

Chapter 9: Transportation

What is this chapter about?

The goals and policies in this chapter show the City's intent to:

- Create a coordinated, efficient, and more affordable multimodal transportation system.
- Make cost effective investments and system management decisions that encourage people to choose healthy, active, and low-carbon transportation modes and systems, and enhance the economic competitiveness of the region.
- Reduce service disparities and achieve equitable access to all types of facilities and transportation modes.
- Ensure safety for users of all transportation modes, with attention to the most vulnerable road users.
- Guide the location and design of new street infrastructure.
- Direct how and when transportation infrastructure is managed and maintained.
- Provide policy guidance for developing and implementing the Transportation System Plan.

Why is this important?

The transportation system is essential to the functioning of the city and the well-being and prosperity of the community. It connects people and businesses to goods and services, and links them to the region, state, nation and world. Although transportation is often measured in terms of mobility, it also creates access to opportunity. These goals and policies also reflect the role of transportation planning in reducing carbon emissions, and improving public health. Finally, this chapter acknowledges the role that streets can play in providing great civic and recreational spaces. The way we build our city has an impact on our mobility and, by extension, our access to opportunity.

With its 1980 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Portland became a national leader in the integration of land use and transportation. The 2035 Comprehensive Plan carries that tradition forward and adds new innovations. The goals and policies in this chapter increase the focus on complete multimodal transportation systems. The historical emphasis on automobile mobility is increasingly creating a cost burden on households and the community as a whole. For the city to successfully meet its transportation system goals for the future, other more affordable choices must be widely available and safe.

What is the Transportation System Plan?

The Transportation System Plan (TSP) is the 20-year plan to guide transportation investments in Portland. The TSP meets state and regional planning requirements and addresses local transportation needs. It includes:

- Policies that guide the maintenance, development, and implementation of Portland’s transportation system.
- A list of projects necessary to accommodate 20 years of growth in population and employment, with a financial plan.
- Master street plans and modal plans.
- Strategies and regulations for implementation, including street classification maps.

Elements of the TSP — the policies, street classification maps and the street plan maps — are adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The TSP is adopted concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan, but published under a separate cover. For ease of use and transparency, the citywide policies from the TSP are also included in Chapter 9 (Transportation) of the Comprehensive Plan document and are also part of the Comprehensive Plan. The TSP also includes additional sub-policies and area-specific policies.

The TSP is both an implementation tool and a supporting document to the Comprehensive Plan. The TSP contains the transportation element of the City’s Public Facilities Plan, and the List of Significant Projects. The TSP also provides more detail than the Comprehensive Plan by including additional supporting information about transportation system conditions. Figure 9-1 illustrates the relationship between the TSP and other policies and plans.

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Goals

Goal 9.A: Achieve multiple goals

Portland's transportation system is funded and maintained to achieve multiple goals and measureable outcomes for people and the environment. The transportation system is complete, interconnected, multimodal, and fulfills daily needs for people and businesses.

GOAL 9.B: Support great places

Portland's transportation system reinforces neighborhoods, placemaking, and quality of life for all Portlanders.

GOAL 9.C: Environmentally sustainable

The transportation system increasingly uses renewable energy, or electricity from renewable sources, achieves adopted carbon reduction targets, and reduces air pollution, water pollution, noise, and Portlanders' reliance on private vehicles.

GOAL 9.D: Equitable transportation

The transportation system provides all Portlanders options to move about the city and meet their daily needs by using a variety of efficient, convenient, and affordable modes of transportation. Transportation investments are responsive to the distinct needs of each community.

GOAL 9.E: Positive health outcomes

The transportation system promotes positive health outcomes and minimizes negative impacts for all Portlanders by supporting active transportation, physical activity, and community and individual health.

GOAL 9.F: Opportunities for prosperity

The transportation system supports a strong and diverse economy, enhances the competitiveness of the city and region, and maintains Portland's role as a West Coast trade gateway and freight hub, by providing efficient and reliable goods movement, multimodal access to employment areas and educational institutions, as well as enhanced freight access to industrial areas and intermodal freight facilities. The transportation system helps people and businesses reduce spending and keep money in the local economy by providing affordable alternatives to driving.

GOAL 9.G: Safety

Transportation safety contributes to a livable city and ensures that people of all ages and abilities feel comfortable and secure using City streets. Human impact and economic costs are reduced by comprehensive efforts to improve traffic safety, including engineering, education, enforcement, and evaluation, all of which will move Portland toward zero traffic-related fatalities and no serious injuries.

GOAL 9.H: Cost effective

The City analyzes and prioritizes capital and operating investments to cost effectively achieve the above goals while responsibly managing and protecting our past investments in existing assets.

Policies

Design and planning policies

The City of Portland's transportation system is a key public facility. The following policies describe what the transportation system is, what it does, and what factors to consider for how the overall system is used. Policies 8.1-8.51 in the Public Facilities chapter also apply to the need for quality facilities and services, multiple benefits, reliability, and creating a multi-purpose and safe right-of-way.

- Policy 9.1** **Street design classifications.** Maintain and implement street design classifications consistent with land use plans, environmental context, urban design pattern areas, and Urban Design Framework designations.
- Policy 9.2** **Street policy classifications.** Maintain and implement street policy classifications for pedestrian, bicycle, transit, freight, emergency vehicle, and automotive movement, while considering access for all modes, connectivity, adjacent planned land uses, and state and regional requirements.
- Policy 9.3** **Transportation System Plan.** Maintain and implement the Transportation System Plan (TSP) as the decision-making tool for transportation-related projects, policies, programs, and street design.
- Policy 9.4** **Use of classifications.** Plan, develop, implement, and manage the transportation system in accordance with street design and policy classifications outlined in the Transportation System Plan.
- Policy 9.5** **Mode share goals and Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) reduction.** Increase the share of trips made using active and low-carbon transportation modes and reduce VMT to achieve targets set in the most current Climate Action Plan and Transportation System Plan. Meet or exceed Metro's mode share and VMT targets in Neighborhood Centers and 2040 Growth Concept areas.

Policy 9.6 **Transportation hierarchy for people movement.** Implement a hierarchy of modes for people movement by making transportation system decisions according to the following prioritization:

1. Walking
2. Cycling
3. Transit
4. Taxi / commercial transit / shared vehicles
5. Zero emission vehicles
6. Other private vehicles

When implementing the hierarchy, ensure that:

- The needs and safety of each group of road users are considered, and changes do not make existing conditions worse for the most vulnerable users higher on the hierarchy.
- All users' needs are balanced, and when necessary to ensure safety, accommodate some users on parallel streets as part of multi-street corridors.
- Land use and system plans, network functionality for all modes, other street functions, and complete street policies, are maintained.
- Rationale is provided if modes lower in the hierarchy are prioritized.

Specific modal policies are found below in policies 9.18 to 9.41.

Policy 9.7 **Moving goods and delivering services.** Maintain efficient and reliable movement of goods and services as a critical transportation system function. Prioritize freight system reliability improvements over general motor vehicle mobility where there are solutions that distinctly address those different needs. Multimodal freight policies are found below in policies 9.31 to 9.39.

Policy 9.8 **Affordability.** Improve and maintain the transportation system to increase access to convenient and affordable transportation options for all Portlanders, especially those who have traditionally been under-served or have historically borne unequal burdens.

Policy 9.9 **Geographic policies.** Adopt geographically-specific policies in the Transportation System Plan, to ensure that transportation infrastructure reflects the differing topography, historic character, natural features, economic needs, demographics, and land uses of each area. Use the Pattern Areas identified in Chapter 3 Urban Design as the basis for area policies.

Land use, development, and placemaking

Land use patterns and connections among different land uses are key elements defining the form and character of places. In tandem with the Urban Form and Design and the Design and Development chapters, the policies in this section give direction for designing and building a transportation system that supports, complements, and meets the needs of different places. These policies acknowledge development adjacent to transportation as a critical component in shaping the future of Portland's public spaces and places.

- Policy 9.10 Land use and transportation coordination.** Implement the Comprehensive Plan Map and the Urban Design Framework through coordinated long-range transportation and land use planning. Ensure that street policy and design classifications and land uses complement one another.
- Policy 9.11 Growth strategy.** Implement street design and policy classifications to support a Centers and Corridors growth strategy.
- Policy 9.12 Centers, Corridors, and Transit Station Areas** Enhance design and transportation function of Town Centers, Neighborhood Centers, Neighborhood Corridors, Civic Corridors, Transit Station Areas, and Greenways as highlighted in Chapter 3, Urban Form and Design.
- Policy 9.13 Development and street design.** Evaluate adjacent land use to help inform street classifications in framing, shaping, and activating the public space of streets. Guide development and land use to create the kinds of places and street environments intended for different types of streets.

Streets as public spaces

Streets, including sidewalks and planting strips, provide critical transportation and utility functions. In Portland, streets are the most abundant type of public space, occupying nearly 20 percent of land area in the city. The following policies support community desire to expand the use of streets beyond their transportation functions. See the Public Facilities and Design and Development chapters for further use and streetscape policies.

- Policy 9.14 Streets for transportation and public spaces.** Integrate both the placemaking and transportation functions when designing and managing streets by encouraging design, development, and operation of streets to enhance opportunities for them to serve as places for community interaction, environmental function, open space, recreation, and other community purposes.
- Policy 9.15 Repurposing street space.** Encourage repurposing street segments that are not critical for transportation connectivity to other community purposes.

- Policy 9.16** **Design with nature.** Promote street alignments and designs that respond to topography and natural features, when feasible, and protect streams, habitat, and native trees.
- Policy 9.17** **Street views.** Maintain public views of prominent landmarks and buildings that serve as visual focal points within streets or that terminate views at the end of streets.

Modal policies

Portland is committed to providing a multimodal transportation system that provides affordable and convenient travel options within the city, region, and outside the Metro area. Because trips are made for different reasons, they vary in length and type of vehicle (mode) needed to make them. Different modes create different kinds of impacts — on neighborhood livability and carbon emissions, for example. These policies recognize that some modes are more appropriate than others for different types of trips.

- Policy 9.18** **Pedestrian transportation.** Encourage walking as the most attractive mode of transportation for most short trips, within and to centers, corridors, and major destinations, and as a means for accessing transit.
- Policy 9.19** **Pedestrian networks.** Create more complete networks of pedestrian facilities and improve the quality of the pedestrian environment.
- Policy 9.20** **Pedestrian safety and accessibility.** Improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and convenience for people of all ages and abilities.
- Policy 9.21** **Bicycle transportation.** Create conditions that make bicycling more attractive than driving for most trips of approximately three miles or less.
- Policy 9.22** **Accessible bicycle system.** Create a bicycle transportation system that is safe, comfortable, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
- Policy 9.23** **Bicycle classifications.** Develop and implement classifications that emphasize the movement of bicycles on a citywide network of designated streets that safely and efficiently provides access to the Central City, Gateway, Town Centers, and Neighborhood Centers.
- Policy 9.24** **Public transportation.** Coordinate with public transit agencies to create conditions that make transit the preferred mode of travel for trips that are not made by walking or bicycling.
- Policy 9.25** **Transportation to job centers.** Encourage transit as the preferred transportation mode for people travelling to and from the Central City and Gateway. Enhance regional access to the Central City and access from Portland other regional job centers.

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- Policy 9.26** **Transit service.** In partnership with Trimet, develop a public transportation system that conveniently, safely, comfortably, and equitably serves residents and workers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Policy 9.27** **Transit equity.** In partnership with Trimet, maintain and expand high-quality frequent transit service to all Town Centers, Civic Corridors, Neighborhood Centers, Neighborhood Corridors, and other major concentrations of employment, and improve service to areas with high concentrations of poverty and historically under-served and under-represented communities.
- Policy 9.28** **Prosperity and growth.** In partnership with Trimet, maintain, expand, and enhance Portland Streetcar, frequent service bus, and bus rapid transit to better serve Civic Corridors with the highest intensity of potential employment and household growth. Use transit investments as a means to shape the city's growth.
- Policy 9.29** **Intercity passenger service.** Coordinate planning and project development to expand intercity passenger transportation services in the Willamette Valley, and from Portland to Seattle and Vancouver, BC.
- Policy 9.30** **Regional trafficways and transitways.** Enhance capacity of regional transitways and existing regional trafficways to accommodate future increases in regional through-traffic.
- Policy 9.31** **Multimodal goods movement.** Develop, maintain, and enhance a multimodal freight transportation system for the safe, reliable, sustainable, and efficient movement of goods within and through the city. Ensure that the transportation system supports traded sector economic development plans and full utilization of prime industrial land.
- Policy 9.32** **Multimodal system and hub.** Maintain Portland's role as a multimodal hub for global and regional movement of goods. Enhance Portland's network of multimodal freight corridors.
- Policy 9.33** **Freight network.** Develop, manage, and maintain a safe, efficient, and reliable freight street network to provide freight access to and from intermodal freight facilities, industrial and commercial districts, and the regional transportation system. Invest to accommodate forecasted growth of interregional freight volumes and provide access to truck, marine, rail, and air transportation systems.
- Policy 9.34** **Sustainable freight system.** Support the efficient delivery of goods and services to businesses and neighborhoods, while also reducing environmental and neighborhood impacts. Encourage the use of energy efficient and clean delivery vehicles, and manage on- and off-street loading

spaces to ensure adequate access for deliveries to businesses, while maintaining access to homes and businesses.

Policy 9.35 Freight rail network. Coordinate with stakeholders and regional partners to support continued reinvestment in, and modernization of, the freight rail network.

Policy 9.36 Portland Harbor. Coordinate with the Port of Portland, private stakeholders, and regional partners to improve and maintain access to marine terminals and related river-dependent uses in Portland Harbor.

9.36.a. Support continued reinvestment in, and modernization of, marine terminals in Portland Harbor.

9.36.b. Facilitate continued maintenance of the shipping channels in Portland Harbor and the Columbia River.

9.36.c. Support shifting more long-distance, high-volume movement of goods to river and oceangoing ships and rail.

Policy 9.37 Portland International Airport. Maintain the Portland International Airport as an important regional, national, and international transportation hub serving the bi-state economy.

Policy 9.38 Portland Heliport. Maintain Portland's Heliport functionality in the Central City.

Policy 9.39 Automobile transportation. Maintain acceptable levels of mobility and access for private automobiles while reducing overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and negative impacts of private automobiles on the environment and human health.

Policy 9.40 Automobile efficiency. Coordinate land use and transportation plans and programs with other public and private stakeholders to encourage vehicle technology innovation, shifts toward electric and other cleaner more energy efficient vehicles and fuels, integration of smart vehicle technology with intelligent transportation systems, and greater use of options such as car-share, carpool, and taxi.

Policy 9.41 Emergency response. Maintain a network of accessible emergency response streets to facilitate safe and expedient emergency response and evacuation. Ensure that police, fire, ambulance, and other emergency providers can reach their destinations in a timely fashion, without negatively impacting traffic calming and other measures intended to reduce crashes and improve safety.

System management

Portland's transportation system is an integrated network of roads, rails, sidewalks, bicycle paths, and other facilities within and through the city. These modal networks intersect and are often located within the same right-of-way. These policies provide direction to manage the system in ways that:

- Allow different modes to interact safely.
- Maximize the capacity of the existing network.
- Identify where additional capacity might be needed.

Also see Policies 8.33 through 8.43 in Chapter 8: Public Facilities and Services.

- Policy 9.42 System management.** Give preference to transportation improvements that use existing roadway capacity efficiently and that improve the safety of the system for all users.
- Policy 9.43 Traffic management.** Evaluate and encourage traffic speed and volume to be consistent with street classifications and desired land uses to improve safety, preserve and enhance neighborhood livability, and meet system goals of calming vehicle traffic through a combination of enforcement, engineering, and education efforts.
- Policy 9.44 Connectivity.** Establish an interconnected, multimodal transportation system to serve centers and other significant locations. Promote a logical, direct, and connected street system through street spacing guidelines and district-specific street plans found in the Transportation System Plan and prioritize access to specific places by certain modes in accordance with the transportation hierarchy.
- Policy 9.45 Technology.** Encourage the use of emerging technology, vehicle technology, and parking technology to improve real-time management of the transportation network and to manage and allocate parking supply and demand.
- Policy 9.46 Performance measures.** Establish multimodal performance measures to evaluate and monitor the adequacy of transportation services. Use these measures to evaluate overall system performance, inform corridor and area-specific plans and investments, and regulate development, institutional campus growth, zone changes, Comprehensive Plan Map amendments, and conditional uses.
- Policy 9.47 Regional congestion management.** Coordinate with Metro to create a regional congestion management approach, including a market-based system, to price or charge for auto trips and parking, better account for the cost of auto trips, and to more efficiently manage the regional system.

Parking management

Vibrant urban places link people and activities. As Portland grows, we must manage both the demand and supply of parking. Providing too much parking can lead to inefficient land use patterns and sprawl. Insufficient parking can negatively affect neighborhood livability and economic vitality. These policies provide guidance to manage parking demand and supply to meet a variety of public objectives, including achieving compact walkable communities, reducing overall vehicle use, enhancing livability, reducing pollution, and expanding economic opportunity.

- Policy 9.48 Parking management.** Manage parking supply to achieve transportation policy objectives for neighborhood livability, safety, business district vitality, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction, and improved air quality.
- Policy 9.49 Central City, and centers parking.** Limit the growth of off-street parking spaces and manage supply and demand for parking, loading, and unloading in the public right-of-way in the Central City, Gateway, Town Centers, and Station Areas.
- Policy 9.50 On-street parking.** Manage parking and loading demand, supply, and operations in the public right of way to encourage safety, economic vitality, and livability. Recognize that the curb zone is a public space, and as such, a physical and spatial asset that has value and cost. Allocate and manage on-street parking and loading within the curb zone in a manner that achieves the highest and best use of this public space in support of broad City policy goals and local land use context.
- Policy 9.51 Off-street parking.** Limit the development of new parking spaces to achieve land use, transportation, and environmental goals. Regulate off-street parking to achieve mode share objectives, promote compact and walkable urban form, encourage lower rates of car ownership, and promote the vitality of commercial and employment areas. Utilize transportation demand management and pricing of parking in areas with high parking demand.
- Policy 9.52 Share space and resources.** Encourage the shared use of parking and vehicles to maximize the efficient use of limited urban space.
- Policy 9.53 Bicycle parking.** Promote the development of new bicycle parking facilities, including dedicated bike parking in the public right-of-way. Provide sufficient bicycle parking at High-Capacity Transit stations to enhance bicycle connection opportunities.

Finance, programs, and coordination

Programs and funding are required to build and maintain the transportation system, and they are necessary to help decide what projects to build. They also provide public information about what facilities are available and how they can be used. Agencies outside of the City also own and operate facilities in the city and provide funding for new facilities. These policies address essential funding and coordination opportunities with other agencies, as well outreach and education programming.

- Policy 9.54** **Coordination.** Coordinate with state and federal agencies, local and regional governments, special districts, and providers of transportation services when planning for, developing, and funding transportation facilities and services.
- Policy 9.55** **Education and encouragement.** Create, maintain, and coordinate educational and encouragement programs that support multimodal transportation and that emphasize safety for all modes of transportation. Ensure that these programs are accessible to under-served and under-represented populations.
- Policy 9.56** **Transportation Demand Management (TDM).** Create and maintain Transportation Demand Management (TDM), programs that increase the modal share of walking, bicycle, and transit trips. Integrate TDM with other programs, including parking management.
- Policy 9.57.** **Telecommuting.** Promote telecommuting and the use of communications technology to reduce travel demand.
- Policy 9.58** **Project selection criteria.** Establish transportation project selection criteria consistent with goals 9A through 9H, to cost effectively achieve access, place making, sustainability, equity, health, prosperity and safety goals. Coordinate transportation project selection with other capital planning programs impacted by work in the public right of way, including sewer and water utilities.
- Policy 9.59** **Funding.** Encourage the development of a range of stable transportation funding sources that provide adequate resources to build an equitable and sustainable transportation system.

Figure 9-1. Transportation System Plan: Relationship to Other Policies and Plans

