

Prior Year Performance Report

Fiscal Year 2018-19



City
Budget
Office

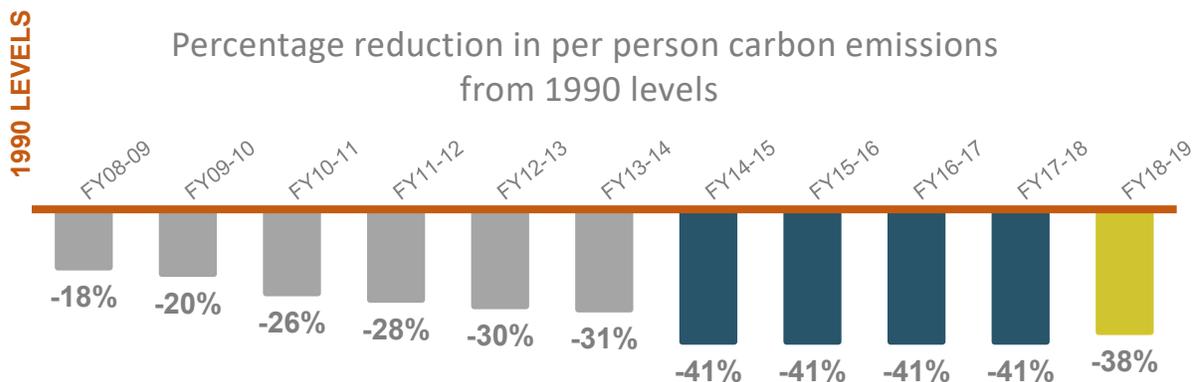
Working Toward a Sustainable and Resilient Future

In FY 2018-19, local sustainability and resiliency efforts remained a priority area for the City of Portland, requiring cross-bureau collaboration between the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), and the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM), among others. According to the recent [2019 Portland Insights Survey](#), younger Portlanders are more concerned about climate change—18% of younger respondents identified it as one of the top three challenges facing Portland compared to 11% citywide. This is evidence of the continued and increasing importance of these efforts for the City of Portland.

Continued Stagnation in Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Metrics

According to BPS' September 2019 Report [Multnomah County 2017 Carbon Emissions and Trends](#), total carbon emissions from Multnomah County have seen a 15% reduction from 1990 levels, resulting from various efforts including commitments to renewable energy resources and fuels and investment in transit and bike infrastructure, among other efforts.

However, the *percentage reduction in per person carbon emissions from 1990 levels* has remained steady at 41% below 1990 levels from FY 2014-15 to FY 2017-18. In FY 2018-19, emissions slightly increased to 38% below 1990 levels for the first time since measuring of emissions began (see graph below). Portland continues to significantly outperform national emissions reductions, which in 2014 were up 7% over 1990 levels, but the City will need to explore creative new approaches to continue making progress toward our 80% goal.¹



Portland's significant economic growth since 1990 has likely affected performance on this measure. Transportation sector emissions in particular are 8% over 1990 levels.² Traffic congestion is a common complaint among car commuters; according to the 2019 Portland Insights survey, two-thirds of respondents feel that traffic or crowding is worse compared

¹ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/636700>

² <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/742164>

to last year.³ PBOT tracks the *percentage of commuters commuting by walking, bicycling, and transit*, which declined from 24.6% in 2017 to 23% in calendar year 2018, far short of the goal of 70% by 2030. The decline in this measure is associated with an increase of 1.77% in people driving alone, and a 1.01% increase in telecommuting, as well as a 0.65% decrease in public transit commuting, and an 1% decrease in people commuting by bike. PBOT is concerned by the trend of this data and has begun coordinating meetings and discussions to make policy change proposals to aid in the City's overall goals for active transportation. Other joint BPS and PBOT efforts to address these adverse trends include PBOT's [Pricing for Equitable Mobility project](#)⁴ and expansion of electrical vehicle infrastructure.

In FY 2018-19, Portland signed on to regional, national, and international climate declarations, including: the C-40 Net-Zero Carbon Buildings Declaration, Advancing Towards Zero Waste Declaration, Clean Air Cities Declaration, and Equity Pledge; and voters passed the Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) in 2018. PCEF revenues are estimated to ramp up to \$50.0-70.0 million annually, collected through a 1% surcharge on retail sales of eligible large corporations in Portland. Revenues will provide grants to clean energy programs, clean energy workforce development, green infrastructure, sustainable agriculture programs, and other programs that help meet climate goals. According to the bureau, PCEF "offers a community-led vision, grounded in justice and equity, that builds citywide resilience and opportunity." All nine members of the PCEF Committee were appointed in Fall 2019;⁵ this committee is responsible for the selection of grant recipients for clean energy projects supported by the Fund's revenues.

Other notable efforts include:

[Climate Action Plan Update](#): BPS has begun work on the Climate Action Plan 2020 Update, with a final report expected by the end of calendar year 2021. This update will employ the framework of climate justice and focus on robust community engagement processes.

[Clean Air Construction Standard](#): City Council passed Resolution 37403 in December 2018, adopting a new Clean Air Construction Standard for the City. The standard restricts emissions of diesel equipment and trucks used in fulfillment of City contracts. Procurement Services received \$458,000 in funding in the FY 2019-20 budget to support program implementation of the standard. The program currently does not have program metrics or performance measures and the Procurement Services Division within the Office of Management and Finance will add performance metrics as the program develops.

³ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/cbo/article/740406>

⁴ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/79819>

⁵ <https://beta.portland.gov/pcefcommittee/about-committee>

Thriving Cities Initiative: Portland is a pilot city for C-40's Thriving Cities Initiative, along with Philadelphia and Amsterdam. The initiative aims to help Portlanders "reduce carbon emissions and enhance quality of life" through more sustainable patterns of consumption. The first workshop of the initiative was held in September 2019.

Waste and Recycling Trends

Similar trends of plateauing metrics are occurring in the City's recycling and composting performance. In recent years, Portland's recovery rate for recycling and composting has been roughly twice the national average, which was 34.7% in 2015.⁶ However, *the percentage of waste recycled or composted* decreased from FY 2016-17 (63%) to FY 2017-18 (54%) and remained steady at 54% in FY 2018-19. By 2030, BPS would like this to rate to be 90% (see graph below). The bureau notes that there are several factors contributing to the dip, including a change in methodology aligned with the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in 2016.⁷



In FY 2018-19 City Council passed the Single-use Plastic Ordinance; as of October 1, 2019, businesses in Portland cannot automatically include plastic straws, utensils or individually packaged condiments with orders. In 2020, the City of Portland, in partnership with Metro Regional Government and other regional partners, plans to roll out mandatory composting for commercial customers. This policy is expected to improve performance on this metric by increasing the amount of material composted.

Recommended Changes for Measuring Climate and Sustainability Work

Though the City is supporting many sustainability efforts, more drastic interventions may be needed to ensure the City meets its future climate and sustainability strategic targets. BPS is increasingly moving toward connecting climate goals to the City's equity work. Enhanced tracking and regular reporting on these efforts will become increasingly important in

⁶ <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

⁷ For more information, see last year's Prior Year Performance Report, page 40: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/cbo/article/700405>

preparation for an expected Climate Emergency Declaration in 2020.⁸ CBO recommends that the bureau quickly identify performance measures and evaluation strategies for its new climate and sustainability efforts, including PCEF investments. The bureau has already noted a need to undertake this effort. This recommendation aligns with CBO's recommendation in the [FY 2017-18 Prior Year Performance Report](#) that BPS should continue to identify methods for measuring localized sustainability efforts as these types of measurements can help show smaller improvements toward the City's larger goals.

Portland Preparedness & Resiliency

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) promotes readiness for, and coordinates response to, large-scale emergencies like natural disasters. This includes developing and implementing strategic planning, programs, and policies to continually advance Portland's mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities.

For the past two years the bureau has been in transition, and to some degree its main operations and mandate have been on hold. The bureau underwent several major staff transitions; was directed to address the City's unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings; and internally reprioritized the bureau's focus away from emergency planning to expand the Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs).⁹ During this same period, several emergencies demonstrated the importance of robust emergency planning. During last year's winter storms, the City effectively shut down, with school children stuck on buses and vehicles abandoned along the road.^{10,11} The City also experienced a significant wildfire near Multnomah Falls, a scrap yard fire in East Portland, gas main break and explosion in Southwest Portland, and a water main break with flooding in Northeast Portland. Each of these events required the activation of the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) and a coordinated response of the City's first responders.

In addition to coordinating cross-bureau and cross-jurisdiction collaboration around planning and execution for emergency response in these kinds of situations, PBEM also encourages community preparedness through its Community Programs, which include the Basic Earthquake Emergency Communication Nodes (BEECN), the NET program, and small business continuity of operations plan (COOP) trainings. While assisting the community with preparedness efforts is important, the decision to prioritize this over City preparedness potentially leaves the City less prepared for large-scale emergency events.

⁸ <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/wheeler/article/742184>

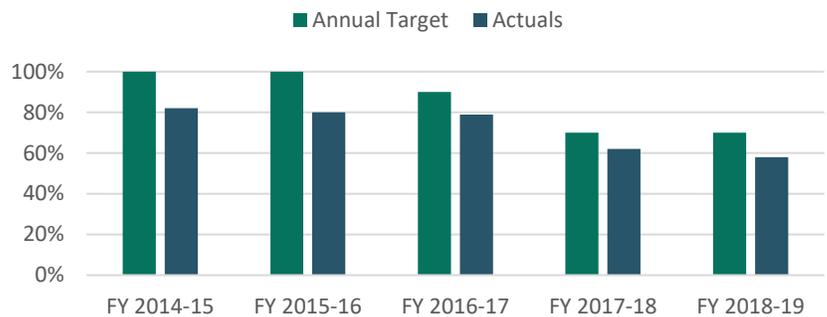
⁹ For more detail, see: City Budget Office. FY 2019-20 Budget Development, CBO Reviews, Emergency Management. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/cbo/article/714548>.

¹⁰ OPB.org. *Snow Strands Hundreds Of Oregon Students In Schools, On Buses*. <https://www.opb.org/news/article/oregon-snow-students-stranded-schools-buses/>.

¹¹ KATU.com. *Possibly hundreds of cars abandoned on area roadways after snow*. <https://katu.com/news/local/possibly-hundreds-of-cars-abandoned-off-area-roadways-after-snow>.

PBEM tracks City preparedness through *the number of PBEM plans that are up-to-date according to their published standards* (see graph right). The measure tracks whether the City's emergency response plans are current. The bureau currently has 12 plans, five of which are expired. Two plans¹² are federally required, but other

Percentage of PBEM Plans that are Up to Date According to Their Published Standard



plans, such as the ADA plan, are important and prevent the City from facing possible litigation. Performance on keeping plans up to date has steadily declined over the past five years, even though the annual target has also been adjusted down. In FY 2019-20 the target was 70% of plans up to date, and the bureau only completed 58% of needed updates.

In addition to plans not being up to date, the bureau has not had the capacity to test the plans to ensure they work. Furthermore, PBEM has identified eleven new plans needed for its plan library, including fuel management and water distribution plans. The bureau's FY 2019-20 Requested Budget included a request for additional staff to increase the Planning and Mitigation section's capacity to address these concerns. However, CBO and City Council did not recommend the request given limited General Fund resources.

Considering the continued constraint in the availability of new resources, CBO continues to recommend that the bureau work with its Commissioner in Charge to identify the right balance between the Planning and Mitigation and Community Programs sections. CBO also encourages the bureau to take a leadership role in the City's preparedness and resiliency efforts by developing Citywide preparedness and resiliency performance measures. PBEM is uniquely qualified to support other bureaus in creating performance measures that track preparedness and resiliency efforts that better communicate the City's overall preparedness level. CBO recommends adding Citywide performance measures such as:

- *Number of ECC activations in a fiscal year,*
- *Maximum downtime for City-provided critical services,*
- *Number of City infrastructure assets that meet seismic resiliency requirements,*
- *Number of Citywide training exercises of emergency response plans,*
- *Number of emergency response plans that have been tested, and*

¹² The Basic Emergency Operations Plan and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The City is also federally required to maintain a Comprehensive Plan, which is managed by BPS.

- *Percentage of City responders that have completed City and Federally required training.*

CBO encourages PBEM to continue its efforts to advance the resiliency of Citywide infrastructure. The bureau attends the Citywide Asset Managers Group (CAMG) meetings and convenes the Disaster Resilience and Recovery Group (DRAAG). The bureau's effort with these groups is to help the City's infrastructure bureaus incorporate emergency preparedness planning into their capital asset management plans and projects. This is key, given the [2016 Portlanders Preparedness Survey](#) in which community respondents selected "strengthen infrastructure such as bridges, sewer lines and water pipes" as the most important thing the City could do to reduce risk from natural hazards.¹³

¹³ City of Portland, Portland Bureau of Emergency Management. Preparedness Survey. April 11, 2016. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/pbem/69888>.