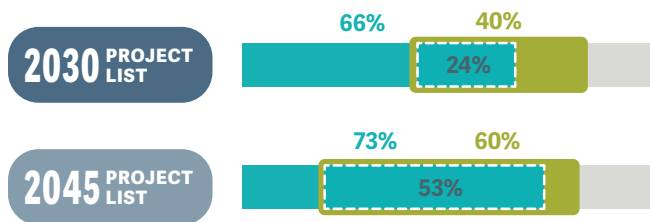# Safety

The region is not on track to meet its target of reducing fatal and serious injury crashes to zero by 2035. By every safety measure that the RTP tracks, the region's streets are getting less safe, and the RTP is not meeting the interim 2020 targets that it established to maintain progress toward the 2035 Vision Zero goal.

The RTP aims to reduce serious crashes to at or below the levels necessary to maintain progress toward the region's goal of eliminating serious crashes by 2035.

Target

Total fatalities
Total serious injuries
Bike/ped fatalities and serious injuries

How does the RTP invest in safety?

More than two thirds of capital funding in the RTP goes to projects that partner agencies identified as safety projects (■), and roughly half of the total capital budget goes toward projects that are on the high-injury network (■), which includes the relatively small share of roads and intersections where most of the serious crashes in the region occur. A smaller share of the near-term (2023-30) RTP spending is devoted to safety projects than of the total budget, which suggests that there may be additional opportunities to prioritize near-term investments in safety.

2030 PROJECT LIST — 66% 40% 24%

2045 PROJECT LIST — 73% 60% 53%

■ Percent of capital spending that invests in projects that **help reduce serious traffic crashes or address other safety issues**

■ Percent of capital spending that invests in projects **located on high injury corridors or intersections**

▢ Percent of capital spending that invests in projects on **high injury corridors or intersections that help reduce serious traffic crashes or address other safety issues**
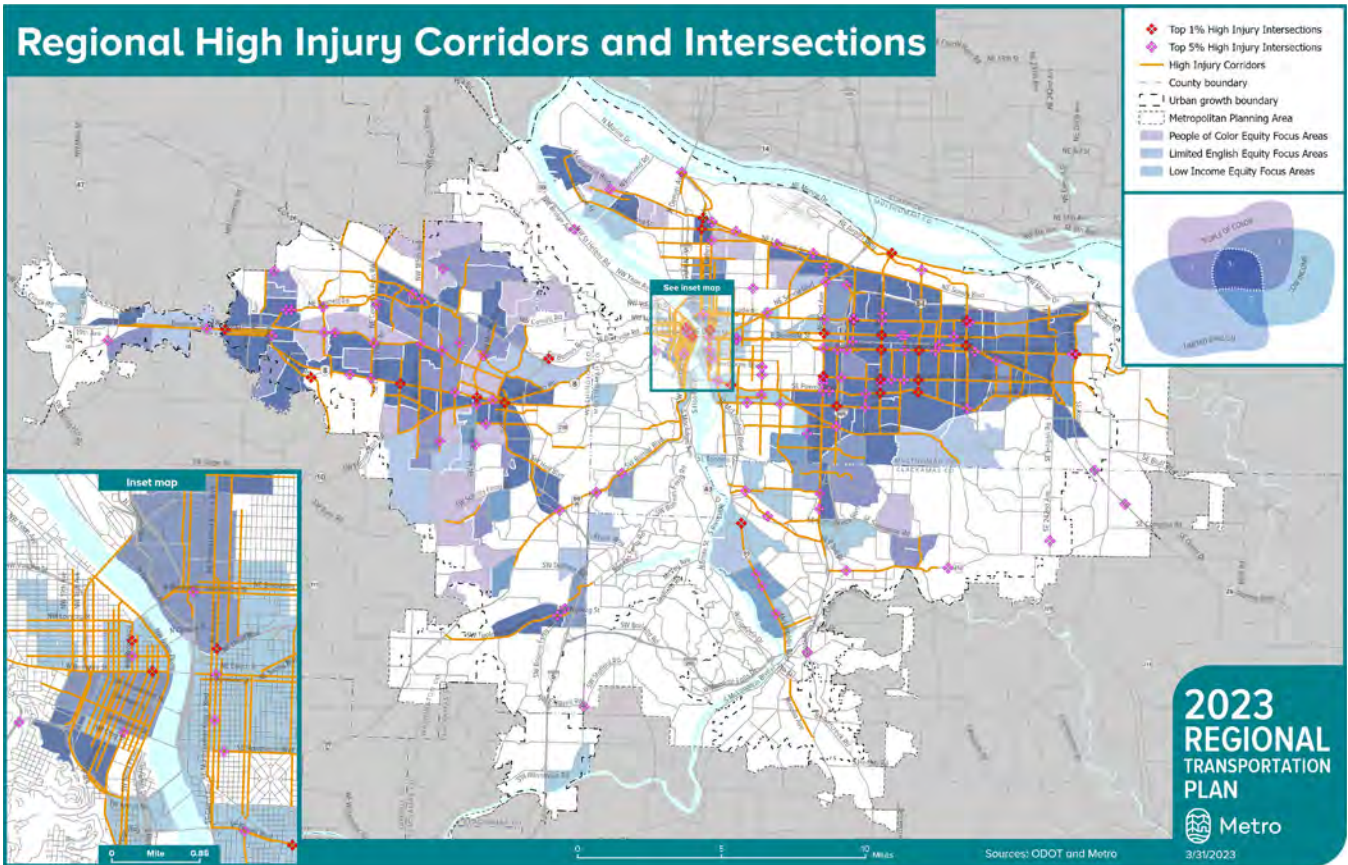
Regional safety trends

The needs assessment on the previous page and the **Urban Arterials Brief** prepared in Fall 2022 contain more information on where crashes are occurring in the region and who is affected by different types of crashes that helps to explain and contextualize the analysis results. Key findings include:

- Pedestrians experience a disproportionately high number of traffic deaths.

- Traffic fatalities are decreasing among bicyclists.

- A majority of serious crashes and bike/ped crashes occur in equity focus areas (see the Equity section for more information).

- Speed, alcohol, and/or drugs continue to be the most common contributing factors in severe and fatal crashes in the region.

- Serious crashes, and particularly fatal pedestrian crashes, are increasing both in the Greater Portland region and nationally. The growing popularity of SUVs and other heavier and larger models of passenger vehicles is contributing to these trends; by 2025, light-trucks, SUVs, vans and pickups are estimated to make up 78 percent of sales. Research indicates that crashes involving SUVs and similar weight vehicles are more likely to be serious and to injure or kill pedestrians and bicyclists.
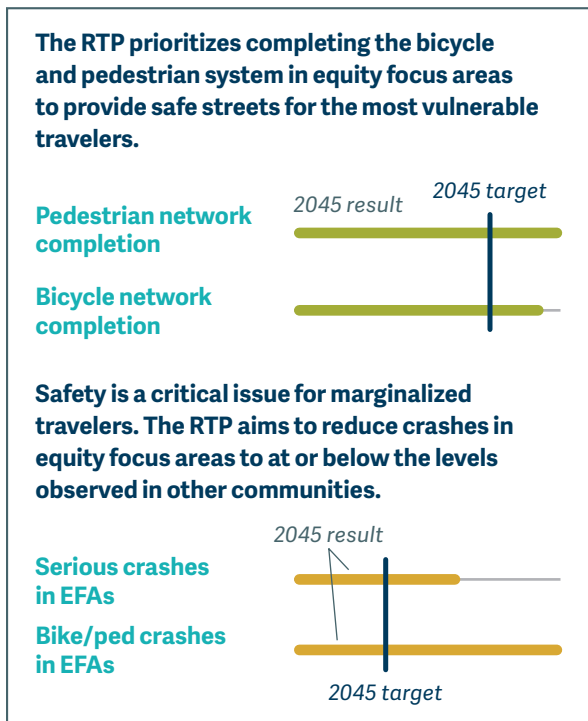
Regional High Injury Corridors and Intersections

Legend:
- Top 1% High Injury Intersections
- Top 5% High Injury Intersections
- High Injury Corridors
- County boundary
- Urban growth boundary
- Metropolitan Planning Area
- People of Color Equity Focus Areas
- Limited English Equity Focus Areas
- Low Income Equity Focus Areas

Inset map

Sources: ODOT and Metro

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3/31/2023

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Equity

The RTP achieves mixed results on equity – it invests equitably, but these investments do not lead to more equitable outcomes, nor do they undo longstanding transportation inequities in safety and access to jobs.

The region's bicycle and pedestrian networks are currently more complete in the Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) where people of color, low-income people and people who speak limited English are concentrated.
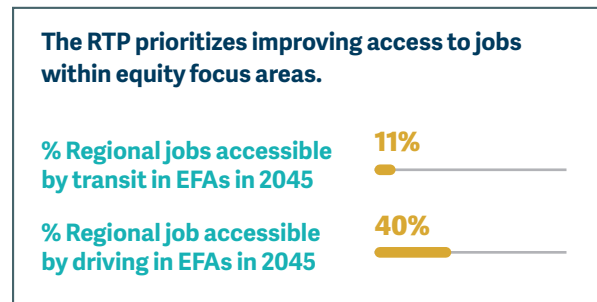
The RTP continues to invest in completing those networks. However, recent data shows that these areas continue to experience three times the number of crashes that involve people walking and biking – who are particularly vulnerable to death and injury during crashes – and almost twice as many fatal and serious injury crashes as other parts of the region.

The RTP prioritizes completing the bicycle and pedestrian system in equity focus areas to provide safe streets for the most vulnerable travelers.

Pedestrian network completion

2045 result   2045 target

Bicycle network completion

Safety is a critical issue for marginalized travelers. The RTP aims to reduce crashes in equity focus areas to at or below the levels observed in other communities.

2045 result

Serious crashes in EFAs

Bike/ped crashes in EFAs

2045 target

Even with the investments in the RTP, the region still falls short of providing equal access via driving and transit.
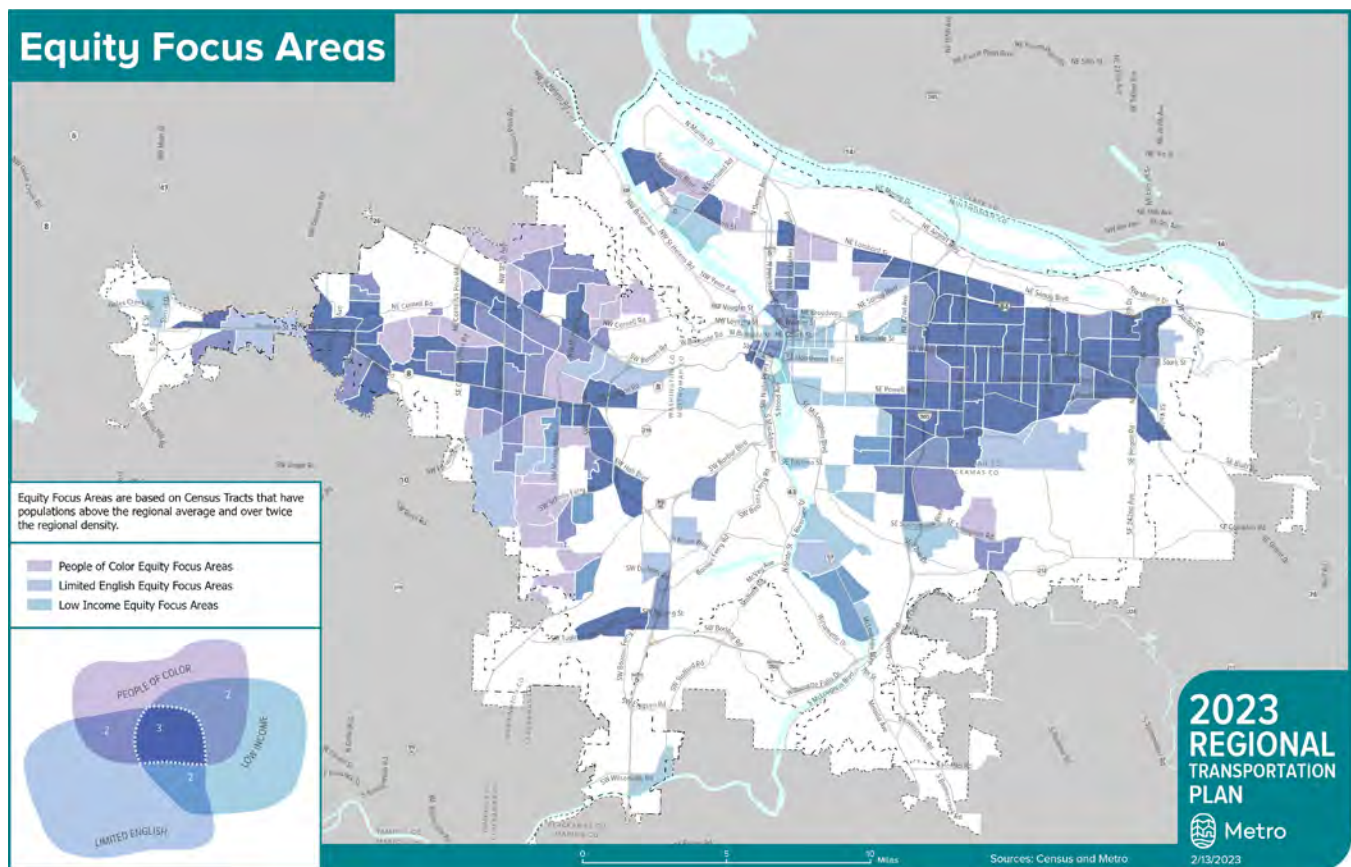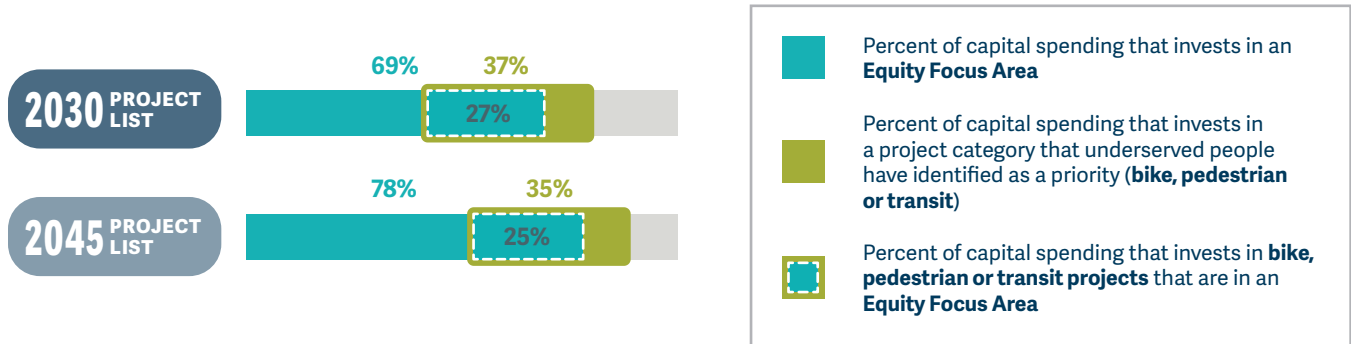
People living in EFAs currently enjoy significantly better access to jobs via transit and driving than people living in non-EFAs. The RTP continues to improve access to jobs in these communities relative to others. However, despite continued efforts to grow transit service during this and previous RTP cycles, driving in general continues to offer much more efficient and convenient access to jobs than transit does.

Both community feedback and research emphasize that people of color and people with low incomes are more likely to rely on transit than other people are. An equitable transportation system, therefore, is one in which transit offers the same level of access to jobs as driving.

The RTP prioritizes improving access to jobs within equity focus areas.

% Regional jobs accessible by transit in EFAs in 2045   **11%**

% Regional job accessible by driving in EFAs in 2045   **40%**

Metro

How does the RTP invest in equity?

Roughly a third of RTP spending invests in project categories that underserved people have identified as priorities (■), and three quarters of overall spending invests in equity focus areas (■). The share of spending that invests in equity focus areas is lower in the near term than in the long term.

2030 PROJECT LIST
- 69%
- 37%
- 27%

2045 PROJECT LIST
- 78%
- 35%
- 25%

■ Percent of capital spending that invests in an **Equity Focus Area**

■ Percent of capital spending that invests in a project category that underserved people have identified as a priority (**bike, pedestrian or transit**)

▦ Percent of capital spending that invests in **bike, pedestrian or transit projects** that are in an **Equity Focus Area**

Equity Focus Areas

Equity Focus Areas are based on Census Tracts that have populations above the regional average and over twice the regional density.

- People of Color Equity Focus Areas
- Limited English Equity Focus Areas
- Low Income Equity Focus Areas

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Sources: Census and Metro   2/13/2023

Appendix C: High-level assessment methodology

General methodology

Note: This document uses *italics* to denote fields and attributes that are included in the RTP Project Hub.

Filtering projects before applying the assessment

The high-level assessment only applies to capital projects, ongoing programmatic investments, and expanded high-capacity transit and better bus service – not to projects that maintain or operate the existing system, nor to projects that are only in the planning or engineering phase. Projects in the following *RTP Investment Categories* are filtered out and excluded from the analysis.

- *Roadway Maintenance and Preservation*
- *Bridge Maintenance and Preservation*
- *Transit Operating Capital*
- *Transit Maintenance*
- *Roadway Operations*
- *Bridge Operations*
- *Transit Service and Operations*

Assessing projects that lack geographic information

Some projects in the RTP do not include geographic information, either because they are regional/county-wide programmatic investments that do not have a particular geography (particularly in categories where investments tend to be more programmatic, such as *Regional activities, Transit-oriented Development and Transportation Demand Management*) or because projects leads submitted inadequate information. Any project for which the *Project Start/End Location* field is empty or incomplete is exempted from any of the GIS-based analysis described below and receives a "not applicable" value for the associated measures.

Methodology by measure

RTP Goal	Measure	Data source(s)	Assessment method
Equity	Is the project located in an Equity Focus Area?	Equity Focus Area map, *project location*	Projects that fully or partially overlap[9] an Equity Focus Area receive credit.
Equity	Is the project in an investment category that underserved people identified as a priority through regional community engagement (transit, bike and pedestrian) or does the project complete a gap in the RTP bicycle, pedestrian or transit network?	Prior regional community engagement on equity, RTP network gap maps, *investment category, project location*	Projects receive credit if they meet either of the following criteria: • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *Pedestrian*, *Bicycle*, or *Pedestrian/Bicycle* • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *High Capacity, Better Bus, Transit Capital – Other,* or *Transit-oriented development* • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *Roadways* OR *Freight* AND they fully or partially overlap a gap in the bicycle or pedestrian networks AND they include bicycle / pedestrian design elements.[10]
Climate	Does the project have a high or medium greenhouse gas reduction potential?	Climate Smart Strategy, *investment category*	This is the only non-binary measure. It's possible to get 0-2 points. Projects in the following *RTP Investment Categories* receive 2 points: • *Pricing Programs* • *High Capacity* • *Better Bus* • *Transit Capital – Other* • *Transit-oriented development* Projects in the following *RTP Investment Categories* receive 1 point: • *Pedestrian* • *Bicycle* • *Pedestrian/Bicycle* • *Transportation Demand Management* • *Transportation System Management (Technology)*
Climate	Is the project located on a Regional Emergency Transportation Route or Statewide Seismic Lifeline Route?	Regional Emergency Transportation Route map, Seismic Lifeline maps, *project location*	Projects that fully or partially overlap with the routes identified in either one of these maps receive credit.

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[9] Metro Research staff use 40-foot buffers whenever determining whether two different features overlap each other for the purposes of the High-level assessment.

[10] Relevant design elements include: *Pedestrian: Sidewalk infill (ped), Bicycle: On-street bikeway or bike lane (bike), Bicycle: Buffered bikeways (bike), Bicycle: Protected bikeways/cycletracks (bike),* and *Trail: New trail/multi-use path or extension (bike/ped)*

RTP Goal	Measure	Data source(s)	Assessment method
Safety	Is the project identified as a safety project or does it address other identified safety issues?[11]	Agency identified consistent with RTP definition	Projects receive credit if the lead agency identifies a project as meeting the definition of a safety project. (*Is this a safety project or program?* = *Yes*)
Safety	Is the project on a high injury corridor or high injury intersection?	High Injury Corridors map, *project location*	Projects that fully or partially overlap a high-injury corridor or intersection receive credit.
Mobility	Does the project complete a gap in the RTP pedestrian, bicycle transit or motor vehicle networks?	RTP network gap maps, *project location*, *investment category*	Projects receive credit if they meet any of the following criteria: • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *Pedestrian* or *Pedestrian/Bicycle* AND the project fully or partially overlaps a gap in the pedestrian network. • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *RTP Investment Category* is *Bicycle* or *Pedestrian/Bicycle* AND the project fully or partially overlaps a gap in the bicycle network. • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *High Capacity, Better Bus, Transit Capital – Other* AND the project fully or partially overlaps a gap in the transit network. • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *Roadway* AND the project fully or partially overlaps a gap in the motor vehicle network. • Their *RTP Investment Category* is *Roadways* OR *Freight* AND they fully or partially overlap a gap in the bicycle or pedestrian networks AND they include bicycle / pedestrian design elements.[12]
Mobility	Does project include ADA-pedestrian-, bicycle- or transit-supportive design or TSMO elements?	Agency-identified project design elements	Projects receive credit if they include certain design design elements identified through the call for projects (i.e., selected options in the *Project features and design elements* field are checked; see appendix A)

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[11] "Safety projects" are defined in the RTP as projects that include proven safety countermeasures, and this definition was used in the RTP project hub. However, Metro staff ended up expanding the definition of safety projects used in the high-level assessment because nominating agencies provided inconsistent information to the hub and identified some projects that did not meet the RTP definition of safety projects. Metro staff did not have capacity to individually review and verify that all projects responded correctly to this and other questions included in the project hub.

[12] Relevant design elements include: *Pedestrian: Sidewalk infill (ped), Bicycle: On-street bikeway or bike lane (bike), Bicycle: Buffered bikeways (bike), Bicycle: Protected bikeways/cycletracks (bike),* and *Trail: New trail/multi-use path or extension (bike/ped)*

3

RTP Goal	Measure	Data source(s)	Assessment method
Economy	Is the project located in a 2040 center, station community, industrial area, employment area or urban growth boundary expansion area?	2040 Growth Concept map, Title 4 Map, Title 6 Map, Metro UGB Expansion History map, *project location*	Projects receive credit if they fully or partially overlap with one of the relevant land use types: • 2040 centers and station communities are on the 2040 Growth Concept map • Industrial / employment areas are on the 2040 Growth Concept map or Title 4 Map UGB expansion areas are on the Metro UGB Expansion History map or were included in a recently-approved UGB land swap.
Economy	Is the project located in an area with higher-than-average job activity?	Economic Value Atlas, *project location*	Projects receive credit if they fully or partially overlap with an area with higher-than-average job activity. (GIS)