

Memo



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Date: September 1, 2021
To: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and interested parties
From: Lake McTighe, Senior Transportation Planner
Subject: Progress Report: Regional safety targets, strategic actions and work program

Purpose

Provide JPACT members and interested parties with a progress report on regional safety targets, strategic safety actions and regional safety work program.

1. **Report on adopted regional safety performance targets** to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries in the greater Portland area. Regional partners did not meet adopted safety targets for 2019, and the region is not on track to meet the 2035 Vision Zero targets.
2. **Report on progress made towards implementing regional strategic actions** identified in the 2018 Regional Transportation Safety Strategy. In the last two years, state, regional, local and community partners have made some progress, but more could be done to address the rising number of traffic deaths and serious injuries.
3. **Report on the annual work program** for the regional transportation safety program, as identified in Chapter 8 of the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Background: 2018 Regional Transportation Safety Strategy

On December 6, 2018, the Metro Council adopted the [2018 Regional Transportation Safety Strategy](#) (RTSS), a topical plan of the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The RTSS and RTP established a 2035 Zero Traffic Deaths and Serious Injuries target (see Figure 2.4, [Chapter 2](#) of the RTP), regional safety goals, objectives and policies, regional high injury corridors, strategies and actions. The RTSS was developed with racial and social equity and public health as core principles, and is based on the safe system approach which starts from a basic assumption that human life and health should not be compromised by the need to travel. The RTSS was recommended for adoption by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee for Transportation (JPACT) and developed by a regional safety working group.

Progress made towards regional safety performance targets

Regional partners did not meet safety targets set for 2019, and are not on track to meet the region's adopted 2035 Vision Zero targets.

In February 2021, Metro submitted the [2019 Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries Annual Performance Report](#) to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The report tracks the region's progress on federal safety performance measures adopted in the RTP and RTSS. The report compares the observed number of deaths and serious injuries in 2019 (using an average of five years of crash data to account for the randomness of crashes) with the 2019 targets. Metro also released a fact sheet on [2019 traffic deaths and serious injuries](#), which provides a snapshot of serious crashes in 2019.

To be on track to meet the targets, fatalities and serious injuries needed to decline 11 percent in 2019 from the 2015 base year. Instead, between 2015 and 2019 fatalities increased 34 percent and serious injuries increased 17 percent. Additionally, not everyone is equally safe on our roadways. Recent analysis by ODOT, Metro, Portland Bureau of Transportation, and Multnomah County, illustrate the disproportionate impact that serious traffic crashes have on Black people and other people of color. For example, in Oregon, Black people experience the greatest disparity in

pedestrian deaths.¹ In Multnomah County, Black people are twice as likely to die in a traffic crash.² Regionally, 76 percent of pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries are occurring in Equity Focus Areas, while 56 percent of the region's population lives in these areas. Additional analysis is needed, including for Clackamas and Washington counties.

2-Year Progress Report on RTSS strategic actions

Metro's [2-year Progress Report](#) provides a high-level assessment of actions that local, regional and state partners have taken since the RTSS was adopted at the end of 2018. The progress report is intended to be an evolving document that is added to over time, and will be used to inform the update of regional plans and policies; it is not intended to be an exhaustive inventory nor is it a quantitative assessment.

The 2018 RTSS identified six strategic action areas. The 2-year Progress Report provides an assessment on progress made towards the strategy. As the RTSS is a long-range plan, it will take several years for the policies, projects and programs to be fully implemented and evaluated. To assess progress on each of the actions and strategies, Metro staff reviewed policies, projects and programs undertaken since 2018, and conducted interviews with community partners and staff from state and local agencies. The assessment shows that some progress has been made in the last two years, but more prioritization of safety is needed to reduce traffic deaths and serious injuries and the disproportionate impact on Black people and other people of color.

2018 RTSS strategy	Status of progress
1. Protect vulnerable users and reduce disparities.	Progress made, but more action is needed
2. Design roadways for safety.	Progress made, but more action is needed
3. Reduce speeds and speeding.	Minimal progress made
4. Address distracted and aggressive driving.	Minimal progress made
5. Address impaired driving.	Minimal progress made
6. Ongoing engagement and coordination.	Progress made, but more action is needed

Source: Metro 2018 RTSS 2-year Progress Report, June 2021

The six strategies represent a multi-pronged approach to reducing fatal and severe crashes in the region. Consistent with the safe system approach, the strategies and actions emphasize systemic solutions and deemphasize individual behavior change, especially enforcement. Each strategy includes a set of specific actions. An appendix to the progress report ([Appendix: 2-Year Progress Report – Strategies and Actions](#)) provides a brief summary of progress made towards each individual action.

The 2-year progress report identifies actions to prioritize in the next two years, doing more of what is working, prioritizing safety over speed and focusing on proven interventions using the safe system framework.

Annual Work Program - Regional Transportation Safety Program

Metro's Regional Transportation Safety Program was formally established in Chapter 8 of the RTP (Section 8.2.2.2) and supports implementation of the 2018 RTSS, in coordination with other Metro

¹ Pedestrian Injury and Social Equity in Oregon, January 19, 2021, ODOT.

https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Safety/Documents/Pedestrian_Safety_and_Social_Equity.pdf

² Multnomah County REACH Transportation Crash and Safety Report: At the Intersection of Transportation Health, Race and Justice, 2021. <https://multco.us/file/95327/download>

programs such as Safe Routes to School and Regional Flexible Fund Allocations, and the safety related programs and efforts of local, state, regional and community partners.

Metro's [annual work program](#) is divided into four areas: safety data, policy and planning, project and design support, and safe behaviors and program support. As a regional agency that does not own or operate any roadways, Metro's role within these general areas is focused on key tasks where Metro takes the lead; otherwise Metro's roles is to coordinate with and support partners. Approximately .75 FTE is dedicated to the Metro transportation safety program activities.

- **Safety data:** Metro's work program focuses on obtaining, hosting and analyzing crash data from ODOT. Metro produces annual performance reports, annual crash update fact sheets, the [State of Safety Report](#), monthly fatal crash updates (presented at TPAC), the [High Injury Corridors and Intersections](#), [safety stats on the Regional Barometer](#) and the [Crash Map](#).
- **Policy and planning:** Metro's work program focuses on working with local, state and regional partners on regional policies in the Regional Transportation Safety Strategy, Regional Transportation Plan (Chapter 3), and Regional Transportation Functional Plan; addressing legislative issues consistent with the Metro Council's legislative principles; convening [regional safety forums](#) and providing updates to Metro committees, transportation coordinating committee TACs and other groups. In May 2021, Metro and Multnomah County Public Health and REACH program co-hosted a regional safety forum on Envisioning Safety, Health and Justice.
- **Safety projects and design support:** Metro's work program focuses on supporting partner agencies and other stakeholders with best practices, regional design guidelines, and participating in technical work groups. Metro's Regional Flexible Funds program funds projects and programs that address safety concerns.
- **Safe behaviors and programs support:** Metro's work program focuses on supporting partner agencies and other stakeholders with best practices, and participating in technical work groups. Metro's Safe Routes to School program is focused on coordinating and collaborating with partners to encourage safe behaviors.

Attached (with web link):

1. [2-Year Progress Report - Regional Transportation Safety Strategy \(June2021\)](#)

Web links:

1. [Appendix: 2-Year Progress Report – Strategies and Actions \(June 2021\)](#)
2. [2019 Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries Annual Performance Report \(February 2021\)](#)
3. [Traffic deaths and serious injuries, 2019 \(fact sheet\) \(February 2021\)](#)
4. [Regional Transportation Safety annual work program](#)



Regional transportation safety strategy

2-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

June 2021

Metro respects civil rights

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The Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) is a 17-member committee that provides a forum for elected officials and representatives of agencies involved in transportation to evaluate transportation needs in the region and to make recommendations to the Metro Council.

The established decision-making process strives for a well-balanced regional transportation system and involves local elected officials directly in decisions that help the Metro Council develop regional transportation policies, including allocating transportation funds. JPACT serves as the MPO board for the region in a unique partnership that requires joint action with the Metro Council on all MPO decisions.





“The design choices we make about how fast cars move, whether there are bike lanes & sidewalks sharing the space with travel lanes — all of this is an example of what it means to have a truly forward-looking approach on infrastructure.”

- Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Transportation Secretary, March 18, 2021

VISION ZERO BY 2035.

ONE DEATH IS TOO MANY.

Sandra

Donald Scott

Cristian

Alfonso

Larry

Donald Calvin

Steven

John

Rachelle

Galen

Michael

Richard

Angie

David

Kristine

Zachary O.

David

Emma

Deniel

Henry

Jayden

Anthony

Sergey

Brenda

Amy

Gabrielle

Josefina

David

Gregory

Pyarin

Alicia & Donald

James

Janace

Theodore

Ortrud

Margaret

Michael

Mary

Adam

Joshua

Lance

Roy

Dmitriy

Naziriy

Shawn

Deontae

Laurie

Louanna

Heaven

James

Charlene & Robin

Robert

Gonzalez

Sergiy

Robert

Lowell

Mark & Tonja

Laurence

Mathew

Elijah

Kristine

Susan

Rena

Edward

Fernando

Unknown

Karl

Magdiel

Jaimie

Michelle

Brandon

Ana & Kaylee

Eric

Lori

Robert

Christal

Zachary B.

Tony

Rajkumar

Zachary

Uriel

Marjorie

Dionicio

Delbert

Marilynn

Gonzalo

Paul

Kenneth

IN 2018 WE COMMITTED TO ZERO DEATHS AND LIFE-CHANGING INJURIES ON OUR ROADWAYS.

Regional partners came together and developed a strategic action plan to make our roadways safer for everyone. The strategy was recommended for adoption by the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) and adopted by the Metro Council as part of the Regional Transportation Plan at the end of 2018.

This 2-year report provides a snapshot of progress that we have made since 2018 to implement the strategic actions adopted in the [Regional Transportation Safety Strategy](#).

WE ARE NOT ON TRACK TO VISION ZERO.



Since the regional safety strategy was adopted at the end of 2018, at least 319 people have been killed in traffic crashes in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. Thousands more are living with physical and emotional trauma from being in a crash.¹

On average, there are over 23,000 crashes a year in our region that result in injury – over 60 crashes a day. Every three days someone is killed in a traffic crash. Every day someone experiences a life changing injury. Every one of us is impacted by traffic violence. **The lives lost since the safety strategy was adopted have cost our region over \$2 billion.**

Our safety goals represent real people. When we set **a goal of an 11 percent reduction in traffic deaths and life changing injuries from 2015 to 2019**, it is a goal to see 58 fewer people killed or seriously injured in a traffic crash in 2019. Instead, in 2019, traffic deaths increased 34 percent, and serious injuries increased 17 percent.ⁱ

We are moving in the wrong direction and are not on track to for zero deaths and serious injuries by 2035. Especially concerning is that **38 percent of people killed in traffic crashes in 2019 were walking.** **Pedestrian deaths have been on the rise for several years.**ⁱⁱ

*Every
three days
someone is
killed in a
traffic crash
in our region.*

*Every day
someone
is seriously
injured.*

¹ Due to the time-lag in crash data availability, only preliminary fatality numbers are available for 2020. Preliminary serious crash data for 2019 was available in early 2021.



NOT EVERYONE IS EQUALLY SAFE ON OUR ROADWAYS.

Systemic racism creates inequities in transportation safety and enforcement.

We know that Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and other people of color are more likely to be killed in a traffic crash. These community members are also less safe from harassment and other types of violence on our roadways. More data and analyses is needed to fully understand disproportionate impact in all three counties and the region.



2x

In Multnomah County, Black people are twice as likely to die in a traffic crash.^{iv}



76%

of pedestrian deaths occurs in the communities in our region where **more people of color, people with lower incomes and people with limited English proficiency** live.^{vi}



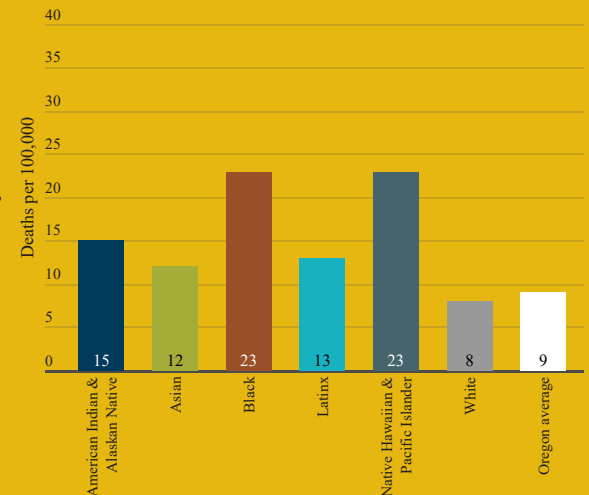
80%

Nationally, **Black people are 80 percent more likely** to be killed by drivers while walking than White, non-Hispanic pedestrians.^v

Black people are the most common targets of racial bias crimes in Portland, 60 percent of which take place in public spaces. Black pedestrians are stopped by police at higher rates than other races. Drivers are less likely to yield to Black people crossing at a crosswalk.^{vii}

Fatal pedestrian injury rates by race, Oregon (2014-2018)

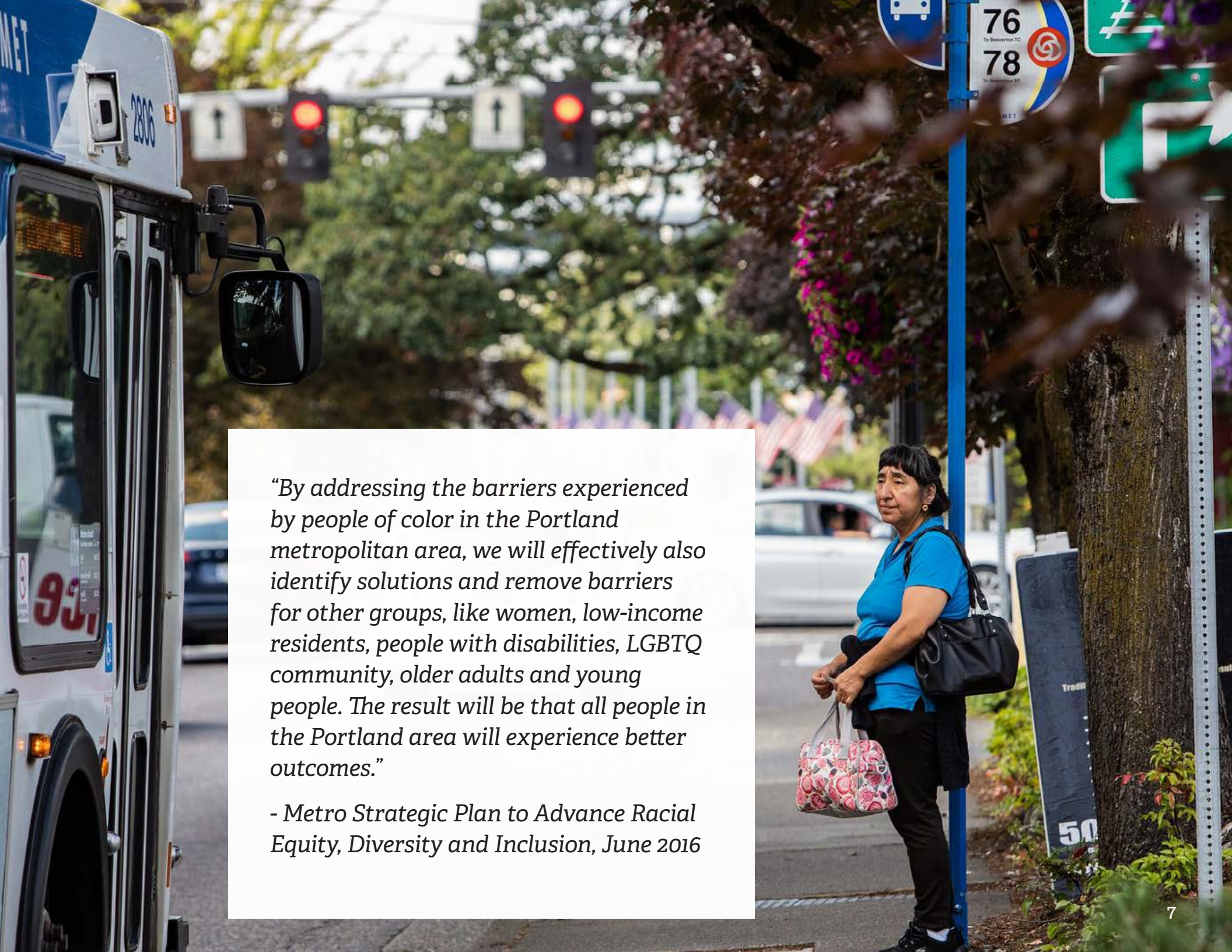
In Oregon, Black people experience the greatest disparity in pedestrian deaths, followed by Indigenous, Latinx and Asian people who also have a higher rate of pedestrian injury than the state average.



Source: ODOT, Pedestrian Injury and Social Equity in Oregon, 2021.ⁱⁱⁱ

In 2020, Black people accounted for 18.5% of traffic deaths in Portland.

That's three times higher than residents' share of Portland's population.^{viii}









“By addressing the barriers experienced by people of color in the Portland metropolitan area, we will effectively also identify solutions and remove barriers for other groups, like women, low-income residents, people with disabilities, LGBTQ community, older adults and young people. The result will be that all people in the Portland area will experience better outcomes.”

- Metro Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, June 2016

WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS, BUT WE NEED TO DO MORE.

This progress report provides a high-level summary of actions taken by **state, regional, local and community partners** in 2019 and 2020 to advance the strategic actions in the [Regional Transportation Safety Strategy](#). In some areas we have made progress. However, the rising number of traffic deaths and serious injuries each year should make us pause and **consider how regional partners can prioritize safety even more**. For an expanded list of actions and more information on how progress was assessed refer to the Appendix at oregonmetro.gov/regional-transportation-safety-plan

2-YEAR REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT			
Strategy	Status	What regional partners have done since 2018	What regional partners could do in the next two years
1. Protect vulnerable users and reduce disparities		Filled nearly 100 miles of combined sidewalk, trail and bikeway gaps and prioritized safety in funding decisions. Expanded understanding of the disproportionate impact of crashes on Black people and people walking.	Prioritize equity and pedestrian safety in project funding and roadway design. Prioritize community-led safety investments in communities of color and lower income communities.
2. Design roadways for safety		Developed new state, regional and local street design standards. Identified safety needs and opportunities on many high injury corridors.	Prioritize making our top-10 most dangerous and high-risk urban arterials safe for pedestrians.
3. Reduce speeds and speeding		Modernized statewide speed setting methodologies. Lowered speed limits on local roadways in Portland. Installed more fixed speed cameras in more communities.	Continue to lower posted speeds. Legalize fixed-speed cameras for use in all jurisdictions and on all roadways. Design current projects to manage speeds for safety.
4. Address aggressive and distracted driving		Implemented one of the strictest distracted driving laws in the U.S. Began reporting through the Statistical Transparency of Policing (STOP) Program.	Coordinate regional support of vehicle technology-based solutions. Continue to implement recommendations in Oregon's distracted driving report.
5. Address impaired driving		Maintained status quo as impairment has increased and resources have not kept pace.	Coordinate to accelerate the incorporation of Alcohol Detection Systems into vehicles at the state and federal level. Coordinate to lower legal blood alcohol content levels.
6. Engagement and coordination		Developed regional Safe Routes to School campaign. Ongoing coordination and policy making at state, regional and local levels.	Integrate the safe system approach into everything we do. Coalesce leadership around Vision Zero. Engage the public to demand safer streets and increase regional collaboration.

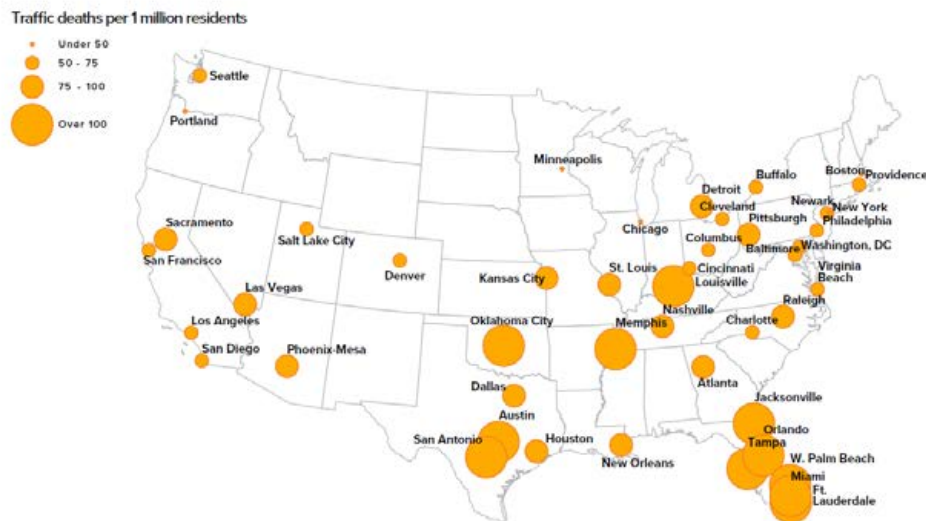
A BETTER STATUS QUO.

We've never been content with the status quo. Unfortunately, traffic violence has become our status quo. Some might think that Vision Zero is unachievable – but we know better. We know safe streets for all, all of the time, can be our status quo. And experts agree. Doing more of what is working and taking the safe system approach have been proven to work.

Doubling down on what works through proven, evidence-based strategies, advancing life-saving technology in vehicles and infrastructure, and prioritizing safety by adopting a safe system approach and creating a positive safety culture, have been proven to work.

DO MORE OF WHAT IS WORKING.

Our region has one of the lowest fatality rates in the country. What's working? Our commitment to compact urban growth. More trips made by walking, bicycling, scooting, bus and MAX. Fewer and shorter trips made by driving.



Traffic deaths by urban region, 2011–2015

U.S. urban regions (MPOs) with populations greater than 1 million

Source: 2018 Metro State of Safety Report

PRIORITIZE SAFETY OVER SPEED.

Adding [the safe system approach](#) to what is already working in our region can get us to zero. **Safety for all road users must be set as the foremost goal, and all decisions must be made based on how well they advance work toward zero deaths.**[ix](#)



A safe system approach

recognizes that although human error is inevitable, fatalities and life-changing injuries are preventable through street design and management choices. Successful safety programs systematically change the way streets operate to keep users safe, even when individuals make mistakes.

Safe speeds. Speed management strategies and technologies are estimated to save 4,000 lives each year nationally.[x](#)

Safe vehicles. Incorporating Advanced Driver Assistance Systems, technologies which exist today, into all vehicles, is estimated to save up to 10,000 lives a year nationally.[xi](#)

Safe road users. Incorporating Alcohol Detection Systems, technologies which exist today, into all vehicles, is estimated to save up to 9,000 lives a year nationally.[xii](#)

Safe roads. Roadway design improvements that are safety-outcomes based, such as roundabouts, sidewalks and medians, are estimated to save 3,000 lives a year nationally.[xiii](#)

Safe EMS. Improved emergency response to crashes is estimated to save 2,500 lives a year nationally.[xiv](#)

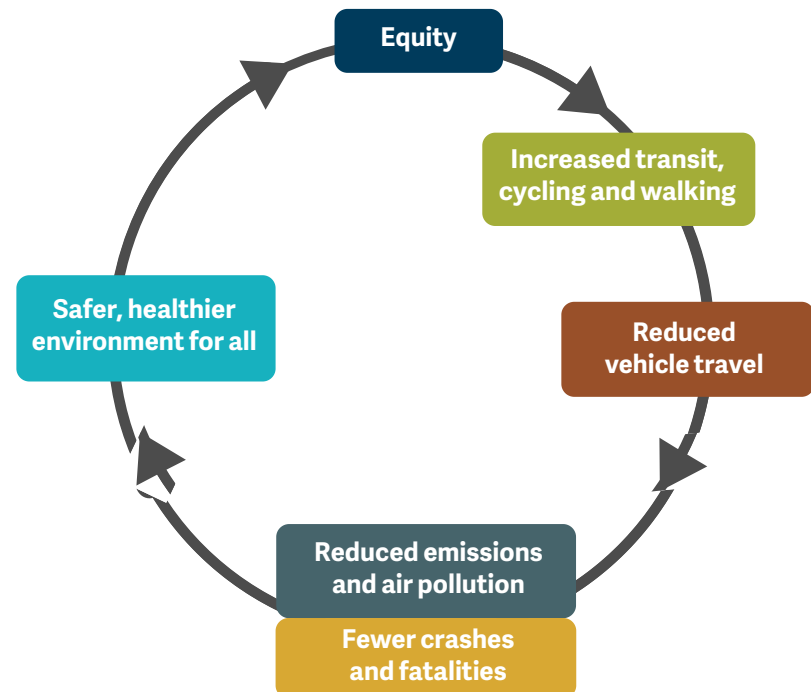
Safe system for all. Shifting to more transit, walking, and bicycling trips is estimated to save 3,000 lives a year nationally.[xv](#)

INVESTING IN A SAFE SYSTEM IS AN INVESTMENT IN EQUITY, CLIMATE, ACCESS AND MOBILITY.

While more walking, bicycling and transit brings many benefits to our communities, we cannot expect Black, Indigenous or any person of color to choose **more vulnerable forms of transportation** (when they have the choice), without addressing structural racism and **arrested mobility** (a term coined by Charles Brown that asserts that legal and illegal authorities deny Black people the inalienable right to move or to simply exist in public spaces). Arrested mobility contributes to adverse social, political, economic, and health outcomes that are widespread, intergenerational and preventable.

We must prioritize racial and economic justice to achieve a safe transportation system with zero deaths and life changing injuries, where Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and other people of color are safe and feel safe while traveling in our region.

When people are safe and feel safe while riding the bus, walking down the street and riding a bicycle, these options will be accessible to more people. Availability of travel options helps ease congestion and reduces the need to travel by motor vehicle, leading to cleaner air, fewer traffic fatalities and a safer and healthier environment for everyone.



2018 Regional Transportation Plan

Regional Transportation Safety Strategy

A strategy to achieve Vision Zero in the greater Portland region

December 6, 2018

oregonmetro.gov/safety

The Regional Transportation Safety Strategy works in concert with other adopted strategies to achieve an equitable, safe, resilient and reliable transportation system. Find the Regional Transportation Safety Strategy on [Metro's Transportation Safety webpage](#)

LOOKING AHEAD.

In the next two years we can drastically advance safety and reverse the upward trend of serious traffic crashes. We can take steps to save lives.

We can elevate the experiences and safety of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and other people of color in our processes and decisions.

We can prioritize near-term funding for safety projects, programs, and operations on the most dangerous arterial roadways and for the most vulnerable users.

We can amplify the safe-system approach in all decisions, focusing on safe speeds, safe streets, safe people, and safe vehicles. We can work together in coordination, proactively creating a safer system to prevent serious crashes from occurring.

“While it will take a generation, the success of other countries and some U.S. cities demonstrates that a combination of approaches makes this an achievable goal.” Rand Corporation, Road to Zero report, 2018.



This person uses their bicycle to get to and from their job in and around Forest Grove. We can make our most dangerous roadways, like the Tualatin Valley Highway, safe for everyone. The Oregon Department of Transportation, the City of Forest Grove and other partners are currently re-designing this stretch of highway to include safety features such as medians, enhanced pedestrian crossings, sidewalks and protected bicycle lanes.

ENDNOTES

- i 2019 Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries Annual Performance Report, Metro, 2021. <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2021/03/04/Metro-safety-annual-performance-report-2015-2019.pdf>
- ii 2019 Safety Fact Sheet, Metro, 2021. <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2021/03/04/Metro-2019-safety-fact-sheet-20210225.pdf>
- iii Pedestrian Injury and Social Equity in Oregon, Analysis of Pedestrian Injury, Built Environment, Travel Activity, and Social Equity, Oregon Department of Transportation Research Section, January 19, 2021. https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Safety/Documents/Pedestrian_Safety_and_Social_Equity.pdf
- iv Multnomah County REACH Transportation Crash and Safety Report: At the Intersection of Transportation Health, Race and Justice, 2021. <https://multco.us/file/95327/download>
- v Dangerous by Design 2021, Smart Growth America. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>
- vi 2019 Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries Annual Performance Report, Metro, 2021. <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2021/03/04/Metro-safety-annual-performance-report-2015-2019.pdf>
- vii Multnomah County REACH Transportation Crash and Safety Report: At the Intersection of Transportation Health, Race and Justice, 2021. <https://multco.us/file/95327/download>
- viii Saving Lives with Safe Streets, Vision Zero Traffic Crash Report 2020, Portland. <https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/2020-vision-zero-traffic-crash-report.pdf>
- ix Zero Traffic Deaths: A Roadmap to Get There, released on March 31, 2021. https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b30d2c5754a3474bbecf7d46b6586469?utm_source=sfmc&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=GOV%20540758&utm_content=
- x City Limits: Setting Safe Speed Limits on Urban Streets, NACTO, 2020: <https://nacto.org/publication/city-limits/the-need/speed-kills/>
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- xii Farmer, Charles M. "Potential lives saved by in-vehicle alcohol detection systems," Traffic Injury Prevention, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Highway Loss Data Institute, January 2021. <https://www.iihs.org/news/detail/alcohol-detection-systems-could-prevent-more-than-a-fourth-of-u-s-road-fatalities>
- xiii Safety Benefits of Highway Infrastructure Investments, AAA, May 2017. <https://aaafoundation.org/safety-benefits-of-highway-infrastructure-investments/>
- xiv The Road to Zero: A Vision for Achieving Zero Roadway Deaths by 2050, RAND Corporation, 2018. <https://www.nsc.org/getmedia/485bod61-e657-44e7-84f2-1a4206a7ea33/rtz-report.pdf.aspx>
- xv Public Transit is Key Strategy in Advancing Vision Zero, Eliminating Deaths, American Public Transportation Association (APTA), August 2018. <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/Resources/resources/hottopics/Documents/APTA%20VZN%20Transit%20Safety%20Brief%208.2018.pdf>

If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

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