

Kickoff and Open House Summary

1 Introduction

On Thursday, June 11, 2026, the Stantec team and the City of Portland led a Portland In Motion project kick-off and open house for the public. The meeting was held in the Portland Public Library Rines Auditorium from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. This event was focused on collecting feedback from the community on a variety of topics, including project goals and the existing transportation network. Participants at the meeting took part in a variety of exercises including:

- Prioritizing existing goals from Portland's Comprehensive Plan and providing additional ideas for project goals
- A "5-Word Vision" exercise that asked people to share their vision about Portland's transportation future in five words or less
- Reviewing and commenting on maps of each transportation network by mode
- Drawing on a large-format aerial map of the City
- Talking with the project team

Approximately 76 people attended the meeting.

This memo summarizes key themes in the comments by transportation mode or topic. The Appendix of the document includes photos of the maps and a digitized inventory of all comments received.



2 Key Takeaways by Travel Model

This section summarizes public comments by travel mode, broken into two categories: “Issues and Concerns” and “Ideas and Opportunities”.

2.1 Bike Network Summary

Issues and Concerns

- Respondents identified several of Portland's major arterial corridors—including **Brighton Avenue, Forest Avenue, Washington Avenue, and Allen Avenue**—as challenging areas for bicycling due to high traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, difficult crossings, and limited existing bicycle infrastructure.
- Many attendees reported that the bicycle network lacks **continuous, comfortable connections**, forcing riders to navigate gaps in the network or share the road motor vehicle traffic when traveling between neighborhoods, trails, downtown, and other key destinations.
- Access both to and through the peninsula was frequently identified as a challenge, with particular concerns noted for **Commercial Street, the Casco Bay Bridge, and key gateway intersections and interstate ramp crossings/intersections**.
- Respondents noted **that even though some corridors may have bicycle facilities of some sort, they are insufficient for riders of all ages and abilities** because of limited separation from traffic, maintenance issues, narrow lanes, and conflicts with parked or moving vehicles.
- Respondents also noted supporting infrastructure challenges, including inadequate wayfinding for cyclists, limited secure bicycle parking, and missing connections to transit stops and stations.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Expand and complete the bicycle network** by closing key gaps and strengthening connections between neighborhoods, downtown, trails, transit, and regional destinations.
- **Provide more protected bicycle facilities** along major corridors and other locations where vehicle speeds and volumes currently hinder bicycle travel.
- **Improve safety** at major crossings, intersections, bridge approaches, and highway ramp areas that were frequently identified as barriers to comfortable bicycling.
- **Develop a more connected network** of low-stress bikeways, neighborhood greenways, and trail connections that provide alternatives to high-volume arterial streets.
- **Invest in supporting infrastructure**, including secure bicycle parking, wayfinding, maintenance, and facility upgrades, to improve the overall bicycling experience.

2.2 Road Network Summary

Issues and Concerns

- Respondents identified the **I-295 and Franklin Street corridors as significant barriers within the city**, noting that they divide neighborhoods, have limited pedestrian and bicycle crossings, and enable high volumes of through-traffic on residential streets.
- Several major arterial corridors—including **Forest Avenue, Congress Street, Marginal Way, Franklin Street, and Brighton Avenue**—were described as challenging not only for people walking and biking, but also those driving due to high traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, wide crossings, and congestion at key intersections.
- Attendees noted concerns with the **safety and comfort of pedestrian travel**, including long crossing distances, insufficient crossing opportunities, limited signal timing, visibility challenges, and corridors where roadway design encourages higher vehicle speeds.
- Participants identified challenges on the roadway network from the driver perspective, including **congestion especially near highway interchanges, confusing lane configurations**, inadequate signage, merging conflicts, and difficult turning movements.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Reevaluate the role and design of the I-295 and Franklin Street corridors**, including opportunities to improve neighborhood connectivity for all modes, reduce barrier effects, and simplify interchange configurations.
- **Pilot traffic-calming measures** to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for all users along key corridors.
- **Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity** by adding safer crossings, upgraded signals, enhanced bicycle facilities, and stronger connections between neighborhoods, downtown, and major destinations.
- **Reallocate roadway space** to support a more balanced transportation system where feasible, including opportunities for bus lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian-oriented streets, and expanded public spaces in key areas.
- **Improve roadway operations** for drivers through better wayfinding, signage, access management, lane configuration, and intersection design to reduce conflicts and improve network efficiency and safety.
- **Several participants proposed closing Exchange Street** to private automobile traffic (which still allowing shipping and freight vehicles) during certain hours of the day; several noted that this should be a permanent change.

2.3 Transit Network Summary

Issues and Concerns

- **Transit service is not frequent enough** to be a feasible alternative to driving. Many comments cited 30-minute or more headways and/or insufficient operating hours on key routes such as Routes 7, 8, 9A/9B, and Congress Street corridor in general.
- **Limited evening, night, and weekend service** restricts mobility, particularly for social, non-commuting trips, service workers, families, and late-night travelers.

- Airport, rail, and regional transit connections were identified as difficult or unreliable, with attendees citing challenges accessing **Portland International Jetport**, connecting to **Amtrak**, and traveling between regional transportation services.
- Participants identified transit **coverage and connectivity gaps in corridors including Warren Avenue, Riverside Street, Westbrook Street, Ocean Avenue, St. John Street, West Commercial Street, Summit Avenue, and North Deering, as well as portions of Westbrook.**
- Numerous respondents reported that transit **stop amenities for popular stops are inadequate**, lacking shelters, benches, lighting, and accessibility accommodations.
- The existing transit system can be **difficult to understand and navigate**, with concerns about route clarity, stop placement, delay communication, and real-time updates.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Advocate for increased service frequency and create a high-frequency transit network**, including 10–15-minute service on major corridors, enhanced Congress Street service, and high-frequency peninsula circulators.
- **Work with GPMETRO and other agencies to implement Bus Rapid Transit and transit-priority improvements**, including dedicated BRT investments, smart signals, and faster, more reliable travel times.
- **Strengthen airport, rail, and regional transit connections**, such as extending CPMETRO Route 1 to the airport, providing express airport service, improving Amtrak connections, and creating stronger intermodal mobility hubs.
- **Modernize the rider experience and transit infrastructure**, with enhanced shelters, lighting, benches, real-time arrival information, QR codes, NFC payment systems, etc. with priority given to high ridership stops.
- **Pursue greater coordination among transit providers and transit options**, including improved connections between METRO, BSOOB Transit, Casco Bay transportation services, regional transit providers, and intercity rail, while also exploring public-private partnerships, smaller vehicles where appropriate, and long-term transit investment opportunities.

2.4 Pedestrian Network Summary

Issues and Concerns

- Respondents frequently identified major roadways, highway crossings, and underpass areas—including I-295 crossings, Forest Avenue, Franklin Street, and Libbytown underpasses—as **significant barriers to walking** due to difficult crossings, long pedestrian signal wait times, high traffic volumes, lack of lighting, and uncomfortable pedestrian environments.
- **Sidewalk conditions were a recurring concern** throughout the City, with participants citing deteriorated pavement, uneven surfaces, narrow walkways, accessibility challenges, and missing sidewalk connections in locations such as Brighton Avenue, Morrill's Corner, downtown, and other neighborhood streets.
- Many respondents noted **a lack of safe and convenient crossing opportunities**, with concerns focused on locations such as **Franklin Street, Commercial Street, the Forest Avenue/I-295**

underpass area, Congress Street at the Fore River Trail, and crossings serving trails, transit stops, and waterfront destinations.

- **Winter maintenance** is a major challenge for pedestrians, with concerns about snow and ice removal, enforcement of sidewalk clearing requirements, and maintaining accessible routes for people using wheelchairs and other mobility devices.
- Several participants noted **conflicts between pedestrians and other users of the public right-of-way**, including truck loading activity downtown, bicycle and e-bike operations on sidewalks and trails, and roadway designs that prioritize vehicle movement over walking.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Improve pedestrian safety at major roadway crossings**, intersections, and highway barrier locations through additional crosswalks, upgraded signals, flashing beacons, shorter crossing distances, and other targeted safety improvements.
- **Expand and enhance the sidewalk network** by filling missing gaps, providing sidewalks on both sides of streets where feasible, widening constrained segments where feasible, and improving accessibility throughout the city.
- **Implement traffic-calming and pedestrian-priority treatments** such as raised crosswalks, curb extensions (bump-outs), daylighting, and other measures that improve visibility and reduce vehicle speeds.
- **Strengthen connections between neighborhoods, trails, parks, schools, the waterfront, and transit stops** through new sidewalks, formalized trail links, multi-use paths, and enhanced pedestrian routes.
- **Improve maintenance and year-round usability of pedestrian facilities** through enhanced sidewalk repair programs, snow and ice management, accessibility-focused maintenance practices, and consistent upkeep of walking routes.
- **Create more comfortable and inviting walking environments** through investments in street trees, lighting, public-space improvements, and pedestrian-oriented street designs that prioritize people over vehicle storage and movement.

2.5 Parking Summary

Issues and Concerns

- Respondents expressed **differing views on parking needs**, with some identifying challenges finding parking for downtown destinations and events, while others felt Portland already provides more parking than necessary.
- Many attendees raised **concerns about the amount of land devoted to surface parking**, particularly downtown and along the waterfront, noting its impacts on walkability, housing opportunities, urban design, and redevelopment potential.
- Several comments highlighted **conflicts between parking and other transportation users**, including reduced pedestrian visibility, safety concerns near bike lanes, impacts on sidewalks and public spaces, and increased vehicle circulation in search of parking.

- Participants identified **parking management challenges**, including underutilized lots and garages, inconsistent and confusing pricing and time limits, limited coordination between public and private facilities, and difficulty locating available spaces.
- Respondents noted that **current parking policies and practices in the city tend to reinforce automobile dependence** and may not be fully aligned with broader goals related to housing, transit use, walkability, and downtown vitality.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Improve parking management** through upgraded parking technology, utilization data (including real-time parking information), updated permit and meter policies, and better use of existing public and private parking resources.
- **Expand park-and-ride facilities, commuter parking options, and transit connections** to reduce vehicle demand on the peninsula and provide alternatives to driving downtown.
- **Consolidate parking into structured facilities** and reduce reliance on surface lots, creating opportunities for additional housing, mixed-use development, and public realm improvements.
- **Reevaluate the role of on-street parking** in key corridors and activity centers, including opportunities to reallocate curb space for walking, bicycling, transit, loading, and other community priorities.
- **Strengthen partnerships with institutions and private property owners** to improve access to underutilized parking resources while aligning parking policies with broader transportation, land use, and economic development goals.

2.6 Safety Summary

Issues and Concerns

- Respondents frequently identified **high-speed arterial corridors and complex intersections**—including Franklin Street, Marginal Way, Brighton Avenue, Forest Avenue, Washington Avenue, Veranda Street, and Woodfords Corner—as **significant safety concerns for people across all modes of transportation**.
- Many attendees expressed **concerns about speeding, aggressive driving, red-light running, racing behavior, and limited traffic law enforcement**, noting that these behaviors contribute to both real and perceived safety risks throughout the city.
- **Pedestrian safety** emerged as a major theme, with comments citing difficult crossings, inadequate signal timing, poor visibility, inaccessible pedestrian infrastructure, insufficient winter maintenance, and locations where vehicle movements conflict with people walking throughout the city.
- Participants reported that Portland's **bicycle network contains critical safety gaps**, including bike lanes that end abruptly, narrow facilities, unsafe bridge and corridor connections, and **limited protected routes for everyday bicycle travel**.
- Respondents also identified concerns related to accessible mobility, including inaccessible bus stops, difficulties for people with low vision, conflicts involving e-bikes and scooters, and challenges safely accessing transit facilities.

Ideas and Opportunities

- **Improve safety at high-risk intersections and corridors** through redesigned crossings, pedestrian scrambles, protected intersections, bridge connections, raised crosswalks, flashing beacons, and other targeted infrastructure improvements.
- **Reduce vehicle speeds** through lower speed limits, traffic-calming measures, roadway redesign, roundabouts, lane reductions, and street designs that prioritize safety over vehicle throughput.
- **Strengthen pedestrian infrastructure** by improving sidewalks, winter maintenance, visibility, signal operations, crossing opportunities, and accessibility for people of all ages and abilities.
- **Expand and complete a connected network of protected bicycle facilities**, trail connections, and low-stress routes that provide safer alternatives to high-volume roadways.
- **Increase enforcement, education, and policy measures** to address speeding, red-light violations, dangerous driving behaviors, and conflicts between different transportation users while improving overall traffic safety culture.

3 Goals and Visioning

This section summarizes the Project Goals board and a 5-Word Vision exercise also present at the kickoff meeting.

3.1 Project Goals

The table below sums up the votes received for each of the previous goals identified from Portland's Plan 2050 and the Vision Zero Action Plan. Attendees were allowed to place one sticker per goal for as many goals as they wanted. A photo of this board can be seen in Appendix A.8.

Table 1: What goals would you prioritize from the previous plan?

Goal	Number of Votes
Promote multi-modal accessibility, enabling residents and visitors of all ages and abilities to participate fully in the social and economic life of the community.	31
Support livability by improving the quality of life in neighborhoods and improving the public health of residents.	25
Support sustainability by reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and stormwater impacts.	19
Support economic vitality by ensuring the efficient movement of goods, services, and people.	6
Eliminate all fatalities and serious injuries resulting from crashes on Portland's roadways by 2045.	23

The most popular goal was about multimodal accessibility. Notably, the goal that prioritized economic vitality received far fewer votes than the other options.

Participants were also asked what goals are missing from the above list. Participants noted things like long-term maintenance of infrastructure, affordability in car-free or car-light living, and improved pedestrian safety.

3.2 5-Word Story for Portland's Transportation Future

Participants were asked to write their vision for Portland's future using five words or less and then hang their card up along with others. A photo of this collage is included in Appendix A.9.

The table below summarizes the frequency of certain words/topics mentioned.

Table 2: Word Frequency for 5-Word Story of the Future

Topic Area	Unique Comments
Transit Expansion & Service Improvements (buses, BRT, trains, rail, streetcars, trolleys, airport service, microtransit)	20
Bicycle Infrastructure & Cycling	10
Walkability & Pedestrian Environment	7
Multimodal Connectivity & Network Integration	6
Parking Reform & Reduced Auto Dependence	5
Safety	5
Public Space & Urban Design	4
Equity & Accessibility	3

See below for a summary of the key themes emerging from the exercise:

- Participants expressed a strong desire for a **more multimodal transportation system** that better integrates walking, bicycling, transit, and driving.
- Many comments called for **expanded transit service**, including more frequent buses, Bus Rapid Transit, rail, streetcars, microtransit, and improved airport and regional connections.
- Respondents emphasized the need for **safer and more connected bicycle infrastructure**, including separated facilities, network completion, and better links between neighborhoods and destinations.
- Creating a **more walkable city** was a recurring theme, with participants supporting stronger pedestrian connections, safer crossings, and more comfortable walking environments.
- Many attendees envisioned a **less car-dependent Portland**, where residents can access jobs, services, recreation, and daily needs without needing to drive.
- Several comments advocated for **reducing the amount of space dedicated to parking and vehicles** in favor of transit, active transportation, and public spaces.
- Safety was identified as a core priority, with participants calling for streets and transportation facilities that better protect people walking, biking, using transit, and driving.
- Respondents frequently described transportation as a tool for improving **quality of life, neighborhood connectivity, public health, and economic vitality**, while creating a more vibrant and accessible city.