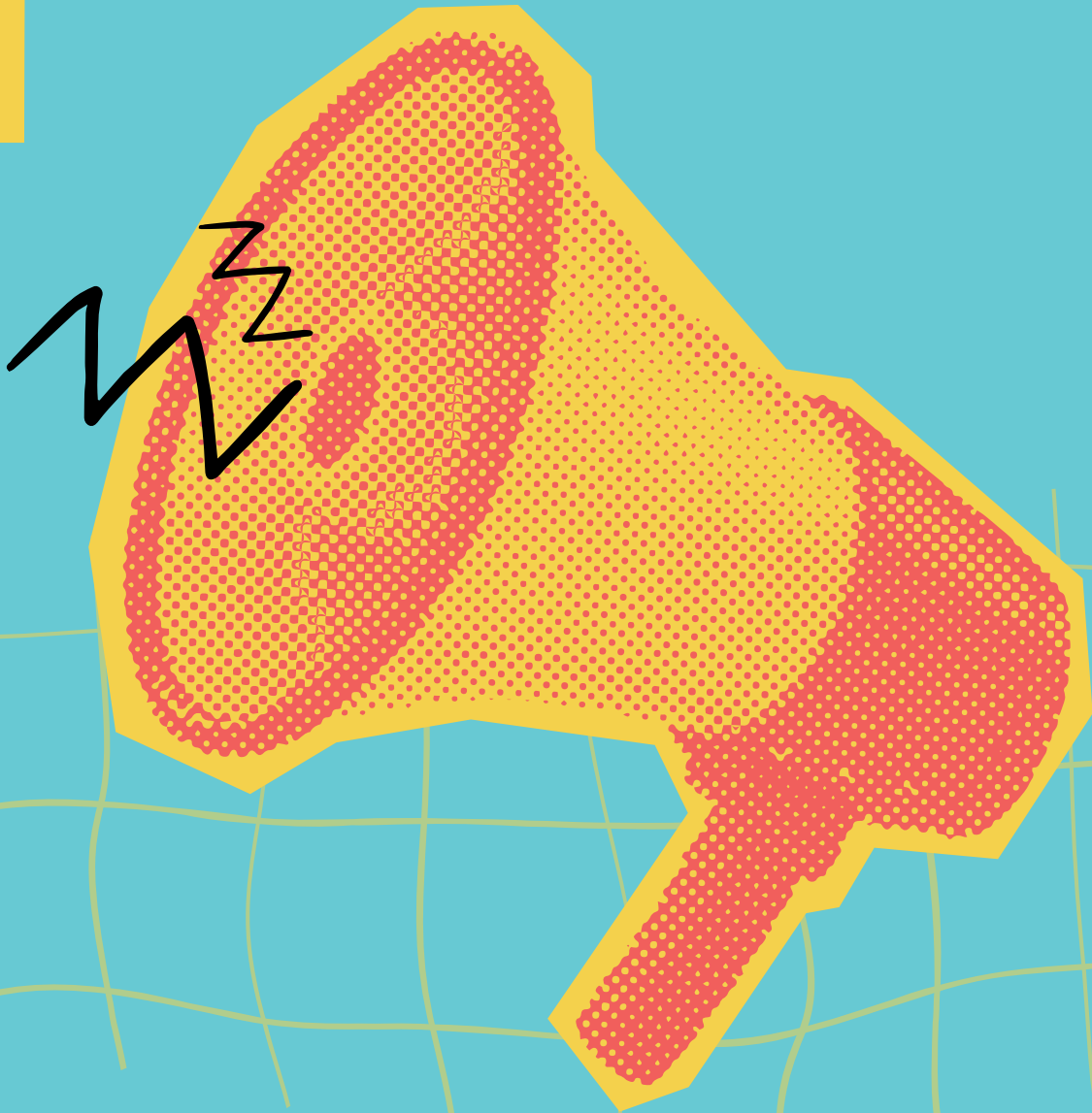
Thank you to our Grant Manager, Molly Cooney-Mesker, for her support in gathering necessary materials, attending events in person, and being available to answer questions as they came up.

Thank you to CCC coordinator staff, Bella Nava (ABC Coordinator) and Natty Pillias (Community Engagement Coordinator) for their efforts to authentically engage and mobilize community members towards understanding Metro's RTP and its planned impacts.

Thank you to CCC Program Leadership staff, William Francis (Programs Director) and Nat Shreffler (Training & Evaluation Supervisor) for their support with project management, route design, ride facilitation, translation and interpretation, and reporting.

APR 2023

**NEXT
UP** 



**REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION
PLAN**

LISTENING SESSIONS REPORT

NEXT UP



Our mission

Next Up amplifies the **voice and leadership of diverse young people** to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon.

The impact of our work in Oregon

We create opportunities for young people ages 13–35, centering Black, Indigenous, youth of color and intersectional youth, to build their individual and collective power. Since 2002, our work has scaffolded a wave of young people who are leading the charge to dismantle oppressive systems and institutions so that our communities can thrive.

Impact Snapshot

600+

alumni of our youth leadership cohorts

7

unique leadership and internship programs

40%

Oregon youth voter turnout in 2022, compared to 27% nationwide



LISTENING SESSIONS SUMMARY

39

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

2

LISTENING SESSIONS

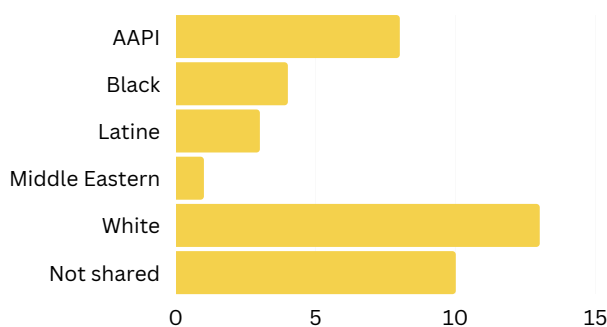
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MEDIAN AGE

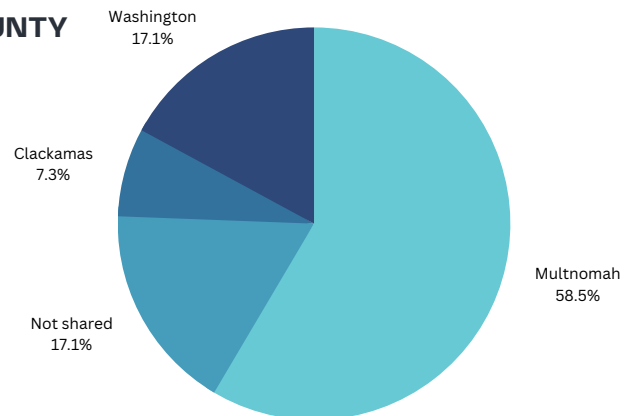
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AVERAGE AGE

RACE/ETHNICITY



COUNTY



GOALS

- Provide community members with the foundation to understand how the Regional Transportation process works
- Lay out the values that Metro has set in the RTP Process
- Explore the projects that would be funded through the Regional Transportation Plan
- Guide community members in a discussion of their lived experiences interacting with our current forms of transportation and sharing feedback on the RTP values, and potential projects

TOP THEMES



"Active transit is important to me because it **promotes climate resiliency** in our projects and maintains a **sustainable future** for transportation."

PARTICIPANT

"'The Historical Context of Racist Planning,' documents the **lack of investments in parts of our city from a racist perspective** on why we are currently in a position where **parts of our city has better infrastructure than others.**"

PARTICIPANT

"I'd like to see some sort of **public repository for the history of neighborhoods and transportation** – the why and how of transportation and neighborhood design."

PARTICIPANT

LISTENING SESSION REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS ON ACCESS

ACCESSIBILITY FOR YOUTH WHO ARE THE MOST IMPACTED AND THAT ARE BLACK, INDIGENOUS, BROWN, DISABLED, LOW-INCOME, IMMIGRANT, AND QUEER AND TRANS

01

"Safe and accessible routes to school and for those who rely on mobility devices to get to transportation."

02

"The equity of accessibility seems like an afterthought or a 'nice to have,' but it's really a 'need to have' because access for folks who have limited mobility is used and good for all. **Budgeting for accessibility should be a priority.**"

03

"Maybe better road signage, **as in signs that more clearly direct people through common routes in Portland.** When driving on the highways here, we have to make many quick decisions before choosing an exit."

04

"There's a service for people who can't get around (folks who can't walk). Folks could get picked up. Would like to see that get expanded. **When you have to get somewhere and you have to plan ahead, it's hard.** We need to improve a Metro-supported Uber. Let's think outside the box."

05

"Abolishing zoning laws that segregate residential and commercial areas, so that **people can easily walk to get goods and services instead of having to use cars.** People wouldn't even need to use buses or trains much!"

06

"More **non-invasive transit close to natural spaces.** I hate that places like Oxbow aren't more accessible by public transportation."

REFLECTIONS ON COST

REMOVE COST BARRIERS FOR ALL TRANSIT RIDERS

01

"Free
TriMet
and free
transit
for all."

02

"It seems like there's going to **be growing inequity for people who don't have the money to buy an electric car.** Use this plan to push agencies to convert faster, but the worry is that if it's not done equitably, then that cost will be pushed to the most vulnerable people."

03

"Some barriers would be limited transportation options in suburban and rural areas, **lack of affordable and accessible public transportation.**"

04

"I believe citizens of the Metro area **need to know that when something is not done right or is too costly etc, projects and programs and contractors will be held accountable in a public way** and that solutions be discussed & acted on publicly."

05

"Tolling is necessary to hold people who drive cars accountable – **the cost of that infrastructure maintenance.**"

06

"Freeway tolling should **fund fareless transit**, creating a better travel experience for all."



REFLECTIONS ON SAFETY

SUPPORT COMMUNITY WELLBEING WITHOUT MORE POLICING

01

"There should be a **stronger 'barrier' or division of where riders are and where non riders are.**

Because the space is so open, I think that may play into unsafe situations. When you're at a MAX station, you can't tell who's a rider and who's not. In other cities, you have a paid area."

02

"With the backlash on public health measures, there are people who don't care to **protect others' health.** Maybe there aren't very many of them, but it can be uncomfortable."

03

"I have not used public transportation that much in the past year because of **safety concerns: worry about anti-asian sentiment** as well as the number of people who seem possibly violent on public transit."

04

"Cleaner buses with **better heating and ventilation.** Improving and enforcing covid precautions – and other communicable and contagious infections."

05

"I used public transportation prior to the pandemic, but I switched to driving because of **anti-Asian sentiment. It doesn't feel very safe in the MAX stations because of the lack of personnel.** There are still other sicknesses. I still don't feel very safe using public transportation, although I would like to."

06

"Separate bike lanes like they have in the Netherlands, which have grass between bikes and cars."

07

"**Waiting for a long time in dark areas,** places where there's no hard stop, just a sign, no lighting. That's how it is in my area in SW Portland. To get there there are no sidewalks."

08

"It would be good to unpack **the goals around climate. Public safety is an issue. Roads that are not maintained by the city or by anyone else.** I have to use private roads that are wrecked. Basic road maintenance."

09

"I live in SW and we don't have **transportation access that is safe for kids and people with mobility devices.** Our sidewalks are limited to the library area in Hillsdale."

10

"**When I hear about dangerous biking experiences, it scares me from biking. Interested in carpooling, but it takes more planning.**"

11

"I'd love to be able to bike, but **I don't feel safe biking in most of East Portland,** even with new bike lanes. Cars drive so fast, even around bike lanes. I have seen fatal accidents...investment s in Gresham, and things seem safer."

12

"I would like to be able to bike AND bus to shopping and recreation. **Segregated lanes for bicycles and better, safer, lighted stops for bus commuters** would help immensely. Walking is also not easy, particularly in the suburbs. Stroads, like Hwy 8, prevent walking."

LOOKING FORWARD

"Are there opportunities to work on the transportation issues **in my neighborhood?**"

"Oftentimes I will learn about a project **too late to get involved** in the preliminary engagement process."

"Make projects have **community planning** sessions. Find ways to get the community involved, maybe through public art. Community gets excited about art."

"I want to **hear back** what happens with this feedback – if it makes its way into the plan directly."

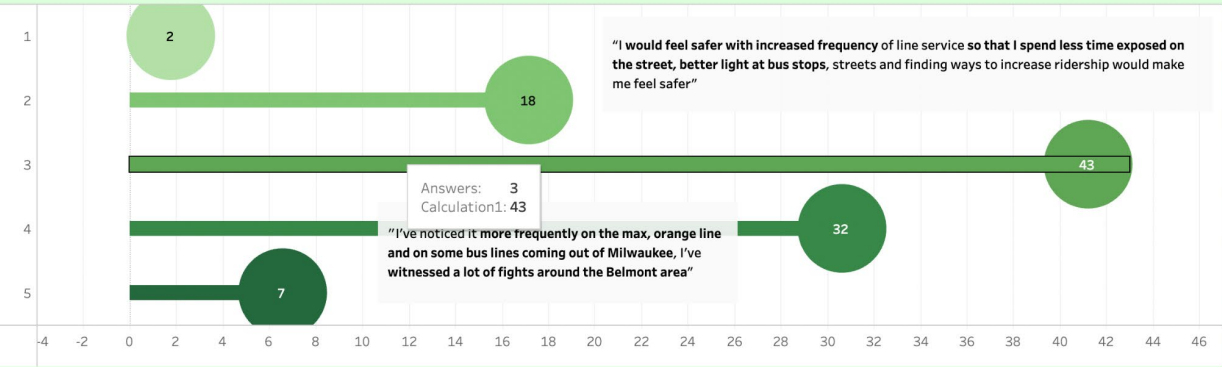


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RTP Community Engagement			
Engagement Tactic	Number of Participants	Data	Notes
Transportation Needs Survey	105 responses over 1 week	First Survey responses Second Survey responses	<p>Two copies of the survey were posted. The first survey did not include a CAPTCHA so was flooded with bot responses. Data was cleaned, please only reference highlighted green responses in the “first survey responses” document. All other responses were identified as fake.</p> <p>\$20 visa gift card sent to all respondents.</p>
Listening Session 1	36 total participants over 2 listening sessions	Recording linked	Virtual, \$100 gift card provided for full 2 hour participation
Listening Session 2	See above	Recording linked	Virtual, see above

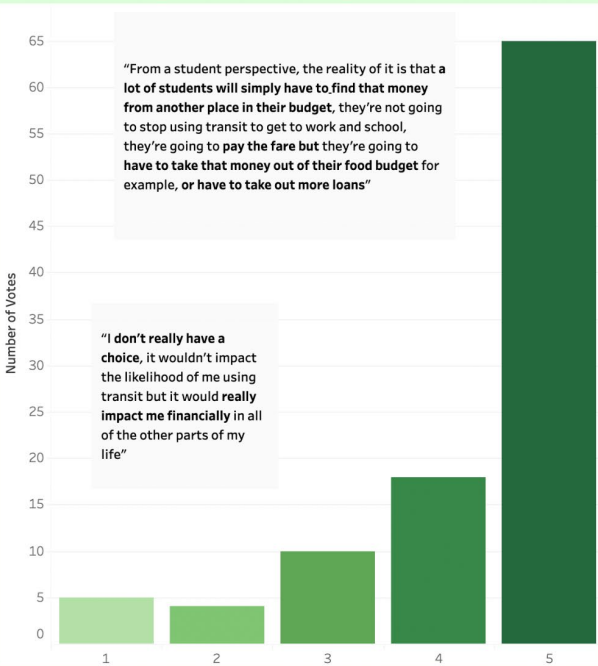


Do you generally feel safe when you use transportation?



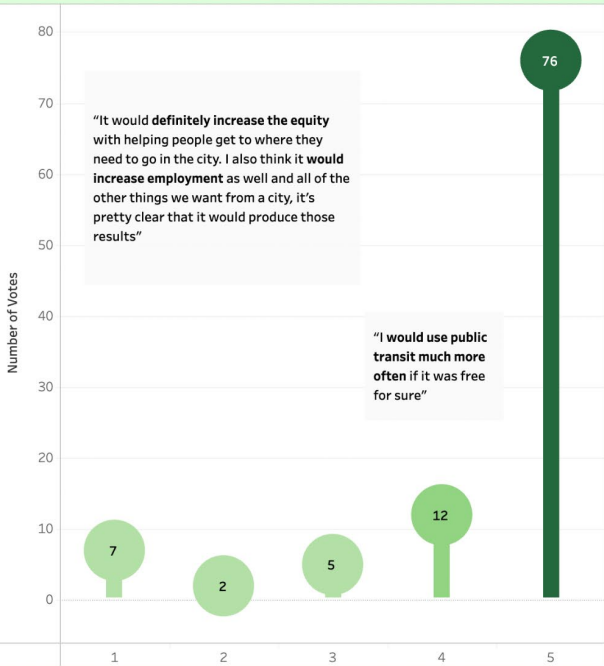
1: Never feel safe; 5: Always feel safe

TriMet considering fare increase, How do you feel that would impact accessibility & equity on transit?



1: Would not impact at all; 5: Dramatically decrease accessibility & equity

If system was completely fareless, Would you use public transport more?



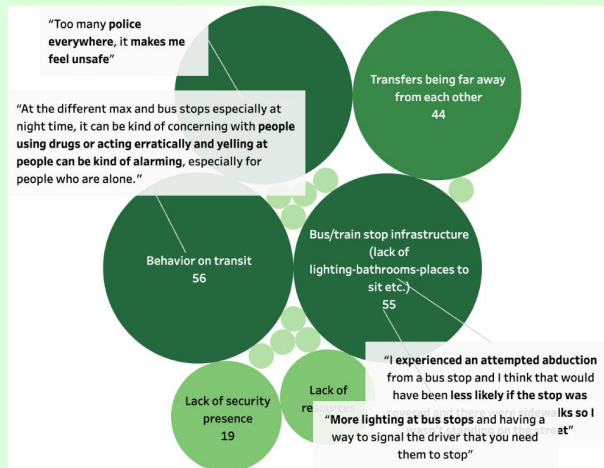
1: Would use it the same amount; 5: would be able to use the system more



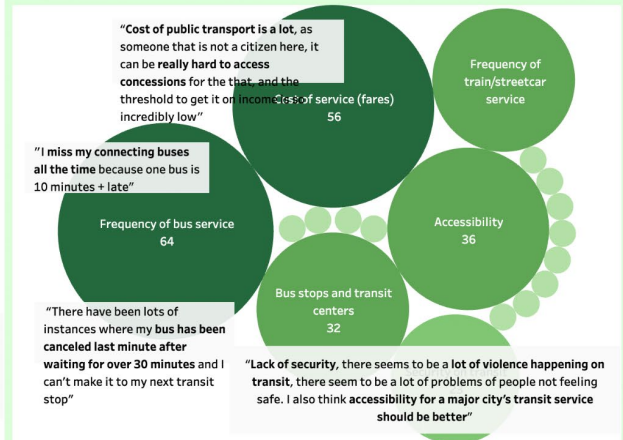
Transportation Survey



What contributes to you feeling unsafe when using transit?



Which aspects of public transport do you think needs improvement?



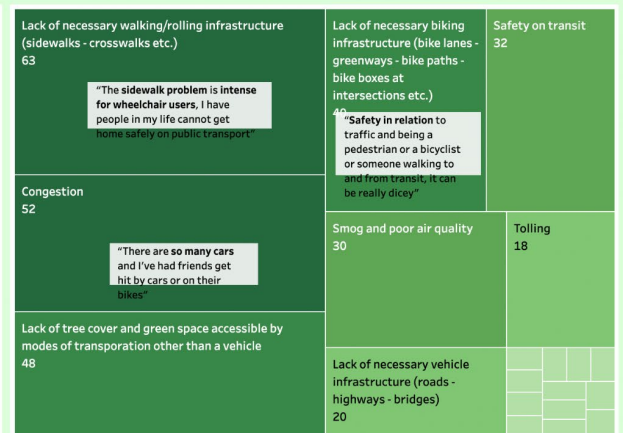
Transportation Survey

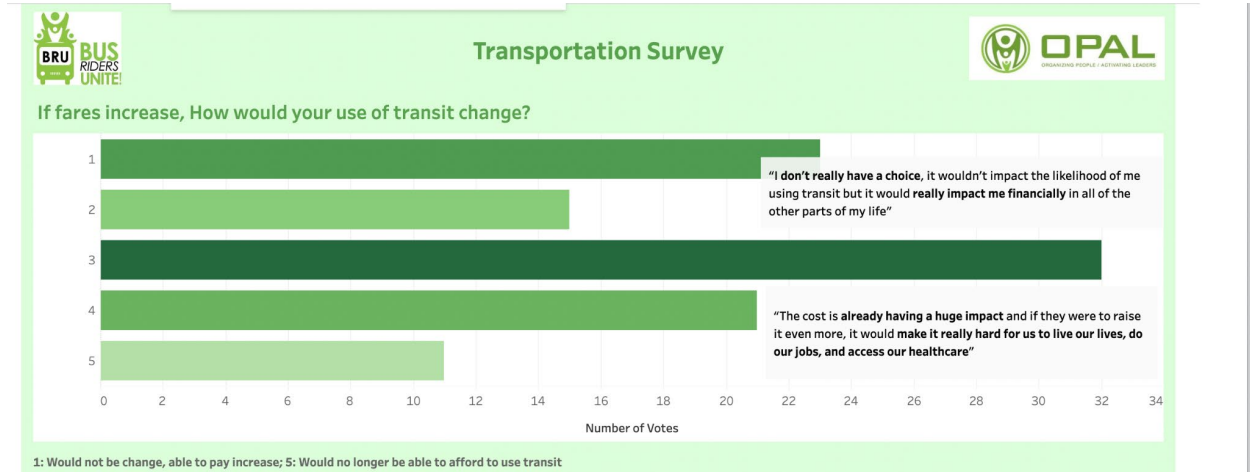
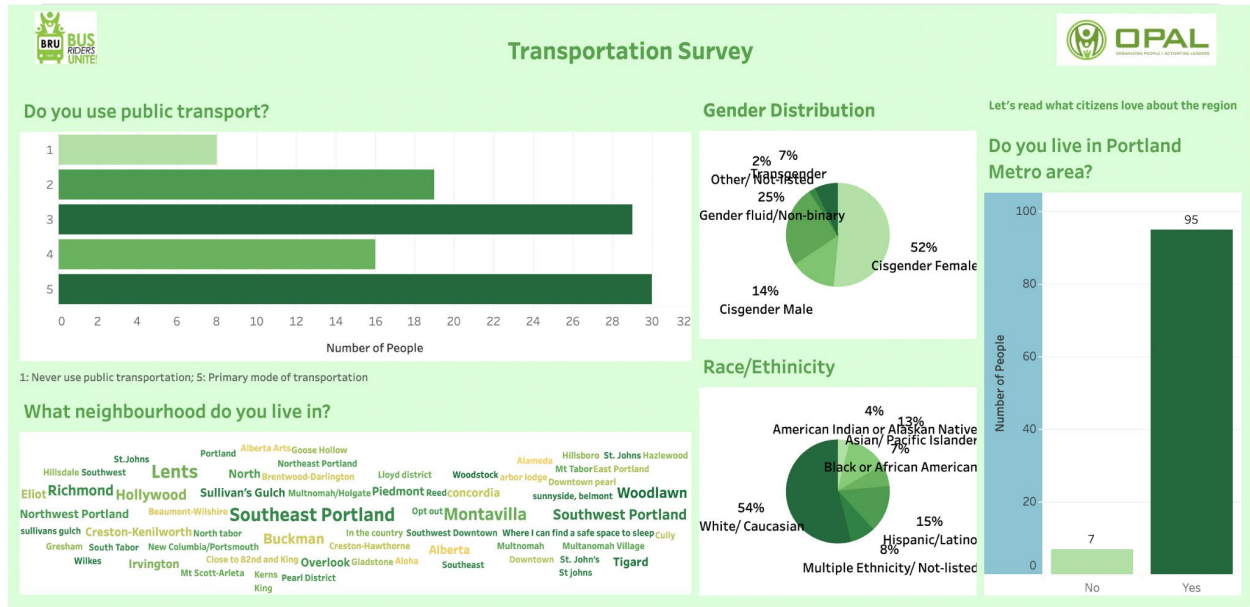


What area of town do you think transit service needs to be improve?



What do you think are the biggest issues impacting our community related to transportation?





2023 METRO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

ABOUT THE STREET TRUST

We are an advocacy non-profit representing street users across Greater Portland, advocating to address unsafe and incomplete public streets that threaten lives and livelihoods. The Street Trust wins policy changes and investments that save lives, reduce barriers, and expand opportunities to the people and neighborhoods our current transportation system neglects.



ABOUT THE 2023 RTP UPDATE

METRO

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), managed by Metro, guides public investment for all forms of travel including driving, taking transit, biking and walking, and the movement of goods and services through the Portland metropolitan region. In 2018, Metro updated the RTP, emphasizing strategies of high-capacity transit, increased safety, enhancing freight and goods movement, advancing transportation technology, and strengthening pedestrian and bicycle policies.

Metro updates the plan every five years with input from various community members and leaders, businesses, and governments. By December 2023, Metro will complete the updated RTP, which will guide investment decisions for the next several decades. In the meantime, Metro has worked to include local community members, listening to their transportation needs, via public forums, public comment periods, and listening sessions.

OUR PURPOSE

This community engagement effort was designed to engage community members in conversations about the transportation investments that are most needed across greater Portland. Elevating the voices of priority community members to deepen RTP decision-makers, staff, and other community members' understanding of the needs of our priority communities and inform the RTP investment strategy. These communities include Black/African American, Hispanic/Latine, and households with incomes under \$80,000, with a focus on those communities residing in East Multnomah County, Clackamas County, and Washington County.

Capturing and amplifying valuable and historically marginalized perspectives will inform the needs analysis of the High Capacity Transit Corridors that are priorities for investment and the community needs along those corridors and shape Metro's guidance to the transportation agencies and local jurisdictions submitting projects and programs to be included in the RTP.

The Street Trust community engagement took the form of five community listening sessions between April - August, 2023. We sought to understand their mobility needs, priorities, and desires and to learn what is and isn't working in their day-to-day experiences. This document summarizes the information gathered in these sessions in order to elevate the stories of local community members. This information was also captured and elevated in a series of videos, available on our [YouTube Channel](#).

OUR PROCESS

Between April and August 2023, The Street Trust conducted 5 listening sessions across Multnomah County, Washington County, and Clackamas County.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Portland State University

BIPOC undergraduate Engineering Majors at Portland State University.

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization

Afghan immigrants connected with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)'s Greater Middle East Center (GMEC).

ACHIEVE Coalition

Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change (ACHIEVE) Coalition.

A group of multi-sectoral partners who have a collective vision of ending health inequities in chronic diseases for African-Americans and African immigrants/refugees in Multnomah County.

Clackamas Community College

Students from Clackamas Community College participating in a Fare Relief Program.

BIPOC Small Business Owners

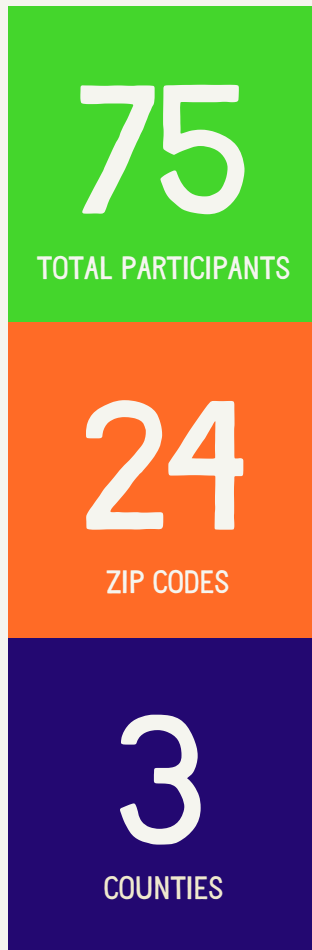
A group of BIPOC small business owners in Washington County.

LISTENING SESSIONS

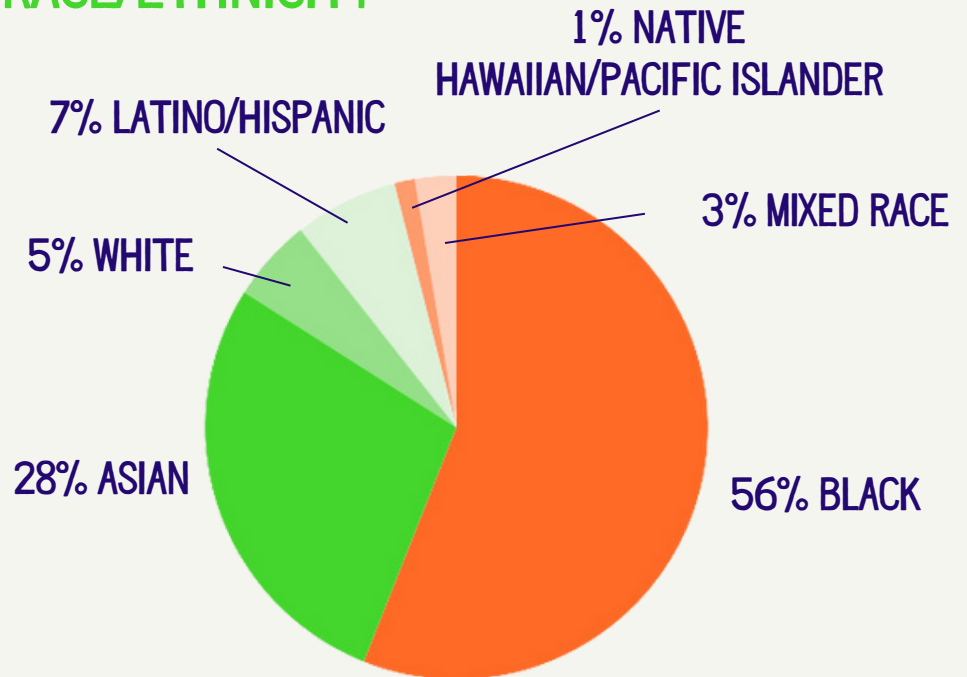
- Each session typically lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours. The sessions followed a structured format and all participants were compensated for their time and valuable input during these sessions.
- First, The Street Trust provided a 15-minute overview of the RTP update, highlighting its significant impacts across the region.
- Following the presentation, there was a facilitated discussion period that spanned approximately 40-60 minutes. During this time, participants engaged in conversations about their daily commutes, shared their experiences with different modes of transportation, provided their interpretations of Metro's draft goals, and expressed their opinions regarding the distribution of funding.
- Toward the end of each session, participants were given 5-10 minutes to complete a survey where they rated their experiences with various modes of transportation.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Between April and August 2023, The Street Trust conducted 5 listening sessions across Multnomah County, Washington County, and Clackamas County.



RACE/ETHNICITY



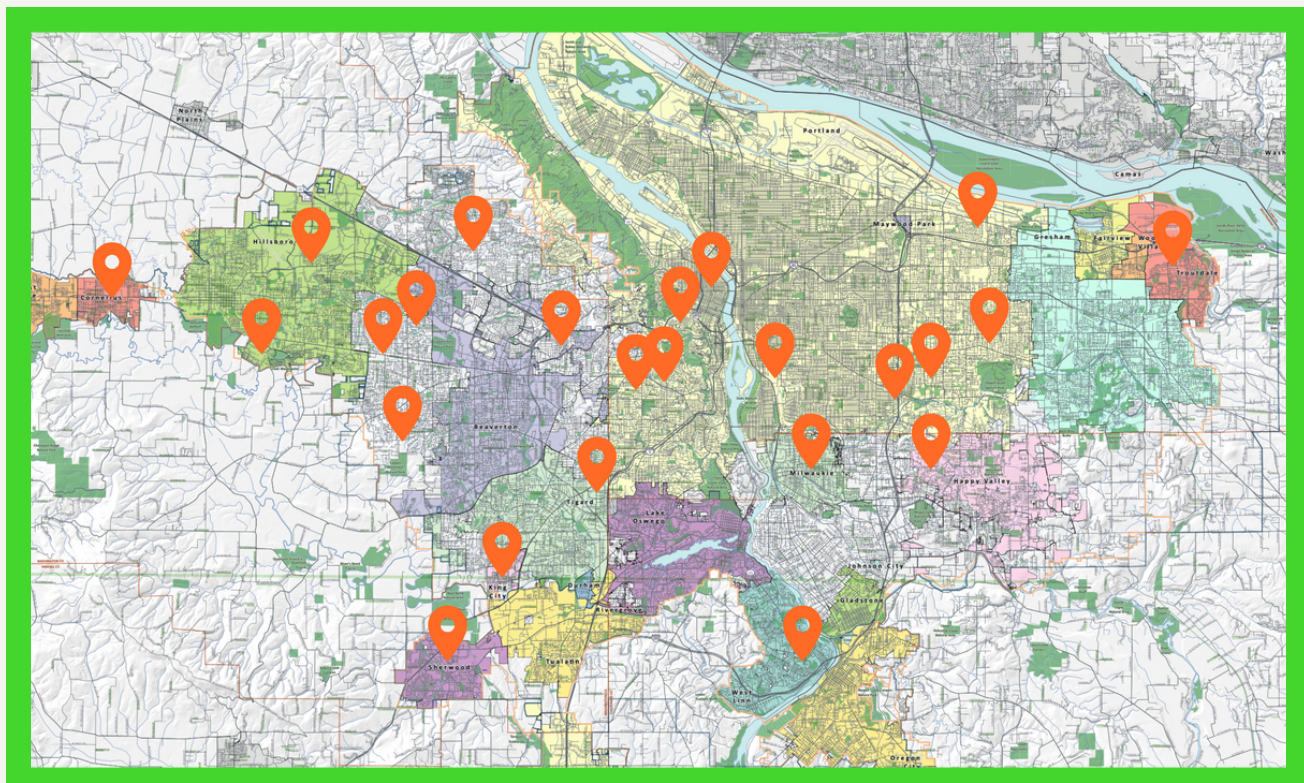
AGE PARTICIPANTS RANGED FROM 16 TO 60.
AVERAGE AGE OF 34 YEARS OLD.

ANNUAL INCOME

LESS THAN \$15,000: 19%	\$60,000 - \$75,000: 3%
\$15,000 - \$30,000: 31%	\$90,000 - \$105,000: 6%
\$30,000 - \$45,000: 11%	PREFER NOT TO ANSWER: 19%
\$45,000 - \$60,000: 11%	

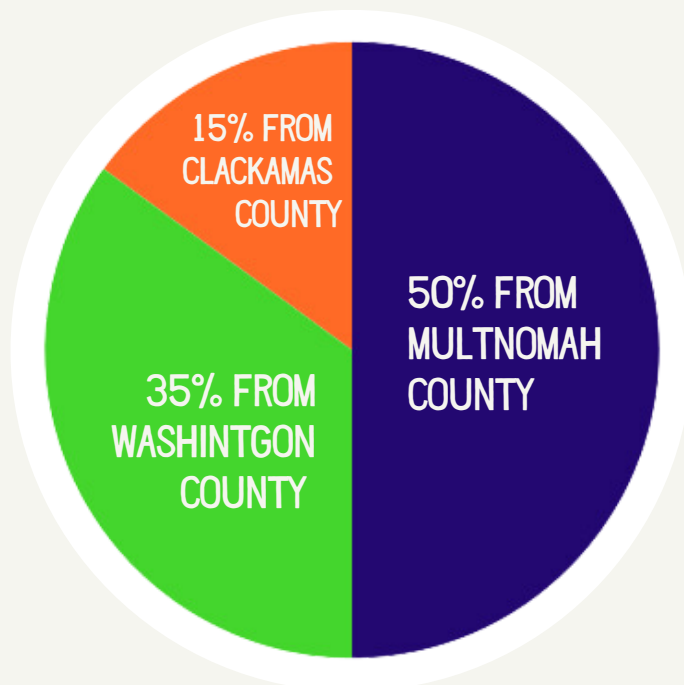
DEMOGRAPHICS

LOCATION: WHERE DO PARTICIPANTS LIVE?



QUICK FACTS

- 70% of participants from Washington County use cars as their primary form of transportation.
- 50% of participants from Multnomah County use cars as their primary form of transportation.
- 0% of participants use biking as their primary form of transportation.



SUMMARY

Metro identified five key goals to apply to the RTP. Participants were provided summaries of each goal and asked which aligned most closely with their interests. Of these goals, participants selected the following

EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION

Transportation system disparities experienced by Black, Indigenous and people of color and people with low incomes, are eliminated. The disproportionate barriers people of color, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, older adults, youth and other marginalized communities face in meeting their travel needs are removed.

MOBILITY OPTIONS

People and businesses can reach the jobs, goods, services and opportunities they need by well-connected, low-carbon travel options that are safe, affordable, convenient, reliable, efficient, accessible, and welcoming.

SAFE SYSTEM

Traffic deaths and serious crashes are eliminated and all people are safe and secure when traveling in the region.

These three priority goals will set the foundation for the following findings, as they were topic areas most frequently discussed during the listening sessions.

EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION

Participants described equity as both a process and an outcome. They emphasized that an equitable transportation system is one where an individual's identity, such as race or socioeconomic status, does not impact their transportation experience. Such a system should provide equal access and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background or physical abilities. Our conversations also highlighted the intersectionality of equity and race, acknowledging that communities of color often experience higher rates of traffic violence and face geographic and income-related barriers to transportation. Conversations also noted the role policymakers have in prioritizing equitable transportation and allocating funding accordingly.

WHAT DOES EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION MEAN TO YOU?

"Equitable transportation to me is an even distribution of affordable and reliable transportation to meet the needs of all community members."

-Participant

"We have prioritized transportation for people with financial resources to get downtown. Most people with lower incomes live their lives outside the downtown corridor. Where do average people and those without cars need to go, and how well is the transportation system set up to accommodate that?"

-Participant

"People that have lower incomes, they often rely on transit a lot. Transit capital should be for covered waiting areas, or signalized crossings near these areas, so that people are able to feel safe. These things are important, I feel."

-Participant

Accommodation for "all abilities. Intersectional analysis is needed because Black & brown people are more likely to have disabilities, 'disability needs' are not a separate box from 'racial equity.'"

-Participant

"In terms of equity, security is asking for certain people's fare because of what they might look like. There is bigger fish to fry than fare. Focus on people's safety."

-Participant

"For me, equitable transportation, no matter your socio-economic status, where you live, its all the same and equal. Just being inclusive with everyone. You can get from point A to point B without worrying a lot."

-Participant

EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION

“My **biggest issue** within running the nonprofit is **accessibility for senior citizens with a language barrier**. The limitations of rideshare and all the other rad accessible transportation that are very limited now after COVID. **We're in a really bad place when it comes to being able to support seniors**, to be able to get them to their necessities, to be able to have a better fulfilling life. And we're so limited and when we don't have volunteers to do it, **then they're stuck at home**. So I don't know what to say about be hopeful. In that case, our seniors are concerned, my heart goes out to them. **So still many, many barriers that really are created in transport for seniors.**”

- Participant

“I'm a lawyer, I've had a contract gig over at PCC Cascade in Northeast Portland **representing tenants doing tenant defense**. We worked very hard to try to make the clinic accessible to folks. **But at the end of the day, transportation continued to be an issue**. Because, again, getting to Cascade campus from Southwest Portland, from Tigard, from deep Southeast Portland, that's not an easy task for anyone. **And if you're struggling**, if you're struggling with income, if you're struggling with mobility, if you're struggling in any way, just childcare, getting to this location for the benefit of getting **free legal assistance, was actually not something that was available to everyone** the way it should have been. And it was purely because of transportation. It impacts my client and the class of people that I represent, low-wage workers, it impacts their ability to access low-cost, no-cost legal services. So even though the county is funding those legal services, **getting to the point of consumption is prohibitive for a lot of people because of transportation.**”

- Participant

“There's limited resources. My mom drives from Tigard to Hillsborough to support this person to a medical appointment or grocery shopping. **Those are the communities that I want to serve, especially in the BIPOC areas, we don't have the same access. I see a huge gap**. So for customers, and then for me, it's very expensive, driving all over the place, gas keeps increasing, and our cars breaking down. **There's not enough public transportation options for me.**”

- Participant

MOBILITY OPTIONS

Participants expressed the importance of having the ability to choose the transportation mode they preferred when they needed it. They advocated for diverse and accessible transportation options that cater to different preferences and needs in different times and places. Participants frequently highlighted the dominance of infrastructure and capacity for driving in the region, often at the expense of people walking, biking, and riding public transit. As a whole, participants repeatedly expressed desire for increased transit capacity and access. For the majority of motor vehicle users, the convenience and efficiency of commuting by car was the largest deterrent to using another mode of transportation.

WHAT ADDITIONAL TRANSIT MOBILITY WOULD BENEFIT YOU?

“Transportation that goes 24 hours. At night time there should be more safety and security throughout the night. Also, more transit near the new housing developments.”

-Participant from Clackamas County

“Accessibility for me is just being able to choose my mode of transportation. If going somewhere is just roads, then, yeah, I'm gonna take a car, right. But if I'm able to take something else, and it might be more economical for me then sure, I'll take it.”

-Participant from Multnomah County

“I have traveled by bus I have traveled by the MAX here when I used to go to university. Yes, I found a comfortable, but it took me forever. So I would have to leave like an hour and a half early to get to my destination.”

-Participant from Multnomah County

“It can be kind of difficult, given the traffic on US-26, coming back, and just having to specifically go back to my residence, park my car, then go to a MAX stop. Rather than just taking one mode. It's the transfer that's kind of the limiting factor for me with my schedule.”

-Participant from Washington County

“I think about this as being inclusive about not only cars but also different types of transportation.”

-Participant from Multnomah County

“I'm from Mumbai, India. When I came to the U.S., I was not driving here. It was really tough for me to manage, because if you don't drive, then you have to be dependent on someone or like use the public transport like TriMet or busses, which was taking almost two hours for me to go to some places.”

-Participant from Washington County

“What would make [transit options] better is thinking a little bit more deeply about the fact that transportation isn't just from wherever you are into downtown Portland.”

-Participant from Clackamas County

MOBILITY OPTIONS

Participants expressed the importance of having the ability to choose one's mode of transportation. They advocated for diverse and accessible transportation options that cater to different preferences and needs. Participants frequently highlighted the dominance of infrastructure for automobiles in the region. As a whole, participants expressed interest in increased transit capacity and access. For the majority of vehicle users, the convenience and efficiency of commuting by car was the largest deterrent to using another mode of transportation.

“Having transportation options that are only concentrated in some areas means that we are ignoring the fact that we are a more diverse sprawly metropolitan area. And in some ways, **I've actually been dissuaded to go into some areas, because I just was like, well, I don't want to drive there.** And if there was an actual opportunity to use public transportation, I'd probably take that.”

-Participant from Washington County

“I do struggle with transportation, and I drive a lot. For example, if I have a meeting downtown, I have to burn a gallon of gas there and a gallon of gas back. And I drive a car that gets 33-34 miles to the gallon. I drive a little car, a four cylinder, a little car. **And that is cost prohibitive, which means I don't get to participate in all the ways that I want to be able to participate”**

-Participant from Washington County

“My commute to work between Sherwood and Hillsborough, **there is no public transportation around me.** In order for me to catch a MAX, I have to drive 30 minutes up to Hillsboro, if I want to get to a bus, the 94 down in Sherwood. And it's just the one and it only goes downtown. Whenever I've tried to problem solve using public transportation for my commute, **even when I've had the time and luxury to do so, inevitably takes longer and ends up costing more.** So in many ways, public transportation doesn't work for me when I'm this far out, and **I'm kind of stranded.** It would be very nice to have the actual public transportation commute take less time than it would take by car and also cost less than by car. I don't think I can say that with much with much confidence right now.”

-Participant from Washington County

“I can count maybe 10 to 15 people in the last 16 years using public transportation to get to my business. Otherwise, they don't come at all. It's the only cultural store in the state of Oregon. I know that the failure of my businesses is because I am not accessible by public transportation.”

- Participant from Washington County

SAFE SYSTEM

Safety was emphasized as a crucial component of transportation. Discussion focused on feelings of danger around transit stations and bus stops due to poor lighting and distance from their home. Several participants also expressed feeling unsafe on public transportation, specifically the MAX, which deterred them from using the mode. Frequent transit users also noted the lack of cleanliness around MAX stations.

Bike users expressed a need for clear bike lanes, especially along multi use paths and other busy areas. Participants expressed a need for increased infrastructure for pedestrian, bike, and transit users, specifically improving lighting around transit stations, making clearly identified bike lanes, and increasing transit access closer to housing developments.

WHAT SAFETY CONCERNS DO YOU EXPERIENCE REGARDING TRANSIT?

“I live in East Portland in the Parkrose area and the lack of sidewalks out here makes walking difficult and unsafe. Kids have to walk in the street to get to school. There's also really poor lighting on busy streets.”

-Participant

“One of the biggest concerns we have, I should be seen walking with my kid on the sidewalk just as much as we see a car. So yeah, and being able to develop the infrastructure for walking. I mean, all road users should have the same access to the road, as much as cars.”

-Participant

“I am in Southwest Portland, there aren't really any sidewalks.”

- Participant

“My commute is literally two blocks away. I work in a co-working space. One of my challenges is there's not a continuous sidewalk for me to walk safely to my co-working space. Nor are there bike lanes. I need a direct path so that I can ride my bike. Those two things would help.”

- Participant

“It seems you need to have a safe system first, so people who have a choice will choose active and local transportation options and not just hop into a car.”

-Participant

“I've had a knife pulled on me and my friends. People doing drugs on the bus and yelling and screaming. I think safety is the big thing.”

-Participant

“Just this weekend in downtown Beaverton there was a little Brewfest. I couldn't go because I would have to drive to and from. Uber and Lyft don't come out this far. So a private car, private transportation, is my only means. There's no sidewalk there. No bike lanes, there's nothing.”

-Participant

ON METRO SPENDING

During the session, participants viewed the distribution of Metro's capital spending. Several participants redrew their ideal project spending.

\$25.3B

CAPITAL PROJECT SPENDING

Participant 1



16% Walking + Biking
33% Transit Capital
17% Roads + Bridges
20% Throughways
10% I-5 IBR Program
2% Freight Access
2% Info + Technology

Participant 2



27% Walking + Biking
18% Transit Capital
18% Roads + Bridges
4% Throughways
3% I-5 IBR Program
3% Freight Access
27% Info + Technology

“What worries me is that, if so little is spent on walking and biking, if you don’t transform that particular infrastructure, then how do you expect people to use it? The state and city is going to continue to grow. And we’re spending so much on roads and bridges and things. It’s great to upkeep that, but how are we going to divert people to the other modes if the infrastructure isn’t up to their standards?”

-Participant

“It’s definitely skewed towards [certain] kinds of vehicles.”

-Participant

“I think, walking, biking and transit should be given at least 30%. I agree, because the upkeep of roadways is important, you don’t want to have too many potholes, because that’s a safety issue.”

-Participant

“In other places, they like walking, different types of transportation. With America, their cars are part of the culture.”

-Participant

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Several groups, specifically those with primarily Black and Brown members, expressed their concerns when approached by The Street Trust to host a listening session.

See the response from one community member below, which they requested be shared with Metro.

While I do hope we can partner in some capacity with Street Trust, I don't believe that Metro informational/listening sessions are the right approach for connecting with marginalized communities. Metro is wonderful and has invested in our programming; however, as of late, we have been asked by multiple community based organizations to hold space and get feedback from the Black community-- all of which have been poorly attended. There is a lack of trust between marginalized communities and state-funded systems/programs and it is rather exhausting to constantly be asked for time to hear from us when there is usually true changes that reflect that our feedback was valued or heard at all.

I do feel like Metro is truly committed to hearing and centering communities of color, but they need to move at the speed of trust. They cannot start with transactional approaches and expect much buy-in. They must first start to earn the trust from the Black community, and I think that starts with coming to our events to connect with us in informal, organic ways.

Thanks again for reaching out. I hope that this feedback is taken seriously and approaches are adapted to fit the needs of the marginalized communities.

- Community Leader

CONCLUSION

Our community listening sessions yielded invaluable insights into the pressing transportation needs and priorities of our priority community members. Our recommendations stand as a roadmap for action, emphasizing the imperative to enhance transportation investments in marginalized communities, curb greenhouse gas emissions, fortify safety measures, broaden the spectrum of affordable and dependable transportation options, and invest in inclusive and accessible infrastructure.

To address these findings, policymakers must prioritize equitable transportation and allocate funding accordingly. Investments should focus on improving safety measures, such as improving lighting around transit stations and ensuring clear bike lanes, while also expanding transit access closer to multi-family housing developments. The dominance of infrastructure for vehicles in the region needs to be rebalanced by investing in other modes of transportation and improving their accessibility.

Above all, this report underscores the vital significance of proactively engaging historically marginalized communities within the sphere of transportation planning and decision-making. By genuinely listening to their voices and addressing their legitimate concerns on an ongoing basis, we can chart a path toward a transportation system that is equitable, safe and accessible to all residents. The insights gleaned from these transformative listening sessions must be seamlessly integrated into the forthcoming update of the Regional Transportation Plan, for they poignantly mirror the needs and priorities of communities that have historically been overlooked in the discourse of transportation planning.

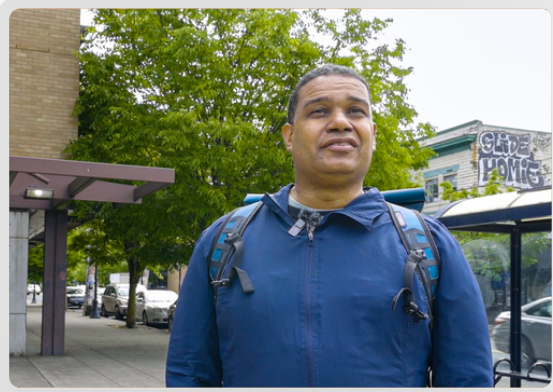
Looking forward, it is of paramount importance for Metro to sustain and deepen its engagement with historically marginalized communities. This necessitates not only further research and investment but also the active incorporation of diverse staff and stakeholder perspectives throughout its work, with accountability measures evaluated along consistent timelines. With creativity and accountability, we can help ensure that transportation policies and investments reflect the values of equity, safety, and accessibility for all residents in the Portland metropolitan region.

MULTIMEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Listen to stories from five community members across the Metro area by visiting our [YouTube Channel](#) or clicking the hyperlinks below.



[Elise Commutes from Beaverton](#)



[Bill Commutes from NE Portland](#)



[Elza Commutes from West Linn](#)



[Miriam Commutes from East Portland](#)



[Christine Commutes from SW Portland](#)

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2023 METRO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT





THE STREET TRUST

LISTENING

SESSION REPORT

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

SPRING 2023



THE STREET TRUST



The Street Trust is a membership advocacy organization representing street users across Greater Portland. We work to address unsafe and incomplete public streets that threaten lives and livelihoods. The Street Trust wins policy changes and investments that save lives, reduce barriers, and expand opportunities to the people and neighborhoods our current transportation system neglects.

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN BACKGROUND

METRO

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), managed by Metro, guides public investment for all forms of travel including driving, taking transit, biking and walking, and the movement of goods and services through the Portland metropolitan region. In 2018, Metro updated the RTP, emphasizing strategies of high-capacity transit, increased safety, enhancing freight and goods movement, advancing transportation technology, and strengthening pedestrian and bicycle policies.

Metro updates the plan every five years with input from various community members and leaders, businesses, and governments. By December 2023, Metro will complete the updated RTP, which will guide investment decisions for the next several decades. In the meantime, Metro has worked to include local community members, listening to their transportation needs, via public forums, public comment periods, and listening sessions.

OUR PURPOSE

Through federal funding, Metro has asked local community based organizations and advocates to engage with different communities across the region. The Street Trust deployed \$30,000 of this funding to uplift the voices and experiences of historically and contemporarily marginalized groups in the area. These groups included BIPOC residents, people living on low-incomes, LGBTQIA2S+ residents, older/younger residents, people experiencing disabilities, immigrants, and refugees. Whereas these communities have previously been excluded from conversations around transportation and its impact, we look to change the narrative and engage in meaningful dialogue.

The Street Trust community engagement took the form of 5 listening sessions, which were carried out between April and June of 2023. We sought to understand their mobility vision, needs, and priorities - what is and isn't working in their day-to-day experiences. This document summarizes the information gathered in these sessions in order to elevate the stories of local community members.

OUR PROCESS

Between April and June 2023, The Street Trust conducted 4 listening sessions across Multnomah County, Washington County, and Clackamas County. The 5th session was rescheduled at the request of the cohost.

1. Portland State University

BIPOC undergraduate Engineering Majors at Portland State University.

2. Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization

Afghan immigrants connected with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)'s Greater Middle East Center (GMEC).

3. ACHIEVE Coalition

Action Communities for Health, Innovation and Environmental Change (ACHIEVE) Coalition. A group of multi-sectoral partners who have a collective vision of ending health inequities in chronic diseases for African-Americans and African immigrants/refugees in Multnomah County.

4. Clackamas Community College

Students from Clackamas Community College participating in a Fare Relief Program.

5. TriMet's Committee on Accessible Transportation*

TriMet's Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT) is a community advisory body representing persons with disabilities and seniors.

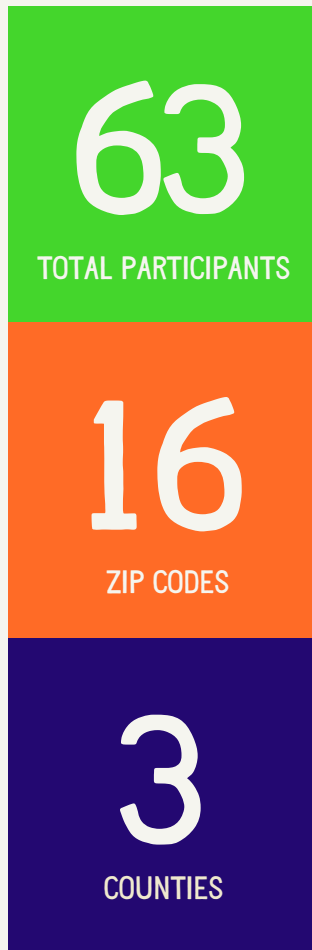
*TriMet CAT listening session is being rescheduled.

Overview of the Listening Session Process

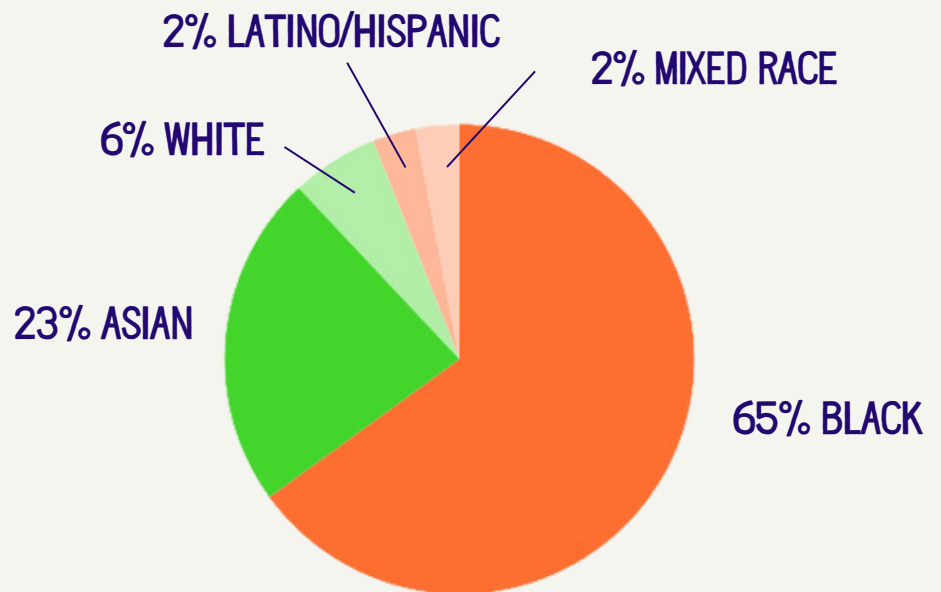
- Sessions lasted between an hour and an hour and a half.
- Sessions began with a fifteen-minute presentation about the Regional Transportation Plan, its influence and importance in the region.
- With the remaining time, The Street Trust asked participants a series of informal interview-style questions about their daily commute, experience with different modes of transportation, interpretation of Metro's draft goals, and their thoughts on funding distribution.
- In the final ten minutes of the session, participants were asked to fill out a survey rating their experience with different modes of transportation. Findings are included below.
- Each participant was compensated for their time and input during the session.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Between April and June 2023, The Street Trust conducted 4 listening sessions across Multnomah County, Washington County, and Clackamas County.



RACE/ETHNICITY



AGE PARTICIPANTS RANGED FROM 16 TO 45.
AVERAGE AGE OF 30 YEARS OLD.

ANNUAL INCOME

LESS THAN \$15,000: 17%
\$15,001 - \$30,000: 44%
\$30,001 - \$45,000: 17%
\$45,001 - \$60,000: 9%
PREFER NOT TO ANSWER: 13%

SUMMARY

Metro has identified six key goals to be applied to the RTP. Participants were provided summaries of each goal and asked which aligned most closely with their interests. Of these goals, participants selected **Equitable Transportation, Safe System, and Mobility Options** as most important to them.

Equitable Transportation - Enhancing transportation investment in marginalized communities.

Climate Action and Resilience - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air quality impacts.

Thriving Economy - Improving the region's economic health through transportation.

Safe System - Reducing the amount of death and serious injuries of users in the transportation.

Mobility Options - Providing a broader range of affordable and reliable transportation options.

These **three** priority goals will set the foundation for the following findings, as they were topic areas most frequently discussed during the listening sessions.

EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION

Participants described equity as both a process and an outcome. They emphasized that an equitable transportation system is one where an individual's identity, such as race or socioeconomic status, does not impact their transportation experience. Such a system should provide equal access and opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background. The conversation also highlighted the intersectionality of equity and race, acknowledging that communities of color often experience higher rates of traffic violence and face geographic and income-related barriers to transportation. Conversations also noted the role policymakers have in prioritizing equitable transportation and allocating funding accordingly.

WHAT DOES EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION MEAN TO YOU?

“Equitable transportation to me is an even distribution of affordable and reliable transportation to meet the needs of all community members.”

-Participant

“We have prioritized transportation for people with financial resources to get downtown. Most people with lower incomes live their lives outside the downtown corridor. Where do average people and those without cars need to go, and how well is the transportation system set up to accommodate that?”

-Participant

“People that have lower incomes, they often use transit, they rely on transit a lot. Transit capital should be for covered waiting areas, or signalized crossings near these areas, so that people are able to feel safe. These things are important, I feel.”

-Participant

Accommodation for “all abilities. Intersectional analysis is needed because Black & brown people are more likely to have disabilities, “disability needs” are not a separate box from “racial equity.”

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“In terms of equity, security is asking for certain people’s fare because of what they might look like. There is bigger fish to fry than fare. Focus on people’s safety.”

-Participant

“For me, equitable transportation, no matter your socio-economic status, where you live, its all the same and equal. Just being inclusive with everyone. You can get from point A to point B without worrying a lot.”

-Participant

SAFE SYSTEM

Safety was emphasized as a crucial component of transportation. Discussion focused on feelings of unsafety around transit stations and bus stops due to poor lighting and distance from their home. Several participants also expressed feeling unsafe on public transportation, specifically the MAX, which was a deterrent from them using the mode. Frequent transit users also noted the lack of cleanliness around MAX stations. Bike users expressed a need for clear bike lanes, as they are sometimes being used for houseless encampments. Participants expressed a need for increased infrastructure for pedestrian, bike, and transit users, specifically improving lighting around transit stations, making clearly identified bike lanes, and increasing transit access closer to housing developments.

“I live in East Portland in the Parkrose area and the lack of sidewalks out here makes walking difficult and unsafe. Kids have to walk in the street to get to school. There's also really poor lighting on busy streets.”

-Participant

“One of the biggest concerns we have, I should be seen walking with my kid on the sidewalk just as much as we see a car. So yeah, and being able to develop the infrastructure for walking. I mean, all road users should have the same access to the road, as much as cars.”

-Participant

“It seems you need to have a safe system first, so people who have a choice will choose active and local transportation options and not just hop into a car.”

-Participant

“I’ve had a knife pulled on me and my friends. People doing drugs on the bus and yelling and screaming. I think safety is the big thing.”

-Participant

MOBILITY OPTIONS

Participants expressed the importance of having the ability to choose one's mode of transportation. They advocated for diverse and accessible transportation options that cater to different preferences and needs. Participants frequently highlighted the dominance of infrastructure for automobiles in the region. As a whole, participants expressed interest in increased transit capacity and access. For the majority of vehicle users, the convenience and efficiency of commuting by car was the largest deterrent to using another mode of transportation.

WHAT ADDITIONAL TRANSIT MOBILITY WOULD BENEFIT YOU?

“Transportation that goes 24 hours and all throughout the day. At night time there should be more safety and security throughout the night. Also, more transit near the new housing developments.”

-Participant

“It can be kind of difficult, given the traffic on US-26, coming back, and just having to specifically go back to my residence, park my car, then go to a MAX stop. Rather than just taking one mode. It's the transfer that's kind of the limiting factor for me with my schedule.”

-Participant

“Accessibility for me is just being able to choose my mode of transportation. If going somewhere is just roads, then, yeah, I'm gonna take a car, right. But if I'm able to take something else, and it might be more economical for me then sure, I'll take it.”

-Participant

“I think about this as being inclusive about not only cars but also different types of transportation.”

-Participant

ON METRO SPENDING

Participants viewed the distribution of Metro's capital spending. Several participants redrew their ideal project spending.

\$25.3B

CAPITAL PROJECT SPENDING

Participant 1



16% Walking + Biking
33% Transit Capital
17% Roads + Bridges
20% Throughways
10% I-5 IBR Program
2% Freight Access
2% Info + Technology

Participant 2



27% Walking + Biking
18% Transit Capital
18% Roads + Bridges
4% Throughways
3% I-5 IBR Program
3% Freight Access
27% Info + Technology

“What worries me is that, if so little is spent on walking and biking, if you don't transform that particular infrastructure, then how do you expect people to use it? The state and city is going to continue to grow. And we're spending so much on roads and bridges and things. It's great to upkeep that, but how are we going to divert people to the other modes if the infrastructure isn't up to their standards?”

-Participant

“It's definitely skewed towards kind of [sic] vehicles.”

-Participant

“I think, walking, biking and transit should be given at least 30%. I agree, because the upkeep of roadways is important, you don't want to have too many potholes, because that's a safety issue.”

-Participant

“In other places, they like walking, different types of transportation. With America, their cars are part of the culture.”

-Participant

CLOSING

The listening sessions provided valuable insights into the transportation needs and priorities of the community members involved. Recommendations include enhancing transportation investment in marginalized communities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air quality impacts, improving safety measures, providing a broader range of affordable and reliable transportation options, and developing inclusive and accessible infrastructure.

To address these findings, policymakers must prioritize equitable transportation and allocate funding accordingly. Investments should focus on improving safety measures, such as improving lighting around transit stations and ensuring clear bike lanes, while also expanding transit access closer to multi-family housing developments. The dominance of infrastructure for vehicles in the region needs to be rebalanced by investing in other modes of transportation and improving their accessibility.

Overall, this report underscores the importance of actively involving historically marginalized communities in transportation planning processes and decision-making. By listening to their voices and addressing their concerns, we can work towards a transportation system that is equitable, safe, and provides diverse mobility options for all residents. The insights gathered from these listening sessions should be considered in the update of the Regional Transportation Plan, as they reflect the needs and priorities of the communities that have been traditionally neglected in transportation discussions.

Moving forward, it is crucial to continue engaging these communities, conducting further research, and incorporating the perspectives of diverse stakeholders to ensure that transportation policies and investments reflect the values of equity, safety, and accessibility for all residents in the Portland metropolitan region.

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REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

LISTENING SESSION REPORT





Community Engagement Report

2023 Regional Transportation Plan (Phase 3)

Prepared by

Unite Oregon

Submitted to

Metro Regional Government

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Executive Summary

Phase 3 of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) focuses on updating regional transportation needs and revenue forecasts to guide updating the Plan's project and program priorities. The goal of Phase 3 is to collect feedback from community members about the needs and priorities as well as gaps in investments related to transportation improvement projects.

Equitable access to transit, biking and walking connections, and streets and highways where traffic flows is critical to allow the low-income black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) immigrants and refugee communities that Unite Oregon serves to reach everyday places. Additionally, past TOD projects in North and Northeast Portland have resulted in involuntary residential and business displacement of BIPOC communities, Unite Oregon has been working tirelessly to address the impact associated with these major infrastructure investments to give all residents an opportunity to live and thrive.

Unite Oregon is partnering with Metro to conduct community engagement in the Southwest and TV Highway Corridors to inform these priorities. We interviewed 21 community members in both regions as part of the community engagement activities for Phase 3. Of the total participants, 81% identify as BIPOC, while 19% identify as White/Caucasian. Ten participants provided feedback about their transportation-related experiences in the Southwest Corridor and the other 11 shared information about their experiences in the TV Highway Corridor. About 91% of the interviewees in the TV Highway Corridor mentioned that they live and recreate in the area, while 63.6% and 54.5% said they work and worship in the corridor, respectively. In the Southwest Corridor, 80.0% of the interviewees reported that they recreate in the corridor; although some of them do not live there they usually visit family and friends.

Unite Oregon's interview had two sections informed by four priority areas related to transportation improvement projects including safety and wellbeing, accessibility, commute/travel time, and project information & implementation. Common themes were identified across the four different priority areas. A number of issues overlapped with needs highlighted in multiple priority areas, including improvement of sidewalks and crosswalks to make them safe and reliable, and accessible and safe areas for folks using wheelchairs who are currently forced to use bike lanes instead of uneven sidewalks. The community-identified needs, priorities, and investment gaps are described in detail throughout this report.

Background

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the blueprint that guides investments for all forms of travel including driving, taking transit, biking and walking, and the movement of goods and services throughout the greater Portland area. The Plan was last updated in 2018 and it's due for an update by the end of this year.

[Unite Oregon](#) has been engaged in the RTP update process generally because having equitable access to transit, biking and walking connections, and streets and highways where traffic flows is essential to allow the communities we serve, particularly low-income black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) immigrants and refugees, to reach everyday places.

More specifically, Unite Oregon convenes two community-centered coalitions of residents and community-based organizations focusing on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). These are the Southwest Corridor Equity Coalition (SWEC) and the TV Highway Equity Coalition (TEC). Both coalitions are supported by Metro and work in collaboration with local governments.

While SWEC advocates for equitable development of a Light Rail Transit (LRT) extension along the Southwest Corridor¹, TEC considers the development of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along the TV Highway Corridor². We work with our partners to ensure everyone in our communities has access to the benefits of these opportunities.

Concurrently, given the fact that past TOD projects in North and Northeast Portland have resulted in involuntary residential and business displacement of BIPOC communities, we have been working tirelessly to address the impact associated with these major infrastructure investments to give all residents an opportunity to live and thrive.

Community Engagement: Goals and Process

Following the completion of Phase 1 (Scoping) and Phase 2 (Data and Policy Analysis) of the RTP update process, Phase 3 is focused on updating regional transportation needs and revenue forecast to guide updating the Plan's project and program priorities. Unite Oregon partnered with Metro to conduct community engagement in the Southwest and TV Highway Corridors to inform these priorities.

¹The Southwest Corridor comprises multiple jurisdictions and many different neighborhoods, extending from South Downtown Portland along Barbur Boulevard to Downtown Tigard and further south along I-5 to Bridgeport Village.

²The TV Highway (Oregon Route 8) is an important regional and county urban arterial that supports the movement of goods and people through Beaverton, Aloha, Hillsboro, Cornelius and Forest Grove in Washington County.

Our team designed a semi-structured interview process to talk with community members in both regions, Southwest Corridor and TV Highway Corridor. This interview has two sections informed by four priority areas related to transportation improvement projects including safety and wellbeing, accessibility, commute/travel time, and project information & implementation.

The first section asks participants to rate a series of statements on a 5-point scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Depending upon their rating, they are then asked follow-up questions to gain more insights on their response. The second section asks about people's view of the specific anticipated TOD projects: LRT in the Southwest Corridor and BRT in the TV Highway Corridor. Appendix A presents the full list of interview questions.

A total of 21 community members in both regions were interviewed. Interview participants had a wide range of experiences using transit services, driving, biking and walking along the two corridors. Some participants also provided insights on their experiences with transportation related projects and activities in other parts of the region.

The discussions at the several meetings of the Southwest Corridor Equity Coalition and the TV Highway Equity Coalition uncovered a number of concerning issues that would negatively impact the communities living in both areas if clear and thoughtful equity measures were not considered when implementing TOD projects. These concerns include early investment in expanding and preserving affordable housing; providing co-located services, especially for healthcare and education; support for small business owners before, during, and after project construction; safety and accessibility improvements; in addition to service reliability.

Findings and Discussion

Out of the 21 participants, 10 provided feedback about their transportation-related experiences in the Southwest Corridor and the other 11 shared information about their experiences in the TV Highway Corridor. Table 1 shows a summary of the demographic information of interview participants, who were asked to choose from a list of options and also had the chance to self-describe their ethnicity, if preferred. About 43% of participants (n=9) chose to self-describe as they did not feel the direct options provided fairly described their ethnicity. The other ethnicities identified by interviewees are Scandinavian & Keltic (n=1), Taiwanese American (n=1), Somali Americans (n=3), Mexican Indigenous (n=1), and Indian (n=1), and multiracial (2).

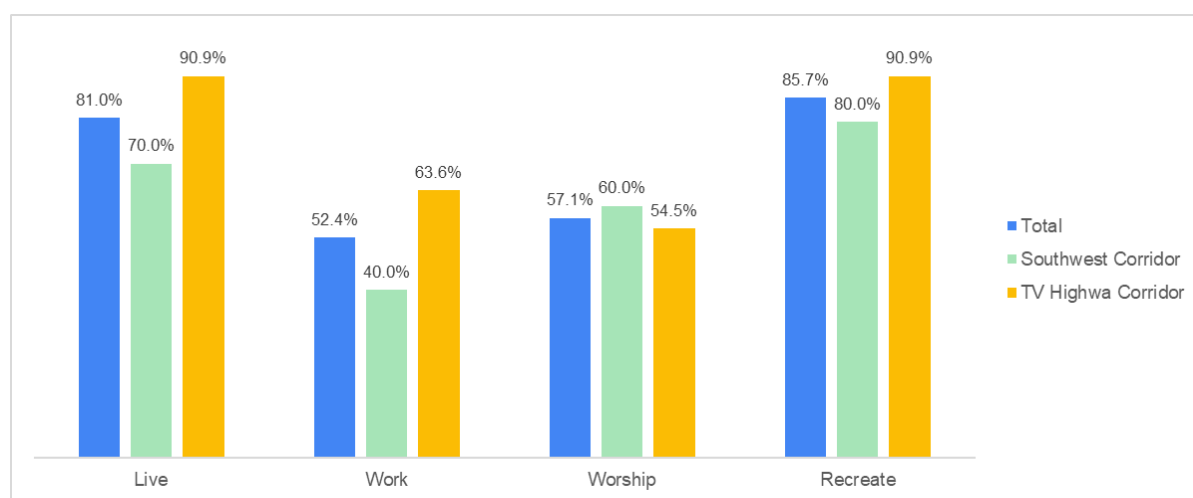
The interview also asked about the connection of participants to the two targeted areas. Figure 1 shows that about 91% of the interviewees in the TV Highway Corridor mentioned that they live and recreate in the area, while 63.6% and 54.5% said they work and worship in the corridor, respectively. In the Southwest Corridor, 80.0% of the interviewees reported that they recreate in the corridor; although some of them do not live there they usually visit family and friends.

Table 1: Participants demographic information

Description	Total (n=21)		Region 1 ^a (n=10)		Region 2 ^b (n=11)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Ethnicity						
Black/African American	3	14.3%	1	10.0%	2	18.2%
LatinX	3	14.3%	0	0.0%	3	27.3%
Middle Eastern/North African	2	9.5%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%
White/Caucasian	4	19.0%	1	10.0%	3	27.3%
Prefer to self-describe	9	42.9%	6	60.0%	3	27.3%
Gender						
Woman	13	61.9%	7	70.0%	6	54.5%
Man	5	23.8%	3	30.0%	2	18.2%
Non-Binary	2	9.5%	0	0.0%	2	18.2%
prefer to self-describe	1	4.8%	0	0.0%	1	9.1%
Residential Status						
U.S. born citizen	11	52.4%	4	40.0%	7	63.6%
U.S. citizen by naturalization	4	19.0%	1	10.0%	3	27.3%
Immigrant	1	4.8%	0	0.0%	1	9.1%
Prefer to self-describe	4	19.0%	4	40.0%	0	0.0%
Prefer not to share	1	4.8%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%

a Region 1 = Southwest Corridor

b Region 2 = TV Highway Corridor

**Figure 1: Participants connection to the corridors**

Interview Findings

As explained above in the Community Engagement: Goals and Process Section, the interviews consisted of two parts, the first of which asked about four priority areas related to transportation improvement projects and the second focused on the impacts of two Transit-Oriented Development projects, one in each corridor. The following sections present a summary of the interview findings, in addition to a brief discussion of the patterns that were identified. Appendix B outlines specific locations/projects that interview participants mentioned.

Section 1: Transportation-Related Priorities

This section provides a series of statements that participants were asked to rate from 1 (low) to 5 (high) based on their personal views. Table 2 presents all these statements and the ratings given by the participants in both regions; the Southwest Corridor and the TV Highway Corridor. Depending on their rating, a series of follow up questions were asked to get a better understanding of people's experiences.

Priority 1: Safety & Wellbeing

Public Transit Services: When asked about how safe they feel using public transportation services, 70.0% and 72.7% of the participants provided low ratings (3 or below) for their experiences in the Southwest Corridor and TV Highway Corridor, respectively. Interviewees mentioned a range of reasons related to safety traveling to and from stops and also while riding on the bus/train.

Lack of safe and reliable sidewalks and crosswalks, unsheltered and unlit bus stops, walking around homeless tents, fear of reckless drivers and those who exceed speed limits, and the fact that bus stops are far from residential areas are some of the main elements that make people unsafe reaching to and from transit facilities.

On the other hand, interview participants expressed the need for more security/safety employees (not police officers) on TriMet facilities. Cleanliness was another issue that several people identified. Other participants mentioned that they repeatedly experienced harassment on public transit due to their race or appearance which reflects their religious affiliation.

Driving, Biking, and Walking: Participants rated three statements about their experiences driving, biking, and walking along the two corridors. For driving, more people in the Southwest Corridor (70.0%) provided high ratings (4 or 5)

Participants said:

- TV Highway was built for cars and other vehicles; not for cyclists, pedestrians, and those with mobility needs.
- We need to implement more security on all public transportation. Not only for the riders but the conductors as well.
- Being a woman and a visible Muslim makes it hard and unsafe. I have been harassed several times. We cannot control other people. I appreciate there are security officers on MAX, though.
- I don't feel safe because people drive too fast and the bus stops are sometimes far away from people's homes.

Table 2: Participants ratings of transportation-related priorities in both regions (percentages)

Statement	Rating (1=low, 5=high) scale (n=21)									
	Region 1 ^a (n=10)					Region 2 ^b (n=11)				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Safety and wellbeing										
I feel safe using public transportation services	0%	50%	20%	20%	10%	9%	18%	45%	9%	18%
I feel safe driving along the Corridor	0%	10%	20%	50%	20%	18%	18%	27%	27%	9%
I feel safe biking along the Corridor	40%	20%	40%	0%	0%	45%	36%	18%	0%	0%
I feel safe walking along the Corridor	40%	10%	0%	40%	10%	27%	45%	18%	9%	0%
Traffic signs, road conditions, and speed limits are effectively designed to offer a safe experience for commuters and pedestrians	20%	20%	20%	40%	0%	27%	27%	36%	9%	0%
Accessibility										
I have easy access to public transportation to reach everyday places	0%	20%	10%	40%	30%	0%	27%	18%	36%	18%
Sidewalks and crosswalks are available and conveniently placed along the corridor	30%	10%	30%	20%	10%	64%	18%	18%	0%	0%
Public transportation services are suitable for people who have mobility/physical disabilities	10%	30%	40%	10%	10%	36%	18%	36%	9%	0%
Commute/Travel Time										
I spend a reasonable time commuting to work, school, or to catch an important appointment	20%	40%	10%	10%	20%	9%	18%	27%	18%	27%
Using public transport takes less or the same amount of time compared to driving my own vehicle to get to everyday places	60%	20%	10%	10%	0%	45%	0%	36%	18%	0%
Project Development & Implementation										
I receive timely information about the planned transportation improvement projects	40%	30%	0%	20%	10%	64%	18%	9%	9%	0%
Transportation projects address the needs of the diverse communities along the corridor	30%	20%	30%	20%	0%	27%	45%	27%	0%	0%

a Region 1 = Southwest Corridor

b Region 2 = TV Highway Corridor

compared to those who drive along the TV Highway Corridor (36.4%). This is due to the fact that TV Highway is considered one of the most dangerous highways in the region. Several deadly accidents were reported in the past months.

With respect to biking safety none of the participants in both regions provided a high rating. People either don't bike themselves, due to safety concerns, or they have been observing several safety concerns for people who bike along the corridors. These concerns include bike lanes being narrow and close to the cars on the road, road conditions force bikers to ride on roadway or sidewalks, and drivers do not respect bikers or signage that protects pedestrians.

Speaking about safety walking along the corridors, 50.0% of interview participants in the Southwest Corridor provided high ratings compared to only 9.1% in the TV Highway Corridor. This is again attributed to how dangerous TV Highway is regardless of the mode of mobility used to get to everyday places.

Traffic Signs, Road Conditions, and Speed Limits: Most of the participants (90.9%) in the TV Highway Corridor offered low ratings to the statement "Traffic signs, road conditions, and speed limits are effectively designed to offer a safe experience for commuters and pedestrians," while the percentage of low ratings was 60.0% in the Southwest Corridor. Potholes in different places along the roadway and uneven sidewalks were the two most highlighted concerns.

Two of the interviewees who use wheelchairs mentioned that sometimes they are forced to use bike lanes instead of uneven sidewalks, and this puts them in a critical dangerous situation. Other participants mentioned that many transportation-related infrastructure changes are done after people are hurt, and that must not be the case. From a driver's and rider's perspective, participants listed commuting at night as a less preferable option due to lack of lighting.

Priority 2: Accessibility

Easy Access to Public Transportation: The first of the three statements that interview participants were asked to rate was about their experience accessing public transit to get to everyday places. In the Southwest Corridor, 70.0% of the interviewees provided high ratings (4 or 5) compared to 54.5% in the TV Highway Corridor. Some of the issues that were

Participants said:

- There are places where there are no sidewalks and sometimes bikes are in the actual car lanes which makes me fear for their safety.
- Being visible to cars is really important, I was hit by a car while walking along the TV Highway.
- Congestion is a big issue, especially on narrow roads. Traffic can build up very easily and makes it difficult for drivers.
- My son walks 3 quarters of a mile going and coming back from school. The bus stop on Barbur Blvd. is far from our house.
- During snow storms, we need better transit options, and more attention to clearing off the roads for cars on busy highways.
- We need lighting on the roads and better road signs with reflective paints to glow in the dark.

Interviewees mentioned that lack of paved sidewalks and safe crosswalks makes them feel unsafe walking in both regions.

common in both regions, but more emphasized in the TV Highway Corridor, are the distance people need to walk to reach a bus stop, transfers from line to line or between buses and trains, rush hour congestion and lack of “bus only” lanes.

Sidewalks and Crosswalks: All participants in the TV Highway Corridor offered low ratings to the statement “Sidewalks and crosswalks are available and conveniently placed along the corridor,” with 63.6% giving the lowest rating. For the SW Corridor, 70.0% of all interviewees provided low ratings (3 or below). In both regions, and specifically for TV Highway, crosswalks are not available where pedestrians need them; people have to walk long distances to be able to cross the road, and this gets worse when sidewalks are not available or are in bad shape.

Transit Services for People with Mobility issues: Only 9.1% of the participants in the TV Highway Corridor indicated that Public transportation services are suitable for people who have mobility/physical disabilities, compared to 30.0% of participants in the Southwest Corridor. Big ledges on sidewalks can become an obstacle for those who may struggle with mobility, especially when bus ramps could not be lowered for people to board the bus.

Another concern mentioned by participants is the time it takes to lower the ramp and then the driver needs to help passengers to put a strap on the wheelchair (2-3 minutes). This needs to be faster. Oftentimes, people on wheelchairs have to miss the bus and wait for the next one either during rush hours when they cannot access the area designated for them or when the ramp/elevator is not working. Participants also reported that, occasionally, some riders are not helpful to give a place to people with disabilities.

Priority 3: Commute Time

Reasonable Time Commuting: Only 30.0% of the participants in the Southwest Corridor and 45.5% in the TV Highway Corridor offered high ratings to the statement “I spend a reasonable time commuting to work, school, or to catch an important appointment.” The main causes identified for the delays are heavy traffic jams, especially during rush hours; frequent accidents, especially along TV Highway; time needed to reach bus stops, many of which have already been removed; in addition to bus delays/MAX shutdowns in snow days.

Participants said:

- A lot of left turns need to have a green turn signal, not only yellow flashing.
- Using transit services takes significantly more time than driving; that’s why I bought a car. It’s also cheaper to use my own car than ride buses every day.
- Bus stops need to be on sidewalks that are accessible, it is hard to get off the bus if you are using a wheelchair and there is no even sidewalk.
- My mosque is 5 minutes by car. I have to take the MAX to Beaverton Transit Center to take bus 57 down to 169th. This takes 35 minutes each way, if I make the connection right away.
- A 30-minute drive sometimes takes 2 hours.

Barbur Crossroads is in the top 10% of dangerous roadways listed in the statewide Safety Priority Index System, and although ODOT has been working on improvements, participants felt that much more is needed to make the area safer.

Participants said:

- I live in Southwest Portland and work in Southeast. It takes me too long to commute and I am often late to work.
- Instead of removing bus stops, we need more buses that run more frequently added to the route.
- I would be more open to using public transit if things changed.
- Before I got involved in Unite Oregon's leadership development cohort, I hardly ever came across information about transportation projects.
- It's kind of a shame to have the Barbur Transit Center sitting while it can be redeveloped to better benefit the community.
- After the failure of the 2020 bond measure, Barbur Boulevard improvements got kicked way back.
- I would implore the government agencies to look at cities that have good transit systems to see what positive things they are doing.

Instead of removing bus stops to attempt reducing commute time, the community wants to see more frequent bus services. Other needs highlighted by interviewees include ensuring elevators/ramps are working all the time and also providing security in stations and on board transit facilities because many people, including those with mobility challenges, prefer not to ride in crowded buses to avoid harassment. Also, creating "bus only" lanes will enhance safety and shorten trip time for riders.

Time Spent Driving Vs. Using Public Transportation: The majority of interview participants (90.0% in the Southwest Corridor and 81.8% in the TV Highway Corridor) did not agree with the sentence saying that "using public transport takes less or the same amount of time compared to driving my own vehicle to get to everyday places." However, participants indicated that using MAX services could be more effective in certain situations like going to Downtown Portland which saves time and effort finding parking if they were to drive their own vehicles.

Priority 4: Project Information & Implementation

Timely Updates on Plans: Most participants in both regions (70.0% in the Southwest Corridor and 90.9% in the TV Highway Corridor) indicated that they don't receive timely information about planned transportation improvement projects. Even those who offered high ratings for this statement explained that they became informed after joining the leadership development programs offered by Unite Oregon and other community-based organizations within the Southwest Corridor Equity Coalition (SWEC) and the TV Highway Equity Coalition (TEC).

Other participants indicated that even when information is available, it is not easily accessible to the public and the way they get updates about these projects is through thorough research and active communications with TriMet and local government agencies. People don't have time to look for information, and the government needs to find better ways to reach them including working with nonprofits and culturally specific organizations to spread the word out to the diverse community in different languages, and those who may not be online or using smartphones.

"If they can send a voting pamphlet to registered voters' homes, they can send information to us directly as well."

Projects to Address Community Needs: All participants in the TV Highway Corridor and 80.0% of interviewees in the Southwest Corridor did not feel that transportation improvement projects address the needs of the diverse communities along the corridor. For example, a participant mentioned that TriMet ignored community inputs and listened to manufacturers recommendations when they designed the FX line. This resulted in aisles that are also too narrow, making it difficult for wheelchair users to move on the bus.

Another participant questioned the need to build an island and add plants starting on SE Cypress St. continuing onto SE 32nd Ave., indicating that making the roads safer is a higher priority than making them look pretty. In the Southwest Corridor participants were frustrated that the proposed improvements on SW Taylors Ferry Rd. were not funded by Metro's Regional Flexible Fund Allocation (RFFA). Also, interviewees consider it a shame that Barbur Transit Center has not been redeveloped despite many calls from the community to build affordable housing and/or establish a multicultural hub.

Section 2: Transit-Oriented Development Projects

This section aimed to get participants feedback on two mega transportation infrastructure projects in the two targeted geographies. Participants were asked the same questions about each of the projects. For the Southwest Corridor, the focus was on the anticipated Light Rail MAX line from Downtown Portland and extending along the Barbur Boulevard corridor to Downtown Tigard and further south along I-5 to Bridgeport Village. In the TV Highway Corridor, the questions were about the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) which is currently being studied to improve bus line #57.

Excitement for the Project: All interview participants indicated that they are excited to hear about both projects, especially as they see that community-based organizations are leading community-centered planning processes in partnership with Metro and TriMet. Several participants mentioned that they would be more interested in using public transportation services if those projects were implemented in an equitable and inclusive way. Then, roads will be less congested with cars, riders will benefit from shortened commute time and less stress about safety and accessibility.

Other Priorities:

Sustainability, environmental consciousness, service affordability for all riders, hygiene on TriMet facilities, training for conductors on becoming culturally competent to address the needs of riders effectively in addition to providing them with special driving skills to keep them, the riders, and other users of the road safe.

Participants said:

- Without careful planning, the planned MAX line in SW Portland will strike low-income households who live or own businesses in the area.
- Oregon does not have the best housing system and this could make more people houseless. It will be too late to think about it after the project is implemented
- Metro and TriMet need to work with nonprofits to engage the community in TOD projects.

However, some participants in the TV Highway Corridor were not sure about how they felt about the BRT project since planning efforts are still underway, but they were hopeful that community inputs will be used in the design and implementation phases.

Concerns about the Project: The biggest concern all interviewees mentioned was the risk of residential and business displacement, which would be more critical in the Southwest Corridor. Some participants were skeptical as to how much can be done, especially in the TV Highway Corridor as the train tracks are in close proximity to the roadway and everything that comes along will have to be negotiated with the railroad companies. Another concern was about lack of engagement efforts with the larger community, except for some activities championed by nonprofits. The need to design new transit services to better serve people with mobility issues was also voiced by participants.

Equitable Project Implementation: Given the concerns highlighted above, the first suggestion provided by participants to make these projects equitable and provide benefits to all members of the community was to strengthen community resilience through early investments in preserving and expanding affordable housing and commercial spaces in both corridors. People need to receive timely information about the projects and be involved in decision making around critical issues that would impact historically underserved communities. Adhering to equity will also advance the local economy and offer more jobs and better career paths to low-income residents.

Conclusion

This report presents the findings from 21 interviews conducted by Unite Oregon staff with community members in the Southwest Corridor and the TV Highway Corridor as part of the community engagement activities for Phase 3 of the Regional Transportation Plan update process. The goal was to get feedback from community members about the needs and priorities as well as gaps in investments related to transportation improvement projects. Table 3 summarizes the identified need/gaps.

Common themes were identified in four different priority areas namely, safety and wellbeing, accessibility, commute time and information about projects design and construction. However, it was found that a number of the issues mentioned by interview participants in one priority area overlap with needs highlighted in other priority areas. For example, building and improving sidewalks and crosswalks responds to accessibility needs while at the same time advances safety for everyone using the roads.

Participants also shared their thoughts on the benefits and concerns associated with two transit-oriented development projects, one in each of the targeted geographies: The Light Tails extension project in the Southwest Corridor and the Bus Rapid Transit project in the TV Highway Corridor. These conversations will be continued as we implement Phase 4 of the community engagement plan to get feedback from the community about specific transportation projects, which Metro will then use to update regional project and program priorities.

Table 3: Summary of the identified needs, priorities, and investment gaps

Safety and Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for improvement of sidewalks and crosswalks to make them safe and reliable. • Repair many potholes in different places along the roadway and uneven sidewalks. • Providing shelters and lighting for many bus stops. • Providing security employees (not police officers) in stations and on board transit. • Cultural competency training for conductors and improving their driving skills to keep riders and other users of the road safe. • Safe and accessible areas for folks using wheelchairs, who are currently forced to use bike lanes instead of uneven sidewalks • Repairing/expanding bike lanes to ensure bicyclists are not forced to use the roadway • Addressing safety issues related to reckless driving behaviors. • Taking a proactive approach to infrastructure issues rather than making changes after people are hurt or killed. • Hygiene products such as hand sanitizer in TriMet facilities. 	Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More bus stops that are close to residential areas. • More bus services running at more frequent regular intervals. • More sidewalks and crosswalks that are conveniently placed along the corridors to prevent people from having to walk long distances to be able to cross the road. • Improvement of sidewalks and crosswalks to make them accessible and reliable. • Repairing potholes along the roadway and uneven sidewalks. • Service affordability for all riders. • Ensuring elevators/ramps are working all the time for folks with disabilities. • Design new transit services to better serve people with mobility issues.
Commute Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating more “bus only” lanes and more frequent bus services to enhance safety and shorten trip time for riders. • Rush hours congestion and lack of “bus only” lanes results in buses being delayed and commute times being long. • Need more accessible stops. Transfers from line to line or between buses and trains takes a very long time. • Contributions to long commute times: heavy traffic jams, especially during rush hours; frequent accidents, especially along TV Highway; time needed to reach bus stops, many of which have already been removed; in addition to bus delays/MAX shutdowns in snow days. 	Project Information & Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing timely & accessible information (in multiple languages) about planned transportation projects. • Providing information in a multitude of ways for folks who do not have access to wifi or smartphones. • Involving historically-underserved people in decision-making around critical issues that would impact them. • Working with nonprofits and culturally specific organizations to spread the word out to diverse communities. • Inter-agency collaboration to address community needs effectively. • Learning from other cities that have good transit systems. • Ensuring sustainability and environmental conscious practices.

Appendix A: Interview Guide & Questions

Background: Every five years, Metro brings together the communities of greater Portland to update the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP). The RTP is the blueprint that guides investments for all forms of travel—driving, taking transit, biking and walking—and the movement of goods and services throughout greater Portland. For a project to receive Federal funding it must be in the RTP. The plan was last updated in 2018.

Purpose: In collaboration with Metro, [Unite Oregon](#) is working to engage community members who are most impacted by transportation projects to identify gaps in investments and define the process for updating the RTP project and program priorities by the end of 2023.

Process: Our team plans to conduct one-hour interviews with 20 individuals who represent the diverse communities that live, work, worship and recreate in the Southwest Corridor¹ or TV Highway Corridor². Information gathered from interviews will be kept confidential. When reporting themes from the interviews, no person or organization's name will be associated with any results. Interview participants can request to receive a summary report of this process.

After the interview, participants will receive \$100 stipends to compensate for their time and contributions to the RTP update process.

Interview Questions: This interview has two (2) sections informed by a number of priority areas related to transportation improvement projects. First, you will be asked to rate a series of statements on a 5-point scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Depending upon your rating, you'll then be asked a follow-up question to gain insight on your response. Second, you will be asked a few questions about your view of specific projects as well as your personal travel patterns.

Section #1: The following table lays out four (4) priority areas, rating statements, in addition to follow-up questions:

¹The Southwest Corridor comprises multiple jurisdictions and many different neighborhoods, extending from South Downtown Portland along Barbur Boulevard to Downtown Tigard and further south along I-5 to Bridgeport Village.

²The TV Highway (Oregon Route 8) is an important regional and county urban arterial that supports the movement of goods and people through Beaverton, Aloha, Hillsboro, Cornelius and Forest Grove in Washington County.

Priority Areas	Rating Statements 5-point scale (1=low to 5=high)	Follow-up Questions If low rating
Safety & wellbeing	<p>I feel safe using public transportation services</p> <p>I feel safe driving, biking, walking along the Southwest Corridor</p> <p>Traffic signs, road conditions, and speed limits are effectively designed to offer a safe experience for commuters and pedestrians</p>	<p>What needs to happen to make these services safer for you and your community?</p> <p>What aspects of your transportation experience make you feel less safe? i.e., other drivers, lighting at night, etc.</p> <p>How can your experience be improved and who should be responsible for that?</p>
Accessibility	<p>I have easy access to public transportation to reach everyday places</p> <p>Sidewalks and crosswalks are available and conveniently placed along the corridor</p> <p>Public transportation services are suitable for people who have mobility/physical disabilities</p>	<p>What are the top 1-3 challenges you face trying to access public transportation?</p> <p>What areas along the corridor require better sidewalks/crosswalks?</p> <p>How can those services be improved to give all riders a better experience?</p>
Commute/travel time	<p>I spend a reasonable time commuting to work, school, or to catch an important appointment</p> <p>Using public transport takes less or the same amount of time compared to driving my own vehicle to get to everyday places</p>	<p>Where and at what times do you see most time wasted while traveling along the corridor? i.e., many stops, slow traffic</p> <p>How can transit services be improved to become more reliable? Would you be more open to using transit if that happened?</p>
Project development & implementation	<p>I receive timely information about the planned transportation improvement projects</p> <p>Transportation improvement projects address the needs of the diverse communities along the corridor</p>	<p>What barriers are keeping you less informed about these projects? Who is responsible to fix that?</p> <p>What are some projects that you feel were not needed or could have been implemented differently?</p>

Section #2: The following questions aim to capture more details about your personal opinion and experiences regarding transportation priorities/needs in your community.

- 1) In addition to the priority areas highlighted in Section #1, what other priority areas can you identify? the Other priority areas?
- 2) Metro and its partners are exploring the development of a Light Rail MAX extension project along the Southwest Corridor, which is expected to be associated with other improvements in the area.
 - What excites you about this project?
 - What aspects of the project and/or the impacts associated with it may be concerning to you and your community?
 - In your opinion, how would implementing this project in an equitable way benefit all residents and riders along the corridor?
- 3) [Optional] Would you be willing to share the following information when we report your answers? This helps Metro better understand certain characteristics of the communities benefiting from/impacted by the plan (**no name or contact information will be reported**)
 - Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Residential Status
- 4) Please provide any additional information you would like to share. You could also reach out with questions/comments via email until March 31, 2023.
 - Learn more about Unite Oregon on our [website](#).
 - For more information on how to join our programs, please contact our team:
 - Mohanad Alnajjar mohanad@uniteoregon.org
 - Juan Moreno juan@uniteoregon.org
 - Myell Thompson myell@uniteoregon.org

Appendix B: Locations Mentioned By Interview Participants

Location	Need
N 29th Avenue (Cornelius) – SW Dennis Avenue (Hillsboro Winco)	Sidewalks and better lighting needed on both sides. Was mentioned by several interviewees
SW 170th Avenue (Aloha) – SW Murray Boulevard (Beaverton)	Needs better lighting
SE Cornelius Pass Road (Hillsboro) – SW 185th Avenue (Aloha)	Need for sidewalks and better lighting on both sides
SE 30th Avenue (Hillsboro) – SE Cornelius Pass Road (Hillsboro)	Needs better lighting and sidewalks on the southern side of TV Highway
SE TV Highway & SE 44th Ave	Crosswalk needs more safety measures
SE Brookwood Avenue – TV Highway intersection	Unsafe, interviewee was hit here many years ago before some infrastructure changes
10th avenue (Hillsboro) – Beaverton TC, and SW Murray Blvd. – Highway 217 or beginning of Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway	TV Highway Traffic hotspots
Barbur Crossroads	Dangerous intersection for all road users. Although it may be difficult to restructure the road, there needs to be a plan to improve safety and accessibility
SW Taylors Ferry Rd.	Despite advocacy by community groups, a proposed project to improve sidewalks and safety was not funded
Capitol Highway in the Southwest Corridor	Recent sidewalk improvements are useless and won't serve the community. It's near the freeway ramp so, even if it had a bench, nobody would sit in it
Bus stop near Casey Eye Institute on S Bond Ave	Once you get off the bus, there is no sidewalk and it's usually muddy and dangerous for people to walk
Homestead Drive – Williger Boulevard	There is no lighting along the road and certain areas have no clear signs which makes it dangerous causing head-on collisions
Barbur Transit Center	It's frustrating the TriMet and ODOT are not listening to the community when we ask to use this space to build affordable housing and/or create a multicultural center



Community Engagement Report

2023 Regional Transportation Plan (Phase 4)

Prepared by

Unite Oregon

Submitted to

Metro Regional Government

July 2023

1. Introduction

Upon completion of the Phase 3 activities for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) – a community engagement process related to a needs assessment and priority identification– the Unite Oregon team prepared for Phase 4, for which the RTP proposed projects are explored and their impacts on the diverse, resident communities are examined. The project list was announced in April 2023. Following the Community Leaders’ Forum, which provided an overview of the 2023 RTP Draft project list, our team implemented planned community engagement events.

Similar to Phase 3, the activities planned for Phase 4 were designed for the Southwest Corridor and the Tualatin Valley (TV) Highway Corridor, which have anticipated investments in high-capacity transit projects. Unite Oregon convenes two community-centered equity coalitions in these corridors. While these high-capacity transit projects are meant to develop the two corridors beneficially, our coalitions have been concerned about how these projects could negatively affect low-income households as well as historically disadvantaged and minority communities, especially immigrants, refugees, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (IR-BIPOC).

Many people within these demographics have already been displaced from other areas, and they will most likely face further displacement if new transit-oriented development projects fail to incorporate equitable access to transit, affordable housing, and co-located services. Through the RTP project, Unite Oregon aims to reiterate the needs and priorities of the impacted communities so that elected officials introduce policies that provide the necessary tools and resources for equitable design and implementation of RTP projects.

2. Community Engagement Activities

During the community engagement phase, the Unite Oregon team conducted a series of focus groups and community workshops to present information about the proposed projects and to receive feedback from participants. For the focus groups, the participants were community leaders and nonprofit representatives directly and indirectly involved in the Southwest Equity Coalition (SWEC) and the TV Highway Equity Coalition (TEC). The community events were designed to provide information to and capture feedback from the large communities connected to the Southwest and TV Highway corridors.

During these events, participants shared several comments and questions that required clarifications and, therefore, our team followed up with the Metro RTP staff, who followed up in a timely manner, to get additional information to share back with participants. The following sections present details of the discussion and outcomes of these community engagement activities, categorized in different sessions. Specific demands and recommendations are also outlined.

3. What We Heard

Following the announcement of the initial RTP projects list in April, the Unite Oregon team began coordinating in order to implement the activities that were planned earlier for Phase 4. Although these activities were focused on the 2023 RTP projects list, community members raised common issues and reiterated important priorities that they would like to see included/considered in the updated Regional Transportation Plan.

3.1. Information-Related Concerns

- **Information Availability**

Many of the community members who participated in the focus groups and workshops expressed frustration that they do not usually hear about development projects, including transportation improvement, in their neighborhoods until these projects are in the final phases, right before the start of construction. The fact that information about these plans could be available on a government agency's website does not make it accessible to people who do not have time to look for this information or are not tech-savvy.

"I have never heard of the RTP or even the website. Typically that is the case until you see the construction and the cones."

Participants demanded more efforts from government agencies to provide timely information about project planning and design in different ways. Although several community members acknowledged Metro's efforts to inform people about the Regional Transportation Plan. They also appreciated the opportunity to provide their feedback. For some, this was the first time they had been included in a planning process, and they would like to stay informed and participate in future processes.

"We live in a busy society, to be involved we need to make ourselves available. Lack of communication and information. I did not know anything about this list of projects. If I knew, I would love to volunteer to do more work."

However, several community members who participated in similar community engagement activities in the past expressed another concern: how will their feedback be addressed and will implementation agencies listen and respond to their concerns. The questions regarding updates and how they will be engaged in the process after this stage and if they are going to receive project updates were also raised.

- **Information Clarity**

Even when information is available, participants had some concerns about its clarity, especially for community members who do not necessarily have vast knowledge of the project(s) being presented. For example, the RTP draft project list overview mentioned percentages of how the RTP invests in Equity, Climate Resilience, Safety, Mobility, and the Economy, and the main question around that in one of the focus group discussions was: What is the point of reference for these percentages? Is it the full number of all projects?

The draft also referenced the Equity Focus Area map, and participants asked for more details about the criteria used to develop this map, especially since an area like the Southwest Corridor was not highlighted as an equity focus area even though they felt that there is a sizable population of BIPOC households in the area. Another specific question was around the definition of "low-income" in the RTP draft project list.

"We need information to be digestible and easy to understand for our community members who want to be involved early on in the development or decision- making process."

Fortunately, Metro staff were responsive, and timely answers were provided to these questions which were shared with the participants. The low percentage of RTP's investment in safety remained a big concern, given that safety has been the top priority of all participants in all community engagement activities. The draft mentioned that 80% of the RTP capital spending invests in safety.

3.2. Impacts of Transit Investment

- **Displacement Risk**

In all focus groups and workshops that Unite Oregon held during Phase 4 as part of the RTP update process, community members expressed concerns about the lack of affordable housing and the rise in gentrification and home prices in new developments. Participants highlighted the need for more effective communication and community engagement outreach regarding housing and transportation projects.

The issue facing seniors and people with disabilities when it comes to both housing and transportation was also pointed out as a significant concern. The cost of living for seniors and people with disabilities is higher due to aging and illness, and housing should consider these needs. The community seeks greater inclusivity and equity in housing projects in areas where

transportation improvements are planned, ensuring that diverse community members benefit from these developments.

- **Safety & Accessibility**

A participant described Washington County as a “transit desert” due to the lack of options that connect cities within the county as well as connections to other areas in the Metro Region. General issues related to accessibility, as outlined by participants, include insufficient bus frequency, inadequate pick-up and drop-off points, and the impact of construction on pedestrian mobility.

“I used transit for 15 years, but due to poor connections, timing, and adverse weather conditions, I decided to switch to using my car.”

More specifically, participants in both the SW Corridor and the TV Highway Corridor mentioned that there is a need for more crosswalks, safer sidewalks, enhanced bike lanes, and better bus stops with proper lighting and weather protection. Most participants said that they use their own vehicles for travel, and a handful of them use public transit. However, almost everyone expressed interest in walking, biking, or using transit services if the conditions were safer and more accessible.

“There is a large marginalized community out where I live. Yes, we need to get people into Portland quickly, but we need to get to other areas without it taking several hours. To get to Sherwood, I had to transfer 3 times. There is a need for better routes. Want to see the projects that provide these quantities.”

Other aspects related to safety and accessibility that participants shared included the need for well-maintained ADA ramps, more routes in suburban areas, services that consider those who live with invisible disabilities, late-running bus routes, service affordability, especially for houseless individuals, and improved cleanliness of transit facilities.

- **Economic Impacts**

The development of transportation projects brings many benefits to the residents and businesses where they are implemented. However, if equity measures are not considered prior to construction, many community groups will be affected, including small businesses that are owned by BIPOC individuals. Similar to affordable housing, small businesses face displacement risks if affordable commercial spaces are unavailable.

Although TriMet reports that their teams work to maximize access and visibility during construction, road closure impacts the traffic of customers to businesses. Usually, many of them report reduced revenues for which implementation agencies do not offer compensation. There needs to be a strategy to provide more support for small businesses before, during, and after construction. Ensuring commercial affordability must also be a priority.

- **Environmental Impacts**

The transportation sector is the largest domestic contributor to climate change. According to the US Department of Transportation, the transportation sector is responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions than any other sector of our economy. In addition to harming the environment, negative health outcomes are among participants' main concerns, and addressing these impacts is among the top priorities.

The concept of green highways was brought up during one of the community workshops as a system of roads that mitigate the negative impact on the environment and maximizes the lifetime of a highway. Specific recommendations for increasing the number of trees and shrubs were mentioned. On the one hand, trees help provide a clean environment while acting as a natural barrier for protection. Increasing the number of electric vehicles within the transit system and those owned by individuals, will also help.

3.3. Transit Services Concerns

- **Transit Workers**

Two main comments related to transit workers were highlighted by participants. Firstly, riders believe workers should be trained on how to interact with and provide services to people representing different backgrounds so that they are culturally competent. This will make riders feel more welcome in transit facilities.

Secondly, the community members who participated in the discussions and usually use transit mentioned that there is a need to offer better compensation for transit workers in appreciation of their efforts to provide high-quality services to diverse communities. Participants also emphasized the need for more security officers – but without guns.

- **Congestion Pricing**

Some participants, who have been following updates on various transportation plans, raised the issue of congestion pricing strategy, and further discussion took place about this topic. Essentially,

the community does not support the idea of tolling, which increases the cost of transportation for many people, including those with low incomes.

The discussion around this topic led to the suggestion that revenues from the tolling program, if the program is inevitable, should be reinvested in improving the quality of and reducing the cost of transit services.

- **Fare increase**

Similar to the congestion pricing, the TriMet fare increase, which was recently adopted by its board, was also a concern for many participants. People have been advocating for free transit services and were frustrated that the decision was made to increase the cost. This would severely impact system accessibility. Our team brought this issue up to Metro and TriMet staff, who provided information on how this will affect Honored Citizen, Youth Fare, and monthly passes.

- **Service Malfunctioning**

As much as many participants acknowledged the efforts of transit agencies to upgrade their services, a few comments were shared by community members based on their personal experiences. When the boarding ramp or power lift is out of service on some buses, any rider in a wheelchair will be forced to wait for the next bus. Participants mentioned that this issue is common, and they would like to see it changed.

Similarly, some participants reported that sometimes ticketing machines are out of service or have issues that riders realize only when they try to buy tickets. Given that they don't receive timely support, this causes unnecessary delays until the issue is resolved. Delays are also experienced when transit services are crowded during rush hours, and people prefer to wait until they can board a bus/train where they feel safe and comfortable.

3.4. Corridor-Specific Feedback

"I think it is important to have plenty of sidewalks on the street. I personally have two siblings who walk on their own, and they hang around the TV Highway area and one of our main concerns is if they are visible. Can they see? Can they be seen by cars? More infrastructure to protect us from cars, better accessibility, sidewalks, away from streets, reduces the scariness of TV Highway, we have to protect our youth."

In the Southwest Corridor, people are concerned about the status of the light rail project, which makes things uncertain related to housing, businesses, and safety upgrades. For example, although the West Portland Town Center plan was adopted by Portland's City Council, many of the plan's actions were left unaccomplished.. Also, participants were frustrated that the Taylors Ferry Rd. improvement project was not funded even though it responds to urgent needs in the area, particularly serving a planned affordable housing development.

4. Conclusion and Next Steps

Overall, the community feedback emphasizes the importance of accessible and integrated transportation systems, the need for affordable housing, effective communication, community involvement, and sustainability in both transportation and housing initiatives. In the next stage, our team will work with the participants of these community engagement activities and other community members and civic leaders to provide additional feedback during the RTP Public Comment Period.



Community Engagement Report

2023 Regional Transportation Plan (Public Comment Period)

Prepared by

Unite Oregon

Submitted to

Metro Regional Government

September 2023

1. Background

The initial contract between Metro and Unite Oregon included a plan to conduct an online survey during Phase 3 of the 2023 RTP update process. However, due to an unexpected delay in executing the agreement and starting the community engagement activities, the terms were amended to move that deliverable to the final stage of the process, the Public Comment Period.

2. Engagement Activities

During the Public Comment Period, extending from July 10 until August 25, the Unite Oregon team implemented several activities to inform community members about the opportunity to provide feedback on the RTP draft, provide resources and ways for them to send their comments, and offer different types of support related to understanding the RTP draft as well as language and internet accessibility. The activities include:

- Regular updates to the partners of the Southwest Corridor Equity Coalitions and the TV Highway Corridor Equity Coalition, both of which issued a letter of comments as noted in the attachments below.
- Targeted messages to about 20 members of the Community Leadership Cohort of each coalition, informing them about the RTP project list and encouraging them to provide feedback given their participation in the development and/or implementation of the Equitable Development Strategies in the two corridors.
- Information about the RTP draft and project list was also included in the events leading to the completion of the TV Highway Corridor Equitable Development Strategy (see draft attached), convened as part of the planning for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.
- A resource document outlining ways to provide feedback was shared in the newsletter that goes to about 380 contacts for community members and civic leaguers in the region. Reminders were sent closer to the end date of the Public Comment Period.

In addition to these activities, and to reach more members of the BIPOC, immigrant, and refugee communities, Unite Oregon also worked with a group of community leaders who have strong connections to diverse communities in the region. They engaged with a large number of people and reported that 40 of them submitted comments during the period.

Out of the people who provided feedback, there were 17 women, 10 were refugees, eight were immigrants, eight were asylum seekers, and 14 were U.S. citizens. The areas of origin of the participants are from different parts of the Asian and African continents. The community leaders

and the people they engaged with were compensated for their support and participation in this process.

3. Plans After the Public Comment Period

During and after the Public Comment Period, our team had a plan to continue to engage in and invite community members to participate in other feedback opportunities through listening sessions. Part of that planning was done in collaboration with organizations that are members of the Getting There Together (GTT) Coalition, including The Street Trust and Verde, which have been working on the RTP's community engagement.

4. Attachment

- [Letter of Comments - Southwest Corridor Equity Coalition](#)
- [Letter of Comments - TV Highway Corridor Equity Coalition](#)
- [Draft Equitable Development Strategy](#)
- [Resource List and Call to Action](#)

Adult Focus Group

Meeting Date: 1.31.23

Language: Spanish

Number of participants: 17

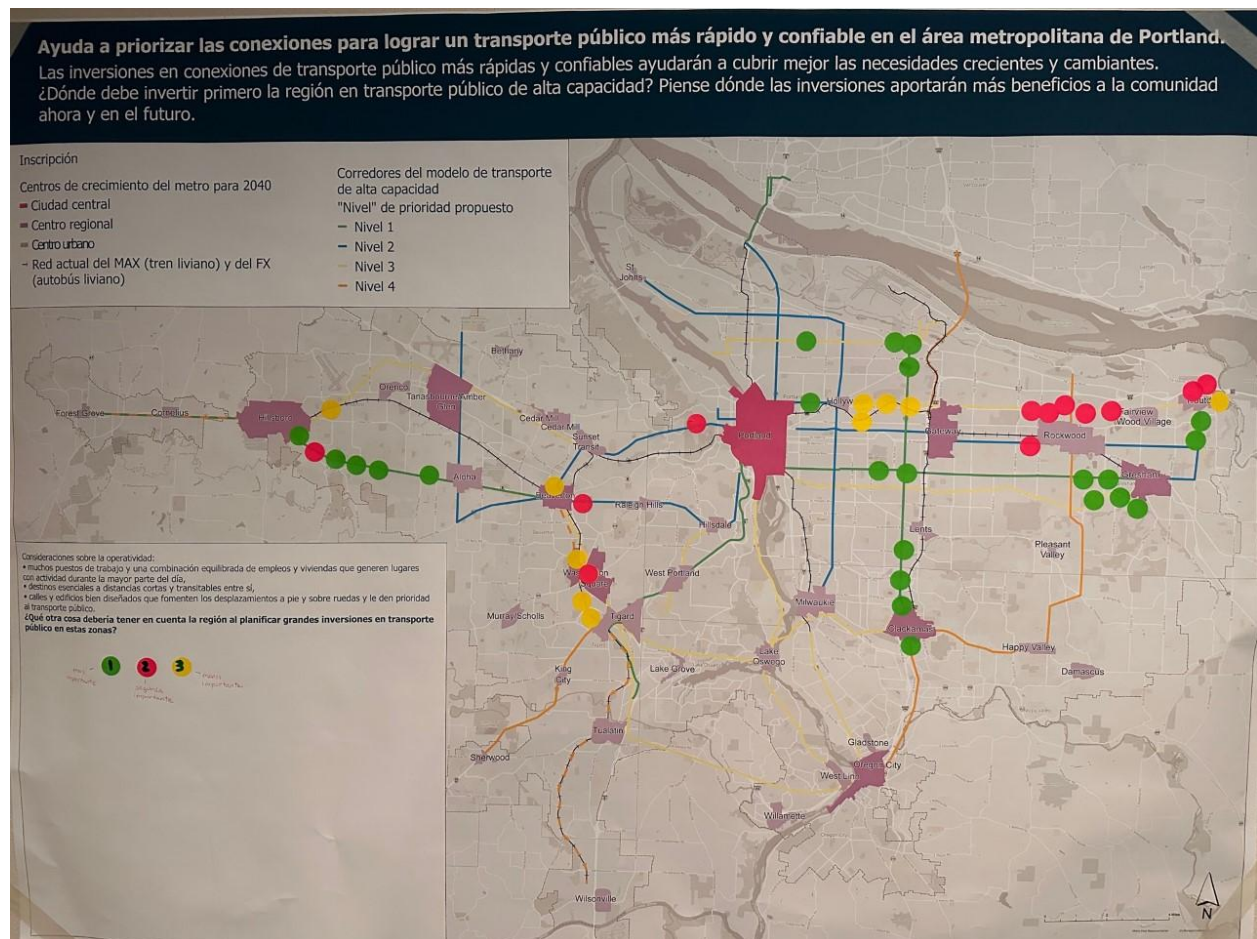
Map activity (segments):

Each participant had 3 stickers*

green = highest priority

yellow = second priority

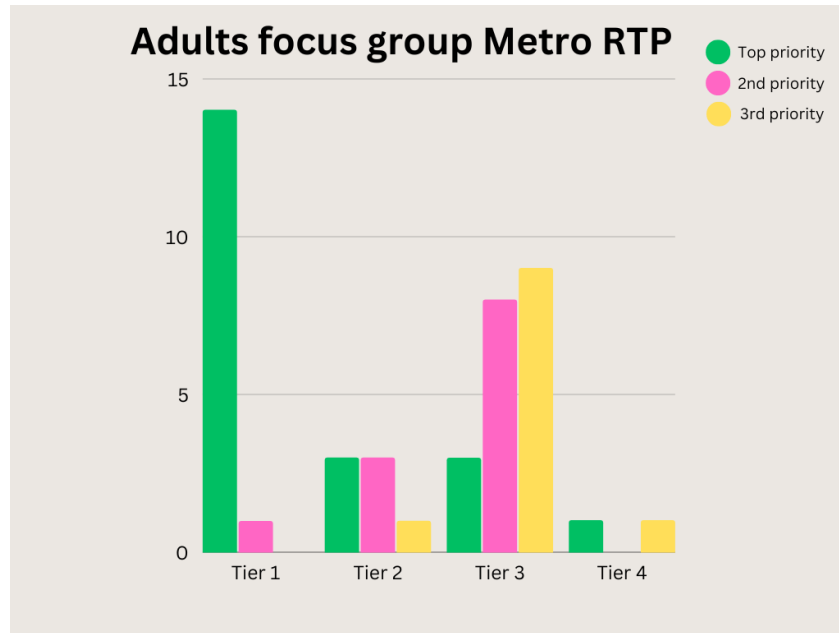
pink = lowest priority



*Several participants used two green stickers to mark two top priorities.

Phase 3 Summary Report
Metro RTP Community Engagement - Call for Projects
Verde / Latinx Community

Map Activity Bar Chart (tiers):



Individual Feedback:

Rogelia	we need a bus FX on 82nd, Tier1: for more comfort and safety
Lizet	FX 82nd, Tier1: better community and safety, Tier 2: safety and reliability
Ana B	FX on 82nd, Tier1: Better community and safety, Tier 4 Avoid traffic
Flor	FX on 82nd, Tier1: - Better community and safety, Tier 3 - I would use it to take my children to swimming and it would be faster for my errands/shopping.
Andres	FX on 82nd, Tier 4 to avoid traffic
Wendy	Prioritize Killingsworth to downtown Portland, Killingsworth to Troutdale
Hilda	Prioritize Killingsworth to Beaverton
Lupe	72 Bus: Stores, frequently go to the hospital 8, most frequent transportation. 72 Max WS. Green Blue Line. Bus 72, more frequent
Teresa	Tier 3: 17S Portland to Oregon City, 18 E Hollywood to Troutdale, 5 Hwy 26 Sunset TC to Hillsboro Easier to visit my family
Rosa Isela	Tier 3: 17S Portland to Oregon Clty, 18E Hollywood to Troutdale, 5 Hwy 26 Sunset TC to Hillsboro

Phase 3 Summary Report
Metro RTP Community Engagement - Call for Projects
Verde / Latinx Community

	Mexican Stores
Alma	Tier 3: Cover from NE to Gresham near Powell and Troutdale and they're direct routes. Safety/security at the bus stops and inside the bus.
Marlene	Tier 2 - Because it's a busier area and there are more community members who use public transportation. At the same time it would reduce traffic for people who use cars on the freeway and encourage the use of the MAX/bus more. They avoid contamination by encouraging the community to use the bus/MAX.

Priorities/Concerns

- Well, I want there to be more safety/security on the bus and for it to be cleaner
- On the corner of where I live, when it's raining there is no shelter. Lighting because it's dark.
- They're on the corner and get wet. The stops on Fairview and Sandy, where the packing companies are, are dangerous and there is no lighting. There's a lot of parks.
- At some stops, in dangerous areas, there needs to be safety/security
- We need transportation that goes from Cully to Downtown Providence Park.
Safety/security at the bus stops and inside the bus, all day. Bus drivers to be more polite to people of all races and be so polite as to wait for people, who can not run to catch the bus, to get on board.

Personal Stories:

- Security/safety to avoid kidnappings. My daughter was waiting for bus 15, the one from 82nd to Powell. Between two cars they wanted to follow her because no one was there. It was two cars, 82nd and Burnside, where the MAX passes through, we need security.
- On a Sunday she was waiting for the bus and a woman attempted to hit her. The person that tried to hit her was drugged. She felt that this person was rude. In English, the person told her to go back to her country.

Key Take-aways:

Many participants were interested in an FX bus on 82nd, more direct buses running from Cully to downtown, and transportation to/from the Gresham area. Safety and security (reduced waiting time, more lighting, better shelters) were among the highest concerns for adults.

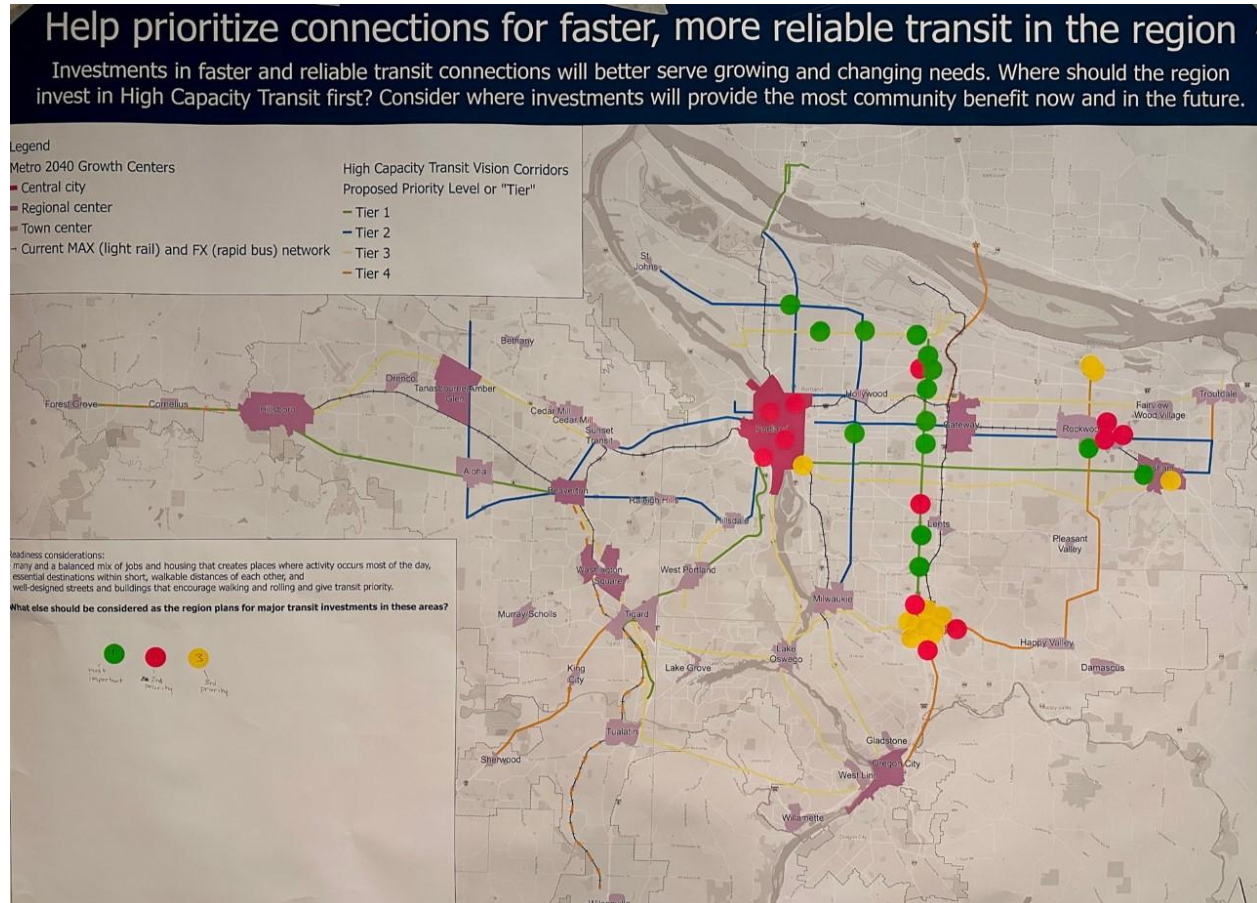
Youth Focus Group

Meeting Date: 2.2.23

Language: English/Spanish

Number of participants: 16

Map activity (segments):

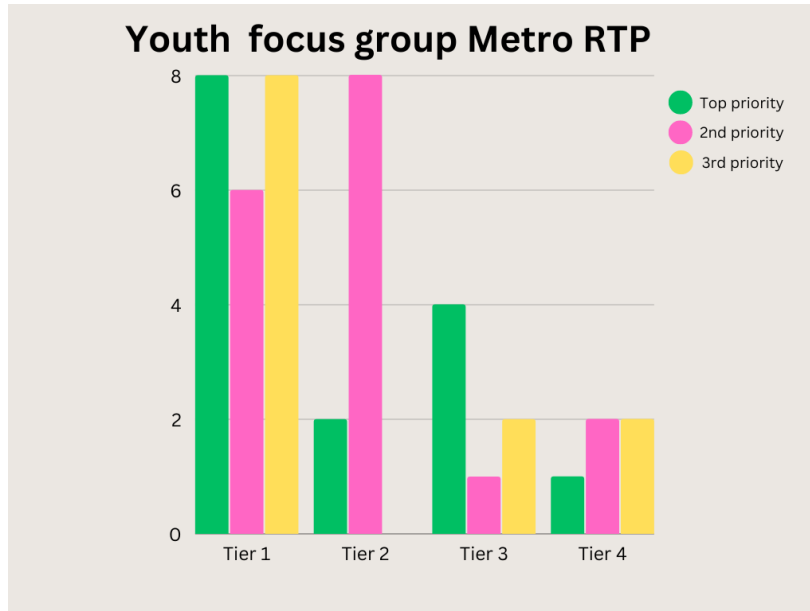


green = highest priority

yellow = second priority

pink = lowest priority

Map Activity Bar Chart (tiers):



Key take-aways and summary:

Highest priority for youth is 82nd Ave. (school, family), followed by routes leading to the Clackamas Town Center mall (shopping, recreation). Other priorities include routes between downtown Portland and the Rockwood/Gresham area, as well as lines that travel along NE Killingsworth (family, friends, other).

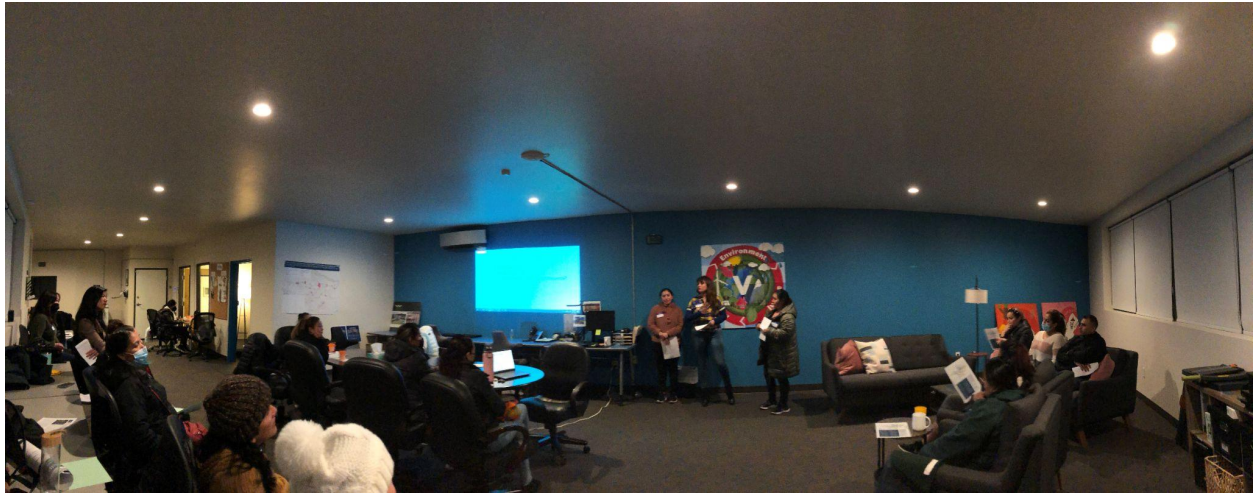
Top priorities were around the need for increased capacity on 82nd as many buses are crowded after school and youth often need to wait for a few buses to pass before they can get on one. Safety and security on buses was a main concern for youth participants, including some concerns around the houseless population. Safety issues posed a significant barrier to youth taking public transportation in the first place.

Phase 3 Summary Report
Metro RTP Community Engagement - Call for Projects
Verde / Latinx Community

Photos:



Phase 3 Summary Report
Metro RTP Community Engagement - Call for Projects
Verde / Latinx Community



Phase 3 Summary Report
Metro RTP Community Engagement - Call for Projects
Verde / Latinx Community



Meeting Dates: 4/19/23 and 4/25/23

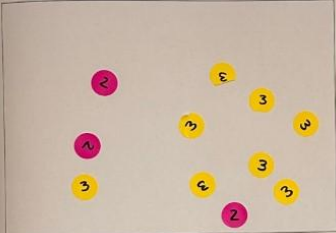
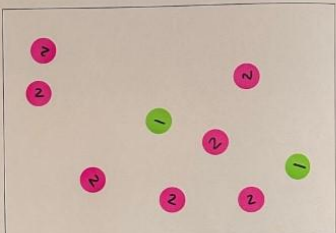
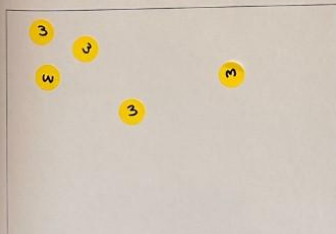

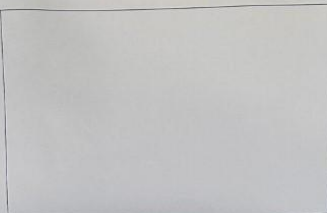
Participants: 13 adults, 7 youth


Prioritizing Goals for next 5-10 years:

Adult Group:

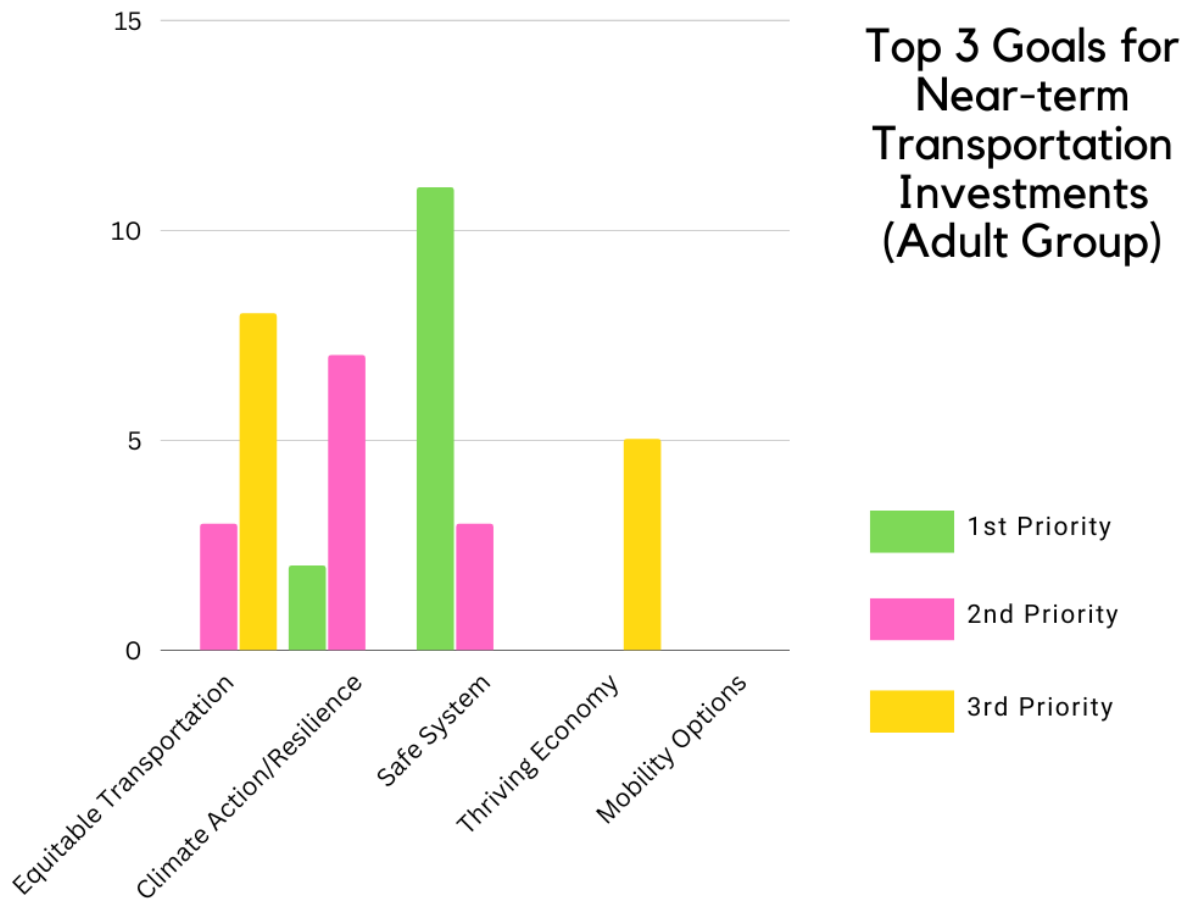
adultos

¿Qué metas son más importantes para los próximos 5 a 10 años? Ponga estas metas en orden de importancia, con la número 1 siendo la más importante.

Transporte equitativo	La resiliencia y la toma de acción frente al cambio climático
	
Una economía vibrante	Un Sistema seguro
	
<p>Opciones de movilidad</p> 	

 Metro

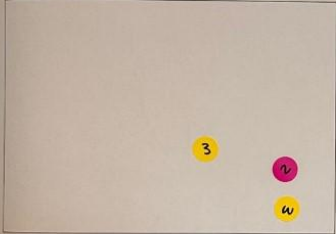
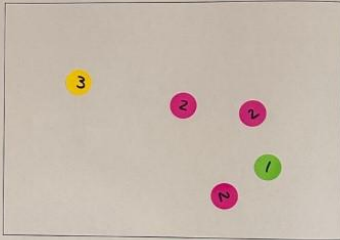
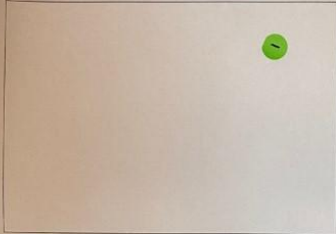
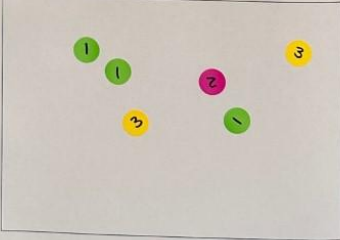
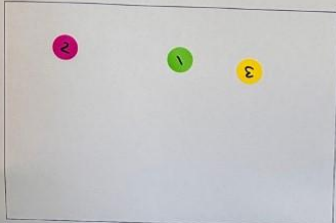
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Youth Group:

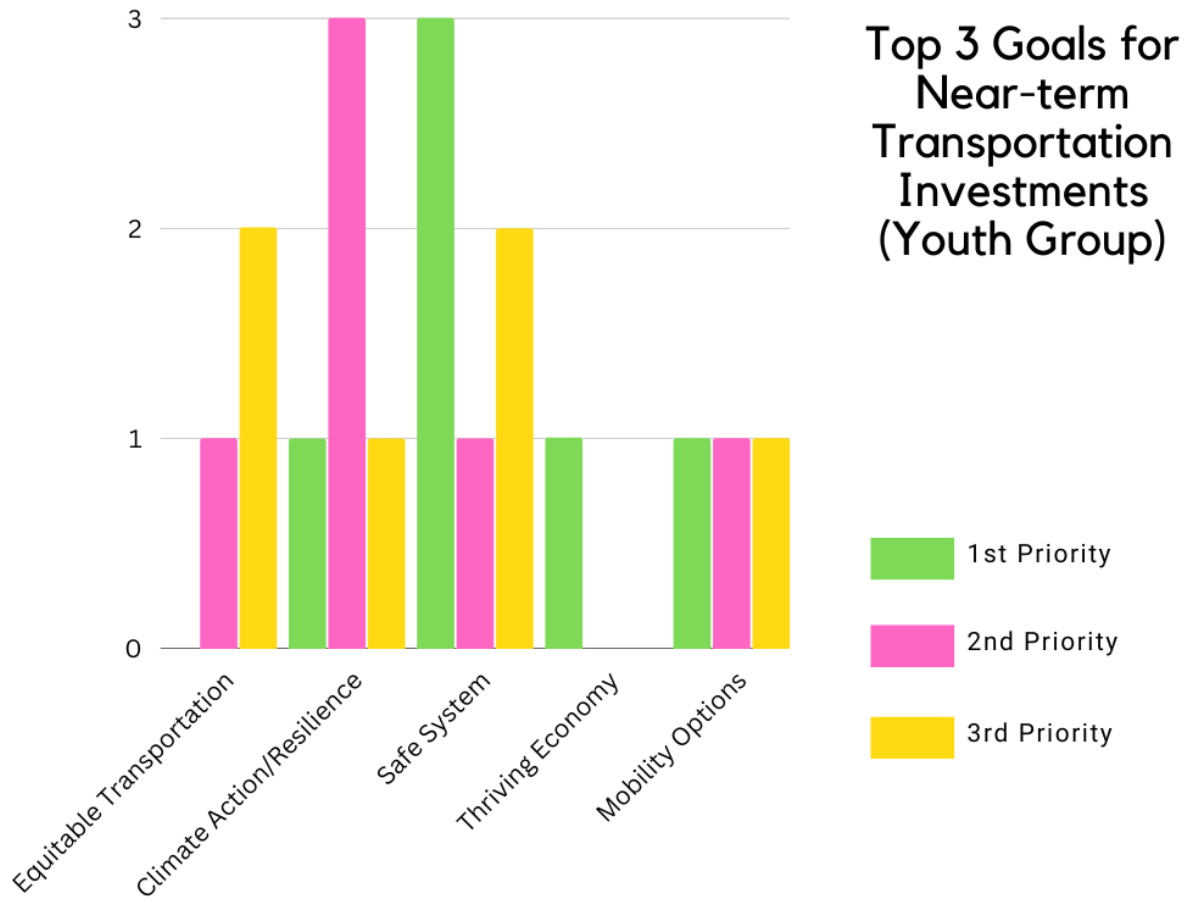
jóvenes

¿Qué metas son más importantes para los próximos 5 a 10 años? Ponga estas metas en orden de importancia, con la número 1 siendo la más importante.

Transporte equitativo	La resiliencia y la toma de acción frente al cambio climático
	
Una economía vibrante	Un Sistema seguro
	
Opciones de movilidad	
	

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“One thing that would make getting around better for me and my community is...”

Adults:

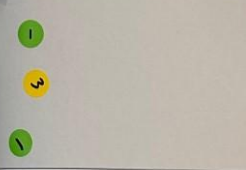
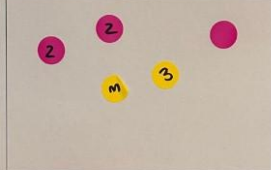
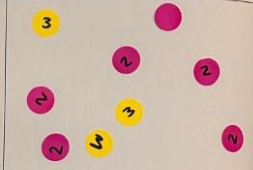
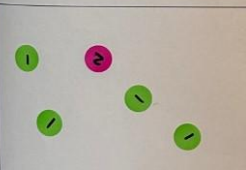
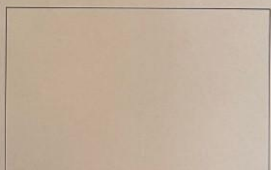
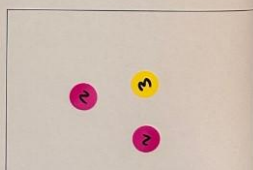
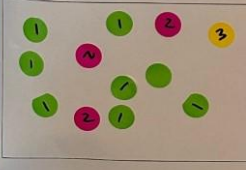
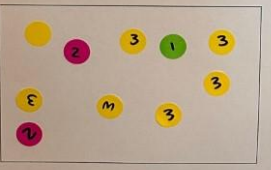
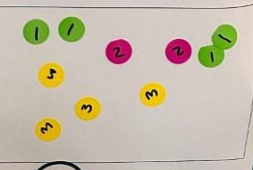
- Safety and more stops
- Safety so we feel confident and secure
- Security at bus stops. The waiting time for buses. More routes
- Safety. More frequent bus stops. More people from the street can get on buses
- Better security and economy for my family and community
- Security at bus stops, cleaning garbage by homeless and light that illuminates well at night for more safety
- More security on buses and max, and more monitoring so we feel safer and want to use it
- On time bus schedule
- Better security, constant travel, and friendly well-trained drivers
- More safety
- Earlier schedules, more space for bikes
- Cleaner buses and max. Lower rates
- Safety. Cleanliness. Punctualness.
- More security on the bus and on the train


Youth:

- Better safety also with an increase in buses
- More safety on buses
- Buses being on time
- The attention of our government
- More communication
- Safety
- Make the trimet faster

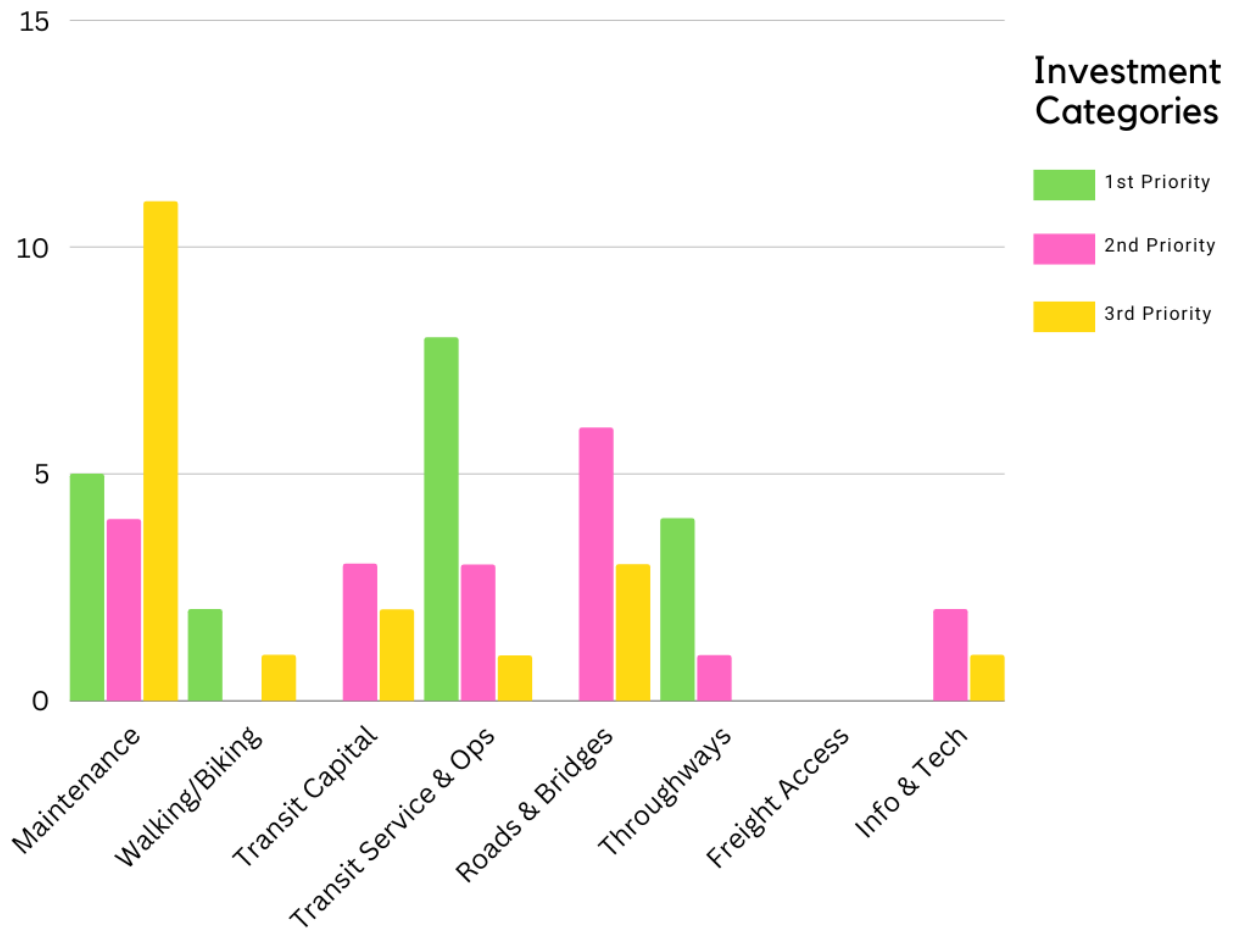
Prioritizing Investment Categories (adults & youth):

Los proyectos caen en distintas categorías de inversiones. Escoja sus tres prioridades más altas.

Caminar y montar bicicleta 	Capital para el tránsito 	Calles y puentes 
Vías de paso 	Acceso para mercancías 	Información y tecnología 
Servicios de tránsito y operaciones 	Mantenimiento de tránsito 	Mantenimiento de calles y puentes 

 **Metro**

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Summary and Key-takeaways:

85% of adults chose the Safe System goal as their number 1 priority. 2nd highest priority for adults overall was Climate Action & Resilience, and Equitable Transportation as 3rd. We saw a similar ranking in the youth group.

The Safe System priority was also reflected in their responses to “One thing that would make getting around better for me and my community..” The majority of responses mentioned safety and security on buses and at bus stops.

The other responses include more frequent bus stops, on-time stops, more routes, and cleaner buses.

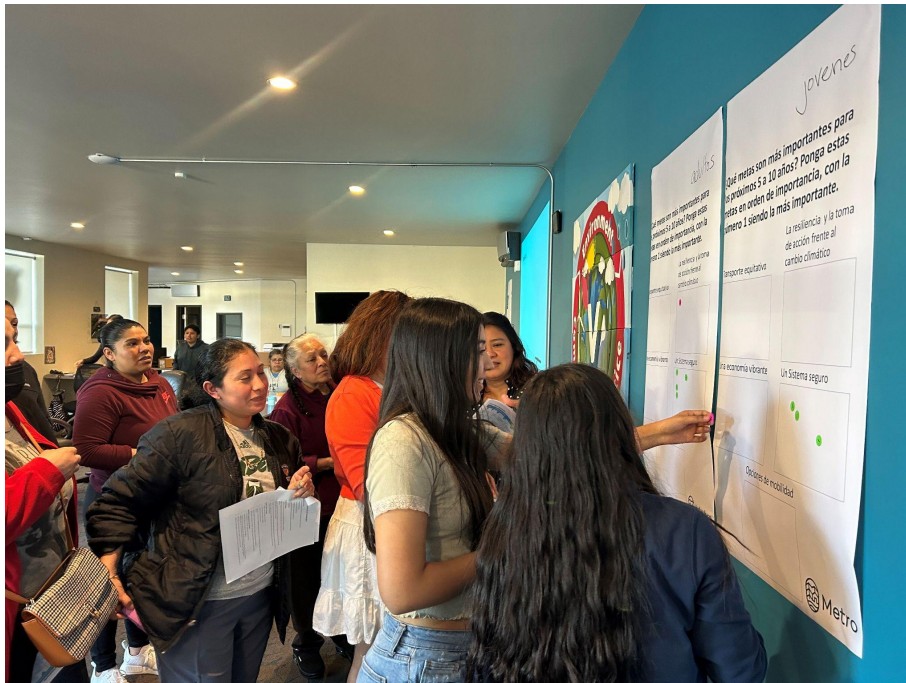
For investment categories, prioritizations leaned towards maintenance and transit services/operations, followed by roads/bridges and throughway investments.

Overall, the most dominant feedback and need identified from the community was for increased safety and security.

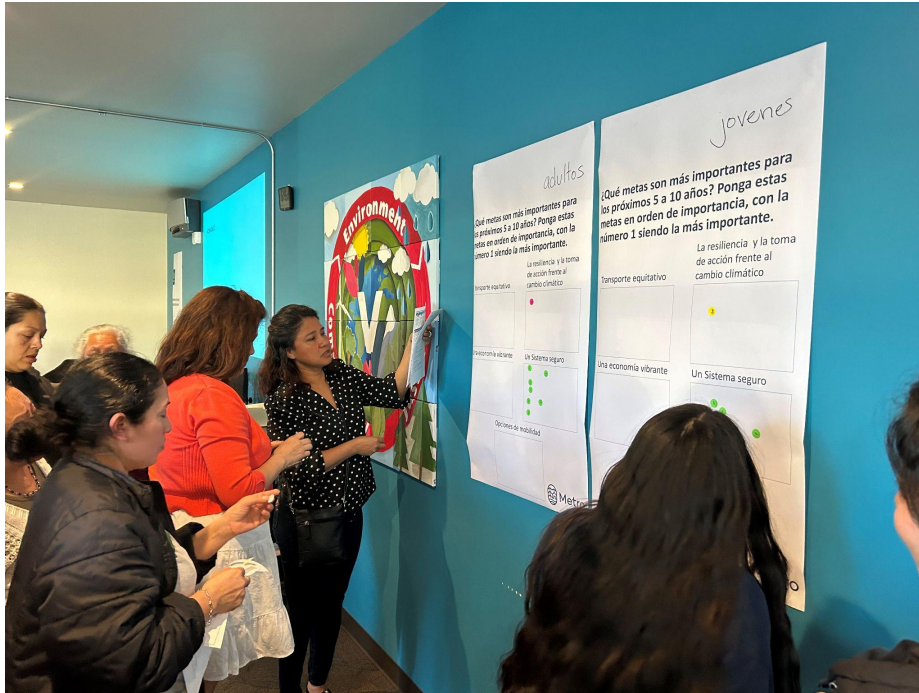
Photos:



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