



EQUITY

2023 Regional Transportation Plan Update

The region's goals are only met when everyone shares in the benefits. Investing in transportation for marginalized communities will get us there.

The greater Portland region has made progress in restoring transportation justice, but some deep-seated inequities remain.

The region's approach to equity

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) directs Metro and its transportation agency partners to “prioritize transportation investments that eliminate transportation-related disparities and barriers for historically marginalized communities, with a focus on communities of color and people with low incomes.” Metro has engaged marginalized communities across the region to better understand their transportation needs. These communities have emphasized the need for fast, frequent, affordable, and reliable transit connections to key destinations and safer walking and biking infrastructure, particularly near transit stops.



Equity Focus Areas

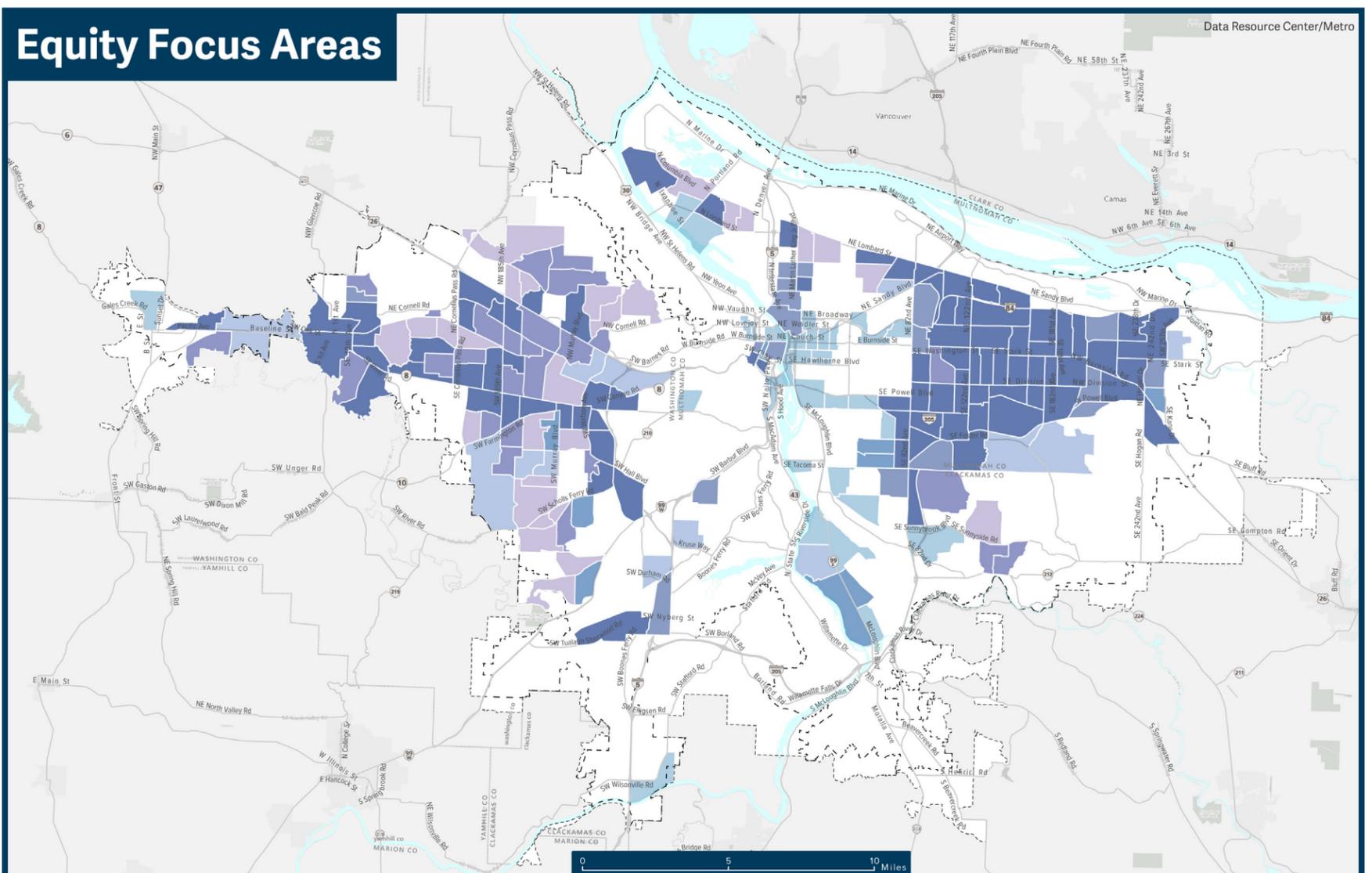
Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) are places where people of color, people with low incomes, and people with limited English proficiency are concentrated. These communities have been excluded from decisions, and negatively impacted by transportation projects. EFAs were identified to guide transportation plans and investments toward meeting these communities' needs, while accounting for regional growth and change. Figure 1 shows which marginalized groups are present in each EFA. EFAs are located throughout the region, and there are concentrations of EFAs in East Portland and Multnomah County and along Tualatin Valley Highway in Washington County.



Did you know...

- ◆ Home values rose by 48% from 2015 to 2020 and continued to increase during the pandemic. Home ownership rates are lower among people of color than they are among white people.
- ◆ The region is aging. The share of people 65 and older is growing, while all other age groups are declining. However, people under 44 will continue to be in the majority through 2045.
- ◆ The COVID-19 pandemic had particularly severe and long-lasting impacts on people of color and workers with low incomes. Black and Latino Americans were twice as likely to be hospitalized and three times as likely to die due to COVID-19 as white Americans.

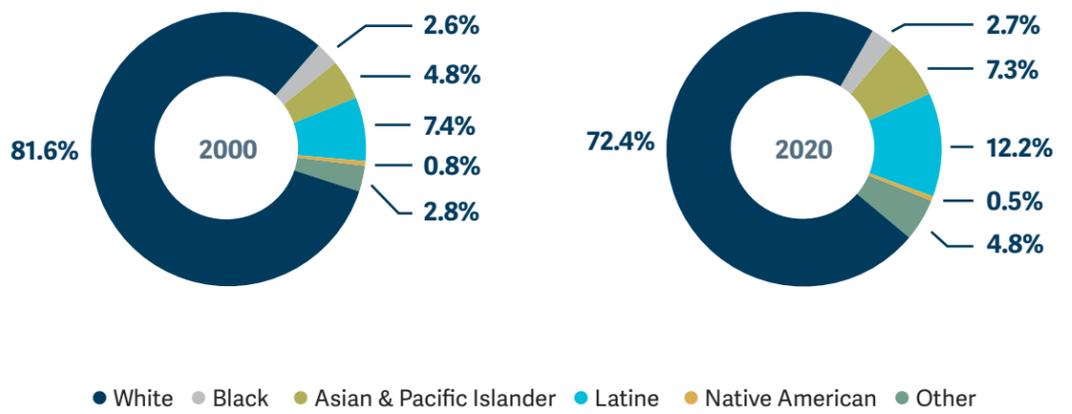
Figure 1. Equity focus areas, 2020 ([explore this map in more detail here](#))



Recent demographic and economic changes

The region continues to grow more racially and ethnically diverse. The share of residents who identify as people of color has been increasing steadily over the past several decades; from under 1% in 1960 to 28% in 2020. Figure 2 shows how the racial and ethnic makeup of the region's population changed between 2000 and 2020, during which the share of residents who identify as people of color grew from 18% to 28%.

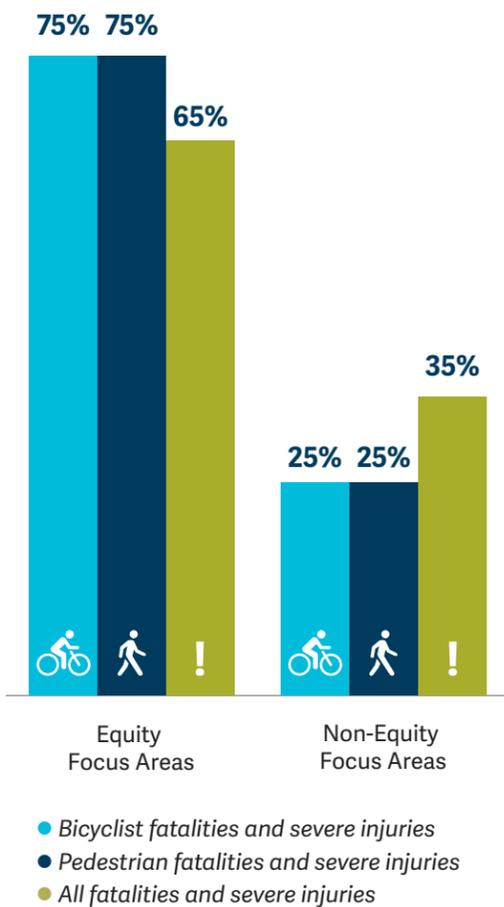
Figure 2. Population by race and ethnicity in the seven-county region, 2000 and 2020



Crashes and equity

A majority (65%) of fatal and severe injury crashes—and 75% of those crashes that involve pedestrians and bicyclists—are in EFAs (Figure 3). Addressing high-crash locations in these areas makes the transportation system safer for all users and makes the region more equitable.

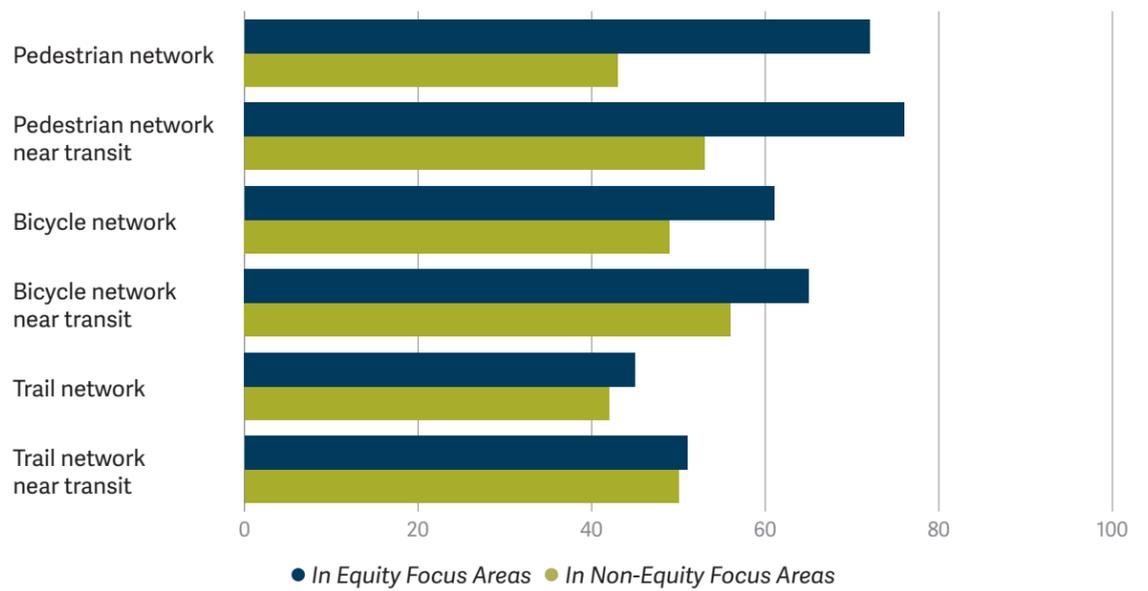
Figure 3. Percentage of average annual traffic fatalities and severe injuries in EFAs



System completeness in Equity Focus Areas

The active transportation network is generally more complete in EFAs than in other communities (Figure 4). However, significant portions of the network still need to be completed for everyone in the region to benefit from high-quality walking and biking connections.

Figure 4. System completeness by network type and geography



Access to destinations via transit

EFA residents say that they need better transit connections between their communities and their destinations. Transit is the most affordable mode for longer-distance trips in the region. EFAs have better access to destinations by transit than other communities, but the transit system does not connect people to destinations nearly as well as driving does (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Percentage of jobs accessible during rush hour

