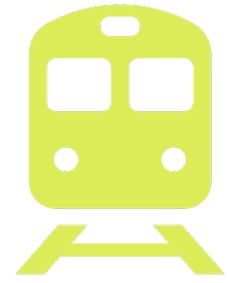




Transportation

Every community member has access to affordable, reliable and safe transit, biking and pedestrian infrastructure.

Goal: Every community member has access to affordable, reliable and safe transit, biking and pedestrian infrastructure.



Description

Access to safe, affordable, and reliable transit is a matter of fundamental equity, and central to reducing emissions since transportation accounts for roughly 40% of community-wide emissions. Frontline communities—those disproportionately impacted by both climate change and economic instability—often reside along high traffic and high-crash corridors. These households also spend more of their income on transportation, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, lower income families spend on average 30 percent of after-tax income on transportation costs.

For these residents, walking, biking, or taking the bus can be a primary means of transportation, and the low carbon emissions option, yet the current infrastructure often penalizes this sustainable choice with higher safety risks. By addressing safety gaps, we can help to ensure that the transition to a low-carbon transportation system increases physical safety for those who are most dependent on these modes, and in the process better protect all road users.

To accomplish this goal, the burden of safety has to shift beyond the individual to the design of the environment itself. Moving away from a car-centric model is essential for meeting climate goals, but this shift is only possible if safe infrastructure exists that makes people feel comfortable using alternatives. By implementing protected bike lanes, well-lit pedestrian crossings, and efficient transit layouts, a resilient urban fabric is created. This approach acknowledges that a simple human mistake should not result in a fatal tragedy.

Ultimately, investing in these multi-modal systems is a dual investment in public health and climate resilience. Reliable pedestrian and transit networks are essential for reducing harmful emissions and improving air quality. Safe active transportation encourages movement that reduces chronic health disparities while simultaneously lowering the community's overall environmental impact. As regions grow, it is clear that we cannot simply build more lanes for cars; instead, we must prioritize a balanced system where every resident, regardless of their age or income, can get to where they need to go safely and sustainably.

How we measure progress

Indicator 1: Traffic-related fatalities and serious-injuries

Description: All traffic-related fatalities are preventable. In the Portland Metro region, “traffic-related crashes are the leading cause of unintentional injury and death for people aged 5-24 and second leading cause for those aged 25-84.” The Vision Zero approach adopted by Multnomah County and other local government partners aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries on roadways. Aligned with this goal is the Safe Systems approach to how roadways are designed and maintained, which prioritizes speed reduction, conflict management across modes, and protection of those most vulnerable in crashes; people walking and biking are the most susceptible to significant injury or death. In addition, people of color, low-income households, and houseless community members are disproportionately harmed. Multnomah County’s Vision Zero goal is zero fatalities or serious injuries on roadways by 2035.

Current data: 170 traffic-related deaths between 2020 and 2021 in Multnomah County

Indicator 2: Transportation system completeness

Description: System completeness measures how well the region’s transportation systems are designed and built to support different ways of getting around. Metro, the regional government body for the Portland Metropolitan Area, plays a key role in planning, coordinating and tracking transportation investments over time. This work is done in close partnership with regional local governments, including Multnomah County, on for both development and implementation of plans and projects. Metro collects data related to transportation system completeness as part of its regular updates to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on a five year cycle. The 2023 RTP established regional goals for completeness: pedestrian, bicycle and trail networks to be 100% complete by 2035; transit and motor vehicle systems to be 100% complete by 2045. Completeness is defined as 100% of the planned networks adopted in the RTP are completed.

Current data: As of the 2023 RTP:

- Motor vehicle network is 98% complete
- Transit network is 70% complete
- Pedestrian network is 57% complete
- Bicycle network is 54% complete
- Trail networks is 44% complete

Strategy: Work with all county jurisdictions to implement a safe-systems approach to the transportation system

Why does this matter?

Adopting a “Safe Systems” approach shifts the focus of transportation related investments from managing traffic to protecting human life. By prioritizing the East County Transportation Safety Plan and fast-tracking improvements on High Injury Corridors, the County is working to address the systemic inequities where traffic violence disproportionately impacts the most vulnerable road users. Further prioritizing this strategy moves beyond reactionary measures, instead treating traffic crashes as preventable health burdens that require transparent, data-driven reporting. As the local public health authority, Multnomah County can play a primary role in advancing this approach to transportation investments and management.

STRATEGY CATEGORY

- County Strategy
- Investment Opportunity
- Community Leadership

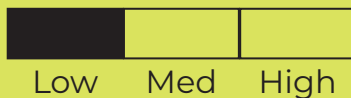
STRATEGY TYPE

- Advocate
- Research
- Convene
- Implement

COUNTY CAPACITY

- Existing
- Additional
- New

COUNTY CONTROL



COUNTY INFLUENCE



COUNTY PRIORITY



Putting this into practice

- Multnomah County will work with jurisdictional partners and community advocates to consider how and where a “Safe Systems” approach can be integrated into transportation planning and investments.
- The Health Department will regularly report on the health burden of traffic crash injuries.

Lead Department(s)

Department of Community Services, Health Department, Environmental Health

Strategy: Implement the Urban East County Transportation Safety Plan.

Why does this matter?

Many of the major roadways in the urban areas of East Multnomah County are designated as high injury corridors, meaning that they have some of the highest rates of crashes that result in deaths or serious injury. These roadways were often designed to prioritize the movement of vehicles, which are more prone to traffic moving at unsafe speeds and are largely incompatible with other modes of transportation and community cohesion. In partnership with the cities of Fairview, Gresham and Troutdale, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners adopted the Urban East Multnomah County Transportation Safety Action Plan (TSAP) in 2026 to guide priorities and investments towards a Vision Zero Goal (zero fatalities) across these jurisdictions. The community-centered TSAP is shaped by widespread community safety concerns, including the risk of active transportation options, and strong desire for safety related investments in urban East County. When implemented, the TSAP will result in systemwide safety improvements, as well as investments in priority safety corridors. While focused on safety, the TSAP will result in significant improvements into active transportation options for the entire community.

Putting this into practice

- Multnomah County and the TSAP jurisdictional and community partners will advocate for state, regional and local funding to fully implement the Plan.
- To ensure community transparency and accountability to the TSAP, the local government partners will regularly report on its implementation and key indicators on transportation safety in the Plan area.

Lead Department(s)

Department of Community Services

STRATEGY CATEGORY

- County Strategy
- Investment Opportunity
- Community Leadership

STRATEGY TYPE

- Advocate
- Research
- Convene
- Implement

COUNTY CAPACITY

- Existing
- Additional
- New

COUNTY CONTROL



Low Med High

COUNTY INFLUENCE



Low Med High

COUNTY PRIORITY



Low Med High

Strategy: Accelerate investments in ADA compliant sidewalks and other publicly accessible pedestrian infrastructure.

Why does this matter?

The 1990 Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and related laws prohibit discrimination against individuals with different physical and mental abilities in order to ensure equal opportunities for all members of our community. ADA is expansive, but is often first understood in the context of our built environment and the recognition that all community members must be able to physically move around and access the places and resources they need to thrive. This benefits not only individuals with physical differences, but society at large including families with strollers and workers making deliveries. New construction of roads, buildings and other infrastructure are required to be universally accessible. However, there remains a significant backlog of existing infrastructure that is not ADA compliant.

STRATEGY CATEGORY

- County Strategy
- Investment Opportunity**
- Community Leadership

STRATEGY TYPE

- Advocate Research
- Convene **Implement**

COUNTY CAPACITY

- Existing **Additional** New

COUNTY CONTROL



Low Med High

COUNTY INFLUENCE



Low Med High

COUNTY PRIORITY



Low Med High

Putting this into practice

- Multnomah County will continue to pursue additional funding to support the implementation of the 2023 ADA Transition Plan for County maintained roads.
- Multnomah County will continue to require new developments to implement ADA compliant improvements along adjacent roadways.
- Work in coalition with community advocates and other partners to secure stable funding for ADA improvements throughout Multnomah County.

Lead Department(s)

Department of Community Services

Strategy: Secure sustainable transit funding and work towards a universally accessible, high quality and resilient transit system.

Why does this matter?

Public transit is not only a critical strategy to address the climate impacts from the transportation sector, it is also central to realizing a vision of more compact and connected communities. Public transit is also an essential service, ensuring that our most vulnerable neighbors have the freedom to move, thrive, and participate fully in the life of our region. This includes during extreme weather and other emergencies, when transit can provide a life-line to critical resources. Without the foundation of a high functioning public transit system, the region's economic health and the well being of the community will be severely impacted.

After housing, transportation is often a household's second highest expense. Moving towards a universally accessible system begins with prioritizing fare-free access for youth and low-income residents. This is a commitment to economic justice, ensuring every community member can reliably reach schools, healthcare, and employment reliably and without financial strain. However, funding for expanding or even maintaining public transit services is a perennial challenge, including with Trimet, the Portland metro region public transit provider. New, collaborative approaches to investing in these services as well as innovative service delivery approaches are needed. Efforts like Trimet's Forward Together approach to targeted investments and Portland Bureau of Transportation Transit Wallet for transportation assistance to low-income residents offer templates to build from.

Adding to the funding strains Trimet faces, climate change is already having negative impacts on public transit infrastructure. Currently, Trimet's MAX light rail speed and reliability can be compromised during high heat. During a declared emergency, TriMet offers free rides to people accessing cooling or warming shelters. This vital service could be further expanded to allow free service to any destination on days the community is experiencing heat waves, severe storms, flooding or air quality advisories.

Putting this into practice

- Support efforts at the Oregon Legislature to permanently increase transit funding and ensure stable service and infrastructure investments over the long run.
- Support efforts that reduce the cost of transit for low-income riders like Transit Wallet, and look for opportunities to expand beyond the City of Portland.
- Support the Multnomah Youth Commission's (MYC) work to actively advocate for a "Regional Universal YouthPass" that would provide free, year-round transit for all youth 18 and under in the region, regardless of school or financial status.
- Support a policy of fareless rides on all public transit systems within Multnomah County during declared extreme weather events, such as heat waves, severe storms, flooding or air quality advisories.

Lead Department(s)

Trimet, Oregon State Legislature, Oregon Metro

STRATEGY CATEGORY

- County Strategy
- Investment Opportunity
- Community Leadership**

STRATEGY TYPE

- Advocate Research
- Convene Implement

COUNTY CAPACITY

- Existing Additional **New**

COUNTY CONTROL



COUNTY INFLUENCE



COUNTY PRIORITY



Strategy: Deliver Safe Routes to School Programs in all school districts within Multnomah County.

Why does this matter?

Safe Routes to School Programs combine infrastructure improvements and education to support safe alternatives to passenger vehicles for students and families to reach schools. For many families, commuting to school by passenger vehicles is seen as the only safe option, resulting in congestion and additional safety risks for families who cannot or choose not to use other means.

Safe Routes to Schools programs aim to shift the responsibility of student safety from individual families to a collective community standard, ensuring that every child—regardless of their zip code—can walk or bike to school without risk. In addition to reducing congestion and traffic accidents, these programs help integrate physical activity into the daily lives of students, reduce environmental impacts around campuses, and foster a sense of belonging within the neighborhood. Ultimately, prioritizing these infrastructure and educational improvements is an investment in equitable access to education, ensuring that a student’s journey to the classroom is as secure and supportive as the learning environment itself. School districts and local governments, including Multnomah County,

support a number of school based Safe Routes to School programs throughout Multnomah County. However funding is limited and often grant based, which is a barrier to universal access to these programs.

Putting this into practice

- Support a coalition of governmental, non-governmental and community partners to engage in regional and state-wide transportation funding decision making to secure stable funding for Safe Routes to School programs across Multnomah County.
- Advocate for reforms to Oregon’s transportation revenue system, which currently limit the ability to invest in alternative transportation programs like Safe Routes to School.

Lead Department(s)

Department of Community Services

Supporting Department(s): Oregon Legislature, Oregon Department of Transportation, Metro

STRATEGY CATEGORY

- County Strategy
- Investment Opportunity
- Community Leadership

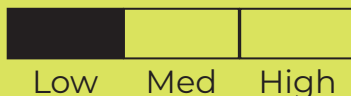
STRATEGY TYPE

- Advocate Research
- Convene Implement

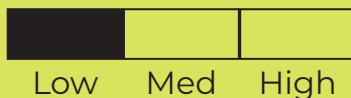
COUNTY CAPACITY

- Existing Additional New

COUNTY CONTROL



COUNTY INFLUENCE



COUNTY PRIORITY

