



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 transportation options is critical for building equitable communities and for the goal of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that come from transportation in Multnomah County by 40%. 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, with lower-income families spending an average of 30% of their after-tax income on transportation costs.⁶¹

Walking, biking, and taking public transit can be primary means of transportation for most people, but current infrastructure and policies often make these options less safe and less reliable. The burden of safety must shift beyond the individual to the design of the environment itself, recognizing most crashes are predictable and preventable.

Moving from a car-centric system through strategies like protected bike lanes, well-lit pedestrian crossings, and robust and efficient transit service is an investment in public health, economic well-being, 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 the region grows, it is clear that simply building more lanes for cars will not meet community needs. Instead, we must prioritize a more balanced system where every resident, no matter who they are or where they live, can get to where they need to go safely, reliably, and affordably.

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.”⁶² The Vision Zero approach adopted by Multnomah County and other local government partners aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries on roadways.

Current data: 183 traffic-related deaths between 2023 and 2024 in Multnomah County.

Data source: Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Death Certificates

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 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; and transit and motor vehicle systems to be 100% complete by 2045. Completeness is defined as the completion of 100% of the planned networks adopted in the RTP.

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 network is 44% complete.

Data source: [Regional Transportation Plan](#)

Strategy 1: 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.⁶³ 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 2: Implement the Urban East Multnomah County Transportation Safety Action 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 generally designed to prioritize the movement of vehicles, which makes them more prone to traffic moving at unsafe speeds and are largely incompatible with other modes of transportation and community cohesion.

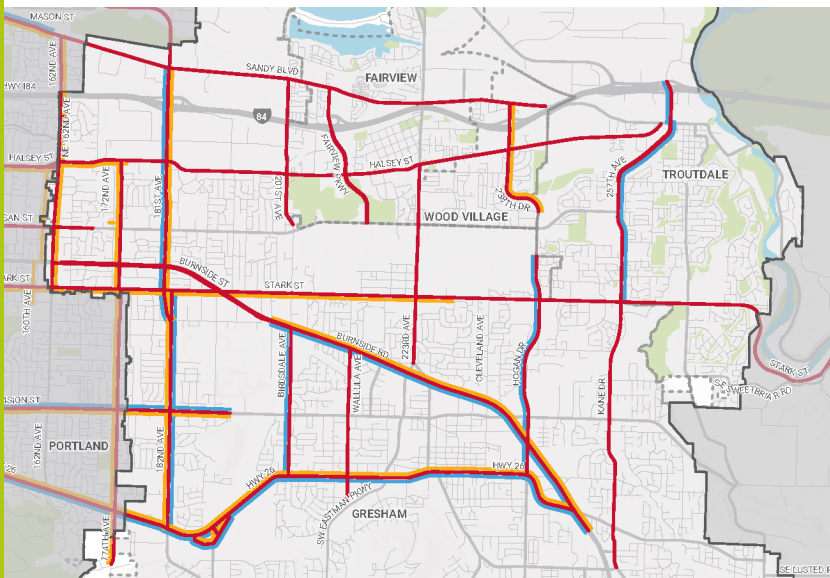
In partnership with the cities of Fairview, Gresham, and Troutdale, the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners adopted the [Urban East Multnomah County Transportation Safety Action Plan \(TSAP\)](#) in 2026 to guide priorities and investments toward a Vision Zero goal (zero fatalities) across these jurisdictions. The community-centered TSAP is shaped by widespread community safety concerns, including the risks of using active transportation options and the 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 significantly improve 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, local government partners will regularly report on its implementation and key indicators on transportation safety in their respective areas of the plan.

Lead department(s)

Department of Community Services



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COUNTY CONTROL

Low Med High

COUNTY INFLUENCE

Low Med High

COUNTY PRIORITY

Low Med High

Strategy 3: 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. The 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, a significant backlog of existing infrastructure that is not ADA compliant persists.

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.

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☒ **Investment Opportunity**
☐ Community Leadership

STRATEGY TYPE

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☐ Convene ☒ Implement

COUNTY CAPACITY

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COUNTY CONTROL

Low Med High

COUNTY INFLUENCE

Low Med High

COUNTY PRIORITY

Low Med High

Lead department(s)

Department of Community Services



Strategy 4: Secure sustainable transit funding and work toward a universally accessible, high-quality, and resilient transit system.

Why does this matter?

While public transit is 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 an essential service, ensuring that our most vulnerable neighbors have the freedom to move, thrive, and participate fully in the life of our region. 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.

Transportation is often a household's second-largest expense after housing. However, funding for expanding or even maintaining public transit services is a perennial challenge, including with TriMet, the Portland metro region's public transit provider. New, collaborative approaches to investing and innovating in these services are needed. Efforts like TriMet's "Forward Together" approach to targeted investments and the Portland Bureau of Transportation's Transit Wallet for transportation assistance for low-income residents offer templates to build from.

Adding to the funding strains TriMet faces are the negative impacts climate change has on public transit infrastructure. Currently, the speed and reliability of TriMet's MAX light rail 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 in 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 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.

Authorizing agencies

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 5: Deliver Safe Routes to School programs in all school districts within Multnomah County.

Why does this matter?

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 combine infrastructure improvements and education 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 improvements and educational opportunities is an investment in equitable access to school-based learning, 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 the county. However, funding is limited and often grant based, which is a barrier to universal access to these programs.

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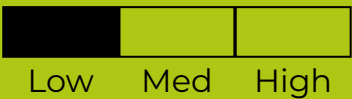
STRATEGY TYPE

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COUNTY CAPACITY

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COUNTY CONTROL



COUNTY INFLUENCE



COUNTY PRIORITY



Putting this into practice

- Support a coalition of governmental, non-governmental, and community organizations to engage in regional and statewide 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 limits the ability to invest in alternative transportation programs like Safe Routes to School.

Authorizing agencies

Oregon Legislature; Oregon Department of Transportation; Metro

Lead department(s)

Department of Community Services

