



MEMORANDUM

To: Clackamas County Planning Commission

From: Scott Hoelscher, Senior Planner – Multimodal Transportation, scotthoe@clackamas.us
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Date: March 24, 2025; Study Session

RE: **ZDO-292**: Comprehensive Plan Amendments to Adopt the *Walk Bike Clackamas (WBC) Plan*, an update to the county's Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of the March 24th study session is to:

- Provide the Planning Commission with background information on the *Walk Bike Clackamas (WBC) Plan* that is proposed for adoption in Ordinance ZDO-292; and
- Give the Planning Commission an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the *WBC Plan* and the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments that will be included in ZDO-292.

BACKGROUND

Oregon state law requires cities and counties to plan for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Clackamas County's bicycle and pedestrian mode elements of the Transportation System Plan (TSP) have not been updated in nearly 30 years. *Walk Bike Clackamas Plan (WBC)* is the first full update to the County's Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan since they were first adopted in 1996. WBC is two and a half year long planning project resulting in the county's first combined, consolidated bicycle and pedestrian plan. The project goal is to provide a comprehensive, long-term vision for improving walking and biking opportunities in Clackamas County for transportation and recreation. WBC provides guidance on capital investment priorities and policy to create a balanced, connected and safe transportation system. WBC will serve as the bicycle and pedestrian mode elements of the TSP.

With the growing popularity of bicycling and walking for both transportation and recreation, it is important that residents and visitors have safe, accessible travel options. The project complements other completed planning efforts as well as the upcoming North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District (NCPRD) Trails Plan. Recent plans have targeted geographic areas: the *Villages at Mt. Hood Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan* which focused on priority active transportation infrastructure improvements in the Mt. Hood area; the *Active Transportation Plan* which provides guidance on regional active routes and principal connections between communities; and the *Clackamas Regional Center Pedestrian and Bicycle Connection Plan*, a project that prioritized last mile connections from the MAX Green Line terminus. The WBC project builds on these efforts to identify bicycle and pedestrian needs for county-maintained

roads in both the urban and rural areas. No monies have been budgeted at this time to construct projects identified in the WBC.

REASON FOR PROJECT

There are four primary reasons for this project. First, an update is needed to comply with state law. The Transportation Planning Rule (TPR) implements statewide planning Goal 12: Transportation. The TPR provides direction on how to plan for bicycles and pedestrians and what these plans must include. The TPR requires counties to update mode plans and to plan for a connected pedestrian and bicycle network that is safe and comfortable “for all ages and abilities.”

Second, since adoption of the 1996 plans, the County’s transportation system has drastically changed: projects have been built, and many have received recent funding and are programmed in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for construction. Developing new, up-to-date project lists will position the county for future state, regional and federal grant funding opportunities.

Third, the need for the WBC project is evidenced by the fact that transportation planning best practices surrounding bicycle and pedestrian networks have evolved and policy priorities have changed. The current plans were developed before safety treatments such as separated/protected bicycle lanes; dedicated bike crossing traffic signals and bike boxes were invented. Emerging technologies such as electric bicycles were years away. Moreover, equity considerations were not a metric in the planning process in 1996. The TPR explicitly requires that counties conduct a planning process for pedestrians and bicyclists with specific attention to underserved populations¹. WBC provides a needed update to respond to these changes.

Fourth, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has set a goal that 100% of county residents have access to safe and affordable multimodal infrastructure. In addition, the county developed a Climate Action Plan with the goal for the county to be carbon neutral by 2050, which means reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to the point where we can capture as much as we emit. Replacing SOV trips with biking and walking will be an important part of the county’s climate change strategy.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The WBC Plan development process was based on extensive community engagement, which was embedded throughout the project. Public engagement included Community Conversation pop-up events, a virtual interactive map, three public surveys, social media posts, interested parties list with email blasts, presentations to community groups; in-person open house and virtual open house, among other techniques. A Walk Bike Advisory Committee (WBAC) guided project development and provided diverse perspectives throughout the project. The WBAC met four times, with each meeting preceding a public outreach event or survey. Four engagement milestones were conducted at project milestones and consisted of traditional and non-traditional open house events; tabling at community events and public surveys. An overview of public engagement associated with the project is included in Chapter 3 of the WBC document.

¹ WBC uses term “Communities of Interest”, which includes the following: Black people, Indigenous people and People of Color (BIPOC); Immigrants; People with limited English proficiency; Low-income; People with disabilities; Youth and seniors.

OUTCOMES

WBC provides a comprehensive, long-term vision for pedestrian and bicycle transportation investments in both the urban and rural areas of Clackamas County. There is no public money allocated to any of the projects identified in the WBC Plan. Any future funding decisions would be made by the Board of County Commissioners. Key outcomes include:

- **Priority Projects:** WBC includes 236 key projects: 96.7 miles of new sidewalk; 322.3 miles of new bikeways and 106.8 of new multiuse trails. Projects are organized within five planning areas. Within each area there are three tiers of priorities: Tier 1 are the highest priority projects; Tier 2 are medium priority and Tier 3 are low priority. The plan also includes key spot improvement projects such as crosswalks and bicycle signals. No funding allocation has occurred in conjunction with this project. The project only identifies potential projects if money becomes available through grants or other channels. See WBC pp. 60-81 for project maps and tables.
- **Shared Streets:** Shared Streets are potentially high-use streets for people walking and bicycling in Clackamas County with speeds reduced to 20 mph to enhance public health and safety. Reducing motor vehicle speeds is one of the best ways to increase safety. The Shared Street program would apply only to local streets that provide important connections within and between neighborhoods, shopping areas, and parks, among other destinations. They would be part of the pedestrian and bicycle network along with bike lanes, sidewalks and trails. WBC pp. 82-86.
- **Supportive Programs:** While infrastructure improvements are an important part of making walking and biking safer, supportive programs help build awareness surrounding safety and rights and responsibilities of everyone using the transportation system. The County currently conducts some programming (Safe Routes to School, for example) that support walking and bicycling. WBC includes several new programs that could help address community desires and complement other investments. The seven potential WBC programs are categorized into event, campaign and mode shift groupings. The seven programs included in the draft plan are: Open Streets, School Zone Safety, Bicycle Friendly Driver, No Parking in Bike Lane, Micromobility, Bicycle and Pedestrian County and Street Painting Program. See WBC pp. 87-89 for program information.
- **Goals, Objectives, Supportive Actions and Performance Measures:** To guide future decision-making, WBC includes key goals, objectives and supportive actions. Performance measures to evaluate progress toward implementation are included in the plan. See WBC pp. 45-49.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS IN ZDO-292

ZDO-292 includes proposed amendments that would adopt the *Walk Bike Clackamas Plan* into the county's Comprehensive Plan by doing the following.

1. **Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 5:** Amends the Active Transportation policies in Chapter 5: Transportation System Plan (TSP) to ensure consistency between the TSP and *Walk Bike Clackamas Plan*.
2. **Appendix A of Comprehensive Plan:** Adopts *Walk Bike Clackamas Plan* by reference in Appendix A of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. **Appendix B of Comprehensive Plan:** Adopts *Walk Bike Clackamas Plan* appendices A through T into Appendix B of the Comprehensive Plan. The *WBC Plan* appendices include existing conditions data, background information and other analyses used to develop the plan.

DISCUSSION ITEMS and QUESTIONS

1) Project Priorities

- a. Does the Planning Commission have any comments or questions regarding the three tiers of projects within any of the 5 WBC planning areas?

2) Supportive Programs

- a. Does the Planning Commission have any comments or questions regarding the recommended supportive programs in Chapter 7 of the WBC plan?

3) Comprehensive Plan Chapter 5 Active Transportation Policies

- a. Does the Planning Commission have any comments or questions on any of the policy changes in Chapter 5?

NEXT STEPS

Public hearings have been scheduled before the Planning Commission (PC) and Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to consider the amendments proposed in ZDO-292.

PC public hearing: Monday, April 14, 2025, hearing will begin no earlier than 6:30 p.m.

BCC public hearing: Tuesday, May 13, 2025, hearing will begin no earlier than 11:00 a.m.

LINKS TO PROJECT MATERIALS

For Walk Bike Clackamas Plan documents and information:

www.clackamas.us/engineering/bikewalk

For additional information about ZDO-292 and to review associated adoption materials, please visit: www.clackamas.us/planning/zdo292

For more information, contact Scott Hoelscher at 503-742-4533 or scotthoe@clackamas.us