

# WALK BIKE CLACKAMAS

## WBAC #1 Meeting Minutes

October 26, 2022 | 6:00-8:00 PM | Virtual (Zoom)

### Attendees

**WBAC Members:** Aaron Lierseman, Dean Apostol, Jacob Anderson, Jay Panagos, Joseph Edge, Kevin Haro, Kymberly Kalu, Marika Yumang, Mark Bentz, Mike Cardwell, Natasha Muro, Nicole Perry, Rob Sadowsky, Sandra Henderson

- Unable to attend: Allina Cannady, Christian Snuffin, Tonia Williamson

**Clackamas County Project Management Team:** Scott Hoelscher, Ellen Rogalin, Brett Setterfield, Karen Buehrig

**Consultant Team:** Jeri Stroupe, Drusilla van Hengel, Layne Wyse (Nelson\Nygaard); Talia Jacobson (Toole Design); Thuy Tu (Thuy Tu Consulting)

### Meeting Summary

The first Walk Bike Advisory Committee (WBAC) meeting took place on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, virtually on Zoom. The intent of the first WBAC meeting was to get to know one another, create a shared understanding of the project purpose and need, provide an overview of tasks and initial work products, and establish protocols for future meetings. WBAC meetings are open for members of the public to join; approximately 10 people joined.

### Introductions

Jeri kicked off the meeting by leading a brief round of introductions in which meeting participants shared their favorite places to walk, roll, and bicycle in Clackamas County. Participants identified well-known regional locations (Springwater Corridor trail, Trolley Trail, Sandy Ridge Trail) as well as everyday walking, rolling, and biking connections in their neighborhoods (Linwood Avenue, Scott Park, Eagle Fern Park, alley paths). Thuy led the group in a land acknowledgement to honor past and current Native people for whom Clackamas County was or is home.

### Project Overview

Jeri and Scott presented an overview of the project, including the purpose and need. They described the project's focus on unincorporated areas of the county; presented the project schedule, key tasks, and planned outcomes; and discussed the draft guiding principles and results of some initial public engagement activities. Jeri also presented an overview of Technical Memo #1, the Health Equity Framework, including the project's draft Guiding Principles (discussed in more detail below).

Jeri emphasized the critical role of the WBAC and expectations. WBAC members also affirmed the general guidelines of the WBAC charter, with one suggested addition from the group: committing to thoughtfully carry out assigned homework between WBAC meetings, such as reviewing and commenting on project deliverables.

## Discussion

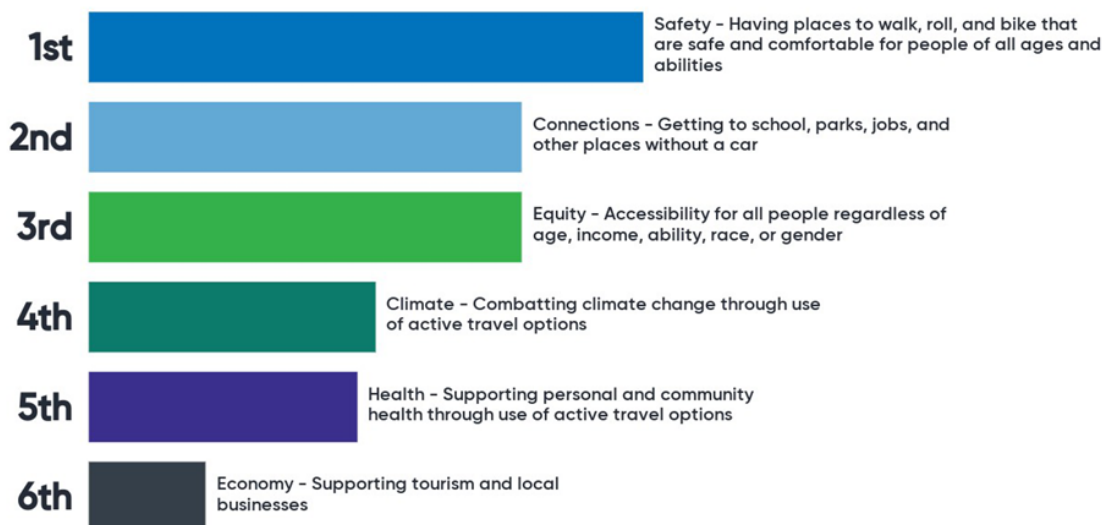
The project overview portion of the meeting wrapped up with a group discussion prompted by a Mentimeter online poll of meeting attendees. Results of the polling questions are shown below. A total of 18 responses were submitted for each question. The first Mentimeter question asked about the draft Guiding Principles that were presented to the group earlier in the evening. Participants rated *Invest in people and places with the greatest need* as the most important guiding principle. Two principles emphasizing thoughtful community engagement, and measuring and evaluating progress, scored close behind.

### QUESTION: RANK THE FOLLOWING DRAFT WBC GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN TERMS OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU. (N=18)



The second question asked about active transportation priorities. Participants rated Safety, Connections, and Equity as the most important themes for active travel in Clackamas County.

### QUESTION: WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT ABOUT WALKING, ROLLING, AND BIKING IN CLACKAMAS COUNTY? (N=18)



An open discussion followed the Mentimeter polling. Comments and key themes from the discussion are summarized below according to the above Mentimeter questions. The project team will take this feedback into account as they draft project goals and evaluation metrics, and adjust draft descriptions of the guiding principles.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Some shared that it felt difficult and too abstract to rank the above concepts without understanding more about the project first.
- Participants noted the importance of listening firsthand to members of the community throughout the Walk Bike Clackamas project.

### **WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT**

- There are a great number of needs for improvement spread across a large area. It will be challenging to decide who has the greatest need.
- The topics presented in the Mentimeter poll are all interconnected, and it doesn't necessarily make sense to prioritize any one over another. For example, Health follows the others – if people can ride/roll/walk, they will be healthier.
- Safety is highly important because if people don't feel safe, they're not going to walk, roll, or ride.
- Creating connections is the most important. People want to live where active travel connections are close and easy to meet their daily needs.

## **Existing Conditions Approach**

Jeri and Talia presented a short overview of the project team's work on assessing existing conditions, including previewing findings from Baseline Health Conditions memo (Technical Memo #2) as well as describing work in progress on mapping active transportation conditions and crashes throughout the county.

### **Breakout Room Discussions**

The group dispersed for small group discussions into three breakout rooms, facilitated by County and Consultant staff in each room. Discussion focused on the questions:

1. What is your experience walking, rolling, and/or biking in Clackamas County?
2. Does your experience match what we are seeing in our analysis, or are there gaps we should research further?

After ten minutes of breakout room discussion, everyone came back together and shared themes from their respective breakout rooms with the whole group. Key themes and points from the breakout rooms are below.

- **The presence of bus stop shelters and other stop amenities could be helpful to analyze** – where do bus stops exist throughout the county, and which ones are safe and comfortable to access and use.
- **The presence of sidewalks doesn't always equate with comfort and ease of walking and rolling.** For example, yes there may be sidewalks along McLoughlin Blvd, but it's not a nice or comfortable place to walk.
- **The county is changing rapidly especially around equity and aging.** It may be worth updating data sources as soon as possible.

- **The public realm has suffered as community assets have been removed** due to concerns that they may invite houseless neighbors to camp in the right-of-way. This includes benches/seating, garbage receptacles, and other things that make the public right-of-way welcoming to more people.
- **Many people who may be interested in bicycling are missing out on wonderful rural assets** because most rural roads aren't comfortable for most people to ride on. Many roads are simply not safe for most people to walk and bike.
- **The existing street and bicycle network is not consistently welcoming to people with diverse physical abilities** or riding diverse types of bicycles. For example, it's hard for people who use canes to find places to walk comfortably, and traffic signal timing is not accommodating to people riding a large heavy cargo bike at slower speeds.
- **Safety on the existing active travel network is a major concern.** People may live close to schools or grocery stores but don't feel safe to access with kids. On-street bikeways would feel more secure for families and children if there were physical protection. High motor vehicle speeds are a serious challenge around schools.
- **Clackamas County has made some progress in active transportation but there is a long way to go.** The challenge to improving active transportation facilities throughout the county feels daunting. It feels like we have a deep hole to dig ourselves out of to build new facilities, but at the same time it's a challenge to maintain the assets we already have. For example, bikeways collect debris, making use difficult.
- **Legibility of the existing network is a challenge.** Trails end in some places, with little indication of how to connect to the next bikeway or to nearby destinations. The I-205 multiuse trail is a valuable asset, but it has gaps in some places where users must go onto streets and there is little wayfinding signage to help make the connection.
- **It's important to make active travel choices easy,** or people will simply choose to drive. Active transportation should integrate smoothly into daily life, with convenient, comfortable routes and facilities easily available.
- **Collaboration between the County and incorporated areas will be critical.** It's often unclear to the public who has jurisdiction over the roadway and who is responsible for maintenance and improvements. We need to make sure active transportation facilities don't end at the city boundary.
- The team's analysis of sidewalk conditions matches lived experience in the Oak Grove area. There are very few sidewalks, but many people do already walk on unimproved roads and streets.

## Public Comment

Ten minutes was set aside for members of the public in attendance to provide comments. These are detailed below.

- Connectivity of the active travel network is most important to improve, but safety defines connectivity – if segments of the network feel unsafe, that is a barrier even though it may appear to be a connection on paper.
- Areas immediately outside of incorporated places often lack paths and lighting to enable active travel, but people are still trying to walk to parks, grocery stores, and other destinations.

- Measuring progress toward plan goals and objectives is very important. Monitoring and evaluation should be posted publicly.
- Safety is a concern for active travel:
  - The Trolley Trail is challenging with some people biking at high speeds.
  - More people should wear high visibility clothing.
  - Speed limits should be reduced along more segments of roads.
- Spending resources to connect the existing infrastructure might be “low hanging fruit” and could be prioritized ahead of adding active travel facilities in areas where none exist at all.
- New affordable housing is not supported by adequate safe active travel connections. Cut through motor vehicle traffic is a major concern.
- One commenter encouraged the project team to be extremely judicious with public engagement processes, suggesting that the team put their expertise to targeted use by having one-on-one conversations with neighbors about what they need and what’s happening on their local streets. The commenter shared several articles for suggested reading:
  - [Most Public Engagement is Worse than Worthless](#)
  - [Stop Asking the Public What They Want](#)
  - [Public Engagement, Core Insights](#)

## **Next Steps**

Jeri wrapped up the first WBAC meeting by describing next steps for the group:

- WBAC members will receive a follow-up survey to help the project team understand what went well with the first meeting and what could be improved for future WBAC meetings, including whether in-person meetings are a viable option for the committee members.
- WBAC members will review project deliverables produced to date, available on the project website: <https://www.clackamas.us/engineering/bikewalk>. No comment or markup is specifically requested of WBAC members.
- The next WBAC meeting will take place in early 2023.